FACTORS AFFECTING PLAGIARISM AMONG POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS

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ABSTRACT

Plagiarism is the unethical use of another's work. The term today is highly used in the context of research work. This paper aims to explore the possible factors that lead to plagiarism through the perception of postgraduate research students. The study evaluates the cases of postgraduate research students using survey questionnaires and discussions, both techniques were used to collect data. The population selected was UOK postgraduate student session 2019-2023. The total population was 589 out of which 156 were the targeted sample. The sampling technique used to reach the population was snowball sampling. The findings revealed that research ethics plays a vital role in fostering upcoming researchers toward ethical contributions to society. Insufficient knowledge of plagiarism, technology, and institutional policies are the issues of postgraduate research scholars. The study is entirely based on the practical usage of literary material in post-graduate studies, the paper should be of interest to academicians, research supervisors, and members of the curriculum development committee. The study is the only evaluation of postgraduate research students of UOK-Pakistan in terms of their knowledge and approaches towards research. The findings will aid in designing educational policies and re-designing current practices of research students.

Keywords: Plagiarism, referencing, Pakistan, knowledge-based societies, ethical publication

Paper type Research paper

INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism is the use of other's words and ideas that are legitimate or attributable to the original creator but are copied usually without the consent of the main creator to achieve a certain purpose or goal. The term plagiarism is highly used by academicians for the increasing act of not referencing the original work. Even though technology has benefited our lives with comfort, the use of technology and AI tools in research has been malpractice to a great extent. Although the use of technology is not the only source to be blamed as a facilitator, the high expectations from scholars, the competitive nature of studies, and the lack of awareness of the concepts of plagiarism also contribute to it. The foundation of human society is based on ethics and integrity, whether it is a matter of social conduct or academic conduct, the ethical considerations are always there to be in the correct direction and not

to be misguided. Each society has individuals with ideas of relative fields yielding new concepts, theories, and technologies. Individuals learn from their past and effort for a better future. This learning and creating process is a never-ending process of search and research of emerging phenomena in each discipline. This process takes us towards the advancement of a society where higher academic institutions, especially universities, represent the major responsible behavior. The skilled and learned graduates represent their nation by their achievements and also by their ethical values, commitment, honesty, and professionalism they have learned to serve their nation. It is a due responsibility that one should be credited and acknowledged for his struggles and achievements. Moreover, it is ethical consideration to credit all those sources that

helped in performing, resulting in and achieving a better outcome. Every upcoming generation can make the most of the previous research and can yield the best out of them keeping the acknowledgments side by side in their studies. These practices in scholarship benefit the previous authors and become a source of appreciation for them.

The increasing ratio of plagiarism has brought all the higher education institutions (HEIs) in great trouble. Universities and other institutions are working on this issue to protect their students from unreliable content and struggling to develop their writing skills. In this ongoing scenario, it is important to identify how students see plagiarism and what are the reasons that influence them towards plagiarizing. However, this study investigated the main causes that lead a scholar to go for plagiarism.

Background

The pre-historic era does not possess any sign of usage of referencing as knowledge was communicated orally from another. People consider any form of knowledge or information as a collective property which represents a sign of authorship. Some initial examples of referencing were found in ancient greek and roman literature (Jardina, 1986) to acknowledge others' work. The period of the renaissance marked a shift in the concepts of authorship and copying other's work as literary theft (Love, 2002). The beginning of the 18th century highlighted the concepts of intellectual property (Darnton, 1979) and with the growing amount of literature published in print form from the 20th century follows the creation of many referencing styles such as APA, MLA, and Chicago Manual (Booth, 1995), along with it, emerged a well-defined notion of plagiarism in the academic and scholarly world (Mallon, 1989). The advent of technology transformed referencing into citation management software (Noorden, 2014) which provides ease of management, yet the ease of copying and pasting. The study takes the case of UOK (University of Karachi) as being historically significant and the first university established in Pakistan after standing as an independent state. The university from the time till date has been a symbol of excellence in academics and research, having 9 faculties comprising more than 50 departments and centers along with more than 17 research centers at the premises. Despite the fact, that academics have been more challenging than ever before, the ratio of reporting plagiarism has also increased. Academic institutions to maintain and produce quality content are struggling to control plagiarism. The researcher as a member of the faculty seeks the answer to the question that arises as to what drives a scholar toward plagiarism. Are there any certain factors that made them plagiarize or the unawareness of the scholar of the elements that contribute to plagiarism? This study is designed keeping in consideration all the aspects a postgraduate scholar goes through in his/her academic journey.

The driving factors are categorized as awareness, academic factors, technological factors, and personal factors. A huge amount of literature has been produced on various aspects of plagiarism including; what constitutes plagiarism, how to prevent it, or whether it is a social or psychological phenomenon. This study is entirely meant to explore the level of understanding of postgraduate research scholars from different types of plagiarism and what may lead them towards performing them intentionally or unintentionally.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify whether are students aware of basic plagiarism concepts.
2. To explore the leading factor that promotes plagiarism.
3. To find out the contribution of technology to plagiarism.
4. To explore the academic factors that became a reason for plagiarism.
5. To furnish approachable suggestions for overcoming issues related to plagiarism.

Research Methods

To seek the answers in real-world scenarios, data was collected using multiple methods such as a survey questionnaire (having both open-ended and Likert scale values so that the respondents may respond to the most possible scenario) and discussions with the respondents to probe and achieve insight into their knowledge. Although the results are majorly based on the survey results. Postgraduate students of KU sessions 2009- 2023 were identified as the targeted

population. Total number of population was 589, and the targeted sample was 120. The responses were received by 156 respondents, which after performing outliers was reduced to 150 respondents, which makes 25% of the total population. Snowball sampling was opted to gather data from respondents. The questionnaires were filled by personal visits to respondents and emails to a few respondents who were out of state, followed by a telephone conversation. The inferential and descriptive statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 22. The respondents were made aware of their right to anonymity which helped in decompressing their attitude towards responses. Different factors and possibilities of plagiarism were discussed with the respondents during personal visits which were noted by the researcher as their opinions and suggestions.

Literature Review

The term plagiarism is often seen as neglected by many research scholars. Some scholars are aware of a few aspects of it but not with a complete concept. Plagiarism is generally considered to be done due to a lack of potential skills and is classified in two manners as per human behavior; Intentional and unintentional plagiarism. Unintentional plagiarism is the complete unawareness of plagiarism rules and policies as if a student has no idea that paraphrasing a text does require a reference along with it or information taken in the form of tables or figures may also require referencing. It also includes citing inaccurately, paraphrasing by changing only sentence structure, and not putting quotation marks when directly quoting. On the other hand, intentional plagiarism includes all such acts that are done with complete awareness of what plagiarism is. Examples of intentional plagiarism are; paying to write for you, copy-pasting, patchwork, and not crediting to the original authors (Park, 2003).

Almost every academician wants their student to be the best scholar without admitting the fact that these scholars are struggling with various other duties and responsibilities along with their studies. To perform the best, scholars seek the fastest and easiest way to be on time with their academic assignments which may lead them towards plagiarism (De Lima, 2022). Studies have shown that some scholars are still unaware of different aspects of plagiarism and are a part of it unintentionally. (Zafaghandi et al., 2012; Batane, 2010; De Jager and Brown, 2010; Idiegbeyan-Ose et al., 2016; Kwong et al., 2010; Park, 2003; Riasati and Rahimi, 2013; Ryan et al., 2009). Still, unintentional plagiarism cannot be a simple reason to risk the research studies at stake. As the use other's published or unpublished work or ideas and representing it as own, intentionally and unintentionally, is plagiarism. (Jameson, 1993; Logue, 2004) The term has been described by many scholars from various perspectives such as; Hannabus (2001, p. 312) defined plagiarism as "using the words or phrases of another person and restating another person's thoughts in slightly different words". Whether intentionally or unintentionally "the use of someone's ideas as one's own, constituting misrepresentation and fraud" Badke (2007, p. 58). It is "a mixture of legal, intellectual, social, professional, and moral issues as well as matters of reputation, acceptance, shame, economic loss and self- esteem" (Hannabuss, 2001, p. 311).Scholar who unintentionally or intentionally contribute to plagiarism become a part of unethical literature.

A significant finding revealed that postgraduate scholars had a favorable perception towards academic integrity rather than plagiarism. The scholars agreed that plagiarism undermines learning and innovation from students (Armstrong and Delbridge, 2008). It was analyzed that student plagiarism is the product of an interplay between individual and situational factors. It is important to be aware student of its consequences and the experience of hardships in academic life, rather than academic achievement (De Lima, 2022). With the growing focus on achieving quantity in publications for future benefits, the quality has been put at stake. The study over Iranian research scholars contribute to it as for their sustainability and promotion (Darouian and Faghihi, 2012)

Postgraduate scholars at Karnataka University Dharwad were found aware of plagiarism, and they have a fair knowledge of various issues of plagiarism such as different types of plagiarism. Despite the fact they argued that the strict academic policies and various anti-plagiarism software are the consequences of indulging in plagiarism (Savitha and Krishnamurthy, 2020).

Also, scholars blame their previous education systems as they possess poor writing skills, which become a reason for plagiarism (Zejno, 2018). The lack of awareness of institutional policies over plagiarism was found in Scholars of Pakistan (Ramzan, 2012) and even a clear difference of awareness of knowledge of institutional policies was attributed in distant learners than on-campus students (Voelker, 2012). Scholars commit that academic pressure of meeting deadline in short time and achieving good grades lead them towards plagiarism (Zafaghandi et al., 2012; Batane, 2010; De Jager and Brown, 2010; Idiegbeyan-Ose et al., 2016; Kwong et al., 2010; Park, 2003; Riasati and Rahimi, 2013; Ryan et al., 2009).

Few studies related to plagiarism practices by scholars of applied sciences revealed that scholars require knowledge of reference style and how to utilize them with in text while writing other's ideas in their research work (Prashantha Kumari and Lakshmi, 2015). While the need for training in research methodology, report writing, and referencing techniques among students was found to curb the causes of plagiarism/ self-plagiarism (Shirazi, Jafarey, and Moazam, 2010; Ison, 2012).

This study of Fish & Hura (2013) indicated that students believe that some types of plagiarism are more serious than others, with taking larger sections of text from another author seen as the more serious incidents of plagiarism. Still, even using another author's ideas was believed to be at least somewhat serious by most students.

Maclennan (2018) reported that the students who think they are well aware of the plagiarism policies are even not likely to be completely aware of the basic rules of plagiarism. In Asia and Greece many students plagiarize because when they receive good marks, they have better chances of finding a good job. The chances of receiving scholarships and bursaries when they are planning to study in different countries within postgraduate programs are also higher (Hayes & Introna, 2005). While Ahmadi (2014) studies the status of plagiarism in Iranian academic context reveals that lenient attitude of the professors at universities are the highlighted leading factors of plagiarism. Since the practices are more likely to be found in developing states and considering no evaluation has been conducted on premises over UOK postgraduate scholars. The study's outcome will benefit the educational institutions of these states.

Data Analysis and Discussion
General information of respondents
The first section of the questionnaire inquired about the general and demographic information about the postgraduate research scholars including the name of the department or center where they are enrolled, name of faculty, year of enrollment, the program they are enrolled in, and their gender. The total number of received responses were 156, which after performing outliers became 150, n = 150.

Name of faculty enrolled in
The data revealed that postgraduate students belong to all faculties of UOK. The number of enrolled students in each faculty differs and depends upon the number of research programs offered and the availability of supervisors. Table 1 is the representation of the number of participants from each faculty.

Table I

Name of Faculty	Frequency	Percent (%)
Arts and Social Sciences	35	23.33
Education	6	4
Institute/ Centre	16	10.66
Islamic Studies	13	8.66
Law	5	3.33
MAS	5	3.33
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences	16	10.66
Science	54	36
Total	**150**	**100**

Year of Enrollment

The sample comprises postgraduates from the session 2009 – 2023, so the scholars were enrolled in their research program at the time of this study. The data show the diversity in the number of respondents with their year of enrollment as: 40 respondents were from the year 2019, 35 from 2020, 41 from 2021, 29 from 2022, and 50 from 2023.

Program Enrolled in

The respondents were asked to which program they were enrolled in as; M.Phil. and Ph.D. The institute also offers an MS program based on courses and not on research work. Hence, the scholars enrolled in the MS program were not selected as respondents. The respondents were also inquired about their gender as shown in Table 2, which represents a larger number of respondents who were enrolled in the M.Phil. Program then in Ph.D. Program. Also a 50% greater female representation was seen as respondents.

Table II

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Program Enrolled	M.Phil.	94	62.7	62.7	62.7
	Ph.D.	56	37.3	37.3	100
Gender	Female	90	60	60	60
	Male	60	40	40	100
Total		150	100	100	

Awareness of Concepts of plagiarism

Although the term in not new, studies have shown that students remain unaware from different forms of plagiarism and consider copying without referencing is the only plagiarism. To inquire about their awareness five point likert scale varying 1= strongly agree to 7= strongly disagree was used. Results of cumulative descriptive statistics are represented in Table III. It shows that majority of the research scholars agree to the fact copying from another source (mean = 2.45), not citing internet sources (mean= 2.6), paraphrasing without citing (mean = 2.65), re-publishing own work without crediting (mean= 2.68), publishing someone's work with your name (mean= 2.71), using translated work without crediting (mean= 2.72) and providing incorrect references (mean= 2.89) constitutes plagiarism. While it was a concern to know that many research scholars were unaware of patchwork plagiarism and does not consider it unethical (mean= 3.96). Also, scholars disagree to the fact that paying someone for writing their papers (mean= 3.47) and taking help without acknowledging (3.76) constitutes plagiarism. The responses of scholars were partial in admitting that they have been made aware from plagiarism during their studies (mean= 3.2). On the basis of the data acquired through survey form and discussion, it can be stated that plagiarism as a subject of study is not accommodated in the curriculum of each department which is alarming to be ignored. Many respondents stated that they have been made aware by the term through their respective research supervisor. Nevertheless, the department of library and information science, UOK in 2019 has announced a course on "referencing and plagiarism" in the first semester of M.Phil. program, which can be studied by research scholars of university.

Table III

Level of Awareness	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing		
I was made aware of the term plagiarism in my previous studies	150	0	3.2	1.63
Copying from a book without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism.	150	0	2.45	1.36
Not citing internet sources constitutes plagiarism.	150	0	2.6	1.38
Paraphrasing other's work without citing is plagiarism	150	0	2.65	1.47
Patchwork (taking small parts from others' work and joining them to make a new work) is also a type of plagiarism.	150	0	3.96	1.29
Publishing other's work with your name constitutes plagiarism.	150	0	2.71	1.47
Re-publishing your work in another form without citing is plagiarism	150	0	2.68	1.43
Providing incorrect references at the end of work is plagiarism	150	0	2.89	1.43
Using translated text without citing is plagiarism	150	0	2.72	1.43
Paying someone for writing your assignments is plagiarism	150	0	3.47	1.47
Taking someone's help with your assignments is plagiarism without acknowledging	150	0	3.76	1.45

Notes: 1= strongly agree; 5 = strongly disagree

Factors promoting plagiarism
Technological Factors
The respondents were also asked about the technological factors that play a role in their research writing which may contribute to plagiarism as shown in table IV. Overall the responses shows an agreement of usage of technology in their work. It was found that research scholars find technology helpful in combining information from multiple sources (mean = 2.25). Accessing research material is easy (mean= 2.37). Research scholars also find it easy to copy/paste (mean= 2.47) and paraphrase (mean = 2.74) with the aid to technology. Although, besides the help they receive from technology, majority of the respondents agree that they find it difficult to manage information sources available online (mean= 2.63). Upon discussion, it was revealed that many of the research scholars are unaware of reference managers and lack knowledge about referencing styles.

Table IV

Technological Factors	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing		
It is easy for me to copy/paste due to contemporary technology	150	0	2.47	1.47
It is easy for me to paraphrase the content using different tools	150	0	2.74	1.59
It is hard for me to keep track of information sources on the web	150	0	2.63	1.44
I can easily access research material using the Internet	150	0	2.37	1.40
I can easily translate information from other languages with modern technologies	150	0	2.39	1.44
I can easily combine information from multiple sources	150	0	2.25	1.37

Notes: 1= strongly agree; 5 = strongly disagree

Academic Factors

The concept of plagiarism is highly relatable to the academic integrity of society. Still, many academic factors are considered to be a reason for scholars to plagiarize. Table V highlights the responses of research scholars in terms of academic measures. Research scholars highly agree that the teaching methods are very old with similar content each year (mean = 2.37) and also no faculty regulation was found by them against plagiarism (mean= 2.39), on which during discussion scholars shared that "many scholars submit the previously submitted assignments to which the teacher is unaware, it seems as a formality to the teachers", which become a reason for scholars to plagiarize. It was also agreed by scholars that they get good marks by plagiarizing (mean= 2.54) and the teacher does not check assignments through plagiarism-detection software (mean= 2.55). Also, it was revealed that students have a pressure of too many assignments (mean = 2.68). It was alarming to know that scholars have no idea about university regulations for plagiarism (mean = 2.82) and penalties for plagiarism (mean = 2.84), although, the university has strict measures for it when reported, it seems the plagiarized cases are not duly reported to the authorities. Some responses argue that assignments are difficult to do on your own (mean = 2.92).

Table V

Academic Factors	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing		
There is no faculty regulation against plagiarism	150	0	2.39	1.45
There is no university regulation against plagiarism	150	0	2.82	1.47
There are no penalties for plagiarism	150	0	2.84	1.49
The assignments are too difficult to do on your own	150	0	2.92	1.56
The teaching methods are very old with similar contents	150	0	2.37	1.30
There are too many assignments in a short amount of time	150	0	2.68	1.42

I always get good marks this way	150	0	2.54	1.39
The teachers do not check the assignments through any plagiarism-detecting software	150	0	2.55	1.45
Teachers do not read students' assignments	150	0	2.58	1.44

Notes: 1= strongly agree; 5 = strongly disagree

Personal Factors

The respondents were also investigated about their approaches towards their studies. Table VI shows that many respondents lack confidence in presenting their work, hence admitting that as their work is not good enough to be presented (mean = 2.56) they opt for plagiarism. It was also observed that research scholars lack much time for hard work (mean = 2.63) and are unable to cope with the workload (mean = 2.63) of their postgraduate studies. Respondents discussed that the majority of them were working part-time to manage their expenses and many respondents were married and having family, which made it difficult for them. Many respondents find it difficult to express their thoughts in a written manner (mean = 2.68), which was mentioned by them as a lack of language proficiency in English. Respondents agree that they got confused with basic research methods (mean = 2.92), while the majority of the respondents believe that they have a clear understanding of how to cite references.

Table VI

Personal Factor	N		Mean	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing		
I sometimes have difficulty expressing my ideas in writing	150	0	2.68	1.04
I run out of time due to many classes and assignments	150	0	2.70	1.5
I am unable to cope with the workload	150	0	2.63	1.24
I do not know how to cite correctly	150	0	3.58	1.22
I got confused with basic research methods	150	0	2.92	1.45
I lack much time to work hard	150	0	2.63	1.2
I feel my work is not good enough to be presented	150	0	2.56	1.06

Notes: 1= strongly agree; 5 = strongly disagree

A comparative analysis of the responses of respondents was made to identify the leading factor among all factors. It was shown in table VI that the postgraduate research scholar highly lacks awareness (mean = 2.32) of concepts of plagiarism. The scholars believe a few types of plagiarism are to be considered as plagiarism and do not show a serious concern towards the rest. The academic factors (mean = 2.58) are important in maintaining academic integrity and making scholars aware of the consequences of plagiarism which was observed to be missing. While it is evident that technology (mean = 2.7) can and has a contribution to making work done easily, it should be ethically used to improve the quality of work provided by research scholars. Also, scholars at the postgraduate level are more mindful and willing to contribute literary to society. Their collective value for personal factors (mean = 2.88) shows that reducing their workload could benefit them more by making a valuable contribution to society.

Table VI

Factors		Awareness	Personal	Academic	Technology
N	Valid	150	150	150	150
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean			2.32	2.88	2.58	2.7
Std. Deviation			1.2	1.36	1.3	1.38

Suggestions

The respondents were asked for suggestions through an open-ended questionnaire and discussion to get more detailed personal views and perceptions about the problems and their suggestions. The response rate for suggestions was *n = 136*. Few respondents were reluctant to share their views while the majority of respondents provided more than one suggestion. The responses were analyzed by content analysis technique by making different categories to which the response belongs. The results of the suggestions is represented in tabular form in table VII.

Table VII

Suggestions	Frequency
The university should organize a seminar for awareness of plagiarism immediately after securing postgraduate admissions.	133
The university curriculum include compulsory courses on research ethics.	92
The postgraduate students must be provided access to plagiarism software so that can check their work before submission.	127
The students must be made aware of the institutional plagiarism policies.	83
A compulsory course should be add in the curriculum for citation and referencing.	77
Supervisors must guide their scholars throughout their research process.	135
The university must offer support for enhancing writing skills.	55

Significant Findings

Despite the fact, that academics has been more challenging than ever before, the ratio of reporting plagiarism has also increased. With the growing amount of scientific literature in all academic disciplines, the level of expectations is also growing from upcoming scholars. Contributing to research publication in sciences and social sciences is although a great achievement by the authors. Gradually the phenomenon that represents wisdom became the representation of pride. The quantity of research publications becomes the criteria for selection and promotion in various fields. This transformation leads scholars towards unethical means of producing literature against the credits and value they receive.

This study highlighted certain findings that were significant in developing understanding and bringing change to the present scenario. Some of the key findings are;

- It was evident from the data that there was a larger female representation as research scholars of post-graduate students. However, it was also identified that the majority of the respondents were married and had children, which added more to their responsibilities. Despite they are keen and motivated towards studies.
- The research scholars seem completely unaware of patchwork plagiarism and do not find it unethical.
- Also, respondents are fine with paying someone to write their research work which is an act of plagiarism they are unaware of.
- It was found that there is a lack of compulsory courses incorporating topics of research ethics, referencing, and plagiarism taught at each department at the post-graduate level.

- It was surprising to know that in today's technological era, majority of the scholars are unaware of the referencing tools that could be used to facilitate their research process and help avoid repetition. They also find it difficult to manage information sources online.
- It was alarming that research scholars are majorly unaware of institutional policies and penalties.
- It was identified that respondents have good subjective knowledge but lack knowledge of research methods.
- It was observed that the most highlighted factor that contributes to plagiarism is the low awareness of post-graduates.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The present study explores the value of ethical research by highlighting the factors that cause hurdles in achieving it. Plagiarism is and will always be an unethical act whether performed intentionally or unintentionally. However, the increasing ratio of student enrolment in post-graduate studies is not only a matter of dedication to knowledge but a struggle toward success, which cannot be viewed pessimistically. Every person deserves the right to struggle to achieve more but with a sense of social and ethical responsibility. The present conditions seem not good enough to make them learn the required knowledge. It appears that in the present situation, the university needs to make more focused efforts to incorporate the needed ethical learning among post-graduate research scholars. It was evident from the finding that lack of awareness of plagiarism concepts, from policies of the concerned institution, and ethical technological implementation cannot be neglected. The matters are of concern to the authorities to make required decisions for the betterment of future contributors to society.

Conflict Of Interest: The author(s) declare the following potential conflicts of interest for the publication of this article:

Author, Rabia Aslam is currently employed by the University of Karachi. This study examines plagiarism practices among postgraduate

A few recommendations are made based on the analysis that opens the door to opportunities for corrective measures and further investigations, which are discussed below;

- It is significant to make and implement courses providing knowledge on research ethics, referencing, and plagiarism compulsory for each department.
- Faculty members (as supervisors) must be consistent in enforcing the institutional policies regarding plagiarism.
- The institution must offer support services for learning research writing in which libraries help students in their research writing phase.
- Institutions and supervisors need to provide information resources and guides on how to avoid plagiarism.
- Open communication between supervisors and scholars must be encouraged.
- To avoid unethical plagiarism the supervisors need to advise students on continuous time management during their research studies to avoid last-minute misconduct.
- The development of a plan for research along with the timeline must be incorporated.
- The scholars must be encouraged for critical thinking and provide innovative ideas.
- To explore knowledge and build understanding such projects should be assigned that require unique insights and perspectives.
- Implementation of anti-plagiarism policies with clear consequences for violations by making accountable sources.

research students at the University of Karachi. To maintain objectivity in research and to ensure that this affiliation does not influence the study's data collection, analysis, or reporting, measures have been taken.

i)   The anonymity of respondents was prioritized while collecting data, to ensure unbiasedness and integrity.

ii)   All respondents were satisfied with informed consent before gathering data.

iii) The responses were gathered keeping the researcher's identity undeclared.

No other potential financial or non-financial competing interests to report.

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Questionnaire

This study aims the fulfillment of a research study conducted at department of Library and Information Science, University of Karachi. This study is focused on exploring the level of awareness of students enrolled in M.Phil. & Ph.D. programs in University of Karachi and to identify the leading factors of promoting plagiarism. The study will be beneficial in providing awareness from plagiarism and discriminating its use.

The data gathered by the respondents will remain highly confidential. Your participation in answering the questions is appreciable. Thank you.

Demographic Details
Gender: M_____   F_____
Age:
20 – 25 _____
26 – 30 _____
31 – 35 _____
36 – 40 _____

41 – 45 _____
More _____
Name of Department enrolled _____
Name of Faculty_____
Program enrolled in: M.Phil. _____   Ph.D. _____
Year of enrollment_____
_

Level of Awareness of Plagiarism

	SD	D	N	A	SA
I was made aware from the term plagiarism in my previous studies					
Copying from a book without crediting the source constitute plagiarism.					
Not citing internet sources constitutes plagiarism.					
Paraphrasing others work without citing is plagiarism.					
Patchwork (taking small parts from others work and join them to make a new work) is also a type of plagiarism.					
Publishing others work with your name constitutes plagiarism.					
Re-publishing your work in another form without citing is plagiarism.					
Providing incorrect references at the end of work is plagiarism.					
Using translated text without citing is plagiarism.					
Paying someone or taking someone's help for writing your assignments is plagiarism.					

* SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= No idea, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

Factors Affecting Plagiarism
1. **Internet & Technological Factors**

It is easy for me to copy/paste due to contemporary technology					
I do not know how to cite electronic information					
It is hard for me to keep track of information sources on the web					
I can easily access research material using the Internet					
I can easily translate information from other languages					
I can easily combine information from multiple sources					

* SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= No idea, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

2. **Academic Factors**

I sometimes have difficulty expressing my own ideas
There is no faculty regulation against plagiarism
There is no university regulation against plagiarism
There are no penalties on plagiarism
The assignments are too difficult
The teaching methods are very old
Too many assignments in a short amount of time
Concepts of Plagiarism is not explained
I always get good marks this way
The teachers do not check the assignments through any plagiarism detecting software.
Teachers do not read students' assignments

* SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= No idea, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

3. Personal Factor

I run out of time
I am unable to cope with the workload
I do not know how to cite
I do not know how to find research materials
I do not know how to research
My reading comprehension skills are weak
My writing skills are weak
I sometimes have difficulty expressing my own ideas
I do not want to work hard
My work is not good enough

* SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N= No idea, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree