

African Journal of Accounting, Finance and Banking Research, March 31, 2010.

Editor's Notes

A Case of Plagiarism

The African Journal of Accounting, Finance and Banking Research (AJAFBR), is a direct access journal indexed in the 11th edition of Cabell's Economics and Finance Directory and marketed globally by EBSCO. All abstracts and copies of articles published by the AJAFBR are available at the Social Sciences Network website. The AJAFBR published its first edition in 2007. As a result of the obvious need for enhanced development in the African continent, the AJAFBR has given special consideration to papers that not only highlight problems but also proffer solutions and make targeted policy recommendations. So far, we have published about twenty-one quality articles in these areas. These articles are currently available on the journal website free to viewers. Interested parties have logged in from around one hundred and twenty-two countries in the world. The number of visits to the journal website increased from three hundred and twenty-two in February, 2008 to five thousand, six hundred and seventy-six to date. We are very grateful to all the authors who shared their creative output with us. The editors, members of the Editorial Advisory Board and many reviewers have worked very hard to achieve the objectives of the journal as stated on the journal website. Our efforts have not been without challenges. Today, I will inform you of an incident of plagiarism.

In December, 2009, we published online an article, titled, *Post-Privatization Changes in Firm Activities, Performance and Management Control: an Empirical Study on Malawian Based Firms* authored by Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma of the School of Business, Canadian University of Dubai, in Volume 5 Number 5. On March 18, we received a complaint of plagiarism from Dr. Bereket Redda of the Department of Accounting and Finance, Monash University, Australia, charging that Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma had copied substantial portions of his PhD. thesis. The thesis was published in 2007 and is publicly accessible via the internet from the data base of the library services of the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. In order to determine authorship, and possible academic misconduct or plagiarism, I requested documentary evidence from Dr. Redda. I forwarded the complaint, a copy of the thesis and other supporting materials to Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma and requested an explanation. Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma replied and admitted plagiarizing Dr. Redda's thesis. Following this revelation I removed Nkhoma (2009) from the online publication of Volume 5 Number 5, 2009 of the AJAFBR. As a result of the admitted plagiarism, the integrity of the whole paper had become compromised by this incident of plagiarism.

Editors of the Global Business Investments and Publications LLC, (publisher of the AJAFBR) and I examined the documents provided by Dr. Redda and the article that was published, to determine if the misconduct was severe or less egregious in order to determine if further sanctions were required. We unanimously agreed that there were conspicuous incidences of plagiarism. The observed plagiarism refers to about 15 lines of abstract, almost the entire research methodology including data collection and data analysis and many parts of the conclusion. In many areas of the article, Dr. Nkhoma copied Dr. Redda's thesis word by word, sometimes with little paraphrasing. Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma took the words and thoughts of Dr. Redda as contained in his PhD. thesis without ever citing Dr. Redda's thesis or obtaining a written authorization from Dr. Redda.

We concluded that Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma copied substantial portions of Dr. Redda's thesis without properly giving him credit for all the information taken from his thesis. This constitutes extensive, exhaustive, gross and conspicuous plagiarism. We therefore decided to ban Dr. Devin Z. Nkhoma permanently from submitting any manuscripts for publication in any of the journals published by Global Business Investments and Publications LLC because he intentionally misled the editors and reviewers and subsequently the reading public about the originality of his work. In addition, we have notified Dr. Nkhoma's institution of affiliation, the Canadian University of Dubai of his acts of plagiarism and the sanctions we have imposed. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, *to "plagiarize" means, to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own, to use (another's production) without crediting the source, to commit literary theft, to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source. In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward,* http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_plagiarism.html.

Dr. Nkhoma has recognized the severity of the problem and has apologized to Dr. Redda and to the journal for his unprofessional action. However there are consequences for violation of academic trust and standard academic conduct. In addition to reporting this incidence of plagiarism, these notes also state that the AJAFBR and all the journals published by the Global Business Investments and Publications LLC will not tolerate plagiarism.

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