

Awareness, Perception and Attitude Towards Plagiarism among Library and Information Science Professionals in Maharashtra: An Investigative Study

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Awareness about plagiarism is essential for the evasion of intellectual mendacity, inculcation of academic integrity and assurance of quality research. Maintaining high standards regarding academic integrity is a major challenge for higher education and research organizations worldwide. In India, University Grants Commission in collaboration with INFLIBNET Centre widely working on plagiarism issues and in this movement, librarians played vital role as a support system for avoiding as well as checking plagiarism in dissertations and doctoral thesis. The main purpose of this study is to examine this cohort's awareness of plagiarism among the Library and Information Science Professionals in Maharashtra. For the collection of data quantitative approach, a cross-sectional survey method was used. A convenience sample of Aided college librarians affiliated to University of Mumbai were selected for the present study. 75 Questionnaires were distributed among the Aided College Librarians out of them 58 were received. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analyses. The findings revealed that while Librarians were aware of the concept of plagiarism, ways of avoiding plagiarism and plagiarism detection tools as well as most of the librarians have positive attitude towards avoiding plagiarism.

Introduction

Academic writing serves the purpose of communicating thoughts, ideas, and results of research to the public. It is an important part of 'Scientific Lerner; a way of life, the famous term coined by Jawaharlal Nehru. Nowadays research scholars and teachers are enthusiastic in publishing the results of their research in conference proceedings, books and journals. Unleashing one's own work to the public not only gives a person satisfaction and fame but also proves to be academically and professionally beneficial. This has resulted in the urge to publish more. But what is more important is to keep the originality and ethics in the context of the published paper, it is unethical to steal the contents of other's works without giving them proper acknowledgement, recently this unethical activity called "Plagiarism" has grown to an alarming state.

Plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem in the academic world. It is aggravated by the easy access to and the ease of cutting and pasting from a wide range of materials available on the internet. It constitutes academic theft - the offender has 'stolen' the work of others and presented the stolen work as if it were his or her own. It goes to the integrity and honesty of a person. It stifles creativity and originality, and defeats the purpose of education. Plagiarism is a widespread and growing problem in the academic process.

The traditional manual detection of plagiarism by human is difficult, not accurate, and time-consuming process as it is difficult for any person to verify with the existing data. (Naik,2015).

2. Research Methodology

The present work is mainly based on data gathered from the Librarians of Government Aided Colleges affiliated to University of Mumbai. The data was collected with the help of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared to find out the uses of Anti-plagiarism for research and development (R&D) as well in the attitude of librarians towards plagiarism.

2.1. Sample Design and Sampling Method

75 Librarians have been contacted for filling the questionnaires. Sample was framed by multistage sampling method. At the first stage, total respondents has been divided on the basis of districts. The ultimate sample was selected on the basis of convenience-cum judgment sampling.

2.2. Tools and Analysis

Collected data were analyzed in table and figure with percentage method. SPSS software has been used for analyzing the collected 58 filled in questionnaires.

2.3. Review of Literature

A few studies relating to plagiarism have been reviewed from different countries during the course of this research paper:

Nisha, et al. (2015) provided an overview of plagiarism- plagiarism in research, and various commercial and free plagiarism detection tools available. Further, the paper presented the latest plagiarism cases reported from India and abroad and initiatives taken by academic and research institutes in India to detect and prevent plagiarism. Pandey, et al. (2015) highlighted the menace of plagiarism with some case studies and the means to curb plagiarism effectively with the help of educational seminars for especially young researchers. Authors also discussed the results of surveys conducted after organizing the seminars for plagiarism awareness. As per the survey results, most of the students were not even aware of plagiarism earlier, but after the seminar, their understanding of plagiarism issues enhanced, and they felt highly motivated against it.

Vinod, et al. (2011) pointed out the meaning of plagiarism and its history in their paper. According to Vinod et al., “many of the research scholars commit plagiarism without their knowledge.” The authors also suggested the ways to avoid plagiarism and how to publish one’s own article safely. Herman and Narayanan 19 focused on the fight against plagiarism and intellectual property rights violations in their article. The authors mentioned some findings arising from investigations on the topic particularly in the field of scholarly works. It also discussed some upcoming technology and its implications on the quality of life since it can transform one’s life due to consideration on social aspects of technology. Taiseer, et al. (2007) discussed about the state-of-the-art techniques used to detect plagiarism in terms of their limitations, features, taxonomies and processes.

The method used to execute this study consisted of a comprehensive search for relevant literature via six online database repositories namely; IEEE Xplore Digital Library, ACM Digital Library, Science Direct, EI Compendex, Web of Science and Springer using search strings obtained from the subject of discussion. The findings revealed that existing plagiarism detection techniques require further enhancements as existing techniques are incapable of efficiently detecting plagiarized ideas, figures, tables, formulas and scanned documents.

Eleonora (2015) discussed about a survey initiated by the Association of Lithuanian Serials, which aimed to ascertain whether Lithuanian journal editors, reviewers and authors encountered plagiarism, self-plagiarism and how they understood originality of a paper. Additionally, the survey looked at methods used for plagiarism prevention by editors and reviewers as well as ways, in which editors managed issues related to plagiarism. The survey suggests that no unanimous decision exists regarding the originality of a manuscript and that editors expect reviewers to identify plagiarism with little use of technologies. While answering to survey questions, respondents provided numerous comments. This demonstrates that plagiarism is a burning issue and scientific misconduct policy is needed in Lithuania. Uloma and Chinyere (2014) discussed increasing plagiarism in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and throughout the world due to the internet. The authors provided measures and steps from vast literature to curb plagiarism in the academic environment. Meera (2017) discussed about the Plagiarism and its importance in the students life. She also highlighted quality of book or research paper is day by day losing its originality and its great effect we see in the unskilled or lack of creative writing by the scholar. Many scholars are writing for own priorities or their professional growth because of this good quality of work suffer. Kumar & Chikkamanju (2019) pointed out the lack of rapid development in Information Technology, as well as Internet has brought tremendous changes to the academic and research world. Large number of research scholars are turning to the Internet for readymade solutions and shortcuts for writing research papers, assignments and thesis. According to research ethics, scholarly world revolves around ethics and integrity, where new ideas and theories are created, confirmed and re-confirmed, experiments and research works is carried and published for the benefits of the humanity, with a genuine desire of acknowledgement. In the process of writing research articles and books, authors tend to copy existing content from other subjects without paying due acknowledgement to the original work.

3. Anti-Plagiarism and INFLIBNET Centre

INFLIBNET has been in the forefront for introducing so many revolutionary initiatives in the field of academic libraries in India. In the case of anti-plagiarism initiatives too INFLIBNET has played a key role. Though the main motivation behind Shodhganga project was that fruits of public funded research are to be made public, it has another aim of preventing or reducing plagiarism. In spite of these efforts, many institutions reported evident case of plagiarism. In 2014, INFLIBNET allocated one crore rupees for providing access to anti-plagiarism software. A trial access of two software's like iThenticate and Turnitin was provided to hundred universities in the first phase and ten other universities in the second phase. Presently INFLIBNET centre providing Anti-plagiarism software to all State, Central, Private Universities as well as National Level Institutions under the project of ShodhShudhi.

4. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the information resources used for writing thesis/ research papers/books by LISc professionals.
2. To understand the researcher's habit of citing references.
3. To study the existing awareness about plagiarism among LIS professionals.
4. To know the LIS professionals' attitude towards plagiarism.
5. To analyze the environment made LIS professionals to reproduce the work of others.
6. To examine the LIS professionals' interest in avoiding plagiarism.
7. To identify the ways and means of helping LIS professionals in avoiding plagiarism.
8. To give suggestion for enhancing awareness about plagiarism and avoiding plagiarism.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. SEX Ratio

Table No. 1 SEX Ratio

Sr. No	Sex	No of Colleges	Percentage
1	Male	38	65.52
2	Female	20	34.48
	Total	58	100.00

It is inferred from Table 1 that out of 58 respondents, 65.52% of the respondents are male and 34.48% of the respondents are female.

Table No. 2: Types of information sources used for writing thesis/research Papers

Sr. No	Particulars	No of Librarians	Percentage
1	Textbooks	21	36.2
2	Journals/Periodicals	55	94.8
3	Internet/E-resources	56	96.6
4	Other's Dissertations/Thesis	36	62.1
5	Conference Proceedings	42	72.4
6	Websites	1	1.7
7	Reports	1	1.7
8	Databases	2	3.4

Table 2 shows information sources used for writing thesis/research paper, here I have observed majority 56 (96.6%) of respondents used to take help from Internet/electronic resources, 55(94.8%) of respondents used to take help from Journals/Periodicals, followed by 42 (72.4%) respondents use for Conference Proceedings, 36 (62.1%) of respondents used to take help from other’s Dissertations/Thesis, 21 (36.2%) of respondents used to take help from text books, 1 (1.7%) of respondents use Website and Reports, 2 (3.4%) of respondents use Database.

Table No. 3: Dependency on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper

Sr.No	Particulars	No of Librarians	Percentage
1	Highly Depended	3	5.17
2	Frequently Depended	34	58.62
3	Occasionally Depended	19	32.76
4	Rarely Depended	2	3.45
	Total	58	100.00

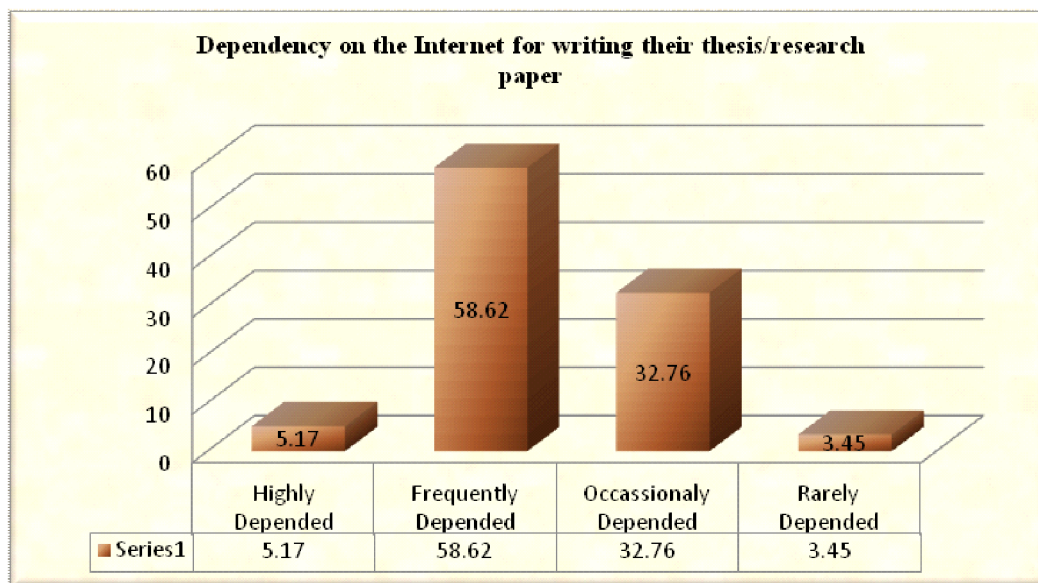


Figure No. 1 Dependency on the Internet for writing their thesis/research paper

Present study showed through Table 3 and Figures 1 that out of 58 respondents, 34 (58.62%) of respondents frequently depended on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper, 19(32.76%) of respondents occasionally depended, 3 (5.17%) of respondents highly depended. It is also observed from the above-mentioned table that only 2 (3.45%) of respondents rarely depended on the Internet for writing thesis/research paper.

Table No.4: the researcher's habit of giving references while they reproduce others' works or ideas

Sr. No	Particulars	No of Librarians	Percentage
1	Always	49	84.48
2	Often	3	5.17
3	Occasionally	4	6.90
4	Rarely	1	1.72
5	Never	1	1.72
	Total	58	100.00

It is inferred from the table and the figure that out of the total 58 respondents, 49 (84.48%) of the respondents always were in the habit of giving the references while reproducing works or ideas of others, 4 (6.90%) of them were in the habit of giving references occasionally, 3 (5.17%) of respondents were in the habit of giving references often and only 1 (1.72%) of respondents rarely and never were in the habit of giving the references, while reproducing works or ideas of others.

Table No. 5: Citation Style used by respondents while giving references.

Sr. No	Types of citation style	No of Librarians	Percentage
1	MLA	8	13.79
2	APA	37	63.79
3	Chicago	7	12.07
4	AMA	5	8.62
5	None	1	1.72
6	Any other	0	0.00
	Total	58	100.00

The analysis of the same has been presented in Table 5. It is clear from the table & Figure that 1 (1.72%) of respondents admit that they do not use any citation style while giving references whereas 37 (63.79%) of respondents use APA style. 8 (13.79%) of respondents use MLA style. 7 (12.07%) of respondents use Chicago style and 5 (8.62%) of respondents use AMA style while giving the references.

Table No. 6: Usage of Citation Tool

Sr. No	Name of Citation Tool	No of Librarians	Percentage
1	Zotero	12	20.69
2	BibMe	19	32.76
3	Citation Machine	2	3.45
4	Citavi	0	0.00

5	Citefast	1	1.72
6	Citelighter	0	0.00
7	Docear	1	1.72
8	Recipes4Success	0	0.00
9	OttoBib	0	0.00
10	RefDot	5	8.62
11	EasyBib	18	31.03
12	Other	12	20.69

It could be noted from the table that out of the total 58 respondents, 40.1% of them were aware citation tool, namely BibMe whereas 19 (32.76%) of them citation tools. 18 (31.03%) of them were aware of citation tools, namely “EasyBib”, 12 (20.69%) of them are citation tools namely Zotero and other, 5 (8.62%) of the respondents were aware of citation tools namely RefDot, 1 (1.72%) of them are citation tools namely Citefast and Docear. It is also observed from the table that of them were not aware of this citation tools namely Citavi, Citelighter, Recipes4Success and OttoBib.

Table No. 7: Awareness of the term ‘Plagiarism’

Sr. No	Particulars	No of Librarians	Percentage
1	At the time of responding to the questionnaire	1	1.72
2	At the time of BLISc/MLISc Course	4	6.90
3	At the time of M.Phil/P.hD Research	13	22.41
4	One year back	3	5.17
5	One to two years back	3	5.17
6	Two to three years back	34	58.62
	Total	58	100.00

It is surprising to know from Table 7 that out of the total 58 respondents, 34 (58.62%) of respondents got first time familiarization with the term ‘plagiarism’ only Two to three years back. It is also observed that 13 (22.41%) of the respondents came to know about the term ‘plagiarism’ At the time of M.Phil/P.hD Research. 4(6.90%) of respondents become aware of the term ‘plagiarism’ At the time of BLISc/MLISc Course. 3 (5.17%) of respondents become aware of the term ‘plagiarism’ One year back & One to two years back.

Table No. 8: Awareness about plagiarism among the respondents

Sr. No	Plagiarism awareness statements	No of Librarians	
		TRUE	FALSE
1	Copying from a book/online sources without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism.	54 (96.10%)	4 (6.90%)
2	If taking consent for copying from authors of the original source, but not giving references constitutes plagiarism.	46 (79.31%)	12 (20.69%)
3	Translating from another language and presenting as one's own work constitutes plagiarism.	47 (81.03%)	11 (18.97%)
4	Copied from the Internet but not citing the source constitutes plagiarism.	52 (89.66%)	6 (10.34%)
5	The UGC insisting on universities to use anti plagiarism software for checking plagiarism in thesis.	57 (98.28%)	1 (1.72%)

It is found from the table that out of the total 58 respondents, 54 (96.10%) of the respondents accept that the statement "Copying from a book/online sources without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism" is true while 4 (6.90%) express that it is false. 46 (79.31%) of the respondents agree with the statement "If taking consent for copying the work of the authors of the original source, but not giving references constitutes plagiarism" is true and 12 (20.69%) of the respondents opine it is false. 47 (81.03%) of respondents claim that the statement "Translating from another language and presenting as one's own work constitutes plagiarism." is true but 11 (18.97%) of respondents express that this statement is false

Table No. 9:- Uses of Anti-Plagiarism Software

Sr. No	Name of Software	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Urkund	35	60.34
2	Turnitin	34	58.62
3	Dupli Checker	23	39.66
4	Plagiarism Check	23	39.66
5	Viper	12	20.69
6	iThenticate	12	20.69
7	Check For Plagiarism.Net	11	18.97
8	Article Checker	8	13.79
9	Quetext	6	10.34
10	Don't Know	6	10.34

11	Plagium	5	8.62
12	Copyscape	3	5.17
13	Paperrator	2	3.45
14	Dust Ball	1	1.72
15	Whitesmoke	0	0.00
16	DMCA Scan	0	0.00
17	Other	4	6.90

It could be noted from the table that out of the total 58 respondents, 60.341% of them were aware of anti-plagiarism software, namely “Urkund” whereas 58.62% of them were aware of antiplagiarism software, namely “Turnitin”. It is also observed from the table that 39.66 % of the respondents were aware of antiplagiarism software namely “Dupli Checker and Plagiarism Check”

Table No. 10 Attitude of the respondents towards plagiarism

Sr. No	Statements	No. of Respondents				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Some research scholars copy other’s work, I am also following the same.	3 (5.17%)	3(5.17%)	13(22.41%)	11(18.97%)	28 (48.28%)
2	Plagiarism is justified due to work pressure.	1(1.72%)	10(17.24%)	10(17.24%)	14(24.14%)	23(39.66%)
3	Plagiarism is justified if there is a deadline to submit a paper/thesis.	2(3.45%)	11(18.97%)	10 (17.24%)	13 (22.41%)	22(37.93%)
4	Plagiarism is justified if some portion of the paper is plagiarized from a quality journal article since it has scientific value.	2(3.45%)	17(29.31%)	10 (17.24%)	5 (8.62%)	24(41.38%)
5	Plagiarism is justified due to engaging in important work.	1(1.72%)	11(18.97%)	13 (22.41%)	11(18.97%)	22(37.93%)
6	Copying methodology from other thesis is justified because the methodology, itself remains same.	3(5.17%)	14(24.14%)	13 (22.41%)	13 (22.41%)	15(25.86%)
7	If anyone is coping one’s own data, it is not punishable because it is not harmful.	4 (6.90%)	10 (17.24%)	11(18.97%)	19(32.76%)	14(24.14%)
8	Without copying other’s work nobody can write a thesis/paper.	2(3.45%)	4 (6.90%)	14(24.14%)	14(24.14%)	24(41.38%)
9	No one will check and detect the copied material.	1(1.72%)	5 (8.62%)	10 (17.24%)	14(24.14%)	28 (48.28%)
10	Copying and pasting from the Internet is easier than creating one’s own sentences	7(12.7%)	13 (22.41%)	9(15.52%)	7(12.7%)	22(37.93%)

It has been seen from the table that all librarians are much more aware about the copyright issues. Also, most of the librarians are Disagree or Strongly Disagree with all the negative statements related to the Plagiarism.

Table No. 11: Reasons of Plagiarism

Sr. No	Reasons of Plagiarism	No. of Respondents		
		Yes	No	Maybe
1	Lack of help in writing research work.	22 (37.93%)	30 (51.72%)	6 (10.34%)
2	Ignorance.	24 (41.38%)	30 (51.72%)	4 (6.90%)
3	Low English proficiency	30 (51.72%)	27 (45.55%)	1 (1.72%)
4	Extra work load	20 (34.48%)	35 (60.34%)	3 (5.17%)
5	PhD work pressure	19 (32.76%)	34 (58.62%)	5 (8.62%)
6	Laziness.	21 (36.21%)	32 (55.17%)	5 (8.62%)
7	Poor study habits	19 (32.76%)	36 (62.07%)	3 (5.17%)
8	Lack of time	20 (34.48%)	34 (58.62%)	4 (6.90%)
9	Hard to get original ideas.	21 (36.21%)	32 (55.17%)	5 (8.62%)
10	Easy availability of information from internet	20 (34.48%)	35 (60.34%)	3 (5.17%)
11	Materialistic benefit through PhD submission	30 (51.72%)	22 (37.93%)	6 (10.34%)
12	Pressure of CAS/promotion	23 (39.66%)	29 (50%)	6 (10.34%)

It is found from the table that out of the total 58 respondents, 22 (37.93%) was aware of Lack of help in writing research work and 30 (51.72%) of the respondents were not aware of it, 6 (10.34%) of the respondents were maybe. 24 (41.38%) of the respondents seemed to be aware of Ignorance and 30 (51.72%) of the respondents were not aware of it, 4 (6.90%) was aware of maybe. 30 (51.72%) of them were aware about Low English proficiency and 27 (45.55%) of the respondents not aware of it, 1 (1.72%) of the respondents were aware of maybe. 20 (34.48%) of them were aware of Extra work load and 35 (60.34%) of the respondents not aware of it, 3 (5.17%) of the respondents were aware of Maybe. 19 (32.76%) of them were aware about PhD work pressure and 34 (58.62%) of the respondents not aware of it, 5 (8.62%) of the respondents were aware of maybe. 21 (36.21%) of them were aware of Laziness and 32 (55.17%) of the respondents not aware of it, 5 (8.62%) of the respondents were aware of Maybe. 19 (32.76%) of them were aware about Poor study habits and 36 (62.07%) of the respondents not aware of it, 3 (5.17%) of the respondents were aware of maybe. 20 (34.48%) of them were aware of Lack of time and 34 (58.62%) of the respondents not aware of it, 4 (6.90%) of the respondents were aware of Maybe. 21 (36.21%) of them were aware about Easy availability of information from internet and 32 (55.17%) of the respondents not aware of it.

Table no 12: Ways of avoiding plagiarism

Sr. No	Ways of Avoiding Plagiarism	Yes	No	Maybe
1	Re-submission of work or alternative piece of work	47(81.03%)	7(12.7%)	4(6.90%)
2	Cancellation of registration after checking the degree of copying from other sources	43(74.14%)	13(22.41%)	2(3.45%)
3	Refund of scholarship/fellowship if detected	51(87.93%)	5(8.62%)	2(3.45%)
4	Recommendation for revocation of degree etc	54(93.10%)	1(1.72%)	3(5.17%)
5	Librarians put more efforts to encourage students and supervising staff to make best use of plagiarism checking facilities available in the library/online free of cost.	27(46.55%)	30(51.72%)	1(1.72%)
6	Librarians can serve as a buffer to students / teaching staff who need assistance regarding the use of appropriate citation methods.	56(96.55%)	0(0.00%)	2(3.45%)
7	Imparting knowledge regarding plagiarism to new comers in research field by arranging classes/ orientation while they take membership in the library.	43(74.14%)	13(22.41%)	2(3.45%)
8	Librarians should be conscious about anti plagiarism tools and method of using them and impart them to the academic community	54(93.10%)	3(5.17%)	1(1.72%)
9	Instil academic integrity in teachers, students and writers and caution them about plagiarism	33(56.90%)	24(41.38%)	1(1.72%)
10	Universities should conduct some training programs for improving English writing skills?	46(79.31%)	11(18.97%)	1(1.72%)
11	University should provide access of anti- plagiarism software to librarians and entire teachers	55(94.83%)	2(3.45%)	1(1.72%)
12	INFLIBNET should provide direct access anti- plagiarism software to colleges	56(96.55%)	2(3.45%)	0(0.00%)

It is observed from table no. 12 that ways of Avoiding Plagiarism, 47 i.e. (81.03%) respondents aware about Re-submission of work or alternative piece of work they select yes, while 7 i.e. (12.7%) select No and 4 i.e. (6.90%) select Maybe. which is followed by ways of Avoiding Plagiarism 43 i.e.(74.14%) aware of Cancellation of registration after checking the degree of copying from other sources 13 i.e.(22.41%) select No and 2 i.e.(3.45%) use Maybe. 51(87.93%) of the respondents Refund of scholarship/fellowship if detected and 5(8.62%) of the respondents feel that colleges, 2(3.45%) i.e. use Maybe. ways of Avoiding Plagiarism 54 i.e(93.10%) respondents aware about Recommendation for revocation of degree etc and 1 i.e.(1.72%) select No, 3 i.e. (5.17%) respondents use maybe. ways of Avoiding Plagiarism 27 i.e.(46.55%) aware about Librarians put more efforts to encourage students and supervising staff to make best use of plagiarism checking facilities available in the library/online free of cost, and 30 i.e.(51.72%) select No, maybe use 1 i.e.(1.72%). ways of Avoiding Plagiarism 56 i.e. (96.55%) respondents aware about Librarians can serve as a buffer to students / teaching staff who need assistance regarding the use of appropriate citation methods, 0 i.e.(0.00%) select No and 2 i.e. (3.45%) respondents were aware of maybe. For usage of ways of Avoiding Plagiarism, 43 i.e. (74.14%) yes, 13 i.e. (22.41%) no and 2 i.e.(3.45%) never use Imparting knowledge regarding plagiarism to new comers in research field by arranging classes/ orientation while they take membership in the library.

Conclusion

Today, it has gained so much importance that it has become necessary to deal with it at the level of schools and colleges by authorities. Moreover, awareness programmes should be there for the researchers and faculty at higher education. Apart from the above, the plagiarism tools also provide a chance for both the researcher as well as the supervisor to correct the statements /quotes, rectify the citations, trace the original contents and authors, reduce the percentage of similar content, and avoid plagiarism towards improving originality of the research. Finally, it is important to fight against plagiarism, the main aim being the improvement of the originality

of the research output. Urkund is one of the most widely acknowledged software. A national level policy should be thought of and formulated.

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