

Collaborative Insight: Examining Ethical Dilemmas in Academic Integrity Among MBBS Students

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: We use the sentence, "If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong", as a phrase. The phrase "collaborative insights" implies a study of student conduct and potential problems with academic integrity, and idioms help us communicate effectively with others by conveying meaning and expressing our thoughts, ideas, and feelings. This statement reveals the problematic view towards plagiarism because it promotes unethical and lazy behaviour, undermines academic integrity, and damages the academic and professional community.

Methods: A self-established questionnaire was administered to 200 MBBS college students at Muhammad Medical College Mirpurkhas. The questionnaire consisted of three categories: agree, neutral, and disagree. The collected data were analyzed using MS Excel 10, and the results were tabulated and graphed. The analysis took place at Muhammad Medical College's central library, affiliated with Ibn-e-Sina University in Mirpur Khas, Sindh, Pakistan.

Results: The cross sectional method and he survey received responses from 99, 58.2%, from the male side and 71, 41.7%, from the female side out of 170 people. 5, 3%, agree, 14, 8.2% neutral, and 151, 88.8%, disagree with the statement. Of 170 people from all academic levels, 136, 80%, disagreed with the statement 24, 14.1% responded as neutral, and 10, 5.8% agreed, showing the misunderstanding or lack of awareness about what plagiarism is and the consequences that come with it.

Practical Implication

Learning requires effort, practice, and dedication, and copying someone else's work does not contribute to any of those. Copying someone else's work without proper attribution can have legal implications, especially if the work is copyrighted.

Conclusion: Of the 170 participants, 136 responded with "Disagree," indicating that the majority of the survey participants find copying from a colleague's paper unacceptable, even if the colleague permits it. The results combine the responses to objectives providing insights into the participants' attitude, attention, mindset, perception, approach, demeanour, and point of view towards plagiarism and their engagement in such activities. This outcome aligns with the general expectation of academic and professional integrity, which underscores the significance of honesty, originality, and ethical behaviour in all domains of work and study.

Keywords: Copying, students, MMC, plagiarism, thoughts, fair-work, integrity.

INTRODUCTION & LITERATURE REVIEW:

Here we used the word "Copying", meaning unfair activity, cheating, lying, plagiary, fooling, misdeed, and many more. Before distributing the questionnaire among students, our co-authors tried the precise position of the word "Copying" to participants. However, the question itself is tricky and up-loads the pressure upon students about the response, relaxation, and attitude towards the definition/meaning of the question. So, we insist to read, and understand this word "Copying" in to the meaning/word "Plagiarism".¹

The statement "If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong" is a problematic view towards plagiarism. Plagiarism is not just about copying someone's work without their permission but also about claiming it as your own. Even if a colleague allows you to copy from their paper, it does not make it right or ethical.²

Copying someone else's work without giving proper credit is a form of academic misconduct and can have serious consequences. It undermines the integrity of the educational system and can harm the original creators of the work. Furthermore, it deprives the person who copies of the opportunity to learn and develop their skills and knowledge. In addition, many educational institutions have strict policies against plagiarism.³ In 2022, a systematic review and meta-analysis were conducted on September 2021 to detect studies published in the journals enrolled in many databases to evaluate the nurse's attitudes. This study found that dishonesty/plagiarism is frequent among nurses in their academic performance.⁴

In their review article, researcher falling in malpractice of plagiarism due to; easy availability of published work, receiving pressure for getting job, and pertained their-self's as a scholar.⁵

A specific study was performed with anti-plagiarism software to come across plagiarism in students' assignments, in general, written assignments, homework, and studies reports. Data is collected through software called the machine to save the scholar's work statistics based on the respective vicinity, time, and situation on which every scholar changed into assigned work. This technique increases attention approximately plagiarism.⁶

Plagiarism is misconduct in literature writings that affects scientific publications' value, readability, and consistency. Researchers must be aware of using words, thoughts, and illustrations, which is critical to avoid unacceptable writing practices.⁷ in 2020, a study on 685 university students sought to examine how positive and negative emotionality relates to students' positive attitudes, negative attitudes, and subjective norms concerning plagiarism. The assume that emotions do not predict attitudes within the plagiarism context but it reveals in their study that higher education students experience high rates of negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, and depression.⁸

Four hundred fifty-four college students completed self-record surveys to analyze the connection between poor emotionality and practical attitudes toward plagiarism and the mediating role of academic self-efficacy and strength of mind in this period. This examination explored the relationship between negative emotionality and tremendous attitudes toward the direction of plagiarism. Negative emotionality changed into resulted as three additives: pressure, anxiety, and melancholy.⁹

METHODS

The cross-sectional method and survey used for this study. The population of this study was the MBBS students of the Muhammad Medical College Mirpurkhas. Upon many questions, a self-established questionnaire about the three modes/categories; a)

agree, b) neutral, and c) disagree. The investigators drew a written Performa and randomly dispensed it to 200 MBBS college students admitted to the Muhammad Medical College Mirpurkhas in 1st to Final years from July 2022 to September 2022. It was optional to fill out the questionnaire by students. Researchers chose only one question, which shows the statement, "If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong", as a phrase which is a problematic view towards plagiarism; we utilized MS Excel 10 to draw results in table and graph format. The results were tabulated, checked, and analyzed in the central library of Muhammad Medical College, a constituent college of the Ibn-e-Sina University, Mirpur Khas Sindh Pakistan.

Below objectives were set to answers:

- To enquire about the answers gender wise
- To evaluate the answers of students as academic year-wise.
- To measure the attitudes, views, mind-set of subjects.

Research question: How do students respond to the word copying in similar meaning of plagiarism?

RESULTS

Table 1 reveals the combined results of the answer to objective one and question 1, which show the attitude, attention, mindset, perception, approach, demeanor, point of view towards the word, and plagiarism activity. The subjects' response is fascinating to a question, particularly to young participants. One hundred fifty one 88.8% per cent of male and female contributor ratio shows the curve, gesture, mentality, mindset, and approach toward the disagree position, because they understand that plagiarism is serious offence in academia or in academic writings, 3%, from the 170 subjects shows their mood on "depend upon the chances" in the AGREE block. Meanwhile, 8.2% of respondents do not agree on position nor disagree, and this state of mind shows "confusion, or depend upon their choices."

Table 2: If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong

S.No	Attitude	1 st Y	%	2 nd Y	%	3 rd Y	%	4 th Y	%	5 th Y	%	Total	%
1	Agree	2	1.1	1	0.5	2	1.1	2	1.1	3	1.7	10	5.8
2	Neutral	7	4.1	7	4.1	6	3.5	3	1.7	1	0.5	24	14.1
3	Disagree	19	11.1	17	10	28	16.4	28	16.4	44	25.8	136	80
		28	16.4	25	14.7	36	21.1	33	19.4	48	28.2	170	100

DISCUSSION

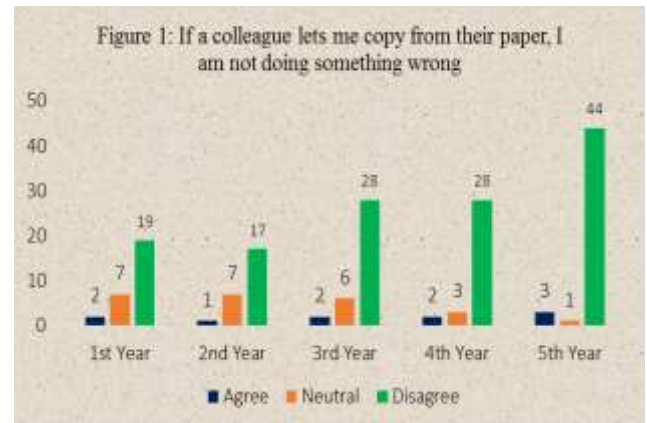
It is concerning that 10 out of 170 people agree with the statement "If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong" towards plagiarism. This suggests that there may be a lack of understanding or awareness about what plagiarism is and the consequences that come with it. Some individuals may not fully understand what constitutes plagiarism or the seriousness of the offence.

The interpretation of 24 out of 170 people is Neutral to the statement, 'If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong', This statement suggests that a survey or poll was conducted, and 170 people were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the message. Of these 170 people, 24 responded as "Neutral," meaning they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. It is important to note that a neutral response does not necessarily indicate that the person is indifferent or has no opinion. It could mean they are unsure or do not have enough information to form an opinion. Therefore, it isn't easy to draw conclusions or make any assumptions about the 24 people who responded as neutral without further context or information. of these 170 people, 136 responded as "Disagree," meaning they did not agree with the statement. This result suggests that the majority of the participants in the survey believe that copying from a colleague's paper is unacceptable behavior, even if the colleague allows it. This is consistent with the general expectation of academic and professional integrity, emphasizing the importance of honesty, originality, and ethical conduct in all aspects of work and study.¹⁰ It is important to note that the result of this survey is not necessarily representative of the broader

Table1: It is not so bad to plagiarize!

S.No	Attitude	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	Agree	3	1.7	2	1.1	5	3
2	Neutral	5	3	9	5.2	14	8.2
3	Disagree	91	53.5	60	35.2	151	88.8
	Results (Total)		99	58.24%	41.7	170	100

Figure 1 and Table 2 show the terminology of the study. Minority 10, 5.8% out of 170, agree with the question. And somehow, 24, 14.1% of respondents stood on the "Neutral" position and in the discus portion, we cleared the status of these respondents. And the majority, 136 80%, respondents have a clear vision, mindset, and plan for their life and perception.



population, as the sample size is relatively small and may need to be fully expected. Moreover, the context and demographic characteristics of the participants may also influence their responses to the statement. Nonetheless, this result suggests that there is a consensus among the participants that copying from a colleague's paper is unacceptable.

Based on the percentages, we can observe the distribution of attitudes towards the statement "If a colleague lets me copy from their paper, I am not doing something wrong" across different years. The disagreement with the information is higher in all years, indicating that most students believe copying from a colleague's paper, even if allowed, is wrong. The highest disagreement is observed in the 4th and 5th years, with 84.85% and 86.27% respectively. This collective disagreement emphasizes the adherence to principles of academic integrity and ethical conduct.

CONCLUSION

You violate academic integrity when you copy someone else's work; even with their permission. This can have severe consequences, including loss of credibility, disciplinary action, or expulsion from school.¹¹ Moreover, in the long run, you will be depriving yourself of the opportunity to develop your skills and knowledge, which can affect your academic and professional growth.¹² Copying someone else's work without proper attribution is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is not only unethical but also illegal in some cases. By copying someone else's work, you are taking credit for their ideas and efforts, which is unfair and undermines the trust and integrity of the academic and professional community.¹³ Copying someone else's work does not

help you learn or develop your skills. Instead, it can hinder your ability to think critically and independently. Learning requires effort, practice, and dedication, and copying someone else's work does not contribute to any of those. Copying someone else's work without proper attribution can have legal implications, especially if the work is copyrighted. In some cases, it can lead to lawsuits and hefty fines.¹⁴ Copying someone else's work without their consent is not ethical. It is a breach of trust and can damage your relationship with your colleague. Moreover, it sets a bad example for others, which may be influenced to engage in similar behaviors.¹⁵ In a nutshell, copying someone else's work, even with their permission, is unacceptable. It violates academic integrity, undermines your own learning, and can have legal and ethical implications. It is always better to do your own work and seek help or clarification if needed.

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