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Plagiarism Research Paper

Plagiarism, it seems very scary. When I was in my undergraduate, it was more than 15 years ago, I had never heard that term. I was a computer science student from one the prominent universities in Indonesia. For my major, almost all the course books were from overseas. The price of each book was extremely expensive, even nearly equal to my monthly living expenses. Dealing with such problem, I eventually made duplicate of those books using a photocopy machine. I was not alone because I am highly certain if almost every student did the same thing. It was a very common thing at that time.

Even though, as a computer science student, I was not too fond of coding. Thus, for every coding assignment, I would go to find my friends and ask them to help me. I copied their source code, made small modifications and then submitted it. I knew if that was not a good thing to do, dishonest, even it was a shameful behavior as a student. I did not care; I just wanted to get a better score and graduate as soon as possible, getting a bachelor degree and find a good job. Actually, it was not the worst case, one of a friend of mine, he was a student at one of the private universities, even bought someone else's thesis and acknowledged it as his own.

Plagiarism can be defined as "using another writer's words or unique ideas as if they were your own" [1]. Other source also described the meaning as – "to use another person's idea or a part of that person's work and pretend that it is your own" [2]. Although plagiarism is not a criminal or civil infringement, plagiarism is illegal and not acceptable in any of its forms, particularly in the western education systems. An individual or institution can sue and take to the court others if his or their intellectual property used without permission or acknowledged by others (partially or completely). Intellectual property means " a work or invention that is the result of creativity, such as

a manuscript or a design, to which one has rights and for which one may apply for a patent, copyright, trademark, etc." [3]. Now, The protection of intellectual property has been adopted by all countries in the world, including Indonesia. However, the law enforcement may still be different for each country. Not as strong as in western countries, law enforcement against infringement of intellectual property, particularly in developing countries, is still inadequate. The main reason is because of many people, consciously or unconsciously, depend on the economic activities that use or produce products that violate intellectual property rights, for example movies and music piracy or the imitation of fashion products.

In the academic society, plagiarism has become a common thing and growing in research or any scholarly writing, particularly among students. Why students do plagiarize? In my case, as I illustrated earlier, the reasons for my action was an economic issue, apathy, lack of knowledge, the need to obtain a higher score and of course, laziness.

The issue of plagiarism among students arises in many different ways. According to [4], plagiarism among students can appear in the form of:

1. Stealing material from another source and passing it off as their own.

2. Submitting a paper written by someone else and passing it off as their own.

3. Taking the content of someone else writing but using citation or reference in inappropriate way.

4. Paraphrasing material from one or more source texts without supplying appropriate documentation.

Whatever the reason, plagiarism remains illegal, inappropriate behavior, unprofessional and should be eradicated from our lives, especially in academic society. Preventing the growth and the spread of plagiarism in the society, [5] propose some strategies, which are:

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1. For teachers, change assignments every time so they will be more unique and less prone to being plagiarized.

2. For individual research papers, create unique course-specific assignments. This ensures that there will be few (if any) existing papers that could be plagiarized.

3. Use technology to check student assignments or any writings if there is any plagiarism or not.

By the increase of public awareness of the importance of intellectual property, the control of plagiarism practices will be more robust.

(Word count : 711)

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