Awareness among Research Scholars towards Turnitin: A Study of Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology Hisar, Haryana

Narender Kumar[1], Dr Rupesh Gaur[2], Vijender Singh[3], Som Dutt[4]

Author's Affiliation:
[1]Assistant Librarian (Stage-II), Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar Library, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar, Haryana 125 001, India.
E-mail: nkcgju2014@gmail.com
[2]Librarian, Indira Gandhi National College, Ladwa- Kurukshetra, Haryana 136132, India.
E-mail: gaurrupesh@gmail.com
[3]Assistant Professor, DAV College (Lahore), Ambala, Haryana 134003, India.
E-mail: vijendernarwal@rediffmail.com
[4]Assistant Librarian (Stage-II), Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar Library, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar, Haryana 125 001, India.
E-mail: Somdutt1947@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: Dr Rupesh Gaur, Librarian, Indira Gandhi National College, Ladwa-Kurukshetra, Haryana 136132, India.

E-mail: gaurrupesh@gmail.com

Abstract

After Google a tremendous growth has been noticed in digital contents even becoming double and triple after few days. Thereby, the access of these contents has become so easy even copying also. The scholars are taking the material from web and incorporate the same in their research work with attribution or without attribution and publish by their own name. When any scholar publishes his/her research work in the form of review paper/s and research paper/s without acknowledging the original author, it leads to plagiarism or more text similarity. To deter the same, numerous tools are available in the market. Few are offering their services without payment and few are on payment basis. Turnitin is one significant deterrence tool among of them as many studies depicted. In this connection, to know the scholars attitude towards Turnitin, a survey has been conducted with 80 scholars of different disciplines of Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar. The present research paper intends to know the awareness of research scholars towards Turnitin-anti-plagiarism software so that the level of awareness of scholars may be judged accordingly and can offer the orientation, if require.

Keywords: Google, Digital Contents, Plagiarism, Turnitin, Detection Tool.

1. Introduction

The concept of plagiarism is not new in the academics neither India nor abroad. In India when education was imparted through 'Gurukul' and Teacher erstwhile known as 'Guru' was only the source of information and the papyrus was used for recording the thoughts. Parchment or the skin of the animals, principally those of sheep and goat was also used. Yellum or the skin of lamb or kid was used for expensive writings, while for messages and notes wax-coated wooden tablets. The recorded and kept knowledge was accessible to particular group of people for a limited period of time. Hence, if anyone copied from the same, it was very difficult to trap as things were not in public domain. Therefore, the trapping cases were negligible. However, with the passage of time, the orientation of educational institutes and methods of preservation of information and knowledge (for present and budding generation) also got changed. Thereby, the academic print contents got digitalization; hence in twenty first century the digital contents growth and accessibility has become fast and easy. In fact, Gen 'Z' students and scholars feel comfort with digital contents instead of print as they do not carry heavy bags as depicted by many studies. The easy availability and accessibility of these contents on single platform may attract the modern users. Therefore, the copying of theses contents has become easy and published materials uploaded in the public domain which is accessible to all or maximum if the concerned database is through vendors'. Recent researches also suggest there is a culture of student cheating now-a-days in schools and universities around the world (Chapman and Lupton, 2004; Lee and Wen, 2007; Gallant, 2008). Amongst all acts of academic dishonesty, Kellogg (2002) reported that over 90 percent of students report that their classmates frequently or often plagiarize. The cases of plagiarism elicited day by day and as of now it stood like a giant in front of the academics. Consequently, the scholars are being trapped under plagiarism. Hence to address the issues, numerous detection tools have been introduced by different companies with different algorithm. Among these tools, Turnitin is one effective tool.

2. Turnitin: a Tool to Deter the Plagiarism

Turnitin is meant to deter the plagiarism or fix the text similarity of uploaded documents. It promotes the research activities with integrity which has been lost in the present environment or in the age of information and communication technology as copying of material is very easy due to availability in abundance form. Turnitin is a commercial, Internet-based plagiarism-detection service launched in 1997. The beauty of the software is that there is no limitation of uploading the documents in a single time for checking the similarity of text. It has contained the paid vendors' database of 5500+ along with open access databases. To know the efficacy of Turnitin and view and awareness among research scholars of Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology Hisar, a survey has been conducted with 80 scholars of different streams comprising Science, Engineering, Applied Psychology, and Management. However, during scholars interviews it has been observed that scholars need training the run the applications of Turnitin effectively; otherwise they are not confident to generate the report independently.

3. Review of Literature

To know the view of previous eminent scholars about the topic, the scholars have to undergo their published literature so that conceptual clarity may help to build the substantial theory building. Moreover, literature helps to scholars to identify the gap, thereby further research may be conducted in the same area and fruitful results may be taken for the sake of the society benefits and concerned institutions. Therefore, the following literature has been considered for citation.

Germek (2012) in his study stated that the Turnitin is really a effective tool to deter the plagiarism in the uploaded theses, dissertations, research papers and etc. In his study it is also found that Turnitin helps the students in improving their writing. After applying the Turnitin, students are very much aware about that plagiarism and learning that cheating never pays.

John Biggam, Margaret McCann (2010) in their study found that the "majority of students submitted the first three chapters of their dissertation to Turnitin (Introduction, Literature

Review and Methodology); less than half the students submitted their Findings and Conclusion to Turnitin. Over the course of the academic year, students submitted their dissertation work on average five times. Student Turnitin "similarity scores" were reduced but student use of Turnitin did not significantly enhance the quality of their writing".

Farber (2007) depicted that scholars must know how to do the technical writing in the twenty first century. A tremendous growth has been done in the production and growth of digital contents. It is universal knowing that the technology is a double edge sword. At one edge it is helping to end users up to last zenith, however if the concerned is not aware about the use of technology, it can be harmful as many cases reported. Hence it is individual virtue by which mean he/she is using the same. Technology is playing a vital and significant role to change the orientation of the societies and individual.

Phillips and Horton (2000) in their study explored the issues which are responsible to explore the academic integrity as it is the desire of every academician since inception of academic societies. In fact, the authors have explored the role of detection tools; even define the role of the teacher to deter the plagiarism and analysis of the report.

4. Objectives

Apparently, to justify the present study, objective/s plays significant role. Without objectives study results cannot be explored. Hence, following objectives have been framed for the present study.

- To know the level of awareness of research scholars towards Turnitin.
- To know the view of Scholars towards Turnitin Report.
- To know about the individual access of Turnitin.

5. Methodology

A questionnaire was prepared comprised the basic questions related to Turnitin-anti plagiarism software. The questionnaire was distributed among 100 research scholars and back received 80 filled questionnaires. In this survey research scholars of GJUS&T Hisar were involved of heterogeneous disciplines as it is mandate for every scholar to upload the thesis onto Turnitin for checking the plagiarism/similarity status before submitting the final report. Moreover, interview has also been conducted of 50 scholars for extracting the qualitative method. Few another questions were asked during interview and their replies with minor modifications have also been incorporated in suggestions. The data analysis was done by using the response of 80 research scholars.

6. Data Analysis

During interview few questions were asked about authentication of Turnitin Report, Similarity Index and many more. The following results have been noted in percentage.

Authentication of Turnitin Report and Similarity Index	Interviewee Responses (in percentage)
Statements	
Is Turnitin the best tool to deter the Plagiarism or Similarity Index of the uploaded document/s?	85.7%
Is Turnitin Plagiarism Report always authentic?	75.4%
Is similarity Index is different from Plagiarism generated by Turnitin?	57.3%
Filters which are in built in Turnitin are sufficient to generate the final report of similarity index/plagiarism.	43.1%
Do you understand the filter of 14 consecutive words as notified by the University Grants Commission?	34.8%

Do you understand the meaning of color shown in the report of Turnitin?	40.3%
Do you feel comfortable to analysis the report of similarity index generated by Turnitin, if it seems unreliable?	38.9%

7. Data Analysis of Survey (Questionnaire)

As mentioned in research methodology, for collection of data a questionnaire was developed to know the awareness of scholars towards Turnitin- a powerful tool to deter the similarity index of uploaded documents. Very basic questions were prepared. The response has shown in diagram form and described also.

Chart 1: Are you familiar with the name of Turnitin- anti-plagiarism software?
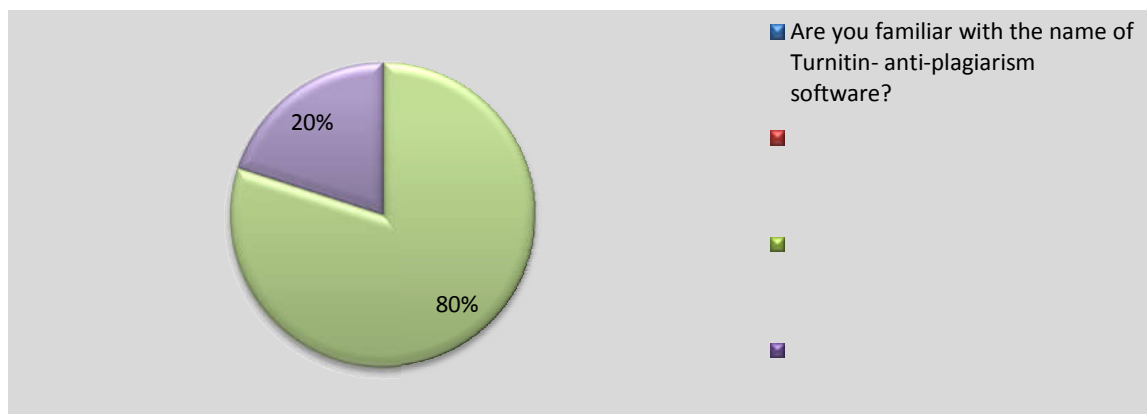

Chart 1: shows that 80% scholars are familiar with the name of Turnitin. Still 20% are not aware. However, as of now Turnitin has become an overwhelming concept and to conduct the fair research activities 100% students must be aware about this tool.

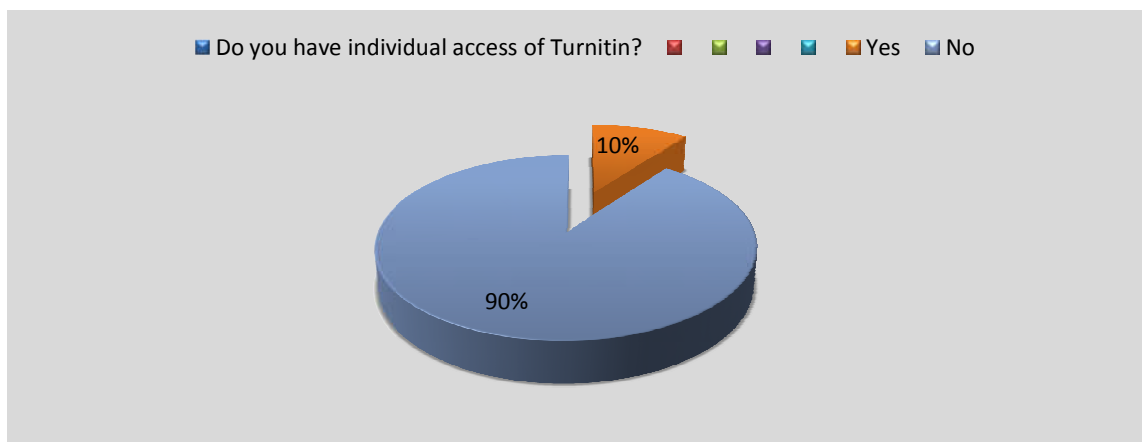**Chart 2: Do you have individual access of Turnitin?**

Chart 2: shows very alarming situation that only 10% having the individual access of Turnitin and 90% are dependent on others. It may lead the breaching of faith and information, if another one may leak the data without publishing and permission of the concerned.

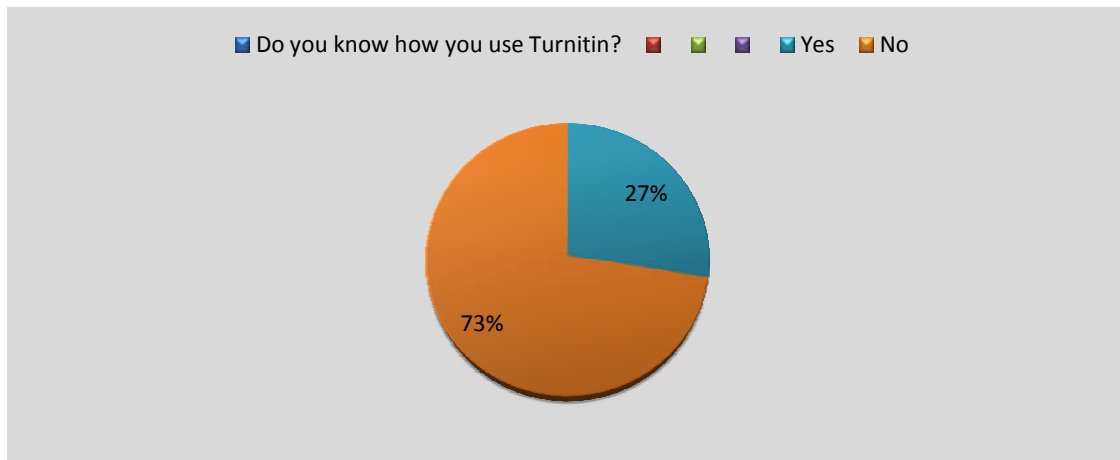**Chart 3: Do you know how you use Turnitin?**

Chart 3: depicts that only 27% know how to use the software. Hence without knowing the software, how they can check their document through this software. It means they are again dependant on others. It itches the mind of the scholars as they are under threat that if their document/s information/data leak from another end before publishing final.

Chart 4: Do you know how to download the final report of similarity index after analyzing the document?
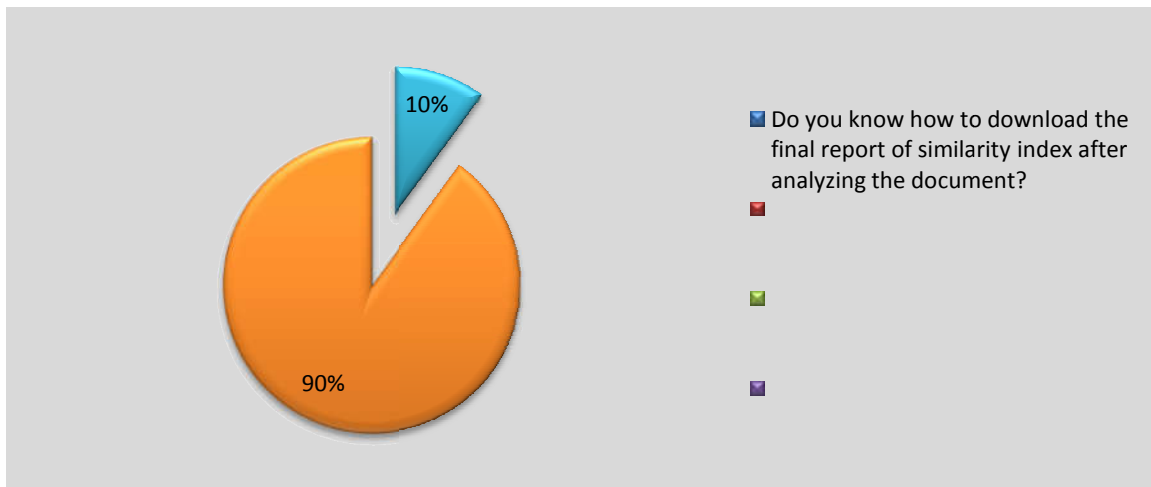

Chart 4: depicted that only 10% scholars know that how they will download the final report from Turnitin. It means scholars need training about the Turnitin. Downloading of final report is indispensible part after analyzing the document throughly even applying filters. Here teacher/supervisor role is inevitable.

Chart 5: Turnitin is user friendly anti-plagiarism software.
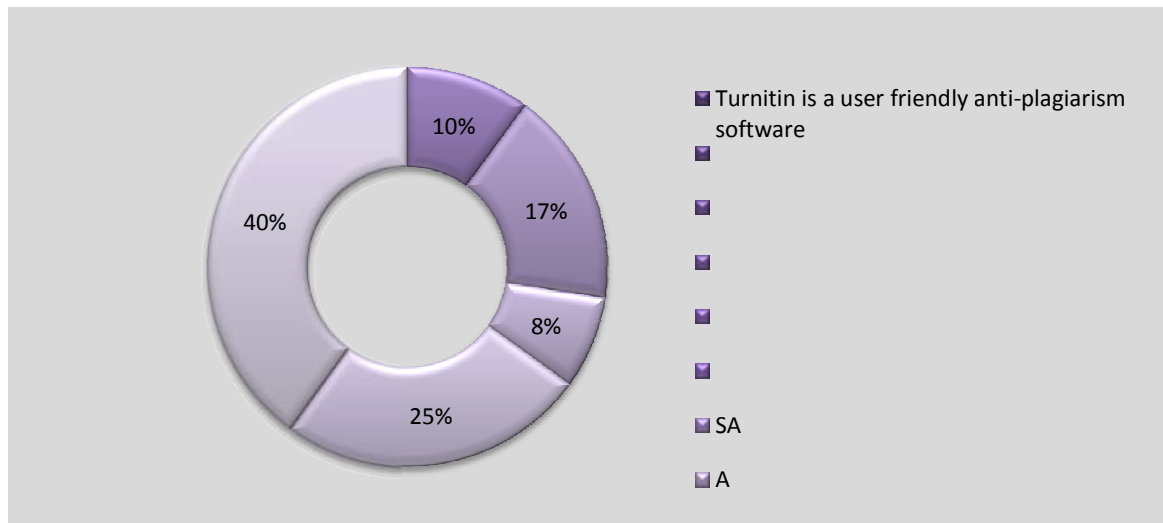

Chart 5: indicates that only 10% are strongly agreed and 17% agreed with the statement. Rest scholars feels that it is not user friendly and need expertise to operate the same. In the age of the ICT, technology must be user friendly so that everyone may participate in the rapidly changing world.

Chart 6: Turnitin shows only text similarity of uploaded documents.
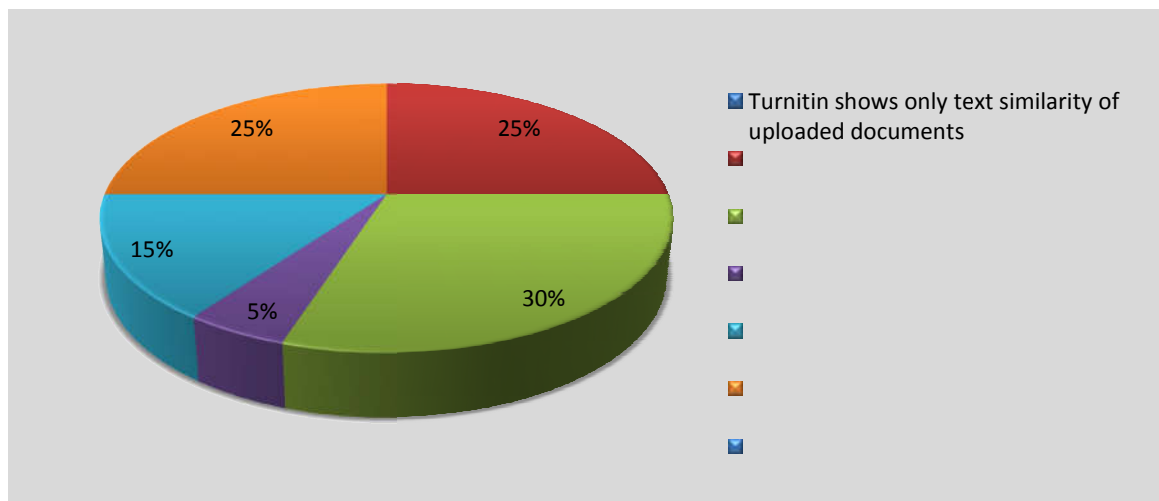

Chart 6: showed that 25% are strongly agreed and 30% are agreed with the statement. Majority of scholars feel that it shows only the similarity of text instead of plagiarism. However, 25% are strongly disagreed with this statement. It means they are much aware how to decide the plagiarism part in the report generated by Turnitin. At least some good sign are here.

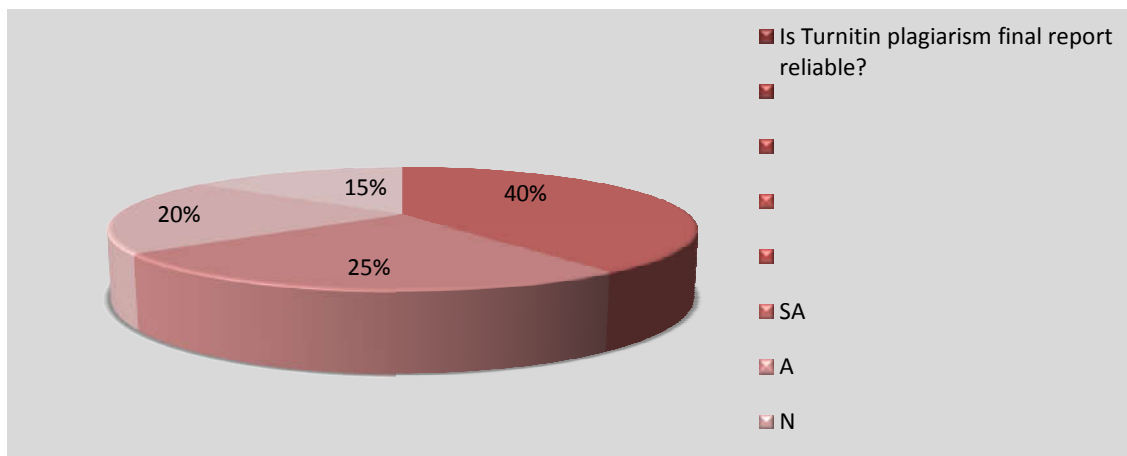**Chart 7: Is Turnitin plagiarism final report reliable?**

Chart 7: explored that 40% scholars are strongly agreed and 25% are agreed means majority of scholars believe that repot is reliable. This is very important statement as reliability ensures the efficacy of the software. In Indian academics the issues of plagiarism have stood like giant.

8. Turnitin Empowers the Academic Integrity

Purposefully, University Grants Commission has shown the interest in curbing the Plagiarism activities even prepared a Public Notice comprising definitions of terms (which are frequently use in Research and Higher Education), Objectives, Duties of Higher Education Institution, Awareness Programmes and Trainings, Curbing Plagiarism, Similarity checks for exclusion from plagiarism, Zero Tolerance Policy in core area, Levels of Plagiarism in non-core areas, Detection/Reporting/Handling of Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct Panel, Plagiarism Disciplinary Authority, and Penalties for students and teachers even mandate that the theses shall be checked through Turnitin before final submission. It is made clear that Turnitin offers its services as remedial tool and empower the academic integrity. Through this notice, UGC igniting the mind of the young aspirations that their education is not meant for promoting the cheating and plagiarism as honesty, fair, reply, accountability and trust are the backbone of qualitative research.

9. Conclusion

It is accepted by the academic institutions that plagiarism activities are being prevailed in academics as availability of digital contents is become so easy even 24×7 throughout the year. In fact, for syllabi contents the concerned students need not to visit any information and resource centre for desired information. Everything is available at the mobile, tablet and desktop and access on single click. With easy accessibility, the copying of digital contents is also very easy. Therefore more incidents of plagiarism are being happened. Hence to control these unethical activities in education, deterrence tools were required. Currently, numerous anti-plagiarism software are available namely Urkund, EVE, Wcopy Find, My Drop Box, Word-Check, Check for Plag- CFP and many more but Turnitin is one amongst them a powerful software as depicted by many studies. The present study shows that 40% scholars are strongly agreed and 25% agree that the report of Turnitin plagiarism is reliable. However, situation is emaciated when 90% scholars say that they do not have the individual access of Turnitin. This is very alarming situation, hence Ministry of Human Resources provides the funds to under privileged institutions so that they may subscribe the license for their scholars. On the other hand, it is a matter of indeed pleasure that 80% scholars agreed that they are familiar with the name of Turnitin- anti-plagiarism software.

10. Recommendations & Suggestions

Authors feel that the concept of MHRD i.e. to curb the plagiarism through anti-plagiarism software i.e. Turnitin is a commendable and significant job. As authors are working in Higher Education Institutions and every day confronts with the research scholars regarding their plagiarism problems like what precaution they have to take during research work in anticipation so that plagiarism may be avoided during final submission. Authors feel that the following recommendations and suggestions may be considered to improve the existing system/plagiarism policy as main author of this paper is working in the University which is first in Haryana among all government universities which implemented the policy of plagiarism in its pursuit and author is the member of that committee.

- Regulatory bodies have to direct the higher educational institutes to conduct the awareness and induction programmes on plagiarism and its detection tools time to time in their premises, thereby at the entry level students may understand the same and avoid while pursuing research work in future and conduct a plagiarism free research.
- Direct to implement the plagiarism policy of University Grants Commission with seamlessly.
- Provide the Turnitin subscription to institutes whose financial position do not allow subscribing the same so that they may also get the access of anti-plagiarism and use accordingly and curb and conduct a fair research work.
- Centrally funded training programmes must be arranged by the regulatory bodies, thereby under privileged institutions may participate and understand and implement in their environment.
- Every higher education institutes must establish Plagiarism Disciplinary Authority so that any complaint may be dealt/entertained with fairly and system may be foolproof even no one can penetrate the system by any mean.
- Programs on academic ethos must be conducted on regular basis even a grading paper must be taught in higher education institutes which contains the contents about plagiarism and detection tools.
- Teacher/Supervisor must be aware about how to analysis the report as he/she is the final arbiter among online resources and scholar contents.
- University Grants Commission must be directed to every Academic Staff College of Indian Universities that during any program a lecture on Plagiarism must be organized by expert Resource Person and its detection tools so that teachers may also aware about the same and may direct the students of their concerned institutions and avoid the Plagiarism.

11. References

1. Khanna, J. K. (1984), "Library and Society", p.xi.
2. Chapman, K.F. and Lupton, R.A. (2004), "Academic dishonesty in a global educational market: a comparison of Hong Kong and American university business students", *The International Journal of Education Management*, Vol. 18 No. 7
3. Lee, C.H. and Wen, L.Y.M. (2007), "Academic dishonesty in higher education – a nationwide study in Taiwan", *Higher Education*, Vol. 54.
4. Gallant, T.B. (2008), "Moral panic: the contemporary context of academic integrity", *ASHE Higher Education Report*, Vol. 33 No. 5.
5. Germek, George (2012) "Empowered library eLearning: Capturing assessment and reporting with ease, efficiency, and effectiveness", *Reference Services Review*, Vol. 40 Issue: 1.
6. John Biggam, Margaret McCann, (2010) "A study of Turnitin as an educational tool in student dissertations", *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*, Vol. 7 Issue: 1.
7. Farber, Miriam (2007) "How shall we write and read in twenty-first century academy?: Notes on the margin of electronic publishing", *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*, Vol. 5 Issue: 2/3.
8. Phillips, Melodie R. and Horton, Veronica (2000) "Cyber cheating: has morality evaporated in business education?", *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 14 Issue: 4.
9. University Grants Commission (promoting of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations- 2017.