

THE INTENSITY OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS IN TANZANIA AND HOW TO CURB THE SITUATION

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ABSTRACT

Education stakeholders have always been striving to maintain academic integrity in higher learning institutions. This is because higher learning institutions are viewed as a source of truth and honesty where students are shaped in both academic and moral aspects. This paper investigates the intensity of academic dishonesty among postgraduate students in higher learning institutions in Tanzania and goes a step further to elicit some appropriate measures to curb the situation. The study participants included postgraduate students (master's degree students) in two-degree programmes namely; education and social sciences from four universities as well as quality assurance officers and head of departments. Data were collected through focus group discussions and interviews. The results show that academic integrity can be maintained in higher learning institutions through a number of ways. These include the establishment of taught courses on academic ethics, conducting mutual discussions between lecturers and students on academic integrity, and appropriate application of plagiarism detecting software. Other measures that could be taken include, change of assessment methods, use of external examiners on final assessment projects, strengthening the internal quality assurance system, conducting frequent seminars on supervisory roles, and raising the level of academic commitment among postgraduate students. Therefore, this study recommends that maintaining academic integrity in higher learning institutions should be carried out in a collaborative way among the education stakeholders.

Keywords: Academic integrity, dishonesty, postgraduate students, higher learning institutions, Tanzania.