

Similarity, Plagiarism, and Academic Citation

Mohammad Rafiqul Islam Talukdar

American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), Dhaka

Abstract:

Differentiating between “plagiarism” and “similarity” is crucial for academics. Similarities to other intellectual properties do not necessarily mean these are plagiarized. It simply means that the respective contents seem to be like the other intellectual contributions or previously published works of the same author(s). Whether the paper is plagiarized or not depends on whether it is appropriately cited or not. But even if it is appropriately cited, if the percentage of similarity of a paper exceeds the institution’s accepted margin, the paper falls under ethical concern and thus would be treated as plagiarized. Such an instance, however, does not invite disciplinary action but, of course, rejection. On the other side, intentional or reckless plagiarism is subject to being treated as a disciplinary offense. The purpose of this article is to inform academics, researchers, and graduate students of the importance of appropriate citation in academic writing. The discussion of this article includes plagiarism vs. similarity, academic citation, no or less similarity does not provide any guarantee of “no plagiarism,” and how to avoid plagiarism and ensure appropriate academic citation.

Keywords:

Academic citation, APA style, in-text citations, plagiarism, similarity.