

A Call for Commitment to Scholarly Ethics in Medical Research and Education

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Abstract

Ethics form the cornerstone of academic work, guiding individuals in their pursuit of knowledge, truth, and intellectual growth. They emphasize honesty, integrity, and ethical conduct in all academic endeavors, fostering a culture of trust and respect. However, there have been many retractions of published papers from journals of great repute in recent years. Such incidents underscore the importance of scholarly ethics in medical education and research. As educators and researchers, we bear the responsibility of modelling ethical standards, which form the foundation of trust in academia and healthcare.

Keywords: Ethics, Research; Plagiarism; Retraction of Publication; Biomedical Research.

Recently, there have been many retractions of published papers from journals of great repute. Such incidents underscore the importance of scholarly ethics in medical education and research.^{1,2} Ethics form the cornerstone of academic work, guiding individuals in their pursuit of knowledge, truth, and intellectual growth. They emphasize honesty, integrity, and ethical conduct in all academic endeavors, fostering a culture of trust and respect. Honesty is especially central to scholarly ethics, requiring accurate and transparent representation of ideas and research findings. The growing pressure to publish has notably increased unethical practices among students, faculty, and researchers. Practices such as plagiarism, data manipulation, and ghost authorship not only compromise academic integrity but also erode trust within the community. Plagiarism—the use of others' ideas or work without proper attribution—seriously undermines academic integrity and erodes trust within the academic community. Similarly, while collaboration is vital for exchanging ideas, it is essential to distinguish it from cheating, ensuring fair contributions and proper acknowledgment. Failing to do so compromises individual and institutional credibility and undermines the integrity of medical science, which can ultimately

impact patient care. Another unethical practice that has increasingly plagued academia is the submission of fake peer reviews using the names of preferred reviewers, further compromising the integrity of the scholarly process.^{3,4,5}

As educators and researchers, we bear the responsibility of modelling ethical standards, which form the foundation of trust in academia and healthcare. Researchers must conduct studies ethically, protecting participants' rights and ensuring the validity and reliability of findings. Equally important is upholding ethical principles in authorship and publication, ensuring that contributions are fairly represented, credit is properly assigned, and the highest standards of integrity are maintained in research reporting.

To address challenges to scholarly ethics, higher education institutions should establish clear guidelines and promote academic honesty through integrity policies, workshops, and rigorous peer-review processes. Faculty must lead by example, mentoring students on transparency, honesty, and accountability. I also advocate for academic journals to maintain stringent review and plagiarism detection processes and encourage authors to adhere to the highest ethical standards. By upholding these



principles, we can create an environment where academic excellence is achieved through merit and integrity. Our commitment to scholarly ethics will go a long way in the advancement of healthcare research.

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