Discussion of Academic Ethics

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In research and academia, in particular, it is essential to abide by ethical norms because ethical norms are essential to promote what are actual research aims such as evidence, knowledge, and truth. Ethical issues in research have a wide range, from discretion to plagiarism of data. Plagiarism has become one of the most important discussed factor in the area of research. Furthermore, it is a complex ethical issue that requires introspection by educational institutions over the attitudes that are encouraging plagiarism in academics, which this paper shall proceed below to analyze.

As with national studies, internet plagiarism was rated lower than cheating by the students, but internet plagiarism is the frequently used form of cheating. In a study, about 50% of the students surveyed responded that they had familiar with someone who had involved in the act of internet plagiarism. On asking precisely that if they would copy an assignment, 33% of them refused that they would not indulge in this act due to ethics and morals, which means that about 67% would intentionally copy the content of their assignments (Jones, 2011). This study indicates that it is acceptable for most of the students to copy or cheat.

In another study, researchers submitted their assignments to a plagiarism checking software to assess the level of plagiarism in their work without their knowledge. The findings suggested that the average plagiarism level of students not aware of whether their work would be checked was 20.5% (Batane, 2010). Furthermore, the students were then introduced to the software for another assignment and made aware that their work would be run through the software. The findings showed that the level of plagiarism decreased by 4.3% among students, which was significant because using the software did not eliminate plagiarism. Thus a detection mechanism alone is not able to tackle this complex problem, and it makes it clear that battling plagiarism requires a systematic re-approach in which the entire education design is re-evaluated, and the underlying attitudes that encourage learning and discourage plagiarism are identified

The decision to plagiarize the research or cheat is an ethical dilemma which most of the students face in their academic lives. The decision to plagiarize or not also depends on the reasons. These reasons or triggers range from lack of knowledge to disgraceful intentions. There are many triggers that become a reason for students to plagiarize and cheat such as lack of enough knowledge to the intentions to do dishonesty. Collectively the most commonly observed reasons of students cheating are fear to fail, procrastination, craving for better grades, disinterest in the assignments and poor time management. In addition, students believe that they won't get caught, so they plagiarize. Some of them are confused about the plagiarism policies. However, none of these reasons are clues to do academic dishonesty. Such students disrespect those who work hard and put diligent care in their assignments. Students need to realize that when there are reasons to copy, professors have to evaluate novelty in each student work, not in that done by others.

To conclude, integrity in academia is an acquired skill that faculty members can model and teach. It is essential that ethics are infused in every aspect of research and education. Ethics serve as principal boundaries between wrongful and rightful practices, whether they are on a collective basis or individual basis. The learning environment in academia has to foster ethical principles that motivate students to avoid plagiarism by systematically reviewing existing approaches to education, and making it further difficult to plagiarize. For this purpose, an introspection has to be done by institutions that identify the attitudes existing within the system that are encouraging students to plagiarize.

# References

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