
Plagiarism conundrum in Kenyan Universities: An impediment to quality research

By

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Presentation Outline

1. **Background of the study**
2. **Problem statement**
3. **Findings**
4. **Recommendations**
5. **Practical implication of the study**
6. **Conclusions**
7. **Q&A**

Background of the study



- The term plagiarism stems from the Latin word Plagium, meaning kidnapping a man (Masic, 2012).
- It is unintentionally or intentionally appropriating other people's materials or passing other people's works as your own (Roig, 2012)
- Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and is manifested in various forms e.g
 - i) Complete Plagiarism,
 - ii) Source-based plagiarism
 - iii) Direct Plagiarism
 - iv) Self/Auto Plagiarism
 - v) Paraphrasing Plagiarism
 - vi) Mosaic Plagiarism
 - vii) Accidental Plagiarism
 - viii) Inaccurate Authorship

Cont....

- **Plagiarism**
 - affects the reputation of the researcher, the institution and the whole purpose of research.
 - is highly discouraged and severely punished in academic circles
- The practice is still highly prevalent in almost all academic and research spheres - Kenya included
- High prevalence is attributed to eg Increased use of internet and digital sources, lack of knowledge, Laziness, pressure to publish etc

Problem Statement

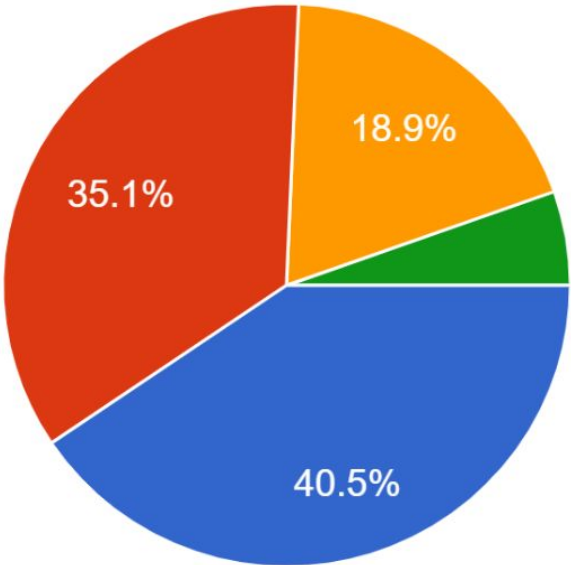
- To counter the practice, most universities in Kenya have adopted different strategies eg capacity building, anti-plagiarism policies, and acquisition of anti-plagiarism software.
- A preliminary review of the strategies adopted by different universities in Kenya, revealed variance in virtually all approaches.
- This implies that the quality of academic writing and research is not standardised
- This study sought to establish the current state of anti plagiarism measures adopted in Kenyan universities with the aim of establishing best practices that would improve the quality of academic writing and research.

Methodology

- The study adopted a mixed-method approach by conducting a survey among the librarians and interviewing the graduate school Directors or Deans.
- Existing policies and guidelines were reviewed to establish the strength and challenges in implementing plagiarism measures in the universities in Kenya.

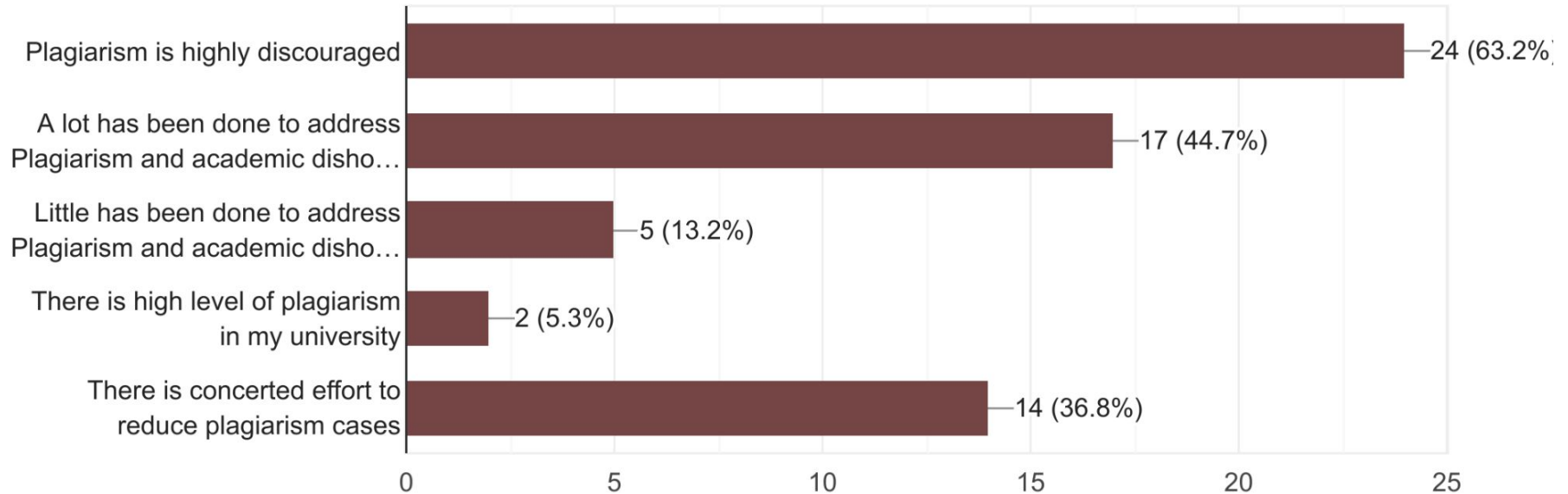
Findings

Type of Institutions

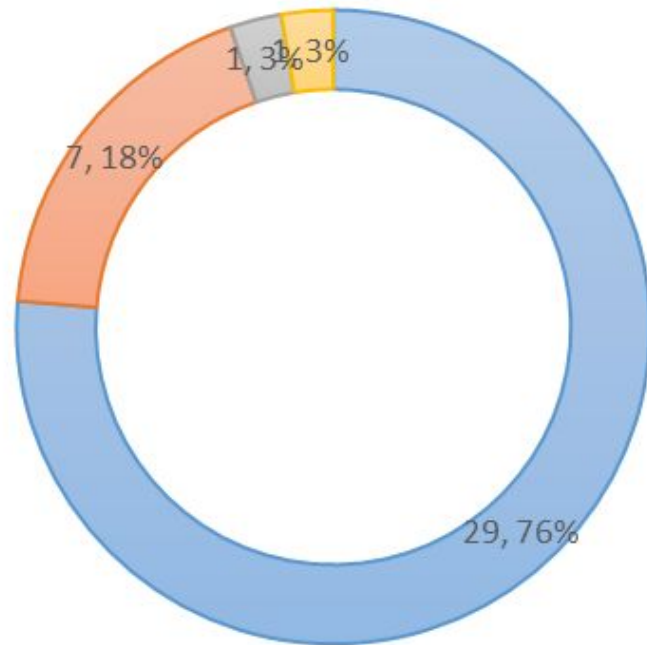


- Public University
- Private University
- Public University Colle
- Private University Coll

Current Status of plagiarism

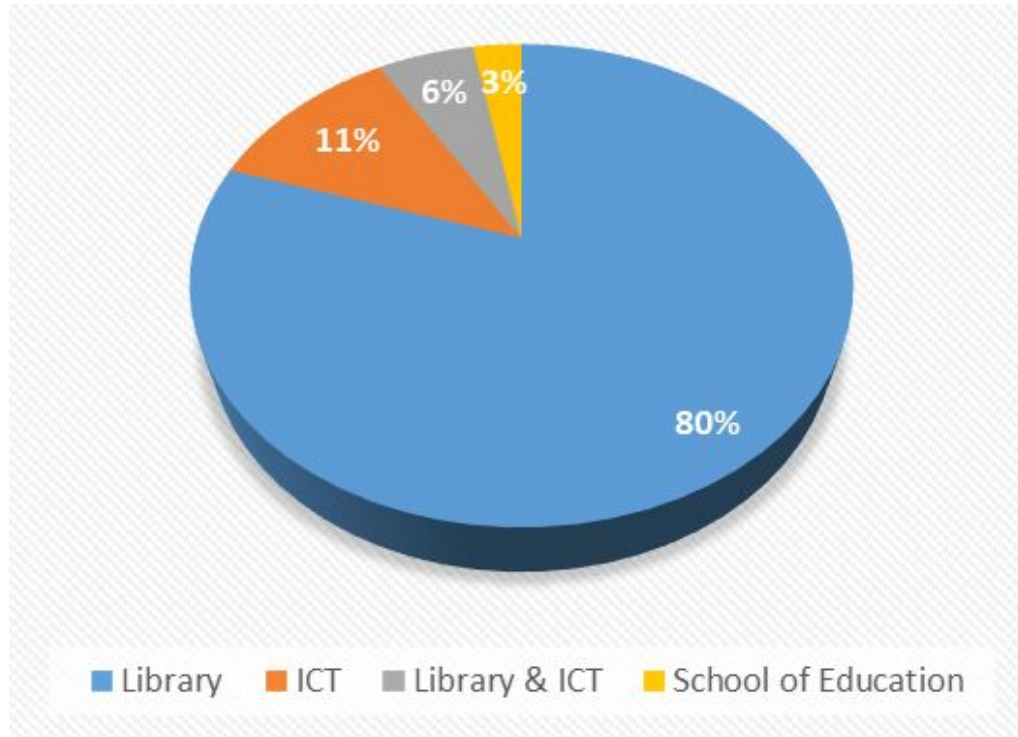


Software/ Tool being used



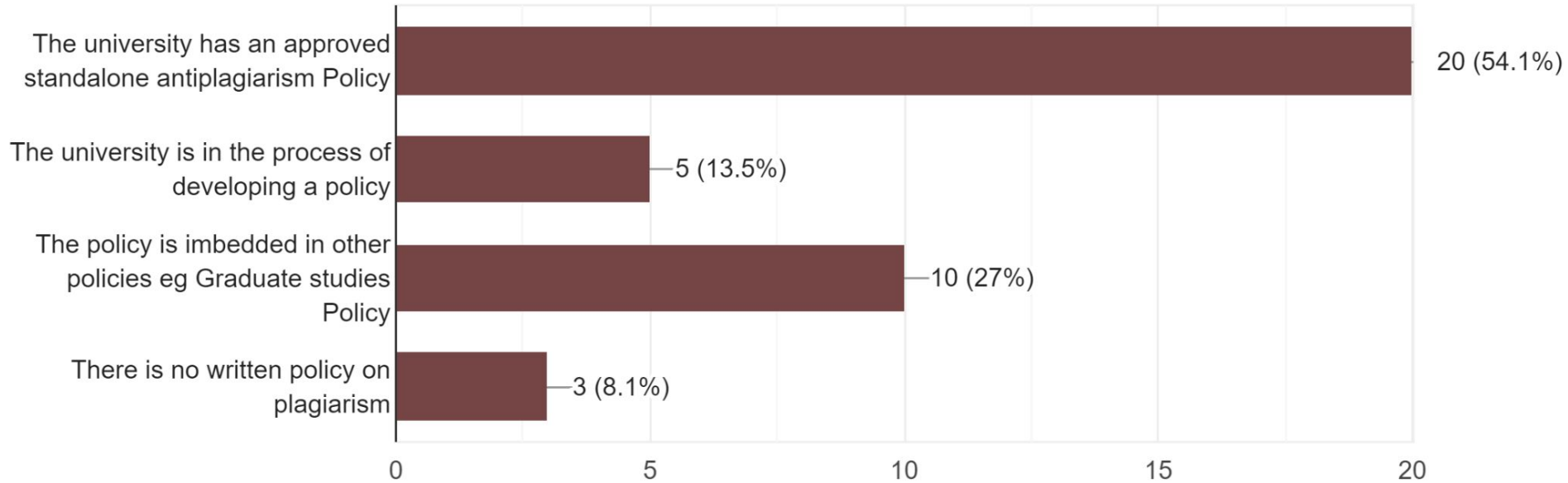
■ Software A ■ Software B ■ Software C ■ Software D

Department that Manages the SW

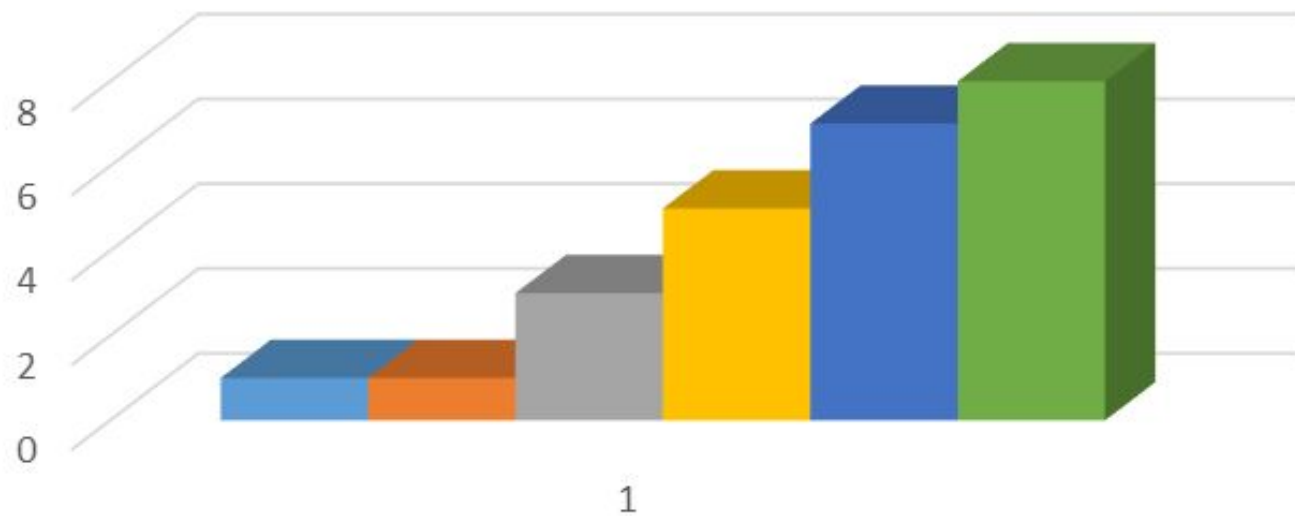


— **Policies** —

Status of the Policies



Initiator of the plagiarism policy



■ Odel

■ DVC (Academics)

■ Research Department

■ Library

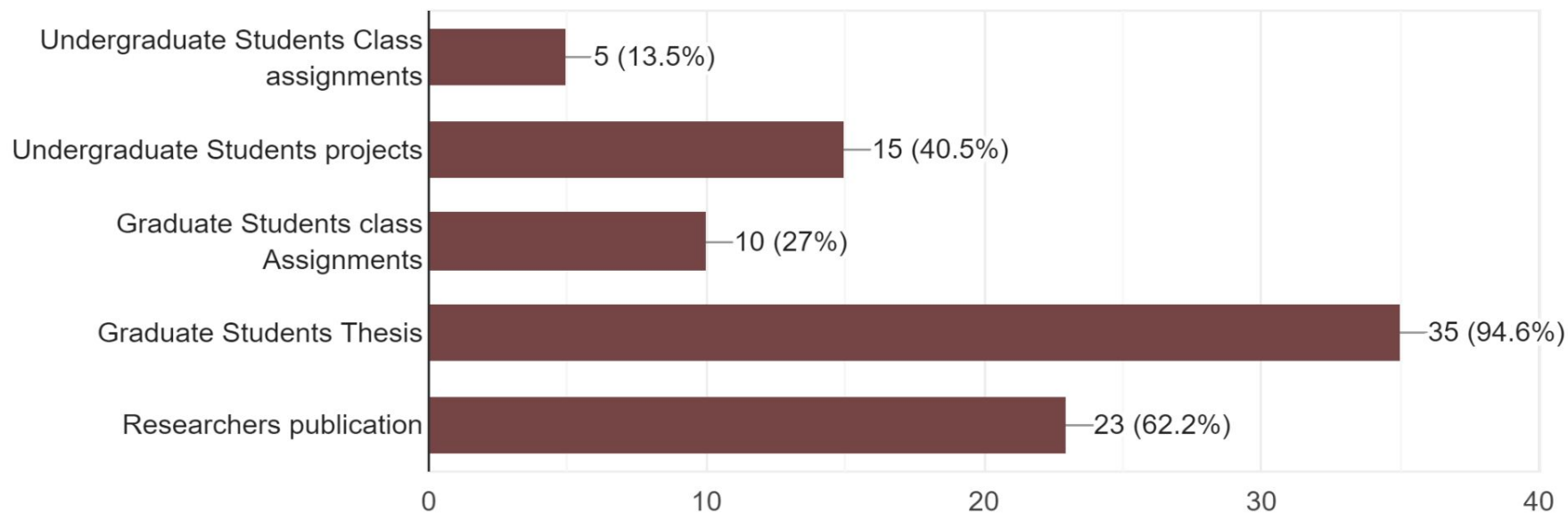
■ Graduate School

■ Library and Graduate School

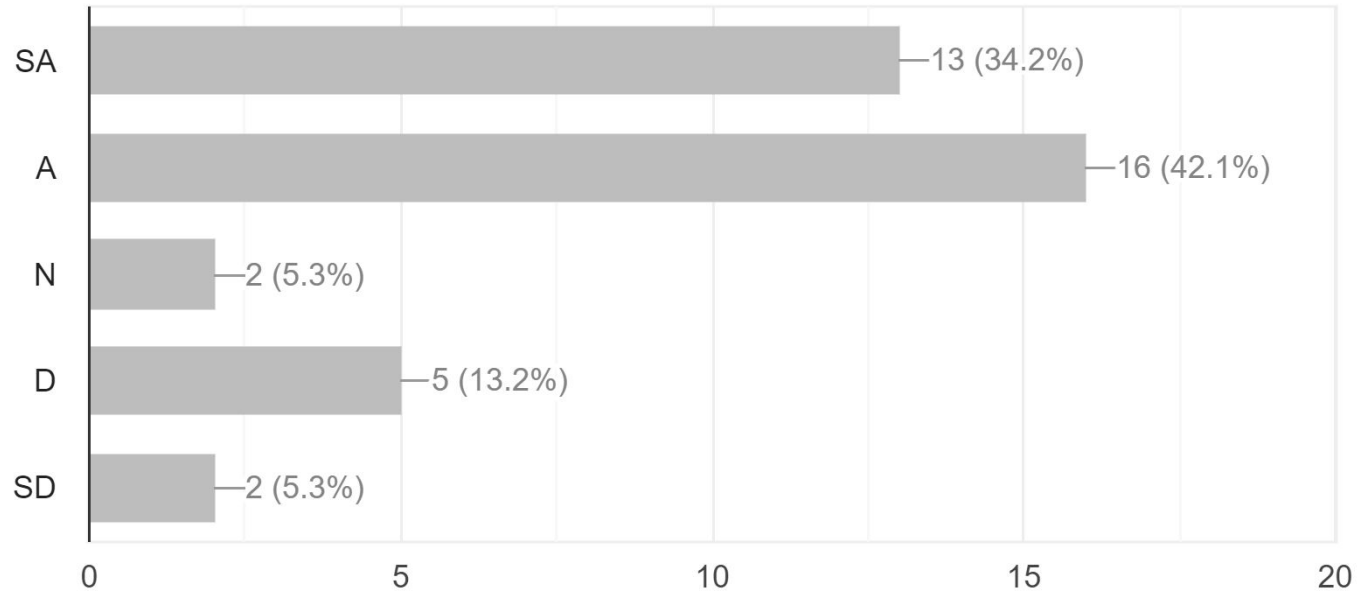
Level of Similarity (%) allowed in Universities

Cumulative Similarity (%)		Single Source similarity(%)
Not indicated (11)	More than 6% but less than 16% (1)	Not indicated (31)
More than 6% but less than 16% (1)	Less than 20% (4)	Less than 1 % (2)
Less than 10% (1)	Less than 20% for undergraduates and 15% for postgraduates (1)	Less than 2 % (4)
Less than 12% (1)	Less than 20% for undergraduates, 15% for Masters & 10% for PhD (1)	
Less than 15% (7)	Less than 25% (5)	
More than 15% but less than 25% (1)	Less than 30 (1)	
Less than 16% (2)		

Works tested in the S/W or tool



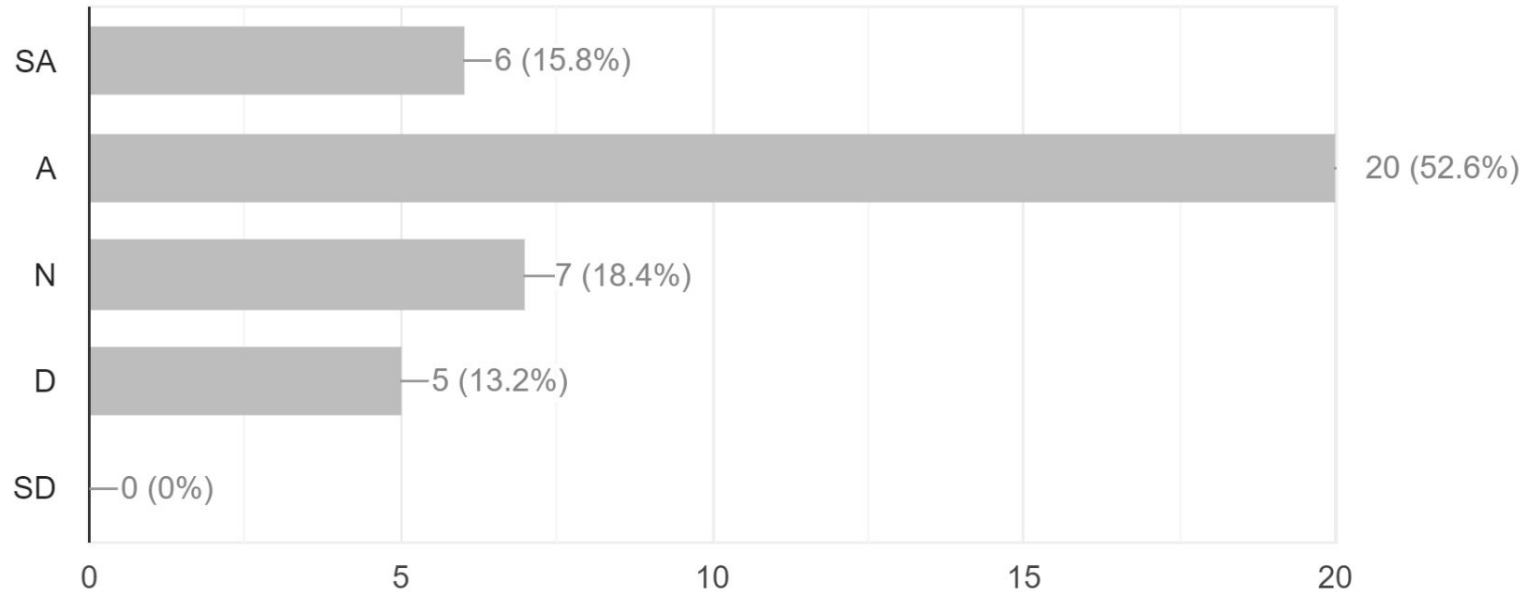
Communication of the Policies



Row 1: The policy is well communicated

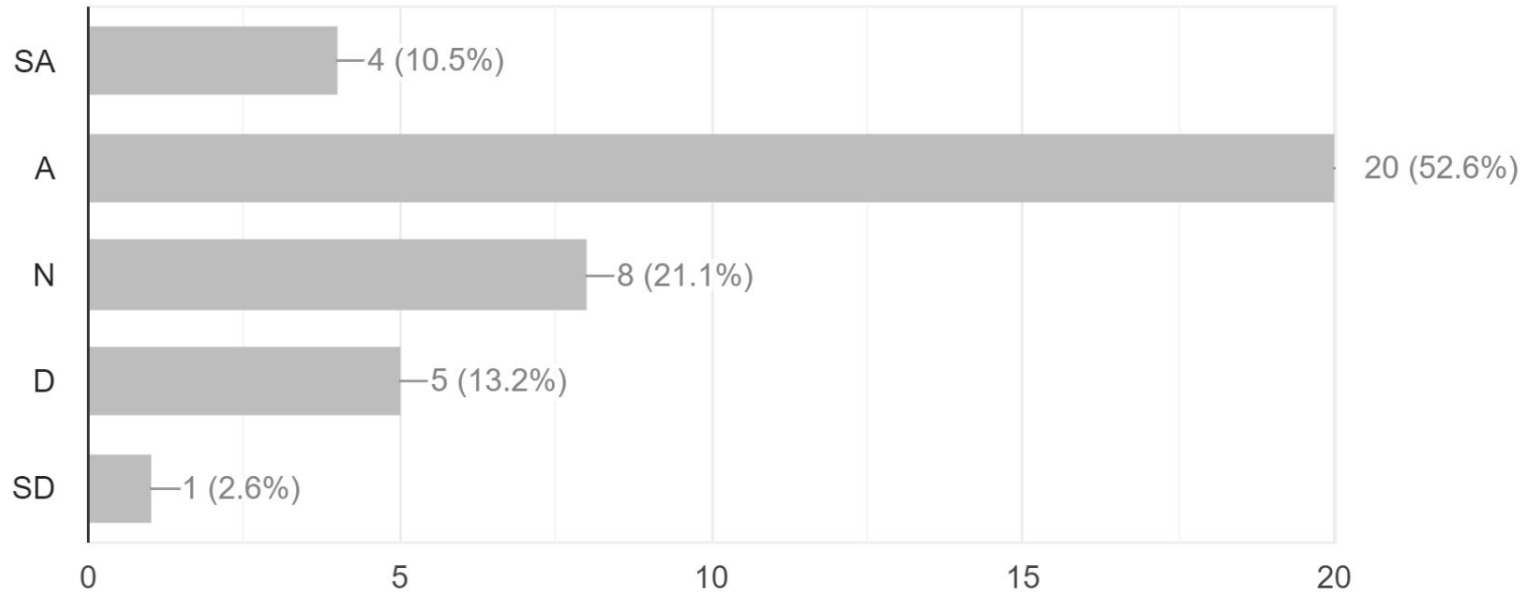
Processes and management

Is the process clear & Easy to follow?



Row 4: The processes are clear and easy to follow

Are Users able to easily use?



Row 3: The researchers are well empowered to test, analyze and correct their writeups

General concerns from universities

1. Lack of shared best practice in the country
2. High cost of the software / tool
3. Inadequate capacity among the librarians, faculty and students
4. Lack or gaps in the plagiarism policy
5. Limited resources for procurement, training &
6. Low advocacy by librarians and
7. Low enforcement by the research / graduate school

Summary of the findings



- Majority of universities appreciate that plagiarism is a bad practice in scholarly writing.
- There is a great effort to mitigating plagiarism in the universities in kenya.
- The anti plagiarism countermeasures like policies, tools and processes vary greatly among universities.
- There was a great disparity on which department/faculty/institute that facilitate access to anti-plagiarism software
- In most universities, libraries are playing a central role in mitigating plagiarism
- Majority of the university only scans postgraduate and faculty publications

Recommendations

1. University libraries and other stakeholders should strengthen collaborative mechanism in the fight against plagiarism
2. Since all published resources are stored in libraries, libraries should be the champions and initiators in the fight against plagiarism
3. From the study conducted, it is evident that there is a lot of misinformation about plagiarism, as such, library consortium should consider establishing a plagiarism toolkit to offer guidance to all libraries
4. There is need for more advocacy and awareness programs among librarians and other stakeholders on plagiarism matters
5. Anti-plagiarism practices should be practiced by all students and faculty at all levels and not just restricted to postgraduate students
6. It is important for universities to consider having a standalone anti plagiarism policy
7. More sensitization training through information literacy initiatives should be conducted to enhance and empower scholars

Practical Implications of this paper

We hope that our findings may be used to;

1. Standardise the policies on plagiarism
2. Improve the quality of research and academic writing

Conclusions

- Plagiarism is an enemy to learning, innovation and creativity as such, it should be condemned and highly discouraged
- Access and availability of anti-plagiarism software in universities should be considered as a necessity and **NOT** an **OPTION**
- Establishment of BEST practice initiatives in the fight against plagiarism in Universities is paramount
- Lack of funds should **NEVER** be considered as a justification of the **ABSENCE** of anti-plagiarism software. Just as the saying goes, *“If you think Education is expensive, try ignorance”*

Thank you