

Chapter 10

Perception of Prospective Teachers on Academic Integrity

Devika S.

NVKSD College of Education, India

Sheela P.

NVKSD College of Education, India

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the levels of academic integrity of prospective teachers and determines any significant differences in their mean scores of academic integrity with respect to background variables, gender, locale, academic stream, and type of family. Normative Survey Method is used to study 400 prospective teachers from Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu, India. Results reveal the teachers have a moderate level of academic integrity and gender, locale of the school, and type of family influence their academic integrity.

INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity is the moral code or ethical policy of the academic world. The term academic integrity was coined by Don McCabe who is regarded as the “grandfather of academic integrity”. Academic integrity includes ethical values such as anti-plagiarism, maintenance of academic standards by adopting honesty in research and academic publishing. Academic dishonesty can be defined as “students attempt to present others’ academic work as their own” (Jensen, Arnett, Feldman, & Cauffman, 2006). It is the set of ethics by which academic world moves on--the standards by which institutions ensure that quality in publications, research, teaching, and other academic efforts in an honest manner. It also provides value to the academic work. Maintaining academic integrity is a highly sought-after phenomenon these days as the importance of original research and the question of academic integrity grew among faculty members these days. Academic integrity is the foundation for original quality academic products or outputs. It is learning or skill or knowledge to express original ideas and cite sources to report results accurately and honestly. It is the search for truth and knowledge by one’s own intellectual and personal honesty in his area of involvement – be it in learning, teaching, research or any other services. It creates an academic culture whereby motivating academia to create originality in academic writings.

Academic integrity can also mean refraining from plagiarism or avoidance of cheating. By being to academic integrity it is making sure as to give credit to other persons as theirs rather than claiming that work as one’s own. Academic integrity means refraining from cheating or otherwise violating the rules that have been set down for any particular assignment. The International Center for Academic Integrity defines academic integrity as assuring of five fundamental values, such as, (i) honesty, (ii) trust, (iii) fairness, (iv) respect, and (v) responsibility. These five values along with the nerve to act on the above-mentioned fundamental values even in the face of harsh conditions are truly foundational to the academy integrity.

The commitment to and expression of honest and moral behavior in an academic setting can also be reasons as academic integrity. This is most relevant at the higher level of academic learning as it relates to providing credit to other people when using their ideas. In other words it is acknowledging the contributions of other people. Failure to provide such acknowledgement leads to academic dishonesty.

Academic integrity is not only a key element in maintaining the quality of the academic writing but also it reflects the personality of an academician. Hence any type of academic misconduct not only gives bad reputation to the academia but also undermines the credibility of the academic. Academic integrity is a way and means to prove that one is honest and responsible in his academic study. Therefore, it is vital to complete a work without cheating or being dishonest in any academic work. Honesty is the foundation for solid academic work. Hence academicians may take extra care in avoiding cheating, unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, or any academic dishonesty.

Academic integrity is fundamental to scholarly work. Since it is the case an academician should trust himself and produce all his academic work honestly and with integrity to ensure individuality and uniqueness. Tendencies of academic dishonesty such as copying, cheating and the like are growing among today’s world of academia.

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