

Academic integrity and quality assurance in higher education

Nosheen Naz

Fatima Jinnah Women University, Pakistan

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Abstract:

Measuring academic integrity through quality assurance in higher education is an important concern of Quality Enhancement Cells (QEC) established in higher education institutions in Pakistan. The purpose of QEC is to assess the academic integrity and quality in higher education through various means of academic performance by the faculty members. One of the mean to measure the performance is to Self-Assessment Reports (SAR) prepared by each department in the institution. To monitor the academic integrity of the faculty members to prepare SARs, action-based research was conducted through organizing a workshop by Quality Enhancement Cell at Fatima Jinnah Women University, Pakistan. This paper reflected the experiences and performances of the faculty members in preparing SARs which reflected upon their academic integrity. Eighty faculty members from twenty one departments participated in the workshop. The workshop was lasted on five hours interactive session between the trainers and the participants. After the completion of the workshop, semi-structured questionnaires were distributed to get feedback on the Self-Assessment Process. The analysis illustrated that academic integrity is reflected in preparing and presenting SARs to improve the quality of education in the respective institution. Many of the participants reported that the process of self-assessment is helpful in improving quality based education through academic veracity. Furthermore, many participants were aware about the components of SARs but lacking in its implementation. For instance, teacher and course evaluation in improving teaching and learning skills of students. It was suggested to the participants to integrate these results into their teaching methodologies to make the exercise more beneficial which was new learning for them. On the basis of the analysis of the action based research, it is concluded that quality of education has a strong link with academic integrity of the professionals in higher education institutions. It was also analyzed that compact podium provided by the institutions motivate faculty members to play their role in progressing the institution to improve the quality of education. The study recommended that to promote academic integrity through quality assurance measures the institutions should create more opportunities for the professional and development of the faculty members in teaching and research.

Keywords: Academic integrity, quality assurance, self-assessment.