

Abstract

Higher institutions of learning are the epitome of every nation's literacy and the basis of knowledge creation and management. Knowledge focus is the third wave of human socio-economic development which emphasizes on the ability to create, use and improve goods and services, the first having been the agricultural age with wealth being defined as ownership of land and the second being industrial age where wealth is based on ownership of capital (Savage, 1995). This crucial asset is being threatened by rampant ethical issues of enrolment that are not procedural for instance, issuing of pelvic marks, incompetence in research supervision and chief among them, and which is the main interest of this paper, is plagiarism.. Ethics refers to moral behavior that incorporates free choice and is not subject to rules and regulations; a disciplined reflection on morality that is not open to human negotiation. Universities must without being coerced, endeavor to create and maintain quality education which is devoid of pedagogical malpractices especially plagiarism and advancing research that is core to economic development. However, changing technology, changing laws, ease of copying, growing access to vast array of online materials have all contributed to plagiarism, a vice that is watering down quality research (Marshall, 2008). This new development has found universities that have stuck to traditionally-oriented policies and systems that have not been updated to address the full range of these issues. The onset of e learning has particularly opened an avenue where institutions are relying heavily on plagiarized materials, instead of encouraging their elite to create original ones. Some scholars photocopy or print plagiarized materials and give them as handouts to their students and barely acknowledge the owners of those materials that they convert to instructional materials. This impinges on the rights of the copyright owners, denying them the right of pride of their work and the earnings that may accrue to their usage. The university students are plagiarizing research works which they present to supervisors as their original work, who for lack of any means to establish authenticity, pass for graduation, half-baked graduates who can barely generate knowledge through research; no wonder universities have almost ceased to be research centers. This paper explores the world of plagiarism to establish how and why it has become rampant and give recommendations on how the vice can be reduced if not stamped out.