

Change in Value System: Undermining Academic Integrity and Innovative Research

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Innovative research is an extension of quality education through academic integrity, and academic integrity is a product of societal value systems. In this study, academic integrity is examined, as it relates to global society. The value system of society is the key factor in building academic integrity, which will, in the long run, affect the quality of education for sustainable development. The question is, to what extent society affects academic integrity? This study applies the Virtue Theory of Ethics in a qualitative methodology of an evaluation research design, using a thematic analysis instrument to answer the question. In any society, certain things are compromised once the value system changes. To imbibe the culture of academic integrity, societal values must promote a system for such to thrive. If not, everyone wants things for the wrong reasons. This leads to a dearth of ability to perform, even innovative research. Then, all the values of academic integrity become scarce commodities, and it becomes difficult to cope with the required values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage whether as students, teachers, researchers, workers, or leaders; this affects the quality of education for innovative research and sustainable development. To imbibe the culture of academic integrity in everyone, societal values must change from just having a certificate to having the ability to perform duties innovatively as demanded by whatever the work requires.

Keywords: Academic Integrity, Belief System, Innovative Research, and Sociocultural Value Systems

Word Count: 229

Introduction

Academic integrity has become a universal educational concept fundamental to the advancement of knowledge in research, teaching, and learning. There have been efforts by various educational bodies to promote academic integrity all across the globe. Despite all these efforts, challenges still exist in identifying and eradicating malpractices in educational institutions all over the world. The fact that academic integrity breaches are becoming rampant in the educational system shows that there must be a fundamental issue to be addressed, especially in the value system of society. The question is: what are

the main factors that make people undermine academic and research integrity? Perhaps in order to find answers to this question, it is necessary to revisit or redefine the purpose of education and educational institutions.

In recent years, there have been debates about the purpose of education, most especially in the 21st century. Arthur H. Camins in trying to define the purpose of education asks if people attend educational institutions to get prepared to get a job, or for personal development to become engaged citizens (Strauss, 2015). In other words, is attending a school to get a certificate or get skills? To answer these questions and how they relate to academic integrity, studies done by scholars from different countries in the Handbook of Academic Integrity are examined in a systematic review. Therefore, the data used for this study are secondary, in a qualitative method of an evaluation research design, applying a thematic analysis instrument to the issues identified in forty-seven countries across North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia, and Oceania. These studies reveal the value system of the society that defines education, and the reason for attending school. The Handbook of Academic Integrity, written by diverse scholars from around the world provides a global view of the causes of academic integrity breaches.

The Concept of Academic Integrity

According to the Center for Academic Integrity, as stated by Tracy Bretag (2016), honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility are the key values of academic integrity. These values must guide academic institutions' structures evident in teaching, learning, and research. This view is also echoed by Jane Thomas and Jon Scott (2016), quoting Park's statement of 2004 on the core values on which academic institution is expected to be rooted. Applying the Virtue Theory of Ethics, according to Athanassoulis (2012), education, either in the aspect of research or teaching is about philosophy, which is simply defined as "good reasoning". Every idea must be critically and thoroughly examined through the prism of others' viewpoints and personal points of view. Virtue ethics theory, as purported by Nafsika Athanassoulis is an alternative to normative theories such as deontology and consequentialism. It is said to be an umbrella term for a variety of theories and claims of many philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Nietzsche, and others.

Virtue theory of ethics is a modern moral philosophical theory debating the missing factors of deontology and consequentialism normative theories in considering moral matters. These shifts focus from rules and obligations to virtues and character, which are not rigid but capture the contextual sensitivity of moral situations. Athanassoulis argues that concentration should be on moral character development that can be applied in unpredictable moral situations. Virtue requires the right reason and desire to be chosen, not by accident or mistake. Athanassoulis believes that understanding appropriateness is the concept on which virtue is built, which is relative to the situation and the individual. Ability to see the morally salient features in each situation and weigh up the moral demands

of the situation. Although there is an objection raised against virtue ethics, which is personality psychology on which an individual may go wrong not being able to differentiate between philosophy and psychology.

Factors Affecting Academic Integrity

According to Teresa 'Teddi' Fishman (2016), In the United States of America, academic integrity in higher education which was built on religious moral values is facing serious challenges of shifting the basis of morality to accommodate other beliefs, individual character, and social order. Attending higher institutions used to be for intellectual growth or knowledge pursuit, but now is for earning potential or future employability. Fishman also identifies the unusual degree of autonomy of individual institutions as a factor affecting academic integrity in the US.

In Latin America, a study by Mauricio Garcia-Villegas, Nathalia Franco-Perez, and Alejandro Cortes-Arbelaez Colombia, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru identified a culture of corruption, inadequate grading system, excessive academic workload, and lack of knowledge about academic integrity as the factor affecting academic integrity.

Jane Thomas and Jon Scott (2016) reveal that, in the United Kingdom, competing market pressure among institutions and degrees, and internalization contribute to the challenge of academic integrity. Other studies done across the 26 European Union countries according to Irene Glendinning (2016) identify lack of awareness, lack of policies to ensure quality educational process, and poor institutional responses in assuring academic integrity as the factors affecting academic and research integrity in Europe. Irene argued that lack of further training for professors also contributes to academic misconduct.

In Africa, the studies done in Egypt and Nigeria by Mohamed Nagib Abou-Zeid (2016) and Stella-Maris Orim (2016) respectively show that ineffective awareness creation, inefficient policies, time pressure through work overload, the quest to meet society's expectation of obtaining high grades pressure people in the academics to involve in academic integrity violation. Abou-Zeid discovery is not so much different from Orim's results in Nigeria, where she outlines educational system and pedagogy, economic and sociocultural environment, infrastructure and technology, institutional policies and management systems, immunity of some cadre of academic community, and lack of awareness of academic integrity standard are identified as the factor affecting academic and research integrity.

Studies done in some Asian countries identify some factors affecting academic integrity in Asia. Ide Bagus Siaputra and Dimas Armand Santosa (2016) identify the lack of enough time to produce quality work as a factor affecting academic integrity in Indonesia. Joyce Kim Sim Cheah, concerning the state of academic integrity in Malaysia, identifies lack of awareness, inadequate knowledge and referencing skills, lack of competence, personal attitude, poor time management skills, work of family commitment, and poor language skills as the factors affecting academic integrity. Sachidananda

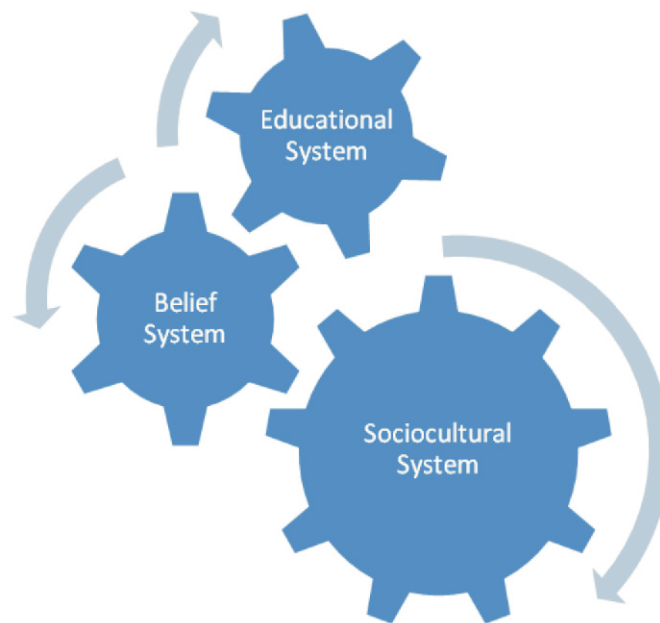
Mohanty (2016) identifies peer and parental pressure to perform, and cultural practices of copying and imitation as factors affecting academic integrity in India. In China, according to Shuangye Chen and Bruce Macfarlane (2016), cultural norms of reciprocity, low salary level and incentive pay to reward publications, academic promotion system of quantity over quality, and importance of first authorship are identified as factors affecting academic integrity in China. Despite Japan's moral education, according to Greg Wheeler (2016), Lack of formal guidance and limited instruction about academic integrity are factors affecting academic and research integrity in Japan.

In the Gulf region of the Middle East, according to Gina Cinali (2016), cultural excuses, local intransigence, changes in the educational system due to rapid modernization and internationalization, and the ability to obtain unearned credentials are the factors affecting academic integrity.

Tracey Bretag (2016) claims that the commercialization of higher education in Australia leads to breaches of academic integrity. As a result, there is a reduction in public funding of higher education, which led to an increase in the number of international students of different academic backgrounds.

Conclusion

According to the studies from various regions, it is discovered that academic integrity violation is not only related to studentship, but scholarship which includes the faculty also. All are part of the society that builds individuals, and individuals that build the society. The societal value system is built on the belief system, educational system, and sociocultural system of the society. Any conflict between these systems affects the values system of the society, including academic integrity.



Societal Value System Chain

As identified in most countries, pressure for success from the sociocultural system of the society creates a belief system that success is what matters, not how it is achieved. It is therefore a necessity that the academic community reset the gears, by setting the right value system on how success is achieved rather than the success itself.

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