

Investigation of the graduates' ethical decision-making patterns

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Abstract:

Scientific ethics examines the value problems that arise during scientific studies and the solutions proposed for these problems. Academic ethics, part of the institutional or professional ethics, is more concerned with the behavior of students and faculty members inside the institutional environment. Academic integrity as one of the most important principles of academic ethics, requires academics to comply with scientific ethics principles in all academic activities and to observe ethical values such as accuracy, objectivity, attention, merit, clarity, confidentiality and respect in these processes. There are various classifications for behavior that contradict academic integrity. In the present study, "cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitation, academic sabotage and misrepresentation" dimensions are discussed within the context of academically dishonest behavior. Ignoring such behaviour damages fairness. Furthermore, behavior of students that does not comply with academic integrity negatively affects development of personality, potentially impacting on the future professional lives of the students. Scientists in the field of education, who play an important role in the formation of new generations and the structure of the society, should adopt and exhibit behavior consistent with academic integrity. The graduate education process is the most important education level where academic ethics values are adopted, and these values are reflected in individuals' behavior. Thus, this study used phenomenology design to investigate the ethical decision-making patterns in the academic experiences of 15 graduate students in the field of educational sciences. The experiences in scientific research processes, knowledge on science ethics, and volunteerism were considered as criteria for selecting the student participants. The data were initially collected with a scenario-based data collection instrument based on ethical dilemmas developed by the researchers. In this context, the individual is expected to decide and rationalize this decision based on the dilemma that the individual experiences in scenarios that contain ethical dilemmas in a sensitive issue such as academic integrity. After the analysis of the written views obtained with the scenario-based data collection instrument, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants based on the abovementioned analysis results.

Keywords: Academic integrity, ethical dilemma, graduate education, phenomenology.