

## THE EVIL THAT MEN DO IN ACADEMICS: UNDERSTANDING PLAGIARISM AND ITS EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study was premised to explore the causes of plagiarism and its extenuating circumstances in Higher Educational Institutions in Ghana. The study focused on Tertiary Students in the Kumasi and Sunyani Metropolis and Municipality respectively, 200 students were selected deploying a cluster sampling technique. The underpinning research paradigm was a cross sectional descriptive survey. Questionnaires were the main instrument used in eliciting primary data for the study. Secondary data were obtained from academic journals databases including EBSCO, and Google Scholar. The analyses were presented using Means, Standard Deviations, Unweighted Means, Relative Important Index (RII), Frequencies and Percentages. The study discovered the causes of student's plagiarism as follows; poor writing skills, to obtain better marks, poor understanding of plagiarism, cost of quality education materials, Pressure from family and friends to offer help. The plagiarism extenuating factors were also discovered as follows; educate students on writing methods, assign different questions to different individuals, give tests quizzes or assignments more, assigning more in-class activities, not allowing students make up tests, rotate curriculum and trust building. It is recommended that deploying plagiarism detective software under covert study will help understand the causal factors better in order to inoculate student's plagiarism effectively.*

**KEYWORDS:** Plagiarism, Causes, Extenuating Circumstance, Higher Education, Ghana

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### INTRODUCTION

Three years ago in Brno Czech Republic, a conference involving all Europeans and beyond was organized to find common solution to counteract the plagiarism scourge. Carroll (2013) commenting on incidence of plagiarism in the United Kingdom maintained that the adoption of turnitin by UK universities has drastically reduced the prevalence of plagiarism. The concept of plagiarism has been variously defined by different authors (see East, 2009; Howard, 1995; Pecorari, 2008 and Thompson, 2002).

According to Appiah (2016) the term is used to describe the habit of copying, imitating or stealing of someone else's idea or symbol with a due acknowledgement. He further posits that patch works and pastiche are the most common forms of plagiarism among Ghanaian undergraduate students. The causes and reasons of plagiarism have been adequately researched. The following are considered common causes; poor writing skills, lack of referencing skills, teaching and learning material, laziness, to obtain better marks, educational cost, poor understanding of plagiarism and because everyone does it (see Suarez & Martin, 2001; Thomas, 2004; East, 2008; Rimer, 2009; Sentleng and King, 2012; Appiah, 2016).

The problem of plagiarism has always been in existence. Moreover, the emergence of the World Wide Web and subsequently the digital age has escalated the incidence especially among undergraduates (McMurty, 2001; Cromwell, 2006). Internet sources still remain the main source of undergraduate plagiarism. Moreover, though students considered plagiarism as a serious

issue the practice is still ongoing (Sentleng & King, 2012). Some countries have plagiarism policy but others don't. Hence the practice is still ongoing especially surfing internet for journals and related academic articles (Carroll, 2013). The incidence of plagiarism among professionals is very high. These include data manipulation by famous scientists.

The prevalence rate of plagiarism has been reported in different studies turns out to be different in various fields, countries, educational levels and times. Sentleng and King, (2012) examined the rate of student plagiarism relating to the academic assignment and concluded that there is the need to deploy most sophisticated detection software to address the Plagiarism. When student are adequately trained it help reduce the rate of plagiarism. The most common methods of avowing plagiarism include proper citation, referencing, quotation and paraphrasing. Lack of this lead to complacency on the part of the students (Landau, Druen & Arcuri, 2002). Preventing plagiarism is a tedious task but the best approach should involve skill and training which is reportedly accounted for most plagiarism. Student must be trained on how to avoid plagiarism (Burke, 2005).

### **Problem Statement**

Plagiarism has recently been acknowledged as a major academic concern by the Ghanaian Universities although the country has not yet design national policy to address plagiarism in Ghana. Whereas some of these institutions have started putting measures in place to address this blight, others are doing practically nothing about plagiarism and all its concomitant academic dishonesty. Meanwhile Appiah (2016) conducted a study on incidence of Plagiarism among undergraduate student in Ghanaian higher institutions and established that there is paucity of reliable literature on student's plagiarism in Ghana. This knowledge gap must be filled.

### **Objectives of the study**

- ✓ To examine the causes of students' academic plagiarism
- ✓ To determine measure to extenuate students' academic plagiarism

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section presents information of related publications on the topic. This has been done in accordance with the established objectives of the study. Several theories emanating from sociology, psychology and anthropology have been deployed to explain plagiarism behaviour of students (see Suarez & Martin, 2001; Thomas, 2004; East, 2008; Rimer, 2009; Sentleng and King, 2012; Appiah, 2016). The most frequently used theories include; theory of reason behaviour, theory of planed behaviour, social cognitive theory, theory of social learning and self-efficacy theory. These theories are fundamental to this study. The Table 1 & 2 respectively illustrates related literature on the causes and extenuating circumstances of plagiarism.

**Tables 1: Causes of Plagiarism**

1	Appiah (2016)	Assessing the Incidence of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions in Ghana	The rate of plagiarism is high among Ghanaian undergraduate students due to lack of knowledge on how to prevent it. Most of these students do not consider patchworks and pastiche as plagiarism
2	Burke (2005)	Deterring plagiarism: A new role for librarians	Lack of skill and training account for most plagiarism. Student must be trained on how to avoid plagiarism.
3	Sentleng & King (2012)	Investigating the awareness of plagiarism among undergraduate students at south African higher education institutions.	The reasons of plagiarism had been adequately researched. The following are considered common causes; poor writing skills, lack of referencing skills, teaching and learning material, laziness, to obtain better marks etc.
4	Landau, Druen & Arcuri, (2002)	Methods for helping students avoid plagiarism	When student are adequately trained it help reduce the rate of plagiarism. The most common methods of avowing plagiarism include proper citation, referencing, quotation and paraphrasing. Lack of this lead to complacent
5	Austin & Brown (1999)	Developing strategies to curb student academic Plagiarism: Concepts, Factors and Solutions dishonesty	Policy on plagiarism can help to reduce it menace. Moreover, teachers /lectures must be adequately involved in this so that they can ensure compliance.
6	Bahadori, et al. (2012)	The goal of this study is to review the scientific concepts related to plagiarism, its factors and roots, its prevalence in the world and methods of detecting it	The incidence of plagiarism among professionals is very high. These include data manipulation by famous scientists. The prevalence rate of plagiarism has been reported in different studies turns out to be different in various fields, countries, educational levels and times.
7	Carroll (2013)	To explore what we can and cannot learn from each other about managing plagiarism	Some countries have plagiarism policy but others don't. Hence the practice is still ongoing especially surfing internet for journals and book sources.

*Source: Author's compilation*

**Table 2: Plagiarism (Prevention) Extenuating Circumstances**

1	Appiah (2016)	Assessing the Incidence of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions in Ghana	National policy on plagiarism must be considered to address the high incidence of undergraduate plagiarism. Institutional efforts must also be enhanced.
2	Austin & Brown (1999)	Developing strategies to curb student academic Plagiarism: Concepts, Factors and Solutions dishonesty	Policy on plagiarism can help to reduce it menace. Moreover, teachers /lectures must be adequately involved in this so that they can ensure compliance.
3	Burke (2005)	Deterring plagiarism: A new role for librarians	Lack of skill and training account for most plagiarism. Student must be trained on how to avoid plagiarism.
4	Compton & Pfau (2008)	Inoculating against pro-plagiarism justifications: Rational and affective strategies	Preventing plagiarism is a tedious task but the best approach to dealing with it.
5	Landau et al. (2002).	Methods for helping students avoid plagiarism	When student are adequately trained it help reduce the rate of plagiarism. The most common methods of avowing plagiarism include proper citation, referencing, quotation and paraphrasing. Lack of this lead to complacent
6	Alsmadi 1 et al. (2014)	Investigated issues related to accuracy and challenges in detecting possible plagiarism in students' assignments	Examine the rate of student plagiarism relating to their academic assignment. there is the need to deploy most sophisticated detection software to address the Plagiarism
7	Batane (2010)	Pilot project of the Turnitin plagiarism detection software, which was implemented to determine plagiarism among Botswana (UB) students.	A holistic approach is needed towards the fight against plagiarism in the university. Adopting turnitin is a good step towards the fight.
8	Rowell (2013)	Addressing student plagiarism in the UK, ten years on	The adoption of turnitin by UK universities has drastically reduced the incidence of plagiarism.

*Source: Author's compilation*

## METHODOLOGY

The general objective of this present study is to identify the root causes of plagiarism and its extenuating circumstances in higher educational institutions in Ghana. The target population of the study is all tertiary students in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions. Overall, 200 students were selected deploying cluster sampling technique. The underpinning research paradigm was descriptive design. Questionnaires were the main instrument used in soliciting primary data for the study. Secondary data were obtained from academic journals and institutional websites. For instance the constructs on causes of student's plagiarism were adopted from Sentleng and King (2012) publication. Moreover the constructs on plagiarism prevention were adopted from Born (n.d), Sentleng and King (2012), Rimer (2009) and Appiah (2016). The data were analyzed using statistical package for social scientist SPSS for windows version 21. Before the data were analyzed it was subjected to validation to ensure accuracy and completeness. Ethical wise, the objectives were elucidated to all respondents before given out

the questionnaires. The study adopted 5-point Likert scale as a measure of constructs. Where 5=strongly agree and 1-strongly disagree.

## RESULTS

### Demographics

Demographically, the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between respondents age and the gender ( $\chi^2$  -value = 453.98,  $df=15$ ;  $p$ -value < 0.05). It was further revealed that majority of the students were in the age bracket 20-24, this was followed by age group 30-34, 27 of the student were aged below 20 years and they were predominantly first year students. The least age group was those pursuing their PhD studies. Regarding the students gender, majority of them were Christians and were found to belong to the highest age bracket. The Muslims were the least religious group in the study population. The Karl Pearson Chi-square test revealed that there is an association between respondent's age and religion at 90% significant level ( $\chi^2$  -value = 6.55,  $df=3$  and  $p$ -value<0.10). Concerning the student sex group, the survey revealed that majority of them were males and they also belong to the highest age group. The least sex group was the females. Again The Karl Pearson Chi-square test revealed that there is a significant association between respondents age and their gender ( $\chi^2$  -value = 17.98,  $df=3$   $p$ -value<0.05)

### Cause of Plagiarism

Items	S. A	A	S. D	D	Don't know
Poor writing skills	42(21.0)	132(66.0)	26(13.0)	0	0
Lack of referencing skills	40(20.0)	91(45.5)	39(19.5)	15(7.5)	15(7.5)
Teaching and learning methods	55(27.5)	64(32.0)	66(33.0)	0	15(7.5)
Laziness/bad time management	72(36.0)	30(15.0)	58(29.0)	26(13.0)	14(7.0)
Don't understand assignments	70(35.0)	14(7.0)	75(37.5)	41(20.5)	0
Education costs	107(53.5)	93(46.5)	0	0	0
Pressure from family & friends	122(61.0)	78(39.0)	0	0	0
To obtain better marks	107(53.5)	93(46.5)	0	0	0
Poor understanding of plagiarism	110(55.0)	76(38.0)	14(7.0)	0	0
Everybody is doing it	57(28.5)	43(21.5)	73(36.5)	27(13.5)	0

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 4.3 depicts the root causes of plagiarism among students. Majority (66%) of the students Agree that they plagiarize due to poor writing skills, other 21% Strongly Agree that they plagiarize due to poor writing skills, while as 13% Strongly Disagree that they plagiarize because of poor writing skills. Predominate (45.5%) of the students Agree that Lack of referencing skills make them plagiarized, other 20% of the students Strongly Agree that they plagiarize for lack of references skill. Another 19.5% strongly disagree that they plagiarize due to lack of referencing skill. Besides, 7.5% of the students Disagree that lack of referencing skills leads them plagiarized, meanwhile, 7.5% don't know either they lack referencing skill or not to plagiarized. Majority (33%) of the students Strongly Disagree that, teaching and learning methods influence students to plagiarized, other 32% Agree that teaching and learning methods influence students plagiarism nevertheless, 7.5% don't know either teaching and learning methods influence students plagiarism or not. 36% of the students Strongly Agree that Laziness and bad time management let them plagiarizes, 29% Strongly Disagree that Laziness and bad

time management let plagiarized. Other 15% Agree that they plagiarize due to Laziness and bad time management, meanwhile 13% Disagree that they plagiarized due to Laziness and bad time management.

Furthermore, students (37.5%) Strongly disagree that they plagiarized because they do not understand the assignment given. Interestingly, 35% Strongly Agree that they plagiarized because they do not understand the assignment given. Other 20.5% of the students Disagree that they plagiarized for not understanding the assignment given meanwhile, merely 7% agree on that. Majority (53.5%) Strongly Agree that they plagiarized other peoples work due to education cost. 49.5% on the other hand Agree that they also plagiarized other peoples work because of educational cost. Surprisingly, 61% of the students plagiarized due to pressure from families and friends. This result bothers the researcher's mind, for what reasons and extend should families and friends pressure influence plagiarism? The study explored that, majority (53.5%) Strongly Agree that they plagiarized to obtain better marks, other 46.5% also agree that they plagiarized to obtain marks. Poor understanding of the concept of plagiarism influence students to commit the crime of not acknowledging other peoples work. As revealed in the study 55% strongly agree that they do not understand plagiarism. Coincidentally, 38% Agree that they do not understand plagiarism, conversely, only 7% strongly disagree that they do not understand plagiarism. In conclusion 36.5% of the students strongly disagree that they plagiarized because everybody is plagiarizing. Another, 28.5% strongly Agree that, they plagiarized since everybody is doing it, also 21.5% Agree that they plagiarized since it is a common practice in the society. However, 13.5% disagree to that fact.

#### RII on causes of Plagiarism

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	RII	Rank	RII Index
Poor writing skills	3.9500	.85508	0.82	5 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Lack of referencing skills	3.5100	1.22368	0.73	7 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Teaching and learning methods	3.3900	1.38110	0.74	6 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Laziness/bad time management	3.4400	1.40580	0.72	8 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Don't understand assignments	3.3950	1.30287	0.71	9 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Education costs	4.5350	.50003	0.91	2 <sup>nd</sup>	High important
Pressure from family & friends	4.6100	.48897	0.92	1 <sup>st</sup>	High important
To obtain better marks	4.5350	.50003	0.90	3 <sup>rd</sup>	High important
Poor understanding of plagiarism	4.4100	.81561	0.89	4 <sup>th</sup>	High important
Everybody is doing it	3.4200	1.24553	0.73	7 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important

Source: Field survey, 2016. To measure the relative importance of each factor or variable used, indices of range 0.85-1.00= High important; 0.65-0.84= Medium important; 0.00-0.64=Low important.

Table 4.4 illustrates the ranks of the causes of plagiarism among students. The study discovered that, poor writing skills ranked 5<sup>th</sup> position with M= 3.9500, SD=0.85508 and RII = 0.82 however, it was considered medium important. Lack of referencing skills was medium important as shows M= 3.5100, SD=1.22368 and RII = 0.73 with a corresponding position of 7<sup>th</sup>. Teaching and learning methods ranked 6<sup>th</sup> position with M= 3.3900, SD=1.38110and RII = 0.74 yet, it was considered medium important. Laziness and bad time management was medium important with the respective M= 3.4400, SD=1.30287 and RII = 0.72 and a corresponding position of 8<sup>th</sup>. Not understand assignments given result in plagiarism. However, it was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> position with M= 3.3950, SD=1.30287and RII = 0.71 and it was considered medium important.

In more repose way, Education costs ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> position with respective M= 4.5350, SD=0.50003 and RII = 0.91 and it was considered high important. Pressure from family and friends was high important as shows M= 4.6100, SD=0.48897 and RII = 0.92 with a corresponding position of 1<sup>st</sup>. To obtain better marks was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> meanwhile it was considered high important, with respective M= 4.5350, SD=0.50003 and RII = 0.90. Poor understanding of plagiarism was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> position, with the M= 4.4100, SD= 0.81561, RII=89 and it was considered high important. Nevertheless, the common practice of plagiarism ranked 7<sup>th</sup> with the respective M= 3.4200, SD= 1.24553, RII=0.73 and it was considered medium important.

### Plagiarism Preventive Measures

Items	S. A	A	S. D	D	Don't know
Treat a paper as a process not a product.	97(48.5)	80(40.0)	0	23(11.5)	0
Assign group activities.	58(29.0)	77(38.5)	15(7.5)	39(19.5)	11(5.5)
Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization.	65(32.5)	135(67.5)	0	0	0
Assign different questions to different individuals.	65(32.5)	123(61.5)	0	12(6.0)	0
Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently.	90(45.0)	110(55.0)	0	0	0
Assign more in-class activities.	136(68.0)	64(32.0)	0	0	0
Don't allow make up tests.	98(49.0)	102(51.0)	0	0	0
Rotate curriculum.	138(69.0)	62(31.0)	0	0	0
Build trust.	109(54.5)	79(39.5)	12(6.0)	0	0
Educate students	63(31.5)	137(68.5)	0	0	0

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 4.5 shows plagiarism preventive measures. The study discovered that, about 48.5% Strongly Agree that papers should be treated as a process not a product, other 40% Agree that that papers should be treated as a process not a product. Another, 11.5% Disagree that papers should be treated as a process not a product. 38.5% agree that teachers should assign group activities; other 29% strongly agree that, teachers should assign group activities. However, 19.5% Disagree that teachers should Assign group activities and 5.5% do not either teacher should Assign group activities or not. Majority (67.5%) Agree that tutors should Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization, other 32.5% strongly agree that tutors should Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization. Majority 61.5% agree tutors should Assign different questions to different individuals, other 32.5% strongly agree that tutors should Assign different questions to different individuals while as only 6% disagree that tutors should Assign different questions to different individuals students to prevent plagiarism.

The study further disclosed that, 55% agree that tutors should Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently to students, other 45% strongly agree that tutors should Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently to prevent plagiarism. Again 68% strongly agree that more Assignment should be given to student's in-class to prevent plagiarism; other 32% coincidentally agree that Assignment should be given to student's in-class to prevent plagiarism. Majority (51%) agree that students should not be allowed to make up tests, moreover, 49%

strongly agree that students should not be allowed to make up tests to prevent plagiarism. Remarkably 69% strongly agree that the authority should rotate educational curriculum, however, 31% also agree that the authority should rotate educational curriculum. Adding, majority (54.5%) strongly that trust must be built to prevent plagiarism, other 39.5% agree that trust must be built to prevent plagiarism meanwhile merely 6% strongly disagree that trust must be built to prevent plagiarism. The study concluded that majority (68.5%) agree that students should be educated to prevent plagiarism notwithstanding 31.5% strongly agree that students should be educated to prevent plagiarism in our sector.

### RII on Plagiarism Preventive Measures

Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	RII	Rank	RII Index
Treat a paper as a process not a product.	4.3700	.68222	0.85	4 <sup>th</sup>	High important
Assign group activities.	3.7800	1.11256	0.73	6 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization.	4.3250	.46955	0.86	3 <sup>rd</sup>	High important
Assign different questions to different individuals.	4.2650	.56246	0.84	5 <sup>th</sup>	Medium important
Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently.	4.4500	.49874	0.89	2 <sup>nd</sup>	High important
Assign more in-class activities.	4.6800	.46765	0.93	1 <sup>st</sup>	High important
Don't allow make up tests.	4.4900	.50115	0.89	2 <sup>nd</sup>	High important
Rotate curriculum.	4.6900	.46365	0.93	1 <sup>st</sup>	High important
Build trust.	4.4250	.77937	0.89	2 <sup>nd</sup>	High important
Educate students	200	.46568	0.86	3 <sup>rd</sup>	High important

Source: Field survey, 2016. To measure the relative importance of each factor or variable used, indices of range 0.85-1.00= High important; 0.65-0.84= Medium important; 0.00-0.64=Low important.

Table 4.6 elicits information on ranks of preventive measures on plagiarism among students. The study depicts that Treating a paper as a process not a product was rated high important with respective M=4.3700, SD=0.68222, RII= 85 however it was ranked 4<sup>th</sup>. Tutors assigning group activities or work for students ranked 6<sup>th</sup> position with M=4.7800, SD=1.11256, RII= 0.73 meanwhile it was rated medium important. Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> position with the respective M=4.2650, SD=0.46955, RII= 0.86 and also it was rated high important.

In addition, assign different questions to different individuals ranked 5<sup>th</sup> position with M=4.2650, SD=0.56246, RII= 0.84 however rating was medium important. Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> position with the M=4.4500, SD=0.49874, RII= 0.89 and it was rated high important. Assigning more in-class activities was rated high important preventive measure of plagiarism, showing M=4.6800, SD=0.46765, RII= 0.93 and it corresponding position was 1<sup>st</sup>. Also, not allowing students make up tests rated high important and it ranking position was 2<sup>nd</sup> with the respective M=4.4900, SD=0.50115, and RII= 0.89.

Finally, Rotate curriculum rated high important, with the M=4.4900, SD=0.46365, RII= 0.93 and was ranked 1<sup>st</sup>. trust building was also rated high important with M=4.4250, SD=0.77937,



RII= 0.89 meanwhile it ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>. However, educating students rated high important, with M=4.3200, SD=0.46568, RII= 0.86, concisely it was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was conducted to achieve two main objectives. Namely: To identify the root causes of students plagiarism and secondly to propose extenuating circumstances towards plagiarism. The finding of the study had been discussed in more details below.

### Causes of plagiarism Among Students

The causes of plagiarism had been variously researched (Sousa Silva, 2013; Sentleng and King, 2012; Teodorescu & Andrei, 2009; Wheeler, 2009; Dordoy 2002; Errey, 2002:17; Devlin & Gray 2007:; Park 2003: 479). The present study has maintained some level of consensus among these previous researchers.

To start with, majority (66%) of the students agree that they plagiarize due to poor writing skills. This finding had fallen in pattern with Colin (2007: 29) and Howard (1995). These Authors are of the view that due to lack of lack on academic writing skills particularly relating to referencing, citation and paragraphing, students are most likely to plagiarize. other 21% Strongly Agree that they plagiarize due to poor writing skills, while as 13% Strongly Disagree that they plagiarize because of poor writing skills. Predominate (45.5%) of the students Agree that Lack of referencing skills make them plagiarized, other 20% of the students Strongly Agree that they plagiarize for lack of references skill. Another 19.5% strongly disagree that they plagiarize due to lack of referencing skill (Sentleng and King, 2012).

Quite smaller amount of the (7.5%) of the students disagree that lack of referencing skills leads them plagiarized, meanwhile, 7.5% don't know either they lack referencing skill or not to plagiarized. Majority (33%) of the students Strongly Disagree that, teaching and learning methods influence students to plagiarized, other 32% Agree that teaching and learning methods influence students plagiarism nevertheless, 7.5% don't know either teaching and learning methods influence students plagiarism or not. Colin (2007) and Pecorari (2008) are of the view that learning materials inadequacy will propel students to engage in an act of academic immoralities and other forms of cheating and patch work.

36% of the students Strongly Agree that Laziness and bad time management let them plagiarizes, 29% Strongly Disagree that Laziness and bad time management let plagiarized. Other 15% Agree that they plagiarize due to Laziness and bad time management, meanwhile 13% Disagree that they plagiarized due to Laziness and bad time management. Furthermore, students (37.5%) Strongly disagree that they plagiarized because they do not understand the assignment given. Dordoy (2002) asserted that most often plagiarism results from poor time management and laziness. Other others have been emphatic on how procrastination eludes academic integrity.

Interestingly, 35% strongly agree that they plagiarized because they do not understand the assignment given. Other 20.5% of the students Disagree that they plagiarized for not understanding the assignment given meanwhile, merely 7% agree on that. Majority (53.5%) Strongly agree that they plagiarized other peoples work due to education cost. 49.5% on the other hand agree that they also plagiarized other peoples work because of educational cost.

Surprisingly, 61% of the students plagiarized due to pressure from families and friends. This result bothers the researcher's mind, for what reasons and extend should families and friends pressure influence plagiarism. Dordoy (2002) and Pecorari (2008) postulated that lack of understanding on plagiarism and the rules governing it prevention will lead other students astray.

The study explored that, majority (53.5%) Strongly Agree that they plagiarized to obtain better marks, other 46.5% also agree that they plagiarized to obtain marks. Poor understanding of the concept of plagiarism influence students to commit the crime of not acknowledging other peoples work. As revealed in the study 55% strongly agree that they do not understand plagiarism. the finding again is in consonance with many other Authors who indicated that the drive for higher score will lead most student into plagiarism had been confirmed (Dordoy 2002; Errey 2002; Devlin & Gray 2007; Park 2003),

Coincidentally, 38% Agree that they do not understand plagiarism, conversely, only 7% strongly disagree that they do not understand plagiarism. In conclusion 36.5% of the students strongly disagree that they plagiarized because everybody is plagiarizing. Another, 28.5% strongly Agree that, they plagiarized since everybody is doing it also 21.5% Agree that they plagiarized since it is a common practice in the society. However, 13.5% disagree to that fact (Dordoy 2002 and Sutherland 2004; Sentleng and King, 2012).

### **Plagiarism Extenuating circumstance (Preventive Measures)**

Many Authors such as Born (n.d), Suarez & Martin (2001), Thomas (2004), Rimer (2009) and Appiah-Karikari (2016) Sentleng and King (2012) East (2008) have all proposed measures to counteract plagiarism. Their findings had been discussed with this study. The study discovered that, about 48.5% Strongly Agree with Born (n.d), that papers should be treated as a process not a product, other 40% Agree that that papers should be treated as a process not a product. Another, 11.5% Disagree that papers should be treated as a process not a product. 38.5% agree that teachers should assign group activities; other 29% strongly agree that, teachers should assign group activities. However, 19.5% Disagree that teachers should Assign group activities and 5.5% do not either teacher should Assign group activities or not.

Majority (67.5%) will further agree with Born (n.d), that tutors should Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization, other 32.5% strongly agree that tutors should Design questions that require discussion rather than rote memorization. Majority 61.5% agree tutors should Assign different questions to different individuals, other 32.5% strongly agree that tutors should Assign different questions to different individuals while as only 6% disagree that tutors should Assign different questions to different individuals students to prevent plagiarism.

The study further disclosed that, 55% will moreover agree with Sentleng and King (2012) East (2008) and Born (n.d) that tutors should Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently to students, other 45% strongly agree that tutors should Give tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently to prevent plagiarism. Again 68% strongly agree that more Assignment should be given to student's in-class to prevent plagiarism; other 32% coincidentally agree that Assignment should be given to student's in-class to prevent plagiarism. Majority (51%) agree that students should not be allowed to make up tests, moreover, 49% strongly agree that students should not be allowed to make up tests to prevent plagiarism.

Remarkably 69% strongly agree that the authority should rotate educational curriculum, however, 31% also agree that the authority should rotate educational curriculum. Adding, majority (54.5%) strongly that trust must be built to prevent plagiarism, other 39.5% agree that trust must be built to prevent plagiarism meanwhile merely 6% strongly disagree that trust must be built to prevent plagiarism. The study concluded that majority (68.5%) agree that students should be educated to prevent plagiarism notwithstanding 31.5% strongly agree that students should be educated to prevent plagiarism in our sector. This is finding supported by Born (n.d), Thomas (2004), Rimer (2009) and Appiah-Karikari (2016) Sentleng and King (2012) East (2008) that educational and institutional programs such as procuring plagiarism soft wares, training and capacity building are all imperative in preventing plagiarism.

Subsequent from the above, the study is concluded as follows: The study had identified the following as the major causes of plagiarism in higher educational institutions. These are; laziness/bad time management, students lack of understand assignments, education costs including cost of buying reliable study materials, pressure from family & friends to assist in assignments, desire for better marks, Poor understanding of plagiarism and finally because everybody is doing it(Plagiarism as a culture). The students has ranked the following as the most important steps towards extenuating plagiarism: Namely; the students propose tests, quizzes or assignments more frequently, assign more in-class activities, don't allow make up tests, rotate curriculum, build trust and ultimately educate students on how best to stay original in their scholarly works including knowledge on Turnitin, plagiarism checker and ithentic software. These they believe will go a long way to ameliorate their understanding on plagiarism.

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