

Academic Integrity in the Islam World: The Impact of culture

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Various recent studies have shown that the creation of a culture that includes ethical values at all levels of higher education is central to maintaining academic integrity (Bretag & Mahmud, 2015; Gow, 2014; Morris & Carroll, 2015). Scholars such as Morris and Carroll (2015) contend that the greatest impact on student's behaviour is achieved if a culture of academic integrity is fostered through practical experiences in a supportive learning environment that holistically addresses unethical practices. Bretag and Mahmud (2015) developed their framework for policy and practice to institutionalise a culture of academic integrity. It moves from punishments for breaches of academic integrity towards prevention and education. The framework includes academics as 'champions' promoting academic integrity among students and staff. Another supporting practice involves students as active promoters of academic integrity. Other research has explored institutional and national cultures and practices that are detrimental to academic integrity. Some studies have contrasted the academic cultures of the West and East (e.g. Kuiteleh & Adiningrum, 2011) and suggested that international students in western universities commit more breaches than domestic students due to language challenges as well as differential cultural norms and practices. While much research has been conducted on academic integrity related to culture in the western world including the behaviours of international students, and some work has been conducted in various Asian contexts. However, little is known about how national culture and religion affect academic integrity in eastern countries with a Muslim majority. This paper presents a synthesis of the literature related to academic integrity and culture in regions where Muslims are the majority. An integrative literature review was carried out. Keywords were used to search and to collect academic integrity related research published from 2010 to 2019. This study revealed that academics in countries with a majority of Muslims faced challenges related to their local cultures, which included social and religious perceptions and practices. However, they were also able to draw upon national and religious practices that supported and enhanced academic integrity. This paper concludes with recommendations for incorporating these positive cultural factors into an academic integrity framework for policy and practice appropriate for Muslim contexts.

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