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STUDENT'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS PLAGIARISM: A CASE STUDY OF CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF HARYANA (INDIA)

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Abstract: Plagiarism is an academic misconduct in which a person use or steals others intellectual property and presents it as own. This paper indicates about the perception of Central University Haryana students towards plagiarism. It is observed that the issue of plagiarism is a matter of great concern in higher educational institutions. This survey study was conducted on 150 post graduate level students of central university of Haryana where student's perception towards plagiarism was assessed on the basis of a questionnaire. Results revealed that most of the students had a positive perception towards the plagiarism aspect assessed in this study. The favorable perception could be the result of their understanding about plagiarism and its consequences in academics. It might be due to the notification of UGC about plagiarism according to which it is considered as a crime in academics and UGC has zero tolerance policy on plagiarism with a penalty.

Key Words: Plagiarism, Perception, academic misconduct

Introduction : Etymologically the term plagiarism is taken from the latin word "Plagiarius" which means " Kidnapping" or "plunderer", and it can be defined as the act of using someone else ideas and text stating them as one's own authorship without giving the acknowledgement to the source. So the practice of using others work, idea etc.-without mentioning the original author who deserves the credit for it – for own benefit is known as plagiarism. It can have different definitions by different authors involved in different academic areas. Many views can be related to it but a few below are as follows:

- "Unacknowledged copying of documents or programs" (Joy & Luck, 1999 pp, 129-133)
- " The presentation of another person's ideas or material as if it were one's own" (Culwin & Lancaster, 2000)
- " The Submission of part or all of another person's work as if it were one's own, without the knowledge of the author, and with intention to deceive" (Irving, 2004).

Among many types of academic misconduct or cheating, the plagiarism is one. Similar few more examples are:-

Collusion

When scholar or pupils work in collaboration and put same type of project or assignment which is expected to do by them originally.

Cheating

It means dealing dishonestly, for example coming with material which is not permitted in exams.

According to Carroll (2004) " Students will be less able to plagiarism of teacher changes the assessment task and change what they ask students to submit for assessment each time as the course runs". When student plagiarise, the blame or guilt cannot be put on them exclusively. It was also found that if students finds the course uninteresting then there are greater chances of a cheating.

Students must be informed and aware that what text be accepted and what is not as well what can be accepted and what is not as well what can be the consequences of plagiarism. If students feel that there is very soft or bearable punishment and very less chance of caught then surly they tries to find the ways of cheating.

The development of ICT in the last few decades made easy that any type of information can spread with in few seconds at any place in the world. Hence it can be said that through the use of ICT and internet everything is possible to find in the research papers, conference proceedings, e-journals, websites or e-text written by any person.

Forms of Plagiarism by Students

Usually plagiarism is followed by students in mainly four ways:

1. The act of stealing the material of another person from a source and presenting it off as their own, e.g.

   (a) To buy a research article from a research agency or research service, term paper mill or essay bank which are either already written or asked to write specially.

(b) To copy a complete paper from a text source without acknowledgement of original author.

(c) To submit other person's work without his/her knowledge and consent. For example taking the text or copying the text from a computer hard disk.

2. Submission of a paper which was written by any other person (e.g. by a relative or any peer etc.) and presenting it off as own paper.

3. Copying or making theft of any section or many sections of text mater from a single or many text resources or writing/copying whole document including full reference but not mentioning the quotation mark, hence trying to give such indication that this matter was paraphrased rather than quoting it.

4. Paraphrasing of material from a single or many text sources without giving the proper documentation.

Statement of Study

Present study was stated as Perception of Central University Students towards Plagiarism.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was:

- To study the perception of students towards Plagiarism in central university of Haryana.

Research Question

This study was guided by the research question:

- What is the perception towards plagiarism by students of Central University of Haryana?

Overview of Literature

Armstrong and Delbridge (2008) conducted a study in the department of information and communication to assess the final year students perception towards plagiarism at a unnamed university. A self prepared questionnaire was used as a tool for this study in which results revealed that a significantly large number of students were having a favourable perception of acts which makes academic integrity rather than plagiarism. Most of the students were agreed to the positive statement which states that-

'It is right to give credit to authors for their work'

'Plagiarism is wrong' and

'Plagiarism undermines learning and creating their own ideas'

Also expectedly, students were disagreed with the negative statements like 'getting good grades is more important to me than citing materials and that 'there's no harm involved with plagiarism' and 'winning is more important than honesty'

Fish and Hura (2013) conducted a study on on perception of students towards plagiarism in a large university in U.S.A. Sample of this study was 334 students. It was found that 96.4% students were having the view that copying others document is a serious act. 78% students were in agreement that copying a paragraph is a serious act. 51% students were in favour that copying phrases of another author's work is serious. Thus students did not perceive plagiarism in a positive way.

Guedes and Filho (2015) conducted a study at the Universidade Estadual do Sudoeste da Bahia (UESB), Brazil on the perception of academic plagiarism among 199 undergraduates who were studying dentistry. To collect the data a questionnaire was used and subsequent analysis of the responses was done with the use of the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Findings revealed that , the researchers reported that all of the students (100%) confirmed that plagiarism is indeed a crime and that they all were in full support of the Brazilian legislation provided to prevent and combat it. This indicated that the undergraduate students were fully aware of the menace of plagiarism.

Idiegbeyan-Ose et al. (2016) conducted a study in federal, state and private universities in Ogun State Nigeria that focused on the awareness and perception of plagiarism by 338 postgraduate students. The questionnaire was the research instrument and the study was descriptive in nature. Findings of the study showed that majority of the respondents (156) 46.2% had an average level of plagiarism awareness. However, a little above 0.4% of the respondents i.e. (140) 41.44% indicated that their awareness level of plagiarism was high and (42) 12.4% noted that their aware **Ayon (2017)** conducted a survey on instructors and students to study the perception of turn it in software as a baulk to plagiarism in a Labanese English –speaking university. Sample of study was 137 students. Results of the study revealed that 57% students had plagiarised intentionally.

Methodology

In this study the investigator used descriptive survey research method. Survey research is a method for collection and analysis of data from a large number of respondents which represents a specific population . In this method data are collected through a questionnaire or be interviews. By this method investigator usually tries to describe the population under study. It is a commonly used approach to know the current status of existing phenomenon.

Sample

For the purpose of present study, Random sampling design was used. In the present study the investigator took total number of 150 post graduate level students of Central university of Haryana.

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents

Central University of Haryana (P.G. Students)	Number of Students	Total Students
Science stream students	50	
Art Stream Students	50	150
Commerce and management stream students	50	

Tool Used for the Study

For collecting the data, research investigator may use variety of instruments keeping in view the need and purpose of the study. Hence, the selection of the device is of vital importance for data collection that depends on various factors like objectives of investigation, availability of suitable tool or scale, competences of investigator in administering, scoring and interpretation of data. The instrument used for the present study was a self made questionnaire which consisted of eight questions related to perception towards plagiarism. Each question has four options as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree .

Data Analysis and Results

The answer to research question was obtained by analysis of responses obtained through perception assessment.

Table 2 : Student's Perception about Plagiarism

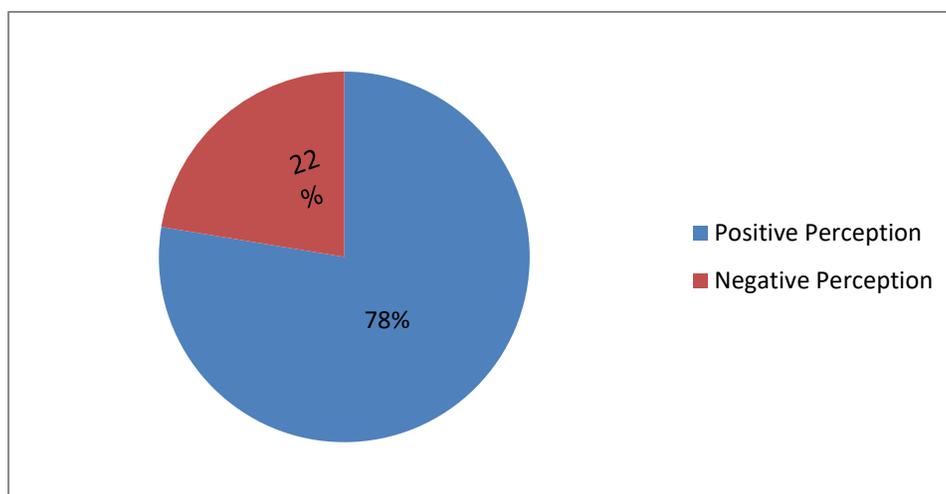| Sr. no.	Statement	Strongly Agree/Agree		Strongly Disagree/Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Plagiarism is a crime in academics	130	86.6	20	13.3
2	Plagiarism is an act of lack of honesty and integrity	110	73.3	40	26.6
3	Plagiarism is done by those who are lack of character	115	76.6	35	23.3
4	Plagiarism is an act done because of Laziness	111	74	39	26
5	There is something wrong in doing plagiarism	120	80	30	20
6	Plagiarism does not shows your smartness	109	72.6	41	27.3
7	Everyone is doing plagiarism , but it is wrong	108	72	42	28
8	Plagiarism affects the morals	128	85.3	22	14.6
Mean		**77.58**		**22.42**	

Figure1 : Student's Perception about Plagiarism

Table 3: Perception of science students about Plagiarism

Sr. no.	Statement	Strongly Agree/Agree		Strongly Disagree/Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Plagiarism is a crime in academics	40	80	10	20
2	Plagiarism is an act of lack of honesty and integrity	30	60	20	40
3	Plagiarism is done by those who are lack of character	33	66	17	34
4	Plagiarism is an act done because of Laziness	26	52	24	48
5	There is something wrong in doing plagiarism	30	60	20	40
6	Plagiarism does not shows your smartness	27	54	23	46
7	Everyone is doing plagiarism , but it is wrong	29	58	21	42
8	Plagiarism affects the morals	40	80	10	20

	Mean	63.75	36.25

Table 4: Perception of art students about Plagiarism

Sr. no.	Statement	Strongly Agree/Agree		Strongly Disagree/Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Plagiarism is a crime in academics	40	80	10	20
2	Plagiarism is an act of lack of honesty and integrity	32	64	18	36
3	Plagiarism is done by those who are lack of character	35	70	15	30
4	Plagiarism is an act done because of Laziness	35	70	15	30
5	There is something wrong in doing plagiarism	40	80	10	20
6	Plagiarism does not shows your smartness	35	70	15	30
7	Everyone is doing plagiarism , but it is wrong	35	70	15	30
8	Plagiarism affects the morals	38	76	12	24
	Mean	**72.5**		**27.5**	

Table 5: Perception of commerce and management students about Plagiarism

Sr. no.	Statement	Strongly Agree/Agree		Strongly Disagree/Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Plagiarism is a crime in academics	50	100	00	00
2	Plagiarism is an act of lack of honesty and integrity	48	96	2	4
3	Plagiarism is done by those who are lack of character	47	94	3	6
4	Plagiarism is an act done because of Laziness	50	100	00	00
5	There is something wrong in doing plagiarism	50	100	00	00
6	Plagiarism does not shows your smartness	47	94	3	6
7	Everyone is doing plagiarism , but it is wrong	45	90	5	10
8	Plagiarism affects the morals	50	100	00	00
Mean		**96.75**		**3.25**	

From Table 2 and graphical Figure 1, it is clear that mean value of overall Agree and disagree responses on perception was 77.58% and 22.41% respectively. It meant that 78% students had Positive perception towards plagiarism while 22% students had Negative perception towards plagiarism. It was because 86% respondents expressed that Plagiarism is a crime, 73% respondents said that Plagiarism is an act of lack of honesty and integrity , 77% respondents expressed that Lack of character leads to Plagiarism, 74% respondents expressed that Laziness is responsible for plagiarism, 80% respondents expressed that Plagiarism means wrong doing, 73% respondents expressed that plagiarism is not a smart work, 72% respondents expressed that

imitation of plagiarism is wrong and 85% respondents expressed that plagiarism leads to immorality. Overall 22% respondents were not agree with the factors related to perception towards plagiarism. Also in academic stream wise analysis it was clear from table 3, 4 and 5, that 63.75 % science respondent, 72.5% art respondents and 96.75% commerce and management respondents were agree to perception factors towards plagiarism and thus they had positive perception towards plagiarism. It was surprising to see that art and commerce and management stream students had more positive perception towards plagiarism as compared to science and art stream students. It might be due to academic variables like information, knowledge etc.

Discussion on Findings

Findings revealed that most of the students had positive perception towards the aspect assessed in this study. The favourable perception could be the result of their understanding about plagiarism and its consequences in academics. It might be due to the notification of UGC about plagiarism according to which its a crime in academics and UGC has zero tolerance policy on plagiarism with penalty. The results are of this study favours the studies done by Guedes and Filho (2015) and Okere et al. (2016)**.** Since students had the knowledge that failure to follow the rules and regulations implemented by UGC in writing research work can lead to penalty both on Students that is why they had might developed a positive perception towards plagiarism. More Perception of commerce students as compared to science and art stream students might be due to academic variables like more informative teachers, seminar in the department etc.

Conclusion

Plagiarism is an burning issue in the field of academics now a day's specially in higher education due to its rife rate among today's students, scholars and researcher supervisors. That is why relevant stake holders like UGC has begun revivification in the level of plagiarism awareness in academic society and especially in higher education institutions. It is revealed that perception of students towards plagiarism was positive but there are many deviant behaviors in society which are difficult to eradicate and plagiarism is one of them and by rising the intensity of more favorable perception towards it, it can be minimized to lowest level.

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