



Awareness of plagiarism among university teachers in Sri Lankan Universities

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Abstract

Purpose. This study explores the awareness of plagiarism among university lecturers in Sri Lanka, with particular relevance to the field of library and information science. It highlights the crucial role of information literacy in addressing plagiarism in academic settings. As academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism, continues to rise, understanding faculty awareness is essential for fostering academic integrity and designing effective prevention strategies.

Methodology. A quantitative approach was used, employing an online questionnaire distributed to academics from 17 Sri Lankan universities. A convenience sampling technique selected 104 respondents. Data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics and Pearson Chi-Square tests to examine relationships between variables.

Results and Discussions. About 55.3% of respondents reported clear definitions of plagiarism within their departments, while 22.3% indicated uncertainty or lack of clarity. Most participants (95.2%) discussed plagiarism with students, though awareness varied by academic field. Faculties of aesthetics and commerce showed greater participation in awareness programs than engineering and technology. Additionally, 60.58% of respondents said their institutions used plagiarism detection software.

Conclusion. The study indicates generally positive awareness of plagiarism among Sri Lankan university lecturers, but notable gaps exist in some academic areas. The adoption of detection software is a significant step, yet there remains a need for better training and targeted awareness efforts tailored to faculty needs. This research contributes to discussions on academic integrity and emphasizes the importance of continuous education and institutional commitment to preventing plagiarism in higher education.

1. Introduction

Understanding teachers' attitudes toward plagiarism is crucial in library and information science, especially since librarians play a key role in fostering academic integrity in educational institutions. In Sri Lanka, where the higher education sector is increasingly focused on combating academic dishonesty, educators' actions and perspectives on plagiarism significantly impact student behavior. Teachers act as role models for their students, and their grasp of plagiarism directly influences how they convey its importance and consequences. By gaining insight into the prevalence and complexities of plagiarism behaviour among faculty, librarians can more effectively customise their educational programs and resources to meet the specific needs of both teachers and students. Plagiarism is using someone else's work and presenting it as your own, which is considered theft. This can include copying the words or ideas of others without proper attribution, as Giannakouli et al. (2023) Notes: Plagiarism involves taking

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someone else's work without permission and passing it off as your own. [Tsoni and Lionarakis \(2015\)](#) Explain that even if a student rephrases another person's ideas without giving credit, it is still considered plagiarism and theft. It is important always to give credit where credit is due to avoid plagiarism and uphold integrity in academic and professional work. According to Palmquist, plagiarism is a type of intellectual dishonesty. It can occur unintentionally by using someone else's work without giving proper credit or intentionally copying someone else's work and claiming it as your own. The most common form of plagiarism is when someone uses someone else's work without acknowledging the source, while the most severe form is when someone deliberately copies someone else's work and presents it as their own.

Plagiarism is a severe issue in educational settings and has become more prevalent in universities since the 1940s. It poses a significant threat to academic integrity. Universities and colleges consider plagiarism academic dishonesty and list it in their course syllabi and student handbooks alongside cheating and fraudulent behavior. In recent years, expanding online information and storage capabilities has led to a significant rise in intellectual dishonesty and plagiarism, a cause for concern. This misconduct has been linked to unethical workplace practices, further emphasizing the issue's seriousness. Most universities worldwide have undergone a heated public debate surrounding unethical educational and scientific methods.

Academic dishonesty is a diverse and harmful behavior that includes cheating, plagiarism, and fraud. The prevalence of cheating among students has increased significantly in recent years, as has the prevalence of academic dishonesty. These changes coincide with the expansion of online information and its storage capacity ([Perkins et al., 2020](#); [Lau et al., 2013](#); [Sisti, 2007](#); [Breen & Maassen, 2005](#)). It has been established that there is a link between cheating at school and acting unethically at work ([Ives & Nehrkorn, 2019](#)). Plagiarism is the most severe academic dishonesty, detrimental to academic integrity. It is well-known that plagiarism is widespread in higher education settings and has dramatically increased over the past 30 years ([Eaton, 2021](#)). Therefore, plagiarism is a complicated and serious issue at every higher education level. Most educators, librarians, professors, and high-level policymakers in higher education attempt to eradicate the problem of plagiarism. As a result, most Sri Lankan universities have recently been forced to purchase plagiarism detection software to check for similarities between academic research and students' work. Although plagiarism software has helped to reduce cut-and-paste plagiarism, there is no evidence of an overall decrease in academic misconduct worldwide ([Dávila, 2022](#)).

Even though there exist techniques for identifying plagiarism in a piece of writing or document, university teaching staff still need to understand the natural causes among students to address the issue. Teachers' awareness of any plagiarism, as well as institutional policies and programs that support the elimination of such students' misbehaviour, will be highly favourable in addressing the issue of plagiarism.

Thus, Plagiarism is a significant issue in academic institutions, particularly universities, and has been a growing concern for decades. It poses a serious threat to academic integrity and is often considered a form of academic dishonesty, alongside cheating and other fraudulent behaviors. The rise of online information and storage capabilities has made plagiarism and intellectual dishonesty more prevalent, exacerbating the problem ([Mulenga & Shilongo, 2024](#)). This misconduct has been associated with unethical workplace practices, highlighting the gravity of the issue. To tackle this problem, educators must understand the root causes of plagiarism and establish institutional policies and programs to combat it. Increased awareness among teachers and students is also crucial. While plagiarism detection software has helped identify instances of plagiarism, it is not enough to address the underlying issues. Moreover, the pervasive nature of plagiarism in

higher education emphasizes the need for further research to evaluate the current state of plagiarism awareness among university teachers.

Plagiarism studies within the Library and Information Science (LIS) field focus on librarians' pivotal role in addressing and mitigating plagiarism in academic settings. This body of research underscores librarians' significant contributions to combating plagiarism at both institutional and educational levels ([Gibson & Fangman, 2011](#)). For example, [Khan et al. \(2021\)](#) propose a framework for principled plagiarism education within library learning commons, synthesizing literature from various disciplines to examine the dynamics of academic citation practices and the underlying causes of undergraduate student plagiarism. This work highlights how librarians can serve as educators and facilitators, equipping students with the necessary skills to navigate citation norms and academic integrity.

While there is evidence that librarians actively raise awareness and provide education on plagiarism, their involvement in developing institutional strategies and detection services is often limited. [Giannakouli et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasize the necessity for improved collaboration among academic stakeholders- faculty, administrators, and librarians to strengthen plagiarism prevention initiatives and discuss the implications of their findings for academic libraries. Such collaboration is critical as libraries are uniquely positioned to offer resources and support for students and faculty in understanding and preventing plagiarism. In addition to addressing student plagiarism, the awareness of plagiarism among university faculty is equally crucial. Research by [Bennett et al. \(2011\)](#), explored how instructors perceive plagiarism, gathering data from 158 instructors through an electronic questionnaire. This study revealed varying opinions about what constitutes plagiarism and highlighted the gaps in faculty training regarding plagiarism detection and response. Such insights are valuable for library professionals who can develop targeted resources and training programs to educate faculty members about academic integrity.

Previous studies, such as those conducted by [Khan et al. \(2021\)](#) this indicates that university teachers often underestimate the prevalence of plagiarism in their courses. This lack of awareness can contribute to a culture where unethical practices may proliferate. Academic libraries can play a vital role in addressing this issue by providing faculty access to resources that promote a deeper understanding of plagiarism and its implications for academic integrity.

The institutional context also plays a significant role in plagiarism among university teachers. For instance, [Giannakouli et al. \(2023\)](#) found that prospective teachers in Turkey were more prone to unethical conduct in virtual environments than in real-life settings, suggesting that anonymity can lead to diminished accountability. Academic libraries can support institutions in developing guidelines and training programs that address ethical dilemmas in physical and online spaces, thereby fostering a culture of integrity. [Hyytinen & Löfström, 2017](#)) utilized a qualitative multi-method approach to explore the attitudes and perceptions of academics regarding research ethics and integrity. Their findings revealed significant variations in viewpoints about the responsibility for teaching research integrity, highlighting where librarians can contribute by providing resources and workshops that promote understanding and adherence to ethical research practices.

A comprehensive investigation into academic dishonesty among academics in Malaysia, [Mustapha et. al. \(2020\)](#) found that almost half of the respondents reported encountering academic misconduct, including plagiarism. This research emphasizes the need for universities to adopt proactive measures, such as training and support for staff regarding academic integrity. Academic libraries can be instrumental in this process by offering workshops and resources that clarify the consequences of academic dishonesty and promote ethical behavior. Research by [Bretag \(2018\)](#) highlights the role of institutional culture in enabling plagiarism among faculty, suggesting that pressures to

publish can lead to unethical behavior (Hascher & Waber, 2021). Further support for this notion is indicated by the fact that educators facing heightened pressure to publish were more likely to plagiarize. This underscores the importance of academic libraries in fostering a supportive environment that values integrity and provides resources to help faculty navigate academic pressures without resorting to unethical practices.

Recent research indicates a concerning lack of awareness and ethical behavior in academic settings regarding plagiarism among university faculty. Multiple studies reveal that instructors often underestimate the prevalence of plagiarism and may even engage in unethical practices themselves (Breen & Maassen, 2005; Giannakouli et al., 2023; Tsoni & Lionarakis, 2015). Institutional culture, academic pressures, and insufficient training contribute to this issue. To combat plagiarism effectively, universities must implement proactive measures, including training programs, clear guidelines, and policies that promote ethical behavior. Libraries play a crucial role in these initiatives by providing resources and educational opportunities that foster an environment of honesty and accountability within the academic community.

In Sri Lanka, university authorities have initiated various measures in collaborative libraries to combat plagiarism, such as utilizing plagiarism detection software and offering academic writing workshops. However, there is a notable gap in research regarding the perceptions of plagiarism among Sri Lankan teachers. While studies have addressed the issue in other countries, specific research on Sri Lankan university educators is lacking. Therefore, understanding the awareness of plagiarism among Sri Lankan university teachers is crucial for developing effective strategies to prevent plagiarism and promote academic integrity. This research gap highlights the importance of further investigation into how library resources and services can be tailored to meet the unique needs of educators in this context. The current research findings will contribute to further investigations into the library and information Science field.

Furthermore, the prevalence of plagiarism in higher education is a severe concern that arises from students' disregard for academic integrity or their inadequate knowledge of citation and referencing conventions. Plagiarism is an unethical practice that undermines the value of higher education degrees. However, the extent of the problem requires further investigation to assess the situation accurately. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the awareness of plagiarism among university teachers. The results of this research are crucial for teachers and students alike, as they can help curb the widespread issue of plagiarism in academic settings. University teachers are the ideal participants for this study as they are the most crucial asset in mitigating plagiarism issues in higher education. The significance of this topic underscores the importance of exploring the findings presented in this research, as they may serve as a valuable resource for academic institutions in their efforts to combat academic misconduct. The findings of this research have the potential to inform and contribute to the existing body of literature on combating academic misconduct, underscoring the importance of addressing plagiarism in academic settings. Furthermore, the outcome of this study holds the potential to significantly influence policy decisions in higher education about the issue of plagiarism while adding to the existing body of literature.

This research is timely and significant for three reasons. First, Sri Lanka's higher education industry is at a crossroads, balancing tradition and modernization, demanding culturally appropriate solutions to combat plagiarism. Second, prior research in South Asia has primarily focused on student behavior, ignoring the role of educators as guardians of academic integrity. Third, the efficiency of plagiarism detection techniques, which require a significant financial commitment from Sri Lankan institutions, depends on teachers' capacity to understand results and educate students proactively. This study fills a vital

vacuum by investigating faculty awareness and providing policymakers with practical findings.

To address these concerns, this research seeks to answer the following questions: 1) What is the current level of awareness among Sri Lankan university teachers regarding plagiarism definitions, consequences, and institutional policies? 2) What are the institutional practices and teachers' approaches to addressing plagiarism? 3) What challenges do teachers face in promoting academic integrity, and how can these be mitigated?

Therefore, this study aimed to assess the knowledge and understanding of plagiarism among Sri Lankan university teachers. It examined their general awareness levels and explored variations based on their expertise, professional background, faculty affiliation, and experience. Additionally, the research evaluated institutional practices for addressing plagiarism, including librarians' roles, and identified the availability of plagiarism detection tools across faculties.

2. Method

The study consisted of university teachers within institutions overseen by the University Grant Commission (UGC) in Sri Lanka. A total of 104 teachers from 17 universities were included in the study. A convenience sampling technique was utilized because it was practical in reaching respondents through the faculty deans of the respective universities, making it well-suited for exploratory research aimed at gathering preliminary insights from a geographically dispersed population. The questionnaire incorporated various types of questions, including closed-ended and single-response formats. The study employed the commonly-used 5-point Likert scale, the same scale utilized by [Tsoni and Lionarakis \(2015\)](#) and [Mustapha et al. \(2020\)](#) in their research. The Statistical Products and Services Solutions (SPSS) Software was used to analyze the data. Therefore, descriptive analysis and Pearson's chi-squared test were carried out to examine the information acquired from the online survey. The findings are shown through the correlations established between the various factors.

3. Results and Discussion

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics techniques, Pearson's Chi-Square, and frequency distribution. In addition, appropriate inferential statistics methods, such as correlation analysis and regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationships between variables and draw meaningful conclusions.

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of University Teachers

Table 1. Total Sample Demographics

Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	57	54.20
Female	47	45.20
Academic Ranks		
Senior Professor	02	1.90
Professor	19	18.30
Associate Professor	01	1.00
Senior Lecturer Grade I	21	29.80

<i>Continued Table 1...</i>		
Senior Lecturer Grade II	31	29.80
Lecturer	06	5.80
Lecturer (Probationary)	22	21.20
Temporary Assistant Lecturer	01	01.00
Other	01	01.00
Working experience		
Less than 5 years	28	26.90
6 to 11 years	26	25.00
12 to 17 years	20	19.20
18 to 23 years	21	20.20
24 more	09	08.70
Faculty		
Arts	32	30.80
Applied Sciences	17	16.30
Medical	05	04.80
Agriculture	11	10.60
Engineering	19	18.30
Aesthetic	12	11.50
Technology	02	01.09
Commerce and Management	05	04.80
Other	01	01.00
Total	104	100.00

The demographic characteristics of the total sample of university teachers reveal exciting insights into the composition of the study participants. Regarding gender distribution, the sample consists of 54.8% male and 45.2% female teachers, indicating a slightly higher representation of males. Moving to academic ranks, the distribution is notably diverse, with Senior Lecturer Grade I and Senior Lecturer Grade II comprising the most significant portion at 29.80% each. Following closely, Lecturers (Probationary) represent a substantial proportion at 21.20%, highlighting the presence of experienced and early-career academics in the study. Notably, while Senior Professors and Professors constitute smaller percentages at 1.90% and 18.30%, respectively, their inclusion enriches the sample with a range of seniority levels. Additionally, Associate Professors, Lecturers, Temporary Assistant Lecturers, and individuals classified as "Other" contribute to the overall academic diversity within the sample. These findings underscore the varied professional backgrounds and academic positions held by the university teachers included in the study, providing a comprehensive snapshot of the demographic landscape of the sample. Similarly, [Giannakouli et al. \(2023\)](#), in their study *How Academic Librarians Combat Student Plagiarism*, analyzed demographic differences and found that individuals with higher education levels were more actively engaged in plagiarism management roles and activities.

The distribution of working experience among university teachers exhibits a balanced representation across various career stages. A significant portion, 26.90%, falls within the category of less than 5 years of experience, while the rest of the sample demonstrates a diverse range of career spans, contributing to the overall richness of professional backgrounds. Examining faculty affiliation provides a comprehensive understanding of the diverse academic disciplines represented in the study. The arts faculty is the most prevalent, constituting 30.80% of the sample, followed by Engineering and Applied Sciences. The distribution across faculties underscores the interdisciplinary nature of the participant pool, contributing to the study's comprehensiveness. In summary, the university teachers' working experience and faculty affiliation in the total sample showcase diverse career spans and academic disciplines.

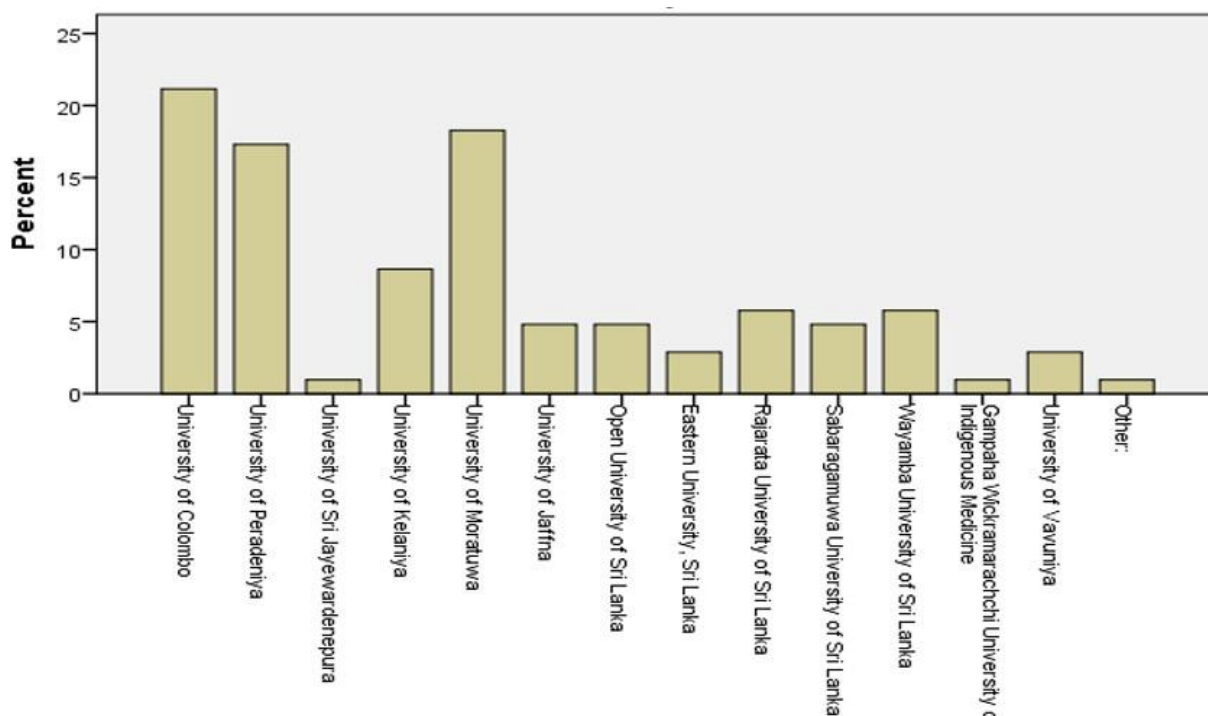


Figure 1. Sample by the university

The study included a varied group of participants from different academic institutions, and the distribution of university affiliations provides a comprehensive overview of the diverse range of institutions represented in the sample. Among the represented universities, the University of Colombo emerged as the most commonly represented institution, making up 21.2% of the sample. Following it was the University of Peradeniya, accounting for 17.3%. These two universities contributed significantly to the cumulative representation, making up 38.5%. Other notable institutions included the University of Moratuwa, which accounted for 18.3% of the sample, and the Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, which represented 5.8% of the participants.

The study consists of a wide range of universities, including but not limited to the University of Jaffna, Open University of Sri Lanka, Eastern University, Sri Lanka, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, and several others. The combined percentages presented in the study represent the individual contribution of each university toward the overall sample. Each institution has its unique perspective and distinctive viewpoint, which adds to this study's diversity of academic perspectives. As a result, this study benefits significantly from a varied and diverse tapestry of academic perspectives.

3.2 Level of Awareness of Plagiarism among Teachers

The research objective was to evaluate the level of awareness of plagiarism among university teachers by analyzing their responses. To accomplish this, the researchers employed a statistical measure known as the chi-square test, which measures the association between categorical variables. This approach was adopted to examine the role of demographic factors, considered crucial elements in academic research, on plagiarism awareness. The study's discoveries could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of plagiarism education programs and assist in enhancing academic integrity in universities. Similarly, the findings of this study support those of [Giannakouli et. al. \(2023\)](#),

who found the significance of academic integrity and the prevention of plagiarism in educational institutions. This finding also supports [Mulenga and Shilongo \(2024\)](#), who researched Academic Integrity in Higher Education: Understanding and Addressing Plagiarism.

A research study examined the level of understanding of plagiarism among university faculty and departments. According to the findings presented in [Table 1](#), 54.8% of the participants reported that their faculties and departments clearly understood what constitutes plagiarism. However, an almost equal number (22.3%) of participants mentioned that their faculties and departments had not defined the concept of plagiarism accurately or were uncertain about it.

Table 2. Awareness of plagiarism- Institutional level

Do your department, faculty, or institution have clear definitions of plagiarism?

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	57	55.3
No	23	22.3
Unsure	23	22.3
Total	103	100.0
Missing System	1	
Total	104	

Table 3. Awareness of Plagiarism-Communication with the Students

Have you ever discussed the topic of plagiarism with students?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	99	95.2
No	5	4.8
Total	104	100.0

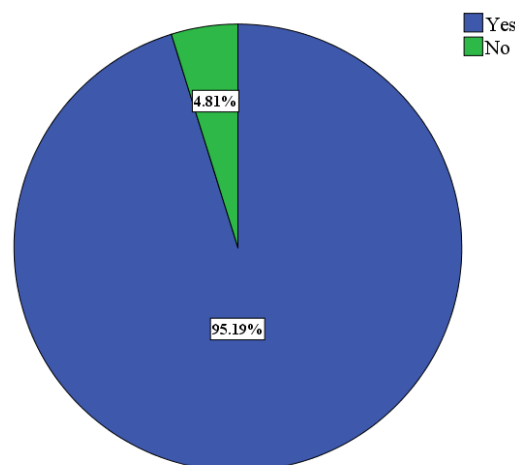


Figure 2. Awareness of Plagiarism: Plagiarism-Communication with the Students

The study asked teachers if they discussed plagiarism with their students, and 95.2% of the sample of teachers responded positively. This indicates that teachers are taking plagiarism seriously and ensuring students understand the importance of academic

integrity. The study also supports the findings of [Dávila \(2022\)](#) that academic plagiarism affects education policy and is unethical and dishonest.

Table 4. Understanding of Plagiarism

Are there occasions where plagiarism can be justified?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	30	28.8
No	52	50.0
Unsure	21	20.2
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

During a survey, teachers were asked if there were any situations where plagiarism could be considered justified. Of the participants, 28.8% responded that there were such situations, while the majority believed plagiarism is never justified. Interestingly, 20.2% of the teachers were unsure whether plagiarism can be justified.

3.3 Institutional practices and librarians' involvement in addressing plagiarism

Table 5. Conducting the plagiarism awareness

Field of Study	Does your faculty library conduct any Plagiarism Awareness Program?			Total
	Yes	No	Unsure	
Arts	12 (38.7%)	15 (48.4%)	04 (12.9%)	31
Applied Sciences	11 (64.7)	04 (23.5%)	02 (11.8%)	17
Medical	02 (40.0%)	02 (40.0%)	01 (20.0%)	05
Agriculture	06 (54.5%)	03 (27.3%)	02 (18.2%)	11
Engineering	07 (36.8%)	04 (21.1%)	08 (42.1%)	19
Aesthetic	09 (75.0%)	02 (16.7%)	01 (8.3%)	12
Technology	00 (0.0%)	01 (100%)	00 (0.0%)	01
Commerce and Management	04 (80.0%)	01 (20.0%)	00 (0.0%)	05
Other	01 (100%)	00 (00%)	00 (0.0%)	01

To understand the perceptions of institutional practices and librarians' involvement in addressing plagiarism, [Gibson et al. \(2011\)](#) also addressed the librarian's role in combating plagiarism. The crosstabulation table presents the distribution of responses regarding the conduct of plagiarism awareness programs. Among the respondents, the highest participation in plagiarism awareness programs was observed in the Aesthetic faculty, with 75% indicating their institution's engagement in such initiatives. Conversely, the Technology faculty reported the lowest participation, with none of the respondents confirming the conduct of such programs. While some faculty libraries demonstrated higher engagement in plagiarism awareness activities, others exhibited varying levels of participation, highlighting the need for comprehensive awareness programs across all academic disciplines. [Table 5](#) presents the crosstabulation table, which presents the distribution of responses regarding the conduct of plagiarism awareness programs.

3.4 Teachers' Participation in the Awareness programs conducted by the faculty

The study investigated the level of engagement by university instructors in Plagiarism awareness programs. The results indicated that an overwhelming % of university teachers,

73.1%, have participated in such programs conducted by their respective faculties. However, the study also revealed that 26.09% of teachers have not participated in Plagiarism awareness programs, indicating a potential need for more outreach and engagement efforts by universities to encourage greater teacher participation. This affirms the stance of Perkins. et al. (2020), in their research, emphasized the importance of understanding the root causes of plagiarism to reduce plagiarism in education.

Table 6. Teacher's Participation in the Awareness Program

Have you ever participated in any awareness program on plagiarism?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	76	73.1
No	28	26.9
Total	104	100.0

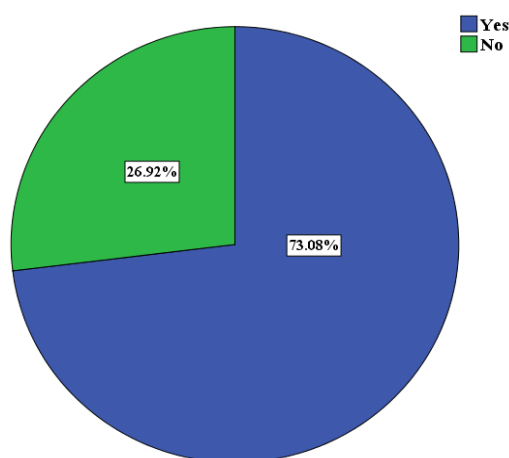


Figure 3. Teacher's Participation in the Awareness Program

3.5 Teachers' satisfaction with the plagiarism Awareness conducted by librarians and faculty members

This study also investigated teachers' satisfaction with plagiarism awareness programs conducted by faculty members and librarians. The data analysis revealed that 58.33% of the participants were moderately satisfied with the existing program. A small proportion (9.72%) expressed high satisfaction levels, while the same number (9.72%) expressed dissatisfaction with the existing programs. Moreover, 12.5% of the respondents were neutral towards the programs.

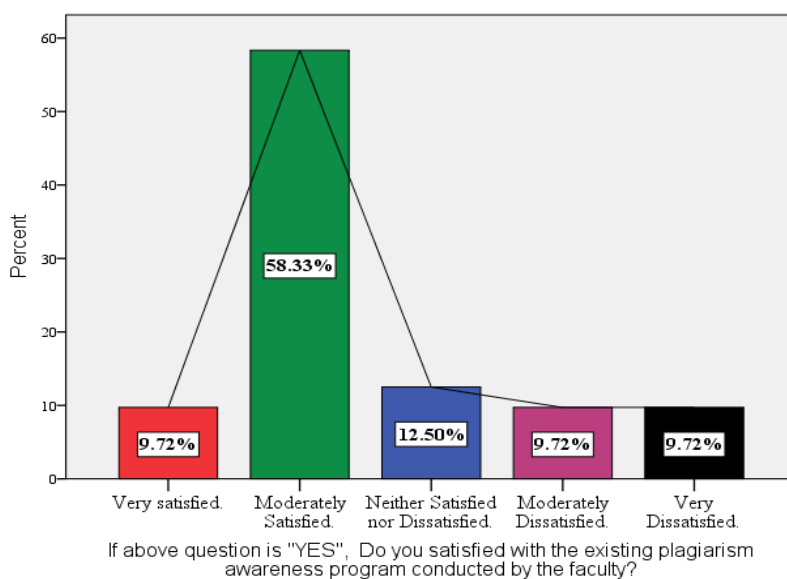


Figure 4. Teachers' Satisfaction with Plagiarism Awareness conducted by librarians and faculty members.

Table 7. Pearson Chi-Square Test Results on Sex and Awareness of Plagiarism

Sex	Awareness of plagiarism		χ^2	Sig
	Yes	No		
Male	39	18	1.390	0.238
Female	37	10		

Table 7 presents statistics about the cross-tabulation data regarding the gender of university academics and awareness of plagiarism. Results of the Pearson Chi-Square test of independence presented in Table 7 indicate that the gender of university academics is not associated with participation in any awareness program on plagiarism, $\chi^2 (1) = 1.390$, $p > 0.05$. Table 8 presents statistics about the cross-tabulation data regarding the Academic Position of academics and their awareness of plagiarism.

Table 8. Academic Position and Awareness of Plagiarism

Academic Position	Awareness of plagiarism		χ^2	Sig
	Yes	No		
Senior Professor	02	00	5.352	0.719
Professor	15	04		
Associate Professor	01	00		
Senior Lecturer Grade I	14	07		
Senior Lecturer Grade II	21	07		
Lecturer	05	01		
Lecturer Probationary	16	06		
Temporary Lecturer	01	00		

Pearson Chi-Square is one of the methods used to calculate the chi-square statistic. In this analysis, the value is 5.352, with 8 degrees of freedom (df). The asymptotic significance (p-value) is .719. Therefore, it would likely fail to reject the test's null hypothesis. This indicates that, based on the Likelihood Ratio Chi-Square test, there is insufficient evidence

to suggest a statistically significant association between Academic Position and Awareness of Plagiarism.

Table 9. The Field of Study of University Academic and Awareness

Field of Study	Awareness of plagiarism		χ^2	Asymp. sig
	Yes	No		
Arts	24	08	11.35	0.083
Applied Sciences	13	04		
Medical	05	00		
Agriculture	08	03		
Engineering	09	10		
Aesthetic	09	03		
Technology	02	00		
Commerce and	05	00		
Management				
Other	01	00		

Plagiarism Awareness by Field of Study was examined through statistical analysis of responses. The results of the Pearson Chi-Square test of independence are presented in Table 9, indicating that the Field of Study of university academics is not associated with participation in any awareness program on plagiarism, $\chi^2 (8) = 11.35$, $p > 0.05$. There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant association based on this test.

The chi-square analysis results concerning the level of awareness of plagiarism among Sri Lankan university academics suggest no statistically significant association between gender, field of study, academic position, and awareness of plagiarism.

Table 10. Availability of Plagiarism software

Does your faculty have plagiarism detection software?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	63	60.58
No	31	29.81
Unsure	10	9.62
Total	104	100.0

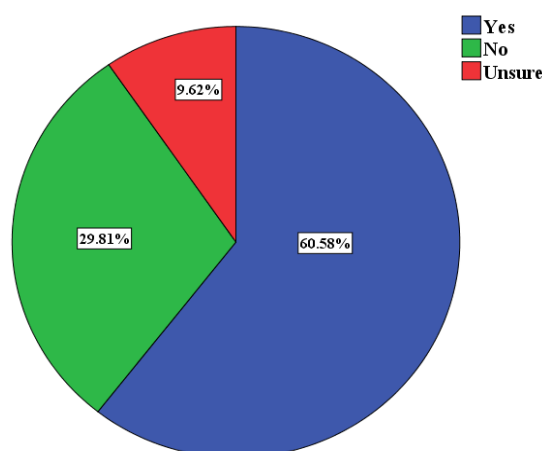


Figure 5. Availability of Plagiarism Software

One of the study's objectives was to assess the prevalence of plagiarism detection software in Sri Lankan universities. Based on the results obtained from the data analysis, the majority of the participants (60.58%) stated that their universities had implemented plagiarism detection software. A smaller portion of the participants (29.81%) mentioned that their universities do not have such software. In comparison, a minority of the participants (9.62%) were uncertain about the presence of plagiarism detection software in their universities. This finding also corroborates a study by [Tsoni & Lionarakis \(2015\)](#), plagiarism in Higher Education: The Academics' Perceptions.

4. Conclusion

The findings indicate no significant association between gender, academic discipline, or professional position and the level of plagiarism awareness among university academics in Sri Lanka. The study revealed that irrespective of gender, subject area, educational qualifications, or job role, all educators demonstrate a comparable understanding of plagiarism. This suggests that academic integrity and the efficacy of plagiarism educational programs can be enhanced by fostering a uniform understanding of plagiarism among all teachers.

The research also revealed that the aesthetics, commerce, and management faculty are likelier to receive plagiarism awareness training. Applied sciences faculty receive the second-highest training, while engineering and medical faculty receive the least. Technology faculty have the fewest availability of plagiarism awareness programs.

The research offers valuable insights into how Sri Lankan university teachers perceive plagiarism. While a significant proportion of teachers grasp the concept and discuss it with their students, there remains a need for greater precision. Additionally, participation in plagiarism awareness initiatives varies among faculties, suggesting that there is a requirement for more comprehensive programs in specific academic domains. The study reveals that university teachers' awareness of plagiarism is distinct to gender, academic position, or field of study. Most Sri Lankan universities have implemented plagiarism detection software, which underscores the significance of academic integrity and the prevention of plagiarism in educational institutions. Overall, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of plagiarism awareness and detection practices among Sri Lankan university teachers and highlights areas that require further research and improvement to promote academic integrity.

This study underscores the crucial role of library and information science (LIS) in combating academic misconduct through proactive, systems-oriented strategies. The growing use of plagiarism detection tools in Sri Lankan universities marks a significant step in promoting academic integrity. However, the findings indicate that technological solutions alone are inadequate without the support of educational and policy frameworks. This research emphasizes the importance of integrating pedagogical interventions with institutional accountability by contextualizing plagiarism within broader LIS issues, including information literacy, ethical scholarship, and equitable access to knowledge.

For library and information professionals, the findings highlight three actionable priorities: (1) integrating information literacy programs into curricula to clarify citation practices and concepts of intellectual ownership, (2) promoting collaboration among educators, librarians, and administrators to develop culturally responsive academic integrity policies, and (3) advocating for ongoing investment in training that equips faculty to interpret detection software outputs and mentor students effectively. These initiatives align with the evolving role of libraries as centers for ethical knowledge dissemination, particularly within Sri Lanka's higher education landscape, where the challenge of

balancing tradition with modernization necessitates localized, interdisciplinary strategies. The findings of this study are significant for Library and Information Science (LIS), as it lies in its dual focus on human and technological dimensions. While previous regional research has primarily examined student behavior, this study shifts the spotlight to institutional ecosystems, emphasizing the roles of librarians and educators as custodians of academic rigor. Additionally, it critiques the notion that detection tools alone can effectively address academic misconduct, urging the LIS discourse to prioritize preventive strategies, such as curriculum redesign and community engagement, over punitive measures. Future initiatives should investigate how libraries can spearhead campus-wide efforts to normalize ethical research practices, bridging gaps in awareness and access to resources. By advancing these strategies, academic libraries can strengthen their mission as pillars of intellectual integrity, ensuring their relevance in an era where the intersection of digital tools and academic ethics is more critical than ever.

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