

Towards Resolving Ethical Issues For Enhancing Research Integrity In Nigerian Education

**Asia Pacific Journal of
Multidisciplinary Research**
Vol. 3 No.5, 167-171
December 2015 Part II
P-ISSN 2350-7756
E-ISSN 2350-8442
www.apjmr.com

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Date Received: November 24, 2015; Date Revised: January 24, 2016

Abstract - *The paper examined the strategies for managing ethical issues for enhancing research integrity in Nigerian educational system. The paper therefore looked at the concepts of ethics and research integrity, the unethical issues being perpetrated among various authors during their research conducts. The reasons why the various authors perpetrate unethical attitudes in their educational research conducts in Nigeria educational. The need to promote ethical value orientation in the conduct or researches in Nigerian. The strategies for resolving ethical issues in research conduct were advocated. It was however recommended among others that ethical value orientation should be integrated into the teaching-learning of research methods in Nigerian higher education. It was however concluded that effective management of ethical issues in the educational research will surely enhance research integrity in the educational research in Nigeria and at the global level.*

Keywords: *Ethical Issues, Research Integrity and Nigerian Education*

INTRODUCTION

Ethic is an elusive word with different opinion in accordance to the way individual views it, ethic can be defined as the determination of an action whether good or bad, right or wrong standard or substandard, respect or disrespect. Ethical value is therefore regarded as the rules, principles and guidelines which aid the conduct of individual actions towards maintaining the standard of the organization. Kazi [1] described ethical issues as those actions or process which guide individuals to cherish or hate good or bad habit towards effective ethical issues that enhance positive habit, integrity, self-conscience in the society.

Abdulrahman [2] described ethical issues as, those standard or moral convictions that individuals set for self-regarding to what is right or wrong in the society. Ethical value orientation therefore serve as the principles, rules and guidelines to choose a right type of good behaviours that will give total respect for the self-society and the whole world in general.

Jimba [3] defined ethic as the guided principles, values, moral standard and convictions which guide individual actions, decisions, procedures and system in an organization in order to pave way for respect,

dignity, conscience and high integrity in such an organization or society. Research integrity on the other word can be described as the systematic ways of valuing good, right positive behaviors and actions that will give respect to the members of the society and the nations at large in respect to the conduct of research.

Ethic according to Jimba, Ogundele and Daniel [4] is the process of creating awareness in individuals to identify what is good from what is bad and enable them to value good things or attitude in the interest of enhancing national development and transformation.

Fleet [5] sees ethic as those standard or moral convictions that a person sets for himself regarding to what is good and bad or right and wrong or positive or negative in the perpetration of ethical issues in the society. The perpetration of good behaviour will now guide an individual to have rational decision in the choice of action.

Ethics therefore involved the systematic ways of inculcating all forms of positive behaviours that will acculturate good habits and actions which constitute respect and high integrity to the norms and value of the society.

Concepts of Research Integrity

Many definitions have been accorded research in Nigeria. According to Adewumi [6] research is the process of investigating or finding out the aspects of knowledge or ideas that the people have not known or they are not clear about them. The author went further to define research as the process of finding out new information, new methods of doing things and extension of boundary of knowledge.

Research integrity is the extent to which high level confidence, respects and dignity is associated with the results or findings derived from the research conducted. Education. Ogwuche [7] described research integrity as the process of conducting effective research that having quality assurance, integrity, dignity and respect for the research conduct and the researchers. A research that is having an ethical value orientation in her conduct and under a high integrity, dignity, honesty and respect for the researchers' institutions, and publication is said to be research integrity, ethical value and the ethical value orientation in the research will be accord good respect.

Jimoh [8] defined research integrity as the situation whereby high respect, dignity are accorded to the available researches that are made due to the fact the such researches are devoid of dishonest, bias, and unethical issues in their publications.

Unethical Issues in Educational Researches

In Nigeria educational system, there are various unethical issues aftermath constitute a great threat disrespects, low integrity to all aspects of Nigeria educational system like certificate awarded, research conducts, the moral behaviours and convictions among members of the society. Accountant [9] identified unethical issues in the society as lack of principles, conscience, negative value orientation, low level accountability and poor self-respects all which caused low integrity and to the researches in the society.

However, the following are the unethical issues that are perpetrated in educational researches especially in local, national and international levels.

Copyright Violations: It is an unethical issue in the education to see that many researches violate the copyright rules and regulations. They cited other authors without referencing nor acknowledging, copying other people work directly and submission of article to different called for paper without withdrawing any. Copyright violation in Nigerian educational system affect research integrity to the

research journal domicile and the authors involved [10].

Falsification of Research Data: Unethical issue of falsification of research data collected for analysis can be falsified and when data collected for any research are falsified. Worthwhile result cannot be achieved for effective implementations when data analyzed are falsified wrong information would be revealed and worthwhile result is difficult and the aftermath is the low integrity to the research conducted in the educational sector.

Plagiarism: This is the systematic ways of individuals to copy directly another author's research work without additional efforts or making any change or innovation to such work.

Contracting research article writing: Many educationists due to the fact that the total number of paper presented or published in teared journals, books or monographs determine the rate of promotion in that higher institutions. However for rapid promotion to take place among the lecturers, many decide to contact articles to be published and claim the ownership of such article. It is unethical because the culprit will not be able to defend accurately the writes up.

Submission of articles to more than two or more places for considerations for publication in their journals: The integrity of such researches is betrayed, if such articles are published in more than one journals or books.

Inadequate editing of papers submitted: Many articles submitted for the publication are neither thoroughly reviewed nor edited. Many published articles are published under a low standard guideline of publications. Low standardization of individual articles in the journal is an unethical to research integrity in education.

Authors biasness: It is not ethically respected if the authors are conducting his researches according to the bias situations rather than how it supposed to be. This biasness or self-interest approach toward researches is an unethical and the aftermath on research integrity is not palatable. Finally, constant changes and innovation on the society without corresponding training of the researches to meet up with the constant changes in the series of unethical issues in the society according to Kazi [1].

Factors Influencing Unethical Issues in the Conduct of Educational Research

Perpetrations of unethical behaviours in the educational research in Nigeria are due to the following factors.

Benchmark for promotion in Nigerian tertiary institutions: In Nigerian tertiary institution today, without any research publication in the local, national, international and on the internet, such individual lecturers will not get opportunity of being promoted. However in their bid for promotion the lecturers seek for numbers of publication at all cost.

Inadequate knowledge of statistical analysis in research: Shift from mere theoretical writing and descriptive analysis to concrete empirical studies made the inferential analysis difficult. Inadequate knowledge of data analysis cause mere fabrication of figures which made implementation of findings fake.

Poverty: The high poverty level in the society encourage many people to make an adequate research and seek for the lecturers that will need such research work to be published in his or her name and pay the required money to the actual researchers.

Inadequate training on research methodology: Effective research conducts and quantitative analysis of educational researches requires good training and teaching. A situation whereby there are poor trainings for the researchers, there are tendencies for the perpetrations of unethical issues in their research conducts.

Political influence also militates against ethical issue in the research conduct: The problems occurred when the politicians influence the researchers to influence their research findings in such a way to portray good name of the government in power. For instance when the government promise to provide certain educational facilities or taken care of the teachers welfare during their electioneering campaign, the government in a bid to portray themselves to the public that they have fulfilled their electioneering promises they will now sponsor the researchers to manipulate their research findings to tell lie to the public that the government is doing the right things. This is part of unethical issues which will never promote research integrity in education.

Inadequate national conscience leading to research frauds: Many researchers perpetrate research frauds and perpetrate unethical issues because their conscience is dead, they will never mind negative comments that the public will pass on their research findings or whether their research results are significant to the educational goals or public interest or not they will never mind. Then just to say that they have published an article in the journals Job [11].

Poor implemented of research findings by the government lead to perpetration unethical issues in research conduct: Despite the fact that there are many conferences, workshop, seminars, journals, internets and books, these write ups and researches came up with many facts and suggestion for improvement. Yet these findings and suggestions were not adequately implemented, however, the research conducts were not taken with seriousness. Lack of seriousness in the research conduct therefore leads to disrespects, low dignity and low integrity in these researches especially in education. Communication gaps between the researches also caused duplication of researches. Where there is communication blackages between the researchers and the respondents it may bring out poor reports of the finding which can never have public respects [12].

Discrepancies in the research findings: Many research studies have been carried out by the various researchers in Nigeria, yet there is no adequate findings to put the researches conduct into practices. However because of the low findings, many lazy researchers take refuge to take advantage of the existing researches to violate copyright rules and plagiarism those outcome of the research findings of another person who do not have opportunity to finance their research, conducts [13].

Finally, thorough fullness in the review of educational research papers is an aspect of ethics issued in the research conduct when an article is not thoughtfully reviewed nor vetted, in line with the international standard, such articles can lose of its integrity. The paper published may commit grammatical errors which is the unethical issue in the publication. When there are so many grammatical errors in the publication such can affect the integrity of such research.

Aftermaths of unethical issues on the educational research integrity: Due to the level of respects and dignity accorded educational researches in Nigeria in the helms of perpetrated unethical issues, had negative impact on the educational research integrity. However, the following negative impacts were accorded Nigerian educational researches, lack of respects and international recognition for Nigerian educational research: Unethical in educational researches enables the research conducted in such countries to lose national and international dignity respects in their findings and their implementation will not be taken with all seriousness.

Failure of educational policies formulated: Since effectiveness of any educational policies hinged on well conducted research. However, the perpetration unethical issues in educational researches will affect the effective implementation of the laudable educational policies in the country. The aftermath leads to the failures of the policies and laudable programmes in Nigeria. Failures of series of education programmes and policies were attributed to the faulty educational researches in Nigeria.

Loss of respect and integrity for the researches: Perpetration of unethical issues in the research conduct by the researchers will cause low self-respect, loss of integrity and inadequate dignity and lack of trust for both the researchers and the conducted research especially on education.

Finally, perpetration of unethical issues in educational researches made the certificates acquired by the perpetrators to be questionable in the society and other colleagues in research. Any research fellows who are supposed to be adequately trained in the research methodology while at the masters and the Ph.D training and still violating research ethics, made the others researchers to put the certificate received by such perpetrators to be questionable or whether there is quality assurance in such a certificate.

Reasons for Resolving Ethical Issues in Nigerian Educational Research

The needs for resolving ethical issues had been advocated by many authors, to accord high respect for Nigerian education research.

Yusuf [14] stated that unethical issues perpetration in Nigerian educational system lead to disrespect, low ranking and in acceptance of Nigerian educational results at the global levels. In order to enhance good respect and encourage high ranking and acceptability of Nigerian researches at the global level, there is a need to resolve all ethical related issues and provide a value orientation towards enhancing research integrity to Nigerian education.

To give true research findings for effective implementation: Effective ethical resolution in educational research conduct will give true research findings and which give the stakeholders ways for enhancing effective implementation of the research findings [15].

To raise the standard of Nigerian educational system: It is accused that the fallen standard of education are caused by falsification of the results.

The falsification of finding is therefore needed to be resolved and encouraged the authors to give value orientation to the plain truths in their findings. The value orientation to the compliance to the true findings will enhance successful implementation of the results and the integrity of Nigerian education will be enhanced [16].

The philosophy of Nigerian education demands for making education system to be relevant to the needs and aspiration of citizens. In order to make, educational system relevance to the needs and aspiration of Nigeria, therefore this paper advocated for the need to resolve all unethical issues in the Nigerian educational system. The identification and valuing of true research in Nigeria education will aid research integrity in the system [17].

Furthermore, reputation of Nigerian certificates and researches will be enhanced: effective ethical resolution in Nigerian education research will accord high respects and value to the certificates presented to the citizens in Nigeria. Even the citizens will be able to defend their certificates in their hands. Without ethical resolution, the truths will not prevail in Nigerian educational system [18].

Strategies for Resolving Ethical Issues for Educational Research Integrity

In order to resolve ethical issues than militate against research integrity in Nigeria, the following recommendations are therefore proffered.

Adequate training for various researchers: Various professional associations should organize conferences, workshop and seminars to train individuals on various technicalities for effective research conduct and strategies for resolving various ethical issues that will enhance research integrity in Nigerian educational researches.

Also, implementations of research findings and publications of the researchers should be everyone's responsibilities. That is the government, philanthropists, well-meaning individuals and non-governmental organizations should help in sponsoring findings implementation of laudable researches, in order to enhance adequate integrity in research conducted in Nigeria.

Well qualified editors and reviewers should be appointed to help in the blind peer reviewing processes of any articles submitted for publication.

The journal, books, monograph publishers should make use of available technology such as computer, video, cameras etc. that will help to detect any

unethical issues that may be perpetrated by the researchers and reject such article for publication in such issue of publication.

All articles submitted for publication should be thoroughly reviewed under a blind peer review process. When the reviewers did not know the author, there will be no biasness in their review and all sorts of unethical issues will be eliminated in the publications.

National Copyright Commission of Nigeria (NCCN) should be established to see to the assessment of all journals, books, monograph and ensure that anybody that perpetrate any act of unethical issues in their publications are adequately dealt with through dismissals, denial of promotion or cancellation of such publication from the public markets.

Finally, ethical value orientation should be integrated to the research methods in education. The integration will allow every researcher to have proper ethical value on the research conducts and be able to avoid all the unethical issues in Nigerian educational research.

However, the perpetration ethical value orientation in the conduct of educational research will definitely enhance research integrity in Nigerian educational system and the educational research in Nigeria will be adequately respected at the global level.

Finally, every individual will be able to give proper accountability to the educational programme implementation. The ethical value orientation will inculcate the knowledge of all aspect of education and every stakeholder will be able to treat educational programme in a true and honest manner in accordance to the findings of the research conduct. The ethical resolution will definitely enhance research integrity in Nigerian educational system.

It is therefore imperative to note that this paper is to the needs and strategies for resolving ethical issues in Nigerian educational research conducts. Nigerian educational researchers should therefore need to avoid all aspects of unethical issues in their research conduct in the interest of enhancing research integrity in Nigerian educational system.

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