



Analysis of Unethical Ways Used by the Research Scholars at University Level

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ABSTRACT

Ethics are the distinctions between right and wrong, and research ethics are implementing these norms during research work. The present study was conducted to investigate unethical practices by research scholars at the university level. Descriptive research and a questionnaire were used to conduct the survey. The questionnaire consisted of 34 closed-ended items. Three hundred fifty-five participants were from three universities of Multan. 353 out of 355 questionnaires were correctly filled and returned, so the return rate was 99.4%. Mostly, the researchers admitted that they had used coping and pasting techniques without acknowledging the original author. Referencing skills could be more vital in the research due to the need for more study habits. Another reason research scholars use unethical methods is the need for study habits. Due to this, the researchers are trapped in violating academic integrity. Academic writing skills should be developed among students. Results show that academic writing courses should be introduced in all the disciplines of the universities. Supervisors should guide their researchers about citation and referencing. Penalties should be clear and be practically given to those who plagiarize the work of others.



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INTRODUCTION

Morality refers to the distinction between good and evil. Researchers should implement moral principles in their research (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). There are several ways to transmit ethical development from generation to generation (David & Resnik, 2015). Formal and informal ethical development occur. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the acknowledgment of the

actual author, most researchers need to be aware of the mistakes they have made during their research. It is essential for researchers to have an understanding of academic honesty and integrity in order to implement ethical considerations in educational research (Khan, 2015). As this is the first school for each child, parents are responsible for teaching them ethical norms. As part of these norms, students must avoid cheating, coordinate with their peers, and be trustworthy (Josefová, 2016).

Teachers can detect plagiarism with plagiarism-checking software. Teachers learned writing sub-skills and how to detect problems in writing during workshops (Khan, 2015). The rules in our education system are repeated, and exams are conducted with these rules, which must be changed with time. Students' creativity is hindered by the repetition of questions and curriculum, which leads to cheating (Gladwin, 2018). A researcher's primary responsibility lies in providing the respondents with protection and safety, and ensuring that their consent will not be violated during the study procedure (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). A researcher should keep a record of his/her research activities and present the data carefully and independently. Reproducing and presenting previously published studies on one's own has also been reported many times. Replicating previously published studies is a significant daily issue (Gladwin, 2018).

As a result, plagiarism is the leading cause of academic dishonesty. Researchers copy and paste information from original articles and make a new paper without acknowledging their original authors (Njeri, 2016). Nowadays, it is quite easy to obtain information from the internet and present it as your own with minor modifications. As a result, copyright violations increase on a daily basis. The majority of researchers paraphrase the ideas of others, but do not acknowledge the original author (Chowdhury & Bhattacharyya, 2018). It therefore has pros and cons when it comes to using social media for research study ideas and information. It is common for researchers to fabricate or alternate data using those ideas (Sloan et al., 2017) where different ideas originated on social media at the same location. It is common for researchers to hire someone to complete their work in order to obtain good grades without any hard work. The practice is called contract cheating. Social media resources are crucial to this activity. Social media introduces cheating methods and research aids that may catch the attention of researchers (Morris, 2018).

According to the Turnitin white paper, there are ten types of plagiarism based on intensity: clone, copy and paste, find-replace, remix, recycle, hybrid, mashup, 404 error, aggregator, and retweet. A clone is a word-for-word copy of another individual's work, whereas a Ctrl-C involves copying and pasting information. Mixing and combining different sources of information without citing them is called a mashup. Plagiarists use find-replace techniques to replace phrases with a substitute character, while aggregators include proper citations but do not contain the original work. In recycling, published work is used in a new study without attribution. When retweeting plagiarism, references are cited correctly, but the sentence structure and grammar are more similar to those in the original. The term remix refers to the combining of ideas without acknowledging the source, whereas a hybrid refers to the collection of material from different sources without acknowledging the source. Plagiarism of this type may result in the loss of original thought as well as invalid citations.

The researcher must make the participants feel comfortable before giving their consent. It is also possible to ensure the accuracy of information (EnagoAcademy, 2018). In order to promote the social good of the respondents and avoid harm, the researcher must avoid and persist

discrimination and bias in order to protect them. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of both the researcher and respondent to develop a convenient tool for respondents to use. Participants should be able to easily read and respond to items if simple, understandable terms and language are used (Showkat & Parveen, 2017). The following ethical challenges arise during the conduct of research:

It is essential to select a problem for any study. The chosen problem or question must benefit participants in the study. The results of this study will assist participants in making necessary changes and improvements to their lives. Responding to an unnecessary problem is unethical (Agwor & Adesina, 2017). As the researcher writes a literature review, some ethical considerations should be taken into consideration. Agwor & Adesina, 2017 assert that researchers must acknowledge the work of others as well as acknowledge themselves when using information from previous research (Agwor & Adesina, 2017). However, many new techniques have been developed to obtain information on the subject matter. Research can be easily conducted through social media resources and respondents will happily give their consent to a subject matter that is of interest to them. Using technology can reduce the amount of time wasted in selecting a problem (Sloan et al., 2017). Expertise is needed during selection. Factually based problems are best. Choosing a problem that has difficult measurements for the researcher can result in ambiguity within the problem (ProfessorToday, 2017). Data collection is crucial to quantitative and qualitative studies. Data must be taken personally and not used more than once. During data collection, respondents' confidentiality and anonymity must be maintained, and their rights must be respected (Agwor & Adesina, 2017). It must be possible for participants to decline participation or reject the results of the study at any time (Showkat & Parveen, 2017).

During research studies, the following ethics must be followed:

Informed consent means that respondents are informed about every aspect of the research prior to giving their opinions. A confidential and anonymous consent is required (Roka, 2017). Beneficence means to do something beneficial and positive. In this survey, the purpose is to clarify the importance of the study and explain to the respondents how beneficial the study will be for them and society. During the research study, anonymity and confidentiality are fundamental ethical requirements that researchers must consider during their research studies, as they are meant to enhance and uplift the respondents' development, and they are free from any bias (Akaranga & Makau, 2018). It is a guarantee that the data will not be leaked or used for any other purpose than this research study (Akaranga & Makau, 2018). Respondents' privacy must be protected, and their dignity must be respected. If the respondents do not want to give their response to a problem or a statement, then they should not be pressured to respond. This is an ethical consideration, as privacy is the fundamental right of the respondents, which is not harmed in any way (Pernilla, 2016).

Therefore, using social media to obtain information and ideas for research studies has both pros and cons. As different ideas arise on social media at that particular moment, data falsification is also possible. With the assistance of those ideas, researchers fabricate or alternate data on their own (Sloan et al., 2017). Contract cheating refers to the act of paying another individual to complete a researcher's work without doing any hard work. This is known as contract cheating. There are a number of research resources available on social media that can assist researchers in

cheating in research. These resources include a variety of research help contents as well as ways to cheat in research (Morris, 2018).

An integral part of any study is the selection of a problem. Choosing a problem to study or a question to be researched should benefit the participants. The research's results should assist in improving the lives of participants. Researching a problem that is unnecessary is unethical (Agwor & Adesina, 2017). The researcher should first determine whether the problem is valid and authentic. The researcher must be aware of the impact of the study on the respondents (EnagoAcademy, 2018). Therefore, researchers should take cautious considerations when choosing problems that do not detriment or abuse participants, and they may require participants' explicit consent when collecting information (Madushani, 2016). A number of new methods are available for obtaining information about the issue. A researcher can easily select a beneficial research topic that will benefit respondents and they are willing to participate in the study with social media resources. By using technology (Sloan et al., 2017), you can reduce the time you spend selecting problems. Expertise is required to select a problem. Factual information is required in the problem. For a problem that is difficult to measure, the solution may involve ambiguity (ProfessorToday, 2017).

Moreover, the present study suggests some solutions to overcome the challenges associated with academic integrity violations. Some of the rationales for the present study are as follows:

Many researchers have conducted extensive research on academic integrity violations from different parts of the world. This study is based on portions of academic dishonesty which have yet to receive significant research attention. According to the measures proposed in this study, some measures need to be taken to control academic dishonesty, such as imposing penalties on those who are accused of academic dishonesty. Student guidance should be provided regarding the ethics of research in their studies, and the administration should take a number of steps to combat academic dishonesty, such as providing plagiarism-checking software to students. Digital libraries should be available to researchers so they can easily read and download more articles. Among the fundamental reasons for this study is the increasing number of academic integrity violations by students, particularly by researchers who use unethical methods to complete their research at higher education institutions. In this study, some significant reasons and common methods of academic integrity violations are discussed. Researchers' perceptions of using unethical practices in their research are also reflected in this study.

In order to overcome the challenge of unethical research methods, this study provides teachers with appropriate guidance on referencing, citation, and acknowledgment to ensure their students develop their academic writing skills. Research scholars will find it useful to know about the various penalties associated with academic integrity violations, as well as the most commonly used unethical methods during research which they must avoid. As these factors were not well discussed in previous studies, they are discussed in significant detail in this study as they contribute substantially to the use of unethical methods (such as poor academic writing skills, failure to acknowledge, poor citation and referencing, etc.). A number of ways for academic cheating have been discussed in previous studies, but this study discusses the most commonly used methods.

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study were:

- To investigate the most frequently used unethical practice by the research scholars;
- To find out the factors responsible for the use of unethical practices among research scholars

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study population consisted of all students at two public higher education institutions and one private higher education institution. Approximately 37,000 individuals participated in the study. Respondents were randomly selected. A total of 355 individuals were included in the study. A survey method was utilized, and a questionnaire was developed with the assistance of an esteemed supervisor. A total of 34 closed-ended Likert-type items were included in the survey. Data was collected by the researcher using questionnaires from various institutions and departments. To analyze the obtained data, descriptive statistics were used, including mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

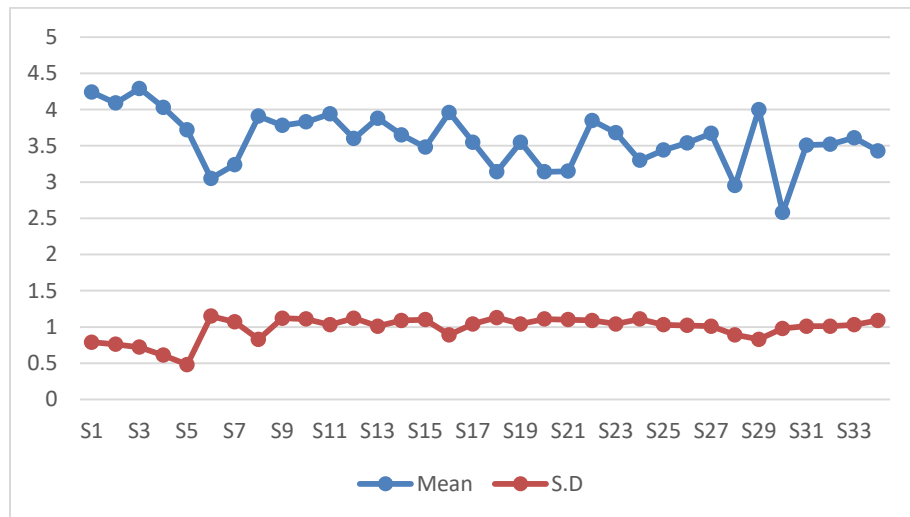
Table No 1. Descriptive analysis of the statements

Statements	Mean	SD
Research ethics is an....	4.24	.79
I am directly in contact with ...	4.09	.76
I keep the confidentiality ...	4.29	.72
I am aware of penalties	4.03	.61
Citation of other sources ...	3.72	.48
I need to acknowledge	3.05	1.15
I have difficulty	3.24	1.07
I know how	3.91	.83
I maintain the records	3.78	1.12
I use the internet	3.83	1.11
I use online sources	3.94	1.03
I need help	3.60	1.12
I added references	3.88	1.01
Referencing is a	3.65	1.09

I manipulate	3.48	1.10
I collect data	3.96	.89
The use of technology	3.55	1.04
I cited the source	3.14	1.13
I took ideas from	3.55	1.04
I use my own words	3.14	1.11
I use phrases	3.15	1.10
I prefer to quote	3.85	1.09
I prefer to get help	3.68	1.04
I pay composers	3.30	1.11
My friends	3.44	1.03
Composers offered	3.54	1.02
I prefer to procedures.	3.67	1.01
I copy and paste	2.95	.89
My supervisor	4.00	.83
My supervisor	2.58	.98
I use Excel sheets	3.51	1.01
I have difficulty	3.52	1.01
I use transitional	3.61	1.03
Developing codes	3.43	1.09

Several of the participants agreed or disagreed with the statements about plagiarism and research ethics, which were followed during their research projects, according to the table. Nevertheless, they disagreed on some statements, such as the issue of copy-pasting material in their research projects, to the same extent. It is also noteworthy that they have different views concerning the statement regarding the guidance they did not receive from their supervisors. By establishing some policies that are tailored to the needs of the students, institutions will be able to control academic integrity violations. The diversity in cultural and economic backgrounds of the students must also be taken into consideration when establishing these policies. As a result of some policies, plagiarism and academic integrity violations could be eliminated from higher education institutions. A separate set of rules and penalties must be included in these policies

regarding academic misconduct. In light of this, researchers cannot redevelop a single piece of paper since they must be habitual about reading articles. Due to less reading, researchers require more information and ideas about their study topic. Supervisors provide assistance to their researchers when necessary. Providing supervisory guidance to the researchers ensures that their tasks are completed in a righteous manner. It is common for researchers to add references to their reference lists, but they must also remember to include in-text references. As technological advancements occur, new ways of cheating and plagiarism also emerge. Researchers believe that excessive internet use opens the door to plagiarism. In the era of technology, some measures would be taken to control academic integrity violations.



DISCUSSION

Accordingly, previous studies on research ethics have discussed the main rules scholars should adhere to, and the present study indicates that unethical practices or academic integrity violations are on the rise. Data collection was conducted in accordance with some of the ethics of research; participants' data was kept confidential and permission was obtained from department heads or institutions before data collection occurred. The researchers did not violate the participants' consent. The researcher collects data personally and clearly explains the purpose of the study to participants, however Bornmann (2013) discussed the reasons for researchers' unethical methods in data collection. When participants did not respond correctly during data collection procedures, researchers manipulated the results of the study in order to obtain desired results. Sometimes, they used unethical methods to complete their project. It is necessary to clarify the penalties for violating ethics, and students should be made aware of these penalties.

Although ethical issues in research regarding researchers and research participants are addressed in Yip et al., these issues are considered necessary in the present study. researchers are able to determine whether they are violating academic integrity or not based on these issues. Although ethical issues related to research work have been examined in various previous studies, the reasons for violating academic integrity during research studies have not been examined in detail before, which is why this study examines them in detail. There are some interaction barriers that required the researcher to include teachers' perceptions and views about the unethical practices of the researchers (lecturers, professors). The same topics can be studied in

future studies in different areas and with a variety of populations, including researchers and supervisors (Louw, 2017).

The result of this is that researchers are incapable of redeveloping a single sheet of paper since they must have a habit of reading articles. Due to the reduced amount of reading, researchers require additional information and ideas on the subject of their research.

Supervisors provide assistance whenever necessary to their researchers. According to Njeri (2016), the solution to unethical conduct in research projects is proper guidance from supervisors that assists researchers in completing their tasks in a righteous manner. Researchers sometimes add references to the reference list, but they must remember to include in-text references as well. It has been suggested that excessive use of the internet increases the likelihood of plagiarism. Technological advancements also result in new methods of cheating and plagiarism. It is anticipated that some measures will be taken to control academic integrity violations in the age of technology (Gokmenoglu, 2017).

According to Quraishi and Aziz (2017), the dilemma of ethics in research can be resolved by adopting some precautionary measures. The researchers will be able to avoid copy-pasting techniques and summarize ideas in their own words when the problem of academic writing skills is resolved. Researchers and their work can achieve success through fair and honest research; otherwise, plagiarized works and studies are not considered significant by society and researchers.

CONCLUSION

1. Based on the results of the entire study, it has been concluded that unethical practices or violations of academic integrity are on the rise every day. In addition to keeping the participant's data confidential and getting permission from the department heads or institutions before collecting data, researchers follow some aspects of research ethics.
2. During the study, the researchers collected data personally and clearly explained the study's purpose to the participants without harming their consent. The researchers also must acquire academic writing skills as another challenge to unethical practice. As a result, researchers prefer to use the copy-paste technique as a method of summarizing or paraphrasing the ideas of others in their own words.
3. The perception of female researchers is better than that of male researchers, according to a comparison of male and female researchers. Researchers believe that the excessive use of the internet creates the potential for plagiarism. New methods of cheating and plagiarism are also developed as technological advancements occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on results and research methodology, recommendations for further studies are as follows:

1. It is possible to examine the impact of unethical practices on researchers at a higher institutional level.
2. Teachers' perceptions of the researchers' unethical practices can also be investigated.
3. There may be an opportunity to conduct seminars on how ethical issues in research are used and misused.

4. It has been observed in the studies of researchers that ethics have benefits and that unethical methods have consequences.
5. It is possible to extend the sample size in other areas of a province.
6. Data can also be collected using online sources, such as questionnaires completed via email or Survey Monkey, interviews conducted via phone or videoconferencing, etc.
7. It is possible to take out more institutions for further research.

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