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RESEARCHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS PLAGIARISM IN ACADEMIA: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Plagiarism is defined as a form of research misconduct. Research Misconduct means fabrication, falsification or plagiarism. Plagiarism has become one of the most serious problems for research community among three. Research is important for overall development in all areas. It should be done ethically. But plagiarism has become great obstacle in research area. It means copying someone else work without appropriate acknowledgement. It is considered as an academic and intellectual offense and there are numbers of potentially negative consequences of plagiarism. Plagiarism in academic circles may not always be intentional but it may be lack of awareness of this issue. In order to avoid plagiarism, there is need to maintain high academic standards through the use of various ethical codes and rules. Guidelines and rules for research ethics should be presented in such a way so that every research participant could aware of it. In this paper we'll explicit the concept of plagiarism as well as factors responsible for it and its solution. The present paper is a survey study to examine the attitude and awareness of plagiarism among research scholars of Kurukshetra University.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Research is creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the knowledge for development of Society and Nation. It has evolved as a social process in which strict observance of professional codes of conduct and ethical norms is essential. On other side, in age of information technology, internet has brought tremendous changes to research world. It has made an extreme effect on creation, organization and dissemination of information. There is large amount of information is available on internet in all disciplines without any hindrance and way of accessing information has become very easy. So, more and more scholars are moving to internet for writing their research papers, which leads to plagiarism. The emergence of technology as well as exponential growth in scholarly publications makes it easier for researcher to misuse the intellectual creation of others. Researchers are using this knowledge in their work without giving the credit to its original creator. It is considered a serious threat to research ethic and integrity, which lead to research misconduct. Fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism are the three principal forms of research misconduct that are universally unaccepted by research community in all disciplines. Plagiarism appears to be the most common type of research misconduct among researchers. Detecting and investigating research misconduct is not easy because the process of evaluating research largely operates on the basis of trust. So, it is the moral duty of researcher to follow research ethics and give appropriate acknowledgement and references to consulted work in order to avoid plagiarism. On other side academic institutions should maintain high academic standards through the use of various ethical codes and rules. Guidelines and rules for research ethics should be presented in such a way so that every research participant could aware of it. These ethical guidelines are very important to preserve the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants. Apart from these guidelines, Anti-plagiarism tools are also good move toward promoting honest and fair use in research.

2. UNDERSTANDING PLAGIARISM

There are multiple interpretations available on the origin of the word 'plagiarism'. The term 'plagiarism' has been derived from Latin word 'plagiaries' that means kidnapper, seducer or one who kidnaps the child or slave of another as in sense of 'literary thief'. In Oxford dictionary, plagiarism means 'the action or practice of taking someone else's work or idea and passing it off as one's own'. In Encyclopedia Britannica, plagiarism means 'the act of taking the writings of another person and passing them off as one's own'. In Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 'to plagiarize' means 'to use the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own words or ideas'. From all above definitions we can say that plagiarism involves an act of stealing someone else's work and pretending it as one's own work. Therefore, plagiarism is the act of copying words, sentences and ideas of someone else's research work without proper acknowledgment and references. Apart from this, there are different forms of plagiarism such as cutting and pasting; copying of words, copying of sentences and paragraphs; paraphrasing; inappropriate citation; and citing without acknowledgment etc. The act of plagiarism may be of intentional or unintentional, intentional plagiarism occurs if a person deliberately copying other's material and not citing the original source; and unintentional plagiarism occurs when a person does not have any intention to plagiarized, but unintentionally he/she may forget to cite proper references and acknowledgement. Unintentional plagiarism includes careless paraphrasing, paraphrasing a source without citation or references etc.

3. FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism always not occurs intentionally, but there may be many reasons for it occurrence. These may be:

1. Lack of awareness of plagiarism
2. Lack of academic writing skills
3. Lack of language skills
4. Lack of time management skills
5. Fear to fail the requirements of submitting the research work
6. Inadequate understanding of research topic
7. Lack of awareness in report writing and citing

4. STRATEGIES TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism refers to copy someone else work without giving credit to original source. It may be avoid by following some simple techniques. The best method to avoid plagiarism is to be honest. Apart from this, the following strategies can be used to avoid plagiarism.

1. Develop good writing techniques
2. Put foot note and quotation marks properly
3. Summarizing and paraphrasing the original text
4. Use of anti-plagiarism tools
5. Organization of orientation cum training programs for scholars on plagiarism
6. Formation of research ethics and implementation of policies and guidelines for Plagiarism
7. Set up zero tolerance policy for plagiarism
8. Familiar the scholars with reference styles
9. Organization of workshops/seminars for creating awareness on various aspect of plagiarism

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many studies have been carried out on Plagiarism. Fish & Hura (2013) highlighted the high frequency of plagiarism among college students as well as solution to avoid plagiarism. Tripathi & Kumar (2009) explored that many researcher are still not aware about plagiarism. According to study Librarian and supervisor of research can play important role in avoiding plagiarism through literacy program. Kumari and Lakshmi (2015) focused on awareness regarding plagiarism and its related aspects among research scholars of Sri Venkateswara University. The study exhibited that scholars are aware about plagiarism, its types, penalties and anti-plagiarism software tools. Kumar and Mohindra (2018) explored the level of plagiarism among law students of Panjab university and examined that majority of students are aware about plagiarism. Amrita (2007) examined good understanding of plagiarism among students. The study examined that mostly students want to complete their research work honestly but they find it difficult due to lack of good writing skills and lack of appropriate knowledge of grammar and citation. Zangenehmadar and Hoon (2014) examined the Malaysian students' perception about plagiarism, its types, penalties and policies and found that yet students have good knowledge of plagiarism, but still there is need to improvement. Ahmadi and Sonkar (2015) focused on concept of copyright issue and plagiarism. The study investigated the level of awareness among doctoral students of Babasaheb Bimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow and presented the results that most of students are aware about fair use policies and plagiarism in research. Muhammad Ramzan (2012) analyzed the awareness of plagiarism policies, detection tools, and effectiveness of the faculty and university's plagiarism detection systems and processes. The present study investigates the graduate and postgraduate student's awareness and understanding of plagiarism in universities of Pakistan.

6. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To examine users' awareness regarding various types of plagiarism
2. To examine the various issues of plagiarism among research scholars
3. To find out scholars' awareness regarding use anti-plagiarism tool
4. To study the awareness of scholars regarding penalties and policies of Plagiarism
5. To identify users' awareness to avoid plagiarism

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A well structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from respondents. Total 50 questionnaires were distributed among randomly selected doctorate scholars of Kurukshetra University during the month of December, 2022 to access their attitude and awareness regarding plagiarism. Total 40 filled in questionnaire received back, and then data is analyzed with percentage, presented in tables and interpreted.

8. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

TABLE 1:

GENDER WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Gender	N	Percentage
Male	6	15%
Female	34	85%

The table 1 depicts that majority of respondents i.e. 34 (85%) are female and remaining 6(15%) are male respondents.

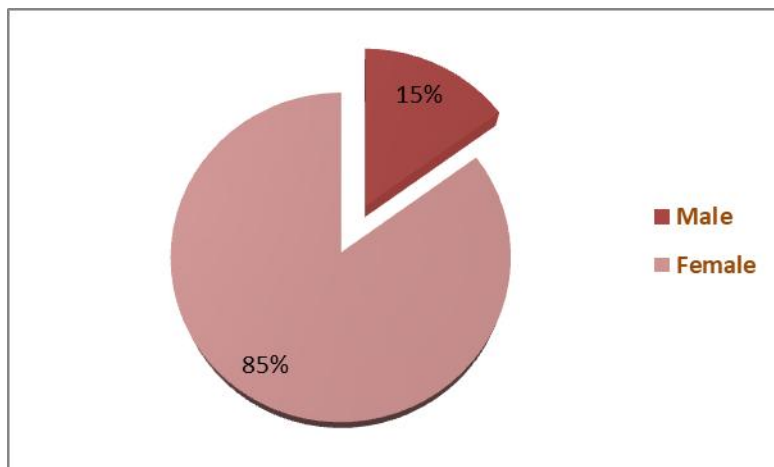


Fig1: Showing Gender wise distribution of respondents

TABLE 2:
RESEARCH EXPERIENCE OF SCHOLARS

Research Experience	N	Percentage
<1 Year	2	5%
1-2 Years	12	30%
2-4 Years	19	47.5%
>4 Years	7	17.5%

The table 2 reflect the research experience of scholars that shows that majority of scholars i.e 19 (47.50%) have 2-4 years of research experience, followed by 12 (30%) who have 1-2 years and 7 (17.5%) have more than 4 years of experience whereas remaining 2 (5%) have less than one year experience of research.

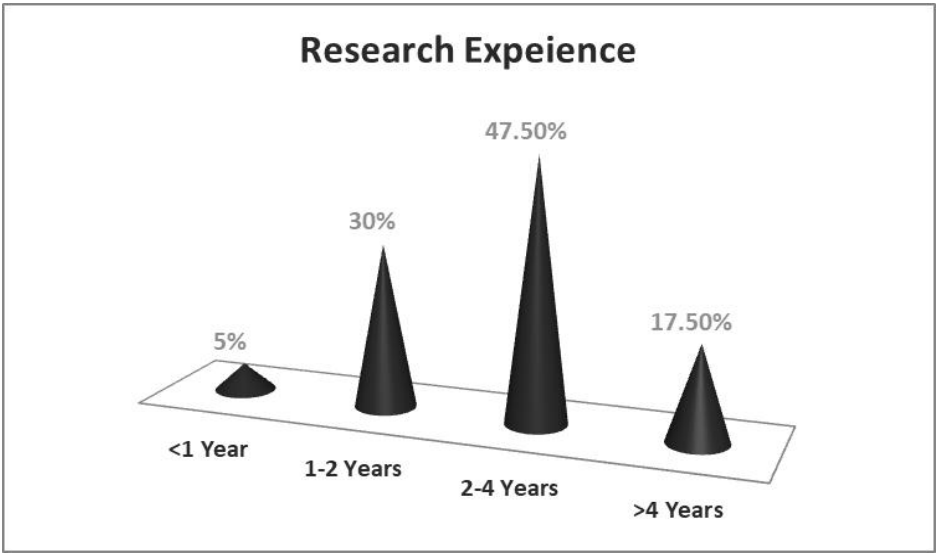


Fig 2: Showing the research experience of scholars

TABLE 3:
AWARENESS REGARDING PLAGIARISM

Statement	Yes	No
Aware with Plagiarism	38 (95%)	2 (5%)

The table 3 depicts the awareness of research scholars regarding 'Plagiarism'. The results indicate that majority of scholars i.e. 38 (95%) have good awareness of plagiarism whereas only 2 (5%) scholars are unaware about plagiarism.

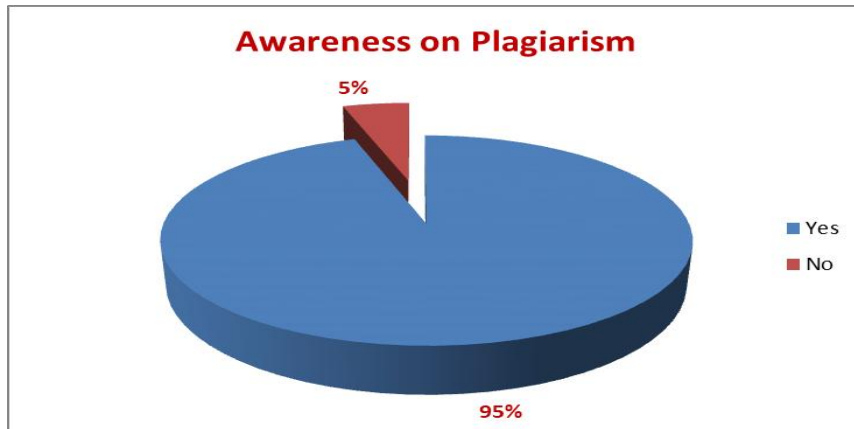


Fig 3: Showing Awareness of Scholars regarding Plagiarism

TABLE 4:

SOURCE OF ACQUAINTANCE WITH PLAGIARISM

Source	N	Percentage
Co-research scholar	7	17.5 %
Research supervisor	24	60 %
Seminar/Conferences	3	7.5 %
Internet	6	15 %

Table 4 depicts that majority of scholars i.e. 24 (60%) come to know about plagiarism through research supervisor, followed by 7 (17.5%) who come to know from co-scholars whereas 6 (15%) acquaint by Internet and 3 (7.5%) acquaint by Seminars and Conferences.

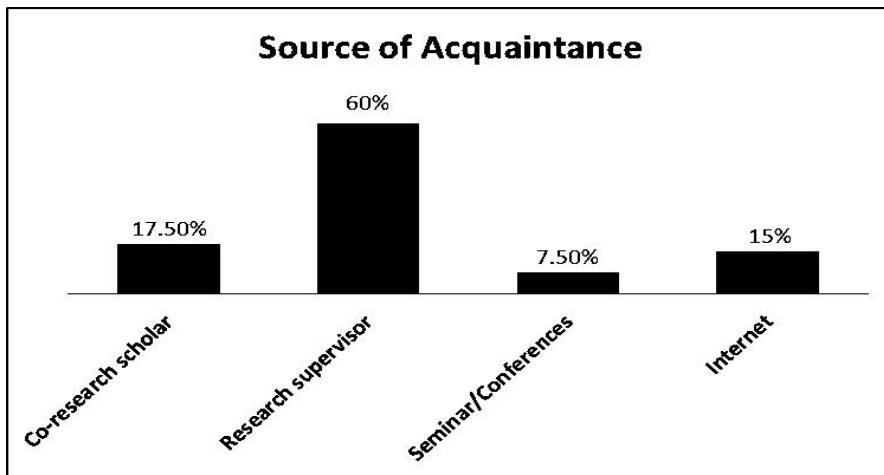


Fig 4: Showing Acquaintance with Plagiarism

TABLE 5:

CITATION STYLE USED BY RESEARCHERS

Citation Style	N	Percentage
APA	26	65%
MLA	9	22.5%
Chicago	5	12.5%

The table 5 depicts that 26 (65%) scholars use APA citation style whereas 9 (22.5%) scholars use MLA and only 15 (2.5%) scholars use Chicago style of citation.

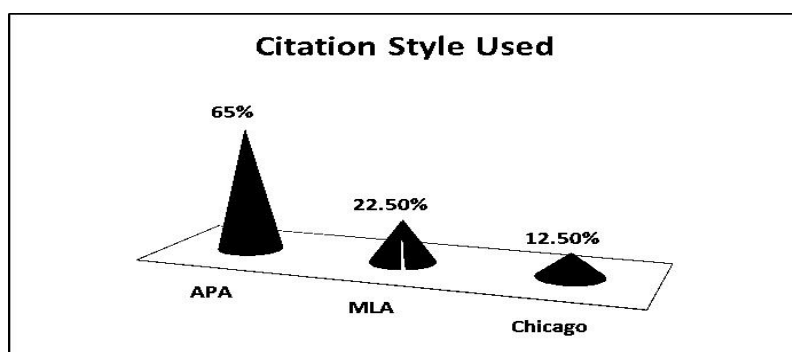


Fig 5: Showing Citation Styles used by Scholars

TABLE 6:

FREQUENCY OF USING THE INTERNET FOR RESEARCH

Use of Internet	N	Percentage %
Frequently	33	82.5%
Occasionally	5	12.5%
Rarely	2	5%
Total	40	100%

Table 6 shows that majority of scholars i.e. 33 (82.5%) frequently use the internet whereas 5 (12.5%) scholars use internet occasionally and only 2 (5%) scholars rarely used the internet for their research purpose.

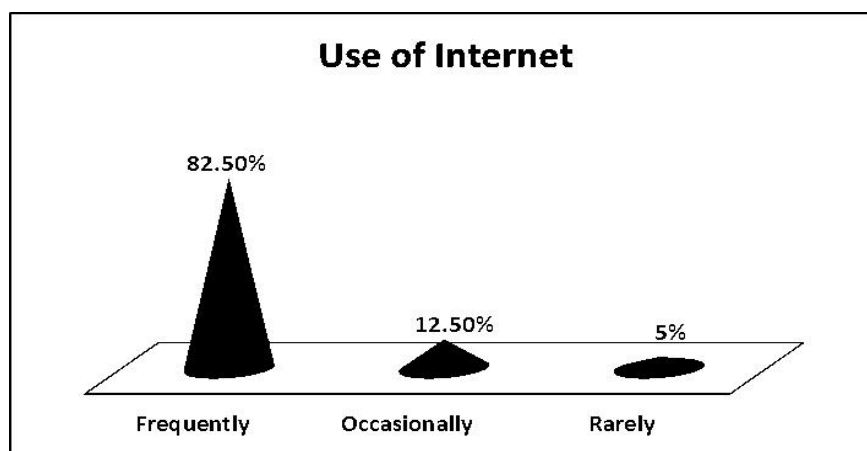


Fig 6: Showing Use of Internet by Research Scholars

TABLE 7:

STATEMENTS REGARDING AWARENESS TOWARD VARIOUS TYPES OF PLAGIARISM

Statements	Yes	No	Don't Know
Deliberately using another's words as your own	37(92.5%)	2(5%)	1(2.5%)
Deliberately using another's idea as your own	28(70%)	3(7.5%)	9(22.5%)

Using another work without proper acknowledgment	36(90%)	1(2.5%)	3(7.5%)
Paraphrasing paragraph without acknowledgement	24(60%)	6(15%)	10(25%)
Copy a paragraph with minor changes with synonyms	22(55%)	12(30%)	6(15%)
Getting research work completed by someone else	20(50%)	5(12.5%)	15(37.5%)
Using another work without citing the source completely & accurately	32(80%)	1(2.5%)	7(17.5%)
Using material from internet without clear indication of its original	26(65%)	4(10%)	10(25%)
Cutting and copying the text	34(85%)	1(2.5%)	5(12.5%)
Using your own published work without citing it	18(45%)	2(5%)	20(50%)

The table 7 depicts that majority of research scholars are aware about various types of plagiarism. Most of scholars agree that deliberately using someone else words; cutting and pasting the text; using another’s work without proper acknowledgment and citation and paraphrasing, are the most common types of plagiarism. On other side some population of scholars are unaware about different types of plagiarism.

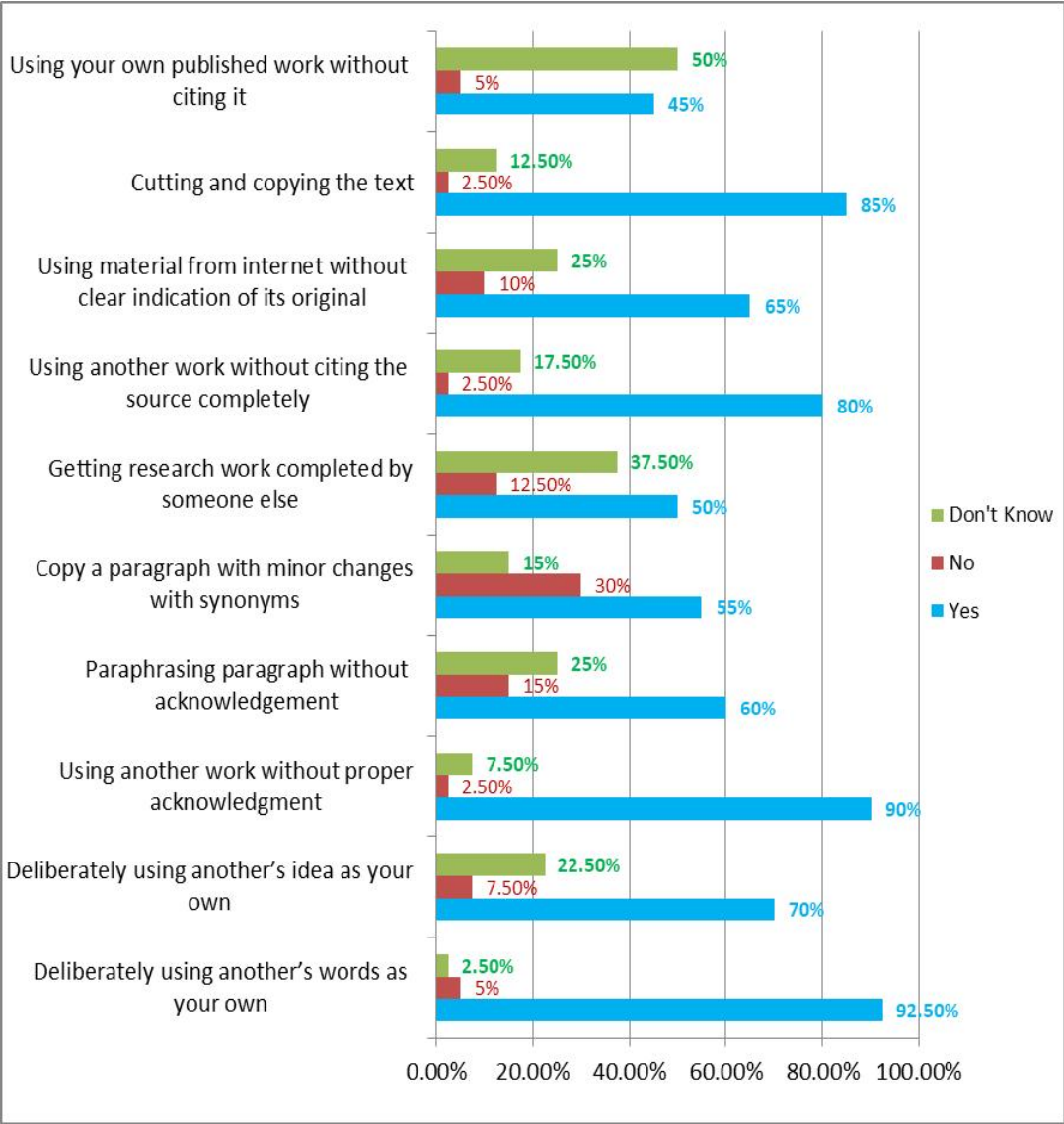


Fig 7: Showing Respondents' Awareness with various types of Plagiarism

TABLE 8:
AWARENESS TOWARD ANTI-PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE TOOLS?

Statements	Yes	No
Awareness regarding Anti-plagiarism Software tools	28 (70%)	12 (30%)
Able to understand the report generated by Turnitin	18(45%)	22(55%)

Table 8 depicts that majority of scholars i.e. 28 (70%) are aware about anti-plagiarism software and 12 (30%) scholars are not aware of it. The results also show that more than half of scholars are unable to understand the report generated by anti-plagiarism software tool Turnitin.

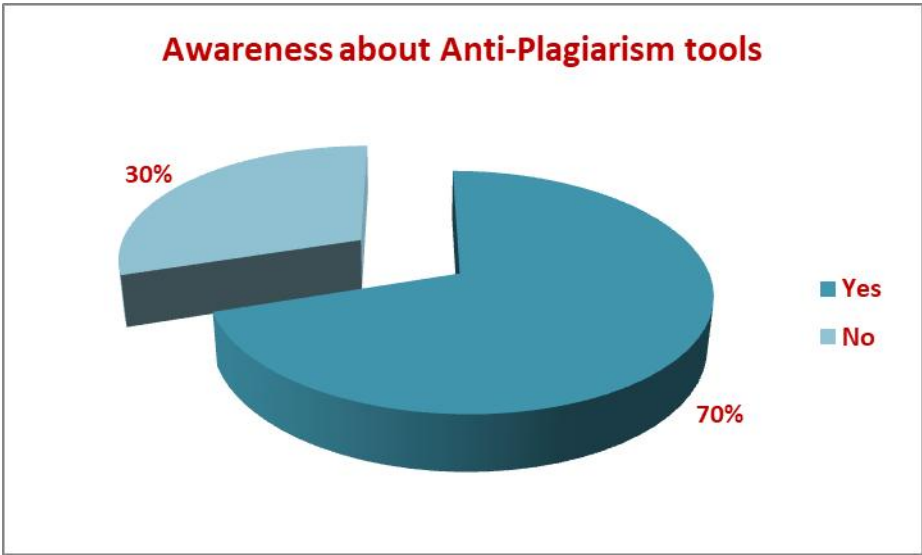


Fig 8: Showing Awareness about Anti-Plagiarism tools

TABLE 9:
AWARENESS ABOUT PENALTIES AND POLICIES ON PLAGIARISM

Statement	Yes	No
Awareness about penalties on plagiarism	32 (80%)	8 (20%)
Familiar with various policies on Plagiarism	26 (65%)	14 (35%)

Table 9 table depicts that majority of scholars are familiar with various policies and penalties on plagiarism.

TABLE 10:
AWARENESS TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

Awareness regarding avoiding plagiarism	Yes	No	Don't Know
Understand the topic properly	24%	7%	9%
Develop own ideas	26%	2%	12%
Fear of penalties	22%	4%	14%
Using plagiarism software tools	34%	1%	5%
Getting help from supervisor or other scholars	36%	-	4%
Improving language and writing skills	16%	8%	6%
Using appropriate references & quotes	38%	-	2%
Citing a source properly	37%	-	3%
Implementation of policies and guidelines properly	20%	2%	18%

Table 10 reflects that majority of scholars agree that plagiarism can be avoided by using appropriate citation and references; citing source properly; getting help from supervisor and by using anti-plagiarism software tools and so on. On other side very low population of respondents admit that good writing or language skills can help in avoiding plagiarism.

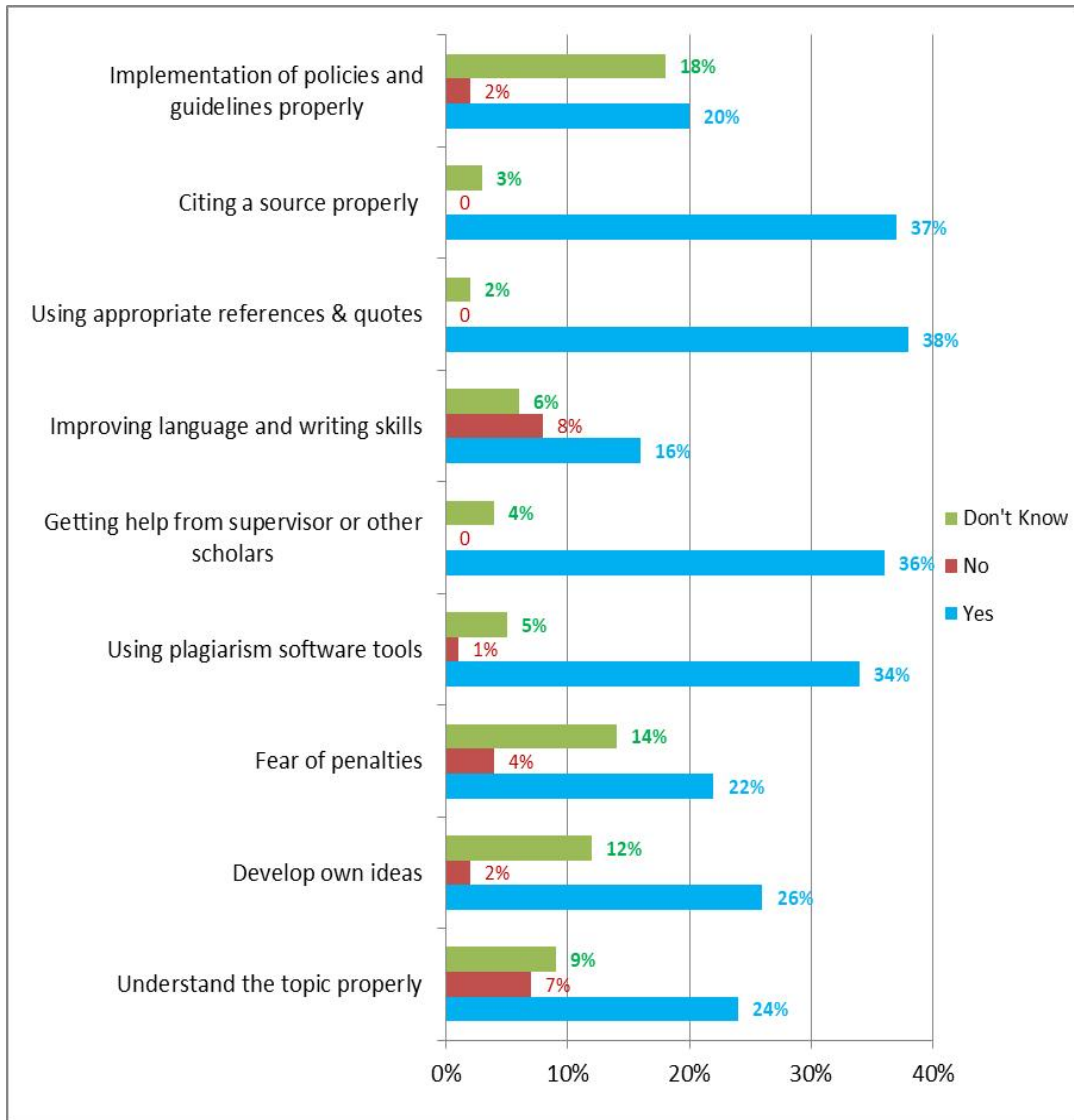


Fig 9: Awareness to avoid Plagiarism

9. FINDINGS

1. Majority of respondents i.e. 34 (85%) are female and remaining 6(15%) are male respondents.
2. The results depict that majority of scholars are aware about Plagiarism and its related issue.
3. Most of scholars are come to know about Plagiarism through their research supervisor than through other sources like internet, co-researchers and Seminars etc.
4. Most of scholars frequently use internet for their research purposes.
5. Majority of research scholars are aware about various level of plagiarism. Most of scholars' believe that deliberately using another word, cutting and pasting the text and using another's work without proper acknowledgment and citation are the most common type of plagiarism. On other side many scholars are unaware about different level of plagiarism.
6. Majority of scholars are aware about anti-plagiarism software tools and only 30% of scholars are not aware of it. But more than half of scholars are unable to understand the report generated by anti-plagiarism software Turnitin.
7. Majority of scholars are familiar with various penalties and policies on plagiarism.
8. Majority of scholars believe that by using appropriate citation and references or by use of anti-plagiarism software tool, plagiarism can be avoided. On other side very low population of respondents admit that good writing or language skills can help in avoiding plagiarism.

10. CONCLUSION

The study examines the attitude and awareness of plagiarism and its related issues among research scholars of Kurukshetra University. The findings of study show that majority of scholars are aware about concept of plagiarism

and they are also familiar with anti-plagiarism tools and various policies & punishment on plagiarism. Based on findings, we can conclude that academic institutions should take steps through orientations, seminars and training programs for research scholars to improve their writing skills and to aware them about various level of plagiarism so that plagiarism can be removed from academic arena. On other side UGC and universities should develop policies and guidelines to avoid plagiarism.

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