

# INTEGRITY IN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

## **Keywords**

*Values, integrity, plagiarism*

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## **Abstract**

*The values are transmitted both through the family and the school. The degree of opportunity, necessity or usefulness of a thing determines its value. The family and the school teach the child what are the most important values after which they must lead their lives. Plagiarism has lately become the disease of the educational environment. He is increasingly exaggerated in the achievement of school resources. The educational process plays a very important role in the prevention of corruption, in the medium and long term at the level of their society.*

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## **1. Review of literature**

Education is a component of the contemporary man who accompanies him from birth to the end of his life. The family and the school continue to hold an important place in the education of people by teaching them what are the most important values after which they must lead their lives, although this is becoming more

and more competitive with the media and the Internet. In today's society there is more and more talk about value in general, more precisely about integrity, and corruption, plagiarism is blamed.

Integrity should be a general and profound concern of every human being defined as the multitude of right actions and attitudes generated by the moral and professional obligations of each. Even if some socio-political and cultural conditions influence the level and quality of private moral life, integrity remains ultimately a matter of personal choice and choice. <sup>1</sup>

The following values should be part of each person's life: human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights.

The European Parliament recommends including the teaching and learning of the eight key competences:

1. Communication in the mother tongue.
2. Communication in foreign languages.
3. Mathematical and basic competences in science and technology.
4. Digital competence.
5. Learn to learn.
6. Social and civic competences.
7. Spirit of initiative and entrepreneurship.
8. Cultural awareness and expression.

To achieve this goal, "education must be organized around four fundamental types of learning, which, throughout life, are the pillars of knowledge: learning to know, which means acquiring knowledge tools; to learn how to do so that the individual gets in touch with the environment; to learn to live with others, to cooperate with other people, participating in human activities; to learn to be, an important element, resulting from the first three" (Delors, 2000, p. 69).

Learning to live with others is one of the major challenges of our day. People are increasingly showing less empathy, assertiveness, understanding and sincerity. Competition,

violence, cheating, lying and corruption have become problem solving levers.

Samuel Johnson said that "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, knowledge without integrity is dangerous."

Terminal of integrity, according to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian language, has several meanings:

- "the characteristic of being integral; honour; probity; incorruptibility;
- Integral character; feeling of dignity, justice and conscientiousness, which serves as a guide in human conduct; honesty; honour; probity".

The law of national education no.1 / 2011 defines the principles that govern pre-university and higher education, as well as lifelong learning. These are:

- The principle of equity
- The principle of quality
- The principle of relevance
- The principle of efficiency
- The principle of decentralization
- The principle of public accountability
- The principle of guaranteeing the cultural identity of all Romanian citizens and intercultural dialogue
- The principle of assuming, promoting and preserving the national identity and cultural values of the Romanian people
- The principle of university autonomy
- The principle of academic freedom
- The principle of transparency

The integral character of a person must accompany him all his life. Integrity as the value of man, exists or does not exist throughout his life. Therefore, on the one hand, the fact that a person is doing research, in education, should not change the data of the problem if the man is, in essence, an honest man. On the

other hand, there is the concept of lifelong learning, especially for learning what is not known or perfecting what is already known, because no one was born learned” (Stefan, 2018, p. 94).

In order to have a quality education it is important to emphasize the essential role that integrity plays in education. This should start from the one leading the educational process: the teacher.

The teacher must take care of his behavior both in the school environment and in society. He must always be a model of moral conduct. As Mazilu said: "No one has to be so rich that he can buy another" and "No one so rich that he is forced to sell" (Mazilu, 1999, p. 6).

Academic integrity is defined by the US Center for Academic Integrity as a commitment to five core values for both professional and moral conduct: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

## **2. Methodology**

### **Objectives**

This research proposes to study the main values that are appreciated by the students and the child in which they refer to them during the academic activity. Based on this scope, the following objectives have been formulated:

1. Description of the main values appreciated by students.
2. Discovering the methods of prevention and detection of plagiarism that students use.

### **Hypotheses**

For the present research, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. The extent to which honesty occupies a central place in the hierarchy of student values.
2. Measure the plagiarism term known to the students.

## **Variables**

The research has two main variables: honesty and plagiarism. The indicators of Plagiarism are: prevention and detection.

## **Methods**

The research method used was the questionnaire-based survey, which is a complex sociological research technique. With the help of the questionnaire, as an investigative tool, questions and problems are asked which determine different answers from the investigated persons.

## **Tools**

The instrument used was the questionnaire following the values promoted. The questionnaire has 17 items.

## **Population**

The target population of this research is represented by students from state and private education. From this population, 58 students were chosen as the following sample:

- 48 girls and 10 boys
- 37 students in private education and 21 students in state education
- 54 students in undergraduate studies, 1 student in master's degrees and 3 students in doctoral studies
- 19 students year I, 18 students year II, 21 students year III
- 33 students aged 18-25, 10 students aged 26-33, 12 students aged 34-41, 2 students aged 42-50 and 1 student over 50 years
- 23 married students, 1 divorced student, 21 single students and 13 students with a friend.

## **3. Results**

The results obtained were the following:

1. Choose the most important value for you from the ones listed below: tolerance, honesty, responsibility, loyalty. The students' answers were as follows:

- A. 25 students chose honesty
- B. 21 students have chosen responsibility
- C. 9 students chose loyalty
- D. 3 students chose tolerance

2. Where do you draw your most inspiration when making a theme or a report? Scientific articles, books, various web pages, others related to the same topic. The students' answers were as follows:

- A. 25 students chose books
- B. 23 students have chosen various web pages
- C. 9 students have chosen scientific articles
- D. 1 student chose broad topics related to the same topic

3. How often do you copy on exams? The students' answers were:

- A. 42 students said I did not copy
- B. 9 students said very little
- C. 7 students said to a small extent

4. What is plagiarism? The students' answers were:

- A. 40 students said it was learned from someone else and presented as a personal creation
- B. 11 students reported theft
- C. 6 students said copying
- D. 1 student said I do not know

5. I was informed and prepared for the correct academic writing and on issues of plagiarism prevention. The students' answers were:

- A. 23 students responded largely
- B. 10 students answered very highly
- C. 7 students responded to a small extent

- D. 6 students answered very little
- E. 12 students answered no

6. More information and information is needed on the prevention of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty for university staff and students. The students' answers were:

- A. 25 students said largely
- B. 12 students said I don't know
- C. 9 students said to a small extent
- D. 3 students said very little
- E. 3 students said no

7. More training is needed on issues of prevention and avoidance of plagiarism and unethical conduct in the university. The students' answers were:

- A. 25 students said largely
- B. 12 students said I don't know
- C. 10 students said to a small extent
- D. 5 students said very highly
- E. 3 students said no
- F. 3 students said very little

8. I know what digital means exist at the university for plagiarism prevention and detection. The students' answers were:

- A. 34 students answered do not know
- B. 12 students responded to a small extent
- C. 8 students responded to a small extent
- D. 2 students answered very little
- E. 2 students answered very highly

#### **4. Discussions**

The results show that:

- 43.1% of the students surveyed chose honesty as the most important value between tolerance, honesty, responsibility and loyalty.
- 43.1% of the students surveyed chose the books as the main place of inspiration for a topic or a report.
- 72.4% of the students surveyed said they did not copy for exams.
- 69% of the students surveyed said that plagiarism was one that was learned from someone else and presented with personal creation.
- 39.7% of the students surveyed said they were informed and prepared for the correct academic writing and on topics of plagiarism prevention.
- 43.1% of the students surveyed said that more information and information is needed on the prevention of plagiarism and other forms of academic honesty for university staff and students.
- 58.6% of students said they do not know what digital means exist in universities for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.

These results show the fact that students know that plagiarism is: “the presentation in a written work or oral communication, including in electronic format of texts, expressions, ideas, demonstrations, data, hypotheses, theories, results, or scientific methods, extracted from written works, including in electronic format, by other authors, without mentioning this and without reference to the original sources” (Stefan, 2018, p. 156).

Another important thing to note is the fact that among the students questioned, half of them do not know about the existence of digital means of plagiarism detection and they devise more information and training regarding the prevention of plagiarism and other reforms of academic dishonesty.

## 5. Conclusions

This study wanted to analyze the value system adopted by students in the academic environment. It should consist of the following values (Stefan, 2018, p. 109):

1. "Honesty - represents a foundation of teaching, learning, research and other types of activities. In any educational institution it is imperative to sanction: fraud, theft, fraud and other indecent behaviors that may endanger the rights of others and / or the common good. In the race for knowledge, students must be honest with themselves and others, whether they are in classrooms, laboratories, in the library or in the gym.
2. Confidence - students respond to honesty with confidence. Confidence is promoted by schools and universities that set clear rules for conducting homework or assessing students.
3. Fairness. A correct assessment is essential in the educational process. For students, certain behaviors of fairness are important, such as: predictability, clear expectations and sanctioning of dishonesty.
4. Respect. The students show respect by coming to the university, reaching the class hours, being attentive, participating in the debates, respecting the deadlines and performing at their level of performance. Teachers show respect by listening to students' ideas, giving honest feedback after evaluating their activity, valuing their aspirations and ideals
5. Responsibility. Both students and teachers should have an exponential behavior. Regardless of the circumstances, members of an educational community should not tolerate or ignore dishonest behavior by others".

Mihai Eminescu said: "no man strengthens himself by signing a gymnastics treaty, but by exercising; no man is taught to judge, citing judgments written ready by others, but judging alone and giving himself the nature of things "(excerpted from the report

prepared by Mihai Eminescu, school reviewer, to the alphabet of Ion Creangă, 1876).

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The Center for Academic Integrity is a consortium formed in 1997, from 200 colleges and universities in the USA.

<https://dexonline.ro/definiție/integritate>

## Tables, figures and appendices

Table 1

Distribution of students by faculty

faculty	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Medicină Dentară	4	6.9	6.9	6.9
F. de Psihologie și Științele Educației	3	5.2	5.2	12.1
Medicină și Farmacie	1	1.7	1.7	13.8

Litere și Științe	7	12.1	12.1	25.9
Informatică managerială	1	1.7	1.7	27.6
Matematică și informatică	1	1.7	1.7	29.3
Automatică și calculatoare	1	1.7	1.7	31.0
Politehnică	1	1.7	1.7	32.8
Transporturi	1	1.7	1.7	34.5
Teologie și Științe sociale	35	60.3	60.3	94.8
Inginerie mecanică și mecatronică	1	1.7	1.7	96.6
Sociologie și asistență socială	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
Psihologie și științele educației	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Table 2  
Distribution of students by specialty

specialty	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Stomatologie	1	1.7	1.7	1.7

Științe ale	3	5.2	5.2	6.9
Educației				
Medicină	1	1.7	1.7	8.6
generală				
Pedagogia				
învățământul	35	60.3	60.3	69.0
ui primar și				
preșcolar				
Tehnică	3	5.2	5.2	74.1
dentară				
Informatică	1	1.7	1.7	75.9
economică				
Limbi străine	1	1.7	1.7	77.6
Matematică	1	1.7	1.7	79.3
Calculatoare	1	1.7	1.7	81.0
Inginerie				
medicală	1	1.7	1.7	82.8
Autovehicule				
rutiere	1	1.7	1.7	84.5
Asistență				
socială	4	6.9	6.9	91.4
Optometrie	1	1.7	1.7	93.1
Teologie				
adventistă	4	6.9	6.9	100.0
pastorală				
Total	58	100.0	100.0	