

BEHIND BARS: THE SINCEREST FLATTERY

by:
Dahnella B. Antonio
Luakan National High School

“Thou shalt not steal.”

-Exodus 20:15

The thought that one’s work was good enough to take is an admiration. It is normal for students, teachers, and even journalists to use websites to gather information and seek evidence to support their claims. Websites publish articles and books containing information for the public, but making use of this information without credits and proper citation is a crime – plagiarism.

According to the Unabridged Dictionary, plagiarism is a form of flattery. Under Philippine Law, plagiarism is a crime with legal and professional repercussions known as the Republic Act No 8293 or the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines. Individuals who are proven to commit this crime may serve six years and one day to nine years in prison and a fine ranging from five hundred thousand to one million five hundred thousand pesos, as section 216 states.

There are consequences in every action, as a student-journalist, being aware of the consequences is one of the basic principles of journalism in general. One of the consequences is the destruction of one’s reputation. Plagiarism can tarnish one’s reputation, especially in the professional and academic setting. Their credibility and reliability will be questioned, and suspicions may arise.

Not only their reputation will be damaged but their social and ethical endeavors as well will be reprimanded Relationships and trust may break leading to a stained integrity and career failure. We all know that plagiarism is an ethical behavior, thus, their morale might be questioned as well, especially with their conscience, shame, regret, and guilt.

Plagiarism is a serious crime anyone can commit and is not tolerated in the Philippines where individuals who commit may face legal ramifications, professional and academic consequences, and damage to reputation. Indeed, imitation is the sincerest flattery, but how far can a plagiarist flatter the intellect of an individual?

References:

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"Republic Act No. 8293 - The Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines." (1997).

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