

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE AND UKRAINIAN PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The article analyses the experience of European countries in counteraction to academic dishonesty and plagiarism, as well as the attitude of Ukrainian students to the problem. The specific examples of the counteraction against academic fraud in universities abroad have been studied, in particular, in the United Kingdom at the University College London, in Sweden at the Karolinska Medical University, and in higher education institutions in Poland. The article examines the attitude of Ukrainian students to various issues of academic integrity by questionnaires for its development in higher education institutions to prevent plagiarism in Master's theses.

The purpose of the research is to study the European experience in counteraction to the manifestations of academic dishonesty and plagiarism among students to apply the experience in Ukrainian higher education institutions.

Methodology. A survey among Master students in H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University was conducted, which revealed the level of students' knowledge about such concepts as academic integrity, plagiarism, as well as its types and reasons that motivate students to academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Results. The results of the survey show that, unfortunately, most students do not consider plagiarism a fraud. According to them, posting a text on the Internet makes it common and accessible to all, "nobody's", and academic

dishonesty and plagiarism in the student environment by majority of students is still perceived as the norm.

Conclusions. *To develop the academic integrity for Ukrainian students, it is necessary to implement a set of various measures. Promoting academic integrity and counteraction to plagiarism should take place at the level of the national ministry, higher education institutions, University faculties, departments, teaching staff, and the students themselves. Such work must be systematic, have a strategy, technology, ways of implementation at all levels of the scientific and educational process. It is expedient to conduct mass, explanatory, preventive work in each university, instill in Ukrainian students the principles of academic integrity, conduct special lessons to prevent plagiarism, work with common electronic programs of text self-checking, and teach training modules.*

KEY WORDS: *Student, Master Student, Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, Questionnaire, Online Form, Electronic Programs.*

INTRODUCTION

Today, the problem of academic integrity is quite acute around the world (Lyst MON, 2017). In higher education institutions of Ukraine, the issue of instilling fundamental values of academic integrity has received much attention (Finikov & Artiukhov, 2016). In this regard, there is a need to analyze the state of academic integrity on the example of European countries.

But before proceeding to the research of the experience of counteracting the academic dishonesty in foreign universities, the meaning of the terms "academic integrity" and "plagiarism" are to be analyzed.

The content of the term consists of a set defined following laws, regulations, norms, and rules that must be followed by participants in the educational process during training, teaching, scientific activities to improve them, as well as ensure confidence in the results.

Foreign scientists argue that academic integrity ensures public confidence in the authority of modern science at all levels, including both the research process itself and the results obtained

(<https://www.academicintegrity.org/>).

According to researchers, violations of academic integrity are incorrect actions on the part of any participant in the educational process (Anderson et al., 2013; Cross, 2007).

Undoubtedly, the leading normative document on academic integrity is T. Fishman's well-known work "Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity" at the International Center for Academic Integrity at the Rutland Institute of Ethics, Clemson University (South Carolina, USA) (Cross, 2007). This normative document has been translated into many languages of the world, and it is fundamental in the research of academic integrity.

Also, the scientific space pays close attention to the issue of plagiarism. The concept of plagiarism is understood as borrowing scientific ideas without reference to the author's source, appropriation of other people's research results, use of texts without correctly indicating the source of borrowing, and so on.

Finally, plagiarism is illegal scientific behavior in the field of education. The

forms of illegal scientific behavior include scientific plagiarism, falsification of scientific information, and production of pseudo-scientific products.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given the fundamental work on the subject (Fishman, 1999), academic integrity is seen as the commitment of the academic community to six fundamental values, including honesty, trust, justice, respect, responsibility, and courage.

First of all, we shall analyze how these basic values are violated. Violations include copying (the use of the author's text, without reference to his work); forgery (falsification of the text); even involvement in the commission of academic dishonesty; plagiarism (borrowing another person's idea or text and presenting them as their own); deception (providing knowingly false information about the results of scientific activities), such as acquiring the results of scientific activities from third parties and presenting them as their achievements (term papers, theses, articles, dissertations, etc.). We believe that various forms of academic fraud in higher education institutions are used to mimic research, which undermines the credibility of science and research in general, devaluing them (Dorozhko, 2021).

Of course, a person must be brought to academic responsibility for academic dishonesty. However, in this matter, a clear distinction should be made between sanctions against scientific and pedagogical, pedagogical, and scientific workers, as well as against those seeking higher education.

The academic responsibility of scientific and pedagogical, scientific workers, with which there is evidence of academic dishonesty, may consist in the following: refusal to award scientific degrees and

confer academic degrees; cancellation of awarded scientific degrees or awarded scientific titles; prohibition to participate in the work of certain bodies or to hold relevant positions.

Academic responsibility for applicants for higher education, with which there is evidence of academic dishonesty, may consist of the following points: their re-assessment (control, credit, exam); loss of academic scholarship; deductions from higher education institutions.

The category of scientific plagiarism researchers (Byvaltsev et al., 2017) decompose into the category of obvious and non-obvious scientific plagiarism when the consideration of this issue requires the mandatory participation of an expert. The concept of obvious scientific plagiarism combines the following categories: 1) appropriation of authorship of elements of another's scientific text in the part concerning its form in the text; 2) borrowing elements of someone else's scientific text using the rules of scientific citation (indicating the author, title and source of the text), the share of which, for example, exceeds 50% of the total volume of your text; 3) borrowing elements of one's own scientific text (self-plagiarism), the share of which, for example, exceeds 70% of the total volume of a new own text.

The category of non-obvious scientific plagiarism includes the following types of borrowings: 1) partial self-plagiarism; 2) mosaic plagiarism; 3) paraphrasing (rewriting); 4) plagiarism with the participation of "ghost authors" (Scanlon & Neumann, 2002).

Our research aims concern the academic integrity and plagiarism of master students because they are in close contact with these concepts when writing a master's thesis. There is no doubt that it is necessary to form students' academic

integrity from the first year when writing theses, or any small-sized original scientific investigations. However, it is when writing a master's thesis that the students feel what the academic virtue of dishonesty is, or plagiarism.

In our opinion, overcoming the problem of plagiarism among students depends on instilling in students the habit of self-examination of their own scientific work and mandatory total (rather than fragmentary) examination of their work within the institution of higher education.

Undoubtedly, higher education institutions are looking for ways to punish higher education seekers for academic dishonesty. As we have already mentioned, for a higher education applicant this may be the withdrawal of the thesis, as well as exclusion from the institution of higher education. Nevertheless, plagiarism is rarely practiced in domestic higher education institutions (according to official websites). Sanctions such as lowering the grade for the thesis, returning for revision, etc. are mainly applied.

To understand the ways of revealing the academic dishonesty and plagiarism, we have explored specific examples of the fight against academic fraud in universities abroad. The most common strategies of combating student dishonesty in research are presented below.

For example, in the United Kingdom, University College London practices a penalty for academic dishonesty by lowering scores, retaking a course, or dropping out. College students are warned about the ban on the following actions: copying information from electronic sources to form part of the thesis; using someone else's work as your own; the processing of essays or practical

work of other authors, as well as their own (self-plagiarism); using the services of employees of professional firms, as well as individuals in the "help" to prepare work instead of the student; preparation of part of the work based on other people's ideas without correct references to them. Students are also clearly informed about the rules of citation.

Scientists in the UK have developed a system of national rates of fines for plagiarism in student work. The development of the system of fines is due to the inconsistency of penalties that follow plagiarism in various higher education institutions in the UK. This practice is extremely harsh in punishing for academic fraud. It aims at a stricter sequence in the regulation of academic fraud. However, the system of fines is conceived as a guideline rather than a directive.

In Sweden, the Karolinska Institute Medical University also has clear sanctions for plagiarism. Students are also explained in advance that the thesis cannot have unauthorized copying of sections of someone else's text, presenting them as their own work. All student theses are checked for originality through the Urkund and iThenticate electronic plagiarism detection programs that are popular in Sweden.

The Swedish National Higher Education Agency provides annual reports on the increase in the number of disciplinary measures taken in the event of plagiarism. An increasing number of higher education institutions adhere to the principle of prevention of academic fraud.

Polish higher education institutions offer the next way to combat plagiarism, which is to promote the principles of academic integrity and training in information competencies, focusing on the

introduction and use of electronic anti-plagiarism programs in the educational process.

In Polish education and science sector, the problems related to the violation of academic integrity are presented to the public, they are quite actively discussed both in the columns of major periodicals and in student forums. All this, of course, contributes to the fight against negative phenomena in science (Shevchuk, n.d.).

It is worth noting that, unlike in Ukraine, most Polish higher education institutions require their students to provide written confirmation that their dissertation was completed independently and is original (Shevchuk, n.d.). In our opinion, this is also a fairly successful step that contributes to the mass prevention of the spread of plagiarism in student research.

Thus, the analysis of specific measures to combat plagiarism in various higher education institutions revealed their division into lenient and severe ones. The former include clarification, prevention, warning, the latter strengthening the

responsibility for plagiarism, the system of fines, deductions.

METHODOLOGY

The empirical basis of our research was the data of the survey of students of H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, which was conducted online through the Google service. Participation in the survey was voluntary; the link to the questionnaire was placed in groups of students from different faculties. In total, 40 master students took part in the survey.

When surveying master students, we wanted to find out whether the students understood what plagiarism is, what programs are available to detect it, what to do with the text after checking for plagiarism, what are the possible penalties for plagiarism, what are the reasons for students to academic dishonesty, plagiarism.

RESULTS

Below, the results of the survey are presented. There are some questions that were asked to respondents during the survey and answers to them (Table 1).

Table 1

Question	YES	NO
Do you know the types of plagiarism?	52%	48%
Do you know what plagiarism check programs are?	25%	75%
Do you know how to check texts for plagiarism?	75%	25%
Do you know what to do with your text if it is found to have a small percentage of originality and a high percentage of plagiarism after being checked by an anti-plagiarism program?	25%	75%
Do you know that plagiarism in scientific papers can be punished by the university?	46%	54%

In our opinion, students' misunderstanding of the essence of the concept of academic integrity and their ignorance of its principles, types, and kinds of verification systems, further processing

of the text, misunderstanding of the concept of plagiarism, and penalties for it are the main problems. Unfortunately, sometimes, the writing of a master's thesis is not aimed at performing a scientific,

research task, but only at obtaining formal results that are subject to control and evaluation.

In our opinion, students can avoid performing a scientific task because they do not know and do not understand that copying a text from the Internet is not a scientific or research search. They used to do this since school. In a higher education institution, scientific activity does not acquire personal meaning for students, they do not understand where, when, how they can use it in life or profession, why they need the results of their own scientific work.

Therefore, in view of this, we consider it is necessary for applicants to be as aware as possible of the issue of academic integrity and to understand the seriousness of the consequences of their dishonest actions. We consider the introduction of measures to ensure the observance of academic integrity in higher education institutions to be one of the ways to convey such information to students.

Considering the measures to ensure compliance with academic integrity at the H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, we can define three types of activities at the university aimed at ensuring the observance of academic integrity, which in turn are divided into three major groups, namely:

- *Information activities.* The necessary information is communicated through the placement of informational, normative, methodological materials on academic integrity and prevention of academic plagiarism on the official website of the university, as well as in structural units; also, they include information stands, banners, leaflets, brochures, etc.
- *Educational activities,* which are implemented through various forums,

courses, seminars, training, quotas, meetings, conferences, training programs dedicated to the promotion of academic integrity and prevention of academic plagiarism.

- *Control activities* are carried out through questionnaires of applicants and employees of higher education institutions for violations of academic integrity and mandatory testing of scientific, educational, methodological, qualification, educational, and research work for signs of academic plagiarism (Code of Academic Integrity of H.S. Skovoroda National Pedagogical University, 2021).

Most of the students who participated in the research, unfortunately, do not consider plagiarism a fraud. According to them, the placement of the text on the Internet makes it common and accessible to all, in addition, the texts are repeated many times, which also, in their opinion, makes them "nobody's". Thus, according to students, partial or complete copying of other people's work allows them to reduce time and intellectual costs for scientific work. In addition, students do not know how to work with basic anti-plagiarism testing programs.

In our opinion, one of the simple and effective mechanisms should be the habit of higher education students to independently check the online texts of their own manuscripts for originality. For example, the most common online programs for self-checking English manuscripts are services Grammarly, iThenticate, Blackboard SafeAssign. You can also use promo or demo versions with Ukrainian-language content, such as "Unicheck", "Antiplagiat", "Plagiat.pl".

We are convinced that higher education institutions must combat violations of the principles of academic integrity and should work on the formation of academic

culture, instill the principles of academic integrity in their students (Kostikova & Dorozhko, 2021).

In our opinion, the formation of academic integrity should begin as early as possible. The institution of higher education should conduct systematic, explanatory, preventive work throughout the scientific activity of students. There is a temptation for students to achieve the goal "at any cost", but cases of plagiarism must be made public in order not to repeat them, because the "tainted" reputation of the student is much more difficult to restore.

DISCUSSION

Several issues remain debatable in the research. To prevent plagiarism, as evidenced by the work of various researchers, it is important to form academic integrity as a professional competence (Habibzadeh & Shashok, 2011), instilling respect for the principles of academic integrity at the level of higher education. There is no doubt that the fight against plagiarism in the scientific works of bachelors, masters, graduate students should have a strategy, tactics, technology, practical recommendations, ways of implementation (Wong et al., 2016).

Almost all national higher education institutions today use online programs to prevent plagiarism and avoid theft in scientific papers (Tucci & Galwankar, 2011). Undoubtedly, academic integrity testifies to the academic culture of the applicant, and plagiarism prevents an honest, responsible scientific process, the birth of new scientific ideas (Marusić & Marusić, 2007).

Based on the definition of scientists (Gallant & Kalichman, 2010), modern science requires a global and comprehensive approach to combating plagiarism, with the formation of academic integrity, and there should be,

above all, the scientists themselves, teachers, reviewers, editors, experts in science, whose experience will serve as an example for students, masters, graduate students (Sharma, 2015).

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the research indicate the fact that majority of Ukrainian master students perceive academic dishonesty and plagiarism in the student environment as the norm. We are convinced that to combat the academic dishonesty of students, it is necessary to carry out a set of measures, which should include not only explanation, prevention, warning, strict control, but also administrative punishment.

Therefore, academic dishonesty can be considered as a symptom that reflects the inconsistency of traditional forms of evaluation and control of the scientific task to the current situation in education, society, life. Thus, in our opinion, the pedagogical requirements of assessment and control conflict with the personal intentions of students, their goals, capabilities or, sometimes, cause internal rejection and misunderstanding.

Thus, in our opinion, there are two main reasons for the disinterest of higher education administrations, research advisors, and master students in identifying and disclosing the facts of plagiarism: at the top level – the desire of institution administration to preserve the "face" of the university, its reputation and student's well-being; at the lower level – the reluctance of research advisors to allocate additional, personal time for a re-examination of works in which plagiarism is detected; also, students' misunderstanding of the value of their own scientific work, its practical implementation in later life.

We consider the substantiation of the technology of formation of academic integrity of master students in institutions

of higher pedagogical education to be prospects of further explorations in this direction.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**АКАДЕМІЧНА ДОБРОЧЕСНІСТЬ У КОНТЕКСТІ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОГО ДОСВІДУ Й УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ПРАКТИКИ**

Стаття присвячена аналізу досвіду європейських країн у протидії академічній недоброчесності і плагіату, а також ставлення українських студентів до цієї проблеми. Досліджено конкретні приклади боротьби з академічним шахрайством в університетах за кордоном, зокрема, у Великобританії у Лондонському університетському коледжі, у Швеції у Каролінському медичному університеті та у закладах вищої освіти Польщі. Стаття досліджує відношення українських студентів до різних

питань академічної доброчесності шляхом анкетування для її формування у закладах вищої освіти щодо запобігання плагіату у магістерських дипломних роботах.

Мета дослідження полягає у вивченні європейського досвіду боротьби з проявами академічної недоброчесності і плагіатом серед студентської молоді з метою застосування даного досвіду в українських закладах вищої освіти.

Методологія. Було проведено анкетування магістрантів Харківського національного педагогічного університету імені Г.С. Сковороди, яке дозволило виявити рівень знань студентів про такі поняття, як академічна доброчесність, плагіат, а також його види та причини, що спонукають студентів до академічної недоброчесності, плагіату.

Результати. Результати анкетування свідчать про те, що, на жаль, більшість студентів не вважають плагіат шахрайством. На їхню думку, розміщення тексту в Інтернеті робить його загальним і доступним для всіх, тобто «нічиїм», і академічна недоброчесність і плагіат у студентському середовищі більшістю студентів, на жаль, поки що і до сьогодні сприймається як норма.

Висновки. Задля формування академічної доброчесності українських студентів необхідно впроваджувати комплекс різноманітних заходів. Сприяння академічній доброчесності й боротьба з плагіатом мають відбуватися на рівні міністерства, закладу вищої освіти, факультетів, кафедр, викладачів, самих студентів. Така робота повинна бути системною, мати стратегію, технологію, шляхи реалізації на всіх рівнях науково-освітнього процесу. Доцільним є ведення масової, роз'яснювальної, профілактичної роботи в кожному закладі вищої освіти, прищеплення українським студентам принципів академічної доброчесності, проведення спеціальних занять щодо запобігання плагіату, робота з поширеними електронними програмами самоперевірки текстів, організація навчальних модулів.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: студент, магістрант, академічна доброчесність, плагіат, анкетування, онлайн форма, електронні програми.

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