

Academic integrity in post/graduate students of teacher education program

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Abstract:

Integrity is a values-based solution-oriented holistic approach to resolving personal and professional problems. The main agenda of academic integrity is to develop the quality of scholarly work. Academic misconduct is frequently found in the academic world. In order to discourage misconduct, universities in Nepal have started to develop policies on integrity.

The main objective of this research was to explore the present scenario of academic integrity in Nepal. In order to explore the current situation, a study was conducted using sequential mixed methods research. In the first phase, the questionnaires were designed and distributed to around 350 students. 162 students returned the questionnaires. Then data were statistically analysed using descriptive statistical tools. In the second phase, eight students from different groups were selected for interview to explore reasons for the existing practices and to suggest appropriate mechanism(s) for developing academic integrity in the college.

Based on the responses from students, accessing information about academic integrity is a major problem. Every three in five students were familiar with various types of misconduct. Most of the students were familiar with citation and referencing conventions, but they are facing difficulties in paraphrasing and rephrasing. Another problem identified was students who wished to be named in activities without making contributions, as well as cheating in the exams and copying answers from others. The main reasons for these misconducts are professional pressure, being unaware of the consequences and the teaching and learning system. Students expect a strong support system and policy on academic integrity, which moves beyond the existing rule compliance approach.

Keywords: Academic integrity, academic writing, citation and reference, misconduct, plagiarism.