

Plagiarism in Advanced Educational Research: Reasons, Extent, Perceived Penalty and Severity

Adrian Bon B. Santiago, Michael Joseph S. Diño & Muriel E. Caballero
Research Development and Innovation Center (RDIC)
Our Lady of Fatima University
Philippines

Abstract

This paper aims to provide a clear understanding on the manifestation of numerous violations of plagiarism. It appears to be one of the most dominant issues concerning academic malpractice. It is regarded as a sociable sarcoma that needs to be curtailed not only by the designated authorities of the government but also to be reinforced by all academicians and educators as their implied oath to academic and social responsibility. The presence and commission of plagiarism is to be categorized into two (2) schools of thought or ideologies. The intentional and unintentional plagiarism. Academic excellence must be achieved through lawful and permissible means. It must not be stained by dishonesty and deceit. Academic research has proven its importance and necessity in this innovative world. The general concept of plagiarism allows the appropriate utilization of qualitative approach. The respondents came from the world of academe that give relevant and informative facts, ideas and concepts scrutinizing the growing issues of plagiarism as to its reasons, extent, perceived penalty and severity. It is an indispensable requirement to establish well-founded laws, rules and guidelines designed to prevent further advancement of plagiarism.

Keywords: Plagiarism, Reasons, Responsibilities, Violations and Penalties.

1. Introduction

The birth of continuous development and advancement of technology provide various violations of Plagiarism. It is present not only in the social and political environment but also most importantly in the academic sector. It is regarded as one of the most controversial issues we commonly find in the academic setting that needs to be addressed properly. Plagiarism as the author's definition, refers to an academic malpractice of attaining excellence by virtue of encroaching ideas from the rightful owner and thereby attributing such concept as your own. In this meaning, not only words are being copied but the wonderful and creative ideas of persons. Learning the legal implications of plagiarism, notion on the scarcity of proper information dissemination and its deeper understanding is of great importance and utmost necessity. Plagiarism is viewed in two (2) Schools of thought or ideologies, the intentional and unintentional plagiarism. The first was recognized as the deliberate and willful intent to cause damage by taking not only the actual works and words of others but ideas and concepts from the legitimate owner. On the contrary, unintentional plagiarism is present whenever a person in his own capacity, without intent and malice has formulated the same thoughts, ideas or design of the first registered individual or entity whose rights are already protected by law. Also, it is present when the researchers inadvertently or negligently overlook to cite the source or person to whom the ideas are to be attributed. The purpose and objective of this study is to foster knowledge to every individual about the increasing legal and social issues on plagiarism. The penalties, concepts, avoidance, and reasons why people resort to plagiarism. Moreover, in the field of innovation and development, several countries around the globe realizing the effects of plagiarism already implemented laws to prohibit, regulate and even prosecute violators thereof. They possess and adopt the latest software and mechanism designed to identify or detect plagiarism violations. However, some countries are still in the "world of abstracts" not seeing clearly the importance and morality of academic integrity. In the Philippines, it is of wrong notion that if you commit plagiarism you will be held criminally and civilly liable.

In contemporary laws, we do not have any concrete or unified definition of plagiarism and if there is violation, it is broad or wide enough that produces general concept that every form of copying is plagiarism. It also suggests as void for being vague because it is not specifically defined. According to the Latin maxim “Nullum Crimen Nulla Poena Sine Lege” meaning, there is no crime or punishment when there is no ground or law punishing it. (Crisan, 2010) The law must be clear and explicit as to its meaning and application for its proper implementation and observance. Therefore, if it is not defined as a special law for that effect, the culprit will be imprisoned not because of committing plagiarism but because of violating other crimes. It is maintained that plagiarism is not a crime per se but identified as the means employed, medium used or manner presented to commit other crimes such as but not limited to the following, violation or infringement of copyright, E-commerce Act and Cybercrime law. The researcher, in compliance of any requirement and to have a fruitful and meaningful result, suggests that the product or output must originate from the legitimate source. If not, must be appropriately credited or attributed. The Golden rule on plagiarism posits that “in the event and circumstance of uncertainty, provide the proper recognition”. This study aims to contribute primarily for the protection of intellectual property rights, to disseminate information about plagiarism, define plagiarism, its violation, reason, extent, and perceive penalties.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Background

According to Social Learning theory, (Bandura, 1977) learning is an unbroken and continuous process that takes place in a social perspective of the participating community. Manifesting innocently through direct observation, adoption or instruction. In this theory, it provides that the people around the observer-learner will respond to the behavior it imitates with either reinforcement or punishment. If a learner observes that the actions taken by the models committing plagiarism are rewarding then it is more likely to continue performing the similar behavior or imitate those people it recognizes as comparable to itself. In this manner, if learners and students observe that doing or practicing plagiarism as witnessed on their colleagues result in satisfying or rewarding manner, without apprehension or consequences from authority, then the tendency or probability of plagiarism will increase and definitely result to simulation and replication. Consequently, it will respond to the same process or cycle in their respective environment. Furthermore, under the reinforcement theory, known as the operant condition theory (Skinner, 1938), it asserts that behaviors will respond either positive or negative. If the reinforcement made by the educators or teachers positively respond to the wrong doing of plagiarism then the learners or students action in the environment is validated, confirmed and strengthened that will cause reiteration of erroneous practice of plagiarism. On the other hand, if the reinforcement is properly maintained, the actions undertaken by the learners or students are sanctioned or penalized, then the practice of plagiarism as an emerging issue or problem affecting academic integrity will be abated.

2.1 Persuasive Reasons

In the context of academic discipline, Plagiarism is regarded as a common schema that reflects primarily on individual’s educational delinquency. It clearly violates the provisions of academic honesty and integrity. Also, it prohibits the further attainment of academic excellence. The indicators show compelling reasons why individuals result to the unwarranted practice of plagiarism. It can be summarized into the following: a) personal interest and convenience, b) insufficiency of knowledge, c) deficiency of educational awareness on plagiarism, d) difficulty and challenges in formulating thoughts, ideas and concepts, e) laziness and idleness, f) it is the common practice and observance in the community, and g) lack of proper implementation of an enabling law or statute.

2.2 Extent

The emergence of industrial advancement, innovation and technology, particularly through the utilization of social media greatly amplifies the degree of cases constituting several violations of plagiarism. Though systems and software are introduced to prevent instances of plagiarism, nevertheless, without appropriate regulation and ruling, the fear and danger of supposed plagiarism is still a threat to present times and integrity is undoubtedly at stake. Unveiling the truth that plagiarism will still proliferate in the environment of academic learning.

2.3 Perceived Penalty and Perceived Severity

The imposition of penalty and application of preventive measures such as warning, reprimand, rectification, dismissal, fine and even imprisonment are some of the suggested means employed to lessen or limit the commission of an offence.

However, the question lies on to what specific extent we consider a person is liable or guilty of plagiarism. Undeniably, the area of plagiarism is comprehensive enough that requires deeper understanding of its meaning and application. Various parameters are needed to be considered for its profound deliberation. The different views on plagiarism, variety of interpretations, determinants of liability, percentage value constituting plagiarism, and conflicting views must be taken cognizance. Unless there is a secured, fixed and established universal rule on the prevalence of plagiarism, the issue will remain and pursue in future generations. To this end, the defiance of any person against the implementing rules and regulations must recognize the fact of the possible sanctions and consequences of his actions.

3. Research Methodology

The researcher, in the conduct of this study opts to utilize the structured qualitative method (Creswell, 2007). The proponent gathered the necessary and required information through personal conversations, panel discussions, direct observations and in-depth interviews of knowledgeable and intellectual personalities from the selected universities in the Philippines. The respondents came from the students of the nominated university, whether in the college level or in the graduate studies. Also, for the advancement, better result, future reference and comparison, the researcher includes relevant information emanated from different researchers, professors, deans and administrators of the universities.

4. Results and Discussions

The presentation of the subject matter pertaining to plagiarism generates an interesting and stimulating topic among respondents. Indeed, it is a matter of public concern and interest. Founded and based form relevant information, material documents and sources, the most commonly known form or type of plagiarism is the so called “in toto or verbatim copy and paste method”. According to respondents, it is prevailing and available since almost all ideas, concepts and answers to queries can be discerned and learned through modern technology. However, this is certainly not a reasonable excuse to researchers when we speak of integrity in the arena of education. Another important form of plagiarism relates to “paraphrasing”. Respondent contends that this measure must not be construed specifically of its adverse effect but rather consider that paraphrasing is one of the mediums use to deviate from the commission of plagiarism. In the examination of document through software of anti-plagiarism, one effective way so as not to be considered as plagiarize document is to rephrase the wordings. Nevertheless, it is stressed that such appearance must refer and limited only to unintentional plagiarism. As a general rule, citation, correct references and accreditation of respective authors must be religiously practiced by researchers to prevent probability of plagiarized articles. Additional material consideration is the exclusion criteria with respect to plagiarized detection. The presence of universal and undisputed fact though coined by authors must be excluded from the measurement of plagiarism. Undeniably, these facts can never be owned by anyone and should be available to everyone. Like the sun is hot, so as the apple is red, the night is dark and one plus one is equivalent to two (2). Therefore, if it speaks of “Universal or Absolute truth” shall be considered as an accepted exemption to commit plagiarism. Otherwise, the non-exclusion will definitely result to severe limitations of future development of researches and experiments that greatly negates the very purpose and meaning of research. Scholars suggest that sanctions that were not properly maintained or enforced give room for its countless violations and occurrences. Additionally, the absence of establishing general law or integrated guidelines between and among states will never solve the developing issue of plagiarism.

5. Conclusion

In summary, the attainment of academic excellence in advance educational research must adhere and conform through proper observance of academic integrity. The mainstream of plagiarism dwells in the question of morality. The important values on fairness, equality, good faith, honesty and truthfulness should be uphold at all times. There is no valid reason for its non-compliance. Likewise, it must not be tainted with deceit, malice and bad faith at the expense of another. The bottom line concludes that innovative and participative software perceiving plagiarism can never replace honesty, self-assessment and personal judgment to determine for a fact that a person is guilty or liable for plagiarism.

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