

Insights into university students' perceptions about plagiarism

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Abstract:

Society expects our university students to be skilled and innovative while maintaining an ethical approach in all aspects of life. However, the emphasis on high grades and digital world realities has posed serious concerns related to cheating and plagiarism in our academic institutions globally and in Pakistan particularly. Data was collected on 24 statements, adopted from Pritchett's study through a questionnaire survey. A stratified sampling was used to select a sample of 1500 respondents from 25 universities across Pakistan. Understanding and beliefs of 1061 participating university students about plagiarism varied significantly. Their perceptions about universities' tolerance and professors' leniency towards plagiarism poses a serious threat to scholarly pursuits. Findings also revealed that students present various excuses such as course pressures, fear of loss of scholarship and instances of peers plagiarizing in order to justify their own incidences of plagiarism. Findings of this study if implemented will help combating the plague of plagiarism more effectively.

Keywords: Attitudes, Pakistan, perceptions about plagiarism, plagiarism, university students' perceptions.