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Perception of the Faculty Members and Research Scholars about Plagiarism: A Study

P. SANKAR,
Librarian,
Sree Narayana Guru College, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

Academic dishonesty at universities is a common phenomenon among students of all ages and specialties. The academic community is currently giving a lot of attention to increasing the awareness of students about ethical issues, including ethics of copying and using information in the electronic age. The present study attempted to analysis the positive, negative attitudes and subjective norms towards Plagiarism. Attitudes toward Plagiarism questionnaire was developed, with good psychometric characteristics. Theory of planned behavior (TPB) was chosen as a model to predict the intention to plagiarize. Simple random sampling adopted for the study to collect data from the students, research scholars and faculty members of Sree Narayana Guru College, Coimbatore. The study highlighted the positive, negative attitudes towards plagiarism and given the subjective norms for the plagiarism activities.

Key Words: *Plagiarism, Attitude, TPB*

Introduction:

Plagiarism is defined as submitting as one's own work, irrespective of intent to deceive, that which derives in part or in its entirety from the work of others without due acknowledgement; or, in the case of self-plagiarism, unless explicitly permitted by regulation, submitting one's own work that has already been submitted for assessment to satisfy the requirements of any other academic qualification, or submitted for publication without due acknowledgement. It is both poor scholarship and a breach of academic integrity.

Plagiarism include **copying** (using another person's language and/or ideas as if they are a candidate's own), by:

- **Quoting verbatim** another person's work without due acknowledgement of the source;
- **Paraphrasing** another person's work by changing some of the words, or the order of the words, without due acknowledgement of the source;

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- **Using ideas** taken from someone else without reference to the originator;
- **Cutting and pasting** from the Internet to make a pastiche of online sources;
- **Submitting someone else's work** as part of a candidate's own without identifying clearly who did the work. For example, buying or commissioning work via professional agencies such as 'essay banks' or 'paper mills', or not attributing research contributed by others to a joint project.

Plagiarism might also arise from **colluding** with another person, including another candidate, other than as permitted for joint project work (i.e. where collaboration is concealed or has been forbidden). A candidate should include a general acknowledgement where he or she has received substantial help, for example with the language and style of a piece of written work.

Plagiarism can occur in respect to all types of sources and media:

- Text, illustrations, musical quotations, mathematical derivations, computer code, etc;
- Material downloaded from websites or drawn from manuscripts or other media;
- Published and unpublished material, including lecture handouts and other students' work.

Acceptable means of acknowledging the work of others (by referencing, in footnotes, or otherwise) is an essential component of any work submitted for assessment, whether written examination, dissertation, essay, registration exercise, or group coursework. The most appropriate method for attribution of others' work will vary according to the subject matter and mode of assessment. Faculties or Departments should issue written guidance on the relevant scholarly conventions for submitted work, and also make it clear to candidates what level of acknowledgement might be expected in written examinations. Candidates are required to familiarize themselves with this guidance, to follow it in all work submitted for assessment, whether written paper or submitted essay, and may be required to sign a declaration to that effect. If a candidate has any outstanding queries, clarification should be sought from her or his Director of Studies, Course Director or Supervisor as appropriate.

Failure to conform to the expected standards of scholarship (e.g. by not referencing sources) in examinations or assessed work may affect the mark given to the candidate's work. In addition, suspected cases of the use of unfair means (of which plagiarism is one form) will be investigated and may be brought to one of the University's Courts. The Courts have wide powers to discipline those found guilty of using unfair means in an examination, including depriving such persons of membership of the University, and deprivation of a degree.

Review of Literature:

Dias, Paulo C (2014) indicated that both teacher and students know that plagiarism is illegal and their attributes on plagiarism to the easiness on contents access on Internet but

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while teachers tend to attribute causes to students' lack of skills, students highlight the pressure to get good grades, laziness and poor management as well as the expectation that won't be caught. **Fish, Reva (2013)** revealed that students believed other students are far more likely than them to commit each type of plagiarism and they recognized that some types of plagiarism are more serious than others. The opportunity to reduce incidents of plagiarism by providing students with accurate information about plagiarism at their schools is discussed in the context of social norms theory.

Khairnar, Mahesh Ravindra (2019) explored attitude toward plagiarism (ATP) measured using a self-administered questionnaire and PG students showed more positive attitude and less negative ATP as compared to faculty members. The study showed negligence of PG students toward plagiarism which calls for improvement in awareness regarding plagiarism and research education. **Strangfeld, Jennifer A. (2019)** highlighted that students plagiarize primarily because they are concerned that not only are their vocabulary and writing skills subpar, but that they do not fit into the college student role. Consequently, students' plagiarism experiences are contextualized within their broader educational histories rather than limited to the immediate circumstances surrounding their academic dishonesty.

James, Mark X. (2019) suggested that students who believe that imitation of experts is important to learning are more likely to self-report plagiarism, and that business students are more likely to self-report than non-business students. The other factors noted about ability to express one's self in English writing and their language skills. These results pointed that key insight into the English writing plagiarism behaviors of Chinese students studying in Western higher education. **Oyewole, Olawale (2018)** revealed that most of the respondents had a high level of awareness of the various acts that constitute plagiarism and majority of the distance learners had a negative perception of plagiarism as they viewed it as a crime who indicated that they will ensure that they duly acknowledge their sources of information. The study suggested to develop a plagiarism policy that will be given to all the students.

Idiegbeyan-ose, Jerome (2016) revealed average level of awareness of plagiarism among postgraduate students, level of training influenced their level of awareness; pressure to meet deadlines, inadequate writing skills and lack of knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism were found to be responsible for the malaise. It recommended the intensification of awareness and sensitization programmes on plagiarism by various institutions and to enforce the use of Turnitin in all Nigerian Universities. **Kim, Aaron (2009)** measured the impact of using anti-plagiarism tools (APT's) on students' behavior and attitudes toward

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plagiarism. It is noticed that correlations between APT perception and plagiarism behavior, moral judgment and neutralization.

Ramzan, Muhammad (2012) revealed that there was a low level of awareness about plagiarism and university plagiarism policies and processes amongst the students. A significant number of students have fairly admitted that they have intentionally plagiarized written materials. It recommended that creating awareness amongst the students regarding plagiarism, plagiarism policies and provides statistical evidences for formulation of policies and guidelines to combat plagiarism in institutions of higher learning in Pakistan. **Ibegbulam, Ijeoma J.** (2015) showed that the knowledge of plagiarism among the students prior to their being taught the subject was very low. However, after being exposed to the subject through teaching, their knowledge increased significantly. The attitude of respondents to strategies for curbing plagiarism showed that respondents favored corrective measures over punitive measures. The study concluded that university administrations should pay close attention to this problem by developing strategies that can help resolve it.

Objectives:

The present study attempted to analysis the positive and negative attitudes towards Plagiarism. The study also examined the Subjective norms on plagiarism activities.

Methodology

To obtain the above objectives a structured questionnaire used. Attitudes toward Plagiarism questionnaire was developed, with good psychometric characteristics. In questionnaire development, Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (TPB) was chosen as a model to predict the intention to plagiarize. TPB is a relevant predictive model of academic dishonesty that explains behavior as a final act anticipated by logical thinking. Simple random sampling adopted for the study to collect data from the students, research scholars and faculty members of Sree Narayana Guru College, Coimbatore. 140 questionnaires disturbed among the various respondents and 130 received which consider for the study analysis. The response rate for the questionnaire was 92.85%.

Social Demographic Profile:

It is noticed that 37% of the respondents was male and 63% of the respondents was female. Among the age group, 39% of the respondents were above 40 years and 23% of the respondents were 36-40 years age. 18% of the respondents was belonged to 31-35 age, 12% of the respondents were 26-30 age and 8% of the respondents was aged below 25. 45% of the respondents was faculty members, 37% of the respondents were research scholars and 18%

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of the respondents was PG students. Among the discipline wise distribution, 44% of the respondents was represented from Science, 34% of the respondents were from Arts background and 22% of the respondents were from Humanities subjects.

Table 1
Positive attitude towards Plagiarism

Sl.No	Positive attitude toward plagiarism	N	Mean	Std Dev	F	T
1	Sometimes one cannot avoid using other peoples words without citing the source, because there are only so many ways to describe something.	130	2.15	1.09	0.39	22.38
2	It is justified to use previous descriptions of a method, because the method itself remains the same.	130	3.25	1.36	0.43	27.13
3	Self-plagiarism is not punishable because it is not harmful (one cannot steal from oneself).	130	2.44	1.00	0.53	27.91
4	Plagiarized parts of a paper may be ignored if the paper is of great scientific value.	130	2.60	1.12	0.43	26.52
5	Self-plagiarism should not be punishable in the same way as plagiarism is.	130	2.86	1.20	0.45	27.21
6	Young researchers who are just learning the ropes should receive milder punishment for plagiarism.	130	2.52	1.17	0.58	24.52
7	If one cannot write well in a foreign language (eg, English), it is justified to copy parts of a similar paper already published in that language.	130	2.22	1.11	0.42	22.83
8	I could not write a scientific paper without plagiarizing.	130	2.57	1.15	0.43	25.38
9	Short deadlines give me the right to plagiarize a bit.	130	2.05	1.07	0.31	21.80
10	When I do not know what to write, I translate a part of a paper from a foreign language.	130	2.62	1.12	0.44	26.55

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11	It is justified to use ones own previously published work without providing citation in order to complete the current work.	130	2.46	1.16	0.31	24.14
12	If a colleague of mine allows me to copy from her/his paper, Im NOT doing anything bad, because I have his/her permission.	130	2.87	1.16	0.28	28.11

The table 1 shows the positive attitude towards plagiarism. It is understand the most of the respondents mentioned due to short deadlines they had the right to plagiarize a bit. (M: 2.05; SD: 1.07), they also stated that sometimes one cannot avoid using other peoples words without citing the source, because there are only so many ways to describe something. (M: 2.15; SD: 1.09) and due to lack of proficiency in the in a foreign language such as, English, made justified to copy parts of a similar paper already published in that language. (M: 2.22; SD: 1.11) A group of respondents had a feeling that self-plagiarism is not punishable, because it is not harmful (M: 2.44; SD:1.0) and they justified to use ones own previously published work without providing citation in order to complete the current work.(M: 2.46; SD:1.16). A bunch of respondents said that young researchers who are just learning the supports should receive milder punishment for plagiarism. (M: 2.52; SD: 1.17) they argued that could not write a scientific paper without plagiarizing. (M: 2.57; SD:1.15). They reported that plagiarized parts of a paper may be ignored if the paper is of great scientific value. (M: 2.6; SD:1.12) and When they do not know what to write, they translate a part of a paper from a foreign language. (M: 2.62; SD: 1.12) . Less number of respondents mentioned about Self-plagiarism should not be punishable in the same way as plagiarism practiced. (M: 2.86; SD: 1.2). Some of them had a feel that If a colleague of mine allows them to copy from her/his paper, they are not doing anything bad, because they have his/her permission. (M: 2.87; SD: 1.16) and justified to use previous descriptions of a method, because the method itself remains the same. (M: 3.25; SD: 1.36)

Table 2

Relationship between age of the respondents and their positive attitude towards Plagiarism

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.465[a]	.216	.136	1.121

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ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.536	12	3.378	2.686	.003[a]
	Residual	147.156	117	1.258		
	Total	187.692	129			

The table 2 shows the regression test results between age of the respondents and their positive attitude towards plagiarism. It is understand the significant value is 0.003 at the significance level of 95%. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected. The hypothesis mentioned that there is a significant relationship on age and their positive attitude towards plagiarism

Table 3
Negative attitude towards Plagiarism

Sl.No	Negative attitude toward plagiarism	N	Mean	Std Dev	F	T
1	Plagiarists do not belong in the scientific community.	130	2.88	1.11	0.50	29.64
2	The names of the authors who plagiarize should be disclosed to the scientific community.	130	2.94	1.21	0.37	27.79
3	In times of moral and ethical decline, it is important to discuss issues like plagiarism and self-plagiarism.	130	3.25	1.28	0.38	29.03
4	Plagiarizing is as bad as stealing an exam.	130	2.85	1.20	0.31	27.23
5	Plagiarism impoverishes the investigative spirit.	130	2.78	1.14	0.45	27.70
6	A plagiarized paper does no harm science.	130	2.81	1.31	0.28	24.50
7	Since plagiarism is taking other peoples words rather than tangible assets; it should not be considered as a serious offense.	130	3.35	1.49	-0.04	25.65

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Most of the respondents thought that plagiarism impoverishes the investigative spirit. (M: 2.78; SD: 1.14) and plagiarized paper does no harm science. (M: 2.81; SD: 1.31). They also believed that plagiarizing is as bad as stealing an exam. (M: 2.85; SD: 1.2) moreover plagiarists do not belong in the scientific community. (M: 2.88; SD: 1.11). A bunch of respondents reflected that names of the authors who plagiarize should be disclosed to the scientific community. (M: 2.94; SD: 1.21) and at the times of moral and ethical decline, it is important to discuss issues like plagiarism and self-plagiarism (M: 3.25; SD: 1.28). It is also noted from the respondents that since plagiarism is taking other peoples words rather than tangible assets; it should NOT be considered as a serious offense (M: 3.35; SD: 1.49).

Table 4

Relationship between category of the respondents and their negative attitude towards Plagiarism

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.405[a]	.164	.116	.639

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.806	7	1.401	3.426	.002[a]
	Residual	49.887	122	.409		
	Total	59.692	129			

The table 4 shows the regression test results between category of the respondents and their negative attitude towards plagiarism. It is understand the significant value is 0.002 at the significance level of 95%. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected. The hypothesis mentioned that there is a significant relationship on category such as students, research scholars, faculty and their negative attitude towards plagiarism

Table 5

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Subjective norms towards Plagiarism

Sl.No	Subjective norms toward plagiarism	N	Mean	Std Dev	F	T
1	Authors say they do not plagiarize, when in fact they do.	130	2.29	1.29	-0.12	20.25
2	Those who say they have never plagiarized are lying.	130	2.55	1.11	-0.01	26.21
3	Sometimes I am tempted to plagiarize, because everyone else is doing it	130	3.09	1.16	-0.08	30.46
4	I keep plagiarizing because I haven't been caught yet.	130	2.98	1.14	-0.02	29.82
5	I work /study in a plagiarism-free environment	130	3.13	1.28	-0.13	27.79
6	Plagiarism is not a big deal.	130	3.28	1.38	0.06	27.05
7	Sometimes I copy a sentence or two just to become inspired for further writing.	130	3.23	1.35	0.13	27.29
8	I don't feel guilty for copying verbatim a sentence or two from my previous papers.	130	1.87	1.07	0.12	19.85
9	Plagiarism is justified if I currently have more important obligations or tasks to do.	130	2.57	1.13	0.04	25.99
10	Sometimes, it is necessary to plagiarize.	130	2.85	1.25	-0.16	25.99

It is noticed that most of the respondents justified that they don't have feel guilty for copying verbatim a sentence or two from my previous papers. (M: 1.87; SD: 1.07), besides that authors said they do not plagiarize, when in fact they do. (M:2.29; SD: 1.29). Majorities of the respondents given explanation that those who say they have never plagiarized are lying. (M:2.55; SD: 1.11) and plagiarism was justified if I currently have more important obligations or tasks to do. (M:2.57; SD: 1.13). A group of respondents thought of opinion that Sometimes, it is necessary to plagiarize. (M:2.85; SD:1.25), kept to plagiarize because they haven't been caught yet. (M:2.98; SD:1.14). They had understanding that sometimes they tempted to plagiarize, because everyone doing like students, researchers, physicians. (M:3.09; SD: 1.16). Sometimes, the respondents stated that they worked / studied in a plagiarism-free environment (M:3.13; SD: 1.28), Sometimes I copy a sentence or two just to become inspired for further writing. (M:3.23; SD: 1.35) and Plagiarism is not a big deal. (M:3.28; SD: 1.38)

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Table 6
Relationship between categories of the respondents category of the respondents Subjective norms towards Plagiarism

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.382[a]	.146	.074	.654

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.722	10	.872	2.036	.005[a]
	Residual	50.970	119	.428		
	Total	59.692	129			

The table 6 shows the regression test results between category of the respondents and their opinion on Subjective norms towards Plagiarism. It is understand the significant value is 0.005 at the significance level of 95%. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected. The hypothesis mentioned that there is a significant relationship on category such as students, research scholars, faculty and their opinion on Subjective norms towards Plagiarism

Results and Discussions:

- Most of respondents had positive altitude that due to short deadlines they had the right to plagiarize a bit, they believed that one cannot avoid using other peoples words without citing the source and language skill made justified to copy parts of a similar paper already published in that language. People expressed that self-plagiarism is not punishable and justified to use one's own previously published work without providing citation in order to complete the current work.

- Some respondents mentioned milder punishment to young researchers who are just learning the supports the

plagiarism and argued that could not write a scientific paper without plagiarizing. They reported that plagiarized parts of a paper may be ignored if the paper is of great scientific value and when they do not know what to write, they translate a part of a paper from a foreign language.

- Most of the respondents thought that plagiarism impoverishes the investigative spirit and plagiarized paper does no harm science. They also believed that plagiarizing is as bad as stealing an exam moreover plagiarists do not belong in the scientific community.

- Respondents reflected that names of the authors who plagiarize should be disclosed to the scientific community and at the times of moral and ethical decline, it is important to discuss issues like plagiarism and self-plagiarism

- Age of the academician cooperated much about the positive attitude towards plagiarism. The difference view of students, research scholars, faculty and match with negative attitude and subjective norms towards Plagiarism.

- Justification made that don't have feel guilty for copying verbatim a sentence or two from my previous papers, besides that authors said they do not plagiarize, when in fact they do. Moreover those who say they have never plagiarized are lying. and plagiarism was justified if have more important obligations or tasks to do.

- Sometimes, the respondents stated that they worked / studied in a plagiarism-free environment and Plagiarism is not a big deal.

Conclusion:

Plagiarism performs appear to be smooth more frequent among the academic community. Growing the awareness of students about the seriousness of this practice is essential. Moreover, helping them by improving their language and writing skills and teaching proper referencing, quoting, paraphrasing and citation styles are also important to discourage this phenomenon. The present study results show positive, negative and subjectivity norms attitudes of PG students. Research Scholars and faculty members towards plagiarism. Faculty members were relatively better informed and against plagiarism compared to post graduates. There by highlighting the need to address the issue of plagiarism among

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students. If the carry out of plagiarism is not in use care of, scientific research turn into a mere repetition of previous papers and lacks uniqueness.

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