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An Evaluation of Undergraduate Student Perceptions, Awareness and Attitudes Towards Plagiarism in Higher Education

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Abstract

Plagiarism is a major concern for students, as it can severely impact their academic progression and writing abilities. Unfortunately, students have varying perceptions and awareness of plagiarism, which significantly affects their attitudes towards it. Despite educational institutions implementing anti-plagiarism programs and academic integrity policies, the effectiveness of these initiatives is limited, given the pressure to excel and achieve high grades. Despite extensive research on student plagiarism, there is still a considerable gap in understanding how students perceive, are aware of, and approach plagiarism. This study will fill this gap by examining student perceptions, awareness, and attitudes towards plagiarism using a quantitative research methodology. The study will involve surveying undergraduate students at a tertiary institution using pre-existing data collection tools. The data collected will be analysed using SPSS version 28, and Mplus. The outcomes will be presented through descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, Pearson Product Moment correlation, and Structural Equation Modelling. The study's findings will be crucial in developing recommendations for preventing and educating students on coping strategies to deal with plagiarism, particularly in independent private institutions. These recommendations will provide students with clear and concise information on perceptions and attitudes towards plagiarism, explain its consequences, and help them develop effective academic writing skills. The study will make a significant contribution to existing research on student plagiarism and student support by providing a more comprehensive understanding of student perceptions, awareness, and attitudes towards plagiarism.

Keywords: Attitudes, Awareness, Perceptions, Plagiarism, Undergraduate Students