



Role of Plagiarism in the Quality of Academic Research

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Abstract: *"In the twenty first century, the electronic publishing became the dominant form of scholarly communication. The scholarly material is available in the public domain with easy access even on single platform. Therefore, the copying of data is very easy. It has been observed by many studies that Generation 'Z' scholars need information by any means; they are less concerned with the ethics, copyright and plagiarism issues. Hence, the plagiarism is a burning issue now-a-days amongst the academic societies. The digital world highly influenced from a plague of plagiarism." After undergoing the previous studies, it has been observed that in India's academic context, the work on plagiarism is negligible, even the concept is still underprivileged as could not define that how to deal with the same in complex digital society. Moreover, the awareness among the research scholars regarding this concept is up to the literary meaning only. Considering these facts and for the purpose, the following objectives are formulated in the present research paper .*

- *To explain the present state of plagiarism in Different Academic fields.*
- *To elicit the factors influencing the incidence of plagiarism.*
- *To know how to deal with plagiarism by using the deterrence tools.*
- *To study the role of Library to combat with plagiarism in digital era.*

Keywords : *Misappropriation, Negligible, Influenced, Research Integrity , substantial and Unattributed.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since inception of the academic societies in all over the world, the India was the omphalos of every level education system even till today. However, the education was imparted through 'Gurukul'. The pupils were generally used to stay inside the gurukul till completion of their education. During their 'Diksha', the 'Guru' was only the single voice or instrument who was responsible to impart the education to pupils. The guru was performed alone without any assistance like teaching aids, books, and written materials. The purpose of the education was to develop the character, mental power/reasoning. Education implies discipline and cultivation of the intellect; an intellect able to operate well in all fields. It enables the individual to know himself. Gradually, the 'Guruvani' started to accumulate in the form 'Dharmgrantha' and literature started to publish. However, for preserving the thoughts, limited resources were available. The papyrus was used for recording the thoughts. "Parchment or the skin of the animals, principally those of sheep and goat was also used. Yellum or the skin of lamb or kid was used for expensive writings, while for messages and notes wax-coated wooden tablets". The recorded and accumulated knowledge was accessible to particular group of people for a limited period of time. With the passage of time, the orientation of the education has got changed; even new preserving tools have been introduced and emerged. During the "latter half of the fourteenth century, the term 'library' was defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as a place where books were kept for reading, study, and reference. By the nineteenth century, the word library denoted a room, set of rooms and building containing collection of books for the use of public". Simply, library came to be regarded as a public institution.

Commenting on the role of library in society; J.H Shera writes "The library is a product of our cultural maturation". Though the concept of library came into existence, but the access of the library and its material was limited, even the concerned scholar had to take the permission prior from the caretaker of the library system which was a time consuming



process. But with the passage of time, nascent technologies have reached at the threshold of the academics and libraries which could really become the cause to change the orientation of both systems. The libraries in the environment of information and communication technology have undergone the drastic transformation in their traditional roles of collecting, organizing and preserving reading materials, and disseminating information by conventional procedure and techniques. They have now transcended their four walls and employed latest technologies to meet the emerging and pressing demands of the well aware seekers of information (Singh, 2017). The speed of the development of the Digital contents has increased with jet speed and their accessibility in the public domain has also been started. The technology has given remarkable changes in the pattern of information storage and retrieval advancement. But with these facilities, the issues of the copyright have also been raised in front of the scholars and stakeholders. Broadly speaking, by copyright is meant an exclusive, legally secured, right to publish and sell the substance and form of literary, musical, dramatic artistic works, authors and web site contents. Any person who reproduces the work of the original author without his prior permission violates his/her right called copyright. The same principle applies to making of copies of a record. "The Indian Copyright Act grants exclusive right over his/her work to the author during life time and 60 years after death. But under the heading of fair dealing and copying by libraries, documentation and information centers under specified conditions, making of photocopies and micro-recording of documents for the purpose of research and private study does not tantamount to be an infringement of the copyright".

After Google, it has been noticed that the availability of digital and electronic contents has become easier. With the availability of digital and electronic contents, the institutions have started to create their electronic repository containing curriculum, syllabi, newspapers clipping, dissertations, theses, and research and review papers published by faculty members. Such types of the repositories are really the witness of the "Web Revolution". Most academic institutions, as of now, are working on the same concept and developing their curricula through online and making accessible in public domain. It won't be an exaggeration to say that the latest technologies are really powerful tool to change the orientation of academic societies and research activities, but many new and unaddressed issues and challenges have been put forth in front of academics which need to be addressed without delay. In information and communication technology era, the most prominent issue has been raised i.e. Plagiarism. The word 'plagiarism' came from the Latin 'plagiarus' meaning 'kidnapper'. In academic, the same is known as academic dishonesty or similarity index. The globalization of the world's educational systems unveil that the plagiarism, as of now, is more rampant among scholars. Hayes and Introna (2005) indicated in their study "some of "the plagiarism categories posed to students in a Master of Science program at Lancaster University Management School regarding copying of work as mentioned below:"

- "Copied a paragraph or more word for word once or more."
- "Never copied a paragraph or more word for word."
- "Judge such copying as not cheating or trivial cheating."
- "Copied a few sentences word for word once or more."
- "Never copied a few sentences word for word."
- "Judge such copying as somewhat or very serious."

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2. Definitions of "Plagiarism":

"While many definitions of plagiarism exist, most agree fundamentally with the following version from the 'US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Research Integrity (ORI):"

As a general working definition, ORI considers that:

- "Plagiarism to include both the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work."
- "Plagiarism- using another's words or ideas without appropriate attribution or without following citation conventions."



- “Plagiarism, or when students copy others’ work and pass it off as their own, is a serious form of academic misconduct.”
- “Plagiarism is described as an unrecognized utilization of someone’s new ideas(s), expression(s), and text(s). The utilization of someone’s new idea(s), expression(s) and texts(s) without acknowledgement. Honesty, trust, fairness, respects and responsibility is the backbone and foundation of academic integrity.”

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature is very significant part of any research. Through this, the concerned scholar/s understands the concept deeply and tries to find out the gap. It helps to develop the basic understanding about the proposed study. Apart from the above, it helps to increase the citation level of the authors as, when anyone does cite to others work, automatically the h-index of the concerned increases. Therefore, for basic understanding and to know the essence of previous studies, the scholars have to undergo to review of literature as it plays substantial role. To fulfill the purpose, few following studies have been covered to analysis the theoretical and practical perspectives of plagiarism.

“Arp and Lemanski (2016) stated that the conceptualization suggests that adopting units lose access to the original sources of ideas as plagiarism victims may establish defensive strategies.” “Taiseer et al. (2015) in their paper described the state-of-the-art plagiarism techniques have been identified and analyzed based on their attributes, limitations, processes and taxonomies. It was discovered that the techniques are limited in some detection aspects.” “Angelica, R. and O'Dwyer, A (2011) in their study explore the relationship between entrepreneurship students’ ethical views on plagiarism, their self reported engagement in plagiarism and their participation in an online plagiarism prevention tutorial.” “Nancy Snyder Gibson and Christina ChesterFangman (2011) stated that the ways in which librarians of different types are addressing the issue of plagiarism at the institutional and pedagogical levels. More than 90 percent of the 610 respondents report that they have assisted students with citing sources. Over 70 percent have instructed students about plagiarism in class. Approximately a quarter have collaborated with other departments regarding plagiarism, conducted or attended workshops on plagiarism, worked with instructors to redesign assignments, or helped faculty with tracking possible instances of student plagiarism.” “Michael Seadle (2011) in his study states that Plagiarism has become a salient issue for universities and thus for university libraries in recent years. This study aims to discuss three interrelated aspects of preserving plagiarized works: collection development issues, copyright problems, and technological requirements.” “Karen et al. (2011) carried a study and revealed that an instructor who uses the results of plagiarism detection software as a point of departure for educating students about ethical effective writing practices would have more success”.

“Malcolm et al. (2007) conducted a study and found that the factors contributing to plagiarism include lack of awareness, lack of understanding, lack of competence, and personal attitudes. No evidence was found to support the suggestion that either pressure or the availability of internet facilities had increased the incidence of plagiarism.” “Christine (2007) explored that the successes and challenges associated with teaching first-year students a session on plagiarism avoidance through the use of an audience response system. Data gathered from the sessions indicated that this session helped students retain knowledge of plagiarism rules. Comments solicited about the session indicated that the students enjoyed the lesson, that they were better able to recognize problem areas in their own writing, and that the interactivity kept them focused on the lesson.” “Maxymuk (2006) shows that many web sites examining the issue of plagiarism have been developed and are maintained by libraries.

The previous studies indicate that the maximum work on plagiarism has been done in Germany, Britain, America, and Russia more. In India, the concept is prevailing but not addressed properly so far, even countless ambiguities are available. Moreover, it is ethical concern only in the eyes of the scholars and a crime without victim. Thereon, the detection tools are also not available with most of the institutions, colleges, and universities due to paucity of funds.

Identification of plagiarism in modern research;

Satyanarayana (2010) states that plagiarism starts very early in sciences as revealed by many studies which are conducted in different parts of the world. Jargin (2010) stated that in Russia the plagiarism was very common because of their state medical libraries. The digital revolution has put forth different challenges but brought easy accessibility and availability of study material which is really drastic revolution. In addition, due to “round the clock” accessibility and availability at desktop, tablets, and mobile phones, the “cut-and-paste” of desired materials has become possible.



Ma et al. (2008) state that the internet is having substantial value in scholars' lives, it is affecting everyone in modern education as scholars need current information for their research core area. Internet keeps up-to-date to scholars providing enormous amounts of information; it also contributes to ethics deterioration among scholars. The author feels that "As the Net Gen has increasingly easy access to the internet in their lives, literature has revealed that, in recent years, more and more young people at school are participating cheating, and things are getting worse each year".

4. Types of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not a single term, it comprises with many concepts. Further to understand its basic; the scholars have to undergo with different types plagiarism. Among many kinds of plagiarism, few important one types are as under which surely will help to understand/explain the concept:

- "Exact Copy Plagiarism: Copying sentence in exact and in substantial phrase from a source without acknowledging the original source of information or proper attribution."
- "Modified Plagiarism: Form its literary meaning it is understood that when any scholar takes a sentence from any source of information and changing few words."
- "Style Plagiarism: Imitate the reasoning style or concept of others author even the copied text fully paraphrased."
- "Metaphor Plagiarism: Copying someone else metaphors in describing a particular subject."
- "Idea Plagiarism: This is very serious form of the plagiarism. Under this, if any one steals the idea of another person's whether it is a novel idea, theory, formula or solution. The concerned will trap."

Plagiarism as-of-now is an overwhelming in the academic/research activities not only in India even all over the world and for further research, this is wide area and having emphatic space and scope which surely will help in understanding the basics, in fact, every ins and outs of the same. Therefore, it is indispensable to identify the factors, which instigate the scholars to commit the plagiarism during their research activities. Some previous studies have identified the following factors, which seem responsible.

5. Plagiarism in Complex Digital Society

"American Psychological Association marked a desire to standardize academic writing and provide a model for ethically quoting the work of others (Simmons, 1992). With the emerging of information society and electronic media, another culture shift seems to be underway. Further it has been observed that plagiarism is more prevalent and much of the accusation has been placed due to easy access of Internet globally. Internet carried the contents life time and become possible to place them up to the last zenith of the society. Thereby copying has become easy. Therefore, in the ocean of digital world of computer and the explosion of electronic information, students going to higher education have grown up with the internet and are at home downloading "cultural materials like films, video games, video lectures, social media sites and etc." Moreover, they share the downloading materials through different media like mail, social sites. They have highly skilled to conduct the non-academic activities by using the applications of Internet e.g. search engines, RSS Feeds, discussion boards, podcast etc. These applications give the link site by site and to access all these, internet is the solo unified source. Thereby copying from internet, students take it as granted and turn the copied material into meaningful material and win award without acknowledging the original source. One study has been conducted in UAE with 2600 students and it came with the result that tertiary level students in the UAE found that just over 40% considered cutting and pasting from the internet as either trivial cheating or not cheating at all. The attitudes of UAE students are similar to those of other students around the world."

6. Plagiarism in Education

In education, the plagiarism orientation is different from other pragmatic fields of politics or business. In India, politicians give speeches and bites mostly not acknowledging the original source even they do not bother. In fact, hire ghostwriters for their speeches writing as depicted by many studies. However, in education plagiarism is seen as transgression against common intellectual efforts. Students cannot hire ghostwriters even the stakes of the students are much lower. The critical issue in the education is to analyzing and synthesizing ideas, and reformulating the contents. This process involves the copious efforts of students as it requires higher order thinking and writing skills.



This struggle for intellectual development is not easy which is the result of high intension and proper execution of the intellectual efforts that make plagiarism attractive for some students. Hence plagiarism is the great albatross around the neck of the scholars and the opportunities to learn lessons, improve their study skills, understanding and knowledge. Therefore, plagiarism is serious in the education as it is considered as punitive element instead of ethical concern. Students need to learn the academic integrity and value of intellectual property. Students must be oriented by the teachers or librarians meet the standards of the technical writing and avoiding the plagiarism as severe penalties are not the foolproof solution to control the plagiarism during research activities.

7. Factors Contributing to Plagiarism

Love and Simmons (1998, pp. 4-5) identified two broad factors influencing plagiarism, based on extensive interviews with master's degree students:

“External contributing factors:

- Pressure (grade pressure, time pressure, task pressure); and
- Professors.
- Internal contributing factors:
- Negative personal attitudes;
- Lack of awareness;
- Lack of competence;
- Negligence;
- Educational Conditioning;
- Language Skill;
- Cultural Background;
- Gender;
- Subject being studied
- Issue with time management;
- Not able to understand the importance of fair research or academic integrity; and
- Conduct research for sake of promotion only.”

“Scanlon and Neumann (2002) suggest six factors contributing to the incidence of plagiarism: lack of awareness, personal attitudes, availability of internet resources, pressure, institutional features and lack of competence.

“Lack of awareness: Where students do not fully understand what constitutes plagiarism, or what the penalties for its detection are, they may not see it as a problem.”

“Personal attitudes: Positive or negative attitudes and willingness to expend effort will be reflected in the incidence of plagiarism, since cheating may be seen as a suitable, if risky, alternative to hard work.”

“Internet facilities: Simplified the process of “cut and paste” from Internet sources.”

“Lack of competence: Lack of confidence in completing the assignments.”

“Pressure: task, time, and family pressures are all acknowledged as potential contributors to plagiarism.””

“Institution: The Higher Education Institutions are showing keen interest in curbing the plagiarism activities as accusation of plagiarism exposes the concerned HEI. With research activities, plag is on priority even HEIs already been declared that without plagiarism status report no thesis would be accept for awarding. Even University Grants Commission is also very serious and notified a notification in 2018 in Gazette of India-extraordinary. Institution having the significant role in curbing the plag activities even has to organize behavioral ethical workshop and writing ethics for teachers and scholars so that things may be resolved at initial level as many studies depicted that maximum incidents of plagiarism have been committed due to personal negative attitude and lack of writing ethics.”



Plagiarism does not seem always the violation of copyright. It may occur whether the intellectual material having the legal protection or not. For taking any material from any source, the attribution is mandate; otherwise it might be the part of plagiarism. If anyone traps under such kind incident, the penalties vary with the policy/discretion of the concerned institution.

8. Deterrence tools for Plagiarism

To curb and control the plagiarism during research activities, every academic institution are being done copious efforts even taking utmost care and using different types techniques like conducting the workshop on Citation, Bibliography and ethics of research. In fact, scholars are being aware that plagiarism is punitive element also. After observing the seriousness of the concept some agencies have taken initiative and consequently few prominent deterrence tools emerged. The few prominent names are as under:

- “Turnitin;”
- “URKUND;”
- “EVE;”
- “W copy Find;”
- “My Drop Box;”
- “Cross-Check;”
- “iThenticate;”
- “Word-Check;”
- “Check for Plag; and many more.

” Ledwith and Risquez (2008). These services usually provide the facility to measure the level of similarity between a scholar’s work and material access publicly online. The objective of the deterrence tools is to curb the plagiarism whether the severity of similarity is less or more.

However, before uploading the academic and research contents on the web, it has to be ensured that the contents are original one and free from plagiarism. For the same, contents need to be checked by using the Anti-Plagiarism software. The implementation of Anti-plagiarism measures in Indian universities has gained importance in view of the mandatory revised UGC Regulations for the award of PhD/MPhil degrees. It is envisaged in these regulations that each and every academic institution of higher education will make proper arrangements to check the plagiarism status before awarding master and doctoral degrees. The mandatory plagiarism check has been integrated into the Academic Regulations of most of the universities. The universities are required to select and approve anti-plagiarism software at the institution level with policies and procedures for plagiarism check. Many free and paid counter measurements for plagiarism do exist. However, issue is to store the uploaded document permanently in the repository of concerned tool which leads to increase the level of similarity of the same document when anyone uploads second time.

9. Guidelines on plagiarism

Many studies have been observed that scholars observe plagiarism as a transgression against their common intellectual efforts, but on the other hand, it has also been realized that it must be addressed as the huge/countless digital contents are available in the public domain with easy access keys and the facility of copy-paste. The use of unethical practices in academics is not uncommon. The Information and Library Network has created an ETD repository of Indian theses viz. Shodhganga Repository. To participate in the same, the concerned university has to sign a MoU with INFLIBNET; thereafter the universities have to send the soft copies of their theses for uploading into Shodhganga Repository. The contents of theses must be free from plagiarism/original one and for their checking, anti-plagiarism software viz. URKUND has been provided to member universities.

Read and Wasley (2008). A sound and seamless policy must be framed at institutional, universities or at the level of regulatory/governing bodies so that the issues of plagiarism must be addressed at very initial stage and a plagiarized free environment may be given to scholars. Without policy scholars were taking it as normal activity and considering the same as victimless crime, if any time caught. Therefore, to bring the uniformity in the level of similarity index among all level research activities in the country, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has notified a notification in the Gazette of India namely University Grant Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism



in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018. Under this regulation, UGC has defined each and every thing like Academic Integrity, Author, Commission, Common Knowledge, Degree, Departmental Academic Integrity Panel, faculty, Higher Educational Institution (HEI), Information, Institutional Academic Integrity Panel, Notification, Plagiarism, Programme, Researcher, Script, Source, staff, student, University and Year. Further, duties of Higher Educational Institutions vide which it is mandate that to curb the plagiarism “awareness and training” programs need to be organized time to time so that scholars may take precaution in anticipation and shall conduct fair research. In fact, this is the duty of the concerned HEI to frame a sound policy on the plagiarism and be notified from the concerned regulatory body so that the same may work as and when it does recall. Policy will give the freedom to scholars to relish the research and not be afraid from the accusation of plagiarism.

“Last but not least, the internet savvy scholars who admit at research level have fundamentally different attitudes to ownership, intellectual, our definition and approach to plagiarism must also be changed. However, this must be done without losing the insistence on the intellectual struggle with ideas which is the hallmark of true education. The institutions must redouble their efforts to provide a frame work within which issues of academic provide a frame work within which issues of academic dishonesty may be explored and addressed seamlessly. Academic integrity is not something innate; it is something that needs to be learned. The greater awareness of ‘Open Access’ and various community based open resources developed through knowledge sharing in the current technological environment have made a plethora of online e-resources freely available on the internet. The use of online resources for academic use comes under the purview of various national and international laws, rules and regulations. The ethical practices how to use someone else’s digital work must be followed. It involves proper attribution in a standard way according to the copyright and licensing restrictions attached to a particular digital object. To avoid all these issues, require great awareness of the academic community about the plagiarism, types of plagiarism, policy and guidelines, causes and consequences of plagiarism. Imparting such information to students is now an integral part of curriculum in the universities so that at initial stages, the students may easily aware from this and take care during their higher research activities.”

10. Conclusion:

To ensure the quality education for present and coming generation, the Government of India has been putting countless efforts since independence and funding/funded different advanced projects which might have been proved mile stone. In this series, in 2009, National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology has started a joint venture of MHRD and CCEA (Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs). Under this program, so far more than 400 universities and 14000 colleges have been provided 1Gbps connectivity. In the same way, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay has started the program of Centre for Distance Engineering Education Program (CDEEP), where the virtual classroom is created and interaction through real time interactive satellite technology. IIT-Kanpur has developed Brihaspati- an open source e-learning platform. Moreover, Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Science and Technology (MHRD) and UGC- info Net has set up.

These programs are proving to be mile stone in conducting the qualitative research activities and promoting technical education. Shodhganga and Shodhgangotri are another one example in this category. Due to availability and accessibility of huge contents in public domain, the easy cut-paste has come into existence and more familiar among the scholars. Thereby, the scholars are being trapped easily. Consequently, the issues of plagiarism are on its scaffold. The Indian academics are in transaction phase; thereby a hybrid system has developed. With this hybrid environment, the plagiarism cases are being more complicated as the detection tools will match the text of the uploaded documents with the data which is available only on web but what about the text which is still unavailable on web. In that case, the report of the plagiarism shall not be 100 percent genuine. Even, the scholars may be trapped after enclosing the report of detection tool. Therefore, the relevance of the present paper is that to create the awareness among scholars towards the basics of this concept along with its deterrence tools and factors contributing. In addition, offering emphatic remedies as suggestive measures to overcome and help in designing a sound and seamless policy so that at initial level the same may be conveyed to scholars and fair and authentic research may be conducted without confronting any litigation.



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