Academic Plagiarism, Intellectual Property and WhatsApp Messaging-
Where Do the Lines Cross?

Beryl Ehondor
Pan-Atlantic University

The ubiquity of the internet, lavish content and adeptness of social-media applications arouses issues of social media plagiarism, where lines cross in WhatsApp messaging and academic plagiarism. Plagiarism and copyright infringement have a variety of implication for scholars. While there are plagiarism checkers like Turnitin, it cannot decipher an original message extracted from the WhatsApp status update or broadcast message. Hence the relevance of this textual and discourse analysis. The paper concludes that WhatsApp plagiarism can be mitigated by user exercising strength-of-character (virtue) and discretion in updates. Also, the government providing enabling environment via policies, in the interest of good scholarship.

Keywords: academic plagiarism, copyright infringement, intellectual property, WhatsApp messaging

INTRODUCTION

The ubiquity of the internet, the explosion of available content and adeptness of social media applications has aroused discourse and some problem questions like 'if social media content can be plagiarised'? Specifically, are WhatsApp messages and status updates considered public domain content? Are they subject to intellectual property protection? If a phrase from an individual's WhatsApp status is adopted in a publication, is this plagiarism? Where do the lines of plagiarism and intellectual property cross concerning the use of WhatsApp message content, especially where books and academic publications (online or offline) are involved? What is the implication of WhatsApp content use, especially as plagiarism checkers cannot flag it, where it was hitherto an original text copied? Is acknowledgement enough, or is it public domain and not intellectual property, where do the lines cross?

With the development of technology over the years came the advent information technology, the internet and web 2.0 brought about innovations in human interactions and communications like the new media and social networking (Creeber & Martin, 2009). Thus Social media platforms, for social networking, does not exist of itself, as it is operated by human persons to suit a purpose (ethical or otherwise) to the extent of its potential. As one of its numerous benefits, social media bridges social distance and facilitates students collaborations with peers to improve their academic ability and communication skills (Ta, 2014). Use of social media for learning in schools at all levels is even more prominent today because the Covid-19 pandemic has forced the lockdown of institutions.

Contemporarily, having access and using social media is considered a human right and necessary for quality social living. Even toddlers are not left out, because they learn early to open the mobile device, choose their preferred applications via their logos, and launch applications into use, scrolling through media

content especially images and videos. The internet, including social media, beyond socialisation, forms a hub for searching and sharing all kinds of information on any subject matter, whether it is solicited or not. This proliferation of human interactions via social media and sharing of content cuts across all fields of human endeavour such as politics, business, media, education etc.

The ubiquity of social media has allowed for harmful and positive human practices which affect individuals and society. Digital media can hardly be ignored by both individuals and the community at large as it now represents a global avenue of communication and socialisation for some.

Suppose social media, beyond being a tool for socialisation, though loosely regulated, makes it easy to share and take information freely. In that case, any info inevitably sent is not subject to scrutiny and copyright protection. This implies that they may be conjured, manipulated, misrepresented or used for the benefit of one and to the detriment of another, like plagiarism.

Looking at WhatsApp, for instance, its statistics indicate over 700 million monthly users and over 30 billion messages exchanged daily. With the increase in globalisation, readymade information is causing a pessimistic effect because social media has made it easier for people to duplicate the same information that has just been received. In academics, the platform is actively explored by stakeholders individually and collectively to share resources and network. For example in Pan-Atlantic University, and perhaps other schools, the post-graduate students, beyond the school's e-learning platform, set up WhatsApp groups to informally discuss, share resources and information between classmates, colleagues; communication between supervisors and supervisees happen too. Once a number is saved on WhatsApp, it implies that users can see the status updates of other connected contacts, save the information and use the same without necessarily notifying whoever uploaded the information. Thus persons academically connected and within one's contact list could put up content via WhatsApp updates, content that may interest another user or links to another's research interest. If this information is used in academic research, would this be categorised as plagiarism? Do WhatsApp broadcast and status update fall under intellectual property category, where do the lines cross?

With the increasing number of online platforms for social connect and ease of extracting content, the propensity to plagiarise, albeit unknowingly, may be on the rise too. This joins the bigger conversation on plagiarism and social media, but now specifically focused on WhatsApp status updates and messaging. It is pertinent for researchers and collegiate to draw inference from this. While there are plagiarism checkers like Turnitin, Turnitin cannot decipher an original message extracted from the WhatsApp status update or broadcast message. Hence the relevance of this discourse. These are the probing issues this paper succinctly considers using textual and discourse analysis. Plagiarism is discussed extensively vis-à-vis other related concepts throughout the study.

Theoretical Framework: Social Responsibility Theory

Social responsibility theory as promulgated by Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, (1956) is an ethical framework that suggests that an individual or an organisation is obligated to act in ways which benefit the society at large. This theory states that the individual is compelled to act in a manner which is beneficial to society as a whole. This kind of responsibility pertains not only to business organisations but also to actions which have an impact on the environment. This theory elucidates the need for self-regulation in practice as a means of personal and societal carefulness. In contextualising this, we can say that plagiarism and copyright infringement are not acts of social responsibility as they do not benefit society as a whole.

From a research perspective, we are called to avoid the plagiarism vice as a means of promoting a virtuous social environment. Simultaneously, avoiding plagiarism facilitates projecting the value of hard work and originality, which will stand to benefit our identity as human persons and academia. The society further benefits as copyright protection and research integrity lead to the birthing of more original ideas, concepts and products to enhance communal human existence.

The creative industries also bloom with novel concepts securely projected in the media through our films, music and other performances of art. This as well as the promotion of commerce, which relies on trust between individuals in a society, which relies on the currency of civil behaviour for progress.

Therefore, we can infer that social responsibility theory provides an ethical basis for the avoidance of acts such as plagiarism and copyright as a means of promoting progress in society.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the discourse analysis methodology and archival research to review constructs to take a conceptual position. Sources of data are online libraries, journal repository platforms like Ebsco and Google scholar. Other sources were books, conference resources, academic journals and relevant magazines.

LITERATURE REVIEW & DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Plagiarism and Copyright in Social Media

Media may be described as the projection of human culture through technology. It implies a convergence of various technologies which combine to amplify the reach and effect of culture. Media is a channel through which the human world and conveyed, interpreted and perceived from one human being to another in a complex whole which combines to form a society and a collection of societies which combine to form the world. In a sense, the media is the lens through which we perceive other beings and societies by virtue of the activities which they perform as their culture. We can infer, therefore that the media is the lens of our perception and the doorway to our conception of reality.

Although plagiarism is perpetuated on every media form available, the focus in this piece is on social media as well as on the academic and entertainment spheres. The rationale for this focus is based on two main premises;

    i.   The widespread perpetuation of plagiarism on these platforms

    ii.   The difficulty of tracing and proving when copyright or plagiarism has occurred.

On the social media, plagiarism is quickly transformed into an infringement of copyright due to the wealth creation model on the internet which is based on page views, likes and other such metrics which are activated easily after a page has been read. Plagiarism on social media is perpetuated through a trend known as **"content lifting"** where individuals may lift original ideas posted by a different person onto their pages as though the ideas belong to them.

Examples:

    i.   **Linda Ikeji:** The blogger's website was taken down in 2014 based on allegations that she had posted unattributed content on her platform. Google took action against her but later reinstated her website based on her plea that she was being witch-hunted by competitors (Ugonna, 2014).

    ii.   **Willy foo:** Willy foo is a photographer of world renown, but in 2016, Facebook took down his page on the website based on their investigation that he had repeatedly lifted content which was unattributed from other sources without even so much as a link-back thread to the original creators of the content (Ekwealor, 2016).

Plagiarism is the "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another authors "language, thoughts, ideas or expressions" and the representation of them as one's own original work even without the intent to show it forth as the owner. It is considered academic dishonesty and a breach of journalistic ethics. It is in simple terms the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. Plagiarism, on the other hand, involves the acts or processes which lead to a passing off of creative work executed by other individuals as one's own. Plagiarism is not a legal issue but an ethical and moral one. It entails that when using other works which are not original to you, it is necessary to attribute as a way of identification of the source of those works (Macleod & Douglas, 2017).

Some Other Examples of Plagiarism Cases Include;

    •   **Martin Luther King:** Martin Luther King, the famous human rights activist, was said to have plagiarised sections of his doctoral thesis which he earned from the Boston University in 1955. He was said to have left large sections of his work without attribution. His doctoral conferment was not revoked, but his thesis was replaced from the university library.

- **President Muhammadu Buhari:** The president was said to have taken out the lines from his work from a speech made by President Barack Obama during his election. The work was later attributed to a speechwriter who was consequently fired (Ogundipe, 2015).
- **Fareed Zakaria:** Fareed Zakaria who was is a talk show host for CNN and a columnist for the New York times, was said to have plagiarised sections of his work from another writer. He was suspended as a result and later reinstated.

WhatsApp Messaging & Intellectual Property

WhatsApp is a cross-platform instant messaging platform people use today in sending voice, video and text messages. WhatsApp has given its users a new way to keep sharing their everyday experiences with their contacts with its newly revamped status feature. To encourage the exchange of messaging on this app, your status is not limited to a boring text message; one might further opportunity for self-expression by uploading short videos, 30 seconds at a time.

WhatsApp statuses, one of the features of the WhatsApp messaging application, recently added that whatever you post on your status could be shared on the user's Facebook story. These updates may be text, images, audio or video files. Though there are privacy settings available to the user, could the status update also be considered a public domain? The public domain is the state of belonging or *being available to the public as a whole*. Some examples of content considered as public domain platforms are Google, Wikipedia, urban dictionary etc. Whatever is posted there belongs to the general public, and anyone who is not comfortable with it is allowed to edit and then await the update of their website. Posts therefrom could be taken from there to anywhere as a resource. WhatsApp status updates disappear after 24 hours, but anyone (in the user's contact) who sees it can download, screenshot and save, use or even manipulate the content. If messages on WhatsApp updates appear as public domain, can the rules governing intellectual property and ethics apply?

There are everyday examples of WhatsApp status content taken without consent and sharing the same. A scenario played out in the University of Lagos (UNILAG) in 2019. The P.R.O of the faculty of social science students association wanted to inform the SOSSAITES that they would no longer use the classes for overnight reading and tutorials just before exams. She sent a message on the group chat belonging to the faculty association otherwise known as SOSSAITES. This message was screenshotted and sent to different parts of the web, and she could not trace how the information got all over the place in no time. The message was trending on Twitter and Instagram, just because people resent the messages all over the web. In this same way, good information could spread.

WhatsApp predators have warned in their terms and agreement that a good rule of thumb is for you to check back to see if what you want to post is what you want the whole world to know or see. Do not ever submit what you don't the whole world to see as a status update. You have to understand that you retain your ownership rights in your status submissions and that whether or not such status submissions are published, WhatsApp does not guarantee any confidentiality concerning any submission. That WhatsApp posts can fly to anywhere in the world! To be clear on this matter, you retain all of your ownership rights in your status submission, but you have to have the rights in the first place.

Many users just clicked the 'AGREE' button without reading through the agreement with WhatsApp. A section of this agreement says:

"In connection with status submissions, users signed in agreement not to…

> *Submit copyrighted material, protected by secret or otherwise subject to third party proprietary rights, including privacy and publicity rights unless you are the owner of such rights or have permission from their rightful owner to post the material and to grant WhatsApp all of the license rights granted herein… ….."*

There are likely instances that while studying, one takes an idea from an already published work, and using only a few 'appreciated' phrases, post on WhatsApp status, but without using quotation marks or attributing the original owner. Isn't this plagiarism?

For the individual in academia, the question must be answered as to whether WhatsApp can or should be a channel for publishing research. If the essence of a publication is passing it from person to person as they get to read about your ideas, then it has some merit. A typical example is Birmingham City University students that used WhatsApp to publish regular updates during a regional election (Bradshaw, 2015). Many people in the City subscribed and followed the updates till elections ended. This vividly indicates that WhatsApp status updates are a valid channel of publishing by sharing updates on a regular basis. Institutions like the World Health Organisation have adapted it. As a lecturer, you may also decide to teach students via status updates. All they have to do is to click the link to join the group and only they would be able to see the status updates that he posts concerning their subject of study. SO, WhatsApp status could be an avenue for plagiarism.

Now, let's take a look at various ways plagiarism can cross lines with Intellectual property in respect to the use of WhatsApp contents;

> **Literary works:** directly or indirectly trying to pass off another's written ideas as your own.
> **Written or recorded speeches:** This is common with politicians but can be anyone. People often fall into the trap of using ideas or specific lines from previous speakers without attribution.

More often than not, we hear certain quotes from people, especially on radio and post them on our WhatsApp status, not even remembering to acknowledge the original owner of the quote. Other contacts comment *'wow'*, *'beautiful piece'*, and because there is no check for plagiarism on WhatsApp, this continues in perpetuity as others copy and share across media platforms.

The implication of plagiarism is the endangerment of creativity. In the last three years, over 50,000 students have been caught plagiarising in the UK alone (Ali, 2016). How about other institutions globally, particularly developing nations, with weak or no plagiarism checker? What about plagiarism perpetrated by persons that have never experienced university learning, how are they called to account or even discovered? How does ethics, morality or the law deal with this probability?

Copyright Infringement and Intellectual Property

Fundamentally, copyright is a law that gives you ownership over the things you create. A copyright is a law that guarantees ownership over objects of individual creation. Fundamentally copyright guarantees a creator the right to profit or extend the right to profit from his creative work based on his will and intention. In other words, a copyright may be violated on occasions where a person's works are used without his/her express consent for a period of time. Copyright is violated by copyright infringement and can occur regardless of attribution (Akpotaire, 2017).

A literary, musical or artistic work shall not be eligible for copyright unless sufficient effort has been expended on doing the work to give it an original character; the work has been fixed in any definite medium of expression now known or later to be developed, from which it can be perceived, reproduced or otherwise communicated either directly or with the aid of any machine or device. Also if at the time when the work is done, it is intended by the author to be used as a model or pattern to be multiplied by any industrial process (Nigerian Copyright Act, 2004).

Copyright infringement can be defined as the process of using works of intellectual creation which are protected by the copyright law and in the process infringing certain rights which are granted solely to the holder such as reproduction, redistribution, display and performance. Usually, the copyright holder is the creator of the work; he/ she may also be a third party to whom the work has been assigned.

An infringement of the intellectual property of an individual is a violation of the law. The intellectual property of the Nigerian person is protected by the Copyright infringement act. The World Intellectual Property Organization is one of the 15 specialised agencies of the United Nations. It was created on the 15th of July 1967, "to encourage creative activity to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world with its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The WIPO currently has 192 member states, administers 26 international treaties.

Ethics in Academic Publishing

According to Cambridge University Press, Ethics in Academic Publishing includes but are not limited to:

1. *Research Integrity:* According to Cambridge, claim that scholarly work has been done must reflect accuracy and excellence output. There should be honesty in all aspects of research. There should also be scrupulous care throughout the research work and excellence in research practice. Transparency and open communication to all participants and object of research.
2. *Peer review:* In a bid to avoid a conflict of interest in the research work, researchers are advised to share the work with a peer reviewer or a close editor for a review before sending it to the publishers.
3. *Authorship:* Though this is done differently in various fields of academia, it is pertinent to note that where there are several authors, the corresponding author is to act on behalf of the other authors. Therefore when referencing a book, as far as the name of the corresponding author is identified, the authors of the book have been acknowledged all together, et al.
4. *Duplicate and Redundant research work:* This is more critical for researchers in the sciences.When there is a research finding that is no longer relevant to society, especially due to newer innovation/invention, then that prior research has become redundant. Therefore it would be totally unethical to bring such research work up again unless referencing it as a basis for newer findings.
5. *Research data manipulation:* Falsification of data and figures just to meet with the demand of academia. For example, a student of UNIBEN was told to submit his final year project with statistics to back up his claim, and this student just put any number there, and people that will read the statistics will be shouting that the number of underemployment is super high and people repost.
6. *Plagiarism:* This is seen as an act of both poor scholarship and a breach of academic integrity.

Examples of Plagiarism Include:

1. Quoting verbatim another person's work without due acknowledgement of the source.
2. Paraphrasing another person's work by changing a few words, or even the order of the words without due acknowledgement of the source.
3. Cutting and pasting from the internet to make a pastiche of online sources
4. Plagiarism may also be colluding with another person that has not been declared or acknowledged.

Plagiarism and copyright infringement potentially have far-reaching implications on the individual, whether as creator or user. This is discussed under motivation, accountability and duplicity below;

- **Motivation:** Plagiarism can have a negative effect on the motivation of individuals to engage in creative activities if no attribution is given or if others receive credit based on conceptual or practical work. Copyright and plagiarism are an attack on the right of the individuals to profit or receive credit for the work of their hands, and in essence, it is an assault on the virtue of hard work and productivity and promotion of laziness and mediocrity. Where individuals can profit from plagiarised works, it reduces the motivation of individuals to conceive and create valuable works while also motivating them to plagiarise and be unoriginal in their work (Carson, 2010).
- **Accountability:** Plagiarism and copyright also have the effect of depleting the value of individual accountability in terms of the value of the ideas that are circulated in society. The implication of non-accountability of the individual in society is that if ideas and commercial entities which belong to other people are continually circulated, eventually they become distorted and become false. When false information is circulated repeatedly in a society, it becomes true to the individuals who are exposed to it and can create damaging effects. It also reduces the potential that unsubstantiated material will take the shape of truth (Carson, 2010).
- **Duplicity:** The implication of copyright infringement and plagiarism in society is that individuals may attain levels of distinction which they have neither earned nor have the skill to marshal and as a result, they can cause harm to others. An example is a doctor who plagiarised

his way through medical school. He may cause harm to his patients since he is likely to lack the relevant understanding to treat his patients. Copyrighted material which is plagiarised and exploited for profit or distributed to others also constitutes a source of fraud in society and an economic disadvantage for those who have the courage to create (Carson, 2010).

Having already established some effects of plagiarism on the human person, it is important to understand that the multiplier effect of copyright and plagiarism on human persons creates a collective effect on society. Some of the effects of plagiarism on society include;

1. **Retardation of cultural growth:** Culture refers primarily to the way of life of a people which is generally based on their ways of life, norms and values. A critical aspect of normality in society is work and all the activities of creation. As earlier stated plagiarism is a dissuasion of honest work and if work is a part of the culture, it then becomes a detriment to the growth, development and maturity of good cultures which are exemplified through work. An example of copyright infringement which leads to the detriment of culture is the proliferation of "*Aba made goods*" which usually try to mimic foreign products. This has done damage to the perception of quality regarded to products which are made there.

2. **Impediment of economic regeneration through creative destruction:** Copyright infringement and plagiarism can occur in the context of hegemonic control over the distribution of media content. When large media organisations resort to plagiarism as a means of creating content, they enrich themselves at the cost of local creatives who may have had the potential to improve society through their work. The implication of this is that creative destruction, which is an important aspect of development is hindered, and the economy suffers as a result.

Plagiarism will and cannot be tolerated in any way for any academic work. But how does one cite a WhatsApp Status? The challenge exists in proving plagiarism based on a WhatsApp Status, even though it is a creative content and/or intellectual property of the person who posted. This is even tougher where a WhatsApp user publishes content, especially text and doesn't reference, thus misleading all others who may attempt to use the information. Should information from WhatsApp status, therefore, be considered credible or worthy of reference in research? Is plagiarism of a WhatsApp message/status an infringement of ethics & morality?

Is Plagiarism of WhatsApp Message/Status an Infringement of Ethics and Morality?

Plagiarism is an infringement on the ethics and morality in the sense that it is an assault on the creative ingenuity and an assault on the creative right of creators to ideas. It is an ethical issue for two reasons;

- Objects of plagiarism are based on conception.
- Objects of plagiarism are not legally provided for in the law.

Because both plagiarism and copyright about creativity and ideas, they overlap considerably. The convergence of plagiarism and copyright is latent in the fact that they both involve implicit or explicit use or passing off of content which is not original to the user. Copyright involves the exploitation, reuse or redistribution of works which is licensed to another party while plagiarism is used without attribution (Moody, 2013).

By far the most prominent form of plagiarism in the Nigerian press is the undiluted recasting of news which has been broadcast by foreign media agencies. In other words, newsmen and women copy directly content from foreign websites onto their platforms without any modification or contextualisation. Plagiarism in the press reflects as a redundancy to the press in its role as the fourth estate. This consists of the lack of investigative rigour which defines the media interpretation of political communication. Communications such as news presses, speeches and other forms of communication are usually treated literally and re-casted with little or no modification. The implication of this is that the press fails in its role as interpreter of news and its function as a for surveillance. This becomes even more reaching with digital media and ease of sharing information via social media platforms, even without verification.

The major divergence in copyright and plagiarism is the fact that plagiarism amounts to use in terms of claiming and implying through non-disclosure or an unwillingness to attribute that work is not original to the claimant. On the other hand, copyright infringement involves commercial exploitation through

performance, redistribution or use of works which are licensed to another by virtue of financial procurement or creation (Moody, 2013).

This points to the position that the use of the message or WhatsApp status update for publishing or academic research without the validation of the creator or publisher is unethical. Thus screenshots and other means of taking, saving and using of WhatsApp Status updates & messages amounts to theft and infringement, even though the creator published publicly.

There may, however, be exceptions to copyright infringement like the Fair Use Act in Nigeria. The second schedule of the copyright act deals with certain exceptions to copyright control, where the user of copyright content is protected by the law in his dealing. In other words, the law itemises specific instances where copyrighted material can be used without permission or clearance from the copyright owner (Nigerian Copyright Act, 2004).

- Research
- Private use
- Critique or review
- Reporting of current events

The act stipulates that if the use of the work is public, it shall be accompanied by an attribution which acknowledges authorship except when included accidentally in the broadcast. The implication of this is that if the work is collected for private or non-commercial use, the user exempted from being charged on the basis of an infringement.

It is worthy of note, however, that this purported copyright exemption demands attributions to the author, whether for research, private use, critique, review or reportage of current events. This is essentially the social responsibility of the content user.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Virtue Ethics & Personal Gatekeeping

This paper considers social media and WhatsApp communication as the exchange of meaning between human persons within context. This social exchange of meaning, for greater impact, within a societal milieu, must be done with virtues. Humans are free and responsible for their actions and communication. Humans are free, can reason and communicate intelligibly within context to another rationally balanced human person to achieve interpersonal communication. Using the human Psyche by Aristotle, we can see the rational framework of the rationality of the human person, which is expressed in daily communication. This must be done with virtue as the Golden Mean.

Interpersonal relations and communication on social media and WhatsApp require Strength of character (virtue), involves finding the *proper balance* between two extremes. People can choose to do right, e.g. avoiding plagiarism, or go to the other extreme, but not without compound implications.

Exercising virtue must be without mediocrity, but *harmony* and balance. There *do not* seem to be general rules or principles, and certainly no algorithms or formulae for virtue. Sometimes the deficiency is more to be avoided than the excess. ***"It is the things which we are naturally inclined that appear to us more opposed to the mean."***

WhatsApp has its underlying purpose as facilitating communication, and at its most basic level, it is meeting that purpose. Education in itself is communication. Education cannot happen if there is no communication. For now, WhatsApp has no way of tracking an act of plagiarism, but when an author reports an act of plagiarism by a user, they have the authority to sanction the user or even worse block the account of the user.

WhatsApp can be used to send and receive pdfs and other documents of books that will be used for research purposes. Group chats and TVs, for the main aim of education, can be used to facilitate learning. These can help in sending and receiving audio lessons from a tutor or even from peers.

Plagiarism and copyright have a variety of implications for the human race. Lack of motivation, dissuasion of creative enterprise and underdevelopment are some of them. It is important for the modern

man of the 21st century in his role as a form of media to practise the virtues which will permit creativity and enterprise and dissuade laziness and economic erosion.

Furthermore, in curbing the spread of plagiarism, it is a function of governments to provide an enabling environment for the promotion of creative talent. Parents as the chief administrators of the young generation must also expose their children to programmes which will promote independence and a sense of identity which will serve the promotion of creativity, innovation and productive work. Also, as we embark on this developmental journey, it is important for governments to make plans which will integrate checks on creativity into basic and secondary educational protocols. The problem of plagiarism is not always down to malicious intent. It can also occur from haste in execution or an inability to be rigorous in research in creating a clear distinction between other peoples ' works and ours. Media bodies must also take the time to contextualise and properly align content when they have not directly covered the news regardless of attribution.

Users need to realise that WhatsApp may be used for communication and educational purposes to a minimal extent. User should not post on his/her status update or message in a group chat, on any intellectual work without acknowledging the author or the source of the work. This is what virtue ethics demands of rational persons, especially in the interest of good scholarship.

REFERENCES

Akpotaire, U. (2017). *Nigerian Law Intellectual Property Watch Inc.* Retrieved June 18, 2017, from https://nlipw.com/some-basic-facts-about-copyright-in-nigeria/-facts-about-copyright-in-nigeria/

Ali, A. (2016, January 4). *UK universities in 'plagiarism epidemic' as almost 50,000 students caught cheating over the last three years.* UK: Independent Newspaper. Retrieved January 25, 2020, from https://www.independent.co.uk/student/news/uk-universities-in-plagiarism-epidemic-as-almost-50000-students-caught-cheatingg-over-last-3-years-a6796021.html

Aristotle. (n.d./1999). *Nichomachean Ethics* (I. Terence, Trans.). Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

Barnlund, D.C. (1968). *Interpersonal Communication: Survey and Studies.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Bradshaw, P. (2015). *Lessons on using WhatsApp for Publishing- An Election Experience.* Birmingham Eastside, UK: Online Journalism Blog. Retrieved from www.onlinejournalismblog.com

Carson, S. (2010). *Plagiarism and its effect on creative work. Psychology Today.* Retrieved June 18, 2017, from https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/life-art/201010/plagiarism-and-its-effect-creative-workgiarism-and-its-effect-creative-work\

Creeber, G., & Martin, R. (2009). *Digital Cultures.* In G. Creeber & R. Martin (Eds.). Maidenhead, Berkshire, England: Open University Press.

Nigerian Copyright Act. (2004). *copyright. Nigeria-law.org.* Retrieved June 18, 2017, from http://www.nigeria-law.org/CopyrightAct.htm

Ekwealor, V. (2016). *Internet plagiarism, Willy Foo and the social media lesson.* Techpoint.ng. Retrieved June 18, 2017, from https://techpoint.ng/2016/08/18/internet-plagiarism/

Farhi, P. (2012). *Fareed Zakaria suspended by CNN, Time for plagiarism.* Washington Post. Retrieved June 18, 2017, from https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/fareed-zakaria-suspended-by-cnn-time-for-plagiarism/2012/08/10/f6315e96-e335-11e1-ae7f-d2a13e249eb2_story.html?utm_term=.5209d3ae076d

Hartley, P. (1999). *Interpersonal Communication.* Routledge. ISBN: 9780203062708

Heath, R.L., & Bryant, J. (2000*). Human Communication Theory and Research.* Mahwah: New Jersey. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Homans, G.C. (1958). Social Behavior as Exchange. *American Journal of Sociology, 63,* 597–606.

Mitchell, M.S., Cropanzano, R., & Quisenberry, D. (2012). Social exchange theory, exchange resources and interpersonal relationships: A modest resolution of theoretical difficulties. In K. Tornblom & A. Kazemi (Eds.), *Handbook of social resource theory: Theoretical extensions, empirical insights, and social applications* (pp. 99-118). New York, NY: Springer.

Macleod, C., & Douglas, C. (2017). *The book designer. Book designer.* Retrieved June 18, 2017, from http://thebookdesigner.com

McLuhan, M. (1994). *Understanding media: The extensions of man.* MIT press.

Moody, G. (2017). *The Difference Between Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement.* Techdirt. Retrieved June 18, 2017, from https://www.techdirt.com/articles/20130925/09523724654/difference-between-plagiarism-copyright-infringement.shtml

Ogundipe, S. (2017). *Nigeria's President Buhari in fresh plagiarism scandal of Obama's speech - Premium Times Nigeria.* Premium Times, Nigeria. Retrieved June 18, 2017, from http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/210515-nigerias-president-buhari-in-fresh-plagiarism-scandal-of-obamas-speech.html

Oluwafemi, A. (2013). *Delphi metals.* Retrieved June 18, 2017, from http://http://www.delphimetals.com/m/Davido_stole_my_song_gobe-_Password

Palma, A. (1990). *Plagiarism Seen by Scholars In King's PhD. Dissertation.* Nytimes.com. Retrieved June 18, 2017, from http://www.nytimes.com/1990/11/10/us/plagiarism-seen-by-scholars-in-king-s-phd-dissertation.html?pagewanted=all

Siebert, F.S., Peterson, T., & Schramm, W. (1956). *Four theories of the press: The authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and soviet communist concepts of what the press should be and do.* University of Illinois Press.

Schramm, W. (1955). How Communication Works. In *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication* (ed.). Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press.

Shannon, C.E., & Weaver, W. (1949). *The mathematical theory of communication.* Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press

Ta, J.Q. (2014, August 13). What Impact Has Social Media Truly Had On Society. *Business2Community*, p.1.

Ugonna, C. (2017). *Google removes Linda Ikeji Blog over plagiarism allegation - Premium Times Nigeria.* Premium Times, Nigeria. Retrieved June 18, 2017, from http://www.premiumtimesng.com/entertainment/169206-google-removes-linda-ikeji-blog-over-plagiarism-allegation.html