When You Really Don't Mean it: A Model of Plagiarism Behaviour and its Correlates

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Abstract: This paper examines the possible correlation between the rise in plagiarism and the rise in international student enrollment in post-secondary education. A model of plagiaristic / academic integrity behaviour is developed based on perceptions of the significance of plagiarism. Four categories of plagiaristic behaviour are discussed in terms of their underpinnings and possible remedial strategies. The underlying message is that the solution to the rise in plagiarism in the third Millennium is complex and requires multicultural empathy and fluency by educators.

Key Words: intentional plagiarism, unintentional plagiarism, international students, culture

Introduction

The increase in academic dishonesty and its detection have become hot topics in academia and the media (Christakis & Christakis, 2012, Moore, 2014; Song-Turner, 2008). Coincidentally, there has been an increase in internationalization of education and an influx of foreign-born students to universities in Europe, Australia, and North America (Hayes & Introna, 2005). The simultaneous increase in both plagiarism and international student enrollment inspired us to investigate the possible connection between the two. Even before conducting a literature review, we were acutely aware of the complexity and inherent problems in this line of research (i.e., divisive stereotyping and accusations of bias). Despite these and other hurdles identified in the literature review, we are committed to increase understanding of why students plagiarize and to

providing insights to help future researchers address the burgeoning plagiarism issue.

The goals of this theoretical paper are to synthesize extant theory and empirical research to generate a better understanding of the antecedents or preconditions for plagiaristic behaviour and to provide academia with knowledge about intervention or remedial strategies to reduce the incidence of plagiarism. In this regard, we examine the differences between intentional and unintentional plagiarism, and the impact that culture-based educational philosophy, ideology, and epistemology have on ethical perceptions of academic dishonesty. In short, we propose that not all ethical or unethical behaviours are equal. We develop a model that helps to identify patterns of student plagiaristic behaviour. We then conclude with recommendations for dealing with plagiarism in each of the categories of deception proposed by the model. Our underlying message is that academic integrity is not necessarily a "one-size-fits-all" endeavour. The intention with this model is to instigate more interest and empirical research into the causes and solutions of academic dishonesty in a situational context.

Plagiarism Defined

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines plagiarism as: "the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person" (2006-2007). In China, plagiarism dates back over a thousand years and evokes such concepts as: "piaoqie'" (to rob and steal someone else's writing) and "cao xi" (to copy and steal) (Liu, 2005, p. 235). In the Colonial world, the word plagiarism was derived from the English word "plagiary" meaning: "one who wrongfully takes another's words or ideas" and the Latin word "plagarius" meaning: "kidnapper, seducer, plunderer, [or] literary thief" (Barnhart, 1999, p. 801). However, the Western / Colonial treatment of plagiarism as literary theft is only a few hundred years old. Up until the end of the 16th century, playwrights and authors regularly borrowed ideas from others without identifying their sources (Mallon, 1989). It was only after the emergence of 17th century English constructs of private ownership, individual property, and pillars of western economic ideology that plagiarism became a force to be reckoned with (Pennycook, 1996).

Hundreds of years later, in the second Millennium, the interpretation of plagiarism is problematic in that it defies clear definition or consensus. Park (2003) conducted a thorough discussion of

the various underpinnings and meanings of plagiarism and reported several interpretations ranging from poor practices such as "a disease of inarticulateness" to malpractice and sins against humanity (p. 472). Across cultures, and within universities themselves, there are differing interpretations of academic integrity and plagiarism (Martin, 2011). Perceived severity of acts such as submitting someone else's work as one's own or cutting-and-pasting direct quotations into one's paper without a proper citation also vary with socio-cultural and individual differences.

Perhaps one of the key distinctions that divide perceptions of plagiarism is the issue of intent: i.e. did the student knowingly plagiarize or was the behaviour unintentional? Students who intentionally plagiarize do so for individual reasons that differ from those of students who unintentionally plagiarize. Martin (2011) found that students with inadequate foreign language skills, poor time management acumen, and derisory moral values were more likely to create willful acts of dishonesty or intentional plagiarism. Unintentional plagiarism, on the other hand, is more likely to occur when students do not understand the western significance of plagiarism and / or were raised in a culture that placed a low priority on academic integrity on the moral hierarchy scale relative to other inequities such as abandoning one's family.

We concur with researchers that intentional plagiarism, in its all-encompassing form, is difficult to generalize because of the complexities of individual differences (Martin, 2011; Martin, Rao, & Sloan, 2011). Perhaps this type of willing plagiarism can be curbed by increased use of detection tools, prevention tactics such as student–initiated plagiarism checkers, and university commitment to serious consequences for plagiarists. However, intentional plagiarism is not the focus of this paper. This hot topic is riddled with debate over issues, such as who is responsible for ethical education (Giacalone & Thompson, 2006) and whose ethics are right (Trevino & Brown, 2004).

To help navigate the plethora of plagiarism interpretations, we advocate research that distinguishes between different types of plagiaristic behaviour such as intentional versus unintentional plagiarism (DeLong, 2012).The focus in this paper is the unwitting, unknowing, or unintentional type of plagiarism behaviour. We propose that unintentional plagiarism, cases where students are fully not aware that they are breaking rules, may be impacted by cultural differences, i.e., differences in learning styles; epistemological un-

derpinnings of what constitutes knowledge; and Western versus Eastern ideologies.

Culture Defined

The construct of culture is difficult to comprehend let alone define (Eagleton, 2013). Up until the end of the 17th century in Europe, culture was an adjective or "a noun of process [whereby] one would describe the culture of something—crops animal, minds" (Williams, 1977, p. 41). In the early 18th century, culture (or culturation, as it was referred to at the time) was considered to be synonymous with civilization, as in 'cultured people are civilized'. Over the course of the 18th century, the term culture became associated with intrinsic, spiritual development primarily within the arts and literature. The term culture "thus charts within its semantic unfolding humanity's own historic shift from rural to urban existence, pig farming to Picasso" (Eagleton, 2013, p. 1). Near the end of the 18th century, the construct of 'identity culture' or 'class' began to emerge to describe "a social, populist, and traditional way of life, characterised by a quality that pervades everything and makes a person feel rooted at home" (Hartman, 1997, p. 211).

Here we see a shift in culture from a subjective stance to an objective observation of a society's way of life. By the end of the 19th century, the concept of culture had evolved to include the "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). By the end of the 20th century, the term culture had advanced to include a degree of social unification or socialization as: "a dominant and coherent set of shared values" (Peters & Waterman, 1982, p. 103) or a "collective mental programming [that is] part of our conditioning that we share with other members of our nation, region, or group" (Hofstede, 1983, p. 76).

The later depictions of culture are understandably open to dispute by researchers who are wary of using diversity to foster 'culture wars' (Gitlin, 1995), oppression (Anderson, 1999), or stereotyping (Liu, 2005; Sowden, 2005). While we are cognizant of the potential to use differences in a divisive way, our focus is on understanding a collective, shared values system of a society so as to expand mutual recognition and improve education for the growing population of international students whose set of shared values may not be consistent with the western collective mental programming.

In this paper, we use Hofstede's definition of culture as a "collective mental programming: [that] is that part of our conditioning that we share with other members of our nation, region, or group" (Hofstede, 1983, p. 76) to analyze patterns of unintentional plagiaristic student behaviour.

Literature Review

The rate of international student enrolment in North American, European and Australian post-secondary institutions has increased dramatically in recent years. The percentage of international students enrolled in Canadian post-secondary institutions has more than doubled in the past two decades (Statistics Canada, 2013), with a record-setting 98,000 international students enrolled in Canadian post-secondary schools in 2011 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2102). In the 2012/13 academic year, another record was broken as 819,644 international students enrolled in colleges or universities in the United States (OpenDoors, 2013). In Australia, the number of international students rose by 98% between 2001 and 2010 and now represents the third largest national industry (Adiningrum & Kutieleh, 2011). This influx in international students undoubtedly provides positive economic and immigration benefits for the host institutions and countries. However, these benefits come with costs and responsibilities: The onus is on educational institutions to provide infrastructure and pedagogy to support the diverse needs of these international students.

Despite mounting university sanctions and social pressure to act responsibly and morally, plagiarism and academic dishonesty in post-secondary institutions are on the rise (Abdolmohammadi & Baker, 2007; Powell, 2012). The ubiquitous nature of media and technology in the second decade of the new millennium has likely fuelled the growth in both incidence and detection of plagiarism (Baruchson-Arbib & Yaari, 2004; Parker, Lenhart, & Moore, 2011). A recent CBC survey of more than 40 Canadian universities indicates that over 7,000 students (1% of the university student population) were caught and punished for academic integrity (Moore, 2014). Front-page articles about forced resignations of deceptive school board directors (CBC News, 2013) and two ministers of the German government (Pidd, 2011; The Guardian, 2013), as well as suspension of dozens of Harvard University students for cheating (Christakis & Christakis, 2012; Perez-Pena, 2012; The Guardian, 2012; The Times, 2013) are indications that the media

and society are disgruntled with plagiaristic behaviour in Canada and abroad.

Plagiarism is problematic on many levels. At a micro level, students who submit the work of others as their own or patch together various texts without synthesizing the contents fail to develop critical thinking and cognitive skills (Abdolmohammadi & Baker, 2007; Vardi, 2012). At the meso level, rampant plagiarism can wreak havoc on a university's reputation (Lupton & Chapman, 2002), damaging the career prospects of its graduates and limiting its potential to attract quality students and faculty. At the macro level, plagiarism negatively impacts society's opinion of higher education in general. In the wake of scandals such Enron and Arthur Andersen, universities, and in particular business schools, have been criticized for sidestepping ethical education and graduating unethical business leaders (Swanson, 2004). If universities continue to allow plagiarism to go unchecked, they will eventually dilute the value of post-secondary education (Lawson, 2004).

Interestingly, what was described as an endemic plagiarism problem in the Global South 15 years ago (Pulvers & Diekoff, 1999) has not materialized as a global issue. On the contrary, research suggests that the increase in plagiarism may be due to a clash between Eastern and Western ideologies and epistemologies (Liu, 2005; Song-Turner, 2008). The Eastern ideology posits that the words of masters or sages are sacrosanct and are to be preserved exactly as they are for future generations. Since everyone knows the word of the masters, there is no need to make a formal reference when citing them. By contrast, Western ideology posits that new knowledge is created by reconstructing or expanding upon existing knowledge. Each author along this path of reconstruction is to be given credit (referenced) for her / his contribution. Despite the consequence that this clash in ideologies likely has on citation practices, there is a lack of empirical evidence to support a correlation between international students and plagiarism (Martin et al., 2011). If anything, it is domestic student participation in plagiarism that is attracting media attention (CBC News, 2013).

We propose that the lack of correlation between the increase in plagiarism and international student enrollment may be due to an overgeneralization of the construct of plagiarism. As indicated by the literature, plagiarism is complex and riddled with individual, psychological and cultural undertones. We propose that a differentiation between intentional and unintentional plagiarism may add clarity by exposing different motivations for plagiaristic behaviour.

We concur with Martin et al. (2011) that "racial identity is a poor proxy for individual differences and psychological differences" (p. 94), thus we are careful not to attribute *intentional* plagiarism to race or culture. Rather, we propose that students who grow up in non-western cultures may have differing values and views about plagiarism and may be more prone to unwittingly or unintentionally plagiarize. Although we recognize that culture is a nebulous topic (Williams, 1977) and are loathe to reopen the debate between Sowden (2005) and Liu (2005) about stereotypes, we propose that attributing *intentional* plagiarism to individual / psychological differences allows us to examine possible cultural reasons for *unintentional* plagiarism (DeLong, 2012).

In summary, intentional plagiarism and unintentional plagiarism are distinct with respect to antecedents and consequences. By highlighting the differences, we are able to focus on unintentional plagiarism and its possible cultural correlates. We now describe a way to distinguish between intentional and unintentional plagiarism based on individual- versus socio-cultural-based perceptions of academic integrity.

Individual Recognition of the Severity of Plagiarism

Notions of what is ethically right or wrong, moral or immoral, correct or incorrect exist in all cultures, albeit in different ways. This is evident in studies with international students who realize that it is wrong to represent others' ideas without referencing, as if they were your own (e.g. Adiningrum & Kutieleh, 2011; Song-Turner, 2008). However, academic dishonesty is not an exclusive international student phenomenon: There are several instances of plagiarized work knowingly submitted by domestic students (CBC News, 2013). On one hand, we have students who are aware of the severity of plagiarism and that stealing someone else's words is morally wrong. We identify this as 'ethically intentional behaviour' that is motivated by individual perceptions and values of morality (Martin, 2011). On the other hand, we have students who lack ethical self-awareness and fail to recognize plagiarism as a serious act of theft or as an ethical dilemma. We identify this as 'ethically unintentional behaviour' by students who were not adequately sensitized to the Western notion of academic integrity during their formative years. We now turn our attention to the differing levels of sensitivity to plagiarism in the students' home culture.

Social Recognition of the Severity of Plagiarism

Research indicates that international students have a basic under-standing of what plagiarism is but are not always clear about its lim-its, applications, or significance (Adiningrum & Kutieleh, 2011; Martin, 2011; Song-Turner, 2008). We have argued that plagiarism is recognized as an immoral act if it is performed wilfully or inten-tionally. However, the lack of clarity and inconsistent practices among institutions, such as different rules and practices in citation and referencing, lack of agreement among professors about what constitutes plagiarism, and ambiguous definitions of plagiarism in the institution's academic integrity policy, may add to the confu-sion about what plagiarism means or entails.

Different cultural interpretations as to the seriousness of plagia-rism can also cause confusion. Research indicates that cultural dif-ferences are among the most common causes for plagiarism (Adin-ingrum & Kutieleh, 2011; Martin, 2011; Martin et al., 2011; Song-Turner, 2008), which include differing ideologies about what con-stitutes plagiarism (Bloch, 2001; Pennycook, 1996), language issues (Adiningrum & Kutieleh, 2011; Introna, Hayes, Blair, & Wood, 2003), skill deficiencies and learning styles (Introna et al., 2003), and lack of understanding of the construct of plagiarism (Park, 2003). In her qualitative analysis of international students' defini-tions of plagiarism, Song-Turner (2008) found that the main rea-sons for unintentional plagiarism were lack of understanding of western academic writing / referencing styles and poor English language skills. Due to lack of explanations, adequate time man-agement skills, or academic support, and under pressure from for-eign-context-transition problems, international students may use plagiarizing as a coping mechanism to deal with (too many) aca-demic demands.

Although we concur with Liu (2005) and others that Asian stu-dents are no more prone to intentionally plagiarize (for individual reasons) than students from other cultures, we propose that students coming from non-Western cultures may be unaware of the deep-seated significance of the western notion of academic integrity. In some Asian cultures, copying, verbatim, the words of masters is considered humble, wise, and dutiful (Watkins & Biggs, 1996). Ironically, on the other hand, in Western ideology, embellishing the words of an original author while simultaneously acknowledg-ing the author's initial efforts is considered to be wise and dutiful. Educators and their institutions need to recognize that the Western

concept of paraphrasing original authors' words may seem presumptuous or rude in some non-western cultures. Further, it is extremely difficult for a student to improve upon an expert's words when the expert's language and discourse are foreign to the student.

With respect to ideological values of academic integrity, some sceptical international students went as far as to say that plagiarism is yet "another form of Western 'superiority' being exercised over other cultures" (Adiningrum & Kutieleh, 2011, p. A-93). While this argument may come across as a vain attempt to justify a wrongdoing, it gives us pause in the West to think more deeply about cultural sensitivity regarding the plagiarism issue. Some students come from cultures where plagiarism is neither a serious ethical issue nor part of their common vernacular (Introna et al., 2003). We label this end of the spectrum 'low significance of academic integrity in the socio-cultural environment'.

With respect to language issues, the performance pressure on international students who are dealing with English as a second language is immense. Reading and writing in English as a second language (ESL), and expressing oneself in the expected academic style, depth, and quality constitute significant challenges for international students. The added difficulty of communicating in English on a day-to-day basis to carry on life in a brand-new cultural context adds to the stress experienced in the academic setting, particularly for ESL students (Yang & Lin, 2009). Students generally fall into one of two categories: either they are subservient to their parents for footing the bill for their education, or they are tasked with the responsibility of providing financial assistance for the family in their home countries. The motivation that drives the educational process for these students is rooted less in academic integrity than in financial pressures, respect for family, and peer recognition (Introna et al., 2003; Yang & Lin, 2009). These social factors can put pressure on students to focus on the ends (completing their degrees rapidly) rather than the means of education. These students may be conflicted between a perceived waste of time on the seemingly insurmountable task of paraphrasing the words of an English master, and the need to finish their education, get a job, and serve the needs of their families (Introna et al., 2003; Song-Turner, 2008). Given these higher order social and familial obligations, plagiarism may appear to be permissible in certain cultures and situations as the lesser of two evils. For instance, how many of us feel conflicted between telling the truth and telling a white lie when

our spouse asks us: "Do these jeans make me look fat?" We propose that students who fall into this category are at the low end of the 'socio-cultural environment's significance of academic integrity' spectrum (Introna et al., 2003).

Research suggests that learning styles and skills also play a major role in unintentional plagiarism. In Western educational institutions, students are encouraged to interpret and express theory in their own words and context (Martin, Reaume, Reeves, & Wright, 2012; Sowden, 2005; Zimerman, 2012), and critical thinking and citation skills are two of the most valued and assessed skills (Vardi, 2012). However, not all countries encourage critical thinking in their classrooms. In many Asian cultures, rote learning is the norm (Nguyen, 2011) and critical thinking and experiential learning are considered inferior to rote learning (Valiente, 2008). Students are taught to honour their elders and masters by memorizing their adages and theories rather than critically analyzing their words (Ballarad & Clanchy, 1991). It is believed that memorization is a worthwhile stage of learning because it helps develop and deepen understanding (Liu, 2005; Song-Turner, 2008; Yang & Lin, 2009). Only after the foundation of knowledge is laid are students confident enough to challenge the masters. There is great wisdom in this logic; perhaps Western institutions could benefit by listening to this and other wisdoms of our international students' cultures.

Socio-cultural epistemological differences also play a role in the lack of consensus on the significance on academic integrity / plagiarism. Rooted in Confucianism, many Asian cultures consider knowledge to be common heritage or a collectively owned property (Martin et al., 2012; Nguyen, 2011). Knowledge already exists and should be conserved and reproduced by students (Yang & Lin, 2009). Hierarchical relationships, obedience, and respect are cherished values for maintaining the status quo in knowledge acquisition and harmony in society. By contrast, in the Western / colonial world, knowledge is created and/or extended through critical thinking and analytical abilities, rather than preserved. We hypothesize that students raised in cultures that encourage critical analysis and citation skills fall into the high end of the socio-cultural spectrum where academic integrity is given a high priority. We propose that students raised in cultures that encourage rote learning and memorization fall into the lower end of this spectrum.

In summary, we hypothesize that students coming from cultures that do not uphold the same values as western cultures regarding the severity to the significance of plagiarism or academic integrity

fall into the low end of the socio-cultural significance of plagiarism spectrum. In other words, academic integrity does not necessarily supersede or take priority over other socio-cultural values or ethical obligations, such as obedience to family. Students from these cultures have not been acclimated to plagiarism or academic integrity in the same way as have students from colonial western cultures.

A Model of Plagiarism Behaviour

To provide educators with a tool to navigate the complex array of antecedents of plagiarism, we introduce a model comprising patterns of academic integrity behaviour. Using a matrix structure, we plot individual values about academic integrity and capacity to recognize plagiaristic behaviour on the X axis. Students who place no or low significance on academic integrity for individual reasons are positioned on the left side of the model. Depending on their cultural upbringing, these students may either know that plagiarism is wrong and chose to do so anyway or they may not recognize that an ethical dilemma is being presented to them because they have not been sufficiently introduced to the Western concept of plagiarism as unethical.

On the Y axis, we plot the significance that the student's home culture places on academic integrity relative to other social and ethical obligations. Students who come from cultures that place a low priority on academic integrity, relative to other values, are placed in the lower half of the socio-cultural significance of academic integrity spectrum. For these students, "plagiarism is a breach of disciplinary decorum not a breach of the moral universe" (Fish, 2010, p. 2). Students who have been raised in cultures that place a high priority on academic integrity are placed in the high end of the socio-cultural significance of academic integrity spectrum. These students are well aware of the requirements and consequences of plagiarism.

What follows is a description of each category in the model, as well as possible remedies for each pattern of student behaviour.

Figure 1—A model of Plagiarism / Academic Integrity Significance

		Significance of Academic Integrity to the Individual	
Significance of Academic Integrity in the Socio-cultural Environment	**High**	**True Deception**	**Naïve Deception**
	Low	**Clueless Deception**	**Hapless Deception**
		Low High	

True deception:

We label this category 'true deception' because, in this case, the student wilfully commits an act of plagiarism even though s/he knows that plagiarism is wrong. This student is well aware of the rules of academic integrity, understands what plagiarism is, and knows how significant it is to his/her education and society. These students likely know the system so well that their plagiarism may go undetected. This student's behaviour is most likely explained by individual rather than socio-cultural differences. The short-term remedies for this type of behaviour include enhancing the detection of plagiarism by using SafeAssign or Turnitin.com for all assignments; imposing strict sanctions on plagiarism for all students; and decreasing the temptation to plagiarize by providing assignments that encourage students to create rather than find information. In the long run, educators need to address the lack of ethical or moral sensitivity at an earlier age. By the time students get to university, their moral character has been formed and relearning moral ethics is difficult.

Lack of ethical character aside, there may be another way to reach these students by appealing to their need for self-expression. Elander, Pittam, Lusher, Fox & Payne (2010) recommend a proactive approach to motivate students to abide by the rules of academic integrity by teaching them to be authors. Students are encour-

aged to establish their own "authorial identity" and to become writers in their own right (Elander et al., 2010, p. 159). Inspired to make their mark on the world by sharing their unique ideas, students may be more willing to learn how to properly paraphrase and synthesize the thoughts and words of others.

Hapless deception:

We label this category 'hapless' because students who are torn between their home culture's vision of success (duty to family) and their educational institution's duty to academic integrity are in an unfortunate position. In a sense, they are caught between a rock and a hard place. We argue that this is the case where a student actually understands that plagiarism is wrong but lacks agreement about the hierarchical significance of plagiarism relative to other obligations or values. This student, possibly due to time pressures, family obligations, or lack of confidence to ask for assistance, may choose to hand in another's paper rather than lose face in front of the class, instructor, or family. Although this student knows what s/he was doing was morally wrong, the severity may be lower in this case due to lack of socio-cultural agreement on the seriousness of the act of plagiarism. We propose that a deeper understanding and empathy for the student under these conditions is required. Rather than force our Western ideology of plagiarism on the students, perhaps we need to empathize with them to understand how we might address the problem in a restorative rather than a punitive way.

One innovative and restorative way to address the plagiarism issue for 'hapless deception' students is to engage and reward students for their intellectual curiosity and critique. In an Australian study, Vardi (2012) demonstrated that students of non-English speaking backgrounds were inspired to write without copying in an academic writing course if critical thinking was explicitly recognized and rewarded through the grading system. This finding suggests that the extent to which intellectual engagement is stimulated in the pedagogical process and included in the assessment methods can help reduce plagiarism rates more than punishment-focused approaches. In other words, communicating the importance of capturing and synthesizing information to create knowledge in the student's own words is more powerful and positive for this category of students than sanctions for violation of academic integrity policy.

Naïve deception:

We label this category 'naïve' because the student unintentionally or unwittingly commits an act of plagiarism in spite of the fact that he/she is clear about the rules of academic integrity and understands what plagiarism is. These students are raised in cultures that prioritize academic integrity yet they fail to recognize the act of plagiarism or that the rules apply in a particular circumstance. It may also be a case of misunderstanding of "generalized knowledge." It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between what needs to be cited and what is taken for granted in speech, i.e., do we really need to cite Shakespeare every time we say: "To be or not to be"? Although it is tempting to label these students as 'privileged' and throw them into the 'True Deception' category, we propose that these students are not deceitful but merely misinformed. How may academics fall into this category by copying pictures and videos from the internet for their lectures or public presentations? This is a situation in which the student (or professor) makes a genuine mistake, and believes he/she is not doing anything wrong. Remedies for this category of students include plagiarism education with actual examples of plagiaristic activity and workshops on appropriate citation and paraphrasing practices. The aforementioned strategies of intellectual engagement and authorial identity may also be relevant.

Clueless deception:

We label this category 'clueless' because these students have no idea what plagiarism means or that they have committed an unethical act. The student neither understands the significance of academic integrity nor the definition of plagiarism. We believe this behaviour is most likely to be explained by both individual and cultural differences. The student has not been adequately versed in ethical standards or morality with respect to academic integrity. Further, cultural patterns or preconceptions of academic integrity lead the student to think and behave in ways incongruent with the Western expectations. Remedies for this category of student include ethical education (i.e. on-line tutorials / tests on academic integrity) and concerted attempts to assimilate students into the westernized academic integrity culture (i.e. non-threatening discussions and presentations about plagiarism).

Conclusion

According to Minkov and Hofstede (2011): "the merit of any model should be based on the basis of its capability to predict interesting phenomena" (p. 18). We propose that our model of plagiaristic behaviour can be used by academia to focus research and remedial actions on each of the unique categories. For example, if a majority of students in a particular department or school are in the "True Deception" category, efforts are better placed in teaching ethics education or motivating students to establish "authorial identity" than in explaining the rules of plagiarism. Likewise, if the majority of students are in the "Hapless Deception" category, efforts are best geared toward education of ethics and integrity and assimilation of students into the westernized academic integrity culture.

We assert that plagiarism behaviour among international students is not always an outcome of deliberate acts. International students coming to Western educational institutions with different cultural backgrounds, pedagogical experiences, and learning styles face challenges of adaptation, not only to daily life, but to academic demands. Their collectivist and pragmatic cultural backgrounds may not be commensurate with the western notion of normative, 'carte blanche' academic integrity. Research suggests that level of international student acculturation, from marginalization to assimilation, has been empirically linked to plagiarism (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989, cited in Martin et al. 2011). The assumption is that international students who study in Western post-secondary institutions must assimilate into the western culture to understand academic integrity and avoid plagiarism. However, perhaps the "one-size-fits-all approach to pedagogy" has run its course (Tapscott, 2009, p. 139).

Given the exponential increase in international students from Asia attending Western institutions, perhaps the time is ripe to consider effective ways to consolidate multiple perspectives and values in the assimilation process. We are not proposing that academic integrity is negotiable. Rather, we propose that an attitude of cultural relativism would help prepare all parties (students and educators) to communicate and understand diverse perspectives. Perhaps we can enhance our notion of academic integrity by incorporating ideologies and ideas from our global neighbours. We propose that university educators and support staff need to be sensitive to the unique needs and socio-cultural backgrounds of international students so as to appropriately design pedagogy.

Limitations

This paper did not take into account variables such as student age, experience with internet technology, or differences in academic discipline. Investigating how these variables impact plagiarism would be valuable future research. Further, we did not investigate the ratio of international students to domestic student with respect to plagiarism, which would be an interesting longitudinal or cross-section study. We also did not investigate the possible impact that decrease in scholarships or government subsidies may have on plagiarism. Finally, we did not investigate the possible relationship between advanced technology (the internet and software) and plagiarism detection. Empirical investigations in these areas would help to support or deny our hypothesis that there is a relationship between increase in international student enrollment and plagiarism activity.

We recognize that research on socio-cultural issues is riddled with complexity and criticism (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). Interpretations of terms such as plagiarism and culture are subjective and lack universal acceptance. Nonetheless, we propose that examining our assumptions about (non)equivalency in significance of academic integrity across borders is a worthy endeavour—one that may help us incrementally resolve the plagiarism issue through cultural empathy and intercultural fluency.

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