

# STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AS PERCEIVED BY TEACHERS IN OGBOMOSO METROPOLIS

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## Abstract

*The impact of the increasing attainment of educational qualification is not well felt in Nigerian society. For academic qualification of citizens to impact positively in the society, the attainment must be through decent, acceptable standard, just and honest means. The role of teachers in promoting academic integrity cannot be overemphasized. This investigation therefore focused on teachers' perception on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary school students considering the extent to which the variables of age, gender, educational qualification, teaching experience and religion moderate respondents' perception. The study adopted the descriptive survey to sample the views of 367 respondents out of which 285 copies of the measure returned were viable for analysis. Simple and stratified random sampling techniques were used to pick out of the entire population of secondary school teachers in both private and public schools in the metropolis. Data collected were analysed using rank order analysis, t-test and Analysis of Variance statistics. The outcome of the study revealed that enlightening students on academic integrity during orientation and on daily basis, ensuring that teachers depict academic honesty by serving as role models to students, encouraging hard work among students among others are strategies that can promote academic integrity. Respondents did not vary in their perception on the basis of age, gender, academic qualification, teaching experience and religion. Counselors should therefore support teachers in performing their roles in promoting academic integrity through sensitization and organization of workshops and conferences.*

**Keywords:** Academic Integrity, Secondary School Students, Strategies for Promoting Academic Integrity, Teachers

## **Introduction**

It is obvious that Nigeria school enrollment and number of schools increase everyday at all levels. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2018) reported the average value for secondary school enrollment percent between 1970 to 2018 at 25.65 percent with a minimum of 4.43 percent in 1970 and a maximum of 56.18 in 2013. Similar increase in enrollment rate is noticed across various educational levels. The increase in the patronage of educational institutions can be linked to the importance accorded to education by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) as stated in the National Policy of Education (NPE, 1981, 2004, 2014). In this document, Nigeria Government strongly believes that education is the superior medium for the accomplishment of national growth and advancement. Secondary education was designed to groom students for higher education, train them for useful living within the society and prepare middle level manpower. The high enrollment rate noticed across all levels of education has not translated much into meeting the needs, goals and objectives of education for personal and national development.

Cursory look at the society revealed that many of the Nigerian secondary school graduates are inactive and inadequately groomed for higher education. Handful of these school leavers lack focus and essential skills acceptable to occupy available positions or initiate trade, while some engaged in immoralities. These problems could be associated with various forms of academic dishonest behavior perpetrated in the course of acquiring secondary school education. The incidence of academic dishonesty in Nigeria is beyond what one can deny. Scores of inquiries, reports from examination bodies and public media have disclosed the rising trend in students' dishonest behaviors and varying dimensions and opportunities through which it is perpetrated (Centre for Academic Integrity, 2013; Jonas, 2017; Saidu, 2016; Uwadie, 2017). These reports revealed that Academic Dishonest behavior has almost become norms for some secondary school students. Meticulous, inclusive and operational strategies are mandatory to overturn this development.

If institutions of learning are to make meaningful impact on the personal and national development of Nigerians and the nation, all stakeholders in the education sector must embrace academic integrity. The term academic integrity has been described as the achievement of educational efforts and assertions of intellectual facts as typical of one's struggles (University of South Florida, 2016). It is the uprightness that guide the conduct of the entire intellectual work of a student and that surround their scholastic

lives. Academic integrity is indispensable to the realization of educational objectives of an institution as it offers a basis for reliable conduct in its products following graduation (CAI, 2013). It is specifically germane to secondary education as it lays the groundwork for brilliant scholastic life, enhances systematic advancement and train students for reliable social responsibility.

Many strategies, law and policies including penalties have been developed and adopted in tackling academic dishonest behaviors among students, but the trend still persist. Various stakeholders in education have vital roles to play in promoting academic integrity and discouraging fraudulence. The centre for academic integrity (2013) stated that the competency of any educational institution to attain its objectives hinges on the excellence and honesty of the scholastic work that the administrators, teachers and students carry out. Teachers are described as individuals who help others (learners) in acquiring knowledge, skills and values (Williamson & Clevenger-Bright, 2008) hence they have vital roles to play in promoting academic integrity among secondary school students. These roles include serving as a role model and mentor. This can be achieved through demonstration of academic honesty in the discharge of their duty such as acknowledging the source of their work, considering students' opinions critically, granting detailed and direct response on students' work and acknowledging students' individuality, treating students justly and honestly. Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005) had earlier revealed that supervisors who are upright influenced their personnel's job fulfillment, devotion and readiness to relate challenges at work to their supervisors. This implies that an upright supervisor act to put in place structural social standards as model and a supporter. In line with this, teachers are in the best position to promote academic integrity among secondary school students by determining the tendency of students' deeds or misdeeds regarding their convictions in challenging academic fraudulence. Through mentoring, teachers along with other personnel in schools could offer students with awareness and directions in expedition development that seems lengthy (Daloz & Parks, 2000; Nadelson, 2006).

Teachers are also dutiful to act against wrongdoing on their part as well as hinder misbehavior by others (CAI, 2013). Teachers are in the best position to establish environmental situation that encourage academic integrity through motivation and reward for students that are academically upright. They are also in the best position to discourage academic dishonest behaviour by creating environment that has zero tolerance for such misdeeds. Outcomes of inquiries have disclosed that students that are largely frightened of apprehension and punishment would likely avoid engaging in academic fraudulence (Huntton,

2006; Nadelson, 2006). It has also been found that teachers who are lenient are less likely to follow due process in handling cases of academic dishonesty foster students' desires to cheat (Love & Simmons, 1998), teachers must act responsibly and enlighten students on how to act responsibly (CAI, 2013).

Various strategies can be employed in promoting academic integrity among secondary school students. These include creating awareness among students regarding the values of academic integrity, what constitutes academic dishonesty and its consequences, moral persuasion instigating prescribed course of action (Stanford University, 1996; CAI, 2013; Iyamu & Aluede, 2014). The University of North Carolina (2015) highlighted strategies adopted by teachers in fostering academic integrity among students. These include discussing one's norms regarding citations and the magnitude of collaboration with others on assignment. In preparing syllabus, teachers should incorporate code of conduct and how it is relevant to the subject been taught; informing school authority of the breach of dignity system.

Numerous studies both at home and abroad (Sotonwa, 2004; Adeyemi, 2010; Reuben, Jaume & Miquel, 2015; Okpe & Philip, 2016) are available regarding incidence of academic dishonesty among secondary school students; Bello (2012) has looked into college of education lecturers comprehension of academic integrity and disclosed that one third of the lecturers have inadequate knowledge regarding the components of academic integrity. However, there is restricted amount of inquiries on what teachers understand as strategies that can be employed in fostering academic integrity. Moreover, the investigators assessed whether variations occurred on what teachers' perceived as strategies for promoting academic integrity in relation to their age, educational qualification, gender, religion and teaching experience.

This inquiry was designed to appraise secondary school teachers' perception of strategies for promoting academic integrity. It investigated how the variables of age, educational qualification, gender and religion moderate teachers' perception on the strategies for promoting academic integrity. To achieve these goals, a research question was raised and answered while five hypotheses postulated were verified.

### **Research Question**

What are the strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary school students as perceived by teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis?

## **Research Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on the strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students on the basis of their age

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant gender difference among teachers on their perception of the strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students based on their educational qualification

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students based on their religion

**Hypothesis Five:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary school students based on their teaching experience

## **Methodology**

This inquiry is quantitative in nature and adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study is made up of all private and public secondary school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis in private and public secondary schools. The study covered teachers from two LGAs that constitute the metropolis. The total population is 1,500 (TESCOM, 2017/2018 Report) as at the time this inquiry was been conducted. Based on this population, a total number of three hundred and sixty seven teachers were selected using proportional and simple random sampling techniques. Data collected were later stratified on the basis of age, educational qualification, gender, religion and years of teaching experience.

The measure used for data collection is a researcher designed questionnaire titled “Strategies for promoting Academic Integrity Questionnaire”. It has two sections, A and B. Section A was designed to gather data on the demography of the respondents while section B has 20 items on strategies for promoting academic integrity. Each of the items were patterned after four Likert-type response scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree been rated 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

The instrument was content validated by given five copies of the measure to experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. Corrections made were effected and incorporated and the final draft was adjudged valid for the study. Test-retest measure was adopted to determine the reliability of the instrument. To do this, 20 copies of the instrument were administered to teachers in a private secondary school within the metropolis twice at the interval of four weeks. This school did not form part of the sample used for the final study. Data collected at the two administrations were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Statistics and result yielded a coefficient of 0.64.

To collect data for the study, the researchers explain the purpose of the study to teachers in each of the schools visited. Consents of the respondents were sought and only those that will to participate were involved in the study. Data collected were analyzed using mean and rank order analysis, t-test and Analysis of Variance statistics at 0.05 alpha level of significance

## **Results**

**Table 1:** Proportional spread of Respondents based on age, gender, educational qualification, religion, school type and years of teaching experience

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>AGE</b>		
18-25 years	12	4.2
26-30 years	45	15.8
31-35 years	71	24.9
36-40 years	72	25.3
41year & above	85	29.8
Total		100
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	133	46.7
Female	152	53.3
Total	285	100
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
NCE/ND	65	22.8
First Degree	194	68.1
Others	26	9.1
Total	285	100
<b>Religion</b>		
African Traditional Religion	2	0.7
Christianity	261	91.3
Islam	22	7.7
<b>Years of Teaching Experience</b>		
Below 5 years	77	27.0
5-10 years	97	34.0
11-15 years	73	25.6

Table 1 depicts the spread of the respondents based on the moderating variables

**Research Question One:** What are the strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary school students as perceived by teachers in Ogbomosho metropolis?

**Table 2:** Mean and Rank order Analysis of Respondents' perception on Strategies for promoting Academic Integrity

Item No.	Items	Mean	Rank
	In my opinion, Academic Integrity can be promoted by:		
1	enlightening students on academic honesty during orientation and on daily basis	3.60	1 <sup>st</sup>
15	ensuring that teachers depict academic honesty by serving as models to students	3.58	2 <sup>nd</sup>
10	encouraging hard work among students	3.58	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	effectively teaching or forming of simple, clear note for students on subject been taught	3.57	4 <sup>th</sup>
8	helping students to develop effective study habits	3.55	5 <sup>th</sup>
17	encouraging/motivating students to learn	3.52	6 <sup>th</sup>
2	orienting stakeholders in educational institutions on the importance of academic honesty	3.52	6 <sup>th</sup>
6	recognizing/rewarding students that uphold academic integrity	3.51	8 <sup>th</sup>
16	promoting academic honesty core values such as fairness, trust, sincerity, responsibilities, respect and courage	3.50	9 <sup>th</sup>
19	assisting students in setting academic goals	3.45	10 <sup>th</sup>
4	helping students to have better self-understanding	3.44	11 <sup>th</sup>
13	establishing academic honesty club in schools to promote the significance of academic integrity	3.43	12 <sup>th</sup>
11	ensuring that examination monitoring team are made up of people with high integrity	3.42	13 <sup>th</sup>
18	encouraging students to take action against wrongdoing by self/others	3.40	14 <sup>th</sup>
9	training teachers and other stakeholders on values and importance of academic integrity	3.39	15 <sup>th</sup>
14	familiarizing students with academic integrity policies and guidelines	3.37	16 <sup>th</sup>
20	adequately challenging academic dishonesty when it occurs	3.37	16 <sup>th</sup>
5	accepting student's uniqueness and respect his/her individuality by teachers and parents	3.35	18 <sup>th</sup>
7	discouraging students engagement in academic frauds	3.29	19 <sup>th</sup>
12	developing fair, relevant and varying forms of assessment to accommodate individual differences	3.21	20 <sup>th</sup>

Table 2 depicts the respondents' views on strategies for promoting academic the students on academic integrity right from inception into school as well as constant reminder top the list of the strategies that teachers believed can help in fostering it. The other items that followed include, teachers serving role model in depicting uprightness and encouragement of students to work hard. These two items ranked second.

In verifying the postulated hypotheses, t-test was used to test hypotheses 2, while Analysis of Variance was used to verified hypotheses 1, 3, 4 and 5.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on the strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students on the basis of their age

**Table 3:** Analysis of Variance on the perception of respondents based on age

Source	SS	df	MS	Cal. F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	325.45	4	81.36	1.34	0.26
Within Groups	17055.49	280	60.91		
Total	17380.93	284			

Table 3 depicts that the calculated F-ratio value of 1.34 and a p-value of 0.26 which is greater than 0.05 alpha level. This implies that respondents irrespective of their age perceived the strategies to be effective in promoting academic integrity of secondary school students.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant gender difference among teachers on their perception of the strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students

**Table 4:** Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value comparing male and female respondents' perception on strategies for promoting academic integrity

Sex	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-val.	P-value
Male	133	69.68	6.96	283	0.27	0.89
Female	152	68.66	8.50			

Table 4 shows that the calculated value of 0.27 and p-value of 0.89 which is greater than 0.05. This revealed that male and female respondents did not vary in their perception of strategies that promote academic integrity.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students based on their educational qualification



**Table 5:** Analysis of Variance comparing respondents' perception on strategies for promoting academic integrity on the basis of educational qualification

Source	SS	df	MS	Cal. F-val.	p-value
Between Groups	195.79	2	97.89	1.61	0.20
Within Groups	17185.14	282	60.940		
Total	17380.93	284			

Table 5 reveals a calculated value of 1.61 and a value of 0.20 is also greater than the alpha level of 0.05. The postulation which stated “there is no significant difference in the perception of respondents on the strategies for promoting academic integrity based on their educational qualification is hereby accepted. Teachers irrespective of their academic qualification viewed the strategies effective in fostering academic integrity.

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary schools students based on their religion

**Table 6:** Analysis of Variance comparing respondents of varying religious background on their perception on strategies promoting academic integrity

Source	SS	Df	MS	Cal. F-ratio	p-val.
Between Groups	92.26	2	46.13	0.75	0.47
Within Groups	17288.68	282	61.31		
Total	17380.93	284			

Figures on Table 6 disclose a calculated F-value of 0.75 and a value of 0.47 is far greater than the significant level of 0.05. Based on this statistics, the earlier stated postulation is hereby confirmed. It can therefore be inferred that teachers regardless of their religious affiliation have similar views on strategies for promoting academic uprightness

**Hypothesis Five:** There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity among secondary school students based on their teaching experience

**Table 7:** Analysis of Variance comparing respondents across years of teaching experience on their perception on strategies for promoting academic integrity among students

Source	SS	Df	MS	Cal. F-ratio	p-val.
Between Groups	369.94	4	92.486	1.52	0.19
Within Groups	17010.99	280	60.754		
Total	17380.93	284			

Information on Table 7 discloses calculated F-ratio of 1.52 and a value of 0.19 which is greater than 0.05, thus, the assumption that teachers with varying years of teaching experience will not differ in their perception on the strategies for promoting academic integrity among students was therefore accepted. This means that the less experienced teachers as well as those who are much more experienced agreed that all the strategies are effective in advancing academic integrity of secondary school students.

## Discussion of Findings

Although there are various rules and regulations regarding examination misconducts stipulated in schools, penalties for engagement in academic fraud have also been drawn and passed into law in Nigeria, efforts in making individuals to realize the importance of obtaining educational qualification through legitimate means as well as self commitment to such efforts should now be emphasized. Inquiring on what approaches teachers considered would help in promoting academic integrity among students is very important to help upturn the trend of academic fraud that ceaselessly rise in the academic institutions which its consequences are now been felt in Nigerian

society. The outcomes of this investigation showed that teachers are knowledgeable about strategies that can be employed in promoting academic integrity. Teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis agreed that enlightening students on academic honesty during orientations and on a daily basis, ensuring that teachers model academic integrity to students, encouraging hard work among students are some of the strategies that respondents perceived will foster academic integrity among secondary school students. This result is in line with the suggestions of various researchers and institutions of learning on promoting positive behaviours and academic uprightness. Bennett (2005) and Centre for Academic Integrity (2013) have earlier suggested that personal factors such as students level of thinking, valuing students' personal goals and aspirations and recognizing students individuality are way to foster their academic uprightness. Others (Iyamu & Aluede, 2014; Nadelson, 2006; Stanford University, 1996; University of North Carolina, 2015) have emphasized that situational factors are important if teachers are to foster academic integrity among students. The finding of this study is contradictory to that of Bello who found a third of college of education lecturers to have inadequate comprehension of academic integrity.

The moderating impact of age, religion, educational qualification, gender and years of teaching experience on human perception have been demonstrated by other studies (Adeoye, 2016; Dada et al., 2014; Ogunboyede et al, 2014; Osiki, 2014). As demonstrated in this study, the moderating variables of age, gender, educational qualification, religion and type of school where respondents work did not significantly impact their perception of the strategies for promoting academic integrity. The outcome of this investigation is in line with previous investigators (Eleja, 2011; Adeoye, 2016) Eleja (2011) found no difference in the views of male and female teachers with respect to solutions to academic dishonest behaviours. Adeoye (2016) had earlier found no significant gender difference in the perception of teachers with regard to strategies for handling attention deficits among primary school pupils. Gender was also not significant in determining the sources of marital stress and coping strategies adopted by lecturers in a college (Ogunboyede et al., 2014; Dada et al., 2014). However, the finding of this study regarding the moderating variable of gender is contrary to that of Huelsman, (2007) who found that the influence that religiosity have on examination malpractice is moderated by gender. The reason for the variation in the findings could be that level of religiosity varied by gender while gender considered here was not across religious background.

Age and educational qualification did not significantly moderate the perception of teachers on strategies for promoting academic integrity in this inquiry. This is related to the finding of Ojo and Omoyemiju (2014) who found that age is not significant in determining the involvement of students in internet addiction. Other studies (Dada, et al., 2014; Ogunboyede, et al., 2014) found age and educational qualification to be significant in moderating lecturers perceptions regarding sources of marital stress and coping strategies adopted for marital stress. The reason for the variation might be the inquiry found teachers perception regarding whether the strategies are effective in promoting academic integrity, it did not determine whether they are employing the strategies or not while the studies in which significant difference was found, considered the strategies they employed in coping with marital stress.

The fact that all the moderating variables of age, gender, educational qualification, years of teaching experience and religion did not significantly moderate teachers perception regarding strategies for promoting academic integrity shows is credible. This disclosed that majority of the secondary school teachers in Ogbomosho metropolis have adequate knowledge of the various strategies appropriate for promoting academic integrity among secondary school students. Thus, it is necessary to investigate the extent to which the teachers are engaged in promoting academic integrity in various secondary schools and to what extent has such efforts promote academic integrity of the students. It is also important to consider student knowledge regarding their roles in promoting academic integrity in institutions of learning.

### **Implication of the Finding for Counselling Practice**

The outcomes of this inquiry disclosed that majority of the secondary school teachers in Ogbomosho have adequate knowledge of the strategies that can be employed in promoting academic integrity among secondary school students, there is therefore the need for them to act. Knowledge of these approaches alone cannot solve the problem of academic dishonesty unless appropriate efforts are put in place to promote academic integrity. It has earlier been emphasized that academic integrity demand actions from various stakeholders in schools (Babafunsho, 2015). Counselors in schools should therefore reawaken the value of academic integrity in the school system through collaboration with the school administrators, teachers, students among other stakeholders.

## Conclusion

This research endeavour has shown that teachers are aware of the various strategies for improving academic integrity among secondary school students, the prevailing incidence of academic dishonesty and the fact that students blame teachers for their engagement in academic dishonest behaviour reflects that a lot of other factors could be responsible for low academic uprightness among students. There is therefore the need to spur teachers as well as other stakeholders to gear up to their responsibilities in promoting academic integrity in schools to ensure that they realized their objectives.

## Recommendations

Counselors should support teachers in performing their roles through sensitization and organization of workshops and conferences on the importance of promoting academic integrity. This might prompt them to actively take steps in promoting academic integrity among secondary school students. There is also the need to work together with teachers irrespective of their age, gender, educational qualification, religion, type of school they teach, and years of teaching experience to foster an environment where academic integrity will thrive through provision of guidance and support to students in developing academic integrity.

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