USE OF PLAGIARISM DETECTION SOFTWARE IN SRTM UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY

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The present study is based on the usage of plagiarism detection software in Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded. The university started using the software (earlier iThenticate and now URKUND) since June 2015. The job of testing theses and dissertations is given to the Central Library of the university where the data of the theses and dissertations tested through the software is centralized. In a short period of time, the researchers of the university responded well to this service and university got quality research output. The paper gives an insight about the dates, subjects, repetition of checking, percentage of plagiarism, etc. of the research publications particularly the theses and dissertations checked in the library.

INTRODUCTION

In India, access to plagiarism detection software is being provided to different universities by INFLIBNET. Earlier, Indian universities were using iThenticate [1] and Turnitin [2] software but from December 2015 onwards, INFLIBNET has distributed URKUND [3] software for checking plagiarism in theses, dissertations and research publications. INFLIBNET has made it mandatory to MOU signed universities to upload the theses on Shodhganga. Before submission of the theses, research scholars have to check their theses using the software and obtain similarity report. Because of this practice, quality of theses has enhanced.

At present, the URKUND software is being used for theses and dissertations in the English language. The theses written in Marathi, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu and all other regional languages (It is learnt that Tamil Nadu state has developed plagiarism check software for Tamil language) are not checked due to language limitations. The central library of Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University started using the software to check M.Phil dissertations and Ph.D theses. Ph.D./M.Phil supervisors and researchers are of the opinion that this is a good decision university has taken.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is basically an intellectual property theft of using the textual matter, graphs images, etc. written or created by other human beings without proper acknowledgment [4].

Use of Plagiarism software

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- Some research scholars use Internet search engines to search for plagiarized text, plagiarism software pusses more sources, such as databases that include periodicals and books that may not be available online. Thousands of periodicals exist. Massive databases contain such articles. Plagiarism checkers have access to these databases [5].

- This software colours the text that is copied. That means we can view what text, word, sentence has been copied in papers, theses, etc. [6].

- Plagiarism finder software also provides the percentages of similarity.

- As mentioned above, a plagiarism tester will colour the text matter that is correctly matched with the original author's words. If any text has not been quoted properly, it will be highlighted.

- Plagiarism software gives the report of non-plagiarized texts and the report can be a proof of the originality of the content of a thesis or a paper [7].

Today, plagiarism has become a major issue with academia. According to plagiarism.org, the Centre for Academic Integrity reported that nearly 80% of students in college have admitted to cheating one or more times. Also, a survey of college students conducted by the Psychological Record found that 36% had plagiarized [8]. Internet has made plagiarism easier. It has also allowed plagiarism detection software to be developed. Plagiarism checker should be a guide to serious students and researchers who want to check their research publications and ensure that they have proof that their papers or Ph.D. reports are original [9].

About the University:

The Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University was established in 1994 at Nanded by bi-furcating the Marathwada University, Aurangabad. The University is to cater to the southern part of Marathwada Region of Maharashtra State, specifically to the districts of Nanded, Latur, Parbhani and Hingoli. In a short period of time, even before completion of five years, the University has been granted recognition by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the apex educational body of Government of India. It has been re-accredited by NAAC in 2009 with B grade. Recently in January 2015. It has been re-accreditated by NAAC with 'A' grade. At present, there are 382 aided and unaided colleges affiliated to this university. There are about 400 research guides who are supervising research work of registered research scholars in SRTM University.

Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University started using plagiarism software from April 2014. But officially after getting instructions from BCUD office, it started from June 2015 [10]. SRTM University has signed MOU with INFLIBNET as:

"The University will use the plagiarism software recommended by the INFLIBNET and made accessible to test the thesis submitted by the student for plagiarism before awarding the Degree. If the university is not subscribing to such software, it will use the software from the nearest Regional Centre, if any".

Considering this fact, University strictly started to check every thesis written in English language. The recommendations of Academic council and instructions issued are given below:

Aims of Anti-Plagiarism

- To inculcate the habit of respecting the academic integrity and discipline.

- To identify any act of dishonesty in academic work constitutes academic misconduct.

Recommended Guidelines

- The research scholar should submit the soft copy of the thesis for Plagiarism check to the central library in a CD/Pen drive.

- The document shall be submitted either in MS Word file or in PDF file format.

- The plagiarism check shall be applied from title page to the last page, including reference and bibliography.

- During the initial plagiarism check, the thesis shall not be added to the data repository.

- Permitted Similarity index <=30% (Not more than 30%).

- The candidate shall mandatorily produce the anti-plagiarism report as a part of the thesis.

- If the similarity index is > 30% the modified thesis has to be re-submitted following the step no. 1 of the process with the fee of Rs. 3,000/-.

- The student can submit the thesis for the third time with the fee of Rs. 5,000/-.

- The third chance shall be considered as the final submission failing which the thesis shall not be accepted.

- The published papers, if any by the candidate himself or herself either independently or along with supervisor or co- supervisor, shall be exempted from anti-plagiarism check/matching count.

- The softcopy of the thesis should be in digital / textual form and there should not be any intentional change in the file to hide plagiarism.

File Requirements

- File must be less than 40 MB

- The Maximum document length is 400 pages

- File must contain at least 20 words of Text

- File must not exceed 2MB of raw Text.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has the following objectives:

- To study the receipts of theses for plagiarism during the period of study.

- To study the repetition in plagiarism checking.

- To study the percentage range of plagiarism in theses submitted.

- To study the subject wise theses received for plagiarism checking.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The scope of the present study is limited to the M.Phil dissertations and Ph.D theses, research papers, etc. received for plagiarism testing in the central library of SRTM University, during June 2015 to December 2015. The data stored on the home page after login of plagiarism software used was collected, analyzed, tabulated, interpreted and the results are drawn.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The job of testing the thesis in plagiarism software is given to the Central Library. During the period of June to December 2015, the central library received many applications requesting to check for plagiarism. The details of documents received for plagiarism checking are given in table 1:

Table 1: Numbers of Documents Received

Ph. D. Theses	126
M. Phil. Dissertations	86
Research Papers	11
Book	1
Total	**224**

130 submissions were made by male researchers and 45 submissions were made by female researchers. This data is based on first time submissions only.
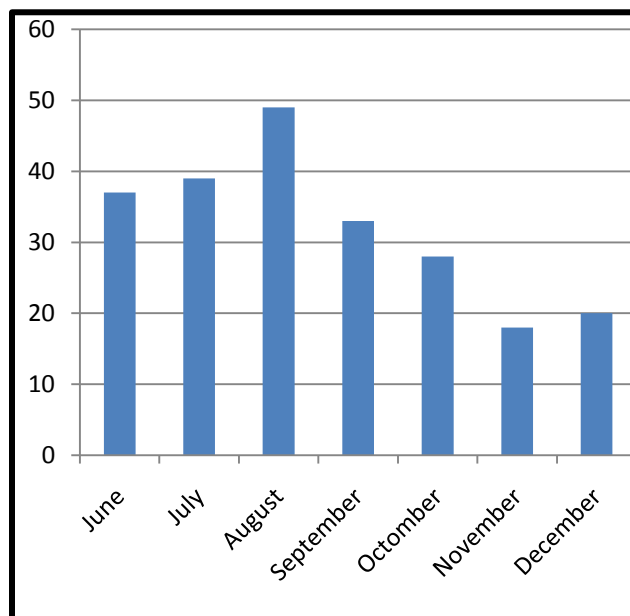

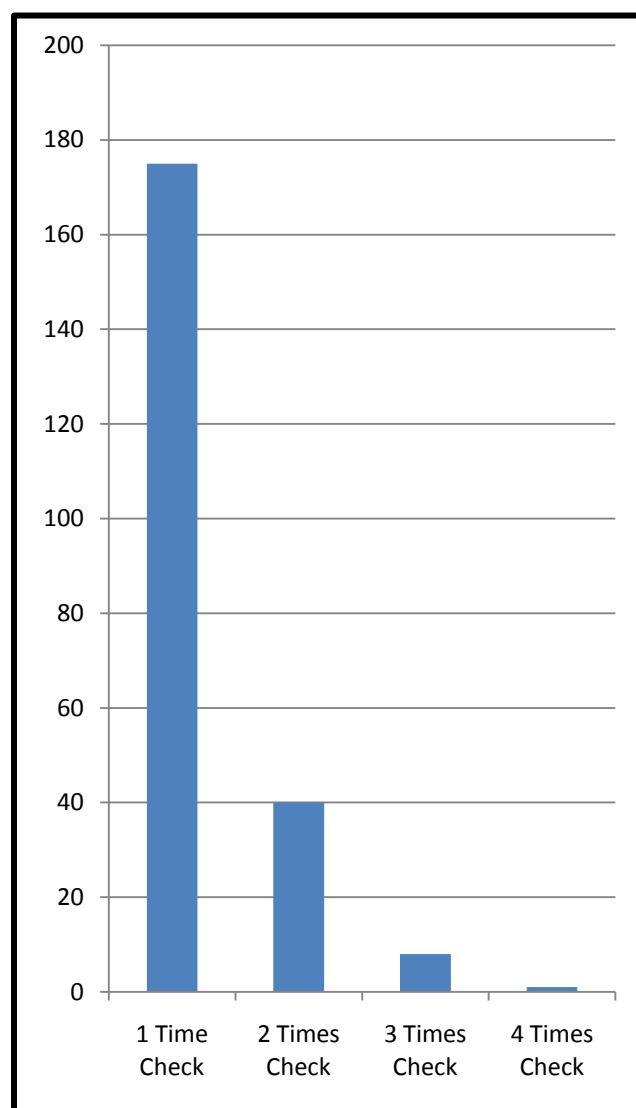**Fig. 1: Month-Wise distribution of Theses Received for Plagiarism Checking**

It is observed from the above table that during the specified time period (seven months), the central library checked 224 documents. During the month of August 2015, the maximum i.e. 22% (49) documents were checked and in November, the minimum 08% (18) documents were checked. Month-wise details of theses received for plagiarism checking is given in figure 1.

Table 2: Repetition in the Checking of Plagiarism

S. No.	No. of Thesis	Times Tested	Percentage
1.	175	1st time	78.00
2.	40	2nd time	18.00
3.	08	3rd time	03.60
4.	01	4th time	00.40

As per the rule of the university, similarity percentage should not exceed more than 30%. It is expected that researcher should write 70% matter in his/her own language in thesis. It is observed that 175 (78%) researchers need not have to test their thesis second time. It is also observed that if the research topic is very unique or rare, the percentage of similarity comes below 30%.

It may be observed in table 2 that even though the practice of testing thesis is new to the university researchers, 78% researchers succeeded in the first attempt. Only three attempts are allowed to test the thesis. In exceptional cases with special permission, one thesis was checked 4th time on 18.09.2015. The university decided to charge Rs. 3000/- for 2nd and Rs. 5000/- for third attempt.

Fig. 2: Repetition in the Checking of Plagiarism

Table 3: Subject-Wise distribution of Theses Received for Plagiarism Checking

Subjects	No. of Documents Submitted for Plagiarism Testing	Rank
Chemistry	29	1
Computer	28	2
Commerce	24	3
English	22	4
Physical Education	16	5
Environmental Science	14	6
Physics	13	7
Mathematics	11	8
Education	10	9
Engineering	8	10
Botany	7	11
Law	7	11
Zoology	7	11

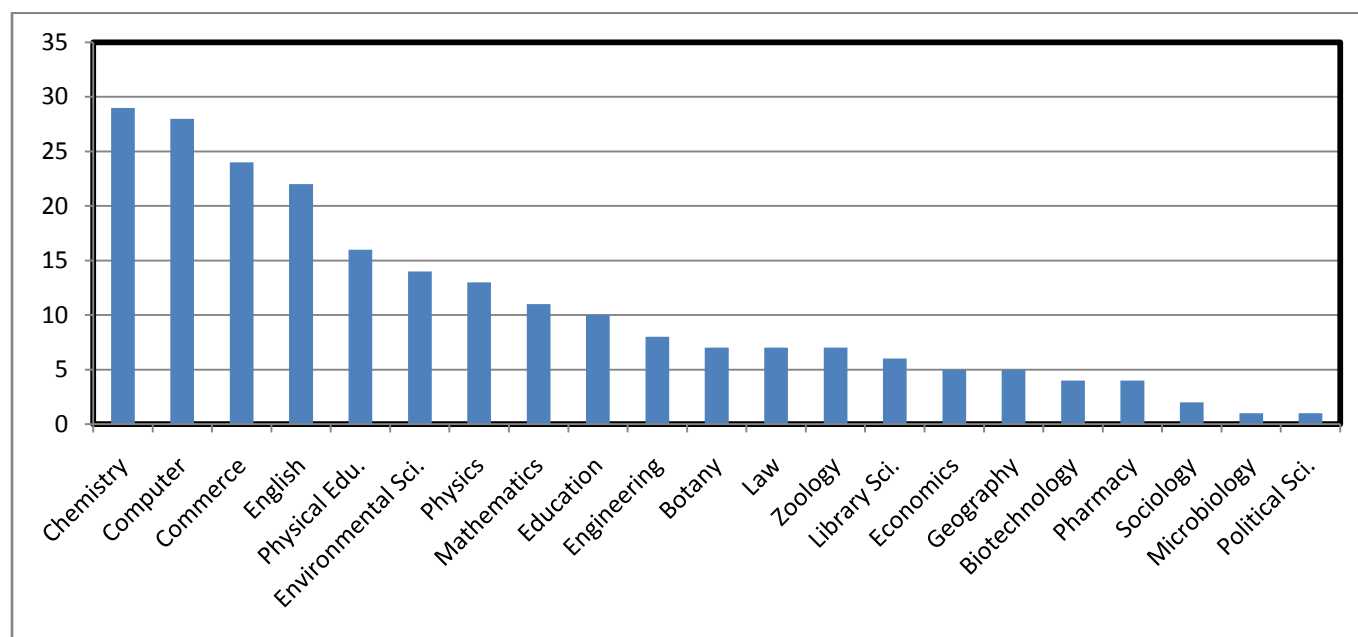| Library Science	6	12
Economics	5	13
Geography	5	13
Biotechnology	4	14
Pharmacy	4	14
Sociology	2	15
Microbiology	1	16
Political Science	1	16

Fig. 3: Subject-Wise distribution of Theses Received for Plagiarism Checking

It may be observed in table 3 that in Science discipline (131) submission of thesis is more than social science (93). In science, Chemistry is on first rank and in social science Commerce occupies first position (Overall rank 3).

CONCLUSION

Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University may be the first university in Maharashtra that has started plagiarism testing of thesis strictly. In the span of seven months more than 224 documents were tested through plagiarism software. The main aim of using plagiarism software is to test M.Phil, Ph.D thesis. University signed MOU with INFLIBNET as a part of condition of MOU this process taken seriously by the academic council of this university. The researchers have appreciated this process.

It is observed from the data analysis that the maximum researchers, even though not aware of this process succeeded in first attempt of plagiarism testing i.e. percentage of their thesis similarity comes below 30%.

REFERENCES

[1]   www.ithenticate.com

[2]   www.turnitin.com

[3]   www.secure.urkund.com

[4]   www.plagiarism.org/.../complete_resou...

[5]   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism

[6]   http://inflibnet.ac.in

[7]   http://smallseotools.com/plagiarism-checker/.

[8]   http://en.writecheck.com

[9]   https://www.paperrater.com/plagiarism _checker

[10]   www.srtmun.ac.in