

Examining the Roles of Endowment and Scholarship on Students' Academic Integrity

Author **Abdul-Rahman Balogun Muhammed-Shittu**
Khazar University, School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences (HESS). Baku, Azerbaijan. E-mail: abdul.rahman@khazar.org
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2141-2632>

Abstract The curiosity in matters regarding students' integrity at higher institutions in particular can be virtually traced back to the numerous reports and cases about academic misconducts world-wide. Thus, academic integrity has been exhaustively dealt with by numerous scientists and researchers. The previous studies have explored different perspectives of the concept. The present study contributes to the literature as the first study to examine the impact of endowment and scholarship on academic integrity. Participants were 107 Nigerian students at Al-Azhar university in Egypt. They completed the academic integrity survey invented by Don McCabe who was the founder of the concept to measure their conducts towards research and examine their attitude towards exams.

Keywords Academic integrity, endowment, roles, scholarship, Nigerian students, Al-Azhar University, institutions of higher education.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/edu.118>

To cite this article: Balogun A. (2020). Examining the Roles of Endowment and Scholarship on Students' Academic Integrity. Azerbaijan Journal of Educational Studies. Vol. 691, Issue II, pp. 71–81.

Article history: Received — 09.03.2020; Accepted — 24.04.2020

INTRODUCTION

There is ongoing curiosity in issues related to students' academic integrity, higher institutions in particular. This can be virtually traced back to the numerous reports and cases about academic misconducts world-wide. Which is obviously attributed to the rapid growth of higher education cum serious massification of the universities systems (Browne 2010). Colleges and universities are crucial elements in society and play substantial role in liberating civilization. Thus, failure to sustain academic integrity at higher institution can jeopardize institutional systems, brands and credibility (Altbach 2004). Measuring the problematic nature of academic integrity, the concept is open to various interpretations. Meanwhile, this study focuses on the behaviours, values and moralities of the students in all facets of their routine. A study considers academic integrity as a term which is broadly regarded as a surrogate for students' conducts, conspicuously in relation to cheating, falsification or fabrication of data and plagiarism (Liang 2009). The literatures on academic integrity are overshadowed by dailies on the subjects of honour codes and ethics education in different academic professions (Wu 2010). Reviewing the definitions, as stipulated by Cummings (1998). The study illustrates on academic integrity and interprets the concept as an umbrella term in the following three dimensions. Firstly, teachings, secondly, researches and lastly services. Apparently, the significant roles and impacts of endowment aids (Mahamood 2006; Abu-Zahrah 2007) and academic scholarships (Bettinger 2004; Dynarski 2008; Golden et al. 2006; Long 2004) on the college and university students' retention and engagement cannot be disputed. Therefore, this study adds to the literature by investigating the roles and impacts of endowment supports and academic scholarships on academic integrity of the university students.

Academic Integrity

Historical evolution has projected that during the late 18th century, academic integrity tightly correlated to the Chinese and Northern America honor code (Browne 2010). This was scrutinized majorly by the students and surrounding culture of the time. The southern honor code focused on duty, pride, power and self-esteem (Macfarlane 2004, 2007, 2009; Nixon 2004; Pring 2001). A short expression at the rationale for the establishment of the Centre for Academic Integrity (CAI) bargains deeper illustrations about the degree of academic fraudulence and dishonesty in the colleges and the universities (Cummings 1998). The organization known as Centre for Academic Integrity (CAI) came into existence in 1992. The Centre is currently associated with the Rutland Institute of Ethics at Clemson University, America. The chief ambition of the Centre as specified in a study, MacIntyre (1981) is majorly to pinpoint, confirm, and stimulate

standards of academic integrity amongst students. Series of antecedents (in academic fraudulence and dishonesty practices) resulted and gave rise to its formation. In accordance to Bowers (1964), the nucleus of the existing academic integrity measure is dated to early 1960s, when a multi-institutional study announces academic dishonesty to be widespread in post-secondary institutions. Academic integrity is expected to be the foundation of college or university's goal to enhance an exchange of ideas and develop new knowledge, of which individual students are expected to work with and trust one another. Avoidance of academically dishonest attitudes, such as, cheating, fabrication or falsification of data and plagiarism is mostly regarded as an appropriate channel to promote academic integrity (Tight 2003). However, in the absence of integrity, when the focus of the students is on negative behaviors; dialogues about integrity are centered on doubt rather than trust, growth and respect. So, this paper examines the impacts of endowment and scholarship in minimizing academic dishonesty and misconducts at higher educational settings.

Endowment

Endowment is an age-long operation in socio-historical context of human being, which is neither external nor strange to the dialectal and language of Muslim in the early stage of Islamic civilization. In Islam, endowment is a concept which factually refers to "Al-Waqf". It has been defined by a prominent and contemporary scholar as, "a permanent or temporary dedication of certain form of wealth with intention of having direct benefits from it or benefiting from what comes out from it on regular basis" (Qahf 1996). Thus, Waqf which is a practical form of endowment in Islam, targeting the human being in general, while prioritizing the less privileged and needy. It provides noteworthy reliefs of any kinds to human being, in accordance with their circumstances. Importantly, endowment provides educational assistance which is the chosen category of Al-Waqf in this study.

In this direction, the two concepts "endowment" and "scholarship" can be used interchangeably in some cases. Because, when a particular student is financially endowed by an organization or institution, such a student will be categorized as a scholarship-based candidate. However, some theoretical explanations differentiated the two concepts as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Scholarship

Scholarship as a practice of academic financial assistance. The study describes academic scholarship as financial aids for the students to proceed with their

educational career. Scholarships are granted in accordance with the various criteria, these criteria are strictly attached to the values and purposes of the provider or donor of the grant. Scholarship is regarded as a great benefit (Dagley, Georgiopoulos, Reece, and Young, 2015; Watterson and Carnegie, 2011), given that the scholarship money is not required to be repaid. Scholarship is one of the obvious advantages of getting rid of economic and financial anxiety during the students' academic career, most especially international students. Having a scholarship allows students to lessen that inevitable financial burden, if cannot be completely eliminated. Obviously, Al-Waqf which refers to endowment can also be explained through all of the above-mentioned points, when it is awarded for educational purpose. Apparently, financial aids; (Al-Waqf) differ prominently in the range of the amount in which the endower (wāqif) offer. In most cases, full coverage of tuition fees is rarely awarded to the lucky few. While some of the scholarships cover only the expenses of conference trips or academic-related expenses such as housing, feedings and schoolbooks (Makdisi, 1981; Baer, 1997; Gibb and Bowen, 1957; Tibawi, 1978; Kozłowski, 1985; Mahamood, 2006).

As expected, a scholarship-based student does not need to work at all to sustain or support himself or has to work less, unlike other students studying without any endowment or scholarship. So therefore, lessened financial stress can be explained as having more time energy to study and to carry out all academic related tasks. Having more and enough time with energy to study can in turn, facilitate academic integrity.

However, education nowadays is seriously facing many impediments, in which lack of academic integrity can be considered as a major impediment. Given that, almost every student engages in this. Thus, it is a retardation for educational advancement. Education indeed is expected to serve as an intellectual enterprise facilities holistic improvement of human identities, it is so significant to think of integrity practice as to eradicate abnormalities in the realm of education. So therefore, endowments are provided by their endowers to provide relief to the needy students and to eradicate common financial stress of students (Long and Riley 2007). By that, financially endowed students are expected to perform in an excellent manner and maintain academic conducts and values, to compensate the efforts of their endowers or scholarship providers on the one hand, and to justify their eligibility, entitlement and worthiness of the financial aids on the other hand. For these and some other incalculable hypotheses, the researcher decides to investigate how endowments and scholarships influence academic integrity and what extend the endowments reflect, translate and prudently enhance their moralities and values through a research question: "how do endowment and scholarship funds impact students' academic integrity towards research and exams?"

Table 1. The frequency of the scholarship status of the participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Fully Endowed	39	36.4	36.4	36.4
Scholarship-Based	35	32.7	32.7	69.2
Without Endowment/ Scholarship	33	30.8	30.8	100.0
Total	107	100.0	100.0	

METHOD

The focus of this study is to empirically explore the impact of endowment and scholarship on academic integrity. Participants were 107 Nigerian students (39 females, 68 males; distributed among Al-Azhar university students) who volunteered and partook in the study. The participants completed the academic integrity survey invented by Don McCabe who was the founder of the concept to measure their conducts towards research and examination. The instrument was adopted for the study after the necessary steps to obtain permission from the inventor. The participants were selected on a random basis, through the database of Nigerian Students Union in Egypt (NSUE). To ensure a thorough anonymity of the participants, the instrument does not contain any form of identifiable demographic variables. The classifications of the participants were threefold as follow: first category are fully endowed students, scholarship-based students are the second category and the students who are currently studying without endowment or scholarship were categorized as the third classification. Table 1 illustrates the percentage of each category.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of quantitative set of data is projected with application and development of methods and procedures for structuring and analyzing statistical data (Powell, 1997). This study used six selected items survey to measure the impact of endowment and scholarship on academic integrity of Nigerian students at Al-Azhar university the twofold stipulated areas (research and exam). The detailed

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Survey

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Scholarship Status of the Participants	107	1.00	3.00	1.9439	.82224
Using electronics and digital devices as unauthorized aids during a test of exam	107	1.00	4.00	2.4112	1.24350
Helping another student to cheat during a test or exam	107	1.00	4.00	2.4486	1.23038
Obtained questions or answers from someone who had already taken a test	107	1.00	4.00	2.3925	1.23439
Turned in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper "mill" or website, or from a book, journal, or other source.	107	1.00	4.00	2.4673	1.22334
Copied a few sentences from a site on the internet without citing them	107	1.00	4.00	2.3551	1.22284
Copied a few sentences from a book, magazine, or other source without citing them.	107	1.00	4.00	2.4579	1.23838
Valid N (listwise)	107				

descriptive statistics of the selected items and scholarship status of the participants where the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation are presented, see table 2.

Results

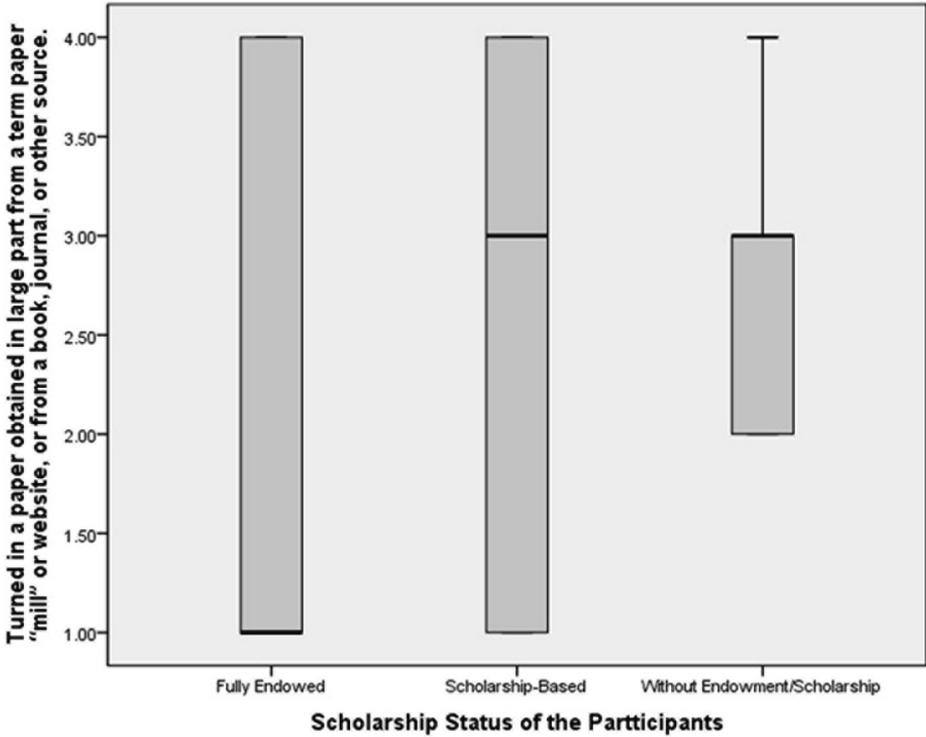
Based on the outlined items for the measurements, the data was explored in accordance with the participants' academic scholarship status. Hierarchically,

fully endowed category is noted as the best form of endowment and scholarship among the classifications of the participants. Followed by the second category labeled as scholarship based while the last category (without endowment/scholarship) are the students without any form of financial assistance from the university or other institutions that provide students with the endowment support. It is important to emphasize that academic failure is what subjected majority of students to the last (without endowment/scholarship) category. The insights from the statistical analysis stress on the fact that, the students without endowment or scholarship show a conspicuous substantial mean value (item 1, mean= 2.45, item 2, m= 2.51, item 3, m= 2.54, item 4, m= 2.60, item 5, m= 2.60, item 6, m= 2.60) on all domains of the selected items. The findings were almost the same in the case of the scholarship-based (second category) students where the mean values were induced as follow: item 1, m= 2.57, item 2, m= 2.71, item 3 m= 2.42, item 4, m= 2.60, item 5, m= 2.34, item 6, m= 2.65. However, the data have shown a significant lower mean value for the fully endowed category (item1, m= 2.23, item 2, m= 2.15, item 3, m= 2.23, item 4, m= 2.23, item 5, m= 2.15, item 6, m= 2.15. compared to the above documented values of the two categories.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this empirical research where a unique sample of Nigerian students at Al-Azhar university was used showed that endowment has a great impact on academic integrity on the participants. The uniqueness of the study accentuates it to be the first study conducted to measure the relationship between academic integrity and endowment cum scholarship. The measurement was based on two vital academic areas: 1- students' conducts towards exams and 2- research. In line with the categorization of the participants, the result pinpointed that both scholarship-based students and the students without scholarship or endowment were outstandingly superseded by fully endowed students in terms of the good conducts towards exams and research through the entire ramifications of the selected (six) items. It is relevantly important to highlight the 4-point Likert Scale (1-NEVER, 2-ONCE, 3-MORE THAN ONCE, 4-NOT RELEVANT) in which the instrument was made of. As indicated in the results, both the scholarship-based category and those without scholarship/endowment were accurately reported with academic misconducts on academic research related activities. For instance, the mean value of scholars-based students on item number four of the survey "turned in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper "mill" or website, or from a book, journal, or other source" was (m= 2.60) absolutely the same with the students without endowment/scholarship (see figure 1).

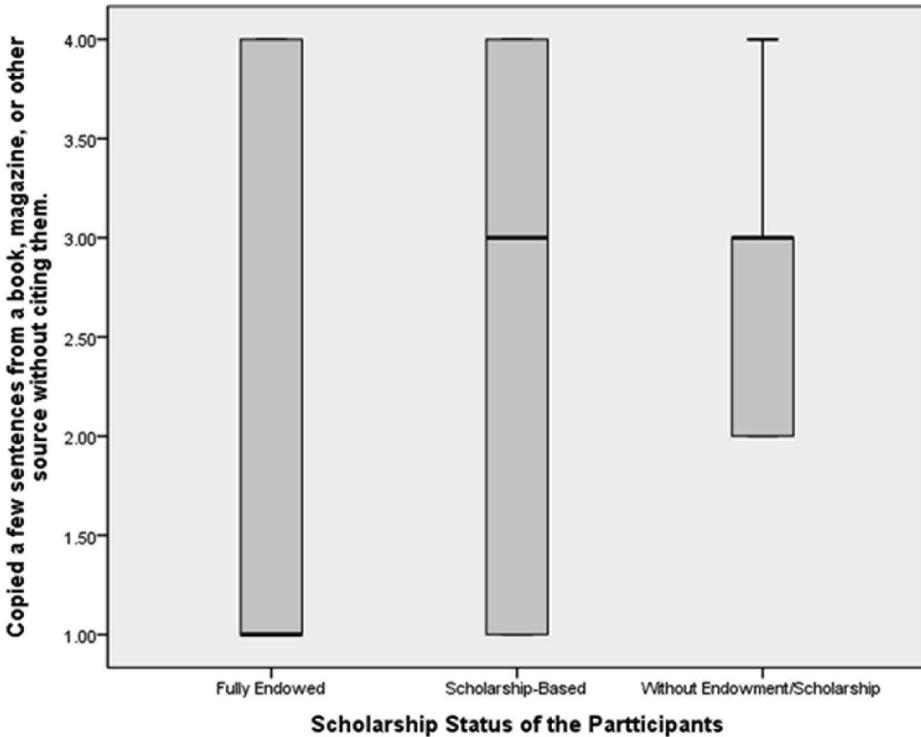
Figure 1.



Subsequently, pertaining to item number six “copied a few sentences from a book, magazine, or other source without citing them”, scholarship-based students were found with the higher mean value ($m= 2.65$) compared to the students without endowments/scholarship ($m= 2.60$) see figure 2. This signifies that, the categories professed their misconducts with regards to academic research related tasks. However, the scholarship-based students were found with the higher integrity and surpassed the category of the participants without endowment/scholarship concerning their attitudes towards exams.

Ultimately, in order to obtain the accurate responses, the participants were ensured of outright anonymity. As a result, it was a bit difficult to include major demographic variables which could enable the study to compare and take other aspects of the participants into consideration. Nevertheless, the study prudently adds to the literature as it is considered a first study to examine the impact of endowment and scholarship on academic integrity of the university students.

Figure 2.



DISCLOSURE

The author of this study received no monetary aid for authorship, there is no conflict of interest, and the research has not been published elsewhere.

References

1. Abu-Zahrah, M. (2007). Waqf according to religion and laws (Wakaf menurut agama dan undang-undang). Puchong: Jasmin Enterprise.
2. Altbach, P. G. (2004). The question of corruption in academe. *International Higher Education* 34: 8–10.
3. Baer, G. (1997). "The waqf as a property for the social system (sixteenth-twentieth centuries)" *Islamic Law and Society*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 264-297.

4. Bettinger, E. (2004). How financial aid affects persistence. In C. M. Hoxby (Ed.), *College choices: The economics of where to go, when to go, and how to pay for it*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
5. Bowers, W. J. (1964). *Students Dishonesty and It's Control*. New York, Columbia University Press.
6. Browne, J. (2010). Independent review of higher education funding and student finance. Securing a sustainable future for higher education. An independent review of higher education funding and student finance. <http://www.independent.gov.uk/browne-report>.
7. Cummings, W. K. (1998). The service university movement in the US: Searching for momentum. *Higher Education* 35, no. 1: 69–90. Dagley, M., Georgiopoulos, M., Reece, A., & Young, C. (2015). Increasing retention and graduation rates through a STEM learning community. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 18(2), 167–182.
8. Dynarski, S. (2008). Building the stock of college-educated labor. *Journal of Human Resources*, 43(3), 576–610.
9. Golden, C., Katz, L., & Kuziemko, I. (2006). The homecoming of American college women: The reversal of the college gender gap. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20(4), 133–156.
10. Gibb, H.A.R. and Bowen, H. (1957). *Islamic Society And the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East*, Oxford University Press, London.
11. Kozlowski, G.C. (1985), *Muslim Endowments and Society in British India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
12. Liang, T. (2009). Examining the concept of integrity from the Confucius's perspective rooted in the 'Analects of Confucius'. *Chuanshan Journal* 74, no. 4: 75–78.
13. Long, B. T. (2004). The role of perceptions and information in college access: An exploratory review of the literature and possible data sources. *The Education Resources Institute (TERI)*.
14. Long, B. T., & Riley, E. (2007). Financial aid: A broken bridge to college access. *Harvard Educational Review*, 77(1), 39–63.
15. Macfarlane, B. (2004). *Teaching with integrity: The ethics of higher education practice*. London: Routledge Falmer.
16. Macfarlane, B. (2007). *The academic citizen: The virtue of service in university life*. New York: Routledge.
17. Macfarlane, B. (2009). *Researching with integrity: The ethics of academic enquiry*. New York: Routledge.
18. MacIntyre, A. (1981). *After virtue*. London: Duckworth.
19. Mahamood, S. M. (2006). *Waqf in Malaysia: Legal and administrative perspectives*. First ed. Kuala Lumpur: University Malaysia Press, p. 191.
20. Makdisi, G. (1981). *The Rise of Colleges*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
21. Nixon, J. (2004). Education for the good society: The integrity of academic practice. *London Review of Education* 2, no. 3: 245–52.

22. Powell, R. L., & Manion, L. (1997). *Basic research methods for librarians*. (3rd ed.) Greenwich, Connecticut: Ablex.
23. Pring, R. (2001). The virtues and vices of an educational researcher. *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 35, no. 3: 407–21.
24. Qahf, M. Y. (1996). *Sharh Muntaha al-Iradah*, Beirut: Alam Alkutub, Vol. 2, p. 397.
25. Tibawi, A.L. (1978), *The Islamic Pious Foundations in Jerusalem*, Islamic Cultural Centre, London.
26. Tight, M. (2003). *Researching higher education*. Maidenhead: Society for Research into Higher Education/Open University Press.
27. Watterson, C. A., & Carnegie, D. A. (2011). Increasing student retention and success: Survey results and the success of initiatives to create an engineering student community. In: *Global Engineering Education Conference (EDUCON), 2011 IEEE* (pp. 191–200). Amman, Jordan: IEEE.
28. Wu, Z. (2010). Teaching postgraduates academic integrity through the discussion of integrity in 'the Analects of Confucius'. *Journal of Educational Development* 10: 79–81.