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PLAGIARISM: MYTH V/s REALITY

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Abstract: *Plagiarism is not borrowing; it's simple as stealing. Whether you do it intentionally or unintentionally, it's of course a stern offence. To be precise, plagiarism is a subject of faith and trust. The context of plagiarism is widespread among the youth talents. The belief of 'taking an idea from previous works' might end up with his/her creation labeled by the term 'Plagiarized activity.' Many writers, film makers, show producers, program managers are often witnessed by the authority to be plagiarized. Even the youth rely too much on the previous works other than referring the source material, now-a-days. This might increase the chance of the work getting plagiarized. Among the youth, it needs to be a matter of sensation of safeguarding their own creation and avoid plagiarism as they might end up being the future of any field per their interests and abilities. This paper aims to study about the awareness, the myths and realities of plagiarism amongst Generation Y.*

Keywords: *Plagiarism, Generation Y, Cyberspace, originality, Ethics*

“When you have wit of your own, it's a pleasure to credit other people for theirs.”

— Criss Jami, Killosophy

Introduction

An act of fraud carried out by any individual is a matter of offence to the authority. Plagiarism states the matter of offence in the form of any person ‘stealing’ the other’s content, intentionally or unintentionally. The copyright serves as a validation and a mark of originality to the content-holder and of course, it shouldn’t be violated. A mark of originality should not get faded off, in order to contrast some other person’s creativity. Plagiarizing content is an unethical attempt to steal a person’s hard work, his/her dedication over to it and also the person’s ideologies which altogether made his/her work get published, in past. It’s never fruitful if your mate or any other living being of this planet gets well-applauded from the audience and the critics, as well for the work he/she had presented but by replicating your *already-published* work. If the person does it unintentionally, he/she usually have no regrets and often are ready to counter the authority. But alas! Stealing the content unintentionally is as offensive as stealing the content intentionally. Where exists creativity, there exist plagiarism. It’s a matter of interest for every one of them who are indulged and concerned into certain media fields. A random audience, as the third person when comes across your plagiarized content and the other individual’s original content from what you have copied, he/she would really not feel good and indeed you would lose the respect for the job you do cause in the field of any creative activities, none of the audience is interested to entertain you. We expect originality every time we go for a movie or read any book and so on. But disappointment hits us when we witness some commonality between a previous work seen, done or heard and the current one. In a populated and media-enthusiastic country like India, the media house always tend to aim at and impressing the audience over the critics and of course, the audience won’t even like the production if it’s copied or stolen from some previous works.

Plagiarism is not only a matter of crime but also a matter of real offence to the dedication and creativity towards the achievement of that very person. It’s simply disrespect to the person. The word plagiarism derives from Latin roots: *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. An example of plagiarism would be copying this definition and pasting straight into a report.

Plagiarism refers to copy anything and everything, even the definitions of the term *Plagiarism* available over the internet. Might the act of plagiarism is old as time but the term is not. The history of plagiarism dates back to the first century AD and also involves a Roman poet whose literary *kidnappers* were later coined as Plagiarists. History of plagiarism doesn’t only limit to invention of radio and television but also goes back to the dates when humans invented pen and paper. Most of the religious manuscripts, by then were authorless and was copied by people with no hesitation at all. Even now, there exist works by many anonymous individuals which are still being copied by many budding media enthusiasts. Plagiarism is a very primordial art. Shakespeare was also labeled as a plagiarist because of his work named *The Reign of Edward III*, which was later found to be a collaborative work by both Shakespeare and Thomas Kyd. The proof was that, by comparing the play to Shakespeare’s known library of works, he was able to use the plagiarism detection software to track phrases that in Edward III that were also in his

other works. Laurence Sterne was also accused of plagiarism for *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*. Also, Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a big time plagiarist and was labeled the same for plagiarizing *Jean-Paul's aphorisms and meditations* in a particular way. After winning the Booker Prize in 1997, Graham Swift's *Last Orders* was also accused as a plagiarized work and broke all the barricades between *just taking an idea* and the act of *plagiarism* by *directly imitating* a previous work, a novel named *As I lay dying* by William Faulkner in the year 1930. To brief in total, the history of plagiarism in terms of media is in a long run and it has never paced slow.

Modern Plagiarism

Plagiarism has never stopped from the day of its origin. Some people state it as the result of their unconsciousness while some actually admits their act of violating the copyright. Nowadays, with time and increase of talents in the world of media, plagiarism has overtaken the creativity in people. The act of plagiarism has never slowed down. We daily come across different songs with the same rhythms, different books with the same storylines and plots, different movies with the same screenplay, different radio shows with the same content and so on. The music industry didn't step back from the act of Plagiarism. A *bollywood* super-hit song named *Raja Ko Rani se* from the movie *Akele hum Akele tum*, composed by Anu Malik was plagiarized from *The love theme, Godfather* by Nino Rota. This is a shameful act, indeed. And here you can witness the reaction of Indian audience to it. The audience accepted it well and made it a super hit. Till date, a very few would actually know about this scenario.

Also the evergreen media, i.e. the print media never lasts back in the race of plagiarism. A very recent book of Chetan Bhagat, *Half Girlfriend* was claimed as a plagiarized activity. First, the royal family of Dumraon sent Bhagat a legal notice for putting a negative torch on them in his work followed by an accusation of plagiarism by Dr. Birbal Jha, the director of British Lingua of a spoken English institute in Patna. He claimed *Half Girlfriend* was a plagiarized content from his play *Englishia Boli*.

Now coming to the electronic media, there exist a lot of movies which got accused of plagiarism. Movies like *Mohabbatein* (Dead Poets Society) and *Rang De Basanti* (All my sons and Jesus of Montreal) were also been accused of Plagiarism. Even the production goes to extent of plagiarizing movie posters. The poster of a Bollywood movie, *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* was copied from the same of a movie named *Lord of Dogtown*.

So, plagiarism has never stopped to show its charm even in modern days. The youth of the country believes more in extracting the best content from any source as it's very difficult to put up the originality everytime cause they believe every topic are visited, at some or the other point of time and they should concentrate more on the content over the originality.

Indian Law - Plagiarism

Copyright infringement is a criminal offence but there is a difference between it and plagiarism. Section 63 of the Copyright Act states that infringers are liable to be imprisoned for between six months and three years and to be fined between fifty thousand and two lakh rupees, while Section 63A stipulates an enhanced penalty for second and subsequent convictions. Plagiarism is more on the ethical side. It involves using the work of another author without attributing him/her. To have committed plagiarism, it is not necessary to exactly copy the words contained in the earlier work. Section 57 of the Copyright Act grants authors the “Special Right” to be attributed for their work. Broadly referred to as a moral right, this right is everlasting, is independent of copyright, and remains unaffected by transfers of copyright ownership. Section 63 of the Copyright Act which deals with infringement as a criminal offence considers the same punishment for both the violation of Section 57 and for copyright infringement. Infringement and plagiarism are completely different and may not occur in chorus. If a copyrighted work is plagiarised in a way which violates Section 14 of the Copyright Act, possibly through an exact replica, then both plagiarism and infringement occur concurrently. As a result, the plagiarism of a work more than sixty years after the death of its author does not engage copyright infringement. If the author is credited, then there would exist no plagiarism. On the other hand, credit does not negate the commission of copyright infringement.

Objective and Methodology

The context of plagiarism is widespread among the youth talents. The belief of ‘taking an idea from previous works’ might end up with his/her creation labeled by the term ‘Plagiarized activity.’ Many writers, film makers, show producers, program managers are often witnessed by the authority to be plagiarized. Even the youth rely too much on the previous works other than referring the source material, now-a-days. This might increase the chance of the work getting plagiarized. Among the youth, it needs to be a matter of sensation of safeguarding their own creation and avoid plagiarism as they might end up being the future of any field per their interests and abilities. This paper aimed to study about the awareness, the myths and realities of plagiarism amongst Generation Y.

This piece of research work was carried among students as plagiarism has typically observed by student fraternity as the perpetrators of unethical behaviors, and less attention has been paid and guided by teachers as well and as likely behaviors. To understand and evaluate plagiarism awareness Generation Y, 100 respondents drawn from Bangalore city using stratified sampling method. The stratification was based on the Higher education and New media usage and access to Internet. Additionally a couple of popular case was analyzed to understand myths and realities related to the act of plagiarism.

Analysis of Case Studies

1. A novel named *How Opal Mehta got kissed, got wild and got a life* by Kaavya Viswanathan published in 2006 under the banner of Little Brown and Company is a major example of any plagiarized act in recent days. The book was withdrawn once the authority witnessed that portions of it were plagiarized from several sources, including the works of Salman Rushdie and Meg Cabot. In order to safeguard herself, Viswanathan apologized but denied the fact that she consciously violated the copyright of the mentioned authors' work. She was signed for a two book contract by the same publishing house. An Indian origin she was and was graduating from Harvard. Also she got a movie deal with Dreamworks. In Harvard, she was introduced to a William Morris literary agent. In April 2006, 100000 copies were printed in order to get circulated. But the sweet deal was no sweeter when Megan McCafferty received a mail from her fan notifying her about the similarities witnessed between *Opal Mehta* and her books named *Sloppy firsts* and *Second Helpings*. Also, she was accused to copy some paragraphs from Salman Rushdie's work. On countering, she declined the fact that she plagiarized but accepted that it might had been an unconscious happening. Being a student and mostly, a part of the whole youth population, it was a complete shame for what she did. Plagiarism has got the full abilities to pierce anyone's talent and creativity.
2. A short film named *Kriti* was gifted to Bollywood by Sirish Kunder on 22nd of June, 2016 casting Manoj Bajpayee, Neha Sharma and Radhika Apte. After a week Youtube had blocked the video as it was accused of plagiarism by a Nepali movie maker, Aneel Neupane. His movie named *BOB* was released a short time back of the release of *Kriti*. The plots, characters and the storyline of both the screenings were all similar. On counter, Sirish Kunder exclaimed that they started their shooting before the shooting initiation date of *BOB* and declined the accusation of being plagiarized. But audience could see the similarities between both the movies. Even the dialogues of both the movies were sometimes exactly the same. This activity never suits a moviemaker with such fame and respect like Sirish Kunder. Might this affect the influence of the people new to the field of media. In a way, this simply discourages the youth confidence and the hidden talent in them.

Finding and analysis

Table 1: Socio-demographic, educational and occupational status of the respondents.

AGE/GENDER	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	EDUCATION	
18-21	38%	33%	71%	>10 th	5%
22-25	18%	8%	26%	>12 th	4%
26-30	1%	2%	3%	Into Grad.	78%
TOTAL	57%	43%	100%	Into P.G	13%

OCCUPATION	STUDENT	EMPLOYEE	SELF EST.	TOTAL	100%
		92%	3%	5%	100%

Table 1 depicts that out of 100 respondents interviewed, majority 57% were male Population and the rest 43% accounts to the Female population. Its seen that more respondents were perusing graduation with a rigid percent of 78%. And by occupation, 92% of the respondents are students, which were right sample, as the study focuses more on the youth population and their opinions on the act of plagiarism.

Table 2: Preferred and daily usage media type of the respondents.

PREFERENCE	PRINT MEDIA	ELECTRONIC MEDIA	ONLINE MEDIA	TOTAL
		27%	20%	53%
DAILY USAGE	PRINT MEDIA	ELECTRONIC MEDIA	ONLINE MEDIA	TOTAL
		15%	21%	64%

According to Table 2, most of the respondents prefer online media (social networking sites, educational sites etc) by 53% over print media and electronic media with 27% and 20% respectively. But there is to be noted a minor variation when comes to daily usage. Again online media leads the race with 64% followed by electronic media with 21% and print media with 15%. So a little variation of preference and usage could be clearly witnessed in this table. In a whole 27% of the respondents prefer print media whereas 15% of the whole interviewed population is actually indulged into the same. The same is observed for other two types but electronic media shows a very minute variation.

Table 3: Depicting the respondents' opinions on whether plagiarism is intentional or unintentional and whether it has any influence on a person's creativity.

PERCENT OF OPINIONS	INTENTIONAL	UNINTENTIONAL	BOTH	TOTAL
		11%	8%	80%
PERCENT OF OPINIONS	NEGATIVE INFLUENCE	NO INFLUENCE	SOMETIMES, NEGATIVE.	TOTAL
		45%	10%	45%

Table 3 showcases the opinions on the fact of where plagiarism is intentional or unintentional or could be both. 80% of the population is stuck in the middle of plagiarism being an *intentional* or *unintentional* activity. Majority of the people considers plagiarism both an intentional and an unintentional activity. With 11% of opinions, plagiarism bags up its intentional cart. And 8% says it's not at all an intentional activity.

Next, this table shows the opinions of the people of whether plagiarism has a negative, positive/ no influence or sometimes negative influence on the creativity of a certain person. It's to be seen that 45% of the population thinks plagiarism has negative influence on a person's talent/creativity. Also, with the same percent, i.e. 45% people believe that it has a negative influence, but only sometimes. And the rest 10% feels that there is no influence in any way.

Table 4: Opinions on what matters the most in any document.

Respondents	CONTENT MATTERS. Not originality	GENRE AND STORYLINE MATTERS. Not originality.	EVERYTHING MATTERS. Originality doesn't, at all.	ONLY ORIGINALITY MATTERS
	39%	12%	12%	37%

The final table contrasts on the choice of the respondents' whilst making their own document. 39% of the people tell that content matters, not originality. For another 12%, genre and storyline matters but not originality. Everything but not originality matters at all for another 12%. But for the rest of the 37% of youth respondents, originality is the only thing to be maintained for their document. It's good to observe that a very good number of youth populations believe in safeguarding the originality and carrying it throughout.

Conclusion

The act of plagiarism initiated with the initiation of every creative work. It might not be a legal offence but of course, it hits the person's hidden hard work. Plagiarism is an act which takes over many a people's mind when they want to step into any creative field. People get into the trap of plagiarism when they are in complete need of fame, finance and respect. But all good things need time to happen. Every flowers bloom. All they need is proper care and time. Many methods have been proposed to detect and stop plagiarism. But, still there are many questions which are to be answered. Natural Language Processing has greater possibilities of providing a sound and concrete mechanism which is capable of detecting plagiarism in any document.

The youth is going more creative nowadays and plagiarism shouldn't grasp their mind rather they shouldn't allow it to grasp them. A lot of plagiarism activities could be witnessed in the present days in terms of any creative work; let it be making a movie or writing a book or an article.

With a new hope of safeguarding the creativity and originality, the whole responsibility goes on to the shoulders of the youth and they should respect the originality. Every topic are researched upon but still, originality could be maintained by shaping the content, trimming every other minute aspect of a document.

Plagiarism might not fade away in full but it could be controlled and it's all in the hands of the youth. We look forward to a better scenario where the originality, hard work, true determination and extended commitment take over the act of *Plagiarism*.

Recommendations

1. Plagiarism is an ethical offence. So, one should be clear with his ethics towards the creativity of his own. He/ She must have a clear vision of what the content should be and in anyway, they shouldn't let plagiarism take over his mind.
2. Till date, plagiarism is an ethical offence but it violates a person's hard work and dedication, in an ethical way. So, the government should step up and put some serious laws onto this activity. It's a complete necessity or else plagiarism cases would keep hiking on.
3. The person should always provide proper citations, references, quotations and source markings, if putting some of the other content into his. If the person is writing about some other person's idea, he/she should mention the person's identity, content source and other necessities in his work.
4. Proper guidance should be there and one should follow the instructor's words and cross check them if possible. The better guidance you have, the better work you can produce.
5. TAKE YOUR TIME. One must take his/her own time and produce the best he/she can.

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