Current Trend in the Library System: Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

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There are many trends in the library system, such as, Internet of Things; Electronic resource management; cloud computing; federated search, and many others as well. However, the present research focuses on an academic integrity and plagiarism as the current trend in the system of library science. This research discusses the concept of plagiarism: it adopts the approaches of acknowledging, referencing, paraphrasing, and checking plagiarism by using particular software, such as, Ouriginal; Turnitin; and others. Avoiding plagiarism and acknowledging a piece of text leads a researcher towards realizing the academic integrity. This paper also discusses the significance of the academic integrity in the academic pursuits of a researcher; it also suggests the various ways of establishing the research ethics and integrity in the culture of research.

Introduction

The present paper searches the concept of an academic integrity and its relevance with the technique of paraphrasing; referencing; acknowledging; and avoiding plagiarism. Firstly, it is important to know what the academic integrity is; how it can be held up ethically; and secondly, what kinds of approaches would help in realizing it. Cavico and Mujtaba (2009) categorize plagiarism in two forms: accidental and deliberate one. They further propose that the deliberate plagiarism results into more stringent sanction if not added by providing a proper citation.

2. Review of Literature

There are many important texts, which are helpful in analyzing the concept of academic integrity, avoiding intellectual theft, that is, plagiarism, and the proper ways of referencing and paraphrasing. These texts or researches include the following ones: Making the case for the creation of an academic honesty and integrity culture In Higher Education: reflections and suggestions for reducing the rise in student cheating (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2009); are some languages better than others (Dixon, 2016); and eight simple rules to avoid plagiarism (Rordorf, 2016).

Further, in a case study of the Hawassa University, Bachore (2016) proposes some prevalent practices of academic dishonesty which is among the students; these practices are cheating and plagiarism associated with written assignments. Additionally, the mental pressure to secure good marks has been one of the leading factors that cause dishonesty in academic research. The cause of dishonesty occurs due to the fact that the students switch over to the practice of copying, which is absolutely an unethical in academia. Contextualizing the aforesaid case study of Hawassa, it is relevant to express that the students

acting as respondents were committing serious misconducts such as plagiarism, cheating, allowing others to copy their already completed assignments, giving authorship to the undeserving ones et cetera (Blanco, Midence & Blanco, 2020).

The students involved in such misconduct (as already discussed) are in fact the intellectual thieves who must be held accountable for damaging the reputation of an institution and its research fraternity. The current study has been carried out to create a consciousness of academic integrity. Also, the concepts related to the academic writing and plagiarism have been prioritized in this research article. The researchers also discuss the prevalent misconduct and the perceptions of respondents regarding the factors leading to academic misconduct.

Objectives

i. To identify the prevalent misconducts of academic integrity among the respondents of the questionnaire

ii. To study the attitudes of the respondents regarding leading factors that lead to misconduct in a research fraternity

iii. To extend awareness related to the concepts associated with academic writing

iv. To explore the awareness of respondents (probably the research students) regarding plagiarism

3. Research Methodology

A questionnaire related to the present topic of research is self-designed and circulated among the respondents through online mode, that is, Google forms. The title of the circulated questionnaire follows, "academic integrity, honesty, and plagiarism: a case study of the students of Cluster University of Jammu"

The sample of the present research consists of the final semester students of the Cluster University of Jammu. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed among the population under study, out of which only 114 students responded to the questionnaire. The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using a simple percentage formula. Also, the textual analysis of the primary sources has been done to mitigate the topic of the present study.

4. Analysis and Discussion

This research intends to discuss the concept of academic integrity, which includes honesty; acknowledgement; and referencing. These are the basic requirements that are helpful in avoiding the plagiarism and making the researcher, cheating free and honest one toward his scholarly writings. Further, the present investigation helps the researcher to answer the research question, "why is academic integrity a necessity in the academic life of a researcher?" To provide a satisfactory answer to the proposed question,

it is necessary to discuss the various ways of zeroing plagiarism, which is otherwise, a serious crime in academic writing. Consider the following quote as an example of the plagiarism-free piece of writing in research:

"This I promise you: **there will be** no new taxes**; there will be** more teachers in our department**; there will be** shorter waiting times for surgery" (Dixon, 2016)**.**

The aforementioned quote is acknowledged properly. If it is to be written without citing, then it can be revised as:

If elected to power, I propose that the wages will be tax-free; the department will have the strength of the teachers, and the waiting time for the surgery will get reduced to half.

If the researchers look at the proposed quote, "This I promise you: there will be…", there is something more that requires to be taken care of, that is, to avoid the repetition in the formal writing, "there will be" which is repeatedly written thrice in the quote. Dixon, one of the authors argues that the style of repetitive writing is absolutely a 'bad style' when it comes to the point of writing academically. This is one of the techniques for avoiding plagiarism by adopting the concept of paraphrasing and avoiding repetition in the process of writing.

There is another method of minimizing the percentage of plagiarism that is to employ synonyms while writing a research article. Some examples follow as:

Words	Substitutable Synonyms
Promise	Pledge, Undertake
Classification	Categorization
Data	Information
Recovering	Recuperating

It depends on the researcher's choice of how to employ words in his write up taking care of the diction and avoiding the plagiarism accordingly. One must have the knowledge of words and their synonyms. It is a matter of concern when to substitute a word with its synonym, so that the repetition could be avoided and plagiarism will not occur. The aforementioned data of synonyms and their substitution makes it explicit that the researcher is at liberty to employ antonyms as well whenever required. In academic and scholarly writings, it is of utmost significance to avoid plagiarism and show the sincerity through the methods of acknowledging and referencing as per the desired style sheet, or otherwise, it may invite disciplinary action as per law.

Since academic writing and the research articles have formal context of writing with absolute honesty and integrity, many researchers have also proposed the methods of overcoming the problem of acknowledgement (if unacknowledged) and deliberate plagiarism. Roka (2017) expresses that plagiarism is of the following

types: intentional; text, words, ideas, or data; source plagiarism; patchwriting; self-plagiarism; and ghost writing. All these types fall under the umbrella term called plagiarism, which means someone commits literary theft (Singh, 2016) when the original contributor is unacknowledged. Further, Roka suggests that the plagiarism one can avoid by being loyal and honest while writing a scholarly article.

In addition to this discussion, the researcher also distributed (through WhatsApp media) a self-designed questionnaire titled "Academic integrity, honesty, and plagiarism: a case study". The questionnaires were distributed among the final semester students of BA Linguistics & Literature, Cluster University of Jammu (CLUJ), and 114 responses were successfully received against the questions proposed in the questionnaire as administered. A detailed analysis based on the responses received follows as:

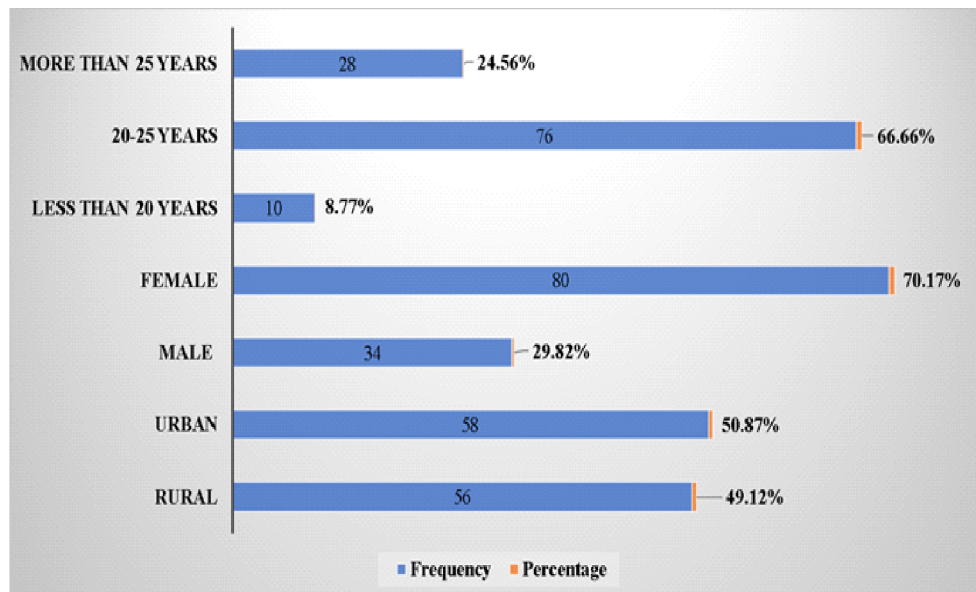**Demographic details of the respondents**

Figure-1: Demographic details of respondents

Figure 1 shows the socio-demographic details of the respondents. Out of the total 114 respondents, the majority i.e., 70.17% were females while the rest were males 29.82%. The majority of the study population belonged to the age group 20-25 years, followed by the respondents who belonged to the age group of more than 25 years, whereas the rest 8.77% belonged to the age group of less than 20 years. It was found that the majority of the respondents belonged to the urban area while the others belonged to the rural area.
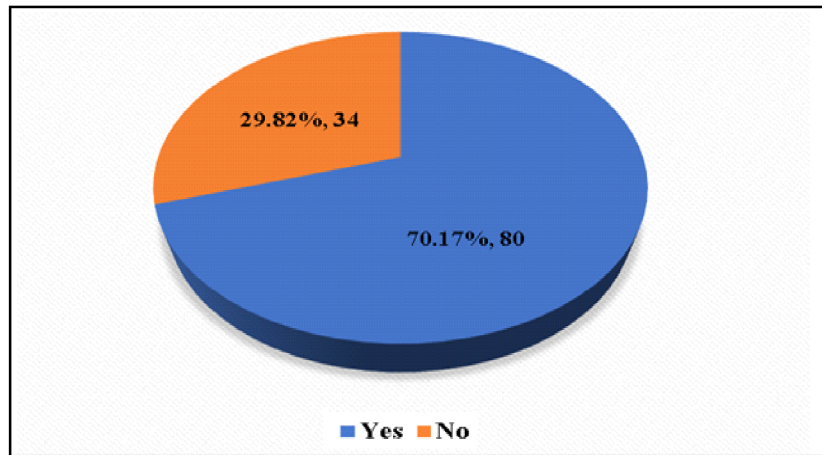
Figure-2: Familiarity with the concept of Academic Integrity

The familiarity of the respondents regarding the concept of academic integrity has been measured. Respondents were asked about their acquaintance with the concept of academic integrity and the majority of them, that is, 70.17% admitted that they had awareness related to the concept of academic integrity in its totality.
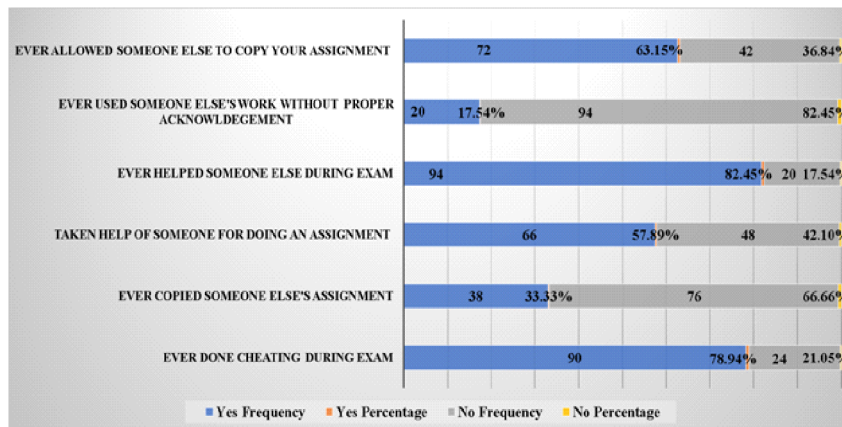

Figure 3: Practices of misconducts related to academic integrity

Students were questioned about the practices of misconduct usually executed by the students themselves. Six statements were put forth to confirm the misconduct in academic writing. While confirming the misconduct, it was established that extending help to someone during an exam is the most prevalent misconduct among the respondents. The ranking of misconduct hierarchically starts from cheating and culminates through copying someone's assignments as a misconduct practice among the students as respondents. Seeking someone's help for completing an assignment is the fourth prevalent misconduct followed by copying someone else's assignment which ranks fifth. The respondents using someone else's work without giving proper acknowledgement is at the lowest rank among the seven responses received.
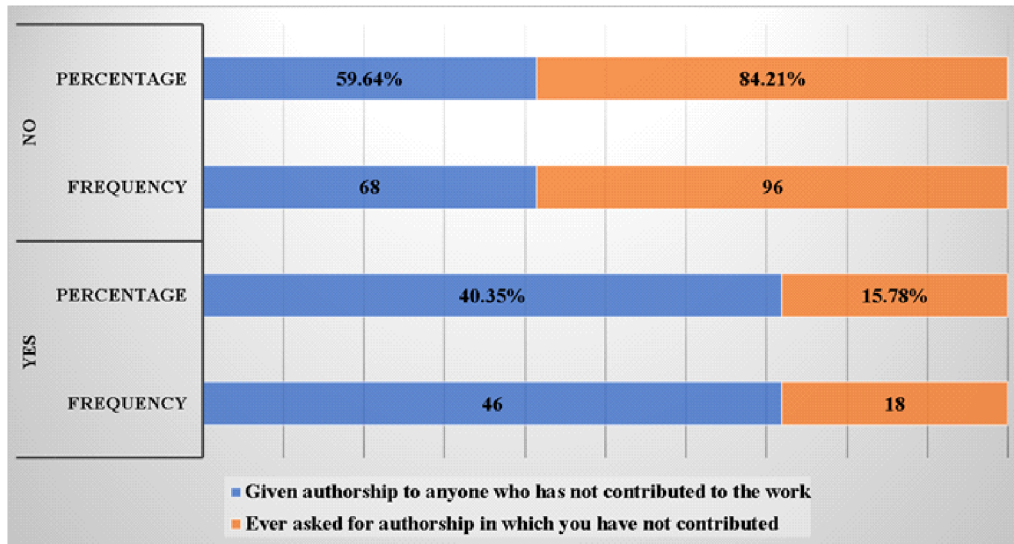
Figure 4: Misconducts related to the authorship

Misconducts related to the authorship have been gauged on account of the respondents under the questionnaire. The researchers observed that the majority of the respondents, 40.35% confessed that they have extended authorship to someone who has hardly contributed to the research work or any other intellectual write up. Further, 15.78% respondents said that they secured the authorships for themselves without contributing any research article.
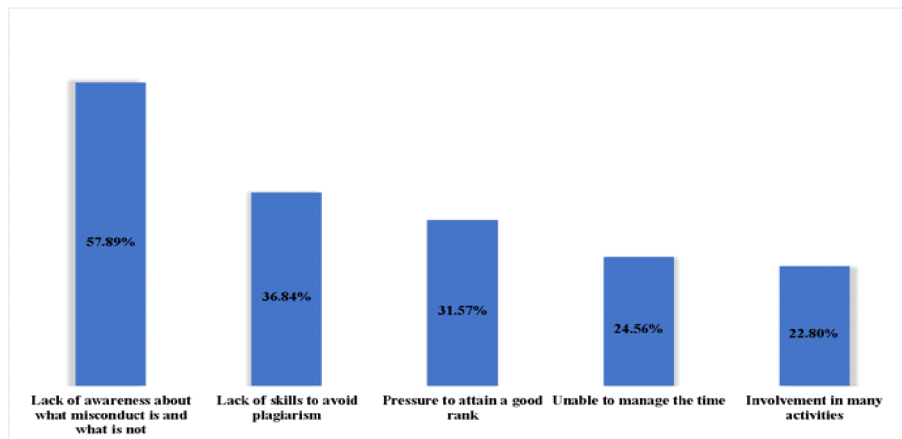

Figure 5: Perceptions of respondents regarding factors leading to misconduct

Respondents were asked about their perceptions regarding the factors leading to misconduct. The majority of the respondents i.e., 57.89% believe that "lack of awareness about what misconduct is and what is not" is the main factor leading to misconduct, followed by 36.84% who believe that lack of skills to avoid

plagiarism is one factor leading to misconduct. There are 31.57% of respondents who believe the pressure to attain a good rank is a factor leading to misconduct. Moreover, 24.56% of respondents consider the inability to manage their time, and 22.80% of respondents consider involvement in many activities as factor leading to misconduct.
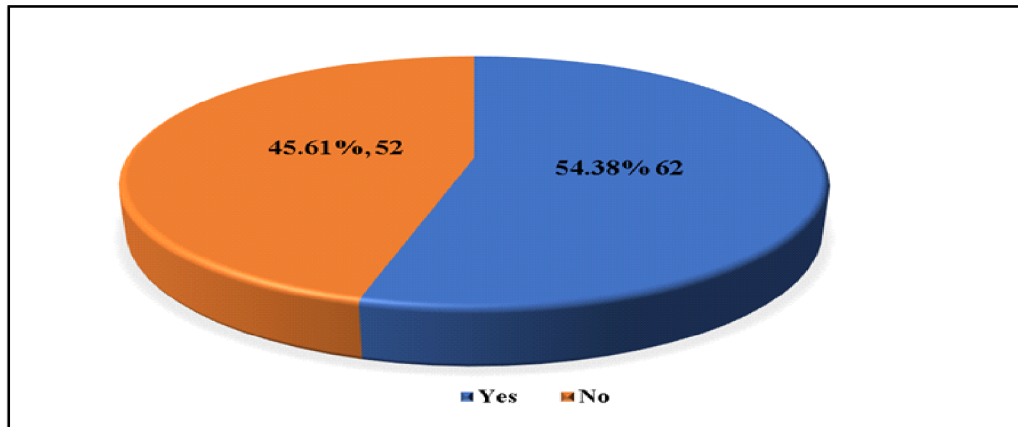

Figure 6: Softwares and plagiarism detection awareness

The respondents were asked to report their awareness regarding the softwares which are usually employed in detecting the plagiarism. It was established that only 54.38% respondents were conscious about the aforesaid softwares.

Table 1: Respondents awareness regarding the academic writing

Misconducts	Not aware at all		Slightly aware		Somewhat aware		Moderately aware		Extremely aware	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Falsification	52	45.61%	26	22.80%	18	15.78%	2	1.75%	16	14.03%
Fabrication	44	38.59%	32	28.07%	16	14.03%	8	7.01%	14	12.28%
Plagiarism	20	17.54%	30	26.31%	26	22.80%	8	7.01%	30	26.31%
Salami-slicing	84	73.68%	14	12.28%	4	3.50%	8	7.01%	4	3.05%
Copyright	18	15.78%	18	15.78%	24	21.05%	26	22.80%	28	24.56%

F: Frequency; P: Percentage

It is evident from the Table 1 that the majority of the respondents were unaware about a salami-slicing act; it is followed by falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, and the copyright. Moreover, less than 50% of the respondents had the knowledge of the terms already presented in the table under the description.

Table 2: Respondents identify the percentage of similarity associated with different levels of plagiarism

Levels of plagiarism	Frequency	Percentage
Level 0 plagiarism	62	54.38%
Level 1 plagiarism	52	45.61%
Level 2 plagiarism	44	38.59%
Level 3 plagiarism	42	36.84%

Table 2 shows the responses of the respondents who were able to correctly identify the percentage of similarity associated with different levels of plagiarism. It has been found that the majority of the respondents could correctly identify the percentage of similarity associated with Level 0 plagiarism. However, less than 50% of respondents correctly identified the percentage of similarity associated with plagiarism of Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3.

Table 3: Respondents correctly identified the penalties for plagiarism

Penalties associated with different levels of plagiarism	Frequency	Percentage
No penalty is associated with Level 0 plagiarism	76	66.66%
Withdrawal of the manuscript (Level 1, 2 & 3 plagiarism)	54	47.36%
Annual increment confiscated (Level 2 plagiarism)	46	40.35%
Cannot Supervise for 2 years (Level 2 plagiarism)	42	36.84%
Two annual increments denied (Level 3 plagiarism)	30	26.31%
Supervision cancelled for 3 years (Level 3 plagiarism)	48	42.10%

Table 3 indicates the responses of the respondents who were able to correctly identify the penalties associated with different levels of plagiarism. The researchers ascertained that the majority of the respondents were able to correctly identify the penalties associated with plagiarism of Level 0. However, less than 50% of respondents know about the penalties associated with the plagiarism of multiple levels (1, 2, & 3 level).

Out of all the students (114 = 100 percent) acting as respondents, 70.17% percent were familiar with the concept of 'academic integrity', rest of the students (29.8 percent) do not have the idea of academic integrity, as nobody has taught them this, till today. When interrogated on cheating observed in the exam, 82.45% respondents admitted that they have helped someone else during the exam, whereas, the minority (17.54 %) reported that have not helped anyone else during the exam. Moreover, 78.94% respondents have admitted that they have done cheating during the exam. This implies that the majority of the students adopt the means of cheating while facing the exam, which is a serious concern from the viewpoint of avoiding the culture of copying and acknowledging sincerely. Also, the respondents confirmed that they have copied someone's assignments, that is, 33.33% percent and 63.15% have allowed someone to copy their assignment.

Less than 50% of the respondents hardly have the knowledge of the terms such as falsification, fabrication, copyright, and plagiarism. However, the respondents were extremely unaware of the salami slicing concept of plagiarism; almost 73.68 percent were found ignorant related to the slicing act in the academic writings.

Furthermore, certain responses received from the students of the CLUJ institution were highly negative: majority of the students were ignorant about the penalties associated with the practice of plagiarism. Respondents (66.66%) were only aware of the disciplinary penalties which are invoked if someone exercises level 0 plagiarism.

It is evident that most of the students (45.61%) as respondents have no idea about the software, which help the researchers in detecting the degree of plagiarism.

The respondents also reported that there could be the multiple reasons which lead toward the academic misconduct (plagiarism and unduly acknowledgement). These reasons follow as: 57.89% admitted that misconduct in research occurs due to the lack of awareness regarding the misconduct in academic writings: they do not know the meaning of misconduct in scholarly sense. The second reason of misconduct in academic writing is that there is dearth of skills required for mitigating the plagiarism (as reported by 36.84% respondents). Therefore, it is necessary to first disseminate the knowledge of plagiarism and academic misconduct among the students who are either the researchers or going to become in times ahead. Unless they are taught, there would be absolute ignorance related to the burning issues of copying and the plagiarism.

5. Conclusion

This section of the paper concludes the selected research topic and presents many points as outcomes in the defense of avoiding plagiarism and maintaining the academic integrity and its sanctity in the academic writings. Further, it is evident from the analysis section that the students at the bachelor degree level are hardly taught the concept of plagiarism, how it is to be avoided though sincere acknowledgement, and referencing. The researchers at the initial stages of their research journey should be taught the necessary skills required for proper referencing and acknowledgement, or else, their research will prove futile and unreliable. This unreliability of the researcher's work would obviously result from the depth of ignorance. Hence, the famous dictum "where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise" (Gray, 1742) reminds the researchers that ignorance leads to foolishness. Expressing briefly, it also connotes that ignorance can never prove fruitful in the research domain. Therefore, the researcher must have the proper knowledge of research process including the academic integrity and the appropriate acknowledgement.

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