ACADEMIC DISHONESTY IN STUDENTS PROJECT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE BASED SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT
Plagiarism, or the act of plagiarizing, occurs whenever a person, orally or in writing, attempts to pass off other people's materials as one own words and ideas. Plagiarism is repugnant to the academic environment because it is a form of academic dishonesty. This research seeks to compare plagiarism level of school of business and that of science based school in Edo State Polytechnic Usen. The research result shows that the originality test of students' projects of School of Business (SOB) is 61.77% on the average and this is quite higher than that of Science Based Studies (SBS) which is 36.42% on the average. The coefficient of variation of SOB of 34% shows that they have the higher expected score in terms of the plagiarism originality test as against SBS with just 19% coefficient of variation. A key factor responsible for high plagiarism rate in SBS is because almost all books consulted or copied are online and while major books consulted by SOB are local books and materials which are not online. Therefore, it is not available for the plagiarism test software.

KEYWORDS: *Plagiarism; Academic dishonesty; Institution; SOB; SBS*

INTRODUCTION

This research work will primarily focus on Plagiarism, which is a common form of academic dishonesty. It has become a global academic pandemic that has seriously bedeviled the academia in recent times. This research work is based on the comparative study of plagiarism in School of Business and Science based schools n Edo State Polytechnic, Usen. School of business comprises the following departments; Accountancy, Business Admin, Public Admin, Marketing, Banking & finance and Office technology &

management and while science based schools encompasses; engineering, environmental, applied sciences courses offered in the Polytechnic.

In college, plagiarism most often occurs in student projects (written or oral) that require independent work. Plagiarism is an issue of major concern in all academic and research institutions across the globe and Nigeria is not an exception with several views and ideas which is not substantiated by empirical researches (Orim, 2015).

However, student plagiarism in the context of Institutions of higher learning in Nigerian is largely unexplored and this is what this research seeks to investigate.

REVIEW OF LITERATURES

The concept and practice of academic integrity seems to be completely foreign to the Nigerian institutions even to such an extent that some scholars misrepresent the concept in their publications. Therefore, creating climate of academic integrity in the Nigerian institutions is equivalent to making a major cultural change. CAIRA white paper states that it is very inappropriate to misconstrue academic dishonesty as examination malpractice alone. Academic integrity includes a lot more.

Plagiarism, a common form of academic dishonesty is a global academic problem that has seriously bedeviled the academia in recent times (Maina, Maina & Jauro, 2014). Academic dishonesty (also known as cheating) has been defined by Storch and Storch (2002), to be "the act of giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic task or receiving credit for plagiarized work".

It is certainly true that colleges and universities are seeing an epidemic of plagiarism, fueled by easy electronic access to resources, including "research papers." The core definition of plagiarism is falsely citing someone else's work as one's own for the purpose of fraudulently gaining some advantage (Dutch, 2010). One of the most astonishing things about academic plagiarism in Nigeria is the degree to which the problem continues to command unswerving rise despite several past cross-cutting efforts to nip the menace in the bud (Olutola, 2016).

Plagiarism is not in itself officially considered to be a crime, but can constitute copyright infringement. In the world of academics and industry, it constitutes a serious ethical offense. Plagiarism is not defined or punished by law, but rather by institutions (Lynch, 2002; Green, 2002 & Valpy, 2005). In the academia, plagiarism related issues by anyone in this sector is considered academic dishonesty and such offenders could face academic censure, up to and even expulsion. Institutions deploy the use plagiarism detection software to detect plagiarism and to deter staff and students alike from plagiarizing (Lipson, 2003; Grove, 2014; Kock, 1999; Kock & Davison, 2003; Clarke, 2006).

Recently, cases of 'extreme plagiarism' have been identified in the academia (O'Connor, 2015).

Plagiarism is the "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another author's "language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions" and the representation of them as one's own original work (Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary, 1995 and Oxford English Dictionary, 1999). Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and a breach of journalistic ethics.

It is subject to sanctions like penalties, suspension, and even expulsion.

The last two decades has seen plagiarism become a widespread concern among lecturers and researchers (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010), resulting in a large body of research exploring the concept of student and academic plagiarism.

Plagiarism is repugnant to the academic environment for two reasons:

1) First, it is a practice fundamentally in opposition to the process of educating one's mind by personal exploration of material and by the effort necessary to shape that material to one's own ends;
2) Second, it is immoral behavior in that it deceives or misleads the hearer or reader in regard to the true authorship.

Three categories of borrowed words and ideas need to be acknowledged:

I. Direct quotation from the work of others
II. Paraphrase of the work of others
III. Certain other uses of information which are neither quoted nor paraphrased.

Orim (2015), conducted a research and upon analyzing the data collected from 839 participants from 39 Nigerian universities and Nigerian students from two UK universities, the study confirmed some widely held views and threw more light on some grey areas, while unveiling some new concerns and phenomena.

The findings show that students plagiarism is as a result of the following

I. Lack of awareness
II. Lack of concern on the part of the institution and lecturers
III. Disadvantaged students

Common forms of student plagiarism

According to "The Reality and Solution of College Plagiarism" created by the Health Informatics department of the University of Illinois at Chicago it highlighted ten (10) main forms of plagiarism that students commit (www.healthinformatic.uic.edu):

1. Submitting someone's work as their own.
2. Taking passages from their own previous work without adding citations.
3. Re-writing someone's work without properly citing sources.
4. Using quotations, but not citing the source.
5. Interweaving various sources together in the work without citing.
6. Citing some, but not all passages that should be cited.
7. Melding together cited and uncited sections of the piece.
8. Providing proper citations, but fails to change the structure and wording of the borrowed ideas enough.
9. Inaccurately citing the source.

10. Relying too heavily on other people's work. Fails to bring original thought into the text.

STUDY OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

Nigerian tertiary institutions have been plagued by a lot of challenges ranging from issues funding, strikes, academic staff shortages etc. Obviously, these issues have impacted negatively on the quality of the graduates produced. Hence, this research to concentrate on the quality of final year students projects submitted to their respective departments as prerequisite for the award of their respective certificates in Edo State Polytechnic, Usen. The originality of their project work will be determined using plagiarism software.

The research will involve:

i. Collecting Final year students project from the various departments in the school.

ii. The collected project will be subjected to plagiarism check using software.

The results from the plagiarism check will be analyzed and a report written.

DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected was from the final year students of ND 2 across the various departments in the school and a total of 245 students plagiarism score was obtained and the data are listed below. The data collected is classified into two:

(1) School of Business (**SOB**), courses with entry requirement which are not science based and

(2) Science based schools (**SBS**).

The range of the collected plagiarism score of the data is between 20 percent and 80 percent.

Table 1: showing the frequency distribution of SOB and SBS

Class Interval	Mid Values (X)	Frequency SOB (R)	Frequency SBS (Y)	Total
16 - 20	18	5	0	5
21-25	23	20	0	20
26-30	28	22	0	22
31-35	33	18	5	23
36-40	38	16	4	20
41-45	43	10	4	14
46-50	48	15	2	17
51-55	53	10	8	18
56-60	58	9	16	25
61-65	63	6	14	20
66-70	68	2	19	21
71-75	73	0	22	22
76-80	78	0	18	18
Total		133	112	**245**

From table 1, figure 1 it can be observed that the frequency table for School of Business (SOB) has values from the beginning which increased to the mid table and thereafter dwindle towards the end and while that for Science Based Studies (SBS) is almost the reverse.

Further analysis shows that from the table 1 and figure 1, the plagiarism values for SOB shows that between class intervals 16-30 percent, the frequency is 47 and this is 35.3% of the total, 31-50 has frequency of 59 and it 44.4% of the total and while 51-80 has a frequency of 27, which is 20.3% of the total.

Conversely, for SBS the percentage plagiarism for the same class intervals as highlighted above are as follows:

16-30 percent the frequency is 0, for 31-50 percent the frequency is 15 and this 13.4% of the total and for 51-80 percent the frequency is 97 and thus it is 86.6% of the total.

Figure 2 gives the breakdown of analyzed projects into the two categories of schools use in the analysis.

SOB make up 54% of the total project subjected to the plagiarism test and 46% are from the SBS.
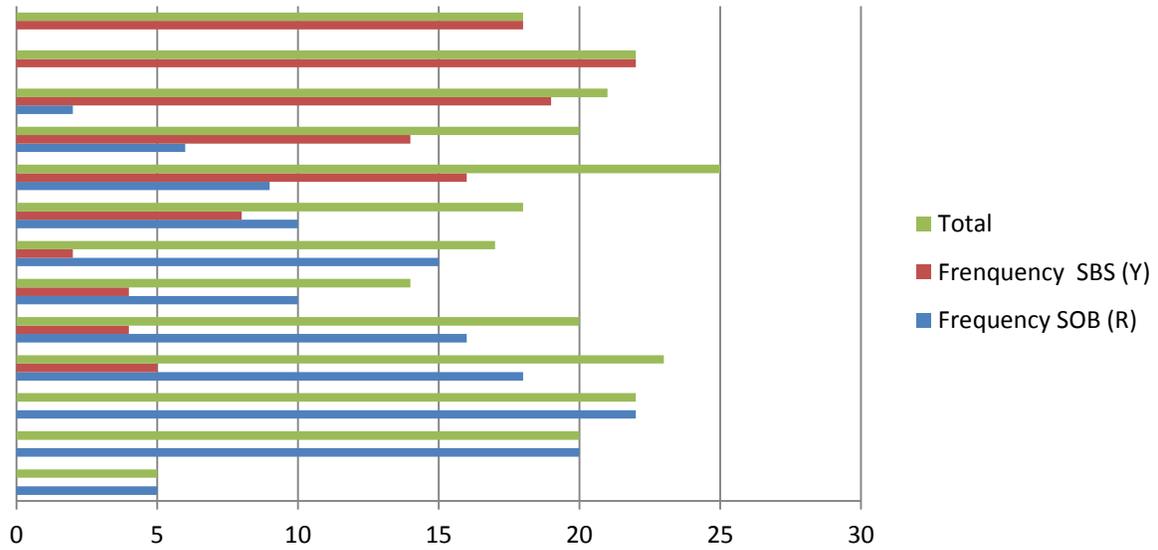
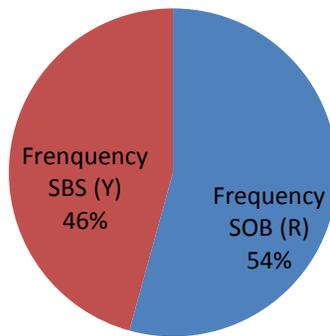**Fig 1: showing the bar presentation of the table 1 above.**

Fig 2: showing the distribution of respondents percentage by a pie chart

Table 2: showing tabulation for mean calculation

Class Interval	Mid Values (X)	Frequency SOB (R)	XR	Frequency SBS (Y)	XY
16 - 20	18	5	90	0	0
21-25	23	20	460	0	0
26-30	28	22	616	0	0
31-35	33	18	594	5	165
36-40	38	16	608	4	152
41-45	43	10	430	4	172
46-50	48	15	720	2	96
51-55	53	10	530	8	424
56-60	58	9	522	16	928
61-65	63	6	378	14	882
66-70	68	2	136	19	1292
71-75	73	0	0	22	1606
76-80	78	0	0	18	1404
Total		**133**	**5084**	**112**	**7121**

Calculating the Mean for School of Business

$$\text{Mean of SOB} = \frac{\sum XR}{\sum F}$$

$$\text{Mean of SOB} = \frac{5084}{133}$$

$$\text{Mean of SOB} \quad (Mr) \quad = 38.23$$

Calculating the Mean for Science based schools

$$\text{Mean of SBS} = \frac{\sum XY}{\sum F}$$

$$\text{Mean of SBS} = \frac{7121}{112}$$

$$\text{Mean of SBS} \quad (My) \quad = 63.58$$

Table 2 gives the tabulation for the calculation of the standard deviations and coefficient of variation of SOB and SBS. The resultant calculation shows that the mean value for both SOB and SBS are 38.23 and 63.58 respectively. This result show that the originality of SOB is 61.77% on the average and this is quite higher than that of SBS which is 36.42% on the average.

Table 3: showing standard deviation for SOB and Coefficient of Variation

Class Interval	Mid Values (X)	Frequency SOB (R)	X-Mr	(X-Mr)²	F(X-Mr)²
16 - 20	18	5	-20.23	409.2529	2046.265
21-25	23	20	-15.23	231.9529	4639.058
26-30	28	22	-10.23	104.6529	2302.364
31-35	33	18	-5.23	27.3529	492.3522
36-40	38	16	-0.23	0.0529	0.8464
41-45	43	10	4.77	22.7529	227.529
46-50	48	15	9.77	95.4529	1431.794
51-55	53	10	14.77	218.1529	2181.529
56-60	58	9	19.77	390.8529	3517.676
61-65	63	6	24.77	613.5529	3681.317
66-70	68	2	29.77	886.2529	1772.506
71-75	73	0	34.77	1208.953	0
76-80	78	0	39.77	1581.653	0
Total		**133**			**22293.24**

Standard deviation of SOB (σ_{SOB}) $= \sqrt{\dfrac{\sum F(X-Mr)^2}{\sum F}}$

$$= \sqrt{\frac{22298.24}{133}}$$

$$= \sqrt{167.63}$$

$$\sigma_{SOB} = 12.95$$

Covariance of SOB $= \dfrac{\sigma}{M_r} \text{ X } 100$

$$= \frac{12.95}{38.23} \text{ X } 100$$

$$= 34\%$$

Tables 3 and 4 show the calculation of standard deviations and coefficient of variations of both SOB and SBS.

The values for Standard deviations are 12.95 and 12.30 for SOB and SBS respectively and coefficient of variation values are 34% and 19% for SOB and SBS respectively.

The standard deviation of SOB of 12.95 for sample size of 133 as against SBS 12.30 for sample size is better indicating less variability in the data.

The coefficient of variation of SOB of 34% shows that they have the highest expected score in terms of the plagiarism originality test as against SBS with just 19% coefficient of variation.

Table 4: showing standard deviation for SBS and Coefficient of Variation

Class Interval	Mid Values (X)	Frequency SBS (Y)	X-My	(X-My)²	F(X-My)²
16 - 20	18	0	-45.58	2077.536	0
21-25	23	0	-40.58	1646.736	0
26-30	28	0	-35.58	1265.936	0
31-35	33	5	-30.58	935.1364	4675.682
36-40	38	4	-25.58	654.3364	2617.346
41-45	43	4	-20.58	423.5364	1694.146
46-50	48	2	-15.58	242.7364	485.4728
51-55	53	8	-10.58	111.9364	895.4912
56-60	58	16	-5.58	31.1364	498.1824
61-65	63	14	-0.58	0.3364	4.7096
66-70	68	19	4.42	19.5364	371.1916
71-75	73	22	9.42	88.7364	1952.201
76-80	78	18	14.42	207.9364	3742.855
Total		**112**			**16937.28**

Standard deviation of SOB (σ_{SBS}) $= \sqrt{\dfrac{\sum F(X-My)^2}{\sum F}}$

$$= \sqrt{\dfrac{16937.28}{112}}$$

$$= \sqrt{151.23}$$

$$\sigma_{SBS} = 12.30$$

Coefficient of Variation of SBS $= \dfrac{\sigma}{My} \text{ X } 100$

$$= \dfrac{12.30}{63.58} \text{ X } 100$$

$$= \quad 19\%$$

CONCLUSION

Plagiarism is the "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another author's "language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions" and the representation of them as one's own original work (Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary, 1995 and Oxford English Dictionary, 1999). This comparative study between School of Business (SOB) and Science Based Studies (SBS) has shown that plagiarism level in Nigeria tertiary institution is high. The mean for both schools shows that SOB is 38.23% and SBS is 63.58%.

Further breakdown of the analysis gives the following Standard deviation for SOB and SBS of 12.95 and 12.30 for sample sizes of 133 and 112 respectively.

The coefficients of variations are 34% and 19% respectively.

One major finding from this research indicates that although students from both schools copied extensively from books. The SOB has a better originality test than SBS with average of 38.23% as against SBS with 63.58%. A major factor that needs to be highlighted in this work is that the key reason for this is due to the fact that a lot of the local books by publishers are not online and this is the bulk of the books consulted by students from SOB and the reason for high plagiarism rate for SBS is a reverse.

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