

Plagiarism in College: When Students Integrity is at Stake

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Abstract: *The main essence of education is to help learners acquire skills, knowledge, and competencies that will allow them to succeed and address some of the significant challenges that they may face in life. Unfortunately, some students deviate from this path by engaging in different forms of academic dishonesties such as cheating and plagiarism. This paper aimed to examine the issue of plagiarism in the context of the college education. This was done on the basis of data and information obtained from plagiarism literature and research. Available research evidence and literature suggest that plagiarism is a serious and complex academic problem that relates to the cultural construction of identity and the desire to get extrinsic benefits. Students who engage in the act prefer short-term and undeserved benefits such as higher grades over long-term benefits such as knowledge creation. Instead of coming up with original work, such students copy materials from various sources and use ideas that belong to other people as their own without thinking of the educational implications. Although academic institutions and instructors are becoming equipped with software and tools for detecting plagiarism, this form of academic dishonesty remains a severe challenge in most institutions. Thus, it is imperative for colleges to work forwards creating an environment that promotes good educational practices,integrity, and honesty among students.*

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I. Introduction

College marks a critical stage in the life and development of students. It provides an avenue for students to narrow down their education and attention to a particular career path that they would like to follow in the coming years (Sinha, Singh, & Kumar, 2009 [1]). Those who want to join the medical field get an opportunity to take up courses that are related to medicine and health sciences. Similarly, those who would like to enter professions such as engineering, law, and accounting also take up courses that are related to these lines of work (Sinha, Singh, & Kumar, 2009 [1]). Thus, the college education is critical to the achievement of career goals and objectives. Unfortunately, there are several things that college students engage in despite the fact that they know that such actions can affect their ability to acquire education and succeed in life. Besides, cases of students participating in dishonest activities and behaviors like presenting other people's work as their own, cheating on assignments, and falsifying data are ubiquitous in institutions of higher learning. Scholars and educators have raised concerns that cheating and dishonest behavior is becoming a norm in college (Welsh, 2017 [2]). The trend has continued to influence negatively the quality of education in universities and other institutions of higher learning. Also, it leads to the emergence of graduates who lack the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in the current competitive and dynamic world. It is for this reason that colleges and faculties are developing interventions for detecting and deterring cheating and dishonest behavior among college students. The goal is to empower students and to enhance the quality of higher education.

In reference to the reported cases of dishonesty in colleges, scholars and researchers have stated that plagiarism remains one of the critical issues that affect the quality of higher education. In particular, concerns have been raised about the tendencies of students to present false information and data on assignments, copy data from various sources without acknowledging the authors, and presenting other people's ideas as their own. The trend is partly attributed to the advent of the internet that has made information and data readily available for learners to use as they write papers and conduct research projects (Cole, 2007 [3]; Welsh, 2017 [2]). Some students use the information available from the internet to improve the quality of their work and projects (Cole, 2007 [3]; Welsh, 2017 [2]). Unfortunately, there are others who merely copy and paste information from journals, books, and research papers into their assignment and papers (Sinha, Singh, & Kumar, 2009[1]). Due to the availability of large volumes of information on the internet, plagiarism has become very common and originality very rare. Instead of using the information obtained from the available sources to further their knowledge and enhance the quality of their papers, some students plagiarize the content and in the process, compromise the quality of college education. Thus, plagiarism is a serious issue that needs to be addressed by the relevant stakeholders including students, educators, and policymakers. This research paper explores the question of plagiarism in the context of the college education.

II. Plagiarism and forms of plagiarism

Researchers, scholars, educators, and software vendors have taken different approaches to defining plagiarism. In the context of education, plagiarism has been described as the unauthorized or unlawful use or imitation of the ideas, thoughts, data, and language of another author and representing them as ones' original work and creations (Sinha, Singh, & Kumar, 2009 [1]). In this perspective, students engage in plagiarism when they participate in the unauthorized use of ideas, thoughts, and language of other authors without duly citing or acknowledging the source. In the academic field, just like in other areas, plagiarism is a serious offense that can result in suspension or expulsion from school. It is also imperative to state that plagiarism can vary depending on the degree to which a student uses ideas, thoughts, and languages of another person without acknowledging the original source. Sinha, Singh, & Kumar (2009) [1] posit that a minimal amount of plagiarism among students is common in the education sector. In this case, the student or individual in question engages in the act of editing the original text and replacing some words with the respective synonyms. In other cases, college students engage in complete plagiarism by presenting the work of another person as their own without making any adjustment to the content and acknowledging the sources. A review of existing body of research evidence also suggests that some students have mastered the act of fabricating and falsifying information or double publication. In all these cases, the integrity of data, materials, equipment, and processes is compromised significantly. Furthermore, the practices are a severe transgression of academic ethics. It is for this reason that colleges and institutions of higher learning strive to come up with punitive and preventing mechanism for discouraging plagiarism among students.

The reality of plagiarism has hit educators and different professions around the world. In particular, concerns have been raised whether the practice can adversely affect the achievement of learning goals and objectives and the realization of short term and long term career goals. A recent study that was conducted by Welsh (2017) [2] reported that the reality of managing plagiarism was an indication of the systematic governance and personal integrity failures that are occurring in the education sector. In addition, the researcher opined that educators and professional bodies and organizations must come together to deal with the issue of plagiarism by coming up with response techniques and approaches for discouraging the act. Welsh (2017) [2] went on to state that educators have a key role to play in managing plagiarism by supporting the governance processes and structures that have been put forward by educational providers to curb the activity. In addition, they must encourage honesty and professionalism among students and discourage them from engaging in actions and decisions that can impact negatively on the quality of education and their future careers.

Some studies and projects have been done to explore and understand the issue of plagiarism among students, especially those in colleges and other institutions of higher learning. In addition, the studies have strived to identify the various forms of plagiarism that take place in the education sector. Cole (2007) [3] reported that the act of plagiarism among students is an issue that can be attributed to the lack of personal integrity. The author further opined that rampant plagiarism in colleges is an indication of the lack of professionalism. The author, however, noted that some students do not know when they are engaging in plagiarism especially when their actions involve copying ideas from other sources. Furthermore, plagiarism is a serious quality issue that must be recognized and addressed by colleges and educators. Harper (2006) [4] concurred by stating that plagiarism is a modern day problem that is being fueled by advancements in technology. In particular, the author noted that technology has enhanced the efficacy, flexibility as well as the convenience of education. However, technology is a two-edge sword that can also degrade the quality of education (Harper, 2006 [4]). In particular, it has provided an avenue through which students can engage in plagiarism and other related academic dishonesty behaviors. Harper (2006) [4] cautions that students and educators should strive to address the issues because it is a clear indicator of further ethical decisions and professional misconduct. In this sense, students who engage in plagiarism are more likely to engage in unethical behaviors in the future while practicing their careers. Thus, attempts must be made to maintain the integrity of the education sector.

Another study by Bassendowski and Salgado(2005) [5] reported that plagiarism is rampant in post-secondary institutions. In addition, the researchers cautioned against the growing ease with which college students are copying-pasting materials from online sources into their paper without acknowledging the sources or looking at the validity and relevance of the content. Unfortunately, these practices are quickly compromising the quality of post-secondary education (Bassendowski& Salgado, 2005 [5]). Perfect and Stark (2008) [6] contribute to the plagiarism debate by stating that the act entails using people's ideas as your own or duplicating previous ideas. In their study, the researchers analyzed the degree to which students recall-own plagiarism and generate-new plagiarism. The authors described recall-own plagiarism as the practice of using ideas, languages, and data generated by another person (Perfect & Stark, 2008 [6]). Generate-new plagiarism, on the other hand, was defined as the practice of duplicating ideas and using it to come up with a new solution or text. The study revealed that both recall-own plagiarism and generate-new plagiarism were rampant among college students

especially when working in groups (Perfect & Stark, 2008 [6]). In some cases, the act occurs subconsciously as students strive to rely on existing body of information to come up with solutions to a given problem.

The issue of unconscious plagiarism also features in the study that was conducted by Perfect and Stark (2007) [7]. According to the authors, unconscious plagiarisms occur when students use a previously experienced concept, idea, or language as their own. Perfect and Stark (2007) [7] opined that available research evidence has shown that cognitive precursors underlie the process of unconscious plagiarism. In particular, students engage in unconscious plagiarism as they strive to relate a previously experienced idea to a present issue or problem of interest. Others engage in unconscious plagiarism as they strive to improve an already experienced idea and generate a better idea or solution to a given issue of interest (Perfect & Stark, 2008 [6]). While the resulting text in such cases may appear to be different from the original, the students will still be engaging in unconscious plagiarisms as the basis and ideas used are taken from another source without authorization. Therefore, unconscious plagiarism is the other area that educators and institutions of higher learning must consider a priority as they work to improve and promote academic honesty.

The other common form of plagiarism that has featured significantly in previous studies and attracted the attention of educators is the falsification and fabrication of data. Sinha, Singh, and Kumar (2009) [1] posit that fabrication and falsification of data is a serious academic and science fraud that compromises the integrity of the education sector. In addition, it demonstrates the failure of students to comply with the set-out and generally accepted standards for conducting any research. The practices are not only unethical but also devalue the whole process of college education (Sinha, Singh & Kumar, 2009 [1]). In addition, the process of falsifying or fabricating information hurts the plagiarized authors, deceives the reader and gives the plagiarists underserved benefits. Finally, the dishonest act brings non-intellectual benefits to students.

III. Why college students engage in plagiarism

Tasks such as writing term papers, completing assignments, engaging in peer review processes, and conducting research are the cornerstone of the college education. In the current technologically advanced world, the internet continues to provide the resources and information that students need to complete these tasks. In addition, the internet has made it possible for students to access data from the relevant journals, books, and publications with a lot of ease. For educators, the internet should be used positively to improve education and help students gain skills and knowledge that will help them to succeed in the chosen careers. In addition, it should be a tool that allows students to carry out an original and valid synthesis of information as they carry out various academic tasks. However, this is not always the case. Instead, available research evidence shows that the technological advancements being witnessed around the world are contributing to rising instances of plagiarism in college. The trend can only be reversed and managed when one understands why such students engage in plagiarism.

A number of factors has been identified and explored in studies and literature that seek to determine why students cheat or engage in plagiarism. McCabe (2001) [8], for instance, argued that the increasing pressure from parents and guardians, coupled with the growing complexity of materials taught in school, are among the leading causes of cheating and plagiarism in college. In this sense, parents and teachers play an essential role in influencing whether students will cheat or not. In particular, McCabe (2001) [8] noted that parents and teachers are not doing enough to curb the problem of plagiarism in school. During the study, McCabe (2001) [8] pointed out that a majority of students feels that most teachers do not care about cheating or try to curb it due to the bureaucratic procedures involved in dealing with such allegations. The researchers added an exciting issue while addressing the role of the internet in promoting education and its relationship with plagiarism (McCabe, 2001 [8]). In addition, many students do not understand that the internet is a critical academic tool that should only be used to improve their performance. Instead, they use it to engage in plagiarism as they complete their tasks and assignments. Similar findings were reported in another study that was done by McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2004) [9]. In this case, the researchers used a sample population of 1800 university students. The results of this particular study showed that contextual factors such as peer disapproval, peer cheating behavior, and perceived severity of the consequences of cheating determined whether students engaged in plagiarism or not. A review of the findings of the study showed that the factors that were identified by the researchers are not easy to analyze because of their very nature. However, the study showed that individual and contextual factors like the approval from peers could influence whether students will engage in plagiarism or not.

Discussions on plagiarism and the reasons why students engage in the act are never complete without the mention of ethics and situational ethics in the context of the college education. According to Klein (2011) [10], ethics refers to the moral values that determine whether an action is right or wrong in the eyes of a particular individual or community. Therefore, ethics determines how members of a group or community behave, act, and make decisions on various issues, including the decision to cheat or engage in plagiarism. Essentially, situations such as not being prepared for an assignment or exam put students in a position where they have to use their ethical values and principles to determine the best course of action. In such cases, students

may be stressed to the limit, and those without strong ethical principles will opt for the easiest way out: copy and pasting materials from various sources on the internet (McCabe, 2005 [11]). The reasons why students may fail to prepare for an assignment or an exam may be numerous. Some of the common causes include absenteeism, sickness, lack of seriousness and motivation in class, misplaced priorities, and poor planning and time management skills. Irrespective of the reasons, the failure to prepare for assignments and exams puts students in an ethical dilemma where they have to decide on how to act and behave. Unfortunately, some students do not have the ethical grounds and values that will discourage them from cheating (McCabe, 2005 [11]). Instead, such students see plagiarism as the only way to deal with their lack of preparation and commitment. What some of these students do not understand is that cheating in assignments and engaging in plagiarism do not add any value to their academic journey. These students are willing to take the risk of engaging in plagiarism even though it is morally and ethically wrong.

Schrimsher, Northrup, and Alverson (2011) [12] noted that some students engage in plagiarism because they do not get sufficient time to study. Exams and assignments are part and parcel of the education system. Thus, students are expected to complete assignments and take examinations from time to time. The assignments and exams help the teachers to assess the performance of students and determine whether the short term and long term educational goals have been achieved. It is also imperative to state that students can only perform better in exams and assignments if they are fully prepared. Otherwise, unprepared students are likely to face difficulties as they complete assignments and record poor results in their exams. To avoid such scenarios, some students opt to engage in plagiarism. Such dishonest practices can significantly affect the quality of education and prevent students from acquiring skills and knowledge that can help them in their future careers.

Other researchers have argued that some students engage in plagiarism due the fact that the internet has made information to be readily available and accessible. According to Scanlon and Neumann (2002) [13], plagiarism is a serious problem that has attracted the attention of stakeholders in the education sector and the public at large. The authors added that the nearly universal access to the internet had been identified as one of the reasons for the decline in honesty and integrity in the education sector. In particular, the internet is regarded as one of the issues that continue to exacerbate the problem of plagiarism in college. It provides students with access to a wide range of information and data that they can copy and paste into their assignments without following due procedure or citing the sources (Scanlon & Neumann, 2002 [13]). Others strive to edit the content that they get from the internet in an attempt to prevent teachers from detecting the plagiarized material (McCabe, 2005 [11]). Thus, university faculty, administrators, and lecturers should be concerned about the role of the internet when it increases plagiarism among college students. Also, educators and administrators should help shape the student's conceptions about the internet and its role in the education sector. This way, students will view the internet as a tool that they can use to improve their academic performance rather than an avenue through which they can find material to copy and paste into their papers and assignments.

There is another group of researchers who have examined the reasons why students engage in plagiarism by focusing on the concept of unintentional plagiarism (Scanlon & Neumann, 2002 [13]). According to these researchers, some students plagiarize content from various sources without knowing. Chanock (2008) [14] claimed that many researchers have neglected the fact that some students intend to plagiarize content while another group does it unintentionally. He also noted that there is a gap between students as well as lecturers' understanding of the issue of plagiarism. Those who do not understand what plagiarism is all about and how it affects their academic journey end up engaging in the act without knowing. Some researchers have raised questions on whether students should be penalized when they do not know that they are participating in plagiarism. Fish and Hura (2013) [15], however, respond to the issue that the proof of intent to engage in plagiarism is not required to support the accusation that a student has been involved in academic dishonesty. Despite this being the case, researchers and educators argue that students who are still learning how to write an academic paper may engage in unintentional plagiarism from time to time.

IV. Perception of plagiarism

For different reasons, students seem to have varied opinions of what plagiarism is all about and how it affects their academic journey. In some instances, leaders get ambiguous and conflicting information and instructions on what plagiarism is all about and the way it can affect their academic progress (Klein, 2011 [10]). In other cases, the social identity and context of leaders determine their understanding of plagiarism and compare themselves to other students. If the students perceive that other classmates are not concerned about cheating, they are likely to develop a skewed understanding of plagiarism. According to Klein (2011) [10], students will engage in cheating when they view it as something that is of less concern for other people and students. In other words, such students consider plagiarism as an act that may not have a significant influence on their performance or attract severe consequences and penalties (Klein, 2011 [10]).

While plagiarism remains a widespread problem in the education sector, college educators often overestimate its frequency. Also, some students may believe that plagiarism usually occurs more frequently than

it does while others relate the cases of plagiarism to strangers and not fellow students that they know (Fish &Hura, 2013 [15]). Therefore, it is crucial to examine and understand the belief of students about the nature as well as the frequency of plagiarism in college. Available research evidence and plagiarism literature show that even though many students expect schools and faculties to impose penalties for academic dishonesty, they usually refer to the behavior of other students to see whether their actions will be judged and punished severely (Fish &Hura, 2013 [15]; Brown, 2012 [16]). Besides, the students'opinion that some of them often submit unoriginal work without getting punished can also lead to the distorted understanding of what plagiarism is and how it affects teaching and learning processes. In the long run, such students will see plagiarism as a less serious academic offense that people can engage in without being punished severely (Brown, 2012 [16]). Besides, it may motivate students to participate in plagiarism rather than create original content when working on assignments and exams.

Fish and Hura (2013) [15] posit that the overestimation of cases and effects of plagiarism in college has supported and contributed to the growing prevalence of this form of academic cheating. The researchers carried out a study to examine students' estimation of the incidences of plagiarism in college. Also, the study focused on discussing the various types of plagiarism that are common in schoolson the basis of the students' understanding of copied verbatim. In this case, the researchers analyzed the responses of students to survey items related to plagiarism. In particular, students were asked to give their feedback on the use of other people's ideas, phrase, and sentences, and submitting an entire text that belongs to another author. The results of the study showed that many students believe that plagiarism only affects students and not original authors. However, the respondents agreed that plagiarism was a common form of academic dishonesty that occurs in college. Finally, the study revealed that the respondents believed that there are more severe forms of plagiarism than others. In particular, they indicated that although the use of other people's sentences, ideas, and phrases amounted to academic dishonesty, the submission of an entire text by another author as someone's work was the most severe form of plagiarism. As a result, educators need to come up with mechanisms for addressing all types of plagiarism as the consequences are adverse.

Researchers such as Kokkinaki, Demoliou, and Iakovidou (2015) [17] have reported that the issue of plagiarism remains a common problem because of the differences in the manner in which students perceive and define the practice. Kokkinaki, Demoliou, and Iakovidou (2015) [17] conducted a study to examine how plagiarism is viewed and defined among college students in the Republic of Cyprus. The study entailed using questionnaires consisting of open-ended questions, multiple choice questions, and Likert-type scale questions related to the topic of discussion. A total of 318 students took part in the study. The results of the study showed that there is a need to come up with a uniform and precise definition of academic dishonesty and plagiarism. In addition, it is crucial to develop a reliable mechanism that can be used to communicate the definitions to students and the faculty so that they can have a clearer understanding of what plagiarism really stands for. Finally, Kokkinaki, Demoliou, and Iakovidou (2015) [17] reported that the lack of a precise definition of what plagiarism is all about has made it difficult for educators to encourage students to stay away from the act. Besides, it has made it difficult for faculties to come up with practical policies for managing the act. From these findings and conclusions, the researchers recommended that there is a need to improve the perception of faculties and students about plagiarism by clearly defining the practice and demonstrating how it affects academic progress.

Many researchers concur that students face a lot of ambiguity when it comes to determining what plagiarism is about and the elements that teachers are likely to consider to be dishonest academic behavior. In addition, there appears to be an inherent conflict between the desires of instructors to give students collaborative work and the need of learners to hand in their individual and original work. The red line between academic dishonesty and collaborative work among students is thin, and this further complicates students' understanding of the issue of plagiarism. There is another argument that the ambiguity and the lack of precise definition make students believe that plagiarism is a victimless crime. In other words, such students think that people who engage in plagiarism have only committed an offense against themselves. Despite this being the case, learners still weigh the benefits as well as the negative consequences of participating in the act. In this case, the benefits include better grades and less time spent doing assignments and tasks. The primary outcomes, on the other hand, are being caught by teachers of the faculty. Unfortunately, these students do not perceive plagiarism as a form of academic dishonesty that will affect their current and future life. The attitude of learners who engage in plagiarism is likely to continue after graduation and can significantly affect the future economy and civil society.

Finally, the perception of the public has been taken into account when exploring the problem of plagiarism. Another important argument that has featured in plagiarism literature is that it is a dishonest act that occurs more online compared to classrooms where many educators look for evidence of academic dishonesty (Klein, 2011 [10]). Available research evidence shows that many students have embraced the internet and used it to improve their academic performance (Klein, 2011 [10]). Unfortunately, such technological advancement

has also provided an opportunity for other students to use the ideas, sentences, phrases, and texts belonging to other people without following due procedures. Today, many educators, learners, and parents agree that the internet is a primary facilitator of plagiarism (Klein, 2011 [10]). In addition, they believe that most of the plagiarism that takes place in colleges occurs online. The process usually entails using ideas and phrases of other authors or copy-pasting context without citing the source and acknowledging the original authors (Klein, 2011 [10]). This particular perception of plagiarism is critical when it comes to managing and controlling the deceptive act as it provides insights for policymakers to focus on their interventions and policy frameworks.

V. Addressing the issue of plagiarism

Students join college so that they can acquire knowledge and skills that will help them to succeed in life and become useful members of the society. In the current digital era, the collection, transmission, acquisition, and storage of data can be fast and simple due to the capabilities of technologically advanced solutions such as the internet (Klein, 2011 [10]). Unfortunately, such technologies also provide new avenues for students who want to engage in academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Thus, the issue of plagiarism remains an area of concern for students, educators, and faculties. Available literature shows that plagiarism relates to a number of factors such as the type of assignment and examination in question, availability of information and data, the current condition of the student, and ethics (Scanlon & Neumann, 2002 [13]; Brown, 2012 [16]; Kokkinaki, Demoliou&Iakovidou, 2015 [17]). These factors will determine whether the student will engage in plagiarism or not. Furthermore, researchers have argued that students participate in plagiarism for various reasons. Irrespective of the underlying cause of the action, plagiarism can negatively affect the academic achievement of students. Furthermore, it can negate the benefits that are often associated with college education. Therefore, attempts must be made to address the challenge and discourage students from engaging in such form of academic dishonesty.

Most of the research work on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty has focused on the significance of teaching and learning in ensuring that education helps students to achieve their potential. In particular, the studies have focused on the role of targeted training, support, and induction in helping undergraduate students to avoid dishonest behaviors such as plagiarism. Researchers agree that plagiarism can become so ubiquitous that educators start to dread giving assignments that require students to use external sources. However, some strategies have proved to be useful in helping teachers and faculties to address and respond to the challenge of plagiarism. A review of available research evidence reveals that the strategies that have been used to address plagiarism fall into two major categories: (1.1) plagiarism deterrence methods and (1.2) plagiarism detection methods.

5.1 Plagiarism deterrence

The plagiarism deterrence strategies are the methods that educators use to discourage or deter plagiarism among students. According to Bretag (2013) [18], teachers can use a wide range of techniques to prevent plagiarism among college students. One of the commonly used methods is developing assessments and assignments that make plagiarism difficult. In this case, the educator must link the assignment and the course goals to be clear so that the students can rely on what was learned in class to complete the assigned task. In addition, the instructor needs to consider the relevance and appropriateness of an assignment (Bretag, 2013 [18]). The goal is to ensure that students can complete the assigned tasks without plagiarizing content from other sources. In other cases, educators can deter plagiarism through academic skills training and education. In this context, the goal is to impart skills that students can use to complete assigned tasks and projects efficiently. As noted earlier, students engage in plagiarism by using ideas, content, language, and texts that belong to other people without acknowledging the source (Bretag, 2013 [18]). The act can be intentional or unintentional. In both cases, however, the student presents work that belongs to another person as his or her work. Educators can discourage the trend by helping learners acquire academic skills needed to complete research and assignment such as citing sources in a paper. In particular, students need to be enlightened on the need to acknowledge the authors of any borrowed information through various referencing styles such as APA, MLA, Harvard, and Chicago. Furthermore, educators need to encourage students to come up with original content in their work even as they rely on information borrowed from other sources to complete assignments.

Another approach that can be used to deter plagiarism is the application of appropriate penalties for those who engage in the act. Research has shown that plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty that adds no value to the performance of students (Bretag, 2013 [18]). Instead, it denies students the chance to acquire knowledge and skills that can help them in the future. In addition, it gives students benefits and grades that they do not deserve if the act goes unnoticed. Therefore, teachers and faculties must take an active role in deterring plagiarism by penalizing students who engage in it. According to Berlinck (2011) [19], the punishment and penalties for plagiarism in college usually occur at two different levels. They are student-institution penalties and teacher-student penalties. In the first case, it is the institutions that penalize the student for engaging in

plagiarism. The sanctions may include social work, revocation of title, reprimand, expulsion, suspension, and legal penalties in accordance with the existing legislation (Berlinck, 2011 [19]). Different universities have adopted diverse methods when it comes to punishing plagiarism. In Stanford University, for example, the common punishment for academic plagiarism is suspension and community service. The University of Yale, in contrast, uses reprimands and suspensions to penalize students. University of California at Berkeley encourages the resolution of the problem between the student and the educator (Berlinck, 2011 [19]). Moreover, the resolution can involve punishments such as suspension, additional assignments, submitting a letter of apology, censure, and community service. The second case is for teacher-student penalties which are established by the teacher and are often more lenient compared to those given by the faculty. In most cases, the punishment and penalties from the teacher may include written or verbal warnings, reprimands, and change of grades. Thus, the teacher and the institution seek to make students aware that plagiarism does not add any value to their education (Berlinck, 2011 [19]), but it is simply a shortcut that can affect their academic performance and progression negatively. Another deterrence measure that institutions have adopted to discourage plagiarism is the enactment of disciplinary rules and regulations. A review of previous studies shows that colleges have adapted to forms of disciplinary rules to deter students from engaging in plagiarism (Bretag, 2013 [18]). The first approach entails establishing peremptory rules that seek to prevent any academic plagiarism in institutions of higher learning (Bretag, 2013 [18]). This traditional way of tackling plagiarism is based on the belief that students must follow strict guidelines and standards when doing assignments and projects. Those who fail to abide by the rules, including those related to academic honesty and plagiarism, can be penalized by either the teacher or the faculty. It is also imperative to note that this particular approach places the educator at the center of plagiarism deterrence efforts (Bretag, 2013 [18]). More specifically, it requires educators to identify students who do not comply with the rules that have been set to discourage plagiarism in college. The second approach when it comes to the setting of disciplinary rules is demoralizing students from engaging in the act. In this case, the focus is on portraying plagiarism as an act that brings no educational benefits (Bretag, 2013 [18]). Thus, the school comes up with disciplinary rules that will be used to manage and respond to cases of academic plagiarism among students.

5.2 Plagiarism detection

The second category of plagiarism management and control efforts focuses on detecting the act and identifying those who engage in such academic dishonesties. Often called as plagiarism detection tools, text matching and plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin can be used by instructors to check the degree of similarity between the work of a student and materials that are available over the internet (Klein, 2011 [10]; Bretag, 2013 [18]). The tools also check for similarity between the work of students and papers that had been submitted previously. Today, a significant number of colleges are using text matching tools and software to discourage students from cutting and pasting content from the internet, books, journals and other online sources. The information obtained through the tools can help in determining the prevalence of plagiarism in a given class and identifying specific students who engage in the act (Klein, 2011 [10]; Bretag, 2013 [18]). The theory behind the use of plagiarism detection and text matching tools is that every student has a unique writing style. Thus, they should be in a position to submit content and papers that are unique even when they rely on the same sources and references to complete a given assignment (Klein, 2011 [10]; Bretag, 2013 [18]). Learners who have been suspected of being engaged in plagiarism must demonstrate the authenticity of their work and prove that the content, style, and ideas are not lifted from a previously written text paper or online sources.

It is imperative to point out that different text matching tools that are being used by colleges and educators to detect plagiarism use different approaches to assess content and the writing styles. For instance, MyDropBox.com uses institutional databases and the internet to determine the degree of similarity between various sources and the work that is submitted by a particular student. Like MyDropBox.com, Turnitin detects plagiarism by conducting a comprehensive search of sources available in multiple databases and on the internet (Klein, 2011 [10]; Bretag, 2013 [18]; Ellery, 2008 [20]). The papers sent to the platform remain on the site and can be used by future comprehensive searchers who intend to detect academic dishonesty. According to Klein (2011) [10], Turnitin remains one of the commonly used plagiarism detection tools in the context of higher education. The device keeps the process of submitting papers and detecting plagiarism straightforward (Klein, 2011[10]). The student or instructor presents the paper through the propriety search engine and receives an originality report that indicates the level of plagiarism in percentage form. In addition, it shows the sources from which the plagiarized content was obtained.

VI. The ethics of plagiarism

The plagiarism deterrence and detection tools have significantly helped in reducing cases of academic dishonesty in colleges. However, it is essential to state that plagiarism is only always an issue of student assessment or the act of using ideas and information that belong to other people without following the right

procedure (Bretag, 2013 [18]; Anderson & Steneck, 2011 [21]; Gilmore et al., 2010 [22]). Instead, it is an act that can be regarded as a symptom of a deeply entrenched and worrying culture that seeks to bring tangible rewards like grants, grades, and diplomas instead of the intrinsic values of knowledge creation and learning. Thus, colleges must work hard to address the challenge by fostering and encouraging a culture of academic integrity (Bretag, 2013 [18]). The process entails nurturing a community and a group of students with a shared academic value of honesty and integrity through an encompassing educational policy and approach (Bretag, 2013 [18]). In addition, the management of plagiarism involves encouraging honesty and integrity in every aspect of the college education, including admission processes, mission statement, and orientation.

VII. Conclusion

Stakeholders in higher education often face challenges and problems that can adversely affect the quality of college education. Today, plagiarism remains one of the main difficulties that faculties and instructors must deal with as they strive to impart knowledge and help students acquire skills and competencies needed to succeed in different career paths. Plagiarism is a severe symptom of the lack of academic honesty and integrity among students. In addition, it detracts from the importance and value of honesty and original academic and scholarly work. Available literature and research evidence show that plagiarism is a complex and serious issue that negates some of the milestones that have been reported in higher education. In addition, it requires the attention of all the major stakeholders in colleges, including students, faculties, administrators, and instructors. Thus, universities, faculties, and instructors must perceive plagiarism as a problem that requires a multi-stakeholder and holistic approach that seeks to promote academic integrity.

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