

Misconduct beyond fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism

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Dear Editor,

I read the recent publication by Habermann, Broome, Pryor, & Ziner (2010) with great interest. Habermann and colleagues concluded that “This study demonstrates the need to expand definitions of scientific misconduct beyond fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism to include other practices.” Indeed, there might be other forms of misconduct in research. The remaining questions are: (a) How do we force scientists to act accordingly? and (b) How do we deal with such reported misconduct? Indeed, misconduct can be caused by several underlying reasons. Increasing a researcher’s awareness to the penalties of misconduct might curtail his or her misconduct. This may be the best way to prevent these problems (Wiwanitkit, 2008). To correct the reported misconduct, several actions can be taken as stated by Habermann et al. There is no doubt that action should be taken, but a standard should be applied to all cases. Sometimes, in many under developed countries, professors who are highly ranked or who are in a top position (e.g., chancellor, dean or director) demonstrate misconduct in their research and receive no penalty despite being reported, while the others are seriously reprimanded (i.e., fired). This is an additional concern regarding misconduct in scientific research.

References

- Habermann B., Broome M., Pryor E. R., Ziner K. W. (2010). Research coordinators' experiences with scientific misconduct and research integrity. *Nursing Research*, 59, 51-57.
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