

Abstract

Plagiarism has long been a concern for educators. However, research literature has indicated that faculty and researchers have themselves conducted plagiarism at alarming rates. Further, there appears to be a large amount of research that has been recycled through egregious self-plagiarism. As aviation research becomes increasingly important to the field of study, it is critical that such research is of high quality, legitimate, and original. This descriptive study investigated the prevalence of plagiarism in aviation research published in five prominent, peer-reviewed research journals (Collegiate Aviation Review, Journal of Air Transportation, International Journal of Applied Aviation Studies, International Journal of Aviation Psychology and Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine). From each of these journals, 30 articles ($n = 150$) were uploaded to Turnitin plagiarism detection software for analysis. The mean similarity index of the articles was found to be 16.01% ($SD = 18.12$). A Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a statistically significant difference in similarity indices across the five journals, $\chi^2(4, n = 150) = 9.785, p = .044$ with the International Journal of Applied Aviation Studies and the International Journal of Aviation Psychology having the highest levels of plagiarism. Within the 150 journal articles, 68 cases (45.3%) met the minimum level of plagiarism (similarity index $> 10\%$ as advocated in the literature). Overall, 102 (68%) articles contained instances of self-plagiarism (overlap with material written by an article author without citation). Sham-type (exact text but improperly cited) plagiarism was evident in 88 (59%) of articles and 78 (52%) contained at least one instance of verbatim-type (exact text without citation) plagiarism. Plagiarism appears to be a concern for aviation research stakeholders and it is evident that there is a need for more guidelines and oversight by journal editors and reviewers. Suggestions for future research are provided.