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"Awareness About Plagiarism Among Post-Graduation Students In College Of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan: An Investigative Study"

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Abstract :

Plagiarism is a major problem for research. It is very important to know whether research scholars are aware of plagiarism or not. In this light, the present study was undertaken to know the "Awareness about Plagiarism" among post-Graduation students in College of Home Science Nirmala Niketan: An investigative study". Structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data. Out of 110 questionnaires 65 filled in questionnaires were received back. The present study describes various aspects of plagiarism such as awareness of plagiarism among post-graduation students, type of citation style which the post-graduation students are using, problems which the research scholars face while writing their own ideas on the thesis etc.,

Keywords: Plagiarism, College of Home Science Nirmala Niketan, post-graduation students

Introduction :

Plagiarism is not exclusively confined to the domain of research; it infects all parts of the body of human efforts as the film industry, music, journalism, fine arts and creative and critical writing, but this study is exclusively concerned with plagiarism in the field of research.

The art and craft of writing may not be uniformly distributed among the members of the academia. At the same time, the pressure and urge for submitting the dissertation and there are some other factors such as lack of time, overload of the work, fear of failure, lack of interest and unawareness of plagiarism which motivate the researchers to reproduce the works of others and presenting them as his or her own.

There are many software's available to detect plagiarism, which can be used for detection of plagiarism, but many researchers are not aware of these software. Moreover, plagiarism is an important ethical issue, but many researchers are still not aware of its seriousness. In this context, the present study has been undertaken to study the awareness about plagiarism among post-graduation students of college of Home Science Nirmala Niketan.

What is plagiarism?

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense: According to the Merriam-Webster

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Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means

1. to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
2. to use (another's production) without crediting the source
3. to commit literary theft
4. to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, defines plagiarism as "the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person: the act of plagiarizing something."

Nirmala niketan College of Home Science :

College of Home Science is a grant-in-aid Institute with the University of Mumbai and offers education in Home Science and the pioneering institutions catering to women's higher education in India. The College is located in the heart of the Mumbai city and is easily accessible since it is within walking distances both from the Western and Central railway terminus. The college aims at the total development of Indian Women, by providing learning opportunities to empower them with knowledge, skills and attitudes, to face personal and professional challenges with confidence, inculcating values of respect, commitment and concern for the service of others, thereby enabling them to make a positive contribution to the society in the 21st century. M.Sc. in home science is a two-year duration postgraduate degree course offered by college of home science, Nirmala Niketan in various specialized subject such as (a) Foods, Nutrition and Dietetics; (b) Human Development; (c) Textile and Fashion Technology; and (d) Community Resource Management (e) Sports Nutrition (f) Food Processing and Preservation.

Review of Literature :

Tripathi and Kumar (2009), The authors opined that many researchers are still not aware of its seriousness. The guide and the librarian can play key role in reducing plagiarism by guiding students on how to use and cite proper sources of information through information literacy programs. The authors also discussed the issue of plagiarism, along with examples from the field of Arts and Humanities and anti-plagiarism initiatives taken in India.

Trupti and Vandana (2011), The authors conducted a survey on the prevalence of Plagiarism among Medical Students. The authors found that only 17 (9%) of students did not plagiarize at all and 68 (34%) plagiarized less than 10% of the text. The average plagiarism rate (% of plagiarized text) was 19% (5-95% percentile=0-88). Students who were strictly warned not to plagiarize had a higher total word count in their essays than students who were not warned (P=0.002) but there was no difference between them in the rate of plagiarism. Students with higher grades in Medical Informatics exam plagiarized less than those with lower grades (P=0.015). Gender, subject source, and complexity had no influence on the plagiarism rate. The authors concluded that plagiarism in writing essays is common among medical students. An explicit warning is not enough to deter students from plagiarism. Detection software can be used to trace and evaluate the rate of plagiarism.

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Lidija Bilic and others (2005), Mathieu stated that plagiarism is a crime against the academy. It deceives readers, hurts plagiarized authors and gets the plagiarist undeserved benefits. The author also explained that copying a few sentences that contain no original idea is of marginal importance compared to stealing the ideas of others.

Shahabuddin (2009), explained that plagiarism sometimes creates legal and ethical problems for students and faculty. There are ways to stop plagiarism and are many tools available to detect plagiarism using software for detecting submitted articles.

Amrita (2007), examined students understanding of plagiarism as it relates to their ability to write research papers. She found in her study that most students want to complete their research assignments honestly, but find it difficult, simply because they are clueless on how to accomplish it. Doing research is an involved and detailed process that requires the ability to find, analyze, and synthesize information while applying the appropriate rules of grammar and citation. The concept of interpreting and implementing the rules of plagiarism to take information from varied sources and knead it into one's own research writing proves to be challenging and confusing for students.

Aim of the Study :

The broad aim of this study is to improve the awareness of plagiarism and among the post-graduation, students of college of home science, Nirmala Niketan, as well as to improve the quality of writing in research.

Objective of the study :

1. To identify the information resources used for writing thesis/ research papers by post-graduation students of College of Home Science Nirmala Niketan.
2. To study the existing awareness about plagiarism among the post-graduation students of College of Home Science Nirmala Niketan.

Methodology :

The study covers only postgraduate students of College of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai. The questionnaire method was used for the present study to collect the necessary primary data, keeping in view the objectives of the study. A total of 110 questionnaires were randomly distributed among the postgraduate students, 65 filled-up questionnaires were received back. The rate of response was. The questionnaire method to bring more clarity to the data which are essential and use for analysis and interpretation of data.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data :

The data was collected by different methods were analyzed and interpreted and same has been presented in the following tables.

1. **Familiarity of the Term 'Plagiarism"**

    Awareness starts when for the first time any person comes to know about anything. The researcher may know copy & paste and also following the same, but many researchers do not know that copying other's works and presenting as one's own are called as plagiarism. Regarding this, the first question has been asked to the

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respondent," Are you familiar of the term Plagiarism "and the percentage analysis of the same has been presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Sr. No.	Familiarity of the Term Plagiarism	No. of respondent	Percentage of respondent
1	Yes	63	96.9 %
2	No	2	3.1 %

It is surprising to know from Table 1.1 that out of the total 65 respondents, 63(96.9 %) of respondents familiar with the term Plagiarism and 2(3.1%) percent means one 1 respondent was not familiar with the term plagiarism.

2. **If yes, how you are familiar with the term 'plagiarism'?**

Table 2.1

Sr.No.	How familiarity of the term plagiarism	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	Through the questionnaire	3	4.8%
2	Through the Internet	24	38.1%
3	Through the Research supervisor	21	33.3%
4	Through the lecture	37	58.7%
5	Through the other research scholar	13	20.6%
6	Through an educational program	23	36.5%

It could be noted from Table 2.1 that out of the total 65 respondents, a majority 37 (58.7%) of the respondents got first time feminization with the term 'plagiarism' through the lecture whereas 24(38.1%) of respondents came to know about plagiarism through the Internet. It is also clear from the above table that very few 3(4.8 %) of respondents first time became aware of the term 'plagiarism' for first time through questionnaire. The above table also clear that 13(20.6) % respondent's feminization with the term plagiarism through the other research scholar and 21(33.3) % and 23(36.5%) of respondents first time became aware of the term 'plagiarism' through the research supervisor and educational program.

3. **Which of these sources would you normally take help from to write your dissertation /research paper?**
This question has been asked to the respondents, "Which of these sources would you normally take help from to write your thesis /research paper?"

Table 3.1

Sr. No.	How familiarity of the term plagiarism	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	Textbooks	27	42.2%
2	Journals/Periodicals	49	76.6%
3	Internet/ E-Resources	55	85.9%
4	Other Dissertation and Thesis	38	59.4%

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The analysis of the same has been presented in Table .3.1.

a. Textbooks - It is inferred from the table that out of 65 respondents, 27(42.2 %) of the respondents opine that they used to get help from textbooks for writing a dissertation /research papers

b. Journals / Periodicals - out of 65 respondents, 49(76.6%) of respondents used to take help from journals / periodicals for writing a thesis/research

c. Internet /E-resources - out of 65 respondents, a majority 55(85.9%) of the respondents used to take help from Internet/E-resources for writing a theses/research papers

d. Other's Dissertations/ Theses - out of 65 respondents,38(59.4%) of the respondents admit that they used to take help from other's dissertations/ theses for writing a thesis/research.

4. Which types of plagiarism are you aware of?

Table 4.1

Sr. No.	Type of Plagiarism	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	Self- plagiarism	37	62.7%
2	Direct plagiarism	42	71.2%
3	Unintentional plagiarism	24	40.7%
4	Complete plagiarism	41	69.5%

It is found from the table that out of the total 59 respondents, 37(62.7%) was aware of self-plagiarism. Out of the total 64 respondents,42(71.2%) of the respondents seemed to be aware of direct plagiarism. Out of the total 64 respondents, 24(40.7%) of them were aware about unintentional plagiarism and out of the total 64 respondents,41(69.5%) of them were aware of complete plagiarism.

5. Which citation style do you use while giving references?

Table 5.1

Sr. No.	Citation Style	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	MLA	3	5.5%
2	APA	37	67.3%
3	Chicago	4	7.3%
4	Harvard	11	20%

In order to know researchers' habit about citing references, the fifth question has been asked to the respondents, "Which citation style do you use while giving references?" and the analysis of the same has been presented in Table 5.1. it is clear from the table that 3(5.5) % of respondents use MLA style whereas 37(67.3%) use APA style while giving references. 4(7.3%) respondents use Chicago style for giving references and 11(20%) respondents use Harvard style while giving the references.

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6. Do you use quotation marks while copied exact sentences from other sources.

Table 6.1

Sr. No.	Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	Always	26	41.3%
2	Sometimes	26	41.3%
3	Never	11	17.5%

To know the researcher's habit of citing references, the question has been asked to the respondents, "Do you use quotation marks while copied exact sentences from other sources?" and the data have been analyzed on a three-point scale such as "Always, Sometimes and Never". The percentages analysis for the same has been presented in Table 6.1. It could be noted that out of the total 65 respondents,11(17.5%) of them admit that they never use quotation marks when copying exact sentences from the work of others, 26(41.3%) of them sometimes using quotation marks if they copy exact sentences from the work of others and 26(41.3%) of the respondents always using quotation marks.

7. Do you give the reference when you paraphrase other's contents?

Table 7.1

Sr. No.	frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	Always	48	76.2%
2	Sometimes	15	23.8%
3	Never	0	00%

To know the researcher's habit of citing references, the question asked to the respondents was, "Do you give the reference when you paraphrase other's contents?" and the data have been analyzed on a three-point scale such as "Always, Sometimes and Never". The percentages analysis for the same has been presented in Table 7.1. It could be noted that out of the total 65 respondents, nobody of them admit that they never give the reference while paraphrasing contents of others.15(23.8%) of them sometimes giving the reference, and 48(76.2%) of the respondents always give the reference when they paraphrase other's contents.

8. Whether you give the references while you reproducing works or ideas of others'?

Table 8.1

Sr. No.	frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1	Always	50	82%
2	Sometimes	11	18.00%
3	Never	0	00%

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To know the researcher's habit of citing references, the question has been asked to the respondents, "Whether you give the references while you reproducing works or ideas of others'?" and the data have been analyzed on a three-point scale such as "Always, sometimes and never ". The percentages analysis for the same has been presented in Table 8.1.

It is inferred from the table and the that out of the total 65 respondents, 50(82%) of the respondents always where were in the habit of giving the references while reproducing works or ideas of others and 11(18%) of them were in the habit of giving references sometimes.

9. Plagiarism awareness statements

Table No. 9.1

Sr. No.	Plagiarism awareness statements	True Responses	Percentage	False Responses	Percentage
9.1	Copying from a book/online sources without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism.	63	96.9%	2	3.1%
9.2	If anyone caught in plagiarism, She/he will be punished	60	92.3%	5	7.7
9.3	Have you checked your research paper with anti-plagiarism software earlier?	23	36.5%	40	63.5%
9.4	Do you need any training for using plagiarism software?	50	76.9%	15	23.1%
9.5	Do you feel that college should conduct some training programs for using plagiarism software?	62	98.4	1	1.6%
9.6	Did you aware of the consequences of indulging in plagiarism?	33	50.8%	32	49.2%

It is found from the table that out of the total 65 respondents,63(69.9%) of the respondents accept that the statement "Copying from a book/online sources without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism" is true while 2(3.1%)35.1 % express that it is false.

Out of the total 65 respondents, 60 (92.3%) of the respondents agree with the statement "If anyone caught in plagiarism, she/he will be published and 5(7.7%)of the respondent's opinion it is false

Out of the total 65 respondents,23(36.5) of respondents claim that the statement "Have you checked your research paper with anti- plagiarism software earlier?." is true but 40(63.5%) express that this statement is false.

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Out of the total 65 respondents, 50(76.9%)of the respondents need training for using plagiarism software and only 15(23.1%) not need the same.

Out of the total 65 respondents, 62(98.4%) respondents need training programs for using plagiarism software and only 1(1.6%) respondent not required any training program for using plagiarism.

Out of the total 65 respondents 33(50.8%) of respondents were aware of the consequences of indulging in plagiarism". 32(49.2%)of the respondents were not aware about punishment if they indulge in plagiarism.

10. **So many other research scholars copy other's work, I am also following the same**

Table 10.1

Sr. No.	Frequency	No of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1	Yes	46	70.8%
2	No	1	1.5%
3	May be	18	27.7%

It is found from the table 8 that out of the total 65 respondents, 64.9 % of the respondents accept that the statement "So many other research scholars copy other's work, I am also following the same "is true while 35.1 % express that it is false.

11. **I will check with plagiarism software before submitting a thesis /article.**

Table 11.1

Sr. No.	Frequency	No of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1	Yes	53	84.1%
2	No	2	3.2%
3	May be	8	12.7%

It is also seen from the table 9 that out of 65 respondents, 53(84.1%) of the respondents agree to develop one's own ideas and 2(3.2%) not interested to check with plagiarism software before submitting a thesis/article 8(12.7%) 50.8% are interested to check with plagiarism software before submitting a thesis /article and 8(12.7

Finding :

- Out of the total 65 respondents, 96.9 % of respondents familiar with the term Plagiarism
- Out of 65 respondents,38(59.4%) of the respondents admit that they used to take help from other's dissertations/ theses for writing a thesis/research.
- Out of the total 64 respondents,42(71.2%) of the respondents seemed to be aware of direct plagiarism.
- Out of the total 64 respondents, 37(67.3%) use APA style while giving references.
- Out of the total 64 respondents, 50(82%) of the respondents always where were in the habit of giving the references while reproducing works or ideas of others.

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- Out of the total 65 respondents,63(69.9%) of the respondents accept that the statement "Copying from a book/online sources without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism" is true.
- Out of the total 65 respondents, 60 (92.3%) of the respondents agree with the statement "If anyone caught in plagiarism, she/he will be published
- Out of the total 65 respondents, 50(76.9%)of the respondents need training for using plagiarism software Out of the total 65 respondents, 62(98.4%) respondents need training programs for using plagiarism software
- Out of the total 65 respondents 33(50.8%) of respondents were aware of the consequences of indulging in plagiarism".
- Out of the total 65 respondents, 46(70.8. %) of the respondents accept that the statement "So many other research scholars copy other's work, I am also following the same "is true.
- Out of 65 respondents, 53(84.1%) of the respondents agree to develop one's own ideas

Suggesions :

- Teachers/Research Supervisors, Librarians may take classes for the PG students on how to cite texts properly.
- Libraries should provide training on how to use the various Electronic Information Resources like E-journals, E-books, and Subject Gateways how to search the information over Internet.

Conclusion :

This research work was undertaken to study the level of awareness regarding plagiarism among post-graduation students of College of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai. The finding of this study reveals that maximum number of students are aware of plagiarism. Although, some of them were not aware about infringement of plagiarism Some are of the view that there should be some awareness about the plagiarism software. The finding of the study revealed that the majority of researchers use anti-plagiarism tools to avoid plagiarism. They use open source anti-plagiarism software's like turnitin, viper, iThenticate, plagiarism checker, plagia etc.

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