Plagiarism in Psychology Perspectives

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Abstract

This article talks about an academic issue, plagiarism. The author gives the definition of it in both general level and in psychology field. Also, the author points out several forms in which plagiarism might be done. The last part of this article, the author gives some strategies for both students and teachers about avoiding or reducing plagiarism.

Keywords: plagiarism, forms of plagiarism, strategies

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As an international student studying in America where plagiarism is highly emphasized by scholars. I feel obligated to fully understand the seriousness and consequences of plagiarism. Owens and White (2013) claim that "a student who students who have a mature understanding of the rules is potentially an outright cheat, whereas a student with only a superficial understanding is referred to as an accidental infringer". No matter how deep students understand the plagiarism, it is undesirable and threat both to the endeavor of creating unique knowledge and to the challenge of transforming students into reflective critical thinkers (Owens & White, 2013). In university settings specifically, plagiarism may lead to failure in a course, notice of misconduct on one's academic record, and even suspension (Hjortshoj, 2009). These are the reasons why plagiarism is important and paid great attention to in western countries.

Defining Plagiarism

Owens and White (2013) define plagiarism as "the use of another author's words or ideas without appropriate acknowledgement, which means that plagiarism could result from a failure to understand how to acknowledge a source, carelessness in doing so, or a deliberate attempt to present another person's work as your own". According to Owens and White (2013), plagiarism can be further defined as "dishonest plagiarism" which is the latter case and "negligent plagiarism" which refers to ignorance or carelessness.

According to Hjortshoj (2009), intellectual property is defined as building blocks that scholars use to make up their academic skyscraper. If these kinds of property are used without citation, it will be considered as plagiarism. Also, academic integrity is another aspect that could reflect plagiarism, which means high honesty that will not offend plagiarism.

In psychology domain, reading and writing articles are intensively engaged which means plagiarism should be taken into consideration seriously. Also, there are large amount of theories in psychology domain. Thus, when we use a certain theory to explain a phenomenon, we must point out the founders of that theory, otherwise it will be considered as plagiarism. On the other hand, plenty of experiments are also required in psychology field. Thus, when experimental paradigms are used, one must points out their founders as well. Or, he/she must provide a strong evidence that the paradigm is his/her original one. Otherwise, it will be considered as plagiarism too.

Forms of Plagiarism

According to Hjortshoj (2009), plagiarism is taken in several forms: a) Citing published material without quotation marks; b) Paraphrasing another author's published or unpublished work without acknowledgment; c) Submitting papers which are formerly done by others; d) Having others write papers for you and take it as your own; e) Self-plagiarism, which means submitting papers that are previously done by yourself.

In psychology domain, plagiarism could be a steal of other psychologist's theory. Or, a steal of other experimenter's paradigm without quotation. In addition, using other researcher's outcomes or conclusions to explain his/her own research without citation is also considered as plagiarism.

Strategies to Avoid Plagiarism

Strategies that may reduce plagiarism should be done by both students and teachers. According to Chamberlin (2005), teachers should inspect or suspect students' work by several ways: a) To find weather there is a different font size in the text; b) To find if there is a unusual

shifts in language; c) To find if there is a excluded citation in the references; d) To inspect is the citation typical in students' major domains.

According to the study done by Novotny, Crutchfield, & Jordanov (2008), the results indicate that almost 95.2% students believe that plagiarism can happen. Accidentally, often or very often. This result reveals that the concept of the importance of plagiarism among students still need to be enhanced. One way to improve it is to highlight the significance and consequences of plagiarism in students' academic life making them realize that plagiarism is a serious thing which may cause unacceptable consequences.

Also, some tools could be considered as a method to avoid plagiarism. Such as Plagiarism Detection Software (Owens and White, 2013). They point out that this kind of software can be used to check for matches among students' assignments. Owens and White (2013) also suggest that writing center should help students avoid plagiarism by providing correct citation format.

Conclusion

Plagiarism is not an easy thing that can be swept out of the entire academic field. What we can do is to reduce it as much as possible. As students, we have obligations to avoid such thing and to refine our academic circumstance especially in countries which does not highly emphasize the issue of plagiarism. The most striking thing for me about plagiarism is that most of the software are not free in America. However, in China, we can download many software that need to be paid, which is also a kind of plagiarism. I realized that this phenomenon in China is due to the concept of plagiarism is not strong among citizens. This might be one of the biggest difference regarding plagiarism between western country and eastern country. Thus, there still are plenty of efforts to be done to purify the circumstance in those areas.

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