

# Plagiarism in the context of higher education

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## Abstract

The aim of this research is to identify the main reason why plagiarism has become so challenging issue nowadays and how it can be detected and avoided. The concept, history, reasons, different factors and finally different approaches for reducing the plagiarism will be presented in this paper. This research is beneficial for students, researchers and lectures to acquire comprehensive knowledge about plagiarism, how to avoid it and how to increase the culture of using available information among students.

## Introduction

Effect of globalization on education is undeniable. In one hand, globalization has positive impact on education, it makes new approach to have borderless new information. For instance developing countries will access to information and knowledge easily. On the other hand, it has negative influences on education too. The rapid growth of technology, provides the opportunity of cheating and academic dishonesty. Razera has demonstrated that plagiarism and cheating (academic dishonesty) are consequences of new technology (Razera, 2011). Plagiarism has become a challenging issue in the academic world. Although it occurs consciously and unconsciously, it has become a matter of concern. Plagiarism has been strengthened by using of unauthorized electronic and the volume of content on the web (Zrnec and Lavbič 2017). Fortunately, a set of ethical rules has been established to detect and punish plagiarism operation.

The topic analyzed in this paper is the concept of plagiarism, different types of it, related reasons and factors, how to avoid and why it is so important.

## Methodology

This project has designed as a systematic review study based on the previous studies conducted on plagiarism in different countries over the years. “A systematic literature review attempts to identify, appraise and synthesize all the empirical evidence that meets pre-specified eligibility criteria to answer a given research question” (Cochrane n.d.). Researchers conducting systematic reviews use explicit methods aimed at minimizing bias, to produce more reliable findings that can be used to inform decision making. The topic analyzed in this paper is the concept of plagiarism, types of plagiarism, reasons behind the plagiarism, factors related to plagiarism and how to avoid it.

## Concept of plagiarism:

There are several ways to define plagiarism by the same concept. Fisherman says plagiarism as using other words, ideas or work products. It is not clear that whether plagiarism takes place in academic concepts or it can occur in daily life too (Sibomana, Ndayambaje, and Uwambayinema 2018). They use “intention to deceive” as plagiarism. Sometimes plagiarism defined as a “deliberate use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment” (Standler 2012). Janowski (2002) gives a list of operational definitions of the plagiarism; “Buying or downloading a paper from a research service or a term-paper and offering it as your own.

Turning in another student's work, with or without that student's knowledge, as your own. Copying any portion of another's work without proper acknowledgment. Copying material from a source and supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotations marks or failing to indent properly. Paraphrasing ideas and language from a source without proper documentation (p. 26)."

## **History of plagiarism:**

The history of plagiarism goes back to ancient Romes. They had used the word "plagiarius" in the sense of kidnapper, seducer, plunderer, and from the word "plagium". It had been used as kidnapping, and from "plaga" snare, net, from "p(e)lag"; flat, spread out 5.500 years ago (Gokmenoglu 2017).

## **Reason behind the plagiarism:**

One of the main reasons which drive the plagiarism is easily access to information via new technologies , digitalization and web(Jereb, Perc, et al. 2018). As plagiarism is an intellectual crime, specific penalties should be considered for it (Sibomana, Ndayambaje, and Uwambayinema 2018). Ten major reasons about plagiarism has been demonstrated(Michelle 2012). These are laziness, panic, lack of confidence, static knowledge, inability to integrate source materials into their own arguments, the failure to understand why sources are important, sloppiness, failure to understand how to deal with citations, novelty and familiarity to a collaborative work model. In addition to all reasons mentioned above, other reasons are added too(Betts et al. 2012) that lead students to plagiarism. For instance, not very involved in academic community culture, lack of orientation on academic ethics, part time jobs that affect study time and lack of study skills are other reasons. Sometimes plagiarism occurs unconsciously because of culture and religion. For example the religious discourse hardly tolerates interpretation of scriptures (Ma and He 2016), or in some cultures, memorization is a sign of educated person(Sibomana, Ndayambaje, and Uwambayinema 2018). These reasons should be considered as cultural misunderstanding of plagiarism.

## **Factors related to plagiarism:**

Research about plagiarism has demonstrated that there are several factors which drive plagiarism and academic misconduct. By using of SEM to test a conceptual model of five factors and using large scale data, a significant relation exists between students by lack of self-control and academic misconduct(Hongwei et al. 2018). Laziness or mismanagement of time, easy access to materials on the Internet, unawareness of rules and regulations are factors of unintentional plagiarism(Dordoy 2002). There are other factors causing plagiarism like low commitment to the learning process and focus on getting an academic degree, the student life style and family pressures(Macdonald n.d.). Bahadori indicated several other factors, like genuine lack of understanding, efficiency gain, time management, personal attitudes, defiance, temptation and opportunity(Bahadori, Izadi, and Hoseinpourfard 2012). Jereb demonstrated gender differences in plagiarism awareness. He illustrated women have much more negative attitude about plagiarism compared to men(Jereb, Urh, et al. 2018). Sprajc presented the role of ICT in plagiarism(Šprajc et al. 2017). Gender, socialization, efficiency gain, motivation for study, methodological uncertainties or easy access to electronic information via the Internet and new technologies are most important factors related to plagiarism(Jereb, Perc, et al. 2018).

## **Strategies to avoid plagiarism:**

The concept of plagiarism should be unpacked and should be defined clearly for all students, teachers and lectures. Importance of referencing should be emphasized (Sibomana, Ndayambaje, and Uwambayinema 2018).In some countries lack of anti-plagiarism software, forces lectures to detect plagiarism manually, this method is uneconomical and ineffective method and only serve few documents(Ali, Abdulla, and Science, n.d.). Establishing new regulation and punishment can increase the importance of plagiarism to users. A

variety of methods have been suggested to avoid plagiarism. Mammen and Meyiwa mentioned to establish plagiarism department(Mammen and Meyiwa 2017). Several plagiarism detection software on the web that can easily find any cheating and academic dishonesty is another solution(Awasthi 2019). Increasing the level of awareness of students and advising them to use anti-plagiarism software are other ways to avoid plagiarism(Sibomana, Ndayambaje, and Uwambayinema 2018). Role of Libraries is significant to raise the knowledge and awareness of users by training them to use information correctly(Awasthi 2019).

## Conclusion

The number of articles that have been published about the plagiarism, indicate the importance of this issue. Different factors and reasons have been demonstrated about the plagiarism . Different strategies have established to help students, teachers and researchers to strengthen their awareness of plagiarism. Some anti-plagiarism software exist to help users. Role of libraries in this issue is vital to increase the awareness of students about using the information correctly. As a result, before any punishment or judgment , the concept of plagiarism and the consequence of not obeying the rules about plagiarism should be cleared for students.

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