**The Perception Toward Academic Teaching style on Committing Plagiarism in Ethical Writing Practices**

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**Abstract**

Plagiarism has become more common in both dental and medical communities. Most of the writers do not know that plagiarism is a serious problem. Plagiarism can range from simple dishonesty (minor copy paste/any discrepancy) to a more serious problem (major discrepancy/ duplication of manuscript) when the authors do cut‑copy‑paste from the original source without giving adequate credit to the main source. This study followed a mixed method research design. The participants of this study (N=60) were recruited from Islamic Azad University, Bushehr branch through the convenience sampling procedure. From this sample, 30 students were male while 30 were female. Their age ranged from 25 to 45 averaging 31.64. They were chosen from two educational levels, M.A. (N=30) and Ph.D. (N=30). The questionnaire which was used as an instrument of the current study composed of 32 five point Likert items on students’ reasons for plagiarizing which will be adopted from previous studies on plagiarism. Based upon the findings of this research, the first research hypothesis was accepted. The results of the study suggested that male and female students held similar perceptions in that for both groups, students’ personal and attitudinal characteristics occupied the first rank while their lack of skills and abilities, characteristics of the context, and teachers ’characteristics were the second, third, and fourth contributing factors, respectively. Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL graduate students’ perceptions of the reasons for plagiarizing. The second hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between teaching styles and academic performance can be rejected. The other finding of the current study showed that differences in PhD and Master’s student perceptions of progressive teaching style on enhances student interest in ethical writing performance was not significant.

**Keywords:** Plagiarism, teaching style, academic texts written, personal and attitudinal characteristics

**Introduction**

At the beginning of this century, the open access movement in science revolutionized communications in science, advocating for free access to published articles without economic or copyright restrictions, and proposing, to bring this to reality, publishing in open access journals or archiving articles in repositories (Abadal, 2013). Plagiarism is hundreds of years old, but, due to the progress in information technology, it has acquired new and different methods compared to the past. Plagiarism was almost a rare phenomenon until 1990, but it has spread across the world in recent years and has worried the academic community (Friesner T.2004). In the past, there were a few scientists who produced knowledge and some of them would produce no more than a couple of papers in their lifetime. In those times, strict reviewing principles were at work, there just a few journals and scientists had a hard time convincing the scientific community to accept their ideas. In the 19th century, the problem was stealing ideas, and that was why many discoveries and inventions were disputed. Today, however, the number of scientists, students, journals and papers has really increased. The subject of plagiarism has been addressed extensively in the scientific literature. However, in light of the increasing number of publications retracted for this reason, the alarm raised by cases that have recently appeared in the various presses and the cases that have affected different journals, it does not seem irrelevant to once again broach this aspect of scientific misconduct, which is encouraged by various circumstances. One of them is the pressure exerted on researchers by the criteria used for professional promotion and awards, with a priority in the quantity over the intrinsic quality of published works that fosters a career that focuses, rather than on the responsible conduct of research, on the collection of publishable data with the end of developing competitive curriculum vitae (Guraya and Guraya, 2017).

**Statement of the problem**

Although there is no universal way to define academic writing, it ‘involves forms of reasoning, analysis, modes of investigation and self-reflection which enable the critical examination of established truths, taken-for-granted assumptions and knowledge handed down by tradition’ (Slonimsky & Shalem 2006). In many of our courses, particularly laboratory courses, students are expected to engage in scientific writing. Despite various efforts by other courses and library resources, as instructors we are often faced with the frustration of student plagiarism and related writing problems (Anqi Yang, Sarah Stockwell, Lisa McDonnell, 2018). Writing in academic settings is one of the requirements that higher education students have to master. The academic writings may be in the forms of essays, journal articles, paper, and thesis. Researchers in developing countries are increasingly enjoying more research budgets, and this development has been accompanied by governmental and institutional demand for better results and more publications in scientifically accredited journals (Stewart, 2011). Plagiarism is a problem affecting all parts of the world. Swales and Feak (1994) asserted that the North American and Western European academic cultures were the origin of plagiarism. In Asia, Australia, and Europe, plagiarism has been a problem as well. This seems to have been an epidemic. Plagiarism-free work is not easy to create because of many influences. A text can be regarded the writer’s product in terms of solitary genius while ignoring the other influences of social, cultural, economic, even technological tools and other sources which affect the writer (Sutherland-Smith , 2015). Concerns surrounding plagiarism tend to exist within the context of academic or source-based writing. This context is of critical importance at the university, as the lion’s share of coursework assessment occurs in the form of source-based writing assignments. Common assignments include term papers, reflective texts, and presentations. The purpose of and rationale behind source-based writing thus serve as context in any discussion of plagiarism. Loosely defined, source-based writing is a form of writing in which students assess and participate in the topics of their discipline (Howard, Serviss, & Rodrigue, 2010) by constructing meaning of previous scholars’ work and fusing it with their own ideas and texts. The purpose of source-based writing is to help students improve their communication skills, critical thinking and understanding of a topic, and learning beyond the lecture (Curry & Hewings, 2005). From a different perspective, source-based writing enables instructors to examine how student reports research, responds to an issue or question, and synthesizes that research with their own conceptions (Bailey, 2014). The fulfillment of these purposes requires a number of strategies on the part of the student to express and expand on his own academic intellect, such as locating and extracting excerpts from sources as well as highlighting, paraphrasing, and summarizing (Singhal, 2004). Key among these points is the notion of grounding one’s own writing in the scholarship of experts, as this spotlight a potential cause of plagiarism. To write academically, ensuring the clarity of one’s argument and the presence of one’s voice, is more cognitively and linguistically demanding than is often appreciated by those who work with first-year students. Students struggle to find the balance between drawing on theory or previous knowledge and taking up their own positions while building on that knowledge, particularly when they are writing in a language that may be a third or fourth language. Often, students arrive at university having been poorly prepared (Gee 2008) by a school system and assessment practices that do not foreground academic writing. This is because they did not receive adequate exposure to writing academic essays and, as a result, are unaware of the demands of the genre (Bangeni & Kapp 2017). The view of knowledge that is established in many of the schools our students come from, is that it is fixed and there is a reliance on memorization and regurgitation. Students also struggle to understand the disciplinary norms that govern the language conventions required in their different subjects and this affects their ability to write successfully in different academic domains. Although some lecturers communicate to students the importance of voice in academic writing, they generally do not provide opportunities for their students to enact this as a central aspect in their lecture rooms and may assume that students are learning how to find their voice in other academic spaces at the university. (Gennrich, & Dison, 2018). Scientific writing can be a complex and arduous process, for it simultaneously demands clarity and conciseness; two elements that often clash with each other. In addition, accuracy and integrity are fundamental components of the scientific enterprise and, therefore, of scientific writing. Thus, good scientific writing must be characterized by clear expression, conciseness, accuracy of what is being reported, and perhaps most importantly, honesty. Unfortunately, writing, or for that matter the entire scientific process, often occurs within the constraints of tight deadlines and other competing pressures. As a result of these constraints, scientific papers, whether generated by science students or by seasoned professionals, will at times be deficient in one or more of the above components. Insufficient clarity or lack of conciseness are typically unintentional and relatively easy to remedy by standard educational or editorial steps. Lapses in the accuracy of what is reported (e.g., faulty observations, incorrect interpretation of results) are also assumed to be most often unintentional in nature, but such lapses, even if unintentional, can have significant undesirable consequences if not corrected. Nevertheless, the ethical professional is expected to operate at the highest levels of scientific integrity and, therefore, must avoid all forms of writing that could be conceptualized as plagiarism. Despite of rules and authorial rights, today plagiarism exists in academia and it is “the appropriation of another individual’s ideas, words, interpretations, etc.” (Lykkesfeldt, 2016). Reputed educational institutes expect their students to produce original and suitable works, while according to many previous studies issues about plagiarism in higher education are growing. Some students merely want to deliver their works as soon as possible. So, for this and many other reasons (lack of knowledge of plagiarism, time pressure, heavy load of works, i.e. a large number of assignments, etc.), they don’t necessarily do all the work themselves. In terms of intentions, plagiarism can be either intentional or unintentional. Mastery of academic writing can cause problems specifically for undergraduate writers, many of whom must undertake course writing assignments whose content is largely unfamiliar to them. The lack of research, theoretical understanding and methodological development in studies on information use is often noted in library and information science (see e.g. Kari 2007; Savolainen 2009a and b; Vakkari 1997; 2008). One of the challenges of use studies is the concept of use and its definition (Kari 2007, 2010; Savolainen 2009). Closely following are the methodological challenges of operationalizing this concept. In this paper the researcher introduced an extended and revised method and the findings of a larger case study where the method was applied. The researcher argued that source-based writing is one of the most typical modes of information use and that it is crucial to understand how information derived from sources is processed in composing new texts. For example, in information literacy instruction it is not enough to warn students against copy-pasting. Rather we should illustrate in concrete terms how valid arguments are built in the creative scrutiny of sources and in the synthesis of information. Students also need to understand the contextual requirements of the task, such as the genre in which they write. Incidents and anecdotal evidence accrue of learners’ resorting to plagiarism in their essays and research papers. The researcher tried to begin to document the actual situation in Iran with the aim of working towards improvements in writing instruction so that a larger number of the English as foreign learners (EFL) learners would achieve their professional goals. Although this study focused on written assignments of learners within the classroom context, specifically focusing on plagiarizing the work of others.

**Significance of the study**

In recent years, the unfortunate phenomenon of plagiarism as an unethical behavior has turned into a worldwide question in education (Angélil-Carter, 2014; Awdry & Sarre, 2013; Bretag, 2007; McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino, 2006; Zobel & Hamilton, 2002). As Martin (2004) stated, "plagiarism involves claiming credit for other peoples' ideas or creations without proper acknowledgement, [as] in an academic context, acknowledgement is typically given in the form of citations or explicit statements of thanks" (p. 1). The considerable increase in the rate of committing plagiarism and its negative effects on the academic society, such as damaging the credibility of higher education systems (Altbach, 2004) and diminishing the esteem of science in the mind of the general public (Betts, 1992), provoked the educational communities around the world to pay more efforts to finding the contributing factors as well as solutions to this problem. Since plagiarism is perceived differently in different cultures (Liu, 2005), it seems revealing to probe it within various sociocultural and academic contexts.

Since the emergence of computer-based writing instruction, with the continual miniaturization of computers and the advent of microcomputers, CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) enthusiasts have always been fascinated by the degree to which computer technology can be used for teaching/ learning ethical writing empowerment to broaden the field's horizons. Despite the rather ambitious pioneering endeavors and the growing computer activities in language learning, little has been done in the development of a theoretical framework for the use of computers in the discipline (Morshedi Tonekaboni and et. al. 2015).

Several studies have scrutinized different viewpoints regarding plagiarism, and its legal or ethical issues in such academic enterprise as second/foreign language (L2) academic writing (e.g., Bugeja, 2004; McLafferty & Foust, 2004). Researches show that students and teachers have different understandings of plagiarism. For some teachers, some definitions are influenced by higher education values such as the copyright, personal effort and unity in the university. The multiplication of databases, with all its benefits, has also caused a rapid growth in plagiarism. Some factors affecting student attitudes toward plagiarism are ignorance, lack of personal investment in their education, situational ethics, and lack of consistent styles among and within various disciplines. Not surprisingly, the bulk of research has chosen as its setting Western academic communities. This setting, specifically the university campus, is where thousands of SLWs plan to or already reside. SLWs must thus grapple with formatting guidelines, such as the American Psychological Association’s (APA) guide for the social and behavioral sciences, and the Modern Language Association’s (MLA) guide for the humanities. These and other guidelines vary not only in the disciplines that employ them, but in their general approaches to scholarship, such as methods of citation (Angeli, Wagner, Lawrick, Moore, Anderson, Soderlund, & Brizee, 2016). SLWs must also deal with various perceptions of plagiarism, such as those of students (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010); instructors (Bennett, Behrendt, & Boothby, 2011; Sutherland-Smith, 2005; Pecorari & Shaw, 2012); students versus instructors (Evans & Youmans, 2000); and various disciplines (Shi, 2012; Roig, 2001). Other studies have focused on distinguishing plagiarism from common facets of source-based writing, such as paraphrasing, with students as participants (Roig, 1997), professors as participants (Roig, 2001), or both (Shi, 2012). Another centerpiece has been to look beyond distinguishing paraphrasing from plagiarism to focus more on plagiarism as a learning process. A key component of this process is *patch writing*, which involves “copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym-substitutes” (Howard, 1992, p. 233). Studies involving patch writing have examined its role as a step towards learning how to paraphrase or summarize correctly (Keck, 2006; Keck, 2014; Li & Casanave, 2012). SLWs may also struggle with abstract considerations, such as attribution of ideas (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010), the notion of intention (Bamford & Sergiou, 2005); and the purposes and conceptions of university policy (Yamada, 2003; Sutherland-Smith, 2005, 2011; Brown & Howell, 2001). According to Dordoy, the most important factors influencing plagiarism include promotion, laziness or mismanagement of time, easy access to materials on the Internet, unawareness of rules and regulations and unwitting plagiarizing. In L2 writing, plagiarism is a linguistic and language-learning phenomenon. As Pecorari and Bojana (2014) emphasized “L2 learner status has frequently been identified as a causal or contributing factor in plagiarism, and the two reasons most frequently offered for this connection are (a) difficulties associated with L2 academic writing and (b) the cultural differences” (p. 2). Nevertheless, majority of the studies on plagiarism were conducted in Western countries and represented the Western cultural attitudes and social concerns about this unethical behavior (Rezanejad & Rezaei, 2013). Without a doubt, plagiarism is the most widely recognized and one of the most serious violations of the contract between the reader and the writer. Moreover, plagiarism is one of the three major types of scientific misconduct as defined by the Public Health Service; the other two being falsification and fabrication (U. S. Public Health Service, 1989). Most often, those found to have committed plagiarism pay a steep price. Plagiarists have been demoted, dismissed from their schools, from their jobs, and their degrees and honors have been rescinded as a result of their misdeeds (Standler, 2000). Given the anecdotal evidence and personal experiences, there seem to be three possible reasons that plagiarism is common among students writing in English as a second language. First is the desire to cut corners, as with NS plagiarism (i.e. they know it is wrong but think/hope no one will notice). Second, there are differences in cultural practices, in attitudes, and in training (i.e they could avoid it, but believe that it is acceptable to plagiarize). Third, the learners have a lack of skills and/or language proficiency (whatever they think, they can’t do anything else). Initial impetus for this project derives from Scollon’s (1995a) call for research into the academic citation practices of learners in TESOL contexts which would take into consideration the broader cultural environment. The literature on plagiarism of L1 learners is quite extensive (REFS). There have been studies on the patterns of plagiarism found in Chinese learners of English writing (see, for example, Matalene, 1985; Bloch and Chi, 1995), but fewer which examine this issue in the context of Japan and the writing of Japanese learners of English. Previous investigations, such as Scollon’s (1995) intellectual-history interpretation and Pennycook’s (1996) educational-effects perspective, place strong emphasis on the Chinese learners’ transferring practices from their L1 culture regarding views of originality, knowledge, and communication into their L2 tasks. However, the researcher’s intuition is that this is not the only factor in Iran.

**Review of past studies**

**Maryam Oghabi, Natasha Pourdana, Farid Ghaemi (2020)** in their study meticulously assessed the Iranian academics for plagiarism at both theory and practice grounds, developing an accountable instrument seemed to be inevitable. To bridge the gap, in phase 1 of the study, a conceptual framework for Iranian academics’ grasp of plagiarism and its components was designed after a thorough review of literature. In phase 2, a number of M.A. graduates and graduate students (n = 224) in six State and Islamic Azad universities in Iran were recruited to partake in piloting the newly-designed plagiarism questionnaire. After a two-step revising the inefficient items (n=11), the final draft of the developed questionnaire with 36 items was administered with the main sample of participants (n= 288). An Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed to identify the components of the instrument, followed by Confirmatory Factor Analysis to measure its construct validity. As a result, the final draft of the Sociocultural Plagiarism Questionnaire contained 31 Likert-point and 5 multiple choice items in four components of awareness (10 items), attitude (8 items), sociocultural beliefs (8 items), and perception (5 Likert-point and 5 multiple choice items), which were suggested as having fundamental contributions to the Iranian academic writers‟ sensitivity to plagiarism. Findings of the study suggested that (a) the Iranian academic writers‟ normative sociocultural beliefs can probably reduce their sensitivity to plagiarism, (b) while the Iranian academics might have relatively high awareness and deep perception about plagiarism, their attitude toward plagiarism seems relatively neutral or even insensitive.

**Alimorad (2020)** in their study aimed at examining the role of gender and educational level of Iranian EFL graduate students in determining the main reasons for committing plagiarism from their point of view. To this end, a convenient sample of 159 M.A. and Ph.D. students partook in the study. To gather the necessary data, a 32-item Likert-Type questionnaire was administered and the results were subjected to a two-way MANOVA. Results of the study indicated that neither the students’ gender nor their educational level had any significant effect on the perceived reasons for engaging in plagiarism. Moreover, the interaction effect of these two variables did not show any significant effect either. Descriptive statistics, however, showed that students’ personal and attitudinal characteristics took on paramount importance compared to other factors. This can signal the intentionality of plagiarism among Iranian EFL graduate students, thereby suggesting the need for making more informed decisions on how to deal with this problem.

**Krokoscz and Ferreira (2019)** pointed to a gap between theoretical and practical knowledge regarding plagiarism for graduate students. They emphasized that although the technical training related to the correct use of research sources is necessary in the capacity-building process, it is not sufficient to prevent plagiarism practices.

**Alimorad (2018)** attempted to uncover Iranian graduate students’ perceptions of their reasons for plagiarizing. The participating students in her study thought that the most important reason for this misconduct was their being unable to write scientifically. Hence, they believed that open discussion and negotiation could help solve this problem in the university context. The role of students’ gender and educational level has by no means been neglected in the studies on plagiarism. Several researchers worldwide pointed to the important effects these two factors can have on students’ committing plagiarism. In some situations, it is reported that even training courses may not necessarily produce desired results.

**Francisca Abad-García (2018)** presented an analysis of the concept of plagiarism in order to show the wide spectrum of manifestations that can be considered as such when committing a transgression of intellectual property, carried out with the intention of deceiving the authors’ true contribution and the originality and novelty of the information. It describes the different circumstances in which intentional plagiarism has occurred, and the damage that this misconduct causes in the credibility of the scientific system, in which authorship credit is the foundation of the academic career, of the prestige of the author in the scientific community, and the basis for financing research. Some circumstances are favoring this fraud: the pressure exerted on researchers by the criteria used for promotion and reward that prioritize the quantity of works on their quality, the existence of a market for the purchase and sale of scientific articles, and the proliferation of predatory journals that operate with no or minimal ethical standards. Finally, the paper highlights the convenience of the adoption of criteria that prioritize the intrinsic quality of the work versus its quantity, including the active involvement of the institutions in the development of active policies for the prevention, detection, and punishment of the cases of potential fraud, and to emphasize that, in the end, the prevention of fraud relies on the individual adoption of ethical and responsible behavior.

**Obeid and Hill (2017)** showed how a 2-hr intervention in a research methods classes, available free online, successfully reduced plagiarism in a sample of undergraduate students registered in a research method in psychology class across three semesters. The implications of this study are that students need specific training and knowledge, not simply the threat of being caught, before their plagiarism is reduced.

**Escobar and Fernández (2017)** in their study mentioned thatin EFL composition courses, teaching and learning normally orbit around norms of unity, coherence, support, and sentence skills that L2 learners are expected to comply with, at the expense of opportunities to develop voice. Against this backdrop, we resolved to examine the extent to which students’ exposure to and practice with lexical bundles, boosters/hedges and stance taking strategies allows them to build a stronger discoursal and authorial voice as future academic writers. Evaluation of the students’ works revealed their level of success in this endeavor and analysis of student surveys unveiled the tensions and struggles they faced along the way. At the end of this paper, they advocate for academic writing courses to be transformed into spaces where students not only come to terms with the basic norms they have to conform to, but also build a discoursal and authorial voice as L2 writers.

**Zare-ee and Khalili (2016)** in their study followed some purposes: a) to explore how plagiarism is to be understood based on the related literature, b) to enumerate the main reasons why plagiarism is committed in our context, c) to summarize current lines of anti- plagiarism research and instruction, and d) to familiarize the audience with how new advancements can be used to control it. Based on the above discussion, the paper ends with hopefully valuable recommendations on 1) the recognition as well as avoidance of plagiarism by novice researchers, 2) the control of possible harms and consequences of committing plagiarism to the existing knowledge and to the future of academia, 3) manipulation of penalties and operationalization of control rules over academic written texts and finally 4) the development and/or purchase of more sophisticated plagiarism detection soft-ware.

**Babaii and Nejadghanbar (2016)** conducted a mixed-method study to examine plagiarism from diverse perspectives. As one of the phases of their study, they strived to discover the main reasons leading to plagiarism in the context of Iran. It was found that some causes such as unfamiliarity with plagiarism, academic writing skills deficiency, lack of enough time, laziness and deceitfulness, low language proficiency, and unfamiliarity with the subject of writing could be attributed to students themselves. In addition to these, teachers were also considered to be responsible for this unethical behavior because of their careless and lenient behavior and because of having high expectations from students. Policies of the educational system were also mentioned as another reason in this study.

**Amiri and Razmjoo (2016)** investigated Iranian students’ perceptions of plagiarism as well as the main reasons for doing it. Results of semi-structured interviews showed that teachers’ ignorance, students’ insufficient research and writing skills, the pressure to prepare high quality assignments, peer pressure and the easiness of engaging in plagiarism were mentioned as the main reasons. It is worthy of notice, however, that the participants of their study were undergraduate students who are unlikely to be familiar with academic research skills.

**Research design**

This study followed a mixed method research design.

**Population and sampling**

Overall, the participants of this study (N=60) were recruited from Islamic Azad University, Bushehr branch through the convenience sampling procedure. From this sample, 30 students were male while 30 were female. Their age ranged from 25 to 45 averaging 31.64. They were chosen from two educational levels, M.A. (N=30) and Ph.D. (N=30). The rationale behind choosing these two educational levels were because in the Iranian context, as in all over the world, M.A. graduates are expected to publish papers in order to be accepted to doctoral programs. All of them are studying TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) at the time of this study. Moreover, all were from the same cultural and native language background (Persian). It is worthy of notice that the participants were free to choose to either fill in the questionnaire or withdraw from the study whenever they desired.

**Instrument**

The questionnaire which was used as an instrument of the current study composed of 32 five-point Likert items on students’ reasons for plagiarizing which will be adopted from previous studies on plagiarism (Amiri & Razmjoo, 2016; Babaii & Nejadghanbar, 2016; Comas-Forgas & Sureda-Negre, 2010; Delvin & Gray, 2007; Rezanejad & Rezaei, 2013; Riasati & Rahimi, 2013; Tahriri & Eslam-Navaz, 2014). The responses to these items were range from 5 representing strongly agree to 1 indicating strongly disagree. Although the items of the questionnaire were arranged randomly in the administered version, with a view to getting a clearer picture, the researcher classified them into four major contributing reasons based on available literature as well as her own understanding of the subject. That is, reasons for engaging in plagiarism were categorized into students’ personal and attitudinal characteristics (items 2, 3, 4, 10, 18, 19, 21, and 27), students’ lack of enough skills and abilities (items 1, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 24, 25, 26, and 29), teachers’ characteristics (items 14, 15, 17, 20, and 32), and characteristics of the context (items 5, 9, 13, 16, 22, 23, 28, 30, and 31). Content and face validity of the questionnaire were confirmed by two expert judges and its reliability was estimated using KR-21 formula whose index turned out to be 0.74 which seemed acceptable for the purposes of the current study.

**Results and Findings**

**RQ1.** Is there any significant difference between male and female Iranian EFL graduate students’ perceptions of the reasons for plagiarizing?

Significant differences in the participants’ perceptions in relation to their demographics were apparent. The means of responses from the gender groups on the five subscales are compared in Table 2. With only three non-binary students and one genderqueer student, the comparison was conducted with males and females, who accounted for most of the sample.

**Table 1. T-test comparison of male and female students**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Level of the study | N | M | SD | t | Df | p |
| Seriousness of Plagiarism | Male | 30  30 | .2789  .0444 | 1.69897  1.61072 | -.986 | 174 | .325 |
| Female |
| Personal factors | Male | 30  30 | -.3527  .1116 | 1.90246  1.77263 | 1.618 | 174 | .107 |
| Female |
| Academic Factors | Male | 30  30 | .1283  -.0003 | 1.31130  1.55354 | -.563 | 174 | .574 |
| Female |
| Assessment factors | Male | 30  30 | .0998  -.0183 | 2.31144  2.29012 | -.345 | 174 | .730 |
| Female |
| Negative attitudes towards plagiarism | Male | 30  30 | -.4206  .2384 | 1.48129  1.58129 | 2.826 | 174 | .005\* |
| Female |

Table 2 shows a significant difference between two groups, (t (201) = 0.21, p < .05) in subscale 5-Negative attitudes towards plagiarism, suggesting that female PG students (M= .2384, SD = 1.58) viewed plagiarism more negatively than males (M= −.4206, SD = 1.48). There were no significant differences between males and females in subscales 1 Perceived seriousness of plagiarism, 2-Personal factors, 3-Academic factors, and 4-Assessment factors, suggesting that male and female PG students were not different in their perceived seriousness of plagiarism and their levels of agreement on different determinants of student plagiarism.

**RQ2**. What are the participants’ perceptions of progressive teaching style on enhances student interest in ethical writing performance?

The means of responses from Masters’ and PhD students were compared in Table 2.

**Table 2. T-test comparison of Master’s and PhD students**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Level of the study | N | M | SD | t | Df | p |
| Career-stage factors | Ph.D. | 30  30 | -.1243  .4176 | 1.58200  1.73431 | -2.276 | 174 | .024\* |
| Master |
| Institutional factors | Ph.D. | 30  30 | -.5984  -.0461 | 1.97946  1.89263 | -.050 | 174 | .96\* |
| Master |
| Professional factors | Ph.D. | 30  30 | .0930  -.1257 | 1.46130  1.50354 | 1.029 | 174 | .305 |
| Master |
| Curriculum factors | Ph.D. | 30  30 | -.3876  .4326 | 2.17117  2.30554 | -2.554 | 174 | .011\* |
| Master |
| Personal factors | Ph.D. | 30  30 | .613  .0219 | 1.56009  1.58960 | .175 | 174 | .862 |
| Master |

Note: M Mean, SD Standard Deviation, \*Significant at .05 level, \*\*Significant at .01 level

Table 2 shows a statistically significant difference in Subscale 1- Career-stage factors, (t (193) = − 2.276, p< .05), with PhD students (M= .4176, SD = 1.73431) viewing plagiarism more seriously than Master’s students (M= −.1243, SD=1.58200). Another significant difference (t (193) = − 2.554, p< .05), was found in subscale 4- Curriculum factors, with master’s students (M = −.3876, SD = 2.17117) being more likely than PhD students (M = .4326, SD = 2.30554) to consider features of assessment as causes of plagiarism. There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups for subscale 5, suggesting that both groups held Personal factors towards plagiarism. Differences in PhD and Master’s student perceptions of plagiarism were not significant in subscales 2- Institutional factors and 3- Professional factors, representing that both groups agreed that plagiarism resulted from personal factors and limited academic knowledge and skills.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

SLA research seeks to enlighten different linguistic phenomena with the focus on elucidating the underlying processes learners experience (Morshedi and Latifi, 2015). Most of the present literature on adopting a progressive teaching vogue focuses on however teaching style enhances student interest within the material and generates a additional stimulating room atmosphere. Currently, there are few studies making an attempt to directly compare the effectiveness of progressive teaching with more ancient models. primarily based upon the findings of this research, the choice hypotheses are often accepted. The null hypothesis stating that there's no relationship between teaching designs and educational performance can be rejected. The results of the study recommended that male and feminine students control similar perceptions in this for each groups, students’ personal and attitudinal characteristics occupied the primary rank whereas their lack of skills and abilities, characteristics of the context, and academics ’characteristics were the second, third, and fourth contributory factors, respectively.

Therefore, an individual’s teaching style may affect a student’s academic success. In a similar vein, the same order of importance was observed for these four factors as perceived by M.A. and Ph.D. students. Given that these students reported their intentional deceitfulness as the most important factor, it may not be unjustified to take special measures to explore the reasons for this academic dishonesty which seems to be surging among Iranian graduate students. Therefore, based on the definition put forward by Stuhmcke et al. (2016), this kind of plagiarism can be referred to as misconduct or intentional plagiarism which deserves to be punished severely. The positive point is that as perceived by these students, teachers’ characteristics received the least importance indicating that despite engaging in plagiarism, these students do not underestimate their teachers’ ability and skills in detecting it. They also think that their teachers devote enough time and energy to evaluating and examining their assignments while paying careful attention to whether they have been copied or not, which can be encouraging because it can indicate that graduate students have not lost trust in their teachers yet. In order to publish a good scientific paper, one has to make an honest effort to read the original sources thoroughly and then put down one’s own ideas or thoughts in his own words with proper paraphrasing, citation and by using quotation marks where ever necessary to avoid plagiarism. Moreover, our study has shown that tertiary level students, perhaps worldwide, may be more motivated by on-line concerns such as time pressures to get an assignment done.

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