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**Book Review**

# Against Plagiarism – A Guide for Editors and Authors

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## ABSTRACT

Zhang, Y.H. (2016). *Against Plagiarism – A Guide for Editors and Authors* (Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis of Scientific and Scholarly Communication). Springer International Publishing.

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## Review

Plagiarism has been a long-standing issue, although use of the internet and the resulting access to a wider range of sources may possibly have led to plagiarism becoming more problematic nowadays. Also, in our more globalised world it becomes evident that the role and status of plagiarism are not comparable from one country to the other. Journal articles about plagiarism research identify some key aspects and issues, but often do not offer a comprehensive picture and practical ideas for the prevention of plagiarism. *Against Plagiarism – A guide for editors and authors* seeks to fill exactly this gap in the market.

Drawing on personal experiences as a chief editor of a journal and author of publications relating to plagiarism and relevant software Zhang sets out to provide a holistic view of plagiarism in its different forms and interpretations in a variety of countries and disciplines.

The eleven chapters in the book are divided into three parts "General Plagiarism Issues" (p. 3), "Discipline-Specific Plagiarism Issues" (p. 59) and "What to Do About It" (p. 99).

After a brief introduction of what constitutes plagiarism, who plagiarises and authors' motivation for plagiarism Zhang presents previously published articles regarding the use of plagiarism detection software and specific issues relating to bilingual and multi-lingual publishing processes. These two examples together with a case study regarding the benefits and limitations of software packages highlight how detection software can be useful tools but should not be relied upon entirely. Zhang argues that ethical behaviour, academic integrity as well as practical strategies are key in combating plagiarism.

In part II of the book some disciplinary conventions are considered in greater detail. Zhang argues that within specific disciplines software will identify high levels of similarity, which may be legitimate to some extent. In Chapter 6 she discusses the issue of conference papers being republished routinely in journal articles within computing and electrical and electronic engineering. This example highlights how there needs to be a person behind the software who makes the judgment call on whether or not a publication should be considered as a plagiarism case.

Part III of the book "What to Do About It" offers some steps authors can take to avoid plagiarising work as well as guidance on how journal editors can and should actively promote academic rigor and integrity. In addition, Zhang offers ideas relating to introducing a framework for publication ethics in order to raise awareness, which would lead to rigor and integrity and therefore a reduction in plagiarism in the long-term.

Overall, this book provides a comprehensive insight into aspects of plagiarism within the field of scientific publications. And therein lies the crux. The book title suggests that the resource could be beneficial for a wider audience. But in order to appeal to a wider readership some sections would have needed to be more detailed. Within Chapter 8 "Avoiding Plagiarism as an Author" (p. 105-109), for example, Zhang tries to provide guidance for authors regarding conduct, roles and responsibilities and practical strategies. With more practical information and examples for authors on how to avoid plagiarism the book could potentially be used by academics in order to teach students about plagiarism, too. As it stands, however, the advice provided is limited and via links the readers are directed to information relevant to integrity and plagiarism external to the book.

Overall, the book contributes to the plagiarism debate and brings to this discussion an international dimension that many other publications lack and as such, it makes for interesting reading and is a thought-provoking contribution to the field.

*Biographies*

*Nicole Brown* is a lecturer in education and programme leader for the secondary teacher education programme at the University College London Institute of Education. Her research interests relate to advancing learning and teaching within higher education and to improving the generation of knowledge.

*References*

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