ABSTRACT

Plagiarism is an act of copying other’s work without giving proper references and presenting the content as their own for the purpose of the academic credit. Plagiarism is a serious problem identified amongst the research community. It is very important to know whether research scholars are aware of plagiarism or not. In this light, the present study was undertaken to know the “Awareness about Plagiarism among Research Scholars in selected Universities in Chennai: An Investigative Study”. In this study, attempts have been made to find out awareness about plagiarism among research scholars, their attitudes towards plagiarism and the reasons for adopting plagiarism. Moreover, this study also tries to find out ways and means of helping research scholars in avoiding plagiarism. The researcher follows the survey method for collecting primary data with the help of a well-structured questionnaire. Since the population is too large to study in view of time and cost involved, and to ensure better response rate, the researcher has chosen eighteen universities in Chennai and distributed the questionnaire by following stratified random sampling method among the various research scholars in different discipline viz. Science, Arts, Commerce, Computer Science, Library & Information Science, Engineering, Medicine, Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Education, Law, Physical Education and others. There are 550 copies of the structured questionnaire have been distributed among eighteen universities in
Chennai and the response rate is 76.18% with 419 filled in questionnaires received from the universities surveyed. For this study, the data was analyzed by using the IBM SPSS Statistics 21 version. After analysis, the data represented is the form of table, and diagrams by using MS Excel, the results have been tested with the percentage analysis, cross table and chi square test. It has been found from the study that out of the total 419 respondents, 77.1% of respondents agreed that they reproduce works of others as they are not aware of the consequences of indulging in plagiarism and 68% of respondent accepted that they copying from the internet as the required information are easily available on the internet. In the case of attitude towards plagiarism among respondents, the preference was given to the statement, “copying and pasting from the Internet is easier than creating one’s own sentences”. It is followed by the statement, “no one will check and detect the copied material”. 56.3% of the respondents were not aware of self-plagiarism and they believe that there is no harm to do this.

It is possible to detect the plagiarism with the help of various anti-plagiarism tools. Plagiarism detection software benefits academicians, research scholars and anyone else interested in safeguard their writing. By using plagiarism detection software one can ensure that the text is unique. Through plagiarism detection tools research community can benefit by having their research paper/theses and dissertation checked for any plagiarism done unintentionally but only detection of
plagiarism is not enough to solve the problem of plagiarism and there is a need to create awareness among research scholars by organizing the seminars, conferences and conducting educational programs. It is a time to take an active stand against plagiarism.