

Example of plagiarism argumentative essay

[Profession](#), [Student](#)



Plagiarism can be loosely defined to imply to the deliberate act or instance of using, reproducing or closely imitating literary works, published thoughts or ideas, in print or otherwise, of other authors without their express or implied authorization or knowledge and passing the same off as your own. It includes the deliberate and intentional exact copying of someone's work knowing that the same is inappropriate; mistaking another person's legitimate work for common knowledge; unintentionally forgetting to cite someone's work whenever used or referred; and intentionally or unintentionally citing someone's work in a manner that is misleading. It is notable, however, that despite the aforesaid elaborations, no comprehensive or wide-sweeping enough definition of plagiarism has ever been developed either in law or otherwise. It is on this background that this paper seeks to discuss about plagiarism with a significant focus on the causes of plagiarism and the solutions to the unending vice.

With a view to building a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the likely causes and effects of plagiarism and the possible solutions thereto, this article critically analyses comprehensive presentation on the same by various scholars and contributors including but not limited to Council of Writing Program Administrators, January 2013 and Outcome Statements for First Year composition; Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education; Syed Shahabuddin-Plagiarism in Academia, Central Michigan University; Ebony Elizabeth Thomas and Kelly Sassi-An Ethical Dilemma: Talking about Plagiarism and Academic Integrity in the Digital Age; Donald Gotterbarn, Keith Miller, and John Impagliazzo-Plagiarism and Scholarly Publications: An Ethical Analysis; and Peter Tennant and Gill

Rowell-Benchmark Plagiarism Tariff.

Statistics point to the fact that Plagiarism has become a serious problem and, therefore, a significant concern and cause for worries in academia. For instance, in the year 2008 alone, Gutterman research released a report to the effect that more than seventy thousand article abstracts appeared disturbingly similar to other work already published when scanned by a search program . This is despite the common knowledge that plagiarism is unethical, wrongful, offensive, immoral and utterly dishonest and unfair to the legitimate authors who expend time, energy and other resources in developing their well-researched publications only for the undeserving and opportunistic plagiarists to run away with the credits and praises on account of their sweat. Further, it is indescribably painful and disheartening to read your exact literary work presented in someone's name and thus benefit despite having worked tirelessly hard to piece-up the same .

Several factors contribute to, promote, and sustain plagiarism. According to the Council of Writing Program Administrators' Report of January 2013, plagiarism of literary work particularly among students is primarily caused by fear of failure by students in handing in their own work. This factor, as a cause of plagiarism, is, in my view, more psychological a problem than it is a practice. Students with low self-esteem or self-belief are, by virtue of their psychological disposition, are highly likely to fall trap to plagiarism compared to their wildly ambitious and self-confident counterparts who have been socialised to be self-reliant and go-getters. Further, it is common knowledge that most people suffering from low self-belief derive their satisfaction from praises, acceptance and acknowledgments particularly by those in authority

no matter what it takes to get such-even if it means masking their own literary abilities by reproducing (plagiarizing) works of others; their ultimate goal is to impress.

Further as put out by Council of Writing Program Administrators' Report of January 2013, reiterated by Donald Gotterbarn, Keith Miller, and John Impagliazzo in their article-Plagiarism and Scholarly Publications: An Ethical Analysis and affirmed by Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, poor time management skills in students and their unforgivable lacking in efforts requisite for research based writing is also a major concern to teachers and authors. Due to lack of such efforts students believe, albeit wrongly so, that they have no option but to deliberately reproduce someone's work without acknowledging, identifying or giving credit to the source. This, all the critics contend, is further compounded by the laid-back approach teachers and instructors take in dealing with the problem. They on most occasions fail to report cases of such cheating when they do occur, or may not enforce appropriate penalties. This in effect cements the misplaced belief by students that the practice is okay or acceptable and inevitable. Even in cases where students attempt to, in good faith, acknowledge the source of their work, they do so inaccurately or in a misleading manner. This, in my view, could probably be so thanks to poor training on how to sync their (read students') ideas, thoughts or reflections and explanations with those of their sources to the extent that foreign ideas and phrases are easily discernible or noticeable as they appear ' patched-up', misplaced, idle or not in sync with the flow altogether.

The effects or implications of plagiarism on both the plagiarist and the

sources or authors as the victims are far reaching than what appears in the face of it if the explanations of Donald Gotterbarn, Keith Miller, and John Impagliazzo in their book *Plagiarism and Scholarly Publications: An Ethical Analysis* is anything to go by. Donald, Keith and John contend that plagiarism, as famously characterised by Rebecca Moore Howard, amounts to “academic death penalty.” The trio quotes Price who observed that once a student has been used to and mastered the art of plagiarism, the consequences of unwitting them are on many occasions severe with failing grades on assignment to expulsion from school being the most prominent. This assertion is relatively accurate considering the fact that most plagiarists do not, at least on most occasions, expend energy or effort to review their work let alone those they have plagiarised. It nips in the bud creativity of those involved and deals a significant blow to intellectual abilities as well as literal intelligence. Further, unknown to the plagiarists, plagiarism as quick-coffee solution instils culture of dependency and chronic laziness which if untamed, may eventually lead to intellectual disadvantage. Any institution that promotes such culture either knowingly or otherwise risk churning out half-baked graduates who, otherwise and ironically so, hold impressive and exemplary academic credentials thanks to the ‘copy-paste’ culture.

As earlier hinted at and further explained by Donald Gotterbarn, Keith Miller, and John Impagliazzo, plagiarism may, in consequence, disadvantage the original author or source of the literary or scholarly work at least financially. By plagiarizing someone’s work, a plagiarist may reap the benefits of publishing a scholarly work, in part or in whole without acknowledgment of the source or a proper citation. The net effect is a discouraged,

disenfranchised and bitter original author who may end up being discouraged or disinterested in any other or further research on issues that may otherwise form part of a nation's lifeline. It is as disheartening as it is hurting to watch someone actively use and benefit from work that is the product of your efforts.

Plagiarism amounts to violation of someone's intellectual property rights and the offenders, therefore, risk sanctions or damages in law. Though scholarly plagiarism is rarely punishable the same is, however, prohibited in law and any violation is punishable in many jurisdictions worldwide . The inclusion of such protection in law is, manifestly, an acknowledgement of the significance of creativity and originality of thoughts, ideas and expressions. It seeks to reward those who care or dare to think while banishing and punishing opportunists whose ultimate intentions are to unfairly benefit from the creations of others-thus reap where they did not sow. Further, it is trite law that any publisher has a well-defined obligation to detect, follow-up, deter and eliminate plagiarism of the author's work. The publisher and reviewers also owe the authors due diligence to reveal and reject as much plagiarism as is practicably possible before publishing.

Having broadly discussed the possible causes and implications of plagiarism, it would only be fair if possible solutions to this menace are also canvassed. One such solution lies in paraphrasing the original work. A paraphrase simply refers to a restatement in one's own words of someone else's ideas.

Restatement of a few words of the original statement does not legitimise a paraphrase-a complete change or overhaul of both the words and the sentence structure of the originals does it perfectly well without necessarily

changing the content. It is notable; however, that even where the writer or researcher has perfectly paraphrased an original work, he or she still needs to cite the source since the ideas came from another source despite putting the same in their own words. The fundamental reason and advantage for paraphrasing is to demonstrate that other sources support one's ideas on certain issues and not to make one seem like they are drawing less directly from other sources or to reduce the number of quotations in one's paper. It is sadly a common misconception among students that one needs to hide the fact that you rely on other sources. The use of quality sources to further cement one's ideas or assertions make those ideas seem stronger and valid. Excellent paraphrasing makes the ideas of the original source fit smoothly into one's paper thus emphasizing the most relevant points while leaving out unrelated ones. Almost all the articles analysed herein contend that even where sources are cited, ambiguity in the phrasing may on most occasions disguise the real source thus resulting to an inadvertent plagiarism.

Another possible solution to this problem is instilling in students and academic instructors alike, virtues and personal values such as honesty and integrity. This in consequence builds or boosts their self-esteem and feeling of self-worth. The Council of Writing Program Administrators, acknowledges the role played by the teachers and instructors in curbing the vice by emphasizing the need for students and other learners to live up to their responsibility to behave ethically and honestly as such students or learners. The paper further contends that teachers and instructors can unknowingly encourage or discourage plagiarism not just by policy and admonition, but also in the way they structure or organize assignments. Further, students

and instructors should openly talk about the underlying implications of plagiarism and to understand that challenging the works of others rather than copying makes them good and responsible citizens.

Improving the design and the sequence of assignments could also be a potential solution to the menace. Constant and continued use of the writing guidelines proposed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators in their publication an Outcome Statements for First Year composition has been demonstrated to instil discipline on the student writers as it teaches them various qualities and virtues such as reading and comprehension as well as analytical and critical thinking-all qualities which one cannot muster until and unless they appreciate language use and sentence structure patterns.

Further, the Teachers and the academic instructors can structure assignments that require students or learners to explore a particular subject in depth with most of the topics based on the principles of inquiry and a genuine need to discover something new. This would ignite curiosity in the students who would in consequence endeavour to produce or come up with the best of results by comparing their findings with those of other authors rather than just copying or reproducing what was already done by others. Further, students will focus on reading and evaluating other works with the view to getting answers to the impending questions as opposed to just reproducing someone's work.

Disciplinary action can also be taken against those who perpetuate the practice. Many institutions have clearly defined procedures for pursuing claims of academic dishonesty. The Council of Writing Program Administrators contends that a lot of care should, however, be taken in

punishing offenders with expulsion of the student being the most drastic and severe to probation being the lightest. This paper is however of the view that due to the rather negative impact of plagiarism both to the plagiarist and the source, full course of the law should issue on the offenders as light penalties for the same would only serve as an incentive and not a deterrent as should be the case. Cases of professors being stripped of their doctorates, undergraduates their bachelors and students being expelled on account of plagiarism are a clear manifestation of how serious some jurisdictions including France have taken up the matter-copying or messing someone's work amounts to clipping or holding the hands that feed them; it is akin to destroying their tools of trade.

On the balance of probabilities and on critical and adept analysis of scholarly articles in issue, it is this paper's contention that the negative implications of plagiarism far outweigh the potential benefits, if any, accruable by the plagiarist. Interestingly and ironically so, it deals a significant blow to the plagiarist, the purported beneficiary, by putting a caveat on their ability to think and process information independently and with an open mind. It in the long run leaves them utterly dependent, wanting in intellectual abilities and academically dwarf. In essence therefore, no one, including the perpetrators themselves, benefits from plagiarism. It is a loss to the society whose cost implications are unimaginably high. It is, therefore, in the interest of everyone that it is nipped in the bud once and for all. The prevalence rates of the practice are alarming to say the least if the statistics provided by the various anti-plagiarism bodies are anything to go by. Students in their thousands fall victim to this 'quick-fix' times without number. It is this

papers contention that such students can be rescued through extensive, thorough and targeted sensitization. Parents should also not just be concerned about grades of their children-rather, they should be concerned with whether their children internalize concepts and can critically analyse information however simple. Otherwise, this would just be another proverbial 'wild goose chase.'

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