

# How different are we? Understanding and managing plagiarism between East and West

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While a sizable body of research on plagiarism has been conducted in institutions of higher education, only a small portion of it has involved international students from mainly non-Confucian backgrounds. This is rather surprising given the large number of students in Australia from Southeast Asia. This study has sought to contribute to redressing this imbalance by looking at Indonesian students' understanding of the notion of plagiarism and the challenges it presents to them. We argue in this study that plagiarism is a culturally-based concept which sometimes disadvantages students from non-Western educational traditions, as is evident in the case of Indonesian students. A series of focus group interviews comprising Indonesian postgraduate students was organised to explore their perception of the issue and to seek their views on how it could be addressed in their country and at Australian universities. Students' professional backgrounds and disciplines formed the basis for dividing the sample into five groups. Data analysis yielded interesting results. The impact of cultural values and educational backgrounds on whether students engage in plagiaristic behaviours was corroborated by the findings. The influence of religious teachings emerged as a reason preventing students from critiquing "accepted knowledge" and discouraging creative and analytical thinking which, according to the participants, lead to plagiarism. Students complained about an alarming rate of confusion and insecurity resulting from the inconsistencies in the understanding of plagiarism and the implementation of plagiarism policy by teaching and administrative staff. The implications of the findings for students and Australian universities in designing policies and academic support for students are discussed.

**Key Words:** international students, plagiarism, higher education, culture.

## 1. Introduction

Recent debate surrounding the notion of plagiarism has focused on its vagueness and inconsistent definitions (Howard, 2000; Leask, 2006). The vagueness stems from the lack of clarity as to what constitutes a plagiaristic behaviour, which the literature shows to range from "sloppy referencing to verbatim transcription with no crediting of sources" (Hawley, 1984, as cited in Larkham & Manns, 2002), and sometimes is used as a "wastebasket" (Buranen, 1999) to accommodate different kinds of cheating activities. While some maintain that it is culturally biased for being strongly embedded in Western culture which values individuality and personal

rather than communal ownership (Howard, 1999), others maintain that it is historically derived from cultural changes in Western civilisation (Scollon, 1995; Swearingen, 1999). Scollon (1995) argues that the notion of plagiarism is an ideological, rather than a universally accepted, concept. This has raised the need for not only a better understanding of plagiarism, but also finding ways to deal with it, particularly in a non-Western context.

The growing problem of plagiarism in Western academic institutions is not limited to a specific group of students or levels; it extends to include undergraduate, postgraduate, local and international students (Roig, 2001, Devlin, 2006). Indeed, plagiarism has become a major topic in students' academic life due to its impact on their academic performance. Research findings related to mainstream students indicate that the number of students admitting to having engaged in cheating practices is uncomfortably high. A study reported by Walker (1998) demonstrates that more than 50% of college and university students have plagiarised at least once. This was corroborated by another study conducted in the UK by Franklin-Stoke and Newstead (1995, as cited in Walker, 1998). Similar data are not available for Australian universities as they do not always publish data in relation to scholarly misconduct, possibly to guard their reputation in an increasingly competitive market (Devlin, 2006).

Research findings in this area have gained prominence in recent times as more cases have been publicised involving international students in Western tertiary institutions. The economic benefits of such students are well reported in the literature. In Australia, for example, overseas students represent the third largest industry, significantly contributing to the ever-shrinking government support for institutions of higher education (Marginson, 2002, as cited in Saltmarsh, 2004). In 2010, the number of international students studying in Australia was 311,191 (DEEWR, 2011), an increase of 98% from the 2001 figures of 157,208 (DEST, 2002). Indonesia was among the top 10 countries from which students were sourced.

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the perceived link between international students and plagiarism. In these studies, the cause of plagiarism was attributed to language barriers, lack of academic skills, lack of morality and cultural issues (Roy, 1999; Chanock, 2003; Handa & Power, 2003; Raj & Jayathurai, 2003). However, such studies have focused mainly on students from Confucian heritage cultures (Dryden, 1999; Zhang, Silitoe & Webb, 1999; Cohen, 2003; Liu, 2005; Green, 2007), and whether these results generalise to international students from non-Confucian heritage cultures does not appear to have been investigated. For example, although Indonesia is in the top ten countries from which Australia sources its international students (DEST, 2007), a review of the reported literature failed to find a study which focused on Indonesian students.

### 1.1. Defining Plagiarism

In Western cultures, the issue of plagiarism has been seen as the product of the notion of ownership which needs to be protected (Hannabus, 2001). Pennycook (1996, p. 200) maintains that the notion of plagiarism is a "peculiarly Western conjunction between the notion of human rights and individual property ownership". This implies that other cultures may have a different understanding of property ownership and do not conjoin it with issues of intellectual property and plagiarism. This may partly explain the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition of plagiarism (Howard, 1996; Leask, 2006).

In an academic context, Western academic institutions seem to have similar definitions but place different emphases on the conduct. Most institutions define it as using someone else's ideas as if they were your own work. A concomitant issue is that of paraphrasing, which is yet to be clearly defined. According to the Collins Concise Dictionary, to paraphrase is "to put a statement or text in other words". In the literature on plagiarism, it is defined as to "re-write other people's ideas or words in your own words" (Devlin, 2005, p. 5). However, the acceptable level of "paraphrasing" is yet to be fully determined. In the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, "paraphrasing" is explained as "Summarising a passage or rearranging the order of a sentence and changing some of the words" (APA, 1994, as cited in Roig, 2001, p. 320). However, Howard (1999) regards such practice as patch writing, which is not accepted in academic institutions:

Copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one synonym for another. The practice is uniformly banned in composition handbooks and in college academic codes. (p. xvii)

Therefore, the lack of a universally agreed-upon definition of paraphrasing has added to the confusion in the understanding of plagiarism and its implementation. While this should be seen neither justification nor explanation for plagiaristic behaviours, students' cultural and educational backgrounds may need to be considered in the decision-making process.

## 1.2. Indonesian cultural values in education and ownership

Although Indonesia shares many features with other Asian cultures, it has its own unique cultural features that play an important role in Indonesian students' academic performance in higher education institutions in Western countries. These include, but are not limited to, collectivism and intellectual ownership, religious values and educational traditions.

Like other Asian cultures, collectivism is a strong cultural tradition in Indonesia. In the local culture, community rather than individual interests are seen as essential for societal harmony and functioning (Bowen, 1996; Sardjono, 2006). As far as intellectual property is concerned, Indonesians do not usually document traditional knowledge or claim exclusive rights to it (Sardjono, 2006). In the educational context, collectivism is perceived to facilitate collaboration among students that leads to the sharing of knowledge and ideas. The existence of "*kelompok belajar*" (study group) is very much encouraged by students who study together in a social setting. In such groups, students write their assignments together, discussing topics and ideas without acknowledging "the owner" (Gunawan, 2005; Ubaya, 2008).

Another important feature of Indonesian culture is the presence of God in daily life. This is enshrined in the state ideology, *Pancasila*, which requires all citizens to belong to a recognised religious group. Religion plays an important role in forming personal identity in Indonesia. As the dominant religion, Islam serves as "part of the framework of Indonesian moral values" (Novera, 2004, p. 479). As a consequence of the influence of religion in the Indonesian society, children are brought up to comply with religious teachings, such as truthfulness, trustworthiness, and the ability to differentiate between right and wrong.

Like religion, centralisation permeates all facets of the education system in Indonesia. This was reinforced by *Pancasila*, which was used to further develop a uniform culture for all Indonesians through schooling, which was very prominent under Soeharto's regime (1966-1997). *Pancasila* is regarded as the national culture, and the infiltration of foreign values as a result of globalisation and the advance of technology is treated with caution. The ideology has been criticised on the grounds that it produces students who are "obedient, scared cowards, uncritical, and never have their own views" (Darmaningtyas, 2004, p. 11). Darmaningtyas argues that Javanese culture may also have contributed to what is known as "low dynamic classrooms" (Dardjowidjojo, 2001). The Javanese philosophy expects "juniors" to respect "seniors". As a result, teachers are not expected to be challenged by their students (Dardjowidjojo, 2001). These features, together with the limited facilities in schools and universities, may have contributed to Indonesian students' understanding of knowledge acquisition and transmission. Therefore, based on these unique features and the absence of research on Indonesian students' perceptions of plagiarism, the current study aims to explore Indonesian postgraduate students' understanding of the Western notion of plagiarism as applied by Australian universities, and their perception and assessment of the support provided to help them understand and deal with it.

## 2. Methodology

Data were collected through a series of focus group discussions. Five focus groups were conducted, and each was attended by between four and nine Indonesian postgraduate students at the same university in Australia. To ensure all participants had sufficient understanding of Indonesian academic values and the concept of plagiarism, the selection criteria stipulated that

subjects should have completed their basic education and a bachelor degree in the Indonesian education system, and should also have completed at least one semester at an Australian university to ensure that they had had adequate exposure to Western academic values, and were familiar with the university's policy on plagiarism. The postgraduate students held scholarships from various Australian government schemes, and had undertaken a course in English for Academic Purposes prior to their departure to Australia.

Participants were invited by an email posted on the Indonesian Students' Associations' Yahoo group mailing list, which had around 150 active members. The response rate was low, requiring follow-ups through individual contacts, either through private emails or personal telephone calls. This approach was deemed to be necessary as students did not check their email regularly or needed further clarification regarding the research objectives. All potential participants were sent an information sheet explaining the study and its objectives in detail.

The participants were divided into five groups based on their course of study and professional backgrounds. This was done to compare the perceptions and views of students in different disciplinary areas and between students who had academic or administrative positions in Indonesia. Thirty-three students participated in the five focus group discussions.

Participants filled in a short questionnaire focusing on demographic information such as gender, age group, professional background and the program currently enrolled in. This data is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Participants (N=33) by age group, gender and professional background.

Group	Age Range	Gender		Background	
		Male	Female	Academic	Non-academic
1	31-40	2	2	1	3
2	31-40	3	4	2	5
3	31-40	6	2	0	8
4	21-40	3	6	8	1
5	26-40	1	4	3	2

The semi-structured group discussions focused on a pre-prepared list of themes related to plagiarism. The questions were open-ended and prompts were used to ensure that the discussion stayed on track. At the request of the participants, discussions were conducted in Indonesian to ensure a free flow of ideas. Students were coded on the basis of the session they attended. For example, 1-1 referred to participant number 1 in session 1, 2-5 is for participant number 2 in session 5, and so on. All discussions were audio recorded. The gathered data were transcribed and translated into English and back to Indonesian by the researchers.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

#### 3.1. Plagiarism in the Indonesian context

Data analysis revealed that plagiarism was perceived by Indonesian students as a foreign concept; it was either completely unknown or not important for students from both academic and non-academic backgrounds. Twenty-six out of 33 participants agreed that the concept of plagiarism was never introduced during their study in higher education in Indonesia. Three students who had completed a degree in English literature in Indonesia reported a limited exposure to the concept. Only students who were taught by overseas-educated lecturers said that they were required to avoid plagiarism. This finding supports the notion of plagiarism as being a culturally-based, Western concept (Pennycook, 1995; Scollon, 1996; Swearingen, 1999).

Indonesians, being the product of collectivistic cultures, do not give priority to the notion of ownership. This is different from the perception held in Western culture. Differences in the conceptualisation of ownership in both cultures were expressed by a participant:

*I think, on one side, our culture is more toward oral tradition, and many things [knowledge] are still passed down traditionally from generation to generation. For example, in a culture that still has dukun<sup>1</sup>, s/he passes down his/her knowledge orally to the younger generation, and there is no acknowledgement who created the knowledge in the first place. So I think our culture is very collective, while Western culture is, as we've discussed, very individualistic... Because I think, in our culture, ideas are passed on to be copied exactly as they are. (1-2)*

An interesting finding was the association between religion and plagiarism. Several respondents indicated that there was a relationship between religion, truth and memorisation on the one hand and plagiarism on the other. Religion, inseparable from other parts of life, requires that Indonesians from an early age always tell the truth, without alteration, and they are taught to memorise prayers and verses from the holy books. These practices are viewed as encouraging reproductive learning, and in the long run, contributing to students' inability to paraphrase, as suggested by a participant:

*That we practise reproductive learning may have a relationship, I can't really say it is for sure, with religion. From an early age, we are taught to always tell the absolute truth, telling things as they are. This culture kills creativity and brings it to a state of coma. In the Western culture, they support creativity and finding new things, still using other people's opinions but they are allowed to add new things... (1-1)*

Another student explained the relationship between memorising prayers and acknowledging other people's ideas:

*We, Christians, are taught to learn prayers [such as] Our Father and Hail Mary, until we know it by heart, and we never recognise who [invented it]. In the end, when we have to perform public speaking, deliver speeches, we are used to deliver memorised words written by other people. [These words] are not our own. (2-2)*

According to Soedijarto (2007, pp. 20-21), obedience, memorisation and passive participation, with reliance on examination for assessment, are the main features of the Indonesian academic culture. A slightly different, albeit related, perspective was presented by one participant, a medical doctor/lecturer, who considered the absence of the culture of writing and publishing as a possible explanation for not being concerned about plagiarism:

*Why plagiarism has not been given attention [in Indonesia]? In my opinion, the main cause is because writing has not been a main part of academic [culture] in Indonesia. There are a lot of our friends here who are also lecturers. How many of them are productive in writing? (1-5)*

Academic writing is considered even less important in studies that put more emphasis on practical skills such as nursing, medicine and engineering. This view is voiced in the discussion involving five students. The participants argued that, in such courses, the ability to perform the required practical skills is considered more critical than writing. Combined with limited resources in those areas, lecturers do not generally expect a high quality of writing, nor do they pay attention to plagiarism. Students are usually judged on the basis of their skills rather than the quality of their writing, as one student explained:

*When students are given a writing assignment, the emphasis is on understanding [the concept] in order to put it into practice. So writing itself is not [considered] as a part of learning. That is, for professional education,*

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<sup>1</sup> *Dukun* refers to a traditional healer or witch doctor.

*the most important thing is application. So if students copy the book in their writing, it doesn't really matter, as long as they understand and can practise it. (1-5)*

According to the majority of respondents, students who were expected to produce written assignments and research reports were taught the technical side of academic writing, such as referencing, direct and indirect quoting and using experts' ideas and theories. However, there were no penalties if students did not comply with the rules of academic writing. While students produced a long list of referencing as evidence of their hard work, acknowledging the sources of their ideas received little attention. In fact, the notion of "stealing ideas" bemused some students:

*By the way, who actually came up with the idea of plagiarism [concept]? I mean, ideas can be accidentally similar. When someone suddenly comes forward, claiming that "this person copied my ideas", it is often the case that those ideas are similar anyway. (2-2)*

Adopting plagiarism into the students' own culture was seen as an ideological battle (Pennycook, 1996), which has the potential to create resentment in students from other cultures. This is compounded, in the case of Indonesian students, by being told to be cautious of foreign influence (Hassan, 1992). The discussions revealed that students viewed the concept of plagiarism as another form of Western "superiority" being exercised over other cultures. This was expressed in groups 2, 3 and 4. One participant said that he felt Westerners want to "control" the world, and plagiarism is another way to achieve this:

*It seems that Westerners want to make the world smaller. I mean that they want to possess a world in which individualism [prevails]. (3-2)*

One student articulated this resentment towards the Western notion of plagiarism by saying:

*[That Indonesia does not recognise plagiarism] might be a form of protest against the developed countries. Because we write [ideas] later than them, so we always have to refer to them. They are always ahead [of us]. It came into my mind once, that it is not impossible for us to think of and produce the same ideas; it is just that they have already written them. (1-4)*

Two participants felt plagiarism was an unfair concept because new ideas do not exist in isolation. Instead, they are based on other people's previous ideas. Therefore, to claim that an idea belongs to one person is "absurd":

*I think plagiarism is unfair. All things under the name of plagiarism are unfair because there is no pure thinker. Nobody! Even the ideas that we quoted are not his/her own [original] ideas. S/he might have read lots of books which led them to a conclusion but s/he could not claim that the conclusion is theirs because it is still based on someone else's ideas, isn't it? (3-2)*

According to several respondents, resisting the Western notion of plagiarism should not reflect negatively on the perception of students' moral standards. Respondents highlighted the existence of an Indonesian version of the same concept, "menjiplak", which is an academically unacceptable practice in Indonesia. It was explained by one participant as:

*It is my understanding that plagiarism (in Indonesia) is similar to "menjiplak" [which is copying word for word], completely the same as the original, no alteration, exactly the same from A to Z. (1-3)*

This may explain why some Indonesian students do not consider partial copying or using other people's ideas as plagiaristic. This seems to support the view that people from non-Western cultures have different views on what constitutes cheating. Some argue that, with the exception of copying, other plagiaristic behaviours should not be indicative of a deficient morality (Buranen, 1999; Dryden, 1999).

In addition to ideological resistance, discussions with groups 2, 3, 4 and 5 showed that students resented the idea of plagiarism because it was seen as restrictive. They felt the concentration on

avoiding plagiarism impeded creative thinking. In their view, paraphrasing forces students to think focally<sup>2</sup> rather than globally as they grapple with changing words and sentences:

*Yes, we are limited, because we have to concentrate on [individual] sentences. So, if we want to write about a topic, we cannot develop our thinking, we have to work hard [at the sentence level] for fear of plagiarism.*  
(2-5)

This view is counterbalanced by three students in Group 5 who suggested that avoiding plagiarism had a positive impact on their study. In addition to properly acknowledging the sources, the requirement to paraphrase was seen as a means of triggering creativity and ensuring students' engagement with the reading material.

Several students expressed the view that the Western understanding of plagiarism should not be accepted without recognising its limitations in the Indonesian context. When asked whether they would promote the Western notion of plagiarism in Indonesia, all participants agreed that, while stopping plagiarism could encourage creativity, it should not be seen as superior to the existing academic conventions in Indonesia. Several participants also noted that in certain professions, plagiarism is a common practice which would be difficult to change. However, they all recognised that, in order to keep up with international academic standards, avoiding plagiarism should be addressed in Indonesian universities.

### 3.2. Indonesian students' understanding of plagiarism

Data analysis shows that students' understanding of plagiarism is not influenced by their disciplinary background or profession. The students who held academic positions in Indonesia before commencing their postgraduate studies in Australia were as confused and concerned as those who occupied non-academic positions. In responding to the question as to how they developed their understanding of plagiarism, the participants indicated that, while they understood it, they found it difficult to implement. All students felt that plagiarism was intimidating and adversely affected the quality of their writing. Students did not recognise the jargon associated with plagiarism at their university in Australia. For example, some could not explain the difference between phrases such as academic integrity, collusion and cheating. They were also confused about paraphrasing, the inconsistencies among institutions and academics, and the difference between intentional and unintentional plagiarism.

One participant who had been accused of plagiarism said he wrote an idea based on his work experience and backed it up with evidence from the literature, which he acknowledged. While his lecturer accused him of plagiarism because he felt the idea belonged to a "famous" writer, another lecturer argued that it did not constitute a plagiaristic behaviour as the student was not aware of the source:

*I wrote an argument that effective bureaucracy should be controlled. It was really based on my experience at work. I didn't know whether that argument had been written before or not, I really did not know. And so, I wrote it. According to lecturer A, I plagiarised ... Then I asked lecturer B, whether I plagiarised or not. He said that as long as I never read that "effective bureaucracy needs control", I didn't plagiarise. Well, how can I read all the things in the world? (2-3)*

This finding is in line with previous research findings that show academic staff differ in their understanding of plagiarism (Flint, Clegg & MacDonald, 2006; Eriksson & Sullivan, 2008), and the way they deal with it (Zobel & Hamilton, 2002; Park, 2004). As explained by one respondent, this creates confusion, insecurity and even more plagiarism:

*My concern is whether all lecturers or academics have already adopted the same standard. The problem is, if we write something ... I think that this is*

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<sup>2</sup> Focally in this context means to focus students' thinking at the sentence level.

*not plagiarism because I follow the definition or the understanding given by a particular lecturer. But then someone else claims it to be plagiarism [claiming] “this idea is the same as that one in that book”. That is the problem. (4-2)*

The issue of what constitutes common knowledge was also raised:

*I think it is a bit difficult for me when I feel that something is common knowledge. Sometimes we still have to find the resources to make it look academic. For me, I am still confused. [I cannot] differentiate [between] which is a common knowledge and which is not. (1-2)*

### **3.3. Intentional and unintentional plagiarism**

The topic of unintentional plagiarism was raised by four groups. Some participants had difficulties in determining the consequences of unintentional plagiarism:

*I had an experience of being given a warning early in the first semester. It was because I wrote a personal opinion, which actually has been written by someone else ... I discussed about special education, about helping children with disability to increase their learning achievement ... I proposed a concept [in relation to this]. The lecturer said that he/she had seen the idea before, which I could find it in nursing books. So I am told that it was not a new idea after all. (2-2)*

They felt it was simply impossible to read all resources on a particular topic and were extremely concerned about how to measure “intentionality” without legitimising plagiarism:

*If I look back [at our conversation], it is wrong to say that as long as we haven't read it, it is not considered plagiarism. Well, who can judge whether someone really has not read [about something], everybody can say that. What I mean is, everything should have [clear] measuring criteria. We can always say that we never read about this, although the material is out there. This could create problems. (3-3)*

Students wanted a clearer policy on how unintentional plagiarism is determined. Although they appreciated the difficulty in measuring intention, they felt that it was unfair to be penalised for it.

### **3.4. Student perceptions of academic support services**

The findings revealed that Indonesian students did not fully utilise the facilities provided by the university to support their learning. According to several respondents, the limited usage of such facilities is caused by the students' cultural attitudes to support services. Indonesian students recognise that they need to be told to do things and that independent initiative is not a feature of the Indonesian academic culture. Thus one student argued that the institution should not assume that providing facilities automatically means that international students would use them:

*We are considered mature enough to know that there it is if you want to go there. But not all cultures in the world are like that, aren't they? Some people have to be encouraged to go. It can't be assumed that by only showing the place, then people will go there. In my opinion, lecturers' awareness about international students' [attitudes] to learning and support has to (be increased). (2-1)*

Furthermore, participants felt that lecturers usually work on the basis of an ill-informed assumption that students have a sufficient understanding of plagiarism. While they acknowledged that the university did exert effort to raise students' awareness of the notion, they recognised that being aware of it does not mean understanding it:

*I feel that there is an assumption that we already have a full understanding [of plagiarism], so we only need to be reminded. Please remember this and that, please read on the web about academic integrity, with no further consideration that we are international students. They only remind us, and*



*without considering that there are so many students that come from outside [of Australia], with different cultures, different academic abilities. They only give reminders, combined with creating fear, but with no further effort to guide or educate. Maybe it is considered a waste of time. (1-1)*

Some respondents argued that sessions on plagiarism should not be provided as soon as students arrive at the university, as they are too busy negotiating social and academic adjustment. A participant said that the sessions relating to plagiarism or academic integrity mostly took place during the first weeks of students' enrolments, during both their English for Academic Purposes course in Indonesia, as well as in their first week of study at the university. During this critical period, students are usually preoccupied with organising daily necessities and are unlikely to pay attention to academic matters. As an alternative, they suggested such sessions be held during semester and be made mandatory to ensure students' attendance. This has been successfully implemented in a faculty at a university in New South Wales, Australia (Handa & Power, 2003).

#### 4. Implications

The findings of this study lend support to the perception of plagiarism as a culturally-based notion. The cultural misunderstanding of plagiarism has, as the findings suggest, adverse effects on students' academic performance and their attitudes towards their courses and institutions. This is aggravated by the inconsistencies in the lecturers' understanding and application of plagiarism and the policies associated with it. The combination of these factors appears to inhibit creative thinking and lower the quality of academic writing, as students are more likely to focus on the micro rather than macro level of writing. While these issues should not be used to justify engaging in plagiaristic behaviours, it is essential that they are considered in programs which aim to educate students from non-Western backgrounds about the concept.

The perceived influence of religion on students' understanding of plagiarism and the way knowledge is viewed helps to dispute the simplistic definitions of plagiarism and further complicates an already complex issue. While it is still premature to draw any conclusions from this finding, further research should be conducted to consider the relative influence, if any, of religious teachings on the incidence of plagiarism.

The results support the calls for a more holistic approach to plagiarism by tertiary institutions (Carroll, 2002; Park, 2004; Devlin, 2006). That is, students' cultural values and previous educational experiences need to be considered in the process of developing related programs and policies. The findings also highlight the need for students to be explicitly informed of what constitutes plagiarism and the institutional procedures designed to address it. One of the suggestions made was to address the inconsistencies within universities in the way plagiarism is defined and handled. This would help to build a clear and consistent framework that students and teaching and administrative staff could use and refer to. Moreover, the majority of respondents suggested frequent sessions be conducted to discuss their own difficulties in dealing with plagiarism. In their opinion, such sessions should be held several weeks after the start of the first semester, when students are engaged with the academic writing process. Similar sessions may need to be conducted for staff to ensure that we all understand and convey the same message

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