

# HONOUR CODES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN ENGINEERING EDUCATION

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## ABSTRACT

*The subject of academic dishonesty at colleges and universities is an old one. However, it is now increasingly believed to be an area of discussion and concern world-wide. Academic dishonesty takes many forms. These include plagiarism, cheating in examinations, contract cheating, etc. The causes of academic dishonesty include lack of awareness particularly in relation to plagiarism, student perceptions of peer behaviour, failure to integrity students into the academic community and financial, time or academic pressures, etc. Honour codes have for long been developed and implemented at colleges and universities in the USA. Honour codes include traditional or modified honour codes. Honour codes underline the core values of an institution and enable students to play a much bigger role to influence peer behaviour and to police academic misconduct. Honour codes promote holistic growth and development of students rather than focussing on the punitive nature of academic integrity policies per se. The work reported in this paper is based on a literature review and concludes that tackling academic dishonesty effectively at colleges and universities require a multi-pronged approach including implementation of the academic integrity policies, the honour code, creative pedagogical practices and a supportive approach to learning and development of students' skills.*

**Keywords:** *Academic Integrity; Cheating; Engineering Education; Ethics; Honour Codes.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity continues to be a subject of increasing concern in higher education institutions world-wide. This was the case even before the move to online delivery of programs since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many colleges and universities have over the years developed academic integrity policies to address the problem. Academic integrity concerns include plagiarism, cheating in examinations, falsification of data or research findings, etc. Penalties for academic dishonesty range from warnings or admonition or failure in a course to expulsion from the institution in the extreme. Intellectual honesty is the only currency in higher education. Failure to uphold academic integrity devalues academic qualifications. Academic integrity is at the heart of trust for individuals and institutions in higher education. Intellectual honesty is a prerequisite for the moral and proper functioning of individuals and society that higher education institutions seek to serve.

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Some colleges and universities particularly in the United States of America have developed academic honour codes to improve academic honesty. The concept of honour codes is not new. One of the earliest honour codes was developed at the University of Virginia in 1840 following the horrible incident of the shooting of an academic member of staff by a student. In the honour code, all students of the university undertook not to cheat, lie or steal whilst studying at the university. This code was policed by students and the single sanction for breach of the code was expulsion from the university (Carter, 2008).

This paper provides an evaluation of the influence of honour codes on academic integrity. The research method adopted in the collation of published information is given in the next section. This is followed by a review of the major causes of academic dishonesty in colleges and universities. Finally, detailed qualitative analysis of the impact of honour codes on academic integrity is provided.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

There has been very limited research into the impact of honour codes on academic integrity at colleges and universities outside the United States of America. The overall aims of this study within the context of the Sultanate of Oman are to:

1. Ascertain the extent to which honour codes have been adopted at colleges and universities,
2. Explore the perceptions of university students and academic staff to academic integrity and the honour code system,
3. Assess the feasibility of implementing the honour code system at colleges and universities,
4. Analyse the impact of honour codes on faculty actions and opinions regarding academic integrity on university campuses, and
5. Evaluate honour codes and their influence on the culture of academic integrity at higher education institutions.

This study seeks to answer several research questions in the context of the Sultanate of Oman namely:

1. What are the perceptions of college and university academic staff towards plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty at higher education institutions?
2. What are the perceptions of students towards plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty at higher education institutions?
3. Does the presence of an honour code reduce the level of academic dishonesty at a university?
4. Does the influence of the honour code vary between students on different majors, colleges and freshmen versus graduating students?
5. To what extent do academic staff communicate the provisions of the honour code?
6. To what extent do academic staff enforce penalties associated with violation of the honour code?
7. Does the presence of the honour code impact on the culture of academic integrity at a university?

A literature review was undertaken and the work started by identifying academic work published in peer-reviewed journal and conference papers, books, theses, dissertations, and academic reports. The literature was identified by searching published sources

through electronic search engines including Masader, Google Scholar, Science Direct, and ProQuest. Masader is the Oman virtual science library and provides single point online access to a wide range of research publications provided by international publishers and online libraries.

The search terms used to identify the relevant literature were: honour codes, academic integrity, academic dishonesty, cheating and ethics. The objective of the search was to narrow down and identify those research publications relevant to honour codes. Non-academic literature such as university policy documents, social media reports, newspaper articles, unpublished reports were excluded from the study. Publications on other areas of academic integrity were also excluded from the study. Most of the research on the subject of honour codes for example the work of McCabe et al. (1999), McCabe et al. (2002), and McCabe et al. (2003) was USA-based. The search overall revealed that there is a dearth of academic literature on the subject of honour codes although there is plenty of published work on academic integrity in general. The work of Richards et al. (2016) was conducted in the Australian context well as the work of Yakovchuk et al. (2011) was undertaken in the United Kingdom.

This research work is still in its early stages and what is reported below are preliminary findings from the literature review. The next stage of the study will utilise both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Primary data will be collected using structured telephone interviews, online questionnaires and focus groups. Focus groups offer a powerful qualitative data collection approach in which six to eight respondents are interviewed as a group. It is anticipated that the study will be extended to cover two other countries to enable comparisons to be made. Comparative analysis methods will be used to assess this qualitative data. Data collected will also be subjected to exploratory factor analysis tests. For example, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure will be used to examine the strength of partial correlation between factors before a factor analysis is undertaken. Bartlett's test of sphericity will be undertaken to ascertain that the data collected is suitable for factor analysis. Qualitative and quantitative relationships will be explored using standard descriptive and inferential statistical tests such as the Chi-squared and F-tests. Quantitative techniques will be used to analyse quantitative data using standard computer packages such as MINITAB and SPSS.

### **3. CAUSES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication of data and research outcomes, plagiarism and collusion. Cheating includes use of unauthorised material in examinations or copying of answers from other students in examinations. Falsification may occur and include fabrication of data or laboratory reports. Plagiarism is defined as use of material, text, or computer code and passing it off as one's own. Assisting other students or copying reports and assignment constitutes a breach of academic honesty. Other examples of academic dishonesty include the "dead grandmother problem" which is an excuse often given by students prior to taking of final semester examinations. These students normally wish to delay or postpone the dates for taking of their own examinations.

Plagiarism is a very common form of academic dishonesty. It is essential that academic staff provide detailed guidance to students on academic integrity policy and their own university expectations. Students should be given guidance on how to source information, how to paraphrase work and how to provide citations. Where students are allowed to work

in groups, the extent of collaboration permitted should be clarified. Specific detailed instructions should be given to students on the first day of classes, and throughout the teaching semester. Students should be given small assignments that are not graded to provide them with opportunities to practice paraphrasing and essay writing before they tackle lengthy graded assignments.

Assuming that students are rational and risk-neutral, they will commit academic offences if the expected benefits in terms of grades improvement is higher than the perceived cost (Awad et al., 2016). Their study finds that complete deterrence in terms of punishment is achieved when the expected penalty is higher than the maximum possible gain. Furthermore, they also conclude that increasing penalties is not always optimal to punish repeat offenders when learning by both the offenders and academic staff is considered. In the paragraphs, that follow, the reasons why students often commit acts of plagiarism and academic dishonesty are discussed.

### **3.1 STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF PEER BEHAVIOUR**

The single biggest predictor of cheating at university is the perception by students of what their peers are doing. Peer behaviour influences the attitudes of others. Based on social learning theory, students learn behaviour from others. If students see their peers cheating and academic staff do nothing about it or get away with it, then they are more likely to cheat. If there is a group of students who are cheating, they can make it appear as if it is the norm. Students can also justify their own behaviour by believing that if others are cheating, they might as well cheat.

Academic staff must define what constitutes cheating behaviour and explain university policy and consequences should a student be caught cheating or attempting to cheat. Academic staff must address cheating where it occurs in a fair and consistent manner. Students ought to always be reminded that cheating has no place in academic life in a university and that dishonest behaviour of any form will be detected and punished. If academic staff address all instances of cheating fairly and consistently, this is likely to reduce dishonest behaviour.

### **3.2 LACK OF PLAGIARISM AWARENESS**

Many students in colleges and universities particularly in their early years on their majors are unaware of what plagiarism is. If they do, their knowledge is rudimentary. Thus, many students may commit plagiarism acts inadvertently or even when they had no intent to cheat. Where students do not have the full knowledge and understanding of the issues, they are likely to ignore and not pursue the matters. Some students feel that fabricating references or submitting work where a few lines of text have been taken from submissions of other students does not constitute academic misconduct. Indeed, others feel that working in groups and submitting the same piece of work even where individual submissions are required is not unacceptable academic conduct.

Lack of plagiarism awareness by students can easily be addressed by academic staff. They can modify assessment practices. For example, assignments which require students to write extensive reports can be replaced by class tests or short quizzes. However, such changes can lead to other forms of academic misconduct including cheating.

### **3.3 FAILURE TO INTEGRATE STUDENTS IN THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY**

Failure to integrate students into the academic community can lead to increased incidents of academic dishonesty. Integration of students into a program or college or academic community will influence their attitudes to the community. Students with a positive attitude to their learning are likely to be motivated to do the right thing so as not to be caught in unethical behaviour. Excessive use of group work, large class sizes and lack of regular contact with academic staff are all factors that can lead to student alienation. Other activities which can assist in student integration into the academic community include extra-curricular activities, summer schools and sports.

### **3.4 SURFACE LEARNING APPROACH TO STUDIES**

Students who adopt a surface learning approach in their studies are much more likely to plagiarise (Guo, 2011). A deep learning approach assists students to develop moral reasoning capabilities when faced with complex ethical situations.

### **3.5 EASE OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Students now have access to vast sources of information available via the internet. This ease of access to information makes it easier for students to plagiarise. Through the internet, students also have access to services of ghost writers which has increased the incidence of contract cheating. Plagiarism detection is now possible through use of text matching software but work procured through contract cheating can be difficult to detect.

### **3.6 FAILURE TO ADHERE TO INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES**

It is extremely important that institutions take plagiarism detection seriously. Where it is detected, university policies must be followed to ensure a fair resolution. Unfortunately, academic staff occasionally perceive this as an extra burden. If students perceive that academic staff do not take plagiarism seriously, they are unlikely to do so themselves. Where the perception by students is that they are unlikely to be caught, the chances of engaging in plagiaristic behaviour will be higher.

### **3.7 ACADEMIC AND TIME PRESSURES**

A university academic qualification is a very desirable achievement and therefore students come under pressure from family and peers to succeed. Such students may resort to plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty. Students under financial pressures may need to take up part-time employment. Faced with limited time, such students may resort to plagiarism. Students with an active social life or poor time management skills may find that they do not have adequate time to devote to their studies which also increases the temptation to plagiarise. Academic staff must always give students reasonable deadlines which provide them with ample time to complete assignments. Extremely tight deadlines to complete written assignments may compel students to take short cuts due to time pressures.

### **3.8 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Some international students for example may find themselves plagiarising because of language difficulties. Academic staff can support such students by replacing extended essays and written assignments with short class tests. In some cultures, copying a piece

of work verbatim may be accepted as a sign of showing respect to the author of the work when indeed it is unacceptable in western education.

### **3.9 STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

Students must be trained and supported in their studies to get them to develop their abilities to take good decisions when faced with ethical dilemmas. Courses in development of academic writing skills will help students to understand and avoid plagiarism. Students must be informed in the early stages of their studies about course and program expectations and must also be given adequate time to complete assignments. Extra support in development of their writing skills can be provided through academic writing centres, foundation programs, language and skills training. Other support mechanisms such as access to funding sources and hardship funds, spiritual needs and legal advice where necessary all help students to feel valued and integrated into the university community.

It should be emphasised that the solution to academic dishonesty does not lie in detecting and punishing students; even if punishments are as severe as expulsion from a university. Expulsion from a university is not a sufficient deterrent to plagiarism. The solution is an overarching one where responsibility to promote academic integrity is shared by all stakeholders including students, staff and the institution. Colleges and universities should focus on inculcating a culture of academic integrity and providing support for students to develop their academic skills.

Some authors have asserted that male students are more likely to cheat than female students, and that younger students are more likely to cheat than their mature older counterparts. Furthermore, other researchers go further to state that students demonstrating lower academic performance are more likely to cheat than those demonstrating superior academic performance. However, research into these demographic variables and their impact on cheating or plagiaristic behaviour remains inconclusive (McCabe, et al 2002).

## **4. HONOUR CODES**

Honour codes have been widely adopted across many colleges and universities in the USA. However, they are not common in universities throughout the commonwealth. These tend to focus on academic integrity policies and student training rather than honour codes. The honour code system enables a university to inculcate its value system in its culture and fabric. It serves as a moral compass to empower students to take responsibility for upholding academic standards. Honour codes also help to shift the focus of responsibility from academic staff to students. Provided that they are well-designed and clearly communicated, honour codes are likely to have mitigating effects on academic dishonesty (Carpenter et al., 2005). Tatum and Schwartz (2017) assert that honour codes reduce both the perception and prevalence of cheating and yet academic staff rarely discuss academic integrity expectations or policies with their students.

Traditional honour codes generally include the following elements:

- A written pledge signed by all students in which they undertake not to cheat or lie in their assignments and examinations,

- Students play a key role in policing and enforcement of the code, for example, all panel members of the disciplinary body may be students and the panel may be chaired by a student,
- Students are expected to report their peers who may be in violation of the code, and
- Students may benefit from taking unsupervised or unproctored examinations.

In the modified honour code, academic staff take on more extra responsibilities for enforcement of the honour code as it is recognised that such a role should not be left to students alone.

Institutions with modified honour codes have less cheating behaviour than those without honour codes. However, they have more cheating behaviour than those with traditional honour codes (McCabe et al., 2002). Their work further confirms that the factors that have the largest influence on student cheating behaviour are as follows:

1. Perception by students of the behaviour of their peers,
2. Existence of the honour code,
3. Perceptions about the chance of being caught,
4. Perceptions about the severity of penalties that are likely to follow when the academic integrity policy is breached,
5. Perceptions about the chance of being reported by other students and staff, and
6. Understanding and acceptance of the institution's academic integrity policy.

Tatum et al. (2018) report that students from modified honour code institutions perceive more severe punishments for cheating and understood the process of reporting academic misconduct better than students from non-code institutions. In order to successfully implement the honour code in a university, an understanding of how and why it affects students' behaviour is essential. The sections that follow provide an evaluation of the processes by which the honour code makes a contribution to reducing academic dishonesty.

#### **4.1 FOSTERING STUDENT COMMITMENT TO THE HONOUR CODE**

If students are committed to the university's values, they are less likely to cheat. It is essential that faculty work to foster students' convictions and satisfaction with the honour code. Increasing student commitment to the honour code requires that universities ensure that students invest effort into the honour code. Investments in the honour code can take several forms including fostering relationships with academic staff, voting during approval of the honour code, maintaining an atmosphere of trust, concern and respect for others in the university environment. Cultivating a sense of commitment to university values is more effective than focussing on detection and punishment of students (Dix et al., 2014). Thus, universities should focus on building a culture of academic integrity in which students and staff are committed to the honour code and upholding of its principles.

An active participatory approach for students in academic integrity matters and framing academic integrity as being central to the mission, vision and values of the college or university should be encouraged. Active participation by students through an academic integrity society at university level to play roles such as adjudication, leadership, dissemination of information, promotion of academic integrity, peer motivation and engagement, counselling support for other students, and other preventive strategies all contribute to reducing academic dishonesty (Richards et al., 2016).

## 4.2 INFLUENCE ON PEER BEHAVIOUR

The honour code in a university can reduce the incidence of plagiarism in several respects. Firstly, it lowers the perceptions of students that their peers are not engaging in academically dishonest behaviour. Secondly, it promotes better student understanding of what academic cheating means. Thirdly, it makes it difficult for students to rationalise cheating. Fourthly, students and academic staff are more likely to report academic transgressions. Finally, students who understand the honour code are less likely to cheat than those in a university without the honour code. Universities with honour codes are also perceived to have more severe sanctions than those without.

Honour codes help to focus minds of students on academic integrity. Cheating will reduce if in addition to the honour code, universities focus on increasing students' commitment to academic integrity, trust and educational objectives. Honour codes promote the relationship of trust between students and academic staff. Honour codes alone are not the silver bullet to academic integrity problems. Indeed, they cannot be effective without a culture of academic integrity being promoted and inculcated within the university setting. Ideally, the honour code should be introduced at university level and be applied throughout the institution. However, there is nothing to stop the honour code from being introduced at college, departmental or even program level.

Honour codes promote and help to build strong and trusting relationships between students and academic staff. If a member of academic staff is perceived as being fair, students are unlikely to cheat. Where academic staff are perceived as being unfair, students are likely to cheat. Good moral conduct serves as a very powerful example for the development of student attitudes and behaviour.

The honour code impacts on students' social behaviour. It helps in getting students to understand that academic dishonesty is socially unacceptable. The honour code therefore assists in providing students with suitable peer role models. If students see their colleagues cheating, they are much more likely to cheat too. Honour codes enable students to participate in socially acceptable behaviours such as designing and enforcing academic integrity policies, making personal pledges to behave with integrity, not to cheat, behaving honestly and educating others not to cheat. Students play a very proactive role in an honour code institution as role models in the development of the university's values and academic integrity culture. The honour code nurtures a culture of academic integrity and makes students accountable for their actions to their peers.

Students in honour code institutions are hesitant or disinclined to be dishonest for fear of being caught. The presence of an honour code assists students in understanding and accepting the university's academic integrity policies. Perceived severity of penalties for academic misconduct also serves as a deterrent and reduces incidents of academic dishonesty.

The honour code encourages professionalism and ethical behaviour. It promotes a positive attitude on the issue of academic integrity; and its fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect for others and responsibility. Honour codes also promote holistic growth of the individual student rather than focussing on the punitive nature of academic integrity policies and rules.

Graduates of honour-code institutions have been found to be less unethical than those from non-code institutions demonstrating the long-term impact of the honour code on the



ethical behaviour of students (McCabe et al, 2003). This is explained by the fact that socialising effects of the experience of academic staff whilst in the early formative years has long-term effects.

### **4.3 ROLE OF ACADEMIC STAFF**

Academic staff play a key role in shaping students' academic behaviour. They can take steps to motivate students to engage in honest academic behaviour. Academic staff can do so by giving students clear instructions on expectations when giving out individual and group assignments. They must confront and challenge academic dishonesty when it occurs. They can foster a culture of trust and honesty in the learning environment. Academic staff must invigilate effectively in classroom tests and examinations and design seating arrangements that make unauthorised collaboration between students impossible. They must also design good assessments and give students ample time within which to return assignments.

Academic staff must integrate academic integrity into the curriculum. The honour code should be implemented within the context of a supportive and creative pedagogical approach (Raman & Ramlogan, 2020). Training of students should be interactive and promote self-evaluation and assessment by students and staff. It can be included in orientation programs for new students and university wide programs and courses such as professional ethics, critical thinking, leadership, technical writing, and small group discussions, and interviews, etc.

Some academic staff take the view that cheating is best addressed between the lecturer and the student (Carter, 2008). Indeed, some academic staff suggest that they would not report a student to their Dean of College or university administrator. Such academic staff may address these issues by warning the student or reducing the student's grade. Of course, the academic staff member may opt to do nothing.

Academic staff who offer to deal with students directly rather than reporting them through official channels cite the time-consuming nature, time and effort required to gather evidence and the punishments meted out to be harsh or lenient. Academic staff who deal with academic integrity issues on a direct individual basis with students are more likely to be lenient and no evidence of academic dishonesty is left on the student's record. Failure to adhere to the academic integrity policy of a university by academic staff may in fact lead to more cheating cases.

Academic staff in honour code colleges and universities are more likely to report cheating cases than in non-honour environments. This is a reflection of their support for the university academic integrity policies in honour code environments. Academic staff at honour code institutions have been found to have positive attitudes about their higher education institution's academic integrity policies. They are therefore committed and more positive about these policies.

Some academic staff view policing of student academic misconduct as being an additional burden which takes them away from their central role of teaching, student assessment, and research.

### **4.4 POLICING STUDENTS' ACADEMIC MISBEHAVIOUR**

Honour codes require students to monitor each other's behaviour and report cheating to university authorities. This helps to nurture a strong academic integrity culture. Students

take their responsibilities seriously because of the trust placed upon them by the institution. With this freedom comes responsibilities and students are accorded certain freedoms and privileges. For example, students may take examinations that are unsupervised. Students may also be allowed to self-schedule examinations. Thus, student roles and responsibilities for policing breaches of academic integrity are clear. This makes it more likely that students at institutions with honour codes are more likely to report cheats than those without honour codes.

Honour codes therefore empower students to take responsibility for holding each other accountable for academic transgressions. Enforcement of the honour code is the responsibility of students who form part of academic integrity committees or panels that decide on sanctions for the academic misbehaviour of others.

At many universities world-wide, there is a growing belief in shared governance where students are represented on most university committees. Where academic integrity committees are chaired by a student and where most members are students, this means that faculty take a smaller share of responsibility in judicial matters. Where students play a bigger role in judging the guilt or innocence of other students, there is a greater sense of procedural fairness and justice (Carter, 2008). Since academic staff are spared somewhat from having to address some aspects of academic integrity, this should increase the satisfaction of academic staff, commitment to their institution and reduced staff turnover.

#### **4.5 HONOUR CODES VIS-À-VIS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES**

Honour codes have an explicit moral element. They may read along the lines of: “As a student of the University, I shall not lie, cheat or plagiarise”. Student perceptions of the honour code may vary. In addition, signing an honour code does not necessarily mean that students agree with it. Thus, the consistency with which the honour code is likely to be upheld will vary from student to student or indeed from society to society. However, university policies, regulations and rules provided they are understood by everyone are likely to be more effective as the consequences for breach will be the same for all students.

As the concept of plagiarism is not well understood by all students alike, a signed declaration that the work submitted is that of the student is likely to be more effective as it leaves students in no doubt about the consequences of breaching the academic integrity policy.

Honour codes require students to report their peers who are in breach of the code. Most students find it difficult to support this notion as it undermines the trust and comradeship that students have with their peers. Unsupervised examinations are also highlighted as one of the potential benefits of applying the honour code. This is equally opposed by students and staff as unworkable. Staff are generally very supportive of student involvement in promoting academic integrity through peer education and membership of academic integrity panels. However, giving panels whose composition is only students the responsibility to hear breaches and to decide on academic integrity matters are not supported particularly in the United Kingdom context (Yakovchuk et al., 2011).

### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

One aspect of academic dishonesty which has received considerable attention in the academic literature is plagiarism. Many universities worldwide have invested in text-

matching software such as Turnitin, Crosscheck or Unicheck which are used by academic staff to screen assignment submissions for plagiarised material from the internet. Turnitin for example is used by well over 10,000 universities worldwide. Students plagiarise for a whole host of reasons. These include availability of materials on the internet, work pressures, pressures to score excellent grades, lack of skills to paraphrase and to acknowledge sources of information. Use of text-matching software now makes it possible to identify cases of plagiarism which would have gone unnoticed in the past. In many colleges and universities, text-matching software are now integrated with learning management systems thus allowing assignment submissions to be checked automatically for plagiarism.

Factors which influence students' academic dishonesty include the probability of detection, penalties for violation of academic integrity rules, improvements in grades that are likely to be gained, and the cheating record of the students. When the expected penalty is greater than the maximum possible gains, complete deterrence can be achieved assuming that students are rational decision-makers and risk neutral. This is consistent with deterrence theory. However, increasing the penalties is not always the optimal thing to do for repeat offenders. The sensible thing here is training for both students and academic staff.

Honour codes underline the basic core values of an institution. Honour codes are of two types: traditional and modified. Traditional honour codes are those where students pledge not to cheat, lie or deceive and to maintain academic integrity. In return students are given roles and responsibilities including taking unsupervised examinations and to report any cheating among students. Students are also given the duty to administer the code. A student may chair the committee responsible to enforcement of the code and students decide on the penalties to be meted out to other students for its breach. The modified code was developed in response to the view that staff also need to be involved in the administration of the code rather than leaving all responsibility for the code to students. Colleges and universities with traditional honour codes have fewer cheating cases than those with modified codes. Those institutions with modified honour codes in return report fewer cheating cases than those without honour codes. This is because in honour code institutions, academic integrity permeates the culture of the institution and students conceptualise academic integrity differently. Honour codes contribute to a students' moral development. Universities with honour codes tend to have a culture where there is a strong peer disapproval of cheating behaviour.

The honour code coupled with creative pedagogical practices can assist an institution to reduce academic dishonesty. The process requires a multi-pronged approach involving policies, the honour code, proper student support in subjects such as academic writing, ethics, and professionalism to promote academic integrity throughout an institution. All stakeholders including students, staff, alumni and the institution need to be brought on board to promote discussions and guidance on the subject of academic integrity.

The findings reported in this paper are preliminary and based on the literature review. Research is in progress to collect empirical data using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The study will be extended to a selection of universities in Africa, the Gulf Cooperation Council and Australia to facilitate a comparative analysis.

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