Engineering academic integrity: a study of students' attitude for quality assurance in college of education Ikere Ekiti

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Engineering, Academic, Integrity, Students', Quality, Assurance

Abstract

This study researched into issues that regard engineering academic integrity and students' attitude for quality assurance in the College of education Ikere Ekiti. It reviewed literatures related to the study and formulated research questions. The hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance and data collected were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The t-test statistics also assisted in the data analysis and results revealed that there is no significant difference between the male and female students' attitude to academic integrity in the College. Recommendations, made were focused at ensuring the improvement of academic integrity and assure quality among the staff (academic or non-academic) and students', through individual resilience, College management, Federal and State Governments.

1. Introduction

The word academic integrity is sacred and connotes sanity, cleaning up, watching out and securing the securable entities within the school environments. It represents discipline, self sacrifice denial and hard work for goodness or well being of education. Academic integrity is a stern approach towards teaching and learning processes. It is also the process of ensuring that standards are met and rules adhered to. The educational policies practiced must be updated in conformity with international conjunctions, to pronounce that academic integrity is in place within an institution. Academic integrity is a parlance for the honest, but disgusting to the dishonest academia. Academic integrity is a path, straight forward to trend for obedient academia, while crooked is it for disobedient academia.

With regards to students, academic integrity is a niche carved out by school management to ensure they have increased academic performance. It holds in the students' self esteem and pride for their institution of study. Academic integrity is a word that brings satisfaction and comfort to students' if they derive a commensurate quality service delivery compared to their school fees. Academic integrity brings to students' understanding the values of self dependency during examination and shunning of examination malpractices. If academic integrity is in place, then is quality assured, and this research is in line with the unceasing effort of the College management at ensuring that academic integrity is bolstered among staff (academic and non-academic) and students', so that the institution can find her place not only among the best in Nigeria, but among her international contemporaries.

2. Literature Review
What is Engineering?

According to Jim, (2014) engineering is the application of science and mathematics to solve problems. Engineering is a technological term that connotes building, construction, accuracy in measurement, calculation, structuring and re-structuring. To an academia, it signifies more solid representation of ideas, accurate thinking, specificity in teaching and

learning methodologies, standard scientific teaching and learning approaches, design and production of standard instructional media for instruction, structuring and re-structuring of human behaviours within the academic environment, building of good characters among staff and students', construction of standard facilities and infrastructures within the institution.

What is Academic Integrity?

Academic integrity is the state of being honest and fair with regards to all scholarly activity, from completing assignments to sitting exams. Academic integrity is also the expression of your beliefs about what is good and right. In other words, by conducting your study and research with integrity, you make complete or whole the relationship between your own judgment and action. This means that you achieve with integrity. The values associated with academic integrity namely the set of "Fundamental Values", defined by "Fundamental Values Project" are: honesty, respect, trust, fairness, responsibility and courage (Fishman, 2012). The opposite of academic integrity is academic dishonesty which is defined as any type of cheating that occur in relation to a formal academic exercise. In the College of Education, it is unacceptable to:

1. present another persons' work as your own;
2. provide other students' with your work;
3. make false claims, for example cooking up data;
4. engage in unacceptable group work or collaboration;
5. get or give more help than you are allowed;
6. cheat during examination; (Futurelearn, 2015).

Plagiarism is an example of academic dishonesty and can have serious consequences in the College. Plagiarism is presenting another persons' ideas, words, artworks, or inventions as your own, as well as using or modifying the work of others without acknowledgement. Plagiarism can include sharing work, submitting work that had already been submitted previously to another course (self plagiarism) and not acknowledging sources used. It can occur intentionally or unintentionally, which is not acceptable in the College of Education (Ditto).

Who is a Student?

According to Manchester City Council, (2015) student is a person who is attending or undertaking a course of study at an educational establishment. This includes study at any level, whether at elementary school, College, University, or some other establishment such as a training hospital, so student nurses are included. It must be study, not training, so people on government and other training schemes do not count as students.

A student is an individual who seeks to acquire knowledge within the confines of school environment. A student is someone who wish to undertake a prescribed course of study for a specified period within a school setting. A student is also any individual that is ready to learn under the tutelage of a teacher within the four walls of the classroom. In a modern sense a student is someone who receives instructional materials, follows a prescribed curricula contents, receives lectures, download educational information, processes data and corresponds with tutors irrespective of boundaries or geographical locations, through internet networks.

What is Attitude?

An attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols (Hogg & Vaughan 2005). Attitudes structure can be described in terms of three components as follows:
(1) Affective component: this involves a person's feelings or emotions about the attitude object. For example: "I am scared of spiders";

(2) Behavioral (or conative) component: the way the attitude we have influences how we act or behave. For example: "I will avoid spiders and scream if I see one"; and

(3) Cognitive component: this involves a person's belief or knowledge about an attitude object. For example: "I believe spiders are dangerous". This model is known as the ABC model of attitudes (Mcleod, 2014).

Attitude is psychological and represents ones mood or behaviour towards situations around him or her. It is the way and manner in which people react to certain issues in the society. Its' nature is located within the affective domain of any individuals learning. Attitude is an innate feeling, transferred to the outer world in a persistent and obvious way. It is a re-enactment of pre-conceived thoughts in relation to immediate environment. Attitude is a perceived interpretation of someone's atmosphere which could be right or wrong to other individuals. Attitude is an observable trait, which could be interpreted differently by various observers at a particular time and under a particular condition.

What is Quality?

Quality is a state of being good or bad at a particular period, given a specific scenario. Quality is standard of people, displayed in a certain atmosphere. Quality is good if it conforms with high standards or expectations, while bad if it does not conform to high standards or expectations. Quality is a determinant of an individual's rejection or acceptance by judges or observers. A key element of what quality means to users of products and services are as follows:

a. A degree of excellence
b. Conformance to requirements
c. Totality of characteristics which act to satisfy a need
d. Fitness for use
e. Fitness for purpose
f. Freedom from defects
g. Delighting customers (Mike, 2015).

What is Assurance?

"According to BusinessDictionary.com, (2015) assurance is part of corporate governance in which a management provides accurate and current information to the stakeholders about the efficiency and effectiveness of its policies and operations, and the status of its compliance with the statutory obligations." Assurance is the coverage of an event that is certain to happen (Investopedia, 2015). Assurance is a positive declaration intended to give confidence (Dictionary.com, 2015)

Assurance is the certainty for something to happen. It is the confidence that someone has about a particular scenario coming into reality. It is the absolute conditions needed for a plan to come true. It gives someone the trust that success level is sure at any particular time. It is a word that shows that everything is going to come out to be positive at the end. It is the possibility that shows all conditions will be favourable in a task.

3. Statement of the Problem

The College Management in their effort at bolstering academic integrity had stopped the sales of hand-outs and introduced the book series material for the students. They have set up disciplinary committee to sanction indiscipline amongst staff and students' to foster academic integrity. They have also organised seminars and workshops to sensitise staff and students on the dangers imbued in academic dishonesty like: copying of another students' assignment as your own, lifting words from another authors article without referencing, whispering during examination period, noise making during lecture hours, immodest dressing, absenteeism from

classes, rudeness to lecturers, getting drunk to classes, partying during examination periods, libidinous acts as College student, smuggling illegal materials into the examination hall, refusal to submit assignments when due, spending oneself school fees, stealing fellow students textbooks, soliciting for lecturers assistance for grades and so on.

4. Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the process of engineering academic integrity and studied students' attitude for quality assurance in College of Education Ikere Ekiti.

5. Scope of the Study

This study covers selected students' of College of Education Ikere Ekiti on engineering academic integrity and quality assurance.

6. Research Question

(1) Is there any significant difference between male and female students attitude towards academic integrity?

7. Research Hypothesis

HO_1: There is no significant difference between male and female students attitude towards academic integrity.

8. Methodology
9. Research Design

This is a descriptive research design of survey type.

10. Sample and Sampling Technique

This study involved one hundred (100) samples of College students', randomly selected across the campus in which forty nine (49) were males and fifty one (51) females. They consisted of four (4) categories which are: degree students, postgraduate diploma students and NCE students'.

11. Procedure for Data Collection

Prior information was given regarding this research to students' by the researcher and the questionnaire was administered to students' at random during free periods in lecture halls. In gathering adequate and effective data, five (5) matured class members were selected in assisting the researcher in distributing the questionnaire. A total of one hundred (100) questionnaire for this research were recollected for analysis.

12. Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study is researcher designed and titled Students' Attitude Questionnaire (SAQ).

13. Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The questionnaire was given to experts in test measurement and evaluation for face and content validation. The reliability was done using test-re-test method and it was found to be reliable and consistent with a reliability coefficient of 0.67.

14. Data Analysis Technique

The data gathered was analysed using t-test statistics, because it involved the comparison of the equality of means between two variables (male and female students). Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was also involved in the analysis.

15. Results and Discussions

HO$_1$: There is no significant difference between the male and female students attitude towards academic integrity.

Table 1

	N	SD	df	t$_{cal}$	t$_{tab}$	Remark
Male	49	49.28	98	0.752	1.660	Not
Female	51	56.34				significant

P<0.05

A table of no significance difference between male and female students' attitude towards academic integrity.

At p<0.05, the null hypothesis was upheld as there is no significant difference between the male and female students attitude towards academic integrity. This revealed that gender has no gratifying influence on students' attitude towards academic integrity.

16. Discussions

From table 1, male students' are not better in terms of their attitude towards academic integrity compared to the females within the College campus, and there is no significant difference in their attitude. This finding shows that students' gender has no significance on academic integrity within the College campus, and it is done by upholding the null hypothesis tested at p < 0.05 significance level.

17. Conclusion

This study revealed that there is no significant difference in the students' attitude towards academic integrity within College of Education Ikere Ekiti, based on gender (male and female).

18. Recommendations

The management of the College of Education Ikere Ekiti should keep up their effort of ensuring that quality is assured through constant structuring and re-structuring of the academic system from time to time. Also updating the teaching and learning system with world class technologies and encouraging more in-service training and development of staff within and outside the shores of Nigeria is also important. Organising constant orientation for students on the importance of honesty in their studies is also relevant. The College management should also increase their reward for honesty and academic integrity to encourage proliferation of the practice. The Federal and State Governments should provide more funds to procure updated technological facilities and infrastructures that encourages staff and students' in their quest for academic integrity. Nonetheless, individuals (academia, non-academia and students') should endeavour to develop and motivate themselves for academic integrity, through hard working and non-resilience even in the face of discouragement, with the hope that rewards await in the future. Also the Federal and State Governments should help in making and ensuring implementation of policies that commensurate with international ones and guides quality assurance in Colleges of Education.

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