Academic Integrity: The Case of Vietnam*

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Abstract: The paper analyzes theoretical and practical issues and measures to ensuring academic integrity in Vietnam.As revealed by the author, like many countries in the world, Vietnam is facing problems of academic dishonesty, which manifets in plagiarism, cheating and fabrication in conducting scientific research. Common causes of academic dishonesty include the development of Internet, the explosion of higher education, the commercialization of academic publishing institutions, the bladder attitude towards the negative manifestations of academic life. The author argued that, to ensure academic integrity in Vietnam, it is necessary to take measures to overcome those common causes, as well as some other specific causes, including shortcomings in codification, dissemination and implementation of academic integrity principles and standards in the academic community.

Key words: academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, citation, Vietnam

1.Introduction

The issue of honesty in research, teaching and learning - the core of academic integrity - has long been concerned and discussed around the world, perhaps with the advent and development of universities. However, in terms of origin, the term academic integrity is considered to be initiated by the late Professor Donald McCabe of Rutgers Business School, USA in the survey report titled "*Cheating in the Academic Institutions: A Decade of Research*", published in 2001 in the Journal of Ethics & Behaviors (D.L. McCabe*et all.*, 2001).Professor Donald McCabe is also considered the "founding father" of research on academic integrity. Since his report, hundreds of other studies have been published on this issue, and a number of research centers and networks of universities, for example, theInternational Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI, since 1992)have been established to promote academic integrity.

Linguistically, academic integrity is a compound word, including integrity and academic. Academic concepts are often understood as research, teaching and learning activities at educational institutions, especially universities (Loreta *et all.,* (2018), p.7). However, as regards to integrity, many Vietnamese authors find it difficult to give a comprehensive and complete definition of this concept (Tran Kien and Vu Cong Giao*,* (2015), p.46), due to its wide and abstract nature. This is the first obstacle to the implementation of academic integrity in

4028

Vietnam, when the concept is not clearly understood.

Currently, although academic integrity is frequently used and adopted in regulations of many academic institutions, especially universities of Vietnam, various theoretical and practical aspects related to this concept still have not been fully clarified. Because of that, the implementation of academic integrity in practice in Vietnam is still formalistic.

The case of Vietnam shows a common situation in other developing countries in which the academic integrity has been introduced, but has not been fully respected and applied by the academic community. Therefore, from the situation of Vietnam, the results of the study may suggest reference values for clarifying and promoting academic integrity in other countries.

2.Objective and Research Methods

The objective of this paper is to answer the following questions:(I) How is academic integrity manifested in the world and in Vietnam? (ii) Why it is needed and what has been done to ensure academic integrity in the country; (iii) How to improve academic integrity in Vietnam in the future?

As a qualitative study, the main research method used in this paper is document analysis. In order to answer the aforementioned research questions, the author has compiled and analyzed related legal documents of Vietnamese state agencies, along with regulations of academic institutions (mostly local universities). Selected sstatistical and survey reports of local stake holders (universities and NGOs) on the situation of academic integrity are

also examined. In addition, some case studies (mostly on plagiarism) are analysed. Theoretical basis to draw conclusions, conclusions and recommendations from the articles was drawn from a number of studies by famous international experts on this issue, like Donald L. McCabe (2001),Ann Nichols-Casebolts (2012), Loreta TAUGINIENĖ (2018), or famous universities like Oxfort, Chicago, etc.

3.Results and Discussions

3.1.Understanding of academic integrity in Vietnam

The combined concept of academic integrity has not been mentioned in any Vietnamese dictionaries. However, the term of integrity was defined in many, which all consider integrity as honesty (*trung thực*) (Y, 2007; Phe, 2000). Some other attributes that are also associated with integrity are uprightness(*ngay thẳng*), purity (*trong sạch*, *trong sáng*) (Y, 2007; Phe, 2000; Hung, 1975).

The aforementioned perception of integrity of Vietnamese is quite similar to common perception in the world. According to a common English dictionary,integrity is a collection of ethical qualities such as honesty, righteousness, soundness, transparency, incorruptibility (Dictionary.com, Merriam-webster, Dictionary.cambridge).

The awareness of the entire term of academic integrity of Vietnamese scholars and educational institutions is also not different from the common perception in the world.

Specifically, in the above-mentionedreport, Professor Donald McCabe implied that academic integrity includes

values such as avoiding fraud or copying; upholding academic standards; be honest and serious in academic research and publication (D.L. McCabe*et all.*, 2001). Another famous expert defined academic integrity as the individual's (researcher's) commitment to standards of honesty about knowledge and personal responsibility, involving standards of reliability and legality (Ann Nichols-Casebolts (2012), p·2). From institutional perspective, Michigan State University (USA) states that: Academic Integrity is honesty and responsibility in academia (Michigan State University)· while the University of Canterbury (New Zealand(believes that academic integrity is a principle that students, teachers and staff of the universities must follow, which is to "act honestly, fairly, kindly and respectfully to others in teaching, learning and administration" (University of Canterbury).

In Vietnam,a local University defines, "Academic integrity is an upright and clean conduct in academic activities, including activities related to learning, teaching, research, as well as other creative and composing activities" (Hoa Sen University, 2013). The another local university also states: "Academic integrity is an upright and transparent conduct in academic activities" (Bach Khoa University, 2017).

Thus, as can be seen, despite different definitions, the connotation of the concept of academic integrity in Vietnam and in the world implies good human qualities such as honesty, righteous, transparency and responsibility for those working on academic area. This is also the main connotation of the concept of academic integrity specified and applied by universities in Vietnam and around the world.

3.2. Violations of academic integrity in Vietnam

Since academic integrity is a broad, relatively abstract concept, violations can take many forms. However, to ensure academic integrity, some governments and universities, including in Vietnam, have established standards to identify acts of violation.

In some countries, the governing body for education and scientific research has issued specific regulations on violations of academic integrity for prevention. For example, the U.S. Office of Science and Technology Policy identifies dishonest conduct in research activities to include: forging, falsifying documents, data and copying (ORI), while the UK Research and Innovation's - one of the country's official funding management and review agencies – also provides a number of other behaviors that are also considered violations of integrity, that is: cheating, violating the prudent principle, and handling allegations of violations inappropriately (RCUK).

In Vietnam, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is the government agency responsible for academic activities. However, this Ministry so far has not yet issued any set of specificguidelines on academic integrity. Currently in Vietnam, there are only a few sets of academic integrity rules issued by some local universities, with relatively similar content, which regulates the

following forms of academic integrity violations.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the most prominent violation of academic integrity, therefore is the most heavily criticized and censured. Plagiarism is essentially an academically dishonest act, but it is also manifested in many forms. The perpetrators of plagiarism are usually learners (students, students), however also include researchers (researchers, lecturers).

According to the Research Council UK, plagiarismis defined to be the use of ideas, works, or intellectual property of others (written or in another form) without citing the source or not allowed for citation (RCUK). The International Center for Academic Integrity also defines plagiarism as actions that use words, ideas or works of others without citing sources to gain benefits, not necessarily monetary benefits(ICAI). The Academic Integrity Code of the University of Maryland (USA) states that plagiarism is "intentionally or unknowingly using someone else's words or ideas as their own in any courses or assignments" (University of Maryland).

In Vietnam, Hoa Sen University defines plagiarism as 'the use of words or ideas of others as if it were their own in academic activities', including: interpretation, presentation, copying, translating other people's texts or ideas without proper citations; Using all or part of another's article, including articles of a commercial nature, on the market or online; Using artwork, designs, charts, data of others without knowing the source" (Hoa Sen University, 2013). In addition, the policies of Hoa Sen University even go further when the provisions of plagiarism also include the act of "self-copying", that is, "using more than 30% of the content of an article of themselves for more than one subject or using a group exercise for individual assignment" (Hoa Sen University, 2013).

The definition of plagiarism in the regulations of some other universities, such as that of Bach Khoa University (Bach Khoa University, 2017), is similar to that of Hoa Sen University, but less detailed (usually does not specify the percentage of duplicates allowed or not allowed in a paper).

The recent cases of plagiarismexposed in the local media in Vietnammostly relates to the use of knowledge and work of others, or the use of research results of others but notdid notquoted or recorded honestly and fully [Quang Dai, 2018; Lan Anh, 2019; Quynh Yen, 2020). This shows that the awareness and severity of sanctions against plagiarism in Vietnam is still low. In this regard, the broader concept to plagiarism stipulated by the University of Oxford (UK) includes hiring or asking others to conduct research on their behalf and not recording the help of others in the researching process (University of Oxford). These actions also occur in practice in Vietnam but so far there has not had any denunciation as a plagiarism act.

Cheating

Cheating is also a common violation of academic integrity. According to the Academic Integrity Code of the University of Maryland, this behavior is understood through learners' expressions such as: "being deceitful, deceiving, dishonest in learning,

or using or attempting to use illegal learning materials, information, or learning aids to try to achieve an unfair score" (University of Maryland). Similarly, the University of Vermont's Code of Academic Integrity states that cheating is the act of students "trying to gain an unfair academic advantage" through acts such as: "claiming someone else's scientific product to be their own ..., using an assignment to submit to more than one course., deliberately using, disseminating information they know or must know that it is inaccurate by deceiving, faking or altering any related documents or records" (University of Vermont).

In Vietnam, Hoa Sen University's Academic Integrity Policy defines academic cheating as "conduct that uses or prepares to use fraudulent, fabricated, and / or presenting, displaying and making untrue statements about their academic activities" (Hoa Sen University, 2013). Specific acts considered fraudulent include: "Using books, documents, notes, electronic devices or any other resources; Communicating, speaking during exams / tests or other academic activities without permission; Doing homework assignments, reports, programming or any assigned learning activities with others without the teacher's permission; Stealing the exam questions or answers before the exam takes place; Acts of counterfeiting records, using illegal files" (Hoa Sen University, 2013).

We can also see the similar but less detailed provisions in the regulations of some other local universities in Vietnam (Bach Khoa University, 2017; HCMULAW, 2015).

Compared to the other countries, the regulations on cheating of Vietnamese universities are quite similar. However, there is a difference that most universities in Vietnam tend to see this as a violation of learners (students, pupils). Because of that, the preventive measures and penalties are aimed at binding learners. Meanwhile, it can be seen from practice that while the culprit of academic cheating is learners (pupils, students, trainees), other subjects in the academic environment, such as lecturers, researchers, and even educational managers, can also involve in cheating acts, although not as common as the learner.This inadequacy makes cheating prevention in Vietnamese educational institutions less effective

Fabrication

This action is considered to be "intentionally illegally falsifying or fabricating any information or citations in any courses or exercises" (University of Maryland), "Making or falsifying empirical, observational data , interviews, statistical surveys, and other information to complete assignments" (University of Vermont)," Counterfeiting, distorting or fabricating any information or quotations in scientific research. Examples include but not limited to, inventing a source of material, intentionally mistaking, forging numbers or other data" (American University).

Thus, through the above definitions, it can be seen that the culprits of fabricating acts in academia can be learners (pupils, students, trainees) and researchers. In fact, this behavior has been done even by reputable researchers, such as the fabrication of stem cell research by a famous Korean

scientist, Dr. Hwang Woo-suk in 2005 (Tienphong Online, 2015).

In Vietnam, Hoa Sen University's Academic Integrity Policy defines academic fabrication as "intentionally misleading or making up any information or quotations in any academic activity", including at least specific manifestations such as "using fabricated information in experiments, research, internship reports or other academic activities. Incorrect citation of user (for example, citing information from a review but presenting it as information from the original book)" (Hoa Sen University, 2013). Similar provisions can be seen in the regulations of some other local universities in Vietnam (Bach Khoa University, 2017; HCMULAW, 2015).

The problem is that almost no cases have been accused of being fabricated in research in Vietnam. This does not mean there is no breaches(in fact, fabricating acts ar rather common in academic community of Vietnam). Rather, it is because the problem has not beenconsidered seriously in the country. Failure to take this problem seriously and strictly handling of fabrication violations is one of the reasons for the low quality of scientific research in Vietnam.

In addition to the three common behaviors mentioned above, a number of other behaviors may also be considered as violations of academic integrity. These behaviors may reflect a specific aspect, or a specific aspect of the three covered behaviors including:*Facilitating academic dishonesty* (known as "knowing but pretending not knowing to help or attempting to help another person violate the standards of academic integrity" (University of Maryland);*Collusion*(known as "two or three students work together on an assignment or essay without a teacher's permission" (Stony Brook University); *Bribes or threats* (known as "bribery or intimidation of others to get points or have good comments on academic results or professional performance" (American University).

The above violations and penalties have not been clearly mentioned in the regulations on academic integrity of Vietnamese universities. It is also an evidence showing that the awareness and regulatory framework for academic integrity in Vietnam is still lower than many countries.

3.3. The necessity and measures to ensure academic integrity in Vietnam

Ensuring integrity is considered a vital element of academic life. A university in the United States stated: "Academic integrity stands at the heart of intellectual life" (American University), while according to a scholar, "Honesty is the basic foundation of public confidence in the entire academic research system, ... is the basis for further investment in research, as well as for the use of research results in decision making" (Michael B. Paulsen, 2013).

In any countries including Vietnam, society's belief in honesty and righteousness in research, teaching and learning activities determines the existence and development of the academic community - a community whose purpose is not only to seek for knowledge but also for high spiritual values. Without integrity, the academic community will not be able to fulfill its role of creating and spreading knowledge as well as good
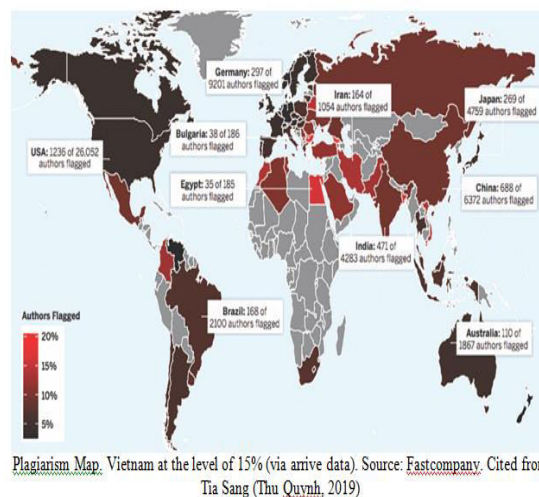
4033

spiritual values. Moreover, losing integrity, the academic community not only loses its position and role, but also has a negative impact on the development of society. The corruption and degradation of the academic community is one of the clear and prominent manifestations of the degeneration and degradation of a society.

Unfortunately, the lack of integrity has occurred since the formation of the academic community, has existed alongside the academic life to this day, not only in developing, but also in developed countries. For example, the survey conducted by late professor Donald McCabe and ICAI over a 12-year period (from 2002-2015) in hundreds of high schools and universities in the United States - the most developed country in the world - shows that 68% of undergraduate students, 43% of graduate students, PhD candidates; 95% of high school students surveyed admitted to having committed academic cheating (ICAI, 2017). Previously, the first large-scale and intensive research on this issue done by the late Professor Donald McCabe and colleagues published in 2001 also concluded that academic cheating in the US took place commonly and forms of cheating have increased dramatically over the last 30 years (D.L. McCabe*et all.*, 2001).

Like other countries in the world, Vietnam has been and will continue to face violations of academic integrity. Although having no in-depth and comprehensive research on this issue, it can be stated that academic integrity in Vietnam is still low compared to many countries in the world. This is reflected not only in the widespread allegations of plagiarism against members of

Vietnamese academic community on the Internet, but also through the existence of "assignment markets" (Cho khoa luan), "thesis markets" (Cho luan van) for Vietnamese learners on cyberspace.In a multinational survey, plagiarism situation in Vietnam belongs to one of the world's most serious groups (see map below).

Plagiarism Map. Vietnam at the level of 15% (via arrive data). Source: Fastcompany. Cited from Tia Sang (Thu Quynh, 2019)

A number of small-scale surveys conducted in Vietnam show that the level of cheating of local university students is very high. For example, a recent survey of Duy Tan University (Da Nang) with newly enrolled students (using the question: "Have you ever copied the original articles of online authors, reference books, textbooks? ... without citation?") showed that only 16% of the students surveyed answered No (Tran Kien and Vu Cong Giao*,* (2015), p.48). A survey by Hoa Sen University conducted on 681 subject essays of students in Human Resources, Tourism, Finance, Accounting, Business and Marketing shows: "The degree of similarity of these essays on average is 29% - a high rate compared to the world" (Hoa Sen University).

For Vietnamese researchers, the lack of integrity is also rather common,

4034

accidentally or intentionally. To a certain extent, plagiarism in research works, including high-level researchprojects (state-level, ministry-level project) becomes "acceptable" as long as it is not too obvious. The act of creating and distorting input figures and data can also be found in many research projects. As stated by a local scholar, "Vietnam is still a plagiaristic wasteland" (Tien Phong Online, 2019).

The lack of academic integrity is devastating the belief of Vietnamese society in the educational system in general and in the scientific community in particular. The reputation of the academic community is reduced, the value of academic degrees is lowered. The confidence of society in the academic community is low, so that the Journal of Education (Tap chi Giao duc, belong to the Ministry of Education and Training) posted an article saying that Vietnamese academic community is "in debt" of trust with society (Xuan Duong, 2017).

The lack of academic integrity is also a cause for the very limited quality and applicability of scientific research projects, especially social science - demonstrating a great waste of wealth and state budget in the context of resources for scientific research in Vietnam is still inadequate. In this regard, since 2012, an article published in the Financial Review (Tap chi Tai chinh - belong to the Ministry of Finance) provided an overview that government-funded research projects often do not indicate a beneficiary agencyto use the results, so that almost research results are only for writing books and scoring research achievement of the researchers (Canh, 2012).

Finally, this situation also makes it difficult for Vietnamese scientists to integrate into the international academic life - which requires very high standards of

academic integrity. In this regards, a report showed that in 2017, 34% of professorship candidates and 53% of associate professors candidates out of a total of 1,226 applications approved by the State Council for Professorship of Vietnam did not have any ISI/Scopus paper (Minh Chau-Phien An, 2018). Among the reasons leading to this situation, two main causes are the low capacity of foreign languages, and the problems of research methodology, including those related to academic integrity.

There are many causes that have contributed to the decline in academic integrity in Vietnam since DoiMoi(Innovation, 1986), including: (1) The development of the Internet that makes finding, sharing and copying research materials easier than ever in academic history; (2) The explosion of higher education leads to the open of universities every provinces, training a large number of students, resulting in the use of lecturers with low professional competence and integrity, as well as overloading the university administration system; (3) The boom and increasing commercialization and competition of local publishers and journals/magazines, which led to a reduction in standards and reviewing processes of the integrity of published research works; (4) Excessive reverence for scholars, leading to indulgence to bad habits of members of academic community, etc...

Theabove-mentioned factors have direct or indirect effects on the decline in the integrity of the academic community in Vietnam in recent years. These factors can also be a common causes of the decline in academic integrity in other countries. In addition, the lack of academic integrity in Vietnam also stems from following specific factors:

- Academic integrity has not yet been codified and fully disseminated: Most of the stakeholders in this area in Vietnam have not realized the importance and have not made effective efforts to promote academic integrity. As mentioned earlier, the Government, in particular the Ministry of Education and Training - the governing body in this area - has not yet issued any specific legal documents on academic integrity. The issue of academic integrity is only briefly mentioned in 1, 2 articles of the masters and doctoral training regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training. Specifically,Article 26, Clause 2, d Regulation on master training, issued together with the Minister of Education and Training's Circular No. 15/2014 / TT-BGDĐT of May 15, 2014 stated: "The thesis must comply with the current provisions of the intellectual property law. The use or citation of the research results of other people or co-authors must be fully and clearly cited at the cited location and in the list of references. The research results in the thesis must be the results of the author's own labor, not yet published by any other person in any research project". Similar provisions can be found at the Article 15, Clause 2, Regulation on doctoral training, issued together with the Circular No. 08/2017 / TT-BGDĐT April 4, 2017 of the Minister of Education and Training, which stipulates a doctoral thesis must: "Comply with laws on the protection of intellectual property rights, specifically: a) Fully cite and specify sources of reference of research results of other authors (if any); b) In case the thesis uses the contents of a collective scientific work and the PhD student is a co-author, there must be a written consent of other co-authors to allow the graduate student to use the results of researchers; c) Complying with other provisions of the intellectual property law".

The same situation also occurs at local universities. A review of the documents published on the universities' websites shows that most of them only mention academic integrity in some terms of the university's training regulations - which are basically a reminder of the common regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training. In fact, only a few local universities, such as Hoa Sen University, have issued their own set of academic integrity rules, which include not only the rules of citation but also those to prevent other forms of violations of academic integrity (Hoa Sen University, 2013). Some other schools only issue guidance on citation, such as that of National UniversityHanoi (National UniversityHanoi, 2017).

In universities, the dissemination of the rules of academic integrity is often integrated into scientific research methodology subject. This subject is usually taught at masters and doctoral levels only, not at bachelor's degree. The teaching of this subject is usually formal, heavy in theory, with few practical exercises.

Although their regulations are still sketchy, local universities are still a bright spot in the promotion of academic integrity in Vietnam. Up to date, the schools at the elementary, secondary, high level, and colleges in Vietnam almost have no specific regulation on academic integrity.

The limitations and inadequacies mentioned above have led to the consequence that most Vietnamese pupils and students, event graduate students at local university nowadays do not fully and accurately understand the requirements and principles of academic integrity, including basic requirements such as citing references. As revealed by a local expert: "Even in good universities, which have programs with

4036

foreign partners, writing and returning articles in English, the anti-plagiarism awareness of students is very low." (Nguyen Thao, 2018).The main reason, as he said, is that "no one has told students [about academic integrity]" (Nguyen Thao, 2018).

In the aforementioned study of Duy Tan University, when asking students why they did not cite when copying contents from other authors' article, 36% said that they did not know the method of citation, 12% do not remember who the author is, 21% because of pressure of progress, 15% said they were: "unable to write better so they had to cite", 9% are not interested in citation (Duy Tan University).

The above situation resulted from another reason which relates to method of teaching social sciences being applied in Vietnam's school system. This is still mainly one-way communication between teachers and pupils (banking education system). Further, for many social sciences such as history, literature, civic education, local teachers traditionally provide pupils with sample essays and ask them to learn by heart then write down the same in the examinations. This develops in pupils' mindset that they can use other people's work to do their own intellectual products without asking permission or quoting (Nguyen Thao, 2018).

The lack of specific regulations on academic integrity also makes it difficult to prevent and handle violations. Although allegations of academic integrity violations are very common in Vietnam, the number of cases handled is low, due to unclear regulations.This can be considered as one of the most important causes of the common situation of fraud and dishonesty in academic life in Vietnam today.

- *Academic Integrity has not been given adequate attention in reviewing and evaluating academic products*: Although having been mentioned and recently paid more attention, the issues of honesty in document references, reliability of input figures and data, etc., are basically still considered as sub-factors in Vietnam, often only roughly assessed and evaluated by the thesis committee and reviewing councils of research projects. Even with research projects that are funded by foreign donors or by the state, the review is also done loosely, almost neglected of checking the standards of academic integrity. Meanwhile, publishers and journals also overlook the review and evaluation of the truthfulness and reliability of citations, input figures and data. This context has enabled various research works that violate the academic integrity standards in Vietnam.

The inadequate assessment and evaluation of the integrity of academic products is due to many reasons, including the ignorance of the appraisers; the indulgence, simplicity, perfunctory, even arbitrary in working manner of many members of the local academic community in Vietnam, and the corruption in testing and evaluating research projects, including theses and desertations in universities. In addition, the overall problem is the lack of legal regulations and professional ethics rules binding obligations and responsibilities of local experts in the inspection, evaluation and acceptance of research products. In practice, when a tested research project is found to be copied or plagiarized, the reviewers do not have to bear any responsibility.

3.4. Positive change and challengein promoting academic integrity in Vietnam

Violations of academic integrity in Vietnam are serious, however, there have been signs of improvement recently. This issue has been paid more attention by local

universities. Mmore and more local universities have started to apply popular software (see the table below) to prevent plagiarism, such as Maritime University, Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics, Lac Hong University, Hoa Sen University, Nguyen Tat Thanh University, Economics University of Hue University, Ton Duc Thang University (Tuoi tre, 2017).

Anti-plagiarism software commonly used by Vietnamese universities

Software	Advantages	Disadvantages
Turnitin	- Quick word processing (no word limit) - Accuracy - Evident show through the color markings on the text (helps the repairer to be easier) - Automatically save all versions of documents to protect copyright.	• Not free.
TurnitinPlagTracker	- Quick word processing (no word limit) - Easy to use interface. - Include detailed report on the article - There is written support service to avoid plagiarism.	• No support for Vietnamese language.
CopyLeaks	- Processing including the content of the entire website. - Supports many file types in any language.	- Account registration is required. - Will soon publish the paid version.
Plagiarisma	- Allows application download for free on Windows systems to check for plagiarism. - Support for over 190 languages, including Vietnamese.	- Only indicate plagiarism if 100% of sentences are found accurately. - The rewrite support tool may accidentally facilitate plagiarism. - Even if you have an account, you can only check 3 items/day.
Plagium	- Easy to use. - Processing up to 5,000 words/time	Free version with limited features (for example, can only upload files to check when paid).
Quetext	- Easy to use interface. - Unlimited features	Can only check each individual paragraph.

In particular, there has been an unofficial cooperation between a group of local universities in promoting academic integrity. For the first time, in 2015, nearly 20 universities met together to build a network of academic integrity actions in the Conference on "Academic Integrity" organized by Hoa Sen University and Towards Transparency Organization held on May 29, 2015 in Ho Chi Minh City (the second conference was held at Maritime University (Hai Phong) on 09/09/2016; the third conference was held at the University of Foreign Trade in Hanoi on 11/12/2017) (Toward Transparency, 2017). In addition, there are conferences/workshops on integrity in general and academic integrity in particular, organized by several other local universities in recent years, for example the Hanoi University of Social Sciences and Humanities (2019), and School of Law under Vietnam Natioanal University Hanoi (2020).

Despite this, the number of universities participating in theabove-mentionednetworkis still limited, and in particular, there is a lack of key public universities with a great tradition and a large number of learners and lecturers and researchers such as the National Universities (in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City).In other words, majority of local universities in Vietnam still do not pay enough attention to the issue of academic integrity.

In particular, this issue has not received the attention of local research institutes - which carry out a lot of academic activities. Similarly is the system of schools and colleges in Vietnam, currently, they has not indicated any attention or effort in this area. Finally, the related state agencies of Vietnam so far have shown no clear attitude and no action on promoting academic integrity, even though this issue has long been a major source of local media.

4. Concluding remarks

Integrity is a crucial requirement of the academic community, having a great impact on the culture, society and the development of anycountry including Vietnam. However, due to many subjective, objective reasons, academic integrity has not been paid enough attention, and is currently a painful issue in Vietnamese society.

4038

In order to meet the urgent requirements that globalization and international integration, the State, universities and research institutes of Vietnam need to pay more attention to ensuring academic integrity. This interest should be expressed in specific actions, which include the complete review of relevant legal documents, the addition of new legal documents, especially comprehensive, complete regulations/codes of academic integrity. Vietnam also needs to unify and specify standards; prohibit and punish the illegal trading of dissertations, theses and academic products; tighten regulations on testing, evaluation and acceptance of academic products, combined with increasing dissemination and education to ensure all relevant subjects understand, have respect and know how to apply the principles and standards of academic integrity. In addition, the Vietnamese Government and academic institutions should also encourage research and exchange of academic integrity, including the establishment of linkage networks between domestic and international universities and research institutes who are interested in this issue.

For the Vietnamese academic community, it is very necessary to apply international standards of academic integrity, in whichthe Singapore Declaration (adopted the 2nd World Conference on Research Integrity) is the most important document..The Declarationstated four principles (being truthful in all aspects of the research; being responsible when conducting research; being fair and professional when working (doing research) with others; and,

managing/protecting the research well in the name of others) and 14 requests for scientific researchers, including:

(1). Honesty: Scientists are responsible for the reliability of the research.

(2). Regulatory Compliance: Scientists must be aware of and comply with research-related regulations and policies.

(3). Research methodology: Scientists must use reasonable research methods, based on scientifically evident conclusions, and report on findings and explanations in a complete and objective manner.

(4). Research records: Scientists are obliged to save fully, in detail, clearly, and accurately the results they achieve in the research process so that others can evaluate or repeat the performed work.

(5). Research findings: Scientists must publicly and promptly share data and findings as soon as they have an opportunity to establish precedence and proprietary right.

(6). Copyrights: Scientists are responsible for contributions in all publications, grants, applications, reports, and other relevant research findings.

(7). Acknowledgments of publications: Scientists have a responsibility to recognize the contributions of individuals or organizations (including writers, sponsors, donors, and other relevant people) in their public works who did not fully meet the criteria as an author.

(8). Reviewers: Scientists need to provide fair, timely and rigorous assessments, and ensure confidentiality when reviewing other people's works.

(9). Conflicts of interest: Scientists should disclose financial conflicts or related issues

that can affect the reliability in research proposals, scientific works, mass media as well as in all peer review activities.

(10). Public communication: Scientists should refrain from commenting on their field of expertise when engaging in public discussions about applications and the importance of research findings and expertise. and judgments based on personal feelings.

(11). Report on irresponsible research: Scientists must report to the authorities when there is suspicion of misconduct in research, including falsification, plagiarism and conducting irresponsible research leading to decline of reliability in research, such as carelessness, misrepresentation of authors, failure to report conflicting data, or the use of false analytical methods.

(12). Dealing with irresponsible research: Research institutes as well as journals, organizations and research institutions need to have procedures in place to deal with allegations of misconduct and irresponsible acts in research work, and at the same time protect those who denounce such acts. Once misconduct or irresponsible research is confirmed, appropriate measures must be implemented promptly, including correcting research records.

(13). Research environment: Research organizations must create and maintain an environment that promotes honesty through education, specific policies, and objective standards in order to create an honest working environment in research. (14). Social Responsibility: Scientists and research organizations need to have ethical responsibilities to bring the most benefit to

society as facing the risks inherent in their works.

Theabove-mentioned requirements are specific and comprehensive, covering all the hottest issues that arise about academic integrity in Vietnam recently. Because of that, the compliance with the above mentionedrequirements will contribute to significantly improvingintegrity in the Vietnamese academic community.

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