

Avoiding Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement in Research Publications in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: A Case Study of Colleges of Education in Edo State and Delta States

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Abstract: This study was carried out to investigate researchers awareness and their perception about research publications. The study covered 4 Colleges of Education. With 2 each from Edo and Delta States of Nigeria. The study also adopted the survey method using self-designed structured questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. The population of the study consisted of 113 researchers randomly selected in the Colleges of Education. Out of 113 copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 89 (78.8%) useable copies were returned to the researchers. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics particularly frequency counts and percentage are represented in the table. The findings of the study showed that most of the researchers working in the Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States do not know about copyright infringement and the consequences in research publications. As a result of this, an awareness and perception of this act need to be given. The study further showed that plagiarism, copyright infringement is serious academic offences. The study brought to an understanding of the penalties for plagiarism and created awareness.

Keywords: Copyright infringement and Plagiarism

I. INTRODUCTION

Copyright is also known as intellectual property. Hence there is a law that protects it. In most institutions of higher learning, plagiarism has become the order of the day which is termed an academic offence. The works of writers and producers are often times duplicated and performed otherwise known as piracy. These two words or terms are synonymous in intellectual property law.

Therefore, this research work will look at copyright infringement and plagiarism with special focus how to avoid plagiarism and create more awareness. According to Pandey (2020). In the present 21st century, higher education is totally technology driven. We have information on our fingerprint. Internet www, Google act as an aid to searching and retrieval process in information, while teaching and learning is a continuous process.

In Higher Education, plagiarism has been experienced as a type of untrustworthiness. According to Oxford English Dictionary online 2017, the term plagiarism is defined as the practice of taking someone else's work or idea and passing

them off as one's own. (Perrin, Larkham and Culwin) define plagiarism as the use of an author's works, ideas, reflection and thoughts without proper acknowledgment of the author. (Koul, et al) define plagiarism as a form of cheating and theft since in the case of plagiarism one person takes credit for another person's intellectual work.

The opportunity to plagiaris from books and journals in written course work has always existed but the extensive development and use of the internet as a source of learning material has enabled researchers to download and plagiaris information much more easily. (Evans 2000, Park, 2003). Subsequently, literary theft is a significant issue at present in scholastic level.

According to Aitufe (2010), copyright is gradually assuming prominence in Nigeria. This is not surprising because of it economic significance. Copyright seeks and aim at protecting the author's economic interests nationally and internationally. It is not only of Economic significance to the authors but also to the public in general. Copyright law does not prohibit all copyright or replication. It is not one of those rights that admit of no exception. This shows that certain acts are exempted from copyright controls.

The copyright Act, especially schedule two therefore, specifies a number of exemptions from the general application to all eligible works. Its application depends on the nature and type of a particular work. All these exemptions specified in the second schedule to the Act apply to literally, musical, Artistic works and Cinematographic films; they have limited applications in respect to sound recordings and Broadcasts.

These exemptions make it clear that copyright in work is not infringed by any person whose act comes within the context of any of the specified exemptions. It is not an infringement by doing any of the acts reserved by the copyright owner by way of fair dealing for purpose of research, private use, criticism or review or the reporting of current events. Eze Ifeoma Chikaodili (2016).

II. COPYRIGHT

Copyright:- The exclusive, legally secured right to reproduce, distribute, and perform a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic work. Now commonly subsumed under the broader category of legal regulations known as intellectual – property law. Copyright supplies the holder with a limited monopoly over the created material that assures him of both controls over its use and a portion of the pecuniary benefits derived from it.

III. LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE

The role of academic libraries in handling copyright related issues, including their required skills and knowledge about copyright issues have become more important in public sharing and in access and reusing scientific research and new technologies as well as delivery mechanism. Due to the complications and general confusion about copyright, there is a growing need for official support. According to Nilson (2016), Academic Libraries often have only an informal mandate to work in this area and therefore lack the authority to work with copyright education in a formalized way. Legitimacy can be achieved by collaborating with other units of the academic units with an interest in copyright. Co-operation with the Library is very important to share experiences and increase knowledge about copyright.

Awareness of Copyright Law

There has been a lot of work done in the past on the subject copyright and allied topics. Among those studies are various key effects to list how library professionals are dealing with copyright law among researchers, students and faculty members in any educational institutions. Copyright is a lengthy topic to library professionals, and, as Libraries are supporting the needed scholarly materials.

The need for descriptive literature has only increased in the current environment.

Awareness of copyright law is the most important to technological inventions and in the emerging knowledge – based economy. Copyright and plagiarism has long been a topic of interest to librarians.

Gould (2021) focused on his studies on the copyright policies that Universities create to address the ambiguities of ownership and use of copyright works.

Copyright is considered as a focal point in various activities with education especially in the higher education sector. Educating within education especially in the higher education sector. Educating the professionals Copyright infringement and plagiarism should be a priority. If, only to protect the institution from lawsuits.

According to Amos (2016) Copyright law has been in existence in Nigeria. It is important to state here that Lecturers in Nigeria higher institutions of learning design their course works from copyrighted materials to teach students. In such cases, lack of copyright awareness may result in an

uncontrolled copyright infringement. This was confirmed in a cursory survey, where it came to height that these commercial photocopy centers are not effectively regulated. For example, in all these places, there are no notices that would inform the students and other users of the quality of materials that may be legally photocopied for permitted use or fair use under section 19 of the Act, 2005 (Act 696). In higher institutions of learning in the developed countries, there are clear copyright policies to guide teaching, learning and promotion of knowledge whilst not infringing on authors rights.

Okoye (2005) investigated the photocopying practices in tertiary institutions in Nigeria as they are related to existing copyright laws regulating photocopying practices so that the infringement of copyright law will be minimized. Results revealed that the major reason for photocopying was the cheapness of photocopies than the cost of the books and scarcity of books and other reading materials.

In as much as I agree with the opinion of the two authors above, it is important that researcher and publishers who may have had a good grasp of writing should always acknowledge the sources where they picked some ideas in putting up their publication, with reference to the citation styles they are using. These acknowledge makes the work of an author more authentic as to the sources of information used. These sources help to indicate what have earlier been published in a field so that you can identify where a particular word or idea was borrowed from.

IV. PLAGIARISM

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) defines plagiarism as “an act to copy another person's idea, words or work and pretend that they are your own.

It is important to understand that plagiarism despite the following according to the Merriam – Webster online dictionary:

- ❖ Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit.
- ❖ Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.
- ❖ Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation.
- ❖ Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.
- ❖ Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

It went further to state that, most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledge that certain material has been borrowed and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.

Consequences of plagiarism at academic level:-

1. It defrauds the system
2. It encourage sloppy research

3. It obstructs the work of scientific journals

Plagiarism can result in your work being destroyed. Plagiarism can also result in legal action, fines and penalties

1. Brings out the worst in people
2. Fighting plagiarism is expensive

Avoiding Plagiarism

According to Nilson (2016), as a writer, avoiding plagiarism is very important. One integrity should always be considered. Outside the fact that you can lose your respect, it can cost you a valuable professional referral and further career advancement.

Fortunately, it's not all scary. Avoiding plagiarism is actually easy to do. To help researchers and scholars achieve these, there are certain guides that can help depending on the citation styles you are using while writing an article or books for publication.

1. Cite your source.
2. Include quotation.
3. Paraphrase.
4. Present your own ideas
5. Use a plagiarism checker.

All the above information if properly followed, one can be said to be avoiding plagiarism.

Objective Of The Study

The study among other things will:

- ❖ Examine the evils of intellectual properties.
- ❖ Determine the consequences of the act of plagiarism.
- ❖ To look at the possible ways to avoid plagiarism.

Research Questions

The following research questions were presented to guide the study;

1. Do researchers in your college refer to other sources of information in writing their research publication?
2. Do they consult books and journals in writing their research publication?
3. Are there photocopying services in your library and college?
4. What are the consequences of plagiarism of the researchers?

Area of Study

This research work covers four major Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States with two Colleges from each state. The Colleges are: College of Education, Igueben, Edo State, Federal College of Education (Technical) Ekiadolor Edo State, Federal College of Education, Agbor, Delta State as well as College of Education, Agbor, Delta State were covered in this study.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey design using questionnaire titled avoiding plagiarism and copyright infringement in research and publications in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: a case study of Colleges of Education in Edo and Delta States.

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to some identified researchers from the targeted Colleges while other were administered through research assistants particularly in the College in Delta State, while the researchers covered College of Education Igueben, Edo State and Federal College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A total of 113 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to researchers out of which only 89 (78.8%) useable copies were returned to the researcher. Analysis of the completed and returned copies of the questionnaire showed that 37 (41.6%) of the respondents were male researchers while 52 (58.4%) were female researchers. The statistics further showed that 21 (23.6%) of the respondents possess Bachelor degrees, 52 (58.4%) masters Degree, and 16 (18%) possess Ph.D degree.

The analysis also showed that 52 (58.4%) of the respondents were registered members of the Teacher's Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) where other belong to other bodies. On their work experience, 8 (9%) of the respondents have work experience of 1 -5 years, 21 (23.6%) have 6 – 16 years 39 (43.8%) have 11 -15 years, 17 (19.1%) have 16-20 years; while 4 (4.5%) have 21 years and above work experience.

Research Question 1: Do Researchers in your College refer to other source of information in writing their research Publications?

Table 1: Knowledge of Plagiarism N = 89

College	Frequency	Percentage
College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State	37	46.6
College of Education (Technical) Ekiadolor, Edo State	26	30.2
College of Education, Agbor, Delta State	16	14.0
College of Education, Igueben, Edo State	10	9.2
Total	89	100

The analysis in table 1 shows that 46.6% of the respondents from the College of Education (Technical) Asaba, Delta State affirmed that they have knowledge of plagiarism, 30.2% indicated knowledge of it from the College of Education (Technical) Ekiadolor, Edo State, while 14.2% from College of Education Agbor in Delta State have the same view and 9.2% from the College of Education, Igueben, Edo State

The researchers sought to know if researchers consult books and journals in writing their research publications.

Table 2: mean awareness of Copyright Infringement N = 89

S/N	Options	Frequency	Percentage
i	I am aware of Copyright infringement	45	52.2%
ii	I am not aware that there is an Act that prohibit photocopying of a persons book without his permission.	33	33.1%
iii	I am not aware that it all source of information must be acknowledged.	11	14.7%
iv	I am not aware that paraphrasing someone's work is also an infringement	0	0
	Total	89	100

The analysis in table 2 showed that 45 [52.2%] of the respondent indicated that they are aware of copyright infringements from sources consulted in books and Journals. 33. [33.1%] of respondents indicated that they are not aware of an act prohibiting of photocopy and Journals without permission from the author. 11 [14.7] of the respondents were of the opinion that they were not aware that all sources of information must be acknowledged. Lastly there was 0% that were not aware of paraphrasing of something work as an infringement.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3: Are there photocopying services in your Library and college?

Means; copying law. N =89

Options	Frequency	Percentage
We have photocopying services in our Library and College.	89	100%
Total	89	100%

The analysis in table 3 showed that 100% of the respondents indicated that there is photocopying services in the Library and College.

Research Question 4: What are the consequences of plagiarism to the researchers in their publication?

Means: The consequences of plagiarism to researchers. N=89

Options	Frequency	Percentage
It can cost you a valuable professional referral	30	33.5%
It encourages sloppy research	20	25.0%
It obstructs the work of scientific Journals	10	11.2%
It can result in your work being destroyed	19	20.1%
It can result in legal action, fines and penalties	10	11.2%
Total	89	100%

In answering this question, the respondents were allowed to tick as many options as applied to their various schools. The analysis in table 4 showed that 30(33.5%) responses indicated that there are consequences in plagiarising peoples work in research publications, which can cost you valuable

professional referral. 20(25.0%) responses agreed that it encourages sloppy research. Another 10 (11.2%) responses indicates that it obstructs the work of scientific journals. 19 (20.1%) where of the opinion that it can result in your work being destroyed. 10 (11.2%) only responded that it can result in legal action, fines and penalties.

Discussion of Findings

The aim of this study is to investigate researchers awareness and their perception about academic plagiarisms, and copyright infringement in research publication in College of Education in Edo and Delta States using Two Colleges in both States as a Case study. The data collected and analysed showed that researchers working in College of Education in Edo State and Delta State do not know much about copyright infringement and plagiarism as well as the consequences involved in such act.

This Corroborates Okiy (200%) and Pandey (2021) findings in their studies respectively. Okiy in his studies on copyright infringement and awareness opined that the major reasons for photocopying was the cheapness of photocopying than the cost of the books and scarcity of books and other reading materials. Over 45% of the respondents indicated that out of the 16 questions raised that, they are totally unaware of copying infringement and plagiarism. Often times, there is plagiarism test to confirm such works of researchers and its originality.

The analysis in Tables 3 and 4 clearly showed that most researchers do not know the consequences of plagiarism in researcher publications. In Table 3, it is observed that they photocopy reading materials with the presence of photocopying services in their College Libraries. Also in Table 4, it is observed also that 33.5% of the respondents agreed that the consequences of plagiarism can create valuable professional referral. 25.0% agreed it encourages sloppy researcher. 11.2% were of the opinion that agreed that it can lead to the whole work being destroyed and lastly, 11.2% of the respondents agreed that it can result in Legal action, fines and penalties.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Plagiarism and copyright infringement in research publication could be said to be a window through which researchers cheat and takes credit for another person's intellectual work.

The opportunity to plagiarism from books and journals in written course work have always existed. The use of the internet as a source of learning material has enabled researchers to download and plagiarism information much more easily.

Recommendations

In view of the negligence experienced by researchers in their publications, and not being aware of the evils of plagiarism and copyright infringements, the following recommendations are made.

1. All research works especially those intended for publication should be made to undergo plagiarism test.
2. Researchers should be advised to always acknowledge the source of their information.
3. Where internet source is used, credit should be given to the source also.
4. A seminar or conference should be organized for researchers on copyright infringement and plagiarism where experts on the subject area should be invited to give lectures on related issues as discussed in the course of the research.

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