Anthropology 1200- Assignment1

**Is Cheating Cultural?**

As per the different studies, it is found that cheating and plagiarism is most common among the international students in British, Canadian and American higher education. It is considered that in one way or other this is due to the cultural differences of these students. There are various reasons regarding this high proportion which are stated by the studies of different authors but it has also come into account that during Covid that this issue of plagiarism and wrong practices has increased for the all students and I will discuss these in detail and also I give points mentioned by different university authorities regarding these practices of students especially International students in the upcoming paragraphs.

Starting with the most common point concluded in various studies that the word plagiarism is not considered same by every student of different countries which shows it is cultural. Mary Pierce, dean of the faculty of business and chair of the St Clair school’s academic integrity advisory group told that the cultural distinctions are the major reason for international students caught cheating because there are range of countries where individuals have distinct views of what the word plagiarism exactly mean.(Heather, 2019). Also told by the Waseem Habash, vice president of same school that the school has greater increase in the number of international students and with this rise, there was increment in the academic misconduct as well including plagiarism and other methods and by researching for the real reason behind this increase, they found that international students didn’t even know that duplicating the material from internet or other sources is considered as a part of cheating. He also told that the school appointed an academic integrity co-ordinator to run workshops for students to better understand the concept of cheating and academic misconducts and this helped in reducing the instances of these misconducts. (Heather, 2019). Andrew Chen of WholeRen, a firm that helps Chinese students to apply to schools in US said, “They think it’s grey area, but in U.S. it’s no-no area.” which means that collaborating with others on their homework and searching online for test answers can be acceptable in China means grey area but not in U.S. means no-no area(Christopher, 2019). Talking about the economic aspects, As Habash from St. Clair school said that students coming from other countries have great load to succeed when they are sent abroad as they had a lot of financial investment done in it by their families back in home country and failing the course cannot be considered as an option by them after spending such large amounts. So, they do everything that they can to pass which even include cheating (Heather, 2019).

Moreover, The reports in the VOA news states that the at the university of Minnesota, the proportion of cases of plagiarism originated from not students who do not have English as their first language is about 85%. According to David Mills, a university professor, the limited skills and comfort of using English language in international students while working with written materials can also be a cause of plagiarism. In addition to this, there is also a statement by an Indian student of University of Virginia named Smaran Shantharaju who told that doing the same thing back in their home country and doing it here are two very different situations because the consequences and seriousness of the word and its tolerance is quite distinct in both (Nick, 2018). David Rettinger of ICAI told VOA,” With the huge increase in international students in the United States, the expectations that we often have for them are not in line with what they have learned in their home countries or the countries they were educated in. So they experience a great deal of cultural shock when they come to the U.S. and one of them is expectations with regard to academic integrity.” Also, he said that ICAI is working well with the schools and colleges to help them work well with cultural gaps and misunderstandings and teach students regarding this misconduct (Greg 2017).

Apart from this conduct by students, an article issued by CityNews on Contract Cheating shows a variety of examples where students get their assignments done by others by paying some sort of money to them. Journalists got to know from an advertisement of a website at University of Toronto Campus that There was a website that offered essays and other assignments to students by getting fees of $165 from them and when they contacted one of the contractors working in this, they found that he had done around hundreds of assignments for the students of different universities. As reported by financial post, “In 2015, the department of Immigration of Australia cracked down on abuses and cancelled 9,000 student visas over academic misconduct.” These misconducts included plagiarism, bribery, doing exam for other person etc (Diane, 2019).

Moving further to talk about the ways which are being used these days to prevent and check the cheating, as already stated in previous paragraph that ICAI is working well and colleges and other institutions are setting up the academic conducts department and officials who deal with teaching students regarding academic misconducts and checking for that and taking strict actions against those who do this. We also got to know that there are some high tech tools that are being used these days to detect cheating by the colleges and universities and the most common example of it is the web server Turnitin which checks the written paper or assignment against the plagiarism and shows the percentage of similarity of students’ work with other sources and one other software named Protortrack deals with the keeping an eye on students while online exams using a web camera. So, it shows that there are various techniques that are adopted by varied universities and colleges against academic misconduct (Greg, 2017). At the end, I would like to conclude that the foreign student may have cultural aspects of cheating so they should be taught well in advance regarding plagiarism and cheating which is actually done by every college prior to the starting of classes as done in Langara College as well.

References:

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