PLAGIARISM VIA INTERNET ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN TURKEY

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Abstract

347 students from 3 different universities prepared paperworks on first semester of 2011-2012 educational year. After a deep investigation using an internet based plagiarism detect engine and serching expression in google its observed that %94,0 of students had prepared their papers with copy -paste method. % 50,7 of them did not had any references while %35,2 of them had not proper references. % 27,1 had their formatting exactly same with the source while %34,3 of them had partialy copied the source formatting.

Key Words: Plagiarism, Internet, undergraduate students, Turkey.

INTRODUCTION

Internet gives researchers opportunities which never seen before. Searching, multimedia, document sharing, world wide access to knowledge, online journals, real time video chat with other experts, easy access from everywhere even while you are mobile, synchronous and asynchronous communication and exc. With this opportunities scientists have a variety of new patterns and processes. On the other hand information is so rapidly produced there is no way of being informed on every study even on a single field. With the non-scientific, replicated and unorganized documents people are complaining about information pollution.

Information pollution is only one aspect of the information era. Another issue that Internet effects information is academic dishonesty. Although academic dishonesty is not a 20. century problem, it has been easier and more common with the development of Internet. Cyber-plagiarism is a rising problem. Another important point is, with so many resources it gets harder to detect the dishonesty.

Plagiarism is widely used as one kind of dishonesty. It is defined as partially or fully copying the intent or format of a source without sticking on the quotation rules. Another similar term is pseudopigraphy which is defined as ascription of false authorship to a piece of writing (Page, 2004). Other similar terms continue as misconduct, falsification, fraud and exc. (Decoo, 2004)

Researches show that internet is widely used (Hitlin, 2005) and also for schoolwork (DeBell and Chapman, 2003). Some researchers agree that plagiarism exist. (Probett, 2011; Born, 2003; Hansen, 2003; Thompson 2006; Scanlon and Neumann, 2002). Some say it could happen even before the internet era (Simmons, 1999). Simmons refers to Dorris Dant's survey made in 1986 on high school students as evidence. It is considered as a vital problem (ATL Survey, 2008, 46). On a research on over 18.000 students from 2001 to 2005 McCabe (2005) found plagiarism is as common as %60 and plagiarism via internet is nearly %50.

Plagiarism may occur as naive and unintentional action or intentonaly and dishonestly (Probett, 2011). Plagiarism may occur partialy or as entirely copying of the source or sources. (Austin & Brown, 1999) When the

source is digital or internet they do not have to even read it. They do a collection of copied and pasted texts (Thompson 2006; Paulhus et al 2003; Park 2003;, Scanlon and Neumann, 2002; McMurtry, 2001). The educational preferences of such papers are a vital question. Another way of plagiarism is to acquire finished research papers for a fee (Paulhus et al , 2003). Appropriation of ideas is also considered as plagiarism and sometimes content and format copying is not necessary (Lindsay, 2003).

Although there are a lot of researches that show the positive effects of computer and internet usage in education, it is not true that the more we use computer and internet the better the performance is. Actualy Fuchs and Woessmann find a surprising change on performance with the usage of computer and internet. The best performance is provided with the moderate computer use, while little and frequent computer usage causes poor performance.

METHOD

From 3 Universities, 9 departments, 347 students were attended to this research. Plagiarisma.net plagiarism detection engine is used for detecting the plagiarism on students paperworks. There were two main aspects the researchers were looking for. First of all they were looking for the content. The other main subject they were looking for was the copy of formatting. At this point The indents, alignments, font properties and styles, paragraph properties exc. were checked.

Plagiarisma.net has been choosen as plagiarism detection system. This site provides 3 papers limited 1000 words for free, but the researchers have bought a premium account for speeding and easing the process. Before deciding, many sites were investigated with the limit of free tries.The results were compared. Some detection sites detected higher levels of plagiarism on papers. They also gave the link of the sources. Checking and being sure that this high levels of plagiarism are not a false alert the low level alerting sites were eliminated. After that, the reporting formats of the remaining sites were checked. The criterion was compatibility to analysis. Plagiarisma.net plagiarsim detection site not only with links it provide for the source/duplicate files but also providing a percentage of originality proved that its the most suitable all amongst the plagiarism detection sites. Except plagiarsima.net names of the plagiarsim detection systems that are checked are given on the list below

http://www.plagiarismdetect.com/
http://theplagiarism.com/
http://plagiarism-detect.com/
http://www.ithenticate.com/plagiarism-checker-products/
http://www.copyscape.com/
http://www.attributor.com/
http://academicplagiarism.com/
http://www.scanmyessay.com/
http://www.articlechecker.com/
http://www.duplichecker.com/plag_check.asp
http://www.plagiarism-detector.com/
http://www.dustball.com/cs/plagiarism.checker/
http://www.plagiarismchecker.com/
http://searchenginereports.net/articlecheck.aspx
http://www.plagscan.com/
http://etest.vbi.vt.edu/etblast3/
http://copytracker.ec-lille.fr/cts.php?action=index
http://chimpsky.uwaterloo.ca/login
https://www.turnitin.com/static/index.php
http://dejavu.vbi.vt.edu/dejavu/

47 students from Afyon Kocatepe University (Afyon/TURKEY) , 119 students from Mevlana University, 181 students from Selcuk University total 347 students were attended to this study. From this students 47 are from

college, 147 from Educational Faculty, 109 technical education faculty and 44 from formation classes. 47 students participated from Afyon Kocatepe University. On their management organization class they were asked for a paper about industrial revolution. The sub subject was depending on students. 119 students participated from Mevlana (Rumi) University (Konya/TURKEY). All of them were first year educational faculty students. On Computer I class a list of subjects were prepared about computers, Operating systems and office applications. Deadline for this papers was 28.11.2011. Students from Selcuk University Techical Education Faculty and from formation classes are asked to prepare a paper about "material design principles" on educational technologies and material design class. This class is four hours a week and is given on 3th year. The special education students prepared their papers for program development class about quantum learning.

The process was mostly like
1- The papers were gathered and saved in categories depending on departments
2- Names, universities, faculties, departments, form numbers, student numbers exc. are written down on a table
3- All the texts on the papers have been copied and pasted on the text box on the site and checked by clicking "check duplicate content" button. (large texts are checked by Bing Started from 12.08.2011)
4- The result page shows uniq and duplicate content areas. The duplicate contents were checked with links provided byte detection site.
5- Google is also used to find the duplicate contents. The results are written on the same table on content, formatting and reference fields.
6- The originality percentage received from detection site is also written down to the table.
The process has been repeated for each participant. The data gathered has been analysed and tabled. The mentioned tables can be seen in results section.

RESULTS

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage of Paper Contents Originality

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
All From One Source	122	35,2	35,2	35,2
All From Multiple Sources	204	58,8	58,8	94,0
Part From One Source	7	2	2	96,0
Part From Multiple Sources	9	2,6	2,6	98,6
Original	5	1,4	1,4	100
Total	347	100,0	100,0	

As seen from table 1 %94 of the students had their paper from other sources without using any unique content. Only 21 students of 347 had partial written their own papers. This seem to be very high for plagiarism.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Papers References

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Reference Given Correctly	49	14,1	14,1	14,1
Reference Given Not Correctly	122	35,2	35,2	49,3
No Reference Given	176	50,7	50,7	100,0
Total	347	100,0	100,0	

As seen on table 2 only %14,1 of students showed their references nearly proper. Because the participants were freshman an International referensing standart is not required. Showing understandibly which part has been taken from which source is concidered as correct referensing. %50,7 of student didnt have a reference section on their papers.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentages of Papers Formatting

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Style Same With Source	94	27,1	27,1	27,1
Style Similar To Source	119	34,3	34,3	61,4
Style Original	134	38,6	38,6	100,0
Total	347	100,0	100,0	

%61,4 of students had totaly copy-paste papers without even revising the format. %38,6 of students had changed the formatting while they still copied the content.

Table 4 The Mean and Standart Deviation of Originality Percentages.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Result	347	34,73	22,714

Table 4 shows mean of originality percentages given by the detect engine. The detect engine gave a mean of %35 for the originality of the papers. And standart deviation for the originality of the papers is quite high like 23.

While on table 1 %94 of the papers were plagiarised Table 4 show an originality percentage of %35. This is due to detection engines can not search on file with PDF, PPT exc. extentions. But seraching deeper using google showed the papers were copy-paste.

In this study %94 of the students did full copy-paste. In an early research in 1986 Dorris Dant observed eight percent of the students paper had plagiarism evidences before the wide use of Internet. After the Interner era compared Thompson 2006 only six percent of the students did. Breen and Maassen found on their research in 2005 that more than %50 of University students involved somehow on plagiarism via Internet while they were students.

Studies show a rise on plagiarism via Internet . From ten percent in 1999 to %40 in 2005. On a single plagiarism detection engine Turnitin, more than 30% of submissions are determined to be plagiarized (Apple Computer, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Detection system are not enough for detecting plagiarism. Because incompatibility or copying errors when lowercase "i" was replaced with "ı" the detection system could not detect the plagiarism. Also some uniq informations like name, department, lecturers or universities name, and exc. caused higher originality percentages on detection engine. Even different titles and punctuation caused the detection engine to missjudge the papers. Those factors caused %10-15 higher result for originality.

Because the detection system (plagiarisma.net) was using bing for searching the phrases, googling a few phrases seem to give better results. As a result recent plagiarism detection systems may produce a hundred percent originality report for a full copy-paste paper.(beacuse of the inability finding the source). Also it is impossible to detect plagiaris from some PDF's and audio visual files with recent systems. It is observed that the papers not only same with internet sources but only same with eachother because most of them were prepared usind 3-5 same sources.

What experienced once more with this research was that the difficulty of checkin a home work. It is not only time consuming but also a never ending and uncertain process. Doesnt matter how long and deep you check the papers there is no way of being certain that the paper is original. Not being able to find the source does not mean that there isn't one.

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