

Research Article

Effects of Academic Integrity of Faculty Members on Students' Ethical Behavior

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Education is fundamental tool in achieving sustainable development. Higher education institutions play vital role in providing a nation with required skilled manpower, needed to foster sustainable development. For these higher education institutions to achieve their goals and respond positively towards meeting needs of the society, ethical behavior of various actors is crucial. Therefore, this study examined the effects of faculty members' academic integrity on students' ethical behavior in universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A total of 450 students were sampled across three public universities in the country. Random sampling method was used in selecting the participants in this study. The study made use of a 30-item questionnaire on academic integrity and ethical behavior. This was adapted into Kingdom of Saudi Arabia universities. The methods of data analysis used in this study are simple percentage and Pearson Correlation Coefficient. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to examine the relationship between faculty members' academic integrity and students' ethical behavior. The result shows that there is a relationship between honest, fairness, responsibility, respect, trust, and ethical behavior of students. In order to ensure sustainable higher education development in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia academic, leaders and policy makers must encourage faculty members to uphold true academia and display good academic integrity as a measure towards influencing the moral and ethical behavior of their students.

1. Introduction

Education has been recognized globally as an essential weapon for attaining economic, social, and political development in any nation. The corollary to this is that higher education institutions are currently saddled with the responsibility of eradicating ignorance in the nation and providing nations with adequate competent human capital required to attain a sustainable growth and development. For these institutions to accomplish these great tasks, effective leadership is crucial [1]. Academic leaders in higher education institutions today are saddle with the responsibility of upholding high integrity among faculty members and students [2, 3]. Failure to do this may hinder attainment of academic goals in higher education institutions.

Higher education institutions are facing numerous challenges in present day. These problems include the following academic dishonest acts, students' enrolment, inadequate

funding, and a host of others. Of these problems, academic dishonesty was found to be denting problem which hinders the morality of university graduates [2]. University students are fond of various dishonest acts like cheating and plagiarism. These acts result into immoral behavior and corruption in academic circle [4, 5] Students who display these acts during their university days usually transmit these bad behavior into their workplace because it is deeply rooted in them [6]. Realizing the need to reform higher education institutions and curb some of these unethical behaviors, the Saudi Arabia government came up with vision 2030 for education which aims at repositioning universities in the country for sustainable development [7]. To accomplish this vision, various measures were put in place to enhance leadership in Saudi Arabia universities. Some of the measures include the creation of leadership centers, the training of academic leaders, and others [8]. Despite these measures, some departmental chairs do not adequately understand

what leadership roles are and do not know how to efficiently and effectively manage resources. This led to their/inability to promote change behavior in Saudi universities [9]. Failure on the part of academic leaders dragged some faculty members to display a dishonest attitude towards their work. Dishonest behavior exhibited by academia include plagiarism, distrust, favoritism, and a host of others [10–13]. This later transmits to dishonest behavior among students in Saudi Arabia universities [14]. This issue is not limited to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia alone; it was also found in many countries in Asia, Middle East, and other parts of the world [15–18]. Also, low knowledge of faculty members about ethical attitude constitutes a challenge. The study of Carter (2008) [19] revealed that some faculty members in higher education institutions do not properly understand which behavior is ideal and appropriate in academic circle. Higbee and Thomas (2002) [20] argued that the effect of this low understanding led to students receiving unpleasant behavior and feedback which later results into academic dishonesty. Hence, this research study examined the effect of academic integrity of faculty members on students' ethical behavior in Saudi Arabia universities.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Two different theories were examined in this research study. They are value-based theory and the academic integrity model. Each of these will be discussed extensively in the next paragraphs.

The virtue-based theory was developed by Aristotle and further expanded by other Greek philosophers. Virtue is an excellent trait of character which is well entrenched in the possessor [21–23]. The value-based theory adopted a character-based approach to morality. The main idea of this theory is that virtues are habits. Aristotle argued that the only way we can develop virtues and become a better people is through practicing good ethics. He further claims that virtues are dispositions to choose good actions which are informed by moral knowledge and the desire to perform virtuous act for their own sake [24]. He stressed that people acquired virtue through practice and learning [25]. He further argued that virtue ethics relates to morality and honesty of a person [26]. People developed good moral character like kindness, bravery, and honesty by practicing these virtues. Aristotle argued further that practicing good habits such as fairness, kindness, and generosity makes a moral and virtuous person [26]. This theory has a lot of benefits to the individual and the society. It guides a person without specific rules for resolving ethical complexity. It also enables people to maintain personal interpersonal connections important for the good life [24–27].

In addition, the fundamental value of academic integrity proposed by the International Centre for Academic Integrity was used in this study. The survey of study was based on an earlier version of (ICAI). These six fundamental values include honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. Honesty is the first value of academic integrity. It was regarded as the basis or bedrock upon which other

values are built. Therefore, the International Centre for Academic Integrity (2021) [28] argued that academic communities must develop policies that frown against dishonest behavior or attitude. Therefore, dishonest behavior like plagiarism, falsification of result, and fraudulent act must be handled with a sense of seriousness. After building an honest background, the next step is to build trust. Trust, as the second fundamental principle of academic integrity, allows faculty members to collaborate, share new ideas, and interact effectively with their students. Fairness, as the third principle of academic integrity, implies fair treatment of everyone within the academic environment. Fairness manifests in transparent dealings with colleagues, students, grading, student evaluation, university policies, and a host of other issues relating to teaching and learning in academic institutions. Once there is fairness in the treatment of people within an academic environment, there will be a peaceful co-existence which will later assist universities in attaining their goals [28].

Furthermore, respect is also essential in attaining academic integrity in any academic institution. It is recognized as the fourth fundamental value of academic integrity. It implies dealing with faculty members, students, alumni, corporate bodies, and parents with a sense of dignity. Respect as they say is reciprocal. Every individual deserves to be respected. Therefore, stakeholders in any academic environment must be accorded his or her respect in order to ensure an enabling environment for all. The responsibility as the fifth fundamental value of academic integrity implies that every stakeholder must be responsible for upholding values of integrity at all times.

Finally, courage as the last fundamental value of academic integrity suggests that every student must learn the highest standards of academic integrity and faculty hold accountable to foster integrity. Therefore, everyone must be responsible for safeguarding integrity in teaching, learning, research, and scholarship. Attaining the goals of the university must be conceived as everyone's responsibility. Each stakeholder has his or her own share in ensuring that goals, vision, mission, and values of the university are attained [1].

Based on these theories, the conceptual framework that guided this study is presented in the diagram below.

As shown in Figure 1, whenever faculty members display academic integrity towards teaching, learning, and interpersonal relationship with their colleagues and students, students learning under them will observe these good traits and later emulate good moral character from their lecturers. This in return will enable students to drop or stop some dishonest attitude like cheating in examination, plagiarizing other peoples' work, betraying trust, and other social vices.

It will also help to improve students' learning outcome, stimulate a healthy teacher-student relationship, increase organizational commitment, and help ensure sustainable social development. Therefore, the following hypotheses guided this research study. Therefore, the following hypotheses guided this research study:

H1: There is a relationship between honest behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities

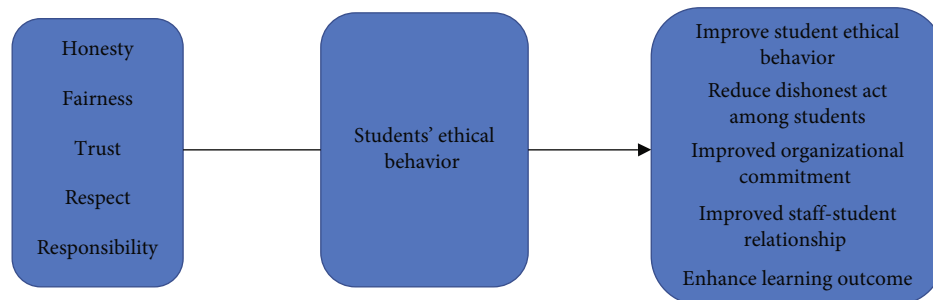


FIGURE 1: Conceptual framework of this study.

H2: There is a relationship fairness behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior in Saudi Arabia universities

H3: There is a relationship between responsible behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior in Saudi Arabia universities

H4: There is a relationship between respectful behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities

H5: There is a relationship between trust behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities

3. Literature Review

3.1. Concept of Ethical Behavior. The term ethics is a practice that applies to everyone in an organization irrespective of their position, age or achievement. It is adjudged to be one of the vital issues facing organizations today [29]. This becomes pertinent at this crucial time when unethical and dishonest behavior continue to manifest in organizations [30]. Ethics in the ancient Greek philosophy implies principles characterizing moral values, beliefs, and attitude [31]. Ethics and ethical behavior is required in all disciplines and organizations [32]. Ethical behavior refers to those actions that are characterized by honesty, justice, fairness, and other good virtues [33].

3.2. Academic Integrity and Its Importance. The word academic integrity consists of two different words, namely, academic and integrity. Peterson and Seligman (2004) [34] argued that the term integrity was developed by Rogers as a rejoinder to his displeasure with Kohlberg theory of moral development. The term integrity is vague and sometimes misunderstood by people [35]. Also, Ramdani (2018) [16] conceived integrity as the magnitude at which an individual acts and thinks morally and honestly. Similarly, Simons (1999) [36] stressed that the term integrity is related to the ethical behavior and moral values which leaders' exhibit. Therefore, Becker (1998) [37] conceived integrity as commitment in action to a morally justified set of values and principles. Without ethical leadership, organizations stand the risk of losing values, principals, and standards [32]. Integrity can also be applied in an academic setting. Academic integrity refers to the individual's commitment to positive values which will assist him or her behave, conduct,

and conform to acceptable standard towards creating a viable academic environment. These positive behavioral values will enhance a viable character education environment [38]. In order to maintain academic integrity in contemporary higher education intuitions, Moris (2018) [39] proposed five core areas which must be looked into including: ascertaining the academic integrity strategy to be adopted, understanding students' needs, revising institutional policies, addressing assessment practices, and enhancing staff development. Similarly, the Center for Academic Integrity (1999) [40] argued that these five core values assist members of staff in academic communities to convert their ideas into meaningful and achievable actions.

Academic integrity has a lot of implication on the development of higher education institutions. Robert and Hai-Jew (2009) [41] argued that with the help of academic integrity, learners in higher education institutions can improve their self-identity and assist in attaining the mission of academic institutions Also, it will help promote ethical behavior in students [2].

3.3. Academic Integrity in Saudi Arabia Universities. Violation of academic integrity in higher education institutions is a global concern. The faculty members and students in Saudi Arabian universities are not left out of the mess. Restructuring in higher education system in Saudi Arabia has dragged some faculty members to work harder and keep with the pace of global development. This later resulted into academic and intellectual theft among faculty members [42]. In the study of Hosny and Fatimah (2014) [43], it was found that students in Saudi Arabia universities display dishonest behavior like plagiarizing other people's work and cheating. Even these students display dishonest attitude towards e-learning courses [44]. In order to overcome the violation of academic integrity in higher education institutions in Muslim countries, these institutions must uphold institutional culture as an alternative measure [45, 46].

3.4. Effects of Academic Integrity on Ethical Behavior. Whenever leaders display high level of integrity, it transmits down to the followers and later impact on the followers' ethical behavior. According to the study of Rabie and Abdul Malek (2020) [32], it was found that ethical leadership affects the followers' ethical behavior in an organization. In the same vein, the academic circle is not left out of this. As argued by Moris and Caroll (2016) [47] that whenever universities

develop holistic institutional policies on integrity policy, this will later reflect on the ethical behavior of students because these students see their teachers or lecturers as their role model and will be ready at all times to emulate good virtues and ethical behavior from them. Also, institutional integrity policies will help to reform the unethical behavior in students and make them better citizens [2, 47, 48]. On the issue of fairness and justice, Morris (2018) [39] opined that academic integrity will promote these good virtues among students and therefore prevent them from cheating or engaging in other unethical behavior. In addition, Brimble (2016) [49] stressed that lapses in integrity policies and failure on the part of actors account for dishonest behavior of students. Therefore, institutional policies should be strengthened to restore ethical values like trust and honesty in students [49]. In addition, Curtis and Clare (2017) [50] argued that awareness of penalty against dishonest acts will stimulate students to act in ethical manner and shun dishonest acts. It will control students' cheating or engaging in other dishonest acts and make students to be just and fair in their dealings [51]. Also, motivation plays a vital role. Whenever the faculty members and policy makers display high integrity, this will motivate students towards behaving in a more ethical manner and become useful to themselves and their society [49].

3.5. Roles of Academic Leaders and Policy Makers in Academic Integrity. Leaders can make or mar an academic institution [52–54]. The leaders in higher education institutions and policy makers have great role to play in promoting good ethics and moral values in various higher education institutions. Grigoropoulos (2019) [33] argued that the ethical behavior in higher education institutions starts with the leaders. They are responsible for making ethical decisions, implementing ethical behavior, and modelling ethical behavior [33, 55, 56]. Therefore, leaders and policy makers must create culture of integrity among faculty members and students [48]. Also, student academic integrity should be improved across higher education institutions [3, 57]. Also, they must strive to ensure effective supervision and implementation of policies relating to ethical behavior of staff and students in higher education institutions [47].

4. Materials and Methods

4.1. Research Design. Research design refers to the procedure for collecting, analyzing, and reporting research [58]. This research study therefore examined descriptive research design. This type of research design allows researchers to investigate more variables [58, 59]. It also describes the relationship among variables [60]. With this type of research design, the researchers can describe the effect of faculty members' academic integrity on students' ethical behavior in higher education institutions.

4.2. Population, Sample and Sampling Technique. The population of this study consists of students who were drawn from three different public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the study examined a population

of about 10000 students. Of this population, the researcher sampled a total of 450. This proportion was chosen based on the recommendation of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) [61] who suggest that a sample of 265 out of population of 10000 is appropriate. In order to ensure that views of some students are taken care of and cover more students from all disciplines, the researcher therefore extended the population to 450 to grant more students chance without bias. The students selected in this study are those who have gained substantial experience in their universities. These students can tell us more about what they feel about their lecturers' academic integrity and how the lecturers' academic integrity affected their ethical behavior. These students were contacted physically in their respective universities. The researcher explained the motive of the research and solicited their consent to take part in the study. Only those who indicated interest were allowed to take part in the study. This implies that the respondents were not forced to partake. In addition, random sampling technique was used in selecting the participants in this research study. The benefit of this technique is that it gives equal chance to each member of the population to be selected without any bias.

4.3. Instrumentation. This study used adopted and adapted questionnaire. The questionnaire was adopted from the study of Guerrero-Dib et al. (2020) [2] on the impact of academic integrity on workplace ethical behavior and the study of Ramdani (2018) [16] on construction of academic integrity scale and adapted into Kingdom of Saudi Arabia universities. It consists of 30 item questions. This questionnaire was divided into seven sections of A to G, respectively. Section A addressed demographic information of respondents. Sections B, C, D, E, and F focused on the academic integrity of faculty members, while Section G relates to the questions on ethical behavior of students.

4.4. Data Administration, Collection and Analysis. The research questionnaire was administered to the respondents in their respective universities. The questionnaire was administered for over four months across the universities under review. Necessary guidance was provided to the respondents. The researcher collected the survey questionnaire from the faculty members. Furthermore, this research study adopted descriptive statistics in analyzing the data. Simple percentage was used to analyze demographic information of respondents, while Pearson correlation coefficient was used in analyzing the hypotheses set for this research study. This helps researchers in examining the strength of relationship between two variables [62].

5. Results

Here, the researcher presents the result that emerged from this study.

As indicated in Table 1, it was found that 315 (70.0%) of the respondents are male, while the remaining 135 (30.0%) are female students studying in public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In addition, the table shows that 100 (22.2%) of the respondents are students studying in

TABLE 1: Demographic distribution of respondents.

Items		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	315	70.0
	Female	135	30.0
Specialization	Humanities	150	33.3
	Science	120	26.7
	Engineering	80	17.8
	Art	100	22.2
University	Uni. Of hail	160	35.6
	Uni of Jazan	140	31.1
	Majmah Uni	150	33.3

Faculty of Arts. 150 (33.3%) of the sampled respondents are currently studying in Humanities, 180 (26.7%) of the sampled students in the Faculty of Science, while the remaining 80 (17.8%) are students from the Faculty of Engineering. Finally, 160 (35.6%) of the respondents are students studying in University of Hail, 140 (31.1%) are students of currently studying in University of Jazan, while the remaining 150 (33.3%) are students of Majmah University.

5.1. Reliability and Validity Test. Cronbach alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the items in the questionnaire. The five fundamental principles of academic integrity were considered. Here, five items were retained under honesty, four were retained under fairness, five were retained each under respect and trust, respectively, while four were retained under responsibility. On the students' ethical behavior, eleven questions were retained. In all, a total of 30 items were retained in this study.

For the validity test, factor analysis was used. It helps to reduce and refine large sets of data to smaller and meaningful subscale [62]. The result is presented below.

The 30 items of faculty members' academic integrity and students' ethical behavior were subjected to principal component analysis using SPSS version 21. Prior to performing principal component analysis, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser Mayer-Olkin value was .835, exceeding the recommended value of .6 [63], and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance at .000 supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. Principal components analysis revealed the presence of nine components with eigenvalue exceeding 1. This six component solution explained a total of 67.50% of the variance. A careful inspection of the scree plot shows a clear break after the sixth component.

Hypothesis 1. There is a relationship between honest behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities.

The relationship between honest behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior was investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. There was a positive correlation between honest behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior with $r = .670$, $n = 450$, and $p < .05$. Therefore, the researcher accepts this hypothesis and fails to accept the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2. There is a relationship fairness behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior in Saudi Arabia universities.

The relationship between fairness behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior was investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed, and there was no violation of the assumptions. The result shows a positive correlation between students' ethical behavior and fairness with $r = .548$, $n = 450$, and $p < .05$ (which is statistically significant). Hence, the researcher accepts this hypothesis and fails to accept the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3. There is a significant relationship between responsible behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior in Saudi Arabia universities.

The relationship between responsible behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior was investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. There was a positive correlation between inspirational motivation and responsibility with $r = .715$, $n = 450$, and $p < .05$. As a result, the researcher accepts the hypothesis that states that there is a significant relationship between responsible behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior in Saudi Arabia universities and fails to accept the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4. There is a relationship respectful behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities.

The relationship between respectful behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior was investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions. There was a strong positive correlation between students' ethical behavior and respect with $r = .809$, $n = 450$, and $p < .05$. So the hypothesis which states that there is a relationship respectful behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities was accepted.

TABLE 2: Correlation.

		Students' ethical behavior	Honesty
Students' ethical behavior	Pearson correlation	1	.670
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	450	450
Honesty	Pearson correlation	.670	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	450	450

TABLE 3: Correlation.

		Students' ethical behavior	Fairness
Students' ethical behavior	Pearson correlation	1	.548
	Sig (2-tailed)		.001
	N	450	450
Fairness	Pearson correlation	.548	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	450	450

TABLE 4: Correlation.

		Students' ethical behavior	Responsibility
Students' ethical behavior	Pearson correlation	1	.715
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	450	450
Responsibility	Pearson correlation	.715	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	450	450

TABLE 5: Correlation.

		Students' ethical behavior	Respect
Students' ethical behavior	Pearson correlation	1	.809
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	450	450
Respect	Pearson correlation	.809	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	450	450

Hypothesis 5. There is a relationship trust behavior of faculty members and ethical behavior of students in Saudi Arabia universities.

The relationship between trust behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior was investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Prelimi-

nary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of assumptions. A strong positive correlation exists between students' ethical behavior and trust with $r = .815$, $n = 450$, and $p < .05$. For this reason, the researcher accepts the hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between trust behaviour of faculty members and ethical behaviour of students in Saudi Arabia universities and fails

TABLE 6: Correlation.

		Students' ethical behavior	Trust
Students' ethical behavior	Pearson correlation	1	.815
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000
	N	450	450
Trust	Pearson correlation	.815	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	450	450

to accept the null hypothesis. Tables 2–6 shows the correlation.

6. Discussion

Based on the result of the findings stated above, it was found that there exists a statistically significant positive relationship honest behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior. This manifests in the r value which is .548 and p values of .001, respectively. This result implies whenever faculty members display an honest behavior in their interactions with colleagues and students. Thereafter, these students will notice this good virtue and later imbibe the act of honesty in their daily life and activities. This view point is in agreement with the position of [32, 64], who opined that the leader's behavior has an effect on the honesty and integrity of their followers. In addition, result of the second hypothesis shows that a positive relationship exists between fairness behavior and ethical behavior of students as indicated in the result of r and p values, respectively. The implication of this result is that faculty members must exercise their dealings with their students and colleagues with fairness. Once this is done effectively, these students will observe it in their lecturers and later exhibit this good virtue in their dealings in the school and outside the school setting. This result corroborates with the position of Odom and Green (2003) [65] who argued that the leaders' behavior can arouse fairness attitude in their subordinates.

Furthermore, a positive relationship exists between the responsible behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior. This occurs with an r value of .713 and a p value of .000. It therefore implies that whenever faculty members encourage their students to behave responsibly, these students will soon emulate this character and later become useful to themselves, parents, workplace, and society at large. Also, they will show some level of responsibility towards teaching, learning, research, and scholarship. With these, universities can achieve the goals for which they were established and respond sharply to changing societal needs. This correlates with the position of Moris and Carroll (2016) [47], when they postulated that the behavior of leaders can go a long way in motivating followers towards displaying high ethical behavior.

Also, the result of the fourth hypothesis affirms that there is a positive relationship between respectful behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior. This manifests in the p value which is statistically significant. It implies that whenever faculty members uphold true academia by displaying academic integrity, they will be forced to understand their students, other colleague, identify the differences in each individual, and respect the differences in their colleague and students. Showing this attitude to students will help students to behave in ethical manner even after completion of their programs. They will even transmit this good character to their workplace and society. This corresponds with the position of Rabie and Abdul Malek (2020), Moris (2018), and Den Hartog and De Hoogh (2009) [32, 39, 66] who found that the leaders' behavior will arouse the spirit of integrity in followers. Lastly, the result of the fifth hypothesis shows that there is a strong positive relationship between trust behavior of faculty members and students' ethical behavior. This implies that whenever faculty member upholds academic integrity and remains truthful in their dealings with students and other members of staff, their students will notice this good trait and would like to imitate their lectures' good and truthful behavior. With this trust, they will build a good virtue in their students, transmit truthfulness to learners, and reform their students positively. This view corroborates with the findings of [66] who found that the leaders' behavior will stimulate trust and integrity in their followers.

7. Limitation

This research study was limited to the three universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a result of the Covid19 pandemic guidelines and financial implication of this research study.

8. Conclusion

The research study has a lot of implications on higher education management and policy. As found in the result, faculty members' display of academic integrity has a positive relationship and effect on students' ethical behavior. Therefore, these faculty members must uphold true academia by observing good ethics and virtues like honesty and fairness in their dealing with colleagues and students. Soon, students will note these good virtues and emulate their teachers. In addition, faculty members must take cognizance of their responsibilities as role model, educators, and teachers at all times. Any act of indiscipline or dishonest act must be shunned by faculty members. This will help in projecting them well in the face of their students and enable the students to trust and count on their lecturers at all times. In addition, academic leaders and policy makers are not left out of this. They have a vital role to play. As drivers of higher education policy in the Kingdom, they must formulate policies that will encourage faculty members to behave in academic honest manner and uphold true nature of academia. They can do this by organizing seminars and workshops to remind these staff of their roles in building viable system.

Apart from formulating laws and policies, there is urgent need for implementation and proper monitoring of the policies across universities in the country. Furthermore, leaders in higher education institutions must uphold a high level of moral values and virtues in order to keep motivating their subordinates. They must stand in favor of promoting good virtues like honest, fairness in dealing with issues relating to staff and students, and avoid dishonest attitudes such as plagiarism and immoral behavior from both staff and students. Any member of the academic community found guilty of misconduct must be brought to book irrespective of the rank, position, or status in the society. Similarly, academic leaders must be at the top of any change idea and encourage their subordinates to imbibe good moral values. In addition, they must fight for justice and fairness, be responsible for action and policy made by their institutions, and lead the path of change with caution in order to achieve the numerous goals set for academic institutions while dynamically responding to societal demands. Furthermore, university management must adopt policy of zero tolerance for academic dishonesty on the part of both faculty members and students. With this, no one will transgress. These views correspond with the position of Guerrero-Dib et al. (2020); Stephens (2016) and Winrow (2015) [2, 3, 48] argued that academic leaders and policy makers have a great role to play in enhancing ethical behavior in higher education settings.

Moreover, this study can further be expanded by examining some social political and personal factors that can influence ethical behavior of faculty members and students in higher education institutions. Further studies can be conducted to examine or explore why people behave ethically. This will provide another paradigm for higher education research and development. In addition, this research study has made it clear that the academic integrity of faculty members can influence the ethical behavior of students in universities. Therefore, faculty members must display good virtues and moral values which their students can emulate from them. Policy makers and academic leaders must enforce all rules and policies relating to ethical conduct sincerely and judiciously. Effort should be made to keep informing staff and students of the virtues of good ethics and moral character. If all the measures proposed in this research study are carefully implemented across public universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, these universities will thrive higher, assist in achieving the vision 2030 proposed by the government, and make the graduates responsible citizens in their various workplaces.

Data Availability

The data presented in this study are available on request from the author. The data are not publicly available due to ethical issues.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no competing of interest.

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