

# OPPORTUNITY VERSUS THREAT AMONG STUDENTS: A STUDY ON PLAGIARISM

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Plagiarism is an important topic in the field of research and the increasing practice of preparing assignments by copying is leading to loss of originality in the academics. Plagiarism and its effects have been a menace on the various professional fields. The impact of plagiarism in the field of academics has really jeopardized the proper dissemination of knowledge and information. There exists a significant relationship between intention to copy and student's perception towards the same. There is the dearth of studies which explore the relationship between students' expectations and their actual behavior towards copying. This practice of plagiarism further impacts the student's emotions and satisfaction level for their academic dishonesty. To explore students' expectations, various items like their religious beliefs, dedication, moral values, outcome and gender are considered as antecedents towards their frequency of copying which includes internet plagiarism. The study found the effect of their emotions, feelings and satisfaction level after the unethical practice of copying from internet in the context of a university. A framework has been developed to relate with the practice of copying focusing on the emotions of students due to the inappropriate behavior (internet plagiarism). The empirical study used five-point Likert scale to measure the students' emotions and intentions to validate the instrument used for data collection. The results found out critical constructs having high impact on the students' intentions to plagiarize and their behavior towards the same.

**Keywords:** *Plagiarism, intentions, beliefs, practice, emotions.*

## INTRODUCTION

“Plagiarism is the appropriation or imitation of another’s ideas and manner of expressing them, as in art, literature, etc., to be passed off as one’s own”, [Macquarie Dictionary]. It comes from the Latin “Plagiarius”, which means “a kidnapper”. To accuse someone of plagiarism is to accuse them of something quite monstrous. Yet the word is flung around all the time these days, with little regard for what it actually means.

University authorities, as well as professors, currently promote the awareness about the plagiarism among students along with the significance of educational honesty. It is vital to be honest while writing and presenting their work without copying from others (Bellack, 2004). Most of the times students are not aware whether they are practicing plagiarism or not, this ignorance leads to practice copy and paste other’s work and presenting as their own work. Hence, it’s vital to elucidate the plagiarism to school students to evade plagiarism (Harris, 2001; Hyland, 2001). With the availability of internet or electronic media which facilitates the students to copy and paste.

In most of the cases, people are influenced by the behavior of others as well as the practices of others. Then those experiences put together and help to develop norms in their life. This will further create the intention for plagiarism. Then this will lead to actual behavior for plagiarism which can be favourable or unfavourable. So our study is based on finding the impact of religious beliefs, dedica-

tion and moral values on actual behavior for plagiarism among students. The understanding of this relationship can be used to create awareness and control the plagiarism among scholars.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### FOUNDATION AND EVOLUTION: PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is not a new term. Replicating from other’s work is possibly as older as scripting, but it continued to be unseen from the civic gape. According to Mallon (1989), the Elizabethan playwright Ben Johnson was the first person to use the word plagiary to mean literary theft, at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### ACADEMIC’S AND RESEARCHERS PLAGIARISM REPORT

Universities consider plagiarism as the most serious offence whether in the form of copying other’s work and representing as one’s own. This is increasing day by day because it is very difficult to notice such acts. Even if, some of the cases caught then there are no proper rules in the university to take actions against them or to punish them. This in return gives an increment to such kind of copying activities for gaining grades. This is also so much time consuming and require a lot of efforts from the side of academics.

It is the presentation of the work, idea or creation of another person, without appropriate referencing, as though it is your own. The copying of another person’s ideas or expressions without appropriate acknowledgement and presenting these ideas or forms of expression as your own, extract from Deakin

## MORAL VALUES

Moral values are usually mutual principles. If we did not have values in common, it would be exceedingly complicated to consent on any single course of action. On various values, there will be virtually undisputed conformity. On others, there may be a significant discrepancy.

Moral values are considered as a philosophy that directs a person on what is good and bad or right and wrong. This further helps to understand how one can evaluate the difference between right versus wrong. People usually relate moral values to validate their judgments, objectives and deeds, and it also describes the individual personality and quality of a person. People with high values exhibit traits of honesty, sincerity, bravery, respect, empathy and evenhandedness. On the other hand, people with low values exhibit traits of dishonesty, disrespect, duplicity, fraudulence and increases the intensity to plagiarize.

## RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

A study of belief in mystical powers that controls individual fortune. Religious belief is the belief in the authenticity of the legendary, paranormal, or holy aspects of a religion. It is a belief in supernatural powers that control our destiny.

Understanding in god is different in each culture, and moreover, it's different in the expression of faith in God by each individual of even same religion. People use different modes

and thinking about their relationship with God. Some of them believe in idol worship and through charity, and others believe that God is present everywhere and observing all of us. This is not for a specific religion like Hindu or Muslim, but can be applicable for all. The more we have faith in God's presence, the more a person will have fear before doing wrong deeds. This phenomenon of being god-fearing stops the individuals from wrong deeds, i.e., Plagiarism. So we can say those religious beliefs have some impact on one's act of plagiarism

## DEDICATION

Dedication is the sense of accountability that an individual has towards his work, target, and objective, which he/she needs to fulfil. When a person has dedication, he or she is more prone to execute his duties and tasks that will further help him to achieve his goals with full sincerity. When a scholar is doing his assignments with full dedication, then their probability to plagiarize will minimize automatically.

A commitment or Love towards a task. Dedication can be complete devotion and faith in someone or something, like your dedication to your family, towards your studies, assignments and projects.

## OUTCOME OF PLAGIARISM

The cost of plagiarism can be personal, professional, ethical, and legal. With plagiarism recognition software so voluntarily accessible and in use, plagiarists are being trapped at an alarming pace. Plagiarists include academics, experts, scholars, journalists, creators, learners, writers and others. The outcomes of this illegal act can be terrifically severe.

Effects of plagiarism can be severe as follows:-

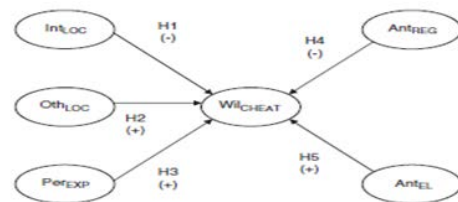
- It can debar you from your course
- It can affect in your project
- It can throw out you from your educational institution
- It can be a lawful act and cause legal repercussions

The crisis is that students face stress to perform better in their assignments or projects which induce the intentions to plagiarize within them with the help of the internet, which is easily accessible by them. 143 further education college students in the UK were debarred in 2007 for copying offences.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Preceding theories examined - cognitive and emotional constructs can be used to healthier understand students' opinions in copying contents (Anderson, 1982). "A developing association of research expresses that student intentions are predisposed concurrently by cognitive and emotional factors; hence, research frameworks should include both cognitive and emotional factors

as preference factors" (Agarwal & Malhotra, 2005). Thus, personal expertise, internal and external locus of control, regret and elation are the causes for willingness to cheat. For our research, these cognitive and emotional factors are intended to signify the foundation causes of copying intentions - the framework of the theory. The figure 1 below shows the model.



**Figure1. Dual Process conceptual Model (Agarwal & Malhotra, 2005)**

Because several scholars feel that copying is immoral simply when it is noticed (Storch & Storch, 2002) on the other hand, exposure of scholar is doubtful.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To develop and test the intentions of the students and their actual behavior towards Plagiarism along with measuring its outcome for Graduate students through a questionnaire.
2. To identify the constructs out of various items of the scale using factor analysis and develop a framework to evaluate their impact on the frequency of students Plagiarism.
3. To Check the impact of the outcome of plagiarism on the students and measure the difference between their expectations and reality.

## HYPOTHESIS

$H_a$ : Sample is significantly adequate for factor analysis

$H_0$ : Presence of significant correlation among the variables

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is empirical in nature and employs quantitative methods of analyses. This research is totally based on Exploratory Research Design.

It is based on the Primary database from the University students. Secondary data used from the available literature of the related content from various sources. The sample size is 344.

It is proposed to conduct a survey of Indian postgraduate students and research scholars to understand their responses to the plagiarism phenomenon. Sampling technique – convenience and cluster sampling were used.

Under analysis the study attempted to developed a new scale where the Reliability will be checked and then Exploratory Factor Analysis is used to find out the selected constructs from the identified variables in the form of components.

Then those components are going to be used to develop the new conceptual framework. In this study, going to discuss the various variables like :- beliefs, values and emotions of Students which is going to depict the Expectations of the students and on the other hand, Reality is going to be depicted by their Frequency of Plagia-

rism or copying. This further is going to point towards the Outcome, i.e., How many cases of plagiarism are noticed and punished accordingly or ignored.

344 respondents were also asked to rate fourteen statements, on a five-point Likert type scale.

All the data from the questionnaires were entered into an SPSS file. Due to time and fund constraints, respondents are graduate students from western U.P. universities.

## VARIABLES / ITEMS OF THE SCALE

To find the most desirable components/factors out of various items which are going to have an impact on the student's intentions for the plagiarism and their frequency to plagiarize. 344 respondents were asked to fill their responses to the following statements using a 5 – point scale in the questionnaire. Their responses are used for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to extract the most suitable constructs for the same study.

### *Table 1 - Variables / Items of the Scale*

$V_1$ : How frequently you visit religious places

$V_2$ : On average, how much time do you spend in a day for completing your assignment

$V_3$ : On average, how frequently do you copy from other's work in parts or as a whole to complete your assignments / project reports

$V_4$ : Have you ever used unfair means to complete your assignment/project work

V<sub>5</sub>: Have you ever bought some project reports

V<sub>6</sub>: Have you ever borrowed project reports, from friends to complete your own assignments

V<sub>7</sub>: Do you believe in presence of god

V<sub>8</sub>: Have you ever advised your friend not to practice this copying of assignment

V<sub>9</sub>: Has he/ she ever listen to you for the same

V<sub>10</sub>: Do you consider your assignments seriously

V<sub>11</sub>: Have you ever copy full assignment/projects

V<sub>12</sub>: Have you ever noticed or punished by teacher for cheating /copying

V<sub>13</sub>: Do you have a feeling of guilt or shame after copying assignments

V<sub>14</sub>: Do you feel satisfied after copying your friend's assignment

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**  
**RELIABILITY**

Initially, some of the questionnaires were consulted from various sources on Plagiarism, then as per requirement questions are selected, and then data was collected from 30 students of the university for the pilot study. After validating the scale and checking its reliability, then data of further 344 students from different universities in western U.P. were collected. The data analyzed and its reliability is measured using Cronbach's Alpha is 0.733, with 344 respondents.

**Table 2 – Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
0.733	14

**EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA)**

After checking its reliability, then Exploratory Factor Analysis is conducted to select the important 6 components out of 14 variables, which will be used for the development of the framework based on the components selected.

**Table 3 – KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.668
Approx. Chi-Square		612.297
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	91
	Sig.	.000

**KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST**

As KMO = 0.668 which is greater than 0.50, so we can say that the sample size is sufficient for the factor analysis and this supports the hypothesis. Ha is accepted.

Then, according to Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the significance is .000, with 91 degree of freedom. Bartlett's test is highly significant when p-value < .001. It depicts that this study is significant and there is a presence of significant correlation among the variables selected for the EFA. Hb is accepted.

**ANTI-IMAGE CORRELATION MATRIX**

In the anti-image correlation matrix given below, shows KMO values for every variable is given away as the diagonal in the matrix (shown in bold black). The diagonal values are acceptable when greater than 0.60 if any value smaller than 0.50 then reject that variable. The smallest correlation value is 0.702, and the largest value is 0.905. This specifies that the matrix is appropriate for factoring. It depicts the sample adequacy.

**Table 4. Anti-image Correlation Matrices**

Variables	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13	V14	
Anti-image Covariance	V1	.841	.059	.054	.182	-.138	.122	-.112	-.006	-.006	-.117	-.049	-.002	-.014	.089
	V2	.059	.885	.108	.058	-.044	.049	.047	-.090	-.040	-.098	.028	-.031	-.131	-.006
	V3	.054	.108	.778	-.094	.056	-.028	.010	-.011	-.128	.050	-.230	-.024	-.067	-.082
	V4	.182	.058	-.094	.752	-.069	-.059	-.009	-.029	.002	-.125	-.061	-.060	.062	.166
	V5	-.138	-.044	.056	-.069	.798	-.111	-.099	-.025	.074	.007	-.106	-.007	.127	-.013
	V6	.122	.049	-.028	-.059	-.111	.844	-.096	-.055	-.002	.059	-.204	-.094	-.088	-.035
	V7	-.112	.047	.010	-.009	-.099	-.096	.890	-.054	.061	-.051	-.004	-.079	-.058	.040
	V8	-.006	-.090	-.011	-.029	-.025	-.055	-.054	.860	-.205	-.114	.102	.031	.034	.081
	V9	-.006	-.040	-.128	.002	.074	-.002	.061	-.205	.870	-.010	.080	-.102	-.001	.015
	V10	-.117	-.098	.050	-.125	.007	.059	-.051	-.114	-.010	.858	-.073	-.095	.099	.028
	V11	-.049	.028	-.230	-.061	-.106	-.204	-.004	.102	.080	-.073	.722	-.084	.086	-.012
	V12	-.002	-.031	-.024	-.060	-.007	-.094	-.079	.031	-.102	-.095	-.084	.850	-.010	.012
	V13	-.014	-.131	-.067	.062	.127	-.088	-.058	.034	-.001	.099	.086	-.010	.881	-.073
	V14	.089	-.006	-.082	.166	-.013	-.035	.040	.081	.015	.028	-.012	.012	-.073	.905
Anti-image Correlation	V1	.784 <sup>a</sup>	.068	.071	.228	-.168	.166	-.129	-.007	-.007	-.137	-.075	-.003	-.017	.102
	V2	.068	.772 <sup>a</sup>	.139	.071	-.052	.065	.053	-.103	-.045	-.112	.041	-.036	-.149	-.007
	V3	.071	.139	.779 <sup>a</sup>	-.132	.076	-.042	.013	-.015	-.166	.066	-.387	-.031	-.086	-.105
	V4	.228	.071	-.132	.721 <sup>a</sup>	-.090	-.085	-.011	-.036	.002	-.155	-.098	-.075	.076	.201
	V5	-.168	-.052	.076	-.090	.707 <sup>a</sup>	-.154	-.117	-.030	.089	.008	-.164	-.008	.151	-.015
	V6	.166	.065	-.042	-.085	-.154	.729 <sup>a</sup>	-.127	-.074	-.003	.080	-.352	-.127	-.117	-.046
	V7	-.129	.053	.013	-.011	-.117	-.127	.702 <sup>a</sup>	-.061	.070	-.059	-.005	-.091	-.066	.044
	V8	-.007	-.103	-.015	-.036	-.030	-.074	-.061	.748 <sup>a</sup>	-.237	-.133	.152	.036	.039	.092
	V9	-.007	-.045	-.166	.002	.089	-.003	.070	-.237	.707 <sup>a</sup>	-.011	.118	-.119	-.002	.016
	V10	-.137	-.112	.066	-.155	.008	.080	-.059	-.133	-.011	.792 <sup>a</sup>	-.109	-.111	.114	.032
	V11	-.075	.041	-.387	-.098	-.164	-.352	-.005	.152	.118	-.109	.793 <sup>a</sup>	-.126	.127	-.018
	V12	-.003	-.036	-.031	-.075	-.008	-.127	-.091	.036	-.119	-.111	-.126	.800 <sup>a</sup>	-.011	.014
	V13	-.017	-.149	-.086	.076	.151	-.117	-.066	.039	-.002	.114	.127	-.011	.857 <sup>a</sup>	-.082
	V14	.102	-.007	-.105	.201	-.015	-.046	.044	.092	.016	.032	-.018	.014	-.082	.870 <sup>a</sup>

a. Measures of Sampling Adequacy(MSA)

**COMMUNALITIES**

‘Communalities’ explains the amount of variance of various items is explained by extracted components. So, it shows the proportion of variance expressed by each variable for new

components. This table shows that all variables are having values more than 0.50, then we will not remove any variable because of low value.

**Table 5. Communalities**

	Initial	Extraction
How frequently you visit religious places	1.000	.746
How much time do you spend in a day for completing your assignment	1.000	.752
How frequently do you copy from other’s assignments in parts or as a whole to complete yours	1.000	.631
Have you ever used unfair means to complete your assignment	1.000	.640
Have you ever bought some project reports	1.000	.479
Have you ever borrowed project reports, from friends to complete yours	1.000	.613
Do you believe in presence of god	1.000	.653
Have you ever advised your friend not to practice this copying of assignment	1.000	.540
Has he/ she ever listen to you for the same	1.000	.720
Do you consider your assignments seriously	1.000	.590
Have you ever copy full assignment/ projects	1.000	.697
Have you ever noticed or punished by teacher for cheating /copying	1.000	.506
Do you have a feeling of guilt or shame after copying assignments	1.000	.665
Do you feel satisfied after copying your friend’s assignment	1.000	.672

*Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.*

**Table 6. Total Variance Explained**

**TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED**

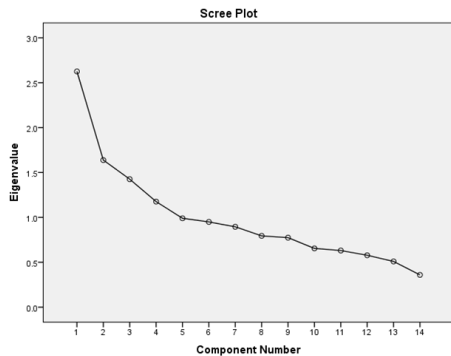
Here, the first 6 components are explaining the 62.889% of total variance, to develop the new constructs for the study. It is reasonably good that the components which are extracted are going to explain more than 60% of the variance out of all variables. Further sustainability can be provided with the help of literature support.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.625	18.753	18.753
2	1.638	11.701	30.454
3	1.425	10.182	40.636
4	1.176	8.399	49.035
5	.990	7.070	56.105
6	.950	6.784	62.889
7	.895	6.396	69.284
8	.794	5.671	74.955
9	.774	5.529	80.484
10	.654	4.675	85.159
11	.631	4.505	89.664
12	.578	4.130	93.794
13	.509	3.637	97.432
14	.360	2.568	100.000



**Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.**

- a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.



**Figure 2. Scree Plot**

**SCREE PLOT**

It is a graph of the eigenvalues against all the factors. It is used to measure that how many factors are needed to retain. This plot is used to

measure the components which are important for the evaluation of the responses to this study.

**COMPONENT PATTERN MATRIX**

The proposal of rotation is to decrease the number of items on which the components under explorations have high loading values. This underlying matrix depicts various loadings related to different variables which further show their association with their respective components. Here, absolute values of variables are observed, the variable having the highest value in whichever component, that variable will be considered to lie under that same component. The highest loadings of various variables are in bold black; this shows that the same variable will lie in that component and used for further analysis as new factors.

**Table 7 – Pattern Matrix**

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
How frequently you visit religious places				<b>.859</b>		
How much time do you spend in a day for completing your assignment					<b>-.859</b>	
How frequently do you copy from other’s assignments in parts or as a whole to complete yours	<b>.607</b>				<b>.377</b>	
Have you ever used unfair means to complete your assignment	<b>.496</b>			<b>-.428</b>		<b>-.446</b>
Have you ever bought some project reports	<b>.408</b>		<b>-.330</b>			
Have you ever borrowed project reports, from friends to complete yours	<b>.736</b>					
Do you believe in presence of god	<b>.341</b>	<b>-.396</b>		<b>.463</b>		<b>-.387</b>
Have you ever advised your friend not to practice this copying of assignment			<b>.584</b>			<b>-.348</b>

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Has he/ she ever listen to you for the same	<b>.854</b>	
Do you consider your assignments seriously	<b>.511</b>	<b>-.528</b>
Have you ever copy full assignment/ projects	<b>.756</b>	
Have you ever noticed or punished by teacher for cheating /copying	<b>.599</b>	
Do you have a feeling of guilt or shame after copying assignments	<b>-.775</b>	
Do you feel satisfied after copying your friend's assignment		<b>.807</b>

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**Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.**

**Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.**

a. Rotation converged in 44 iterations.

## COMPONENT CORRELATION MATRIX

In the component correlation matrix, as all diagonal values are 1.000 and the lower matrix is the mirror image of the upper matrix. This depicts that it is an identity matrix and

describes that all the new components extracted are symmetrical in nature. It shows the linear correlation among various components extracted. This satisfies that the new components can be used for further testing and analysis but before that their nomenclature is needed to be done.

**Table 8. Component Correlation Matrix**

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1.000	.085	-.044	.008	.058	-.115
2	.085	1.000	.001	.034	-.015	-.106
3	-.044	.001	1.000	-.071	-.115	.004
4	.008	.034	-.071	1.000	-.140	-.114
5	.058	-.015	-.115	-.140	1.000	.096
6	-.115	-.106	.004	-.114	.096	1.000

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**Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.**

**Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.**

**RESULT**

**H<sub>a</sub>: Sample is significantly adequate for factor analysis**

As KMO = 0.668 which is greater than 0.50, so we can say that the sample size is sufficient for the factor analysis and this supports the hypothesis. H<sub>a</sub> is accepted.

**H<sub>b</sub>: Presence of significant correlation among the variables**

Then, according to Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity, the significance is .000, with 91 degree of freedom. Bartlett’s test is highly significant when p-value < .001. It depicts that this study is significant and there is the presence of significant correlation among the variables selected for the EFA. H<sub>b</sub> is accepted.

**NOMENCLATURE FOR VARIABLES**

Below the table is summarizing the various new components using various existing items:-

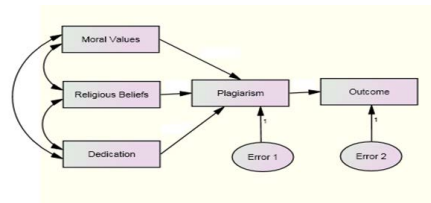
**Table 9. Components**

Components	Nomenclature
1	Plagiarism
2	Outcome
3	Moral Values
4	Religious Beliefs
5	Dedication
6	Emotions/Satisfaction level

Respective absolute values of the component matrix were considered for the components then accordingly nomenclature assigned with the help of literature support for the same. So, in the above table nomenclature to the various components are allotted.

These new components are going to be used in further research and for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using SEM, to develop a new model. This will further used to elaborate the various components extracted through EFA and also clears the magnitude and direction of correlation between them.

With the help of above-extracted components, a conceptual framework can be generated that is shown below.



**Figure 3. Attitude towards Plagiarism & its Outcome**

This is the conceptual framework which is developed using the extracted components. Here, we will consider the Moral Values, Religious Beliefs and Dedication of students as their Expectations and frequency of Plagiarism will be considered as Reality, and further Outcome will be considered as the punishments for the copying.

**CONCLUSION**

In this study, the researcher observed the various variables with the help questionnaire, and then their responses are analyzed with the help of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). This will further be used to extract the various components to develop the conceptual framework for the study. It depicts the frequency of plagiarism is so common in universities in western U.P. specifically in case of assignments

submitted by the students. As a result, Religious Beliefs, Dedication and Moral Values have some impact on Plagiarism. Further, Plagiarism will lead to Outcome, which shows that the result of copying cases are noticed and punished accordingly out of all plagiarism cases for assignments. So, various components are needed to be taken for controlling plagiarism in the university in India.

## SIGNIFICANCE

This research will help the education and research sector in general and particularly scholars in dealing with the plagiarism phenomenon by gaining a better understanding of how beliefs and values affect plagiarism behaviour. This research will also enrich the extant literature on plagiarism. Evaluate the intentions of students to plagiarize.

## LIMITATIONS

The components extracted in this study can be further used for the developing model for evaluating the plagiarism behavior in students. Further, new factors can be added eventually and can be tested with various other statistical tools. The conceptual framework evolved can be used to develop a theoretical model using SEM with the help of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Due to time and fund constraints, my study was restricted to western U.P. and graduate students only.

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