ACADEMIC (DIS)HONESTY IN ALBANIA: CONCERNS ON PLAGIARISM

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ACADEMIC (DIS)HONESTY IN ALBANIA: CONCERNS ON PLAGIARISM

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Abstract

This policy paper focuses on the problem of plagiarism in the scientific work published by academic staff members in Albania. At first, the paper provides a definition of plagiarism based on the reviewed foreign literature. Then, it examines the legislation on higher education, copyright, and plagiarism. By double checking plagiarism programs and manually examining 64 scientific works, including 5 doctoral works, the study assesses the most common forms of plagiarism and its level of permeation in academic research. A questionnaire completed by 65 public and non-public university pedagogues in Tirana, Durres, Elbasan, Shkodra and Vlora helped to identify some of the causes of committing plagiarism on the part of academic staff members and their perception on the severity and spread of this problem. Their answers provide valuable information on current capacities and performance of higher education institutions with regard to awareness, oversight, disclosure, and sanctioning of ethical violations and cases of plagiarism. The study pays special attention to the problem of self-plagiarism, also identified in works submitted for double check for plagiarism. This document proposes few recommendations adapted to the main finding of this study by pointing out the need to prevent, oversee and sanction cases of plagiarism.
1. Introduction

Scientific research in Albania features many problems and deficiencies, particularly with regard to ethics, and research results leave much to be desired.\(^1\) Plagiarism as a phenomenon is found not only in students’ work but also in academic staff’s research. While there are several factors that affect spread of this phenomenon, the first one consists in the difficulty to define the concept of plagiarism. It should be considered that the borderline between plagiarism and research is surprisingly murky, because advanced research implies review of many sources and “standing on the shoulders” of others.\(^2\)

From the etymological viewpoint, plagiarism is “literary thief”,\(^3\) while the Oxford Dictionary defines it as “the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own”.\(^4\) In this work, we will refer to plagiarism as “a form of intellectual

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1. Committee on Higher Education and Scientific Research, “Final Report on Reform of Higher Education and Scientific Research”, Tirana, (2014: 51). The report argues, among others, that “The research output is not conceptualized right; in many cases it is justified with publication of textbooks, failing to focus in original and experimental work to bring innovation to science. Cases of plagiarism are quite common.”


theft”5 and “academic dishonesty”6. Simply put, plagiarism is both a theft (stealing someone else’s work) and cheat (passing it off as one’s own) in the intellectual world.7 A form of plagiarism is self-plagiarism, in which the writer republishes a work in its entirety or reuses portions of a previously written text while authoring a new work.8 In essence, self-plagiarism is a scholarly misconduct, because it does not contribute to further advancement of knowledge and artificially increases the number of scientific works and, consequently, earned degrees, regardless of lack of innovative contribution. Self-plagiarism can also infringe upon a publisher’s copyright.9 Plagiarism is an individual act closely connected with personal moral and ethical norms. In literature, the problem may be attributed, in part, to the interdisciplinary nature of the topic and the ethical challenges of accessing and using information technology.10 Spread of academic dishonesty is facilitated by technological developments11 and appearance of plagiarism varies from undertaking an intentional or systematic act to unintentional nonabidance to principles of ethics in scientific research.12

In Albania, universities are responsible to maintain and strengthen the standards of academic integrity. While data are lacking, it is assumed that plagiarism is relatively endemic at all levels. Lack of research infrastructure is one of the factors that have affected

9 Ibid
the decline of academic integrity, as the response from responsible structures has been meager to date.

Taking into account a deficiency of studies on the quality of scientific research and policies that target this serious problem, this work seeks to:

- **Identify forms and scale of severity of plagiarism among academic staff members in social sciences and doctorates; and**

- **Contribute to addressing this problem by providing some specific recommendations generated by analyzing the findings of the study and its survey.**

This document is composed of these sections: the methodology employed in this study is provided in the first section. It is followed by a section that examines the applicable legal framework. Then, the study continues with the presentation of findings generated from an examination of scientific research and doctoral works for plagiarism as well as from the survey on academic staff’s perception of this phenomenon. The last section provides conclusions and related recommendations.
2. Methodology

To address the problem of plagiarism in social sciences, authors employed a mixed-method approach, which enabled the collection, generation, and analysis of the information and data obtained from various sources. Triangulation of (qualitative and quantitative) data, methodological triangulation (examination of primary and secondary documentation and survey), and theoretical triangulation were employed to help in-depth understanding of the finding and ensure their validation and credibility. The last method consisted in collecting the interpretations of university teachers with scientific degrees and academic titles on some major findings (e.g. self-plagiarism with doctorate works).

During the first phase, secondary sources on plagiarism, published online in country and abroad, were identified and analyzed. In this phase, the domestic legislation on higher education, copyright, and plagiarism was reviewed. Aspects of this review included statutes and academic regulations of two universities in Albania - one public and one private.

In the second phase, the relevant indicators were determined in order to identify and assess the level of plagiarism in scientific articles published by the academic staff of the two universities selected for this study.

Later, a list of all pedagogues (with at least doctoral degree) currently employed in four social sciences faculties of two (public and non-public) universities was prepared. The total number of pedagogues for all four faculties is 229. The internet website www.mauvecould.net was used for a random selection of a sample of 5 pedagogues from each faculty. It was initially planned to obtain three scientific research works from each selected pedagogue, but
because some of them had fewer than three research works, it was later decided to increase the number of pedagogues by the same procedure in order to ensure a higher number of scientific articles to undergo examination for plagiarism. Thus, the total number of selected pedagogues was 26, of which held Doctor degree, 7 were Associate Professors, and 4 had earned the Prof. Dr. degree. In total, 59 scientific articles published in scientific reviews in country and abroad during 2001-2015 were examined for plagiarism by means of software program and in manual form.

In addition, 5 doctoral (PhD) researches submitted to these universities in the last three years were selected randomly. The computer software examination and manual control were used for doctoral researches written in English. Technical difficulties to electronically control doctoral work written in Albanian led to manual control (basically using “Google search, check of references, quotations, etc.). It was of no relevance whether the authors of the doctoral works were employed as instructors in any higher education institution in Albania in order to examine for plagiarism the PhD works submitted to and defended at the respective departments.

Lastly, the examination for plagiarism was conducted to 59 scientific research works initially through a special computer program and then by manual control. For ethical reasons, the names of two universities, academic staff members employed in them, whose works were examined for plagiarism, and the authors of the examined PhD research works will not be disclosed.

During the third phase, a qualitative research instrument (questionnaire) was designed in an electronic form for a ten-day period. The survey questionnaire targeted teachers of several public and non-public universities in five districts of the country. The main goal of this survey was to grasp their perception on the scale of plagiarism, opinions on causes, and their recommendations for tackling this problem. Snowball sampling was employed for an easier dissemination of the information on questionnaire online and its completion by as many pedagogues as possible. The questionnaire was delivered to a total of 346 pedagogues and only 65 of them responded – a response rate of 18.7 percent.
3. Legal Framework

In addition to constituting a severe violation of research ethics and academic writing, plagiarism violates legal provision that protect copyright. Freedom of scientific research, use and benefits from intellectual products are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Albania.¹³ Second paragraph of Article 58 stipulates legal protection of copyright. Albania has also ratified a series of international conventions and agreements in the area of copyright and protection of intellectual property, such as WIPO Treaty on Copyright, etc.¹⁴ Once ratified, these acts have found their way to domestic legislation and are, therefore, binding for enforcement.

Currently, Law No. 9380, dated 28.04.2005, “On Copyright and Related Rights”, is the major piece of legislation on protection of intellectual property. Yet, according to annual evaluations of the European Commission on Albania, this law does not comply with the EU standards and the new draft law developed with the assistance of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has not been adopted yet.¹⁵ People who claim that their copyright have been

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harmed by other subjects may also use several provisions of the Criminal Code and Civil Code. In practice, many claims are annually filed with the courts building on legal provisions of Articles 148 and 149 of the Criminal Code and Article 608 and other articles of the Civil Code. These articles are linked with the criminal offences of “Publication of another person’s work with own name”, and “Unlawful reproduction of the work of another” as well as civil lawsuits on instituted harm and claim for recompense.

Another important piece of legislation is the Law on Higher Education and Scientific research, adopted in 2015, which specifies, inter alia, the establishment of an Ethics Council at higher education institutions. In addition to the teaching process, the Ethics Council reviews issues on research ethics. Of particular interest in this area are several subregulatory acts, such as the Council of Ministers’ Decision No. 232, dated 19.04.2006, “On Creation and Functioning of Albania Copyright Office” and national strategic documents on “Implementation of Intellectual Property Rights”, and “Science, Technology and Innovation”, adopted with Council of Ministers’ Decision. Principles of honesty, ethics, avoidance of plagiarism, and respect of copyright are also included in the Regulation on Ethics of the Research and Publishing Activity, adopted in year 2012. As a rule, in addition to statutes and internal regulations, higher education institutions must also have codes and protocols of ethics. Their existence, increase of awareness on their imposition and compliance as well as their continuous monitoring are necessary conditions for promoting and maintaining requirements of ethics in the course of scientific research from both students and academic staff of these institutions.

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4. Findings from Control for Plagiarism

A control for plagiarism did not identify problems for 7 scientific articles published by one Prof. Dr. (for three articles as coauthors), one Dr. (three articles as coauthor) and another Dr. (one article as single author). For the rest of the works (52 scientific articles and 5 doctoral works), a double audit for plagiarism identified the following problems by form of plagiarism and extent of spread. While the extent of spread varies by work and author, the main problems of plagiarism include flagrant plagiarism (‘copy-paste’), plagiarism in translation, lack/ill-use of references, and plagiarism of images. These findings are presented by continuously referring to scientific degrees of authors of the audited works during the period this study was conducted (in March 2016).

One of the most flagrant forms of plagiarism is word-for-word copying of entire sentences and paragraphs from other authors’ previous works. Evident cases of this form of plagiarism were identified in 23 scientific works, published in country and abroad (Graph 1). Thus, an audit of two articles written by a university teacher holding doctoral degree revealed that one of them had 4 lines of the abstract and 7 others in the text identical with two foreign authors without attribution to them in the research. In the
second article coauthored with a candidate for doctoral scientific degree, it was found that 54 percent of the article was direct plagiarism of a foreign article, to which only three words (“An investigation into”) were omitted and keeping the rest of the title and using it the article controlled for plagiarism. The third article published by the same pedagogue in 2015 had 7 lines similar to a foreign article without attribution and quotation marks, published in 2013. Entire sentences and paragraphs have also been copied in an article published in 2011 by an Assoc. Prof., who uses in the preface a definition given by a foreign author in 2008, without attribution and quotation marks. About 22 percent (758 words out of a total of 3,414 words) of the article is deliberate plagiarism, which is clearly reflected in a paragraph with bullet points copied from the foreign article and adapting only few words to conform to the context of the article under review.

Two articles co-written by another Assoc. Prof. revealed significant problems of plagiarism. In the first work, for which its coauthors were hired as experts by an Albanian NGO, there is no bibliography or one single reference to the source of comparative data quoted for difference countries. While such works cannot be considered academic research, failure to comply with basic standards of writing and ethics on the parts of authors who hold various academic degrees is of great concern. The other article features ad literam plagiarism at the highest degree possible identified in all the works examined under this study. Plagiarism in this specific article went beyond 90 percent –33 percent was copied from one source only. Plagiarism was also identified in articles published by a Prof. Dr., whose Abstract had a sentence identical with the preface of a foreign report and the entire part on Literature Review and 8-9 consecutive lines were obtained from a World Bank report as well as 5 identical line were copied from Wikipedia. The plagiarism rate in this article was 28.5 percent, whereas the second article had a plagiarism rate of 21 percent (974 words out of a total of 4,580). An example of plagiarism identified in one of the articles examined with a special software is presented below.

Another form of plagiarism encountered is the use of the text translated from another foreign language, without completely and correctly making reference to the original source. It is difficult
Graph 1.
Forms of plagiarism/number of articles with problems

- Copy-paste plagiarism: 23
- Translation plagiarism: 5
- Self-plagiarism: 13
- Lack/problems of references: 35
- Plagiarism of images (tables/graphics, etc.): 10
and challenging to identify this form of plagiarism, as it requires manual control because of the technical impossibility of the anti-plagiarism software to detect it. To identify this form of plagiarism, researchers used other techniques, such as translating from Albanian into English some key words within paragraphs and running a Google search on them. This control identified at least 5 articles with parts translated from a foreign language and without making reference and attribution to the original source or with incorrect references. This is the case of an article published by a Prof. Dr. in a magazine in the country. Three out of five pages of this article were translated word-for-word from an article published in English. While the author of the original article was only mentioned in a footnote, the reference was incomplete and incorrect (quoted website was inaccessible and the reference did not have an access date). However, it is unacceptable that an article presented as “Reflections on (title of original article translated into Albanian)” translated and uses verbatim copy of a considerable part of the original work rather than commenting by paraphrasing or quoting parts from the original source. Likewise, two articles published in Albanian by an Assoc. Prof. are in fact processed translations of the same author’s article published in English, without making a reference to the previous publication. This aspect does indeed raise concerns of self-plagiarism, which seems to be endemic in the examined academic works.

In addition to the abovementioned cases of self-plagiarism of the two articles translated from English into Albanian, it was found out that a pedagogue holding a doctoral degree has translated into English and published three complete chapters of his doctoral work without mentioning the original sources and without abiding to the requirements of paraphrasing or quotation of reused parts. This
was revealed in two other cases: 1) two chapters of doctorate work of each of the coauthors were identified in a scientific research coauthored by an Assoc. Prof.; and 2) a scientific article presented by a pedagoge holding a doctoral degree was in fact a chapter of a previous doctoral work. Indeed, most pedagogues (56 percent) that completed the questionnaire of this study think that the presentation of specific chapter a doctoral study as an academic article is not plagiarism in case it is mentioned that this article is part of a doctoral research.”

As a matter of fact, reuse of a scientific work to earn a doctoral scientific degree is in violation of the subregulatory acts, which stipulate that earning academic titles requires, among others, publication, after doctoral research, of ‘original scientific articles or reviews in scientific magazines.” Self-plagiarism was also identified in a scientific article authored by an Assoc. Prof, in whose article were identified at least 68 lines dispersed in the text that were identical with parts of a UNICEF report for which the pedagoge had contributed as an associate researcher. Another form of self-plagiarism is the publication of the same article in the same scientific magazine in two different years (2013, 2014) by a pedagoge holding a doctoral degree. The total number of scientific works that had completely or partially similar content with unquoted previous works of same authors was 13 (Graph 1). In terms of the above, a considerable part of the examined articles had noticeable problems with listing of sources, their completeness and accuracy, compliance with the requirement of paraphrasing, citations without quotation marks and in-text references. These deficiencies make it hard to identify the original sources and oftentimes lead to assumptions of authorship on information provided without the required references. Thus, 35 scientific research articles had plain problems, including:

- Failure to abide to a specific style of reference (e.g., AMA, APA, Chicago, Harvard, OCSOLA, etc.);

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19 See the 'Findings of Questionnaire' section and the graphs of Annex 2 for more information on answers given to this question.

• Various reference styles in the bibliography of the same article (indicating potential plagiarism of bibliographic references from different consulted articles);

• A considerable number of references (17 of them in a particular case) similar by listing with that of a foreign article;

• Incomplete and inaccurate references, such as Duka, 270:30 or www.bksh.al, provided at the bibliography part).

• Failure to include in-text references in the bibliography (e.g., Gupta, 2008);

• Presenting a website address as a source, without providing other necessary data;

• In some cases, referenced websites do not have an access date and result invalid (e.g. “File not found”);

• Problems with quotations, use of quotation marks, and presenting the source for parts of the text provided in quotation marks.

Another form of plagiarism is the one of images, graphics, tables, etc., without quoting their source. Images, figures, graphs, etc., are copyrighted just like any other creative, intellectual product. A manual examination of scientific research works for plagiarism revealed that 10 of them contained graphics and tables with data but failing to quote the relevant source. For instance, regardless that it did not represent any of the problems stated above, one of the works published by a university teacher holding a doctoral degree contained at the end of his/her work several images of towns of Albania without quoting the source or copyright holder of these pictures (e.g. photographer or postcard company). In another case, an article published by an Assoc. Prof. contained illustrative tables without quoting their source. This problem was also identified on the first page of an audited doctoral work, which included an image of several foreign currencies, but did not quote
the source and did not specify whether authorization from author had been obtained.

The level of plagiarism in reviewed articles varies by article. Thus, 24 articles featured flagrant forms of plagiarism (‘copy-paste’) at a rate of 20 percent. Seven other works had a plagiarism rate of 21-40 percent. Four other scientific research works had a plagiarism rate of 41-60 percent (49%, 54%, 56% and 60%). One article coauthored by two Associate Professors constituted the most concerning case of highest plagiarism rate, going over 90% of the publication.

Finally, a manual and software examination for plagiarism was also conducted to five doctoral works submitted to a public university and one work to a non-public university. Problems identified in these doctoral works are similar to those encountered in scientific articles and include: plagiarism of images (in the front page of a work and tables/graphics without quoting relevant source, copying (8 pages out of a total of 93 pages of a doctoral research) of an international conference program together with the list of participants in it, and many other problems explained above. These programs relate with the poor references or there lack thereof, (e.g. general internet website addresses, such as www.ilo.org, or inaccessible website, mentioning author’s name or work only, lack of quotations, etc. Other problems identified in these works, even though not directly linked with plagiarism, include references to Wikipedia (not advisable in academic research because of any person’s easy access to modify its content) and use of Google Translate for translation of abstracts from Albanian to English.21
Graph 2: Rate of plagiarism in scientific research

- 0-20%: 24
- 21-40%: 7
- 41-60%: 4
- 61-80%: 1
- 81-100%: 1
5. Findings of Questionnaire

BOX 1: MAIN FACTORS THAT LEAD TO PLAGIARISM

Based on responses given by respondents of this questionnaire, the major factors that push academic staff to commit plagiarism include:

- Lack of professionalism and academic culture;
- Impunity of plagiarism
- Lack of research infrastructure in universities;
- Existence of quantitative parameters only in obtaining an academic title;
- Limited financial resources intended for scientific research;
- Dormant ethics boards in universities

The questionnaire with 12 questions (9 closed-ended and 3 open-ended) was completed by 65 pedagogues holding various scientific degrees and titles. Most of them were PhD students (32.3%), Dr. (29.2%) and Assoc. Prof. (26.2%). Least represented in this survey were pedagogues with Prof. Dr. degrees (4 persons) and 4 others with Master’s degree (Graph 4).

22 Questions are provided in the Annex.
Most respondents (72.4%) have completed at least one academic program abroad, while 18 of the respondents have only studied in the country. Irrespective of lack of official statistics, it is assumed that the number of academic staff to have completed one or more academic programs abroad is practically smaller. The high rate of respondents from these university teachers in the survey may be interpreted as an indicator of their enhanced sensitiveness to the topic of the questionnaire (Graph 5).
When asked how often doctoral works in Albania contain plagiarized content, most respondents (64.4% or 42 of them) think that this happens ‘frequently’, whereas 17 respondents (26.2) think that this happens ‘in few cases’. Only two respondents (3%) believe that this ‘never’ happens. The perception that this is a phenomenon occurring ‘frequently’ is more spread among PhD students (17 out of a total of 21) and among those that have
completed at least one academic program abroad (35 out of 47 in total or 74%). This perception is less common among those that have not studied abroad (7 out of 18 in total, or 38%). Eleven respondents think that doctoral researches do have plagiarized content ‘in few cases’ (6 respondents), ‘rarely’ (3 respondents), and ‘never’ (2 respondents).
When asked “Do you think you may have plagiarized in your writings?”, most respondents (64.6%) replied negatively, 21.5% responded ‘maybe’, whereas 7.7% stated they ‘don’t know’. Only 4 respondents out of a total of 65 admitted having committed plagiarism in their writings (Graph 7).

Graph 7.
Do you think you may have plagiarized in your writings?
Questions 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 sought to assess capacities and performance of university on training on plagiarism, detection skills (with anti-plagiarism software), supervision and punishment of identified violations.

Thus, 29 respondents (or 44.6%) stated that their university provides classes on ethical research and plagiarism. Yet, 35.4% of the respondents (about 9% less) declare quite the opposite.

Graph 8.
Does your university provide subjects or workshops on ethical research and plagiarism?

- Yes: 29
- Don’t know: 13
- No: 23
In addition, some 20% have no information on any programs or modules against plagiarism (Graph 8).

In terms of universities’ logistic capacities to detect plagiarism in scientific research work, most respondents (66.2%) admit the lack of anti-plagiarism software, and 27.7% of the respondents state the opposite (Graph 9).

Graph 9.
Is your university using any anti-plagiarism software at all?

- No: 6%
- Don’t know: 66%
- Yes: 28%
About 54% of the respondents stated to have information on cases sanctioned for plagiarism in the university where they are employed. However, about 34% are not aware of any such cases (Graph 10).

Graph 10.
Do you know of any case of punishment on grounds of plagiarism in your university?

Some 47.7% of the respondents say that the Ethics Committee is functional in their university, whereas 33.8% do not have any
information on the work of this Committee and 18.5% state that this Committee never worked at the university where they teach (Graph 11)

Graph 11.
As far as you know, is the Ethics Committee functional in your university

When asked about the frequency of meetings held by the Ethics Committee during year 2015, respondents (16 of them) are divided
equally among 1, 2 4 and 5 meetings. Six respondents said they did not know and 3 respondents declared that this Committee never convened.

Pedagogues were particularly asked about the problem of self-plagiarism. Indeed, they were asked whether presentation of specific chapter of a doctoral study as an academic article is not plagiarism.

Graph 12.
According to you, presentation of specific chapter of a doctoral study as an academic article

<table>
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<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not plagiarism</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is plagiarism in case it is mentioned that this article is part of a doctoral research</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is plagiarism</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
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plagiarism or not. About 54% of the respondents declared that “this is not plagiarism in case it is mentioned that the article is part of a doctoral research”. Another 9% of the respondents were stricter in their stance, considering such act to be plagiarism. Yet, to some 21.5% this is not plagiarism, whereas 15.4% of the respondents (10 pedagogues) do not know whether this act constitutes plagiarism or not. While most respondents point out the need to quote the original research (doctoral work), the presence of dissimilar opinions or answers that lay bare the lack of information on this issue underlines the need to determine and adopt written codes and protocols on ethics in academic research and writing (Graph 12).

BOX 2: MEASURES TO PREVENT PLAGIARISM

- Adoption and strict implementation of preventive measures are considered to be the most effective option for the fight against plagiarism and for strengthening academic integrity some of these measures include:
  - Publication and promotion of the Code of Ethics;
  - Publication in Albanian of an informational manual on styles of references and on plagiarism/self-plagiarism;
  - Installation of anti-plagiarism software in the universities;
  - Organization of awareness sessions;
  - Uninterrupted verification by samples of literature quoted in the works of the academic staff;
  - Strict examination of references/bibliography;
  - Update of curricula and inclusion of case studies on ethical issues;
  - Continuous education on standards of academic integrity;
  - Cultivation of critical thinking among the students
Conclusions and Recommendations

This study focused on the nature and extent of the spread of plagiarism among the academic staff in Albania. It also highlights the need for responsible institutions’ proactive intervention. Findings generated from the examination of scientific publications of a sample of university lecturers and the perceptions collected through a questionnaire conducted with some academic staff revealed that this phenomenon is considerably spread in the academic domain. Deficient awareness on plagiarism and its severity along with the lack of codes and written protocols are deemed to be among the major causes of the appearance and spread of plagiarism. In addition, Ethics Committee’s scarce meetings on scientific research in university, poor supervision of quality and compliance with the ethical core principles, and failure to institute strict administrative measures have contributed to the aggravation of the situation.
The results point to the need for an imperative, comprehensive, and coordinated institutional approach to plagiarism. To this end, it is a priority to promote ownership among university pedagogues and enhance institutional capacities and responsibilities in order to contribute to abidance to ethical principles in research, to increase awareness on copyright, to prevent and detect plagiarism and to improve the quality of scientific research in social sciences.

In light of findings of this study, it is suggested that central institutions in cooperation with higher education institutions undertake the following steps:

- **Improve legislation with preventive measures and escalated severity of punishment for cases of plagiarism;**

- **Establish quality criteria for measuring research work of academic staff and review the parameters applied on their scientific and pedagogical qualification;**

- **Establish a national database on topics of diploma for master and doctoral levels;**

- **Make available to all higher education institutions an Albanian-language software to detect plagiarism in all cycles of research;**

- **Make “Academic Writing and Scientific Research” mandatory for all doctoral programs in social sciences;**
• Adopt an anti-plagiarism strategy for academic staff to facilitate the process of supervision and control of scientific leaders on doctoral research topics;

• Open a Center for Academic Writing to provide counsel, training and continuous education on principles of ethics in scientific research to academic staff and students of all levels;

• Establish Committees on Scientific Research Ethics at universities and regularly apply monitoring mechanisms along with online publication of periodic reports;

• Improve research infrastructure and subscribe to international scientific research databases of real impact factor;

• Provide financial support to scientific research and encourage publications at international level.
Bibliography


Annex:

Questionnaire

The questionnaire designed and distributed electronically (via Google Forms) was completed by 65 pedagogues holding various scientific degrees and titles. Universities where they are currently teaching are public and private located in 5 areas of the Albania. The questionnaire contained 12 questions (of which 9 closed-ended and 3 open-ended).

1. What academic degree do you currently hold? (PhD Student/Dr./Assoc. Prof. /Prof. Dr./other)

2. Have completed any of the following academic programs abroad?
   (Bachelor/Master/Doctorate /Post-Doctorate/None of them)

3. Does your university provide classes/subjects or workshops on ethical research and plagiarism? (Yes/No/Don’t know)

4. Is your university using any anti-plagiarism software at all? (Yes/No/Don’t know)

5. Do you know of any case of punishment on grounds of plagiarism in your university? (Yes/No/Don’t know)

6. How often do you think doctorate works in Albania contain plagiarized content? (Never/Rarely/In few cases/Frequently)

7. As far as you know, is the Ethics Committee functional in your university? (Yes/No/Don’t know)
8. If yes, how many times did this Ethics Committee convene during 2015? (Write a number)

9. Do you think you may have plagiarized content in your writings? (Yes/No/Maybe/Don't know)

10. According to you, presentation of specific chapter of a doctoral study as an academic article: (is not plagiarism/is plagiarism/is not plagiarism in case it is mentioned that this article is part of a doctoral research/Don't know)

11. Please name some of the strategies applied to prevent/detect plagiarism:

12. According to you, what are the main causes that push academic staff commit plagiarism? How can this phenomenon be combatted?
ACADEMIC (DIS)HONESTY IN ALBANIA: CONCERNS ON PLAGIARISM

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