STUDY ON BUILDING PROCESS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AT VIETNAM MARITIME UNIVERSITY

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Abstract Plagiarism, one of popular and complicated problems, needs to be treated in Vietnam's universities. Quality assurance for education and scientific research activities plays an important role in the development of Vietnam Maritime University (VMU). Therefore, the university has decided to subscribe and use Turnitin program to control the quality of education and research since 2015. The paper analyses plagiarism situation at VMU using the database composed of theses and dissertations from 2015 to 2017. The results shows that the similarity index between the original report and the Turnitin database lies in a range from 1% to 79%. Particularly, 40% of dissertations have high similarity index in excess of 25% whereas the internet source occupies more than 50% of copying sources. Besides, the statistics shows that the similarity index of economic major is higher than that of engineering major. One of the reasons is that students do not know about academic integrity and how to make the correct citation. Based on this analysis, authors propose the building procedures for the Academic Integrity at VMU as a case study for the Vietnam's education network.

Keywords: anti-plagiarism, academic integrity, copying, Turnitin, similarity index.

1. Introduction

Copy and paste actions in education training in Vietnam are more and more popular and serious. Recent surveys held at some Vietnam's universities such as Hoa Sen University, National Economic University etc. show that students popularly reused each other at either the same universities or other ones. Particularly, there are serveral websites arbitrarily offering dissertations and materials such as www.luanvan.net, http://thuvienluanvan.net/, http://zbook.com… This makes a large number of students become lazy, reduces their creativity. This also leads to a decline in Academic Integrity of Vietnam's universities.

In addition, scientific research works such as articles and scientific research papers have also been copied both ideas and text contents. When checking originality of some papers sending to Marine Science and Technology Journal, we realize that 100% of the contents have been translated from oversea research papers. This problem leads to a waste of both finance and time in scientific research.

In order to control the above-mentioned situation in education training and scientific research, VMU has decided to use Turnitin software for anti-plagiarism in education training and scientific research. The application of checking originality in the University has been started since June 2015. In this paper, the authors will present the building process of Academic Integrity at VMU, the results achieved, as well as the conclusions and recommendations to improve Academic Integrity in education training and in scientific research (Pham 2016, p.148).

2. Building process of Academic Integrity at VMU

To facilitate management and monitoring of the process of Academic Integrity in education and scientific research at VMU, the authors have proposed the process including eight steps as follows:

Step 1: Survey of copying status in education training and scientific research at VMU

In order to survey of copying status in education and scientific research at VMU, the following works have required:

- Selecting objects of the survey;
- Classifying objects by specialized;
- Designing the form of survey questionnaires for appreciating the level of copying;
- Collecting and statistical of survey data;
- Commenting and appreciating survey results for building process of academic integrity.

Step 2. Proposing objects of checking copying

The objects of originality checking at VMU as follows:

- Originality checking of undergraduate student thesis, graduate thesis, doctoral dissertations;
- Originality checking of articles published in the Marine Science and Technology Journal, books published at Marine Publishing House.
- Originality checking of scientific research works.

Step 3: Application of Turnitin software to enhance the quality and Academic Integrity of education training and scientific research at VMU

To check the similarity index in education training and scientific research at VMU, after a long time using several anti-plagiarism program and verify the exaction of the result. We have proposed to use Turnitin because of this software have been widely used by famous foreign as well as Vietnamese universities and publishers with high precision and reliability.

Step 4: Proposing similarity index for anti-plagiarism for VMU

Turnitin software has four levels of warning about plagiarism. They are:

0%-25% is normal level (Green)

26%-49% is warning level (Yellow)

50%-75% is high warning level (Orange)

Above 75% is alarm level (Red)

To fit the situation of education training and scientific research in Vietnam, to refer experiences of other universities such as Hoa Sen University, National economic University… The authors have proposed the allowable Similarity Index in originality checking of VMU as follows:

- All assignments, dissertations, articles, scientific research works must have the similarity index below 30%;

- In cases, the similarity index of works over 30%, the special committee on Academic Integrity will conclude to accept for revising or refuse the thesis, articles, textbooks or scientific research works.

Step 5: Building the model combining of originality checking and online reviewing papers published on Maritime Scientific and Technology Journal

At the present time, similarity checking and reviewing of papers published on Marine Science and Technology Journal have been carried out separately by two divisions, this makes the process complicated and last for a long time. From this situation, the authors have proposed the combination of checking similarity with online reviewing of papers by using of Turnitin software, the model has been applied for the VMU's Marine Science and Technology Journal No.48. The reviewer guidelines have been published on the Discussion menu of Turnitin software (Figure 1). The software also allows the reviewer comments directly to editor and authors (Figure 2) and the authors can reply directly to editor and reviewer by choosing Reply menu in Turnitin software (Figure 3).

Criteria for review of the paper:
1. The content of the paper (The necessary of the topic, precision...);
2. The new approach in the paper;
3. The structure of the paper;
4. The appropriation of illustrations, figures, and tables;
5. The citation of the relevant work;
6. Conclusion (Accept, Minor revision, Major revision, Reject);
7. Comments.

Figure 1. The criteria for paper reviewing

Comments from reviewer
1. This is not something new in the paper.
2. The paper not well structured.
3. The paper should have brought something new, useful for all member universities.
4. The English language is poor.
5. Author may be approached for major revision to make it more comprehensive with some new ideas
6. Edit the formatting of the reference list and referring in the text according to the instructions.

Figure 2. Comments from reviewer for authors on Turnitin software

Thanks for the comments. Authors fully agree with the comments of the reviewer. Authors will correct the paper to the comments.

Figure 3. The reply of the authors to reviewer on Turnitin

Step 6: Building the model combining originality checking with distance education training of the University

At the present time, there are several distance training courses at the university, almost of students are working in the provinces and cities, that far from the university. Therefore, the process of study, exam and providing certificate for students have taken a lot of time. From the above situation, the authors have proposed the combination of originality checking with distance education training by using of Turnitin software. The model has been appplied for six distance training courses in Quang Ninh Province and Binh Phuoc Province from September 1, 2016 to November 1, 2016. The Figure 4 has described the submissions of assignments of students, high similarity reports and submissions with feedback. The use of this model helps to correctly and effectively control both progress and quality of assignments of students in six distance training courses.
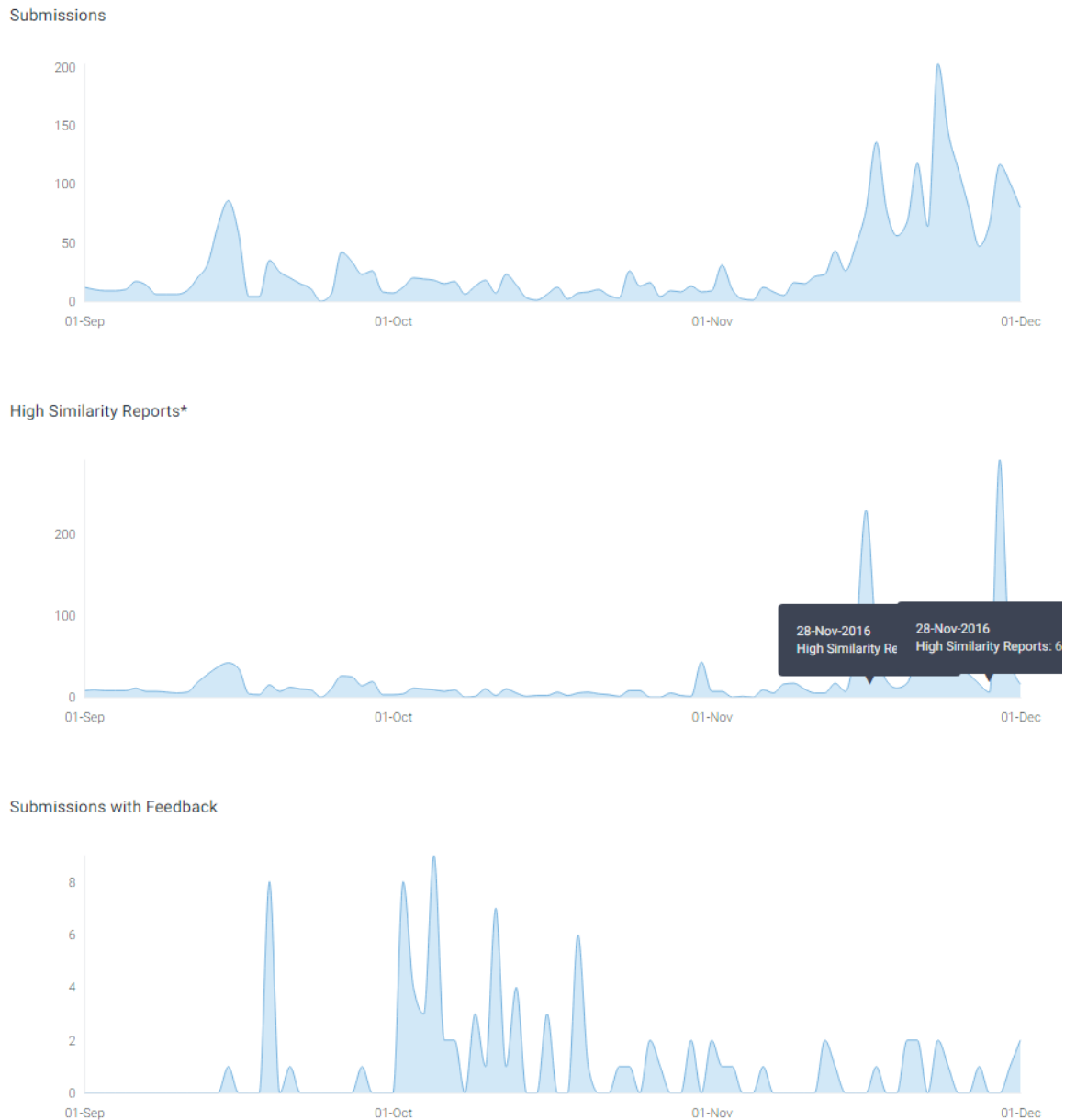
Figure 4. The overview of statistics data by Turnitin for six distance training courses at VMU

Step 7. Analysis, appreciate the results of originality checking at VMU

The analysis of changing the quality and Academic Integrity in education and training of VMU have been carried out by making the comparison between the Similarity Index of the thesis of students of the Faculty of Hydraulic Engineering in the year 2015 and those of 2016 and 2017 (Tran 2016, p.123). The static has been described in the Table 1.

From this survey, we can see that at the beginning of carrying originality checking, most of the students have similarity index in excess of 40% (87,5%). However, after two years almost students have similarity index under 30% (81,8%), only 3% have similarity index in excess of 40%.

Table 1. Similarity Index for the thesis of students in the hydraulic engineering department from the year 2015 to 2017.

Similarity Index	The Year 2015	The Year 2016	The Year 2017
Under 30%	2/40	14/30	27/33
From 30% to 40%	3/40	10/30	5/33
Over 40%	35/40	6/30	1/33

Besides that, the authors also utilizes the dissertations of 768 post graduate students of VMU in the year 2016. Analysis of the results shows that the similarity index between the original report and the Turnitin database lies in a range from 1% to 79%. Particularly, 40% of dissertations with similarity index in excess of 25%. The internet source account for over 50% of copying sources. The statistics show that the similarity index for economic major is higher than that of engineering major. One of the reasons is that students do not know about academic integrity and how to make the correct citation.

Step 8. Modifying and completing procedures of originality checking at VMU

After one and a half year application of Turnitin software for originality checking at VMU, the University has summarized building process of Academic Integrity and organized successfully The Second National Academic Integrity Workshop in 2016 (Figure 5). Through this workshop, the university has passed our experienced to other universities as well as getting experiences from other universities in Vietnam and foreign universities such as National Economic University, RMIT University, British University…, the University has been modified and completed procedures for Academic Integrity corresponding to our real conditions.

Figure 5. The second national Academic Integrity workshop organized at VMU

3. Conclusions

In this study, authors have described the progress of building procedure for Academic Integrity at Vietnam Maritime University over two years as well as the achievement in improving the quality of education, training and scientific research, as shown in the Table 1.

The procedure of quality control by using this program is simple and accurate. The comments and marks of lecturers in assignments is easy for students to understand and significantly reduce time for scoring and commenting. In our research, authors have also proposed the model combining of originality checking and online reviewing papers published on Marine Science and Technology Journal; the model combining originality checking with distance education training of the University.

With excellent experience from over two years of implementing anti-plagiarism checking, Vietnam Maritime University will expand this model to other activities in education and scientific research in the coming years to equip our students, lecturers and researchers with 21st century skills, and also support our university's goal of education and scientific research.

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