

SESSION 2

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS IN SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC INTEGRITY THROUGH LIBRARY'S SERVICES IN CENTRAL ASIA REGION: CASE STUDY FROM KAZAKHSTAN

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Libraries become increasingly involved in raising students awareness about academic integrity through information literacy program. Commonly recognized as information hubs, the libraries are supposed to provide plagiarism education with access to information related technologies and services such as text-matching software. Supporting academic integrity by libraries in Kazakhstan is framed in the context of cultural, administrative and technological issues. The purpose of the study is to determine the challenges in implementing international policies and practices in preventing plagiarism and promoting academic ethics by libraries. It also intends to identify the prospects of library involvement with academic integrity in the institutional level, emerging on teaching and training practice, librarians-faculty collaboration and policy-making partnership.

Category of abstract: A case study

Keywords: academic integrity, libraries, plagiarism checkers, information literacy

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of educational system in order to meet the requirements of Bologna Process in Kazakhstan likewise in other post-Soviet Union countries has expected the potential benefits and possible difficulties. The Central Asia region has being equally experienced the academic integrity problematic as the East-European countries. "Cheating, plagiarism, corruption and bribery claims in particular have blighted Kazakhstan's higher education reputation in the past, with admissions and assessment procedures proving regular flashpoints". (McKie, 2018). However according to the quality assurance agency Kazakhstan, "even though joining the Bologna Process much later than the other countries, has become a type of "model student" of the Bologna Communiqués on QA" (Bischof, 2018). In 2017 Universities in Kazakhstan have set up the League of Academic Integrity to improve the quality of education and facilitate implementation of AI principles in the region ("About the League of Academic

Integrity”, 2019). The objectives for this paper is to share interim results of a continuous research on the libraries’ engagement in building the culture of academic integrity (AI) through library initiatives, academic collaboration, and administrative support (Alenzuela, Groen, Kamilova, Terzi & Zvonareva, 2017). With the focus on Kazakhstan and Central Asia we aimed to:

- identify administrative, technical, socio-cultural challenges in implementation and development of academic integrity;
- determine the current practice and perspectives for libraries in supporting AI.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED SOURCES

Socio-cultural Challenges

The socio-cultural challenges of academic misconduct in students’ behaviour and teachers’ contribution to the phenomena in former Soviet-Union are widely explored by international researchers.

Grimes P. (2004) in the context of cross-cultural evaluation of student attitudes found that the number of students who observed plagiarism in the classroom and don’t consider plagiarism to be a critical misconduct is significantly higher in Eastern Europe and Central Asia than in the US. The author argued that collective values are predominant rather than individual in the countries with a transition economy and hypothesized that “college students in the transitional economies attach relatively lower levels of importance to individual actions of dishonesty than their American cohorts”.

Dr. M. Scheffer (2009) provided personal experience of teaching in Lithuania, Estonia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan right after the collapse of Soviet Union in 1990s. He noted that students were unused to Western teaching technologies and formats of assignments, academic standards and procedures which are more strict than in Eastern region; cheating and plagiarism were defined differently and seemed to be an accepted practice especially in Lithuania and Uzbekistan. This was echoed by Foltýnek T. and Čech F. (2012) who concluded that there is different understanding, attitude and level of awareness about plagiarism among students and teachers in western and eastern (post-communist) countries.

Another study “Tolerance of Cheating: An Analysis Across Countries” by Magnus J. (2002) compares students’ perception of cheating in post Soviet Russia,

Netherlands, Israel, and the United States. The tentative explanations include cultural differences of collective and individualistic values, the design of the educational system, and “so-called coordination effect: the more consistently a norm is observed in society, the greater the costs incurred by an individual deviating from it” (Magnus, 2002). Through examples of contract cheating Roosa Kaisa Rytönen (2016) studies the changes in value of higher education and its commercialization in post-Soviet Russia.

The studies show that plagiarism and academic misconduct are widespread across Higher education institutions in Russia. As of survey results conducted by National Research University “Higher School of Economics” 31% of respondents submitted as individual projects completed in groups; 27% used paper writing services or downloaded papers from Internet and turned as their own assignments; one fifth of students intentionally plagiarized on copy-paste mode and more than 10% used paraphrasing without giving credits to the authors. (Roshina, 2016).

Zurabishvily (as cited in Dmitrienko, 2013) has discussed negative changes in values of education in Georgia focusing not on knowledge acquirement but on a formal certification; the loss of interest in quality of education among faculty due to the economic issues and expended misconduct.

Burkhalter and Shegebayev (2012) analysed and illustrated how the teacher-centred Soviet system education led to plagiarism and why critical thinking should be one of the principle of teaching teachers is Kazakhstan.

Soltys D. (2015) and Tampayeva G. (2015) explain difficulties in implementing reforms in Kazakhstan and post-socialist countries by the specific individualistic values, low civic and state capacities. However Issues of culture and national traditions have less impact among the Central Asians, perhaps because their languages and cultures are highly distinct from those of Russia and Europe rather than economic rationales.

Administrative Challenges

The Higher education Institutions are successfully implementing principles of AI however the understanding of term differ. Dmitrienko I. (2013) compared approaches to AI among Kirghiz, Russian and US scientists and concluded that there is a need to define the term of AI in an Educational Law as it determined the term of “academic freedom”.

The governmental initiatives to develop common academic integrity and research ethics documents were launched in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. In 2016 the Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan announced that a national platform preventing academic plagiarism could be created and all Higher Education Institutions would be involved in writing the Anti-plagiarism code. In February 2017 the first President N. Nazarbayev proposed to set up a department at National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan which would develop The code of ethics for researchers and scientists (Utupin, 2017).

The Russian researchers raised the issue of academic freedom and different percentage of text matching in internal institutional regulations. They stressed that students should be aware of acceptable proportion of similarities but not consider as acceptable plagiarism. Since the indicator may vary in different institutions, include or not the references and differ for monographs or articles the importance of literacy on the subject is significant. It is emphasized that plagiarism checking must be provided by qualified staff (Avdeeva, 2018).

In 2018 the Indian Ministry of Human and resource development approved the national anti-plagiarism policy which has to be applied to different levels in academy and research. The document developed by the University Grants Commission standardised definition of plagiarism, methods of curbing and tolerance for content similarity, penalties for students, researchers, faculty and staff (Awasthi, 2019; “UGC Rules Regarding Plagiarism by Indian Academicians”, 2019).

In terms of CIS countries, the definition of plagiarism is set out only in the Law of Ukraine “On Copyright and Related Rights”. The other members of CIS use the term “usurp authorship” in criminal legislation. (Vitko, 2018).

There is a challenge to approach librarians to the academic / faculty status, recognize them as a part of team working on academic performance, and building the culture of academic integrity (Cruz III, R., Cruz, K. V., & Yap, J. M., 2018). The possible involvement of librarians as stakeholders in the development and implementation of institution policies was preliminary researched and presented at the 2nd Conference on AI in 2017. (Alenzuela *et al.*, 2017)

The Ukraine researchers highlighted that “academic librarians must have the freedom to function as full members of their academic communities which includes the right to criticize, disseminate and share views and professional expertise within and outside their academic institutions.” (Kandiuk, 2015).

Awasthi (2019) recognized librarians among other stakeholders and sophisticated the role of librarians in curbing and detecting plagiarism. The main activities should include instructions on reference style and usage of reference/citation tools, creating awareness on plagiarism and how detectors work, encouragement to use anti-plagiarism tools.

Library Plagiarism Policies (Stepchyshyn, & Nelson, 2007) contain analysis of data gathered from college libraries in the US about plagiarism issue and the librarians involvement into plagiarism prevention. Librarians helped colleges to arrive at the plagiarism policy and work together with administrative and academic colleagues to enforce the college policy. 30% responded that librarians have seats in committees of plagiarism detection and prevention. 15% have librarians responsible specifically for plagiarism issues. They assist faculty in checking students works using Turnitin or help with citation analysis, collaborate with faculty on course design.

On the other hand there is no subject course in Library Science programs to address the issue of librarians capacity building. The required skills are acquired through special workshops, training and other forms of individual and professional development.

In 2016 Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with American Councils for International Education (ACTR ACCELS) and US Embassy launched a 4 years Strengthening Academic Integrity in Ukraine Project (SAIUP) designed for 10 Universities. The project is unique within the former Soviet Union and for global perspective. It is outlined that Libraries are an integral part of the project having equal responsibilities with all stakeholders of educational process and employees and highlighted the Libraries' key role in raising literacy and awareness about academic integrity principles and culture ("Strengthening Higher Ed", 2016).

Within this project Ukrainian Library Association launched an innovative program "Academic Integrity Culture: the libraries' role" which aimed to build librarians capacity for teaching Academic Integrity in Higher Education Institutions, development of Guidance for Librarians Instructors on the subject for all academic levels, and lobbying integration of subject libraries sessions into curriculum («Культура академічної доброчесності: роль бібліотек», 2016). The Scientific Library of Kharkiv National Medical University has researched the students' plagiarism and academic integrity initiatives. In 2016 the Library reported to the University Academic Council the results of a survey discovering students' attitudes and awareness about plagiarism. The recommendations for improving plagiarisme education included integration of Information Literacy

and Academic Writing course into curriculum (Kirichok, & Pavlenko, 2016). The Library also contributed to the development of policy regulating the quality of educational process and academic research outputs; and writing guidelines for usage of plagiarism software. The software is installed in the Library research rooms where researchers can get assistance from Librarians (Kirichok, & Pavlenko, 2016). The academic libraries information sessions, workshops, trainings were offered on a range of topics:

- usage of electronic resources and database,
- selecting journals for publications and preparing the manuscript for publication in international academic journal,
- scientometrics,
- copyright,
- citation and referencing («Культура академічної доброчесності: роль бібліотек», 2016).

Technical Challenges

The plethora of free and commercial software for plagiarism prevention has been offered to educational institutions. The methods of detection vary depending on machine learning techniques, sources of original works (generated database or Internet) and consequently the language and type of documents (pdf, word, jpeg etc.). Mainly from the linguistic perspective, there is a problem in implementation and usage of international products such as “TurnItIn”, “Copyscape”, “Istio”, “Articlechecker”, “Duplichecker” in the universities of former Soviet Union, for they can not be applied to the works in Russian or other national languages.

A range of software was developed for Russian institutions, namely “Детектор плагиата”, “Advego Plagiatus”, “Етхт Антиплагиат”, “Плагиата.НЕТ”. These tools compare documents with the resources in Digital Library of Thesis and Dissertations of the Russian State Library, Scientific electronic library elibrary.ru, LEXPRO, Университетская библиотека онлайн, institutions collections and online sources (Gruzdo, 2011, Sevostyanova, 2017; Anisimov A., 2013 Shikorenko 2017).

National Center of Science and Technology Evaluation of Kazakhstan (NCTSE) is using PlagiatInform which is unable to match text with international sources as well as generated database of theses can not be indexed by other detectors (Utupin, 2017).

The advances in IT advocate for blockchain-based technologies which allows to create databases of unic documents, set access privileges and control academic achievements (Hoy, 2017; Turginbayeva, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

For this paper an online search on the 151 websites of Kazakh universities was applied to discover Academic Integrity policies, codes, regulations (Contact of Higher Education Institutions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019). We also used data from initial study when faculty members at the Nazarbayev University (NU) were interviewed to determine the possibilities for collaboration. (Alenzuella *et al*, 2016).

The information from libraries was gathered through the survey. To determine the current policies in using the plagiarism detectors the participants were asked about the type of software applied and how long it has being used, the patrons who have access to the tools, the libraries help in using the detectors. Questions also aimed to identify the attitude to the practice of using the software and other libraries activities in supporting AI. The distribution of the survey was performed through the email. The survey was launched to 69 higher education institutions libraries in different regions of Kazakhstan.

Performing desk research we were unable to find reported data on plagiarism prevalence or academic misconduct in Kazakhstan. JSC Information-Analytic Center of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan strives to systematize and share the world and the best Kazakhstani experience for the organizations of education and stakeholders, however there is not yet reported data or initiatives in academic integrity field (site). Similar there is no many peer reviewed evidences and empirical studies on how extended is plagiarism in the region and libraries' involvement in supporting AI. Due to a lack of information, for this research we considered experience of former Soviet Union countries and preferably of Central Asia region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6 out of 12 libraries participated in the survey were from universities-members of the League of AI. They are Kazakh-British University, Almaty management University, University after Suleiman Damirel, Medical University of Karaganda, KazGUU, Kazakh National Technical University.

BEST PRACTICES IN PROMOTING AND IMPLEMENTING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Based on the librarians responses most of Universities are using Turnitin for plagiarism checking, which is followed by Антиплагиат.ВУЗ and StrikePlagiarism. 7 libraries help with using plagiarism checkers although only four libraries have access to the software together with faculty, students and researchers. 8 respondents agreed that access to the software should be provided in the libraries. 2 libraries had difficulties to answer on this matter, and other 2 libraries who currently assist their communities to use detectors gave a negative answer.

In terms of libraries activities in supporting academic integrity, 8 responded libraries are engaged in conducting sessions, workshops, training on the following topics:

- identification and evaluation of sources;
- citing and referencing;
- using plagiarism checking software;
- publishing ethics.

One library offers computers with installed software EtXt which can be used for free plagiarism checking. An annual book display is another way to turn attention to the subject of academic misconduct. It was also mentioned that Academic integrity policy is equally applied to the librarians and other university staff.

Four libraries were undecided and one has delegated academic integrity support to university departments and schools.

While Nazarbayev University (NU) Library is becoming increasingly involved in raising students awareness about academic integrity and plagiarism education through the library sessions and workshops, it doesn't provide service of plagiarism detection via public terminals nor librarians have access to the software. Although "the findings suggest that Turnitin used as a learning tool for effective paraphrasing and make necessary adjustments are the most effective way" (Awasthi, 2019). The current TurnItIn licence allows students to submit their course works through moodle or to faculty for further checking through their instructors account online. This limits researchers and students of checking their non-course related works. Commonly recognized as information hubs, the libraries are supposed to provide access to information related technologies and services such as text-matching software.

On the websites of academic libraries in Ukraine and Russia it is stated that plagiarism checking should be done by librarians and the report has to be enclosed to other documents submitted for theses procedures (Antiplagiat, n/d;

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Plagiarism checking, n/da; Antiplagiat, 2019; Antiplagiat.VUZ, n/d; Plagiarism Checking, n/db).

It is evident from the NU faculty responses that they would prefer plagiarism and integrity education rather than enforcement to a proper code of conduct. They expressed a believe that “students don’t know very well how does the plagiarism work” and “how this soft is usually cross checking”. Alongside they admit that they “don’t have time to go deep into”.

The citation analysis of theses conducted by subject librarians illustrated the poor practice in referencing and addressed the issue to neglect this part of research works. Summarizing faculty responses regarding the prospects of faculty-librarians collaboration, the support can be offered as a short course or optional sessions in class or online in the beginning of the semester or at the final step before submitting thesis. A one-on-one session with the librarian would also be helpful.

The academic integrity has being used as a part of Information Literacy Programs (Moniz, Fine, & Bliss, 2008; Wood, 2004; Datig, & Russell, 2014; Arp, & Woodard, 2002). NU librarians have developed a skillful Information Literacy Program which contains 4 modules: Searching for Information, Identifying and Evaluating Information, Citing Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism. Each of the modules has designed learning objectives and outcomes, and assessments. The Program aims to build core integrity skills, competencies and abilities for the academic and research practice. NU is being developed the core curriculum and research strategy, however the libraries support has not be mentioned in any of the documents. However, the discussion on integration of the Program into academic curriculum took place. One of the challenging issue in this process is recognition of librarians status as instructional staff (Cruz III, R., Cruz, K. V., & Yap, J. M. (2018). The faculty responses show that awareness on library programs and the role of the library for academic integrity is not clear to many faculty.

Similar the NU library doesn’t share responsibility with academic community in the NU documents regulating academic misconduct. An online search showed that academic integrity principles are presented in the code of conduct, honor code, code of corporate culture or AI policies, regulations. Of 151 higher education institutions 67 universities have published the documents on their website. The others have no regulations on Academic Integrity or didn’t make them public. The majority of found documents were written and approved in 2017-2019.

BEST PRACTICES IN PROMOTING AND IMPLEMENTING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

For the research we focused on approaches to responsibilities in plagiarism education instructions and promotion of AI. Atyrau University of Oil and Gas, Taraz State University after M. Dulaty, Ballet Academy, M. Auezov South Kazakhstan State University, I. Zhansugurov Zhetysu State University, Kainar Academy, Kazakh-American Free University, K. Zhubanov Aktobe Regional State University, Almaty University, Kostanay State University after A. Baitursyniva and Turan-Astana University have used one template for AI policy. The faculty and universities staff are responsible for providing support in searching authoritative and reliable sources, and guarantee a proper referencing and citing according to the approved style. Likewise Zhelkazgan University after O Baikonurova assigned faculty to develop skills to search and analyse information sources and to consult student regarding how to cite and create the reference list.

The faculty of Kazakh National Pedagogical University after Abay University are responsible to raise students' awareness and understanding of plagiarism, and to disseminate principles of research ethics. West Kazakh Medical University after M. Ospanov has developed the AI Regulations based on internal university policies and the statute of the League of Academic Integrity. A part of Regulations is dedicated to citing and referencing where they provided definitions and examples of references in Harvard and APA style which are required for using.

A number of institutions - Shakarim University, Korkyt Ata State University, Medical University Astana, Miras University - stated that faculty must control and monitor students misconduct and described procedures of plagiarism checking and cheating.

The academic integrity may also be addressed specifically to students (Nazarbayev University Student Code, (2015); S.Seifullin Kazakh AgroTechnical university Code for students, (2019). Or in the Codes of corporate ethics for faculty and staff which most commonly don't specify responsibilities in relation to plagiarism and academic integrity education.

We were able to find policies which mentioned libraries as teamworkers in supporting AI. Code of Academic Integrity of the Caspian State University of Technology and Engineering named after Sh. Yessenov (2017) assigned librarians to be the key responsible for citing and referencing. The librarians have to build collaboration with faculty and students in order to help them to search for information and work on projects. The Rules of Academic Integrity of West Kazakhstan state University after M. Utemisova (n/d) also indicated librarians to be in charge of citing and referencing of materials used in research

and academic papers. The role of libraries in policies writing and discussion of responsibilities sharing requires future research.

The definition of AI is provided in the mentioned above documents. However only a few universities have references to the sources from where it was retrieved. The reference list is given by Sarsen Amanzholov East Kazakhstan State University, Kostanay State University after A. Baitursynova cited wikipedia, KazGUU acknowledged adapted sources.

In August 2018 Askhat Asimaganbekov then a vice-minister for education affirmed that AI is not normally being taught but the subject should be covered in secondary schools alongside with universities and that plagiarism detectors have to be implemented in secondary education institutions (ME RK, 2018). The freshmen students are more likely to plagiarize having a grasp of what is academic integrity/plagiarism if it is not introduced in the colleges or schools. The Regulations on academic integrity for students of Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (2015) and The Internal Regulations of the Republican Physics and Mathematics School (2017) are available on the websites. The research on continuity of AI in educational institutions of all levels and the libraries activities can be done in the future.

Transparency Kazakhstan reported that academic integrity is impossible without access to all research outputs and plagiarism checking of theses (Aubakirov, T., 2017). With this regard the establishment of consolidated repository can be considered. 9 libraries in Kazakh Universities are maintaining institutional repositories. The number of documents vary from 3 000 to 12 000 items. In 2014 the library initiated establishment of NU Repository aiming the long-term preservation of research outputs (Yap, J. M., & Jangulova, 2019). In 2019 the number of documents uploaded to the repository reached more than 3000. In 2019 the Library has developed Open Access Policy which was approved by NU Academic Council and will go into effect in the Fall 2020. The policy may help to resolve the challenges to collect document from schools (Yap, J. M., & Jangulova, 2019).

Transparency Kazakhstan also recommended to National libraries and NCTSE to provide service of plagiarism checking (Aubakirov, T., 2017). Nowadays, NCTSE, the National libraries in Russian and Belarus offer the verification as a paid service which can be availed in person or requested online (Services of NCTSE, n/d; Antiplariat in RSL, 2018; New Service “Antiplariat”, 2016).

The League of AI in Kazakhstan is striving to enhance the standards in educational and research. Namely the initiative consist in development of

standard for assessment of journals selected for publications (About the League of Academic Integrity, 2019). It is a recognized and practical experience of universal libraries to contribute to the awareness raising about predatory publishing. NU Library has created a libguide *Selecting a Journal for Publication* available on the website. We also provide workshops on the topic for the community likewise other libraries stated in re survey responses. Therefore it is recommended to involve librarians in the task force to work on the project.

CONCLUSION

The initiatives of libraries in supporting and promoting academic integrity in Central Asia are coherent with international practice. The evidences support libraries engagement in institutional level such as recognition of their contribution to the AI development in policies. The governmental initiatives and collaborative universities' projects for creating regulations should account an active role of librarians and the area of their expertise in AI improvements. The role of libraries in policies writing and discussion of responsibilities sharing requires future research.

The information literacy programs and sessions on the subject play a prominent role in raising awareness about academic integrity and plagiarism education. This is mainly because of socio-cultural differences in understanding the issue the teaching of AI seems to be challenged. On the other hand the lack of standardised approach confronts the proper assessment and measurement how crucial the misconduct is. The researchers and practitioners agree on the priority of education rather than enforcements. The further research can be done to discover the intensiveness and methods of AI education. Remaining studies on how plagiarism is expanded and changing with time, what are the causes for academic misconduct in the region are important for handling the challenges and finding possible AI improvements.

The plagiarisme detectors continue to serves as one of the essential tools in preventing writing dishonesty. However the access policy is restricted which makes impossible effective training in libraries and may set obstacles for works evaluation for individual researchers. The diversity of tools requires professional development activities for stakeholders in order to achieve understanding of their specifications and algorithm of checking.

It is also recommended to study how the capacity building on AI for academic libraries in the region can be done.

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