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**THE CONCEPT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PERCEIVED THROUGH
THE EYES OF STUDENTS AT ONE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTION IN KAZAKHSTAN**

***Abstract.** The paper considers the problems with academic dishonesty at one higher educational institution that is located in East Kazakhstan. Despite the fact the Government has been fought for academic integrity since 2011 and a lot of measures have been taken to establish Academic Honesty, Kazakhstan's educational system is still experiencing plagiarism. The questions that the paper wants to answer are as follows: With what kind of academic dishonesty actions are students familiar with? What is the motive of plagiarism among students? Why is plagiarism still relevant in the current academic context? How should higher education institutions address the issue of academic dishonesty? The method employed in this paper is qualitative research. 10 students(1 - first-year student, 6 – third-year students, 3 – fourth-year students) from different departments were interviewed. This research reveals some crucial outcomes referring to the knowledge of students, reasons of plagiarism and recommendations of participants to address the current situation in higher educational institutions. According to the findings, despite the fact that there are several types of actions against Academic integrity, the vast majority of students are aware of only plagiarism as the main academic dishonesty action. One of the significant motives of students' plagiarism is the negligence of educators in terms of verification for reference in students' papers. Another predominant figure from these findings is that the lack of knowledge in citation plays a significant role as the main reason of academic dishonesty among students. This issue is still relevant in current academic context due to the several factors, such as students' biased opinion related to the program anti – plagiat, the equal level of plagiarism from students and teachers. To sum up, this research paper concerns the significant problem of Kazakhstani universities, its relevance and its potential solutions.*

Keywords: Academic integrity, academic dishonesty, plagiarism, Codes of Academic Integrity, Cheating

INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in learning, teaching, and research. It is important for students, teachers, researchers, and professional staff to act in an honest way, be responsible for their actions, and show fairness in every part of their work. All students and staff should be an example to others of how to act with integrity in their study and work. Academic integrity is important for an individual and a school's reputation (Exemplary Academic Integrity Project, n.d.).

The significant issue of plagiarism became the most common situation in the Educational system of Kazakhstan. In order to combat this phenomenon, the National Center of Science and Technology Evaluation (NCTSE) was established in Kazakhstan in 2011. The main goal of this Center was the organization of research for Academic integrity (D.Utupin,2017).

Then according to the law of the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, all scientific papers that were written from 1994 were transferred to the National Center of Science and Technology Evaluation (NCTSE). On the basis of these scientific papers was created the system of Anti-plagiarism (G. Shimirbaeva, 2014). For the period from 2010 to 2014, more than 7000 doctoral and master's dissertations, articles, and monographs were identified for originality through the system of Anti-plagiarism. According to the statistic that was proved by the National Center of Science and Technology Evaluation, every 10th scientific research was plagiarized (A.Ibraev, 2014).

Despite that the System of Anti- Plagiarism was created, this issue still was relevant to our country. According to the research that was carried out by Scopus in 2014, Kazakhstan ranked the 222nd among 238 countries in making the reference list (Scopus, 2014).

In February 2017, ex-president N.Nazarbaev proposed the creation of a Code of ethics and academic integrity (Utupin, 2017). After that order, all the

universities started to create their own Codes of Academic integrity. It is important to note that in 2018, 28th August was founded the League of Academic Integrity (adaldyq.kz).

And now there are two main official documents that regulate the issue of Academic Honesty. The first one is the order of the minister of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan which determines that the university must exclude the student for violation of academic ethics. The second document is the law on Authorship and Related rights that addresses the issue of intellectual property infringement (A.Tahmazov,2020).

Research Problem

Despite the fact, a lot of measures have been taken to establish Academic Honesty, we still experience plagiarism in the educational system. For example, in 2020, the Republican scientific competition that was held among the law students revealed that the vast majority of scientific papers were plagiarized with 80% respectively. (S. Pen, 2020).

Plagiarism is not only found in undergraduate studies' paper works. Plagiarism has been found in doctoral dissertations too. For example, the vice minister of education had troubles with plagiarism. Anti-plagiarism specialists conducted a thorough analysis of the text of Fatima Zhakypova's dissertation and confirmed that at least 52% of the dissertation text is almost a direct plagiarism of the texts of articles and dissertations from the collection of dissertations of the Russian State Library. It should be noted that a significant part of the text of the results of the studied dissertation work turned out to be borrowed (Y. Chekhovich, 2019).

Research Purpose

The main purpose of our academic article is to study the issue in-depth at one higher educational institution in Kazakhstan and give recommendations to address this situation.

The research questions guiding this study are as follow:

With what kind of academic dishonesty actions are students familiar?

What is the motive of plagiarism among students?

Why is plagiarism still relevant in the current academic context?

How should higher education institutions address the issue of academic dishonesty?

Assumption

According to our experience, there are several types of dishonesty, namely cheating, bribing, fabrication, plagiarism. However, plagiarism is the most common type of dishonesty among students.

From our point of view, the main factors of plagiarism are the following points:

First of all, the main motive of plagiarism is lack of knowledge of basic citation rules;

Secondly, when students do not have enough confidence in academic writing they tend to plagiarize;

The widespread reason for plagiarism that we agree with is the students' understanding that a large number of citations reduces uniqueness, thus, they do not refer to quotes at all.

In our assumptions, since the Codes of Academic integrity was accepted in 2018, the process of implementation is on track, and the students that entered in 2018, probably, will put forward the lowest level of plagiarism in their diploma writings.

Potential relevance

This topic requires a large amount of attention and the research is not carried out enough in Kazakhstan. Thus, we made a decision to conduct this issue in-depth, in order to address the situation that is related to Academic dishonesty.

It is desirable to read this article to the heads of educational institutes to obtain an understanding of the reasons for plagiarism among students and take action against Academic dishonesty.

Our recommendation is based on establishing the required course of reference that will be used in every university.

Key terms:

Academic dishonesty is defined as a student's use of unauthorized assistance with intent to deceive an instructor or other such person who may be assigned to evaluate the student's work in meeting course and degree requirements (The Regents

of the University of Colorado, 2017).

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work and idea as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement (University of Oxford, 2021).

Bribing takes on two forms: Bribing someone for an academic advantage, or accepting such a bribe (i.e. a student offers a professor money, goods, or services in exchange for a passing grade, or a professor accepts this bribe).

Using an academic advantage as a bribe (i.e. a professor offers a student a passing grade in exchange for money, goods, or services, or a student accepts this bribe) (spcollege.libguides, 2020).

Fabrication is the use of invented or misrepresentative information. Fabrication most often occurs in the sciences, when students create or alter experimental data. Listing a source in your works cited that you did not actually use in your research is also fabrication (spcollege.libguides, 2020).

Cheating is taking or giving any information or material which will be used to determine academic credit (spcollege.libguides, 2020)

The League of Academic Integrity is an association of higher and postgraduate education organizations in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The League's mission is to improve the quality of education in the country by promoting and implementing the ten fundamental principles of academic integrity (adaldyq.kz, n.d.).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Articles chosen for this literature review were selected based on the article publication date, on keywords, and on methodology. We worked with articles that were written in the last 10 years, so the time frame for the selected articles covered the period from 2010 through 2020. The articles were located through databases. The online databases used include: Google scholar, CyberLeninka, eLYBRARY. Using the advanced search feature of the databases, the following keywords were used: academic integrity, academic honesty, academic dishonesty, plagiarism, academic misconduct, cheating, university students, academic plagiarism, academic ethics, higher education. From sixteen primary research articles, ten articles were chosen from those eligible based on content, writing style, and

breadth of the topic.

Review of Previous Research

Three main themes emerged as research for this paper was conducted: Reasons, Perception, Gender. The first theme to be discussed is Reasons. In this section, the reasons of students are illuminated. This will be followed by students' perceptions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. The last theme to be discussed is the effect of gender on students' attitudes to cheating.

Reasons

According to the research papers that were analyzed and considered from different angles, the researchers found out several reasons for Academic dishonesty among students in higher educational institutes. Cheema et al. (2011) performed a study at International Islamic University, Islamabad in which they used Qualitative and quantitative study, Face to face interview, and Pilot testing. They report that students do not comprehend the significance of citation and referencing the data that they utilize in their academic research.

Txema (2012) performed a similar study at Universitat Oberta de Catalunya in Barcelona, which is survey-based. The study involved 115 students and 22 teachers. The surveys were used to understand academic plagiarism among university students and how they cite and reference the information they find on the Internet. His findings provided support to the outcomes of Cheema et al. in which pointed out the major causes of plagiarism among students were the lack of awareness about plagiarism and weakness in skills of citation. Their studies support our main assumptions that the motive of plagiarism is lack of knowledge of basic citation rules and students' incompetence in academic writing.

Olafson et al. (2013) conducted research in which they examined differences between three types of university students: the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, Boise State University, and the University of Kansas in Lawrence. Their research findings contradicted the results of Txema (2012) and Cheema et al. (2011). They suggest that students who tend to plagiarism are more at risk to cheat because they have lower grades. It is important to note that the research outcomes of Šprajc et al. (2017) are mostly the same as the previous study of Olafson et al. (2013), however,

as the second reason for plagiarism they highlighted the ease of copying and ease of access to materials and new technologies. In addition to this, Jereb et al. (2018) findings equally indicated the ease-of-use of information-communication technologies and the Web as the top cause for their behavior.

Comas-Forgas and Sureda-Negre (2010) also elucidated that the greatest relevance as causes of plagiarism refers to questions of time management and personal organization. In our point of view, their findings are extremely useful because it sheds light on the difficult problem of Academic dishonesty.

Perception

Sarsenbayeva (2020) carried out a questionnaire-based study to find students' perceptions of academic dishonesty at the Nazarbayev university in Kazakhstan. The survey declares that students and teachers at the university adhere to the policy on a regular basis. However, Pen (2020) openly stated that 80% of students, who took part in the Republican scientific competition, plagiarized. Our feelings on the issue are mixed. We do support Sarsenbayeva's position that in general students have a negative attitude towards academic dishonesty, but I find Pen's statement is an unambiguous fact.

Gender

Sarsenbayeva, A. (2020) claims in her doctoral dissertation that the gender and the language of instruction have not an impact on students' attitude to cheating and contract-cheating. According to this paper work, there is a huge discrepancy between the number of females and males which is one of the limitations of research. However, the proportion of the responses in cross tabulation shows no significant differences in the responses. For example, 60% of male students noted that they would not cheat while for females the figures are equal to 55%. Moreover, 10% of males are reportedly ready to indulge in cheating as opposed to 12% for females. It can be concluded that there is not a significant difference between the dishonest behavior of males and females. In addition, Jereb et al. and Šprajc (2018) also believe that gender and socialization factors do not play a significant role in the specific context of Academic dishonesty. As a result, we rely on it that gender differences have not any impact on attitude to Academic dishonesty.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of our research was to study on defining students' perception of academic integrity at one higher educational institution in Kazakhstan and give the recommendations to address this situation. It was followed by research questions:

1. With what kind of academic dishonesty actions are students familiar?
2. What is the motive of plagiarism among students?
3. Why is plagiarism still relevant in the current academic context?
4. How should higher education institutions address the issue of academic dishonesty?

In the methodology we will discuss Rationale; Research sample; Research design; Ethical considerations.

Rationale

Our choice of methodology is qualitative and based on interviews. The perception of students related to academic integrity contributes to illuminate that the issue of this research paper implies exactly qualitative research. The purpose of our research and questions is to investigate the opinions and understandings and perceptions of students, which is the cause of choosing the method of interview. In addition, there is no research with empirical data on this subject, despite the work Sarsenbayeva (2020). She conducted quationari based quantitative research. Therefore, we decided to distinguish and to be the first researchers that used qualitative research in the topic of academic integrity.

Research sample

We had 10 participants. 1 – first-year student, 6 – third-year students, 3 – fourth-year students. The combination of purposeful and convenience sampling strategies are used in this research paper. All the participants were easily accessible and convenient to us, however they were selected by two main criteria: firstly, they had to be students of the same university. Secondly, they had to be over 18 years old.

At the beginning of gaining access we contacted possible participants and made an appointment in a ZOOM session in order to elucidate the purpose of our paperwork. During the meeting we received their permissions to take part in this

research as our participants and they were distributed a concept form.

The site of research was one of universities of Kazakhstan that is located in the east region. This university is multidisciplinary and there are more than 6000 students who are getting higher education.

Research design

We needed data including students' perception of academic dishonesty, their comprehension of citation, the main reasons for plagiarism, their overview about the equipment of anti-plagiarism and finally their recommendations to address the issue of academic integrity in Kazakhstan. Consequently the interview protocol was prepared with questions based on the necessary information. In addition to this, the participant profile was created. In data collection there were used instruments such as ZOOM meetings to take interviews, voice recorder to record the interview, and in special occasions the network of WhatsApp was used to take interviews. The timeline of methodology was from the 1st of march – to the 21st of march. After collecting the interviews they were uploaded to Cloud and transcribed in Word documents.

Ethical considerations

It is important to consider research ethics because researchers need to protect their research participants, develop a trust with them, and promote the integrity of research (Isreal & Hay, 2006). In order to ensure the rights of our participants we didn't write their names in the data analyzing, we attempted to be very polite with them, they were aware that their interview would be recorded and the consent form was in their native languages.

The main issue that we faced during the collecting data was the network troubles. Due to the lack of good Internet connection, 2 of 10 participants couldn't join in the ZOOM meeting. The second problem was connected with their opportunities to sign the consent form. Since we conducted the research in the distance we sent the consent form to their WhatsApp and email. However, they couldn't sign and send back.

Nevertheless, we could address these issues and find solutions. As regards the issue of internet connection, we utilized WhatsApp instead of ZOOM meeting. The

second issue was solved by sending the permissions in writing form through their contact numbers.

Summary

In the methodology section we found out a lot of information related to our topic that will be analyzed in the following section of the research paper.

Analyzing Data and Reporting Findings

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008) qualitative data analysis is a process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the masses of data collected. Likewise, Braun and Clarke (2012) give another definition of this term, according to them qualitative data analysis is a process of systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning across a data set.

Inductive coding approach was used in our analyzing data: codes and themes emerged from the transcripts. Prior to analyzing data we had assumptions but we did not limit our vision. We did not utilize a theory and prearranged codes and themes from a theory to analyze data.

Steps of the analysis

We considered all data: all transcriptions were recited and all recordings of interviews were listened to in order to familiarize with analyzing data. Each of us encoded all ten transcriptions of interviews and listed all codes. The following step that was accomplished is discussion and comparison of our codes. At this step we faced a difficulty with choosing the best option for names of information. Nevertheless, we found a solution to this issue and preceded the next step. The next stage required identifying similar codes and grouping them according to their topics. In order to complete table1 we gave themes for each group of codes. Then we made up the data summary table in accordance with research questions of the scientific article.

Data summary table

#	Research questions	Themes
1	With what kind of academic dishonesty actions are students familiar?	Cheating on exams, copying other students' works
		Plagiarism is the common academic dishonesty action

Table continuation

2	What is the motive of plagiarism among students?	The lack of knowledge in citation as one of the main reasons of plagiarism
		Laziness of students
		Lack of time to complete tasks
		Incomprehension of the lessons leads to plagiarism
		Easy accessibility of information as one of the reasons for plagiarizing
		Lack of verification for reference in students' work is the reason for the increase in plagiarism
3	Why is plagiarism still relevant in the current academic context?	Negligence of the teaching staff as one of the factors of plagiarism
		Inaction of the university or ineffectiveness of the measures taken
		Division of students' opinion about the anti-plagiat
4	How should higher education institutions address the issue of academic dishonesty?	Observation of Academic integrity can improve the quality of education
		A discipline on academic integrity can solve the issue of academic dishonesty
		Creating culture of academic integrity
		Forming the concept of academic integrity
		Demand and rigorous checking, strict adherence to the code of academic integrity can solve this problem
		Severe penalties are important in reducing the number of academic integrity violations

FINDINGS

The findings are organized according to the research questions.

RQ1. With what kind of academic dishonesty actions are students familiar?

All respondents are not aware of academic integrity. During the interview, participants described their perception of academic dishonesty. Some of interviewees listed types of academic dishonesty they face every day, such as cheating on exams, using cribs, providing unreliable sources on home works.

This is peeping and cheating on exams and using cribs. It is also when you write scientific papers or homework and provide unreliable sources and information. (Participant 6)

However, according to interviews with students, we would say that plagiarism

is the most common type of academic dishonesty among students and all students plagiarize at least once.

To be honest, I found out the term of academic integrity about a month ago. Although, I'm a 4-year student. As I understand it, plagiarism goes against academic honesty. (Participant 2)

I think all of us did plagiarism. It doesn't mean that we wanted to do it, we didn't know that is unacceptable. (Participant 7)

I admit honestly, I have been plagiarized, I have done it many times. My friends, many of them also often resorted to plagiarism. (Participant 9)

RQ2. What is the motive of plagiarism among students?

During the analyzing data, our assumption that lack of knowledge in the citation as one of the main reasons of plagiarism was proved. At the university, students allegedly have an extra course of citation. However, they didn't receive information when and where they should use that knowledge, moreover, they were taught according to the old editions of reference styles.

In our first year at the university, we had a library course that taught us how to make a reference using the old citation method. But we never found out the context and usage of this knowledge. (Participant 2)

In addition, there were some unexpected factors that influence the increase in plagiarism. The most well-known reasons for plagiarism are the laziness of students and lack of time to complete tasks. According to some interviews, these two main factors come together in all cases.

One of the main reasons for plagiarism is students' laziness, the student years are full of other entertainments and you think that no one will notice your cheating. Also, a lot of students work at the same time and make money. Therefore, I consider that it leads to a constant lack of time when you want to live and study and earn money somehow. (Participant 6)

Due to the Pandemic, the bulk of students study online. At the moment of online learning, lack of comprehension of lessons and assignments, also easy accessibility of information on the Internet impact on spreading plagiarism among students.

If we talk about the current situation, about the situation of quarantine and distance learning, first of all, this is a lack of knowledge about lessons or assignments. Also getting ready-made material is the easiest solution in this case. It is the main reason for promotion plagiarism at the moment. (Participant 4)

Students in their responses openly stated that teachers never check for citation and plagiarism. In this case, students put forward their hypothesis of this type of teachers' attitude to plagiarism. They declare that teachers have too many students, consequently, they do not have enough time for checking every work. It causes the inattention of students to their assignments. Therefore, students are used to plagiarism and submit their works in any way.

To be honest, until the 3rd year of studying at this university, I did not have experience when teachers checked the citations in our works. They never checked for the citation and the reference list. (Participant 9)

There are teachers who are negligent in their duties and do not check students' homework. In this regard, they can be explained with the fact that it is physically impossible that assignments of 30 students were checked by one person. (Participant 2)

RQ3. Why is plagiarism still relevant in the current academic context?

There are a large number of reasons related to the relevance of plagiarism in the current context. However, the negligence of the teacher staff is the most significant factor that influences the relevance of plagiarism. According to respondents teachers didn't explain the concept of academic integrity and didn't take any actions against plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

I entered the university in 2017 and until 2021, January I haven't heard about academic integrity and plagiarism from any of my teachers. (Participant 2)

Moreover, there is an assertion that illuminates the blame of university administration. The inaction of university administration and ineffective measures that were taken caused teachers' and students' irresponsibility. There are no actions on the part of the university administration against academic dishonesty. The university has its own Code of academic integrity, however, during the interview, it was found out that 5 of 10 respondents did not know its existence.

Secondly, there is a vulnerability of universities with the situation of plagiarism. It means the absence of prevention measures such as explaining or preventing at the university. (Participant 2)

To be honest, until this time I did not know that my university has a Code. Because, firstly, no one informed students about the existence of the Code, and even if the Code was not elucidated, students should have been informed of the link to the Code in order to familiarize themselves with it. (Participant 4)

Although every university has the equipment to identify plagiarism, however as it can be seen plagiarism is still relevant in the current academic context. Therefore, there is a division of respondents' opinions about the anti-plagiat device. The first group claims that it is an effective way to detect plagiarism.

Anti-plagiarism is probably a device where your work is scanned through the database. I think it is the most effective way to identify plagiarism currently (Participant 6)

Conversely, the reverse is true. The second side believes that anti-plagiarism devices are not effective and they do not inspire confidence. Because it can be fooled, there are many ways that students actively use to bypass anti-plagiarism.

There are several ways to pass the plagiarism check. Many students are aware of the methods of how to cheat the anti-plagiarism device. As it turned out, this is very easy. For example, students can translate materials into another language, change letters or punctuation in the text, and so on. Using these methods, all students can pass a check in the anti-plagiarism device. (Participant 2)

RQ4. How should higher education institutions address the issue of academic dishonesty?

All respondents claim in one voice that higher educational institutions have to observe academic integrity because it contributes to the improvement of the quality of education.

The first thing that comes to mind is the quality of education. If every student studied in a strict order, they would have high-quality knowledge. And in its turn, an educated student will become a good specialist in the future. On a large scale, compliance with the rules of academic integrity will make a significant contribution

to the development of our country. (Participant 5)

In this case, respondents provided us with several recommendations in terms of solutions to this issue. As the best guidance was decided to choose to integrate the special discipline on academic honesty that can solve the issue of academic dishonesty. In addition to this, it can improve the situation with a lack of knowledge in the citation. It also can impact on creating the culture and forming the concept of academic integrity among students and teachers.

I think that Higher Education should start with a discipline that explains how to do citations, where to get information, how to make sure that this is reliable information. So it would be good if it was introduced from the first year. (Participant 6)

As the creating the culture of anti-corruption or other cultures, we need to create the culture of Academic integrity. And we should pay more attention to it. (Participant 2)

In order to solve it we need to form the concept of academic honesty among students. Also there is a need to explain what kind of circumstances can be led by academic dishonesty. It increases the level of fear from bad outcomes. (Participant 4)

Also, one of the more logical solutions is demand and rigorous checking for plagiarism, strict adherence to the code of academic integrity.

Honestly, I think that if you solve a problem, you need to take it seriously. That is why it is really necessary to demand and check every student's work. Of course, It will take a lot of time and effort, but if university administrations want to achieve any results, they need to take strict measures because it can really solve this issue. (Participant 6)

In addition to this, respondents maintained that severe penalties are important in reducing the number of academic integrity violations because weak punishments or its absence is probably one of the reasons for academic dishonesty.

Probably students use plagiarism in their works due to the weak punishment. They are aware of that, so I really consider that there should be a strict punishment for academic dishonesty. (Participant 5)

In this research paper, our goal was to learn students' perception of academic dishonesty, identifying the common reasons for plagiarizing, illuminating the factors that influence the relevance of plagiarism in the current academic context, and sorting the best recommendations to address the issue of academic dishonesty. It was found that the common academic dishonesty action is plagiarism. And as the main reasons for plagiarism can be a lack of knowledge in citation, the laziness of students, and lack of comprehension of lessons and assignments, also easy accessibility of information on the Internet. This issue is relevant for several causes, such as negligence of teachers and inaction of the university or ineffectiveness of the measures taken. It is to solve this issue because observation of Academic integrity can improve the quality of education. In this case, integrating special discipline on academic honesty, rigorous checking for plagiarism, and using severe penalties are important in reducing the number of academic integrity violations.

DISCUSSION

Theme 1: Plagiarism is the most popular academic dishonesty act.

While studying in Kazakhstan, all respondents don't have the proper comprehension of academic integrity. Some of the interviewees presented types of academic dishonesty they come across every day, such as cheating on exams, using cribs, and providing unreliable sources on homework. However, according to interviews with students, plagiarism is the well – known type of academic dishonesty among students and all students plagiarize in their works at least. These findings coincide with the findings of other reviewed studies on this topic. Kokkinaki et al. (2015) from Cyprus, Cheema et al. (2011) from India and Eret and Gokmenoglu (2010) from Turkey found that plagiarism is the main issue in academic integrity. In their study as the significant research findings pointed out there is a need for a clear and uniform definition and understating of the terms “plagiarism” and “academic dishonesty”, also the importance of avoiding plagiarism. However, Sarsenbayeva (2020) in her research claims that half of the respondents have medium awareness of academic integrity policy existing at their university. And in general, students have a negative attitude towards academic dishonesty.

Theme 2: The reasons for plagiarism among students.

During the analyzing data, there were found the main reasons and influencing factors of plagiarism, such as lack of knowledge in citation, lack of time to complete tasks, lack of comprehension of lessons and assignments. As a significant factor, we can put forward the laziness of students, easy accessibility of information on the Internet and the fact that teachers never check for citation and plagiarism. Šprajc et al. (2017) from Slovenia and Artyukhov and Liuta (2017) from Ukraine demonstrated the same causes in their scientific article. Participants of their research indicated laziness of students, lack of time, absence of plagiarism check of students' work by teachers, ease of copying and ease of access to materials and new technologies as the main reasons for plagiarism. An interesting finding related to the reasons for plagiarism was reported by Harji et al. (2017) from Malaysia. They conversely declared that personal reasons appear to be more frequently cited, for example, student inadequacy, and attitudes/values, i.e. neutralizing their engagement and students' poor writing skills.

Theme 3: The relevance of plagiarism.

There are several causes that have a significant impact on the relevance of academic dishonesty in the current academic context such as the negligence of the teaching staff, inaction of university administration and ineffective measures taken and ineffectiveness of equipment to identify plagiarism. These findings coincide with the findings of Artyukhov and Liuta (2017). They found the manifestation of academic inferiority is the negligence of teachers' staff in educational activities. Also, they agree with our results that systemic phenomenon of academic malpractice and inefficient system to combat academic dishonesty influence the relevance of academic dishonesty. However, Sarsenbayeva (2020) argues that most of the respondents believe that students and teachers at the university adhere to the policy on a regular basis. Moreover, half of the respondents find the academic integrity policy effective or moderately effective.

Theme 4: Recommendations to address the issue of academic dishonesty.

Respondents suggested several recommendations in terms of solutions to this issue. The best recommendation for this issue was chosen integrating the special

subject of academic honesty, demand and rigorous checking for plagiarism, strict adherence to the code of academic integrity and severe penalties that can overcome the issue of academic dishonesty. Moreover, creating the culture of academic honesty and forming the concept of academic integrity were mentioned as the best solutions to the issue. Artyukhov and Liuta (2017) gave similar suggestions in order to solve this problem. They consider certain types of punishment, increasing ethical standards and forming a standard of academic conduct, as well as identify the boundaries of unacceptable academic behaviour as solutions for this issue of academic integrity. Although in the research papers of Naghdipour and Emeagwali (2013) from Cyprus and Eret and Gokmenoglu (2010) we found other options that may solve this problem. They suggest that universities should launch some awareness-raising campaigns through seminars, posters and banners in order to magnify the importance of quality in education. Also, they believe that higher education institutions should develop strategies in order to increase awareness of plagiarism.

To sum up, there are several similarities and contradictions between our and other researchers' findings. However, all these scientific papers are based on the empirical data, consequently all of them are incontrovertible.

CONCLUSION

Findings reveal that participants familiar with academic dishonesty acts. In the interview, respondents confessed that they undertook actions against academic integrity. According to findings, it was discovered that all students plagiarize at least once during studying. Based on these findings, we draw the conclusion that students still plagiarize and this issue is still relevant to Kazakhstan's education system. Our recommendation is that the government of Kazakhstan should pay serious attention to the elimination of this significant issue among students of the higher Kazakhstani educational institutions. Based on the participants' recommendation, Kazakhstani universities should formulate an academic integrity culture and develop students' ethical morality.

Outcomes of the study demonstrated there are several reasons for plagiarism among students. But all of them come from students' laziness. Having Internet

access to the data, they claim that they don't have enough knowledge in the citation. The absence of time management leads to not enough time to complete tasks. Getting ready answers from the Internet provides students with the opportunity that allows them not to complete tasks by themselves. Based on these findings we came to the conclusion that universities don't provide the disciplined condition within students to stay lazy and irresponsible to their education. We recommend that universities should be strict in terms of checking students' assignments. In the case of detecting plagiarism in students' works, they have to be severely punished. The students' fear of punishment contributes to reducing students' laziness.

As regards the relevance of plagiarism in a current academic context, findings put forward the main factors influencing the relevance of the plagiarism are the negligence of the teaching staff, the inaction of the university administration or ineffective measures taken. These outcomes make us conclude that teaching staff and administrations of universities don't take this issue seriously. Consequently, we suggest that in the case of detecting plagiarism in the works of students, universities should reprimand teachers. In addition to this, universities should hire particular specialists who will be responsible for academic integrity and work with teachers' staff and students, and also take measures against academic dishonesty at university.

Findings demonstrate that students don't have enough awareness of academic integrity. Their recommendations are based on teaching citation and create the concept of academic integrity among students. Their recommendations lead us to reach the conclusion that students have a lack of knowledge in academic integrity. Therefore, we recommend universities integrate the special discipline of academic honesty that explains the importance of academic integrity, indicates what kind of actions are against academic honesty and teaches how to make citations by recent standards.

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