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Plagiarism: Awareness, Perception and Attitude of Research scholars in Farook College, Kozhikode, Kerala, India

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ABSTRACT

The study is conducted on plagiarism awareness, perception, and attitude of research scholars in Farook College. There are 101 research scholars and the whole population is selected for the study. A questionnaire tool was used for data collection. The present study describes various aspects of plagiarism such as awareness of plagiarism, perception of plagiarism, use of plagiarism detection software, satisfaction with plagiarism detection software, use of citation styles, and awareness of punishments for plagiarism. The findings reveal that most of the research scholars are much aware of plagiarism and its consequences.

Keywords: Plagiarism, Research scholars, Awareness, Perception, Citations, Farook College

INTRODUCTION

Research is a systematic investigative process employed to increase or revise current knowledge by discovering new facts. Nowadays, many kinds of research in different disciplines are being conducted throughout the world. Each researcher comes out with new ideas and results.

A researcher must ensure that the research output put forward by him is free of any type of misconduct. One such misconduct that might occur in research is "plagiarism". Plagiarism is simply the use of someone's ideas, views, or words without giving credit to the original work.

Plagiarism is turning out to be a big challenge to various researchers and academicians due to the easy availability of resources anytime from anywhere, which poses a serious threat to the integrity of their work. The prominent reasons considered for the rapid growth in plagiarism cases are lack of awareness about it and its consequences, fierce competition, and easy availability of digital resources online. (Mishra & Gautam, 2017)

DEFINITION

Merriam-Webster's online dictionary (2014) defines plagiarism as "the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person: the act of plagiarizing something".

According to Hannabuss (2001), plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the ideas and language/expression of someone else and involves representing their work as your own".

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kight (2018) conducted a study on the decision to pursue disciplinary action for plagiarism. The main objectives of the study were to explore how and why adjunct instructors address includes student plagiarism, to identify factors used in determining plagiarism. The researcher used a qualitative case study to collect data. The major findings of the study were to participants depended on observable traits such as amount, as well as followed moral and ethical conviction addressing plagiarism is highly subjective due to difficulty in determining intent. Rangeet (2017) organized a case study on the use of plagiarism detection software at SRTM University. The main objectives of the study were to analyze receipts of theses for plagiarism during the period of study, to study the percentage range of plagiarism in these submitted. The findings of the study were those maximum researchers, even though not aware of this process succeeded in testing. Most of them were aware of plagiarism detection tools. Suseela & Uma (2017) examined a study of users' perception at the University of Hyderabad. The main objectives of the study were to examine users' perception regarding plagiarism, to identify plagiarism detection tools, the role of the library in executing new practices in Hyderabad University. The survey result indicated that around 80 percentages of respondents were aware of the concept, functionality features of plagiarism detection tools. 80 to 90 percentages agreed that implementing plagiarism detection tools were satisfied with the information and screening services provided by the

library. Ibegbulam & Eze (2016) organized a case study on the knowledge perception and attitude of Nigerian students to plagiarism. Ose, Nikiko & Osonulu (2016) carried out a study on awareness and perception of plagiarism of postgraduate students in selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. Ramzan & Asif (2016) conducted a study on the topic of awareness of plagiarism among university students in Pakistan to bring out and highlight the seriousness of plagiarism among graduate and postgraduate students in Pakistan. Razera & Verhagen (2014) examined plagiarism awareness and perception among students and teachers in Swedish higher education to identify plagiarism awareness.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study covers the awareness of plagiarism and its perception among research scholars of Farook College. The study will help to know the attitude and perception of the research scholars towards plagiarism and to make them aware of the seriousness of their wrong action. If they are aware of plagiarism in the early stage of research, they will avoid it throughout their lifetime. Also, it ensures productive results from the population through awareness of plagiarism.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the awareness and perception of plagiarism among research scholars.

2. To know the awareness of citation and mostly used citation style among research scholars.

3. To study the awareness and use of plagiarism detection software by the research scholars.

4. To determine the most used plagiarism detection software.

5. To determine the satisfaction level among research scholars while using plagiarism detection software.

METHODOLOGY

The population selected for this study is the research scholars at Farook College. There are 101 research scholars at Farook College and a census study is conducted. The Arts and Science discipline is taken as the classificatory variables of the study. The questionnaire method is adopted to collect data from the population. The percentage method is used for data analysis, using MS-Excel. Out of 101 questionnaires distributed, 88 were duly filled and returned back

Discipline wise response rate
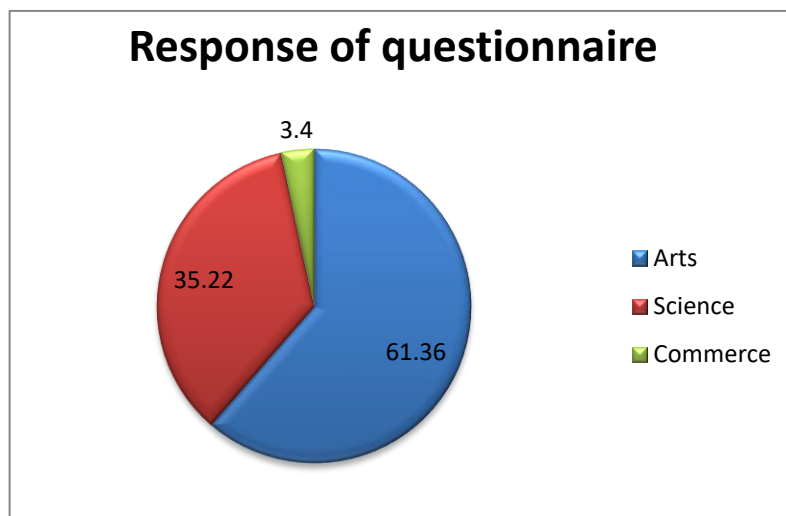
Figure 1

Discipline wise response rate

Above figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents of questionnaires according to their respective disciplines. Out of 101 questionnaires distributed, 88 were returned. Therefore the total response rate is 87.12 percent. Within this 61.36 percent are Arts researchers and 35.22 percent are Science researchers. Since Commerce research scholars are only 3.40 percent, it is not considered for the study

Research categorical response rate

Table 1

Research Categories

Research Category	Part-time		Full- time	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Research Scholars	53	60.22%	35	39.77%

Above table 1 show that 60.22 percent are Part-time research scholars and 39.77 percent are Full-time research scholars.

.DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Awareness of the term 'Plagiarism'

Plagiarism is the "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another author's language thoughts, ideas, or expressions and the representation of them as one's own original work. (*ARSSS*, n.d.) .To brings out productive research output a research scholar needs to be aware of plagiarism.

Table 2

Awareness of Plagiarism

Awareness of plagiarism	Arts (N=54)	Science (N=31)	Total (N=85)
Aware	53 98.14%	30 96.77%	83 97.64%

Not aware	1 1.85%	1 3.22%	2 2.35%

Table 1 depicts that a large majority of research scholars (97.64 percent) are familiar with the term plagiarism. Very few researchers (2.35 percent) are not aware of the term plagiarism. A large majority of research scholars in both Arts (98.14 percent) and Science discipline (96.77 percent) are aware of the term Plagiarism.

Perception of research scholars regarding Plagiarism

Plagiarism arises in different ways. It might occur with full awareness or unintentionally. The respondents were asked to provide information regarding their perception of plagiarism within the given statements.

Table 3

Research scholars' opinion on Plagiarism

Statement	Plagiarism			Not Plagiarism			Uncertain		
	Arts	Science	Total	Arts	Science	Total	Arts	Science	Total
To submit someone else's work as if it is yours.	54 (100%)	31 (100%)	85 (100%)	-	-	-	-	-	-
To take a piece of text from a book and submit it as yours without giving proper reference.	51 (94.44%)	31 (100%)	82 (96.47%)	2 (3.70%)	-	2 (2.35%)	1 (1.85%)	-	1 (1.17%)
To use most of the content from someone else's original text but change the order.	45 (83.33%)	26 (83.87%)	71 (83.52%)	5 (9.25%)	1 (3.22%)	6 (7.05%)	4 (7.40%)	4 (12.90%)	8 (9.41%)

To extract your main points from a text you read, but write it in your own words.	29 (53.70%)	4 (12.90%)	33 (38.82%)	17 (31.48%)	23 (74.19%)	40 (47.05%)	8 (14.81%)	4 (12.90%)	12 (14.11%)
To quote a paragraph as well as to italicize it and cite the source with a page reference in the text in a footnote and bibliography.	2 (3.70%)	2 (6.45%)	4 (4.70%)	51 (94.44%)	29 (93.54%)	80 (94.11%)	1 (1.85%)	-	1 (1.17%)

Submitting someone else's work as one's own is estimated as plagiarism by all the selected population of research scholars. Also, extracting a piece of text from other sources and not giving a reference is estimated as plagiarism by a large majority of researchers (96.47 percent). This indicates that the topic of plagiarism is of much concern to scholars. The researchers seem to be inconsistent in deciding on whether extracting main points from other texts and writing them in one's own words is plagiarism or not. This evokes a slight dilemma among the researchers regarding plagiarism.

The table further shows that a large majority of Arts researchers (94.44 percent) and all the Science researchers (100 percent) consider, not giving reference to the texts from other sources as plagiarism. Quoting a text and giving reference to it is considered not plagiarism by a large majority of research scholars in Arts (94.44 percent) and Science (93.5 percent). Changing the order of someone else's text and using it in one's research paper is contemplated as plagiarism by a majority of researchers both in Arts (83.33 percent) and in Science (83.87 percent).

Reasons for plagiarism

Plagiarism may occur due to many reasons such as excess workload, time pressure, lacking research skills, etc. The respondents were asked to mention the reasons for plagiarism.

Table 4

Reasons for plagiarism

Reasons for plagiarism	Response		Total
	Arts	**Science**	
Time pressure	3 (5.55%)	2 (6.45%)	5 (5.88%)
Excess workload	3 (5.55%)	1 (3.22%)	4 (4.70%)
Lacking research skills	35 (64.81%)	21 (67.74%)	56 (65.88%)
Unaware	8 (14.81%)	6 (19.35%)	14 (16.47%)
External pressure	0	1 (3.22%)	1 (1.17%)
Others	2 (3.70%)	3 (16.12%)	5 (5.88%)

The largest number of respondents in Arts (64.81 percent) and Science (67.74 percent) consider lacking research skills as the major reason for plagiarism. Very few in Arts (14.81 percent) and Science (19.35 percent) opined unawareness as to the reason. Also, external pressure is opted by the least number of Science researchers (3.22 percent). On the other hand, very few Arts researchers (3.70 percent) and Science researchers (16.12 percent) mentioned other reasons for plagiarism such as lack of language skills.

Awareness of Citation

Citation is the quotation from or reference to a book, paper, or author in a scholarly work. (*Vocabulary Flashcards | Quizlet*, n.d.) Citations are very important to prevent plagiarism. The respondents were asked to mention whether they are aware to cite a work or not.

Table 5

Awareness of citation

Awareness of citation	Arts	Science	Total
Aware	52 96.29%	30 96.77%	82 96.47%
Not aware	2 3.70%	1 3.22%	3 3.52%

The response in Table 5 shows that a lion's majority of research scholars (96.47 percent) are aware of citation. Also, 96.26 percent of Arts researchers and 96.74 percent of Science researchers are aware to cite a work.

Citation style used

Style manuals are of different types. Different style manuals are available for different disciplines like APA, MLA, Chicago, Harvard, etc. The research scholars were asked to indicate the type of citation style they use to give reference in their research papers.

Table 6

Citation style used

Citation Style	Arts (N=54)	Science (N=31)	Total (N=85)
MLA	39 (72.22%)	15 (48.38%)	54 (63.52%)
APA	6 (11.11%)	5 (16.12%)	11 (12.94%)
Chicago	2 (3.70%)	1 (3.22%)	3 (3.52%)
Harvard	4 (7.40%)	1 (3.22%)	5 (5.88%)

		9	9
Others	0	(29.03%)	(10.58%)

Table 6 indicates that more than half of the researchers (63.52 percent) prefer MLA style manual for citation which may be due to the ease in structuring and styling guidelines of MLA. It also helps the instructor to read and understand the work without any difficulty, while a few researchers (3.52 percent) opt for the Chicago style manual for citation.
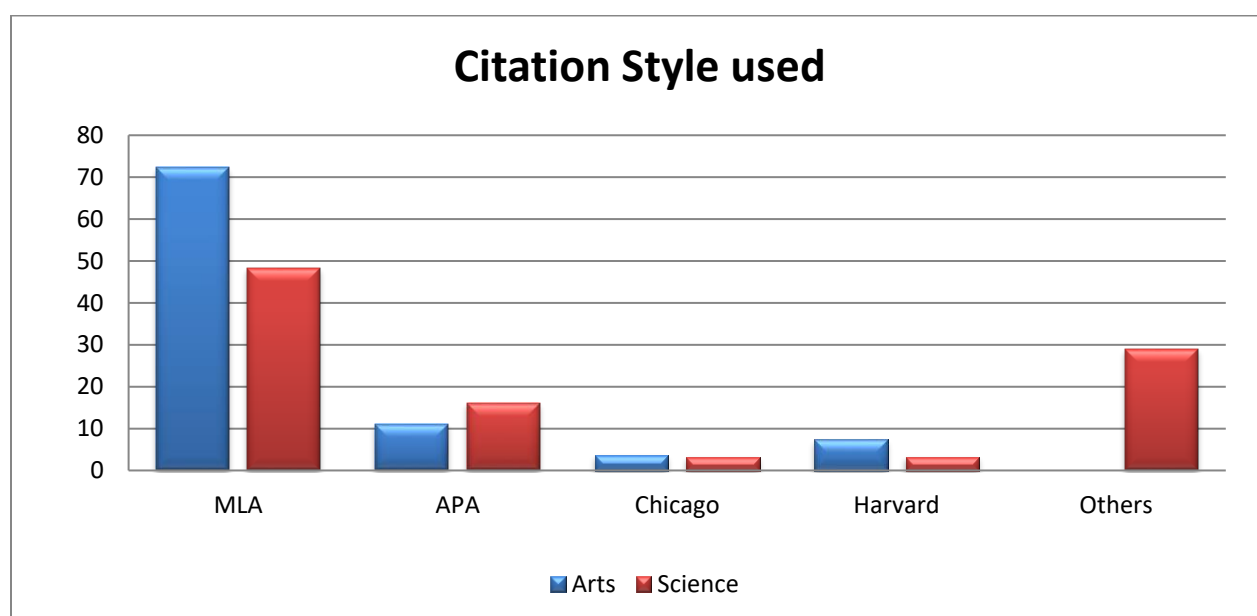

Figure 2

Citation Style used

From figure 2 it is clear that the majority of Arts researchers (72.22 percent) generally opt for MLA and a good number of Science researchers (48.38 percent) prefer MLA style manual for citation. Very few Arts researchers (11.11 percent) and Science researchers (16.12 percent) opt APA style manual. On the other hand, a few Science researchers (29.03 percent) prefer other citation styles such as ACS, Nature, and IEEE, etc. for citation work. Arts researchers tend to use

MLA style more than Science researchers. On the other hand Science, scholars prefer APA more than Arts researchers.

Awareness of Plagiarism detection Software

Plagiarism detection software helps to check for plagiarism in research writings.

Table 7

Awareness of plagiarism detection software

Awareness of plagiarism detection software	Arts (N=54)	Science (N=31)	Total (N=85)
Aware	47 (87.03%)	27 (87.09%)	74 (87.05%)
Not aware	7 (12.96%)	4 (12.90%)	11 (12.94%)

The research scholars were asked to provide information regarding their awareness of plagiarism detection software. Their response in Table 6 shows that the majority of research scholars (87.05 percent) are aware of plagiarism detection software. Also, the majority of both Arts (87.03 percent) and Science (87.09 percent) researchers are aware of plagiarism detection software.

Use of types of plagiarism detection software

Plagiarism detection software helps the researchers to identify any kind of plagiarism issue in their research paper. Plagiarism detection tools are many such as Mendeley, Turnitin, and Plagscan, etc.

Table 8

Use of types of plagiarism detection software

Plagiarism detection software	Response		
	Arts (N=13)	Science (N=16)	Total (29)
Mendeley	4 (30.76%)	6 (37.5%)	10 (34.48%)
Turnitin	8 (61.53%)	10 (62.5%)	18 (62.06%)
Plagscan	5 (38.46%)	7 (43.75%)	12 (41.37%)
Others	1 (7.69%)	-	1 (3.44%)

The researchers were enquired on the types of plagiarism detection software they use. Table 8 reveals that out of 29 research scholars using plagiarism detection software, more than half of respondents (62.06 percent) use Turnitin software for plagiarism detection. 34.48 percent tend to use Mendeley software. This may be due to the functionality of Turnitin software, which checks for potentially unoriginal content by comparing submitted papers to several databases using a proprietary algorithm(*Turnitin Plagiarism Detection Service | Trunk User Guide | Trunk User Guide*, n.d.).Also, the software mostly used by both Science researchers (62.5 percent) and Arts researchers (61.53 percent) is Turnitin.

Satisfaction while using plagiarism detection software

The research scholars, who tend to use plagiarism detection software, were asked regarding their satisfaction with using plagiarism detection software.

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Table 8

Satisfaction with using plagiarism detection software

Satisfaction on using plagiarism detection software	Arts (N=13)	Science (N=16)	Total (N=29)
Satisfied	9 69.23%	11 68.75%	20 68.96%
Partially satisfied	4 30.76%	5 31.25%	9 31.03%
Not satisfied	- -	- -	- -

More than half of research scholars (68.96 percent) are satisfied with using plagiarism detection software and 31.03 percent are partially satisfied. No research scholars are dissatisfied with plagiarism detection software. This may be due to the increase in self-confidence he/she experiences with one's research paper when plagiarism detection software is used. Also 68.75 percent of Science researchers and 69.23 percent Arts researchers are adequately satisfied with plagiarism detection software.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT:

Based on the response of the study, the following suggestions are given for making research scholars aware of plagiarism:

1. An awareness program should be conducted on plagiarism.
2. Provide training and education regarding plagiarism.
3. Conduct practical workshops on introduction about plagiarism detection software
4. Conduct workshops in the usage of the English language.

CONCLUSIONS

The study tries to understand the awareness and perceptions regarding plagiarism among the research   scholars

The analyses reveal that a large majority of research scholars are aware of Plagiarism. Lacking research skills is considered the major reason for plagiarism by a majority of researchers. Proper orientation towards this misconduct has to be done among research scholars. The library can organize many training programs in making aware of the different tools for the detection of software. This will help to wipe out this misconduct from the research scholars and helps in producing effective output in the research.

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