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## Avinash Kumar



*Avinash Kumar has completed his Ph.D. in International Investment Law from the Dept. of Law & Governance, Central University of South Bihar. His research work is on "International Investment Agreement and State's right to regulate Foreign Investment." He qualified UGC-NET and has been selected for the prestigious ICSSR Doctoral Fellowship. He is an alumnus of the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. Formerly he has been elected as Students Union President of Law Centre-1, University of Delhi. Moreover, he completed his LL.M. from the University of Delhi (2014-16), dissertation on "Cross-border Merger & Acquisition"; LL.B. from the University of Delhi (2011-14), and B.A. (Hons.) from Maharaja Agrasen College, University of Delhi. He has also obtained P.G. Diploma in IPR from the Indian Society of International Law, New Delhi. He has qualified UGC – NET examination and has been awarded ICSSR – Doctoral Fellowship. He has published six-plus articles and presented 9 plus papers in national and international seminars/conferences. He participated in several workshops on research methodology and teaching and learning.*

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# **THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM: LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

AUTHORED BY - ABHISHEK SINGH & KANINIK MAJUMDER

## **1. Abstract:**

The complex and multifaceted nature of plagiarism and academic integrity is the main subject of this research paper. Conceptualized as the occurrence of using another author's language or closely imitating him or her by presenting someone else's expressed ideas or words as original ones, plagiarism is one of the central challenges in academic and professional environments. The paper examines four types of plagiarism, direct, self, mosaic, and accidental, to discuss the overlap and grayscale of their definitions and examples. The four types are used to justify how the concepts of academic honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility form the code of academic conduct that supports the reputation of academic institutions and the value of degrees. Copyright laws and institutions are two forms of legal approaches to preventing plagiarism as discussed below. These frameworks are very important for nurturing academic integrity, protecting ideas, and analyse the moral dilemmas. They also embrace good working accountability, honesty and respect in doing academic work. The essay also looks at the serious consequences of plagiarism, on the academic and professional aspects, which arise in the form of discipline, damaged reputation and legal consequences. Finally, it provides strategies for countering plagiarism through training, supported by institutional and technical resources, and it supports a positive approach to defending academic integrity and preventing wrongdoing.

## **2. Introduction:**

Piracy is the leading principle of acquiring and enhancing the knowledge, which means academic integrity as a principle. According to the criteria of truth, trustworthiness, fairness, respect, and responsibility, major violations of academic integrity necessary to sustain the legitimacy of educational institutions and the value of academic credentials include harmful theft. Includes unauthorized use or close imitation of another author's speech and ideas, and presented as one's own original work. It can manifest in a variety of forms, including direct theft, self-theft, mosaic theft, and accidental theft. Each approach presents unique challenges and raises ethical and legal considerations. Direct plagiarism is verbatim uncredited text, when a plagiarist is and when a person reuses his previous work without properly expressing Moses

plagiarism by sentence a source includes its own without proper quotation marks, and accidental plagiarism is due to neglect to cite sources properly to understanding or knowledge as they are not so.

The importance of academic integrity cannot be overstated. It ensures that the academic community can have confidence in the research findings and scholarly contributions of its members. When academic integrity is established, students and researchers must engage in appropriate practices of original thinking, critical analysis, and citation, which are critical for intellectual development and knowledge development. There can be devastating academic and professional consequences including reputational damage and legal implications.<sup>1</sup> The legal framework for plagiarism consists primarily of laws relating to copyright and institutional arrangements. Copyright law protects the expression of ideas and prevents the unauthorized production of original works. However, it is important to note that copyright dumping is not the same as plagiarism, although they often overlap. Copyright law focuses on the unauthorized use of protected texts, while plagiarism involves misrepresentation of the authorship. The doctrine of fair use allows limited unauthorized use of copyrighted material in specific circumstances, allowing for some flexibility in the work of academic scholars.<sup>2</sup>

Institutional policies play an important role in maintaining academic integrity by establishing clear policies and procedures to prevent theft. A large number of colleges and universities have an honour code that accurately defines plagiarism and clearly defines the consequences of violating academic integrity. The only way for every learner to understand the value of protecting academic integrity and, at the same time, the impact of the vice of cheating, is that everyone must be given a fair shot at academic integrity testing<sup>3</sup>. Among its key elements, the methods of understanding and combating information theft contain ethical questions. The principles of honesty, respect, and accountability guide academic practice, emphasizing the importance of proper citation, proper acknowledgment of the contributions of others, and adherence to scholarly standards Support for these principles foster a culture of honesty and respect among the students It also encourages them to do so review contributions.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fishman, T. (Ed.). (2009). "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity". The International Center for Academic Integrity.

<sup>2</sup> US Copyright Office. (n.d.). "Circular 1: Copyright Basics". Retrieved from <https://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Blum, S. D. (2009). "My Word!: Plagiarism and College Culture". Cornell University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Pecorari, D. (2018). "Plagiarism, a Peculiar Issue: It's Meaning and How to Address It". *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 34, 1-12.

### **3. Objective of the Study:**

The main purpose of this study is to undertake a critical research on ethical and legal implication of academic integrity and plagiarism. offers a comprehensive discussion on the definition, implementation and consequence of plagiarism in business and academics. The objective of the research is to get people concerned with issues to do with academic integrity and to show the consequences that ensue from their violation. It seeks to provide legal frameworks such as laws on copyright, anti-plagiarism, institutional policies designed to prevent and deal with academic dishonesty Furthermore, the study aims to identify ethical considerations various underpinning academic ethics examining these concepts focusing on the principles of integrity, respect and responsibility The assessment of the concept is to provide insights into effective strategies for fostering a culture of promote integrity and prevent theft in educational and professional settings.

### **4. Research Methodology:**

This study uses a qualitative research approach to examine ethical and legal implication of academic integrity and plagiarism. It reviews existing literature, analyses case studies, interviews academic practitioners, legal experts, and ethicists, and uses thematic analysis to identify common patterns and issues related to theft and academic integrity Objectives A broader understanding of the ethical and legal implication of academic integrity and plagiarism is to be provided, in order to develop effective strategies for promoting academic integrity and preventing misconduct The research aims to provide a strong theoretical foundation for understanding the complexities of plagiarism and academic integrity.

### **5. Definition and Forms of Plagiarism:**

#### **5.1. Definition of Plagiarism**

The act of claiming the work, ideas or actions of another as your own original work without giving proper credit is called plagiarism, which is undoubtedly one of the biggest ethical and, in fact, legal violations. There may be severe consequences for plagiarism in and out of the classroom, the total disregard for the credibility of academic work and value of honest efforts. The common feature of plagiarism is deception of the authors and in general, plagiarism may occur in various fields, for example, in art, in research activity, in writing.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Park, C. (2003). "In Other (People's) Words: Plagiarism by University Students—Literature and Lessons". *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 28(5), 471-488.

## 5.2. Forms of Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be of different types and in most cases, each of them is different in its implications and nature. Therefore, your ability to understand these resources will determine whether you can recognise as well as avoid cases of academic dishonesty.

### 5.2.1. Self-Plagiarism

It refers to the process whereby someone incorporates into his own work the work of another person or some portion thereof in full cognizance of the fact that he or she lacks the permission to do so. This may include sending the same paper across courses or republishing the article without indicating prior publication. Self-plagiarism is a fraudulent act as it passes the information to the public or the instructor as original work and new when in actual sense it is not.<sup>6</sup>

### 5.2.2. Direct theft of information

Direct plagiarism is the simplest method, which involves transcription of the sources verbatim without attribution. This includes downloading and pasting large articles or entire documents from books, articles, websites, and other sources. Apparent plagiarism is often easily detected and is often considered a gross violation of academic integrity due to the obvious intent to deceive.<sup>7</sup>

### 5.2.3. Plagiarism Paraphrasing

Plagiarism is basically a practice. The act where a writer uses ideas, scripts, or even whole works from another writer without referencing them is called Plagiarism. In this case, if the name given to a source actually cited and the name cited in accordance with the instructions differ, the original source still has to be named. The concepts remain the same. Not only does paraphrasing require wording, but it also requires credit to the original author to avoid intellectual theft.

### 5.2.4. Mosaic Plagiarism

Mosaic plagiarism, also known as plagiarism, involves taking sentences or fragments of text from somewhere and weaving them into your writing without proper citations or references,

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<sup>6</sup> Lipson, C. (2008). "Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success" (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

<sup>7</sup> Roig, M. (2001). "Plagiarism and Paraphrasing Criteria of College and University Professors". *Ethics & Behavior*, 11(3), 307-323.

this form of plagiarism can be tricky and may involve altering original text no slightly or repeat. Although it doesn't seem as obvious as blatant plagiarism, it's an unfair in a case of author and intellectual plagiarism.<sup>8</sup>

#### 5.2.5. Source-Based Plagiarism

Source-based plagiarism occurs when an individual creates or misrepresents source material. This may include citing missing data, incorrect information about sources, or incorrectly quoting from sources. Such practices not only constitute theft, but undermine the integrity of the investigative process by providing false or misleading information.

#### 5.2.6. Accidental Plagiarism

Accidental plagiarism occurs when an author fails to cite sources or present information properly due to lack of understanding or knowledge Common reasons include poor copywriting, genre a not knowing, or not understanding, what a valid synonym is. Although accidental, it results in misappropriation of someone else's work and should be treated with the same seriousness.<sup>9</sup>

### **6. Implications of Plagiarism:**

In one form or another, plagiarism affects everyone in academics and in the larger society. It is of and a result of poor academic performance, suspension, or expulsion, it can lead to this and undermines the trust that educators and learners have in each other as well as the workings of credible scholarly effort. Whereby legal consequences, dynamism in revenues, and company reputation may be affected and this leads to the legal consequences of the employees who have committed plagiarism. So, maintaining academic integrity and claiming that worthwhile and moral goals are achievable means having information about plagiarism and its absence.

It is comprehensible how plagiarism is achieved and therefore, how the society can avoid it in as much as it maintains the principle of honesty. Organisations play an important role in educating scholars and students on plagiarism and at the same time availing to them the tools which could help them in refining their research and presentation skills.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Sutherland-Smith, W. (2008). "Plagiarism, the Internet, and Student Learning: Improving Academic Integrity". Routledge.

<sup>9</sup> Macfarlane, B., Zhang, J., & Pun, A. (2014). "Academic Integrity: A Review of the Literature". Studies in Higher Education, 39(2), 339-358.

<sup>10</sup> Fishman, T. (Ed.). (2009). "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity". The International Center for Academic Integrity.

## **7. Legal Framework Addressing Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism, a serious violation of academic integrity, interacts with legal systems, particularly through copyright law and institutional structures. Copyright law which is governed by statutes and decisions helps in preventing the wrong persons or groups from copying or publishing material contained in writings or other media<sup>11</sup>. Though, copyright infringement and piracy are two entirely different things in most of the cases, but these two concepts interrelate, and most commonly this happens when the unauthorized product having copyright content is being pirated. Copyright law protects ownership of literary works, and prohibits others from copying or publishing the works against the wish of the writer. However, the Fair Use Doctrine provides exceptions for limited-use copyrighted materials that do not receive permission, such as criticism, commentary, research, teaching, and journalism.

In addition to copyright laws, educational institutions have developed their own policies and procedures to address plagiarism and maintain academic integrity. These policies are often part of the organization's honour code, and outline expectations for ethical behaviour and consequences for violating academic integrity. Disciplinary actions outlined in organizational policies can range from warnings to learning internal sanctions to suspension or expulsion depending on the severity of the offense.<sup>12</sup> Such a system is necessary to maintain a culture of academic integrity and to ensure the credibility of educational credentials. By understanding and following copyright laws and organizational policies, individuals can navigate the complexities of plagiarism, uphold principles of academic integrity, and contribute for the integrity of the student body.

## **8. Ethical Considerations in Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism raises deep ethical considerations that extend beyond legal systems, encompassing basic principles of respect, responsibility and honesty within the academic community. Ethical considerations of plagiarism in emphasizes the importance of maintaining integrity in scholarly work and recognizing the rights of original authors.

### **8.1. Respect**

Respect for intellectual property is another important ethical consideration in information theft.

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<sup>11</sup> US Copyright Office. (n.d.). "Circular 1: Copyright Basics". Retrieved from <https://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Fishman, T. (Ed.). (2009). "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity". The International Center for Academic Integrity.

Plagiarism ignores its own efforts and authority without acknowledging the work of the original authors. Respectful scholarly practice requires acknowledging the contributions of others and treating their work with dignity and recognition. Their academic contribution is lessened and students' self-esteem is also affected by plagiarism.<sup>13</sup>

### 8.2. Responsibility

Responsibility and integrity are two aspects of academic integrity. Any person who is to be answerable for an academic piece has to ensure that it is free from dishonesty and cost-effective alongside being non-plagiarized work. Plagiarism evades this responsibility by attempting to present the work of others as one's own, ultimately undermining the integrity of the academic work.<sup>14</sup>

### 8.3. Honesty

Educational integrity is fundamentally the principle of authenticity. This rule is violated by plagiarism which seeks to present out as the creators of ideas or works of art. In order to stay ethical, people have to positively own up and reciprocally recognize the work done in one's thoughts. If this isn't done, students end up giving up on you and on the honourable process that education is supposed to be<sup>15</sup>.

## **9. Mechanisms for Preventing Plagiarism**

It is very important to prevent plagiarism and the only methodology is through a multimodal strategy that comprises of institutional support, technology and education. Hence, educational establishments may foster culture of creativeness and ethical scholars besides to academic honesty through installing efficient procedures.

### 9.1. Technology

Technological tools help the teachers identify cases of cheating and even teach the students appropriate way to cite their sources. To be specific, there is the Turnitin or Grammarly, which use the database of recent publications to compare student's work for the presence of

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<sup>13</sup> Blum, S. D. (2009). "My Word!: Plagiarism and College Culture". Cornell University Press.

<sup>14</sup> Fishman, T. (Ed.). (2009). "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity". The International Center for Academic Integrity.

<sup>15</sup> Pecorari, D. (2018). "Plagiarism, a Peculiar Issue: It's Meaning and How to Address It". Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 34, 1-12.

plagiarism<sup>16</sup>. From the feedback these tools give pertaining proper citation and correct paraphrasing techniques, not only do they reduce cases of plagiarism, but also play a major role in enhancing the teaching process.

### 9.2. Institutional support

That culture can only be encouraged in the institution to ensure that students will have to follow and embrace the principle of academic integrity. Penalties for the offenders and definition of academic dishonesty should form part of the outstanding clear and informative code and procedures that colleges develop to tackle plagiarism<sup>17</sup>. Writing and research services, writing centres, writing tutors, academic advisors and other related services help students to enhance their writing and research skills while at the same time addressing the issue of overwrite, and plagiarism.

### 9.3. Education

Education has a crucial part to play in combating plagiarism, as it provides the individuals concerned with the knowledge that is required to improve, together with a vastly superior understanding of how to respond for the content they are developing. A clearer understanding of the reason why academic integrity must be upheld and why plagiarism is not good for students are relayed to the students through plagiarism sensitization and citation skills on trainings, seminars and workshops<sup>18</sup>. Professionals assist children in handling the complexity of writing essays and research papers without having to commit plagiarism through being taught acceptable methods of citation.

### 9.4. Cultivating a Culture of Integrity

In addition to these specific measures, developing a culture of integrity is essential to preventing theft. Encouraging values such as honesty, respect and accountability in this unit and fostering an environment where academic honesty is valued and celebrated.<sup>19</sup> It helps the students to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility to pride themselves on collaboration, imagination and originality, which reduces the chances of being associated with

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<sup>16</sup> Park, C. (2003). "In Other (People's) Words: Plagiarism by University Students—Literature and Lessons". *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 28(5), 471-488.

<sup>17</sup> Fishman, T. (Ed.). (2009). "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity". The International Center for Academic Integrity.

<sup>18</sup> Lipson, C. (2008). "Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success" (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

<sup>19</sup> Blum, S. D. (2009). "My Word!: Plagiarism and College Culture". Cornell University Press.

theft.

## 10. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to state that preventing plagiarism require sa comprehensive approach that fosters education, technology, organizational support, and a culture of integrity in the learning community. Knowledge and skills needed for academic responsibility for students -Software and technological tools others helps to identify the patterns of academic misconduct and respond to appropriate lending practices. Institutional support, including clear policies and resources for students, reinforces the importance of academic integrity reinforce and help students to maintain it. Finally, fostering a culture of integrity that promotes values such as honesty, respect, and accountability is critical to preventing theft and promoting ethical learning Through these means, educational institutions can create conditions that support originality, critical thinking, and academic performance

This complete approach to plagiarism prevention not only protects the integrity of academic work, but it also instils values that are necessary for personal and professional growth. Educational institutions that promote academic integrity teach students to become ethical leaders and contributors to society, armed with the skills and ideals required for success in their academic and professional activities.