

USAGE OF ANTI PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE IN  
ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS:  
A CASE STUDY

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Abstract:

*The purpose behind writing the present paper is to make clear understanding of the plagiarism and its related concepts. Plagiarism is now a very critical issue in all cases while writing or creating any intellectual work. Now it is very easy to track the original source if the any part of the text is copied from any of the source. This paper tries to discuss all these issues. The Indian scenario in present context has also been mentioned. The paper also discusses the duties and responsibilities of library professionals. It also provides evaluation study of two major anti-plagiarism proprietary software. Finally, a comparative study of the usage of Turnitin software of IIT Mandi & IISER Bhopal has been presented. This paper is a single source guide to understand the concept of plagiarism and its allied areas.*

Keywords: Plagiarism detection, Originality verification, Turnitin, iThenticate, IIT Mandi, IISER Bhopal

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**Introduction:** It is not so long back when writing a paper and getting it published in journal was a hard hitting task. In those days the authors had to search literature by making search strategy. The search strategy usually used to pass through indexing and abstracting services, bibliography and other secondary sources which guide the users to the primary literature. This process demands time and efforts on the part of the researchers. But now only one click has replaced all this process. It has now become very easy to search, find and use the sweating efforts of someone else. Thus the word plagiarism came into existence. This paper tries to find the solution to check the plagiarized material. Hence there are many open source and free tools available to complete the task of checking plagiarism. But only the proprietary software can provide the ultimate solutions. Also these tools claims to be accurate in generating the originality report which is first and final requisite of using such service.

Plagiarism is simply using the intellectual work of someone else without giving credit to the original creator. It not only involves the theft of the ideas but also a sense of being an original creator. According to Wiki "Plagiarism is generally considered a serious violation of academic standards and a detriment to education"<sup>1</sup>.

There are many definitions of plagiarism given by scholars. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, plagiarism means to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own, to use (another's production) without crediting the source, to commit literary theft and to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source<sup>2</sup>.

In other words, plagiarism is a piece of scam. It is an act which involves stealing one's intellectual work and then claiming for its ownership. Nevertheless Wiki page on plagiarism says "Plagiarism is not a crime /per se/ but in academia and industry, it is a serious ethical offense"<sup>3</sup>.

Teddy Fisherman points out that Plagiarism occurs when someone: Uses words, ideas, or work products; Attributable to another identifiable person or source; Without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained; In a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship; In order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be Monetary<sup>4</sup>.

**Category of Plagiarism:** Turnitin Whitepaper has classified plagiarism into following ten categories<sup>5</sup>:

- CLONE: An act of submitting another's work, word-for-word, as one's own. It involves copying the text, graphics etc. without making any change.
- CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
- FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
- REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
- RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one's own previous work without citation; To self plagiarize.
- HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
- MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
- 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
- AGGREGATOR: The "Aggregator" includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
- E-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

Now days it is very common practice of using the materials which is available through Google search, particularly images and video/audio files. A UGC report on Electronic Theses online admit this fact "risks of exposure of plagiarism is much larger in a scenario where theses are available in electronic format". This act is also reckoned as plagiarism if authors are not taking the permission from the creator of the file or not giving the credit. To avoid the issue of plagiarism is to take the advance permission for using the material and giving the proper credit<sup>6</sup>.

**Indian Scenario:** In India, people are not very much concerned about the concept of the plagiarism and its consequences. Most people still feel that there is no need to take the permission from the creator of the work. They can use the ideas presented by others without proper acknowledgement. Lack of knowledge or the sense of innocence also leads to creation of plagiarized material. In India generally an action is taken only on the complaint. Although the electronic media makes the other's work easily available to mass, print version of the work may also be plagiarized. Unfortunately the material which is not available in electronic media, there is no any way to check the copy/paste. In many cases, the author had to face the complaint or a type of punishment. Still there is no any statutory body in India which can deal with the problem of plagiarism. Besides at the national level, at the institutional level there should be a monitoring body that can evaluate the work done by a person. There should be some check points which should be necessary for everyone to get checked who wants to make his/her work public. However there are some cases when students found innocent in using someone's materials. Rajeev Vij & other say "Often, students do not even know that they are plagiarizing, and those who do know are often unaware of the seriousness of the offense and its possible consequences." Still they further adds "Another part of the problem lies in the factors that make students likely to plagiarize: poor research skills, attitudes toward grades and schoolwork, poor time management skills, the perception that peers are cheating and skewed risk-reward assessments<sup>7</sup>.

Despite of many cases and the actions taken afterwards, the authority in India at all level does not show any attention to confront with the problem of plagiarism. As P. Chadah rightly said "India's university system is displaying a knee-jerk reaction to increasing reports of plagiarism from our country"<sup>8</sup>.

**Role of Library Professionals:** The duty of a library professional does not finish at the gate of the library, even beyond the boundary of that. Being a library professional our duty is to make the faculty, students and other users of the community aware about the issue of plagiarism. If any user wants to get published his/her work we should guide them in a most convenient way.

Various publishers also publish brochures and pamphlets which contains the guidelines for publications of the papers. These brochures should be distributed to the educationists to make them aware of the new policies and procedures for getting papers published.

**Anti-Plagiarism Packages:** In order to control over this widespread evil (immoral exercise) in 2002, Steve O'Connor conducted an Australia-wide study investigating the extent to which university students plagiarised and reported that 70 per cent of universities participating in the study were affected<sup>9</sup>. An anti-plagiarism tool must be installed in an organization. The question is which tool should be chosen. There are many anti-plagiarism packages available online free of cost. These anti-plagiarism softwares give the facility to check the originality status of the paper. Some of them run online and there is no need to install them in user's system. Users have to simply open the website and upload your paper for originality check. While some of the software are needed to install in the system before using them. In using free software, there are various issues involve, which are mentioned below:

The services may be temporarily available/unavailable; Some of the features may be restricted and are provided on payment of charges; It is very common that many software do not search through the purchased contents in absence of proper agreement with the publishers; There is a fear of using the uploaded contents for commercial/noncommercial purposes; The originality report might be ambiguous which might not present the true picture.

As Raimondi<sup>10</sup> opines that "Anti-plagiarism software tools may falsely report legitimate portions of text as being plagiarised", but in case of a proprietary software user can somewhat rely on the reports generated by it. A commercial software helps to avoid all these problems. By signing a license agreement with the proprietor of commercial software, all these above said issues can be sorted out. Turnitin & iThenticate are two such software which are available in Indian market and are being widely used by many of the leading institutions in India. IIT Mandi and IISER Bhopal are few of such academic institutions.

**Turnitin** : The Turnitin is an anti-plagiarism software package was developed by John Barrie. Turnitin is a cloud-based service which consists of three core functions: checking originality, grading online and conducting peer reviews. It is one of the most widely used applications in the world, which is used by more than 10,000 institutions in 135 countries to manage the submission, tracking and evaluation of student work online.

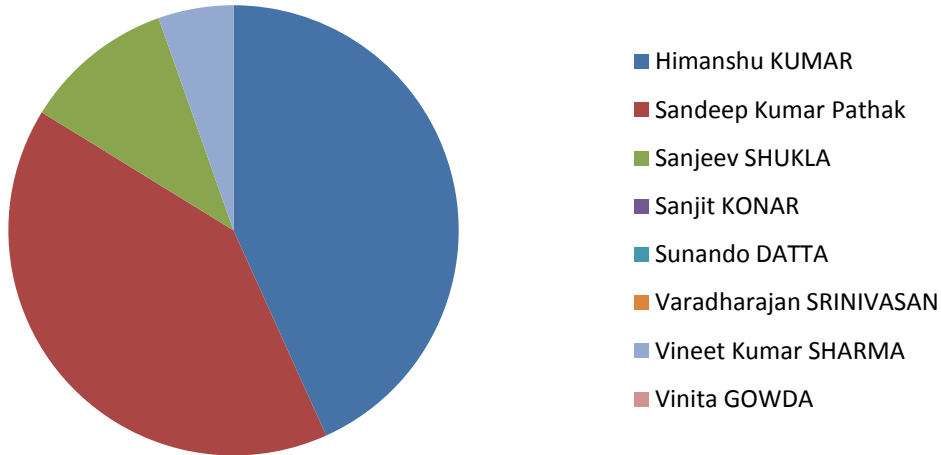
Turnitin compares the submitted paper to a vast database of 45+ billion pages of digital content (including archived Internet content that is no longer available). Peer Review facilitates the management of peer review exercises so students can evaluate and learn from one another's work. Turnitin is available in many languages and currently offers interfaces and content matching for checking originality and online grading in English, Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Japanese, Russian etc<sup>11</sup>. Turnitin has a wide-spread distribution in India. The distribution agency in India claims for 168 Indian institutions in which Turnitin is being used.

**iThenticate**: iThenticate is a plagiarism detection service, developed by iParadigms. It was launched in 2004. The service is marketed to publishers, news agencies, corporations, law firms, and government agencies<sup>12</sup>. The uploaded document is compared to more than 40 million published research. iThenticate also maintains its own web crawler, indexing over 10 million web pages daily.

It has two primary benefits. First, authors can ensure they have sufficiently cited their sources and presented the highest quality written work. Second, this preliminary editorial review will allow editors to view and move submitted documents through the peer-review or referee process to publication, confident that content is original<sup>13</sup>.

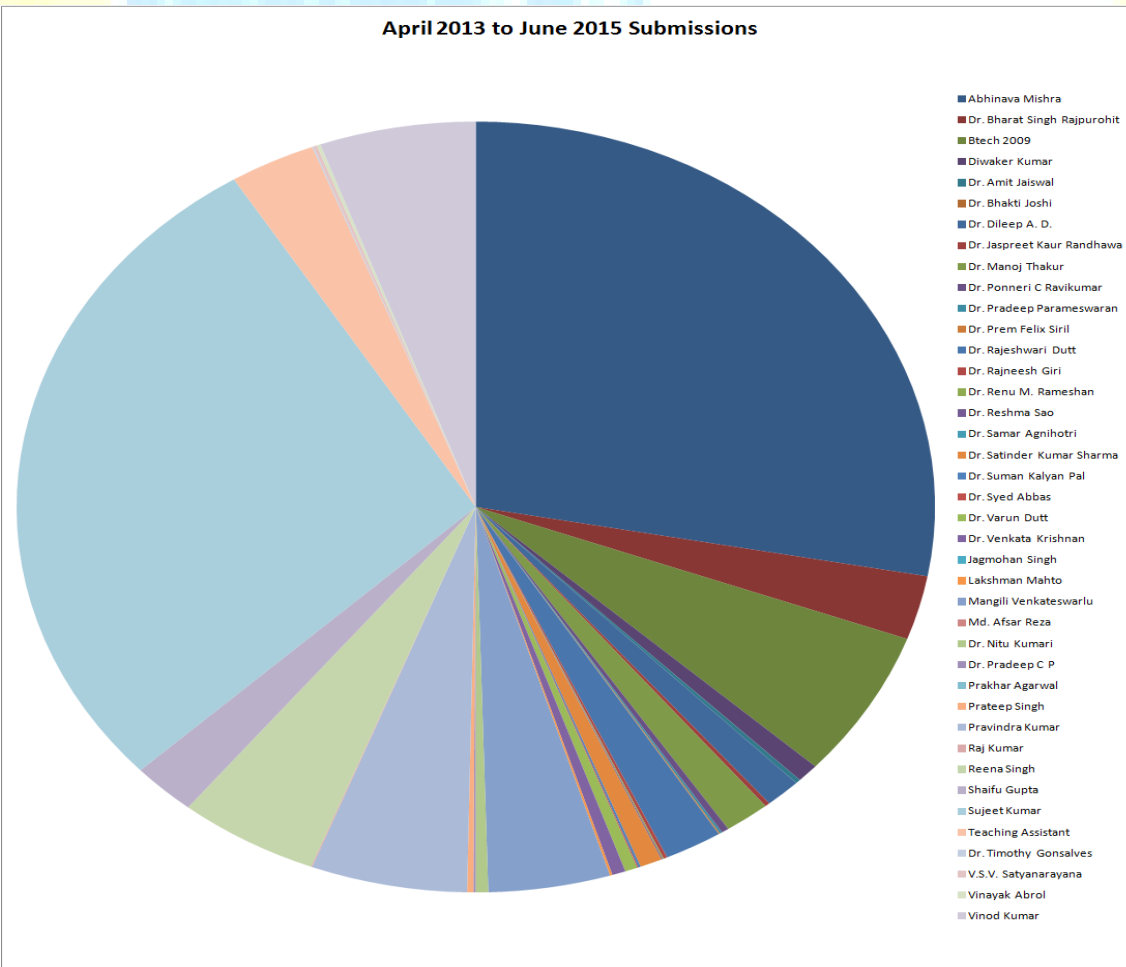
**Usage of Turnitin in IIT Mandi & IISER-B**: Turnitin plagiarism software is being used in IIT Mandi since April 2013. IISER-Bhopal is also having subscription to Turnitin plagiarism software since April 2015. Usage of this anti plagiarism web tool in both the academic institutions have been illustrated by the following pie chart:

### April 2015 to June 2015 Submissions



### Usage Stats of Turnitin at IISER-Bhopal

#### April 2013 to June 2015 Submissions



### Usage Stats of Turnitin at IISER-Bhopal

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During 3 months subscription period (April 2015 to June 2015) of Turnitin at IISER-B has total 37 submissions. The usage chart shows that right now very few users including the administrator have started using Turnitin. It shows a typical trend towards a new thing which is first time introduced in any organization. There is a need to spread more awareness among the users to make best of this plagiarism web tool so usage can be increased. Since Turnitin is being used in IIT Mandi for more than 2 years, the submission rate is also high, which is 2311 till June 2015. The average submissions rate is more than 85 per month. However it must be necessary to mention here that the submission rate during 2<sup>nd</sup> subscription year is much higher than the first year. Also more than 70% faculty has used it atleast one time.

**Conclusion:** In the era of literature explosion it is very common to have the similar idea with one another. This may happen intentionally or unintentionally. But when it actually happens, either intentionally or unintentionally, it comes out with very harsh results. There are many cases in which the person had to face court cases and other types of punishment. If you are the originator of the original idea no need to say that you might be the victim of plagiarism. Since no one is perfect, it may also happen that the works of two different people may be same at the same time. But even then utmost care should be taken to avoid such types of occurrences. To solve this problem the anti-plagiarism tools can play a great role. If users are choosing such tool which provides the services online free of charge then users should be aware of its terms and conditions. It may also happen that such service provider may disclaim the unauthorized use of users' materials online. One should clearly understand the terms of usage of the tools. On the other hand on choosing a proprietary tool the institute should make clear all the doubts about the usage. In no case the intellectual work should be allowed to misuse by the proprietor. All this is very important to avoid any problem of illegitimate use of the materials. Plagiarism is a reality now days. If users are going to explore something new or have generated a new idea it is their own duty that they must protect it to be plagiarized ON TIME.



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