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A Study on Academic Integrity in the Age of AI: Challenges for Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education

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Abstract:

The growing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in higher education has brought noticeable changes to the way teaching, learning, and assessment are carried out. AI-based tools now support students in completing assignments, preparing for examinations, and accessing academic resources with greater ease. While these developments have enhanced learning efficiency and personalization, they have also raised important concerns about academic integrity, especially in relation to assessment and evaluation practices. The use of generative AI tools has made it increasingly difficult to distinguish between genuine student effort and AI-assisted work, thereby challenging the fairness and credibility of traditional assessment systems.

This study explores how the use of AI affects academic integrity and examines the challenges it poses to existing assessment and evaluation frameworks in higher education institutions. A descriptive and analytical research design was adopted, drawing on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to faculty members and students from selected higher education institutions using stratified random sampling. The questionnaire consisted of 25 Likert-scale items covering AI awareness and usage, integrity-related concerns, assessment vulnerabilities, institutional policies, and future strategies. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, ANOVA, and regression techniques.

The study is expected to show that increased reliance on AI tools is closely associated with growing challenges to academic integrity and that conventional assessment methods are increasingly inadequate in addressing AI-assisted misconduct. It also anticipates that greater faculty awareness and clearly defined institutional policies can play a significant role in managing these challenges. The findings are likely to highlight the need for assessment redesign, ethical guidelines, and training initiatives that promote responsible AI use. Overall, the study aims to support higher education institutions in balancing technological innovation with the preservation of academic integrity.

Keywords: Academic Integrity, Artificial Intelligence, Assessment, Evaluation, Higher Education, Ethical AI etc.

Introduction:

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed the landscape of higher education across the globe. AI-enabled tools such as generative text applications, automated content creation platforms, intelligent tutoring systems, and adaptive assessment technologies are now widely used by both students and educators. These technologies have improved learning efficiency, supported personalized instruction and enhanced access to academic resources. However, alongside these benefits, the growing use of AI has introduced serious concerns related to academic integrity, particularly in the areas of assessment and evaluation.

Conventional assessment methods including written assignments, online examinations, project work, and take-home assessments are increasingly susceptible to AI-assisted academic misconduct. Practices such as plagiarism, unauthorized use of AI-generated content, and contract cheating have become more difficult to detect.

Moreover, traditional plagiarism detection tools often struggle to accurately identify AI-generated responses, further intensifying concerns about the fairness, credibility, and reliability of student evaluation processes. In this context, the present study aims to explore the impact of AI usage on academic integrity and to critically examine the challenges it poses to existing assessment and evaluation systems in higher education institutions.

Review of Literature:

Prior studies have highlighted the transformative role of AI in education, particularly in personalized learning and assessment automation. Researchers have emphasized that while AI enhances learning outcomes, it simultaneously challenges ethical norms and institutional policies related to academic honesty. Studies indicate that students increasingly rely on AI tools for completing assignments, often without clarity on acceptable usage boundaries. Faculty members express concerns over reduced authenticity of student work and limitations of existing assessment models. However, empirical research examining academic integrity specifically in the context of AI-enabled assessment remains limited, creating a clear research gap.

Guadu, Dibekulu, and Menberu's research addresses academic integrity concerns posed by AI in African higher education, building on current literature to identify hazards such as generative AI plagiarism, data privacy breaches, the digital divide, and institutional policy gaps. The examined studies, which frequently include research on algorithmic bias and ethical quandaries in AI adoption, show that AI tools worsen academic dishonesty in resource-constrained African contexts, where digital literacy is low and infrastructure is unequal. To maintain integrity while utilizing AI's advantages, the literature highlights tactics like faculty training, explicit policies, stakeholder participation, and AI-resistant assessments (such as oral exams and project-based evaluations). Overall, the assessment emphasizes context-specific governance structures informed by African realities to reconcile innovation with ethical norms. (Guadu, 2025)

Ncube, Dzvapatsva, Matobobo, and Ranga conduct a systematic review of literature on redefining student assessment in the era of AI integration, synthesizing studies from 2020-2026 that highlight challenges such as AI-generated plagiarism, unreliable detection tools, and threats to traditional summative evaluations. Reviewed works emphasize generative AI's disruption of knowledge recall and essay-based tasks, drawing from systematic reviews on AI in education (e.g., Wang 2024, González-Calatayud et al. 2021) that document biases, privacy issues, and the need for process-oriented over product-focused assessments.

Predictive analytics for early intervention, authentic tasks evaluating human-AI collaboration and AI fluency (e.g., simulations, multi-modal portfolios), and adaptive formative assessments via intelligent tutoring systems for real-time feedback are important tactics found across sources. The synthesis recommends for a move to dynamic, individualized approaches that emphasize critical thinking and ethical AI use, as well as faculty training and policy reforms to assure equity in AI-infused environments. (Ncube, 2026)

Afifah's paper examines research on academic integrity in the context of AI's widespread use in education, summarizing studies that show how AI technologies like ChatGPT enable undetectable plagiarism, contract cheating, and the degradation of original authorship in student work. Drawing from sources such as university policy (e.g., TASC 2023) defining integrity as honesty, fairness, and trust, it addresses dangers including overreliance on generative AI for essays and tests, alongside detection issues from changing algorithms. The evaluated works highlight strategies that promote ethical guidelines, faculty training, and authentic evaluations such as oral defenses, while treating AI as supportive aids through evaluation of outputs, cross-referencing facts, editing for personal voice, and proofreading. The synthesis asks for balanced policies supporting AI literacy without surrendering ownership of learning. (Afifah, 2024)

Using frameworks like Assessment 2020 and research on cognitive offloading (e.g., Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development adaptations), the paper "Assessment reform for the age of artificial intelligence" by Lodge, Howard, Bearman, Dawson, and Agostinho synthesizes educational technology literature to address generative AI's disruption of traditional assessments. As demonstrated by works on AI ethics and higher education standards, reviewed sources highlight risks like undetectable AI-generated submissions undermining validity, detection tool limitations amid algorithmic evolution, and an overemphasis on cheating that ignores learning assurance. In addition to five propositions authentic AI integration, program-level redesign, process-oriented tasks (e.g., portfolios, scaffolding), human-AI collaboration, and multi-layered security models-core strategies from the literature include two principles: preparing students for ethical AI use and focusing on learning processes. The report supports systemic reforms toward future-ready evaluations like evaluative judgment activities, backed by faculty development and policy alignment, to balance integrity with innovation. (Lodge, 2023)

Research Methodology:

1. Research Gap:

Although substantial literature exists on AI in teaching and learning, limited empirical research addresses:

- The direct impact of AI tools on academic integrity.
- The adequacy of current assessment and evaluation frameworks in managing AI-assisted misconduct.
- Stakeholders' (faculties and students) perceptions regarding ethical AI use in assessments.

So, this study aims to bridge this gap by providing empirical evidence and policy-oriented recommendations.

2. Statement of the Problem:

The rapid adoption of AI tools has blurred the distinction between legitimate academic support and academic misconduct. Existing assessment and evaluation systems are inadequately equipped to detect or regulate AI-assisted dishonesty, leading to concerns over

fairness, academic standards, and institutional credibility. This study investigates the extent of these challenges and explores strategies to uphold academic integrity in an AI-driven educational environment.

3. Scope of the Study:

The study is confined to higher education institutions, covering undergraduate and postgraduate programs. It focuses on AI usage in assignments, examinations, online assessments, and evaluation practices.

4. Objectives of the Study:

1. To examine the influence of AI tools on academic integrity in higher education.
2. To identify challenges posed by AI in assessment and evaluation processes.
3. To analyze faculty and student perceptions of AI-assisted academic misconduct.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing academic integrity policies.
5. To propose strategies for ensuring integrity in AI-influenced assessment systems.

5. Research Hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (H0):	Alternative Hypothesis (H1):
H ₀₁ : The awareness and use of AI tools have no significant impact on academic integrity in higher education.	H ₁₁ : The awareness and use of AI tools have a significant impact on academic integrity in higher education.
H ₀₂ : Faculty awareness of AI-related academic integrity issues do not significantly influence assessment redesign.	H ₁₂ : Faculty awareness of AI-related academic integrity issues significantly influences assessment redesign.

6. Research Design: Descriptive and analytical research.

7. Sources of Data:

- **Primary Data:** Structured questionnaire administered to faculty members and students from commerce and management stream of higher education.

8. Sampling Design:

- **Population:** Faculty and students from commerce and management stream of higher education institutions.
- **Sampling Technique:** Stratified Sampling.
- **Sample Size:** 120 respondents.

9. Tool for Data Collection:

- Google form having a structured questionnaire involving Likert-scale.

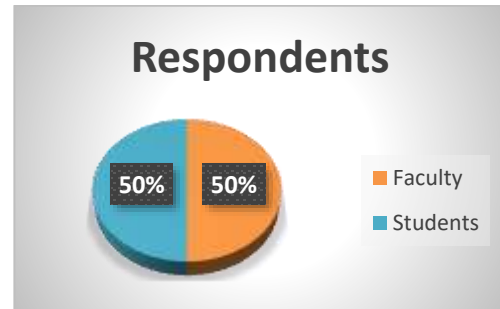
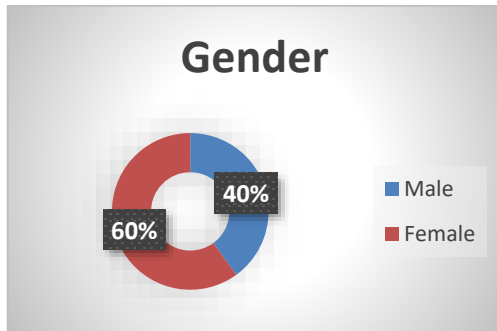
10. Significance of the Study:

- Assists institutions in redesigning AI-resilient assessment frameworks.
- Contributes to ethical AI policy formulation.
- Enhances faculty awareness of AI-related academic integrity challenges.
- Supports compliance with quality assurance and NEP 2020 guidelines.

11. Limitations of the Study:

- Reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias.
- Rapid technological evolution may limit the long-term applicability of findings.
- The study may be limited to selected institutions and regions.

4. Data Analysis & Interpretation:



Correlation Analysis	Level of AI Awareness for academic use	Level of AI's integrity
Level of AI Awareness for academic use	1	
Level of AI's integrity	0.824958	1

The correlation analysis indicates a strong positive relationship between the *Level of AI Awareness for academic use* and the *Level of AI's integrity* ($r = 0.8249$). This high correlation suggests that increased awareness and understanding of AI tools are associated with higher levels of ethical and responsible AI use in academic settings.

Given the strength of the relationship ($r > 0.80$), the findings demonstrate that AI awareness has a significant impact on academic integrity.

Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) that AI awareness and usage have no significant impact on academic integrity is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis (H_{11}) is accepted.

The result underscores the importance of institutional efforts such as AI literacy initiatives, ethical guidelines, and faculty-led interventions to promote academic integrity in an AI-driven higher education environment.

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
Regression Statistics								
Multiple R		0.678704						
R Square		0.460639						
Adjusted R Square		0.456029						
Standard Error		1.093026						
Observations		119						
ANOVA								
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F			
Regression	1	119.3791	119.3791	99.923463	2.2182E-17			
Residual	117	139.7805	1.194706					
Total	118	259.1597						
	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	0.542394	0.34078	1.591624	0.1141676	-0.13250359	1.217292	-0.1325	1.217292
5	0.859102	0.085943	9.996172	2.218E-17	0.6888964	1.029308	0.688896	1.029308

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the impact of the *Level of AI's integrity* on the *Need for training on AI for students and faculty*. The model shows a moderately strong explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.4606, indicating that approximately 46.06% of the variation in the perceived need for AI training is explained by the level of AI-related academic integrity. The adjusted R^2 value (0.4560) further confirms the robustness of the model.

The ANOVA results reveal that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 99.92$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating that the independent variable significantly predicts the

dependent variable. This confirms the overall fitness and reliability of the regression model.

The regression coefficient for the *Level of AI's integrity* is positive and statistically significant ($\beta = 0.8591$, $t = 9.996$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that an increase in AI integrity is associated with a corresponding increase in the perceived need for AI training among students and faculty. In practical terms, respondents who recognize the importance of maintaining academic integrity in AI usage also strongly emphasize the necessity of structured AI training and ethical orientation.

The intercept value is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that the need for AI training becomes meaningful primarily in

relation to perceptions of AI integrity rather than existing independently. Regression analysis confirms that the level of AI's academic integrity significantly predicts the need

for AI training for students and faculty ($\beta = 0.859$, $R^2 = 0.461$, $p < 0.001$).

ANOVA: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
4	119	404	3.394958	0.647771		
4	119	452	3.798319	0.975929		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	9.680672	1	9.680672	11.92421	0.000657	3.881163
Within Groups	191.5966	236	0.81185			
Total	201.2773	237				

A one-way ANOVA was performed to examine differences between the Level of Academic Integrity and the Level of Effectiveness of AI in redesigning the policies regarding ethical use. The results indicate a statistically significant difference between the two variables ($F = 11.92$, $p < 0.001$), as the calculated F-value exceeds the critical value ($F_{crit} = 3.88$).

The findings demonstrate that variations in academic integrity significantly influence perceived effectiveness of AI in redesigning the policies regarding ethical use, with effectiveness showing a higher mean score (Mean = 3.80) compared to academic integrity (Mean = 3.39). This confirms that higher levels of academic integrity are associated with meaningful differences in effectiveness of AI in redesigning the policies regarding ethical use within the academic and assessment processes.

Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected, establishing academic integrity as a significant factor in determining effectiveness. The result underscores the importance of integrity-driven practices for enhancing the credibility and effectiveness of academic evaluation systems.

One-way ANOVA confirms a significant difference between academic integrity and effectiveness ($F = 11.92$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the critical role of integrity in effective academic practices.

Findings & Conclusions:

- The study establishes a **strong positive association** between AI awareness and academic integrity ($r = 0.8249$), confirming that greater understanding of AI tools leads to more ethical and responsible academic use. This fulfills the objective of examining the influence of AI on academic integrity in higher education.
- Empirical evidence demonstrates that academic integrity significantly affects assessment effectiveness ($F = 11.92$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that traditional assessment and evaluation practices are increasingly challenged in AI-enabled academic environments.

- The regression results confirm that academic integrity is a significant predictor of the need for AI training among students and faculty ($\beta = 0.859$, $R^2 = 0.461$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting widespread recognition of AI-assisted academic misconduct and the limitations of existing institutional policies.
- The findings indicate that **current academic integrity frameworks require strengthening**, as policy provisions alone are insufficient without structured AI literacy initiatives, ethical orientation, and faculty development programs.
- Based on the results, the study concludes that **enhancing AI awareness, redesigning assessment systems, and reinforcing integrity-focused policies** are essential strategies for maintaining fairness, credibility, and effectiveness in AI-influenced higher education.

Suggestions & Recommendations:

- Strengthening AI Awareness and Ethical Literacy:**

Higher education institutions should introduce **structured AI literacy and ethics programmes** for both students and faculty, as the findings confirm a strong positive relationship between AI awareness and academic integrity. Mandatory orientation sessions on **ethical AI usage** should be conducted at the beginning of academic programs to clearly define acceptable and unacceptable academic practices.

- Redesign of Assessment and Evaluation Systems:**

Institutions should progressively shift from traditional, content-recall-based assessments to application-oriented, analytical, and problem-based assessment methods, as traditional assessments are shown to be vulnerable in AI-enabled environments. Greater emphasis should be placed on oral examinations, presentations, viva-voce, case-based evaluations, and continuous assessment, which reduce dependence on AI-generated outputs and enhance authenticity.

- **Faculty Capacity Building and Training:**

Regular faculty development programmes (FDPs) should be organized to equip educators with the skills to design AI-resilient assessments and detect AI-assisted misconduct. Faculty members should be encouraged to integrate ethical discussions on AI use within classroom teaching to promote responsible student behavior.

- **Institutional Policy Reforms:**

Institutions should formulate clear, transparent, and standardized AI usage policies, explicitly distinguishing between ethical academic assistance and academic misconduct. Existing academic integrity policies should be updated periodically to reflect evolving AI technologies and emerging ethical challenges.

- **Integration of Training as a Strategic Priority:**

Given that academic integrity significantly predicts the need for AI training, institutions should treat AI ethics training as a strategic academic requirement, not an optional initiative. Certification-based short-term courses on AI ethics, digital responsibility, and academic integrity may be introduced as part of the curriculum.

- **Enhancing Effectiveness and Academic Credibility:**

Institutions should adopt a preventive rather than punitive approach, focusing on awareness-building and ethical engagement rather than strict surveillance alone. Assessment effectiveness can be improved by aligning integrity policies with transparent evaluation rubrics and continuous feedback mechanisms.

- **Policy Alignment with NEP 2020:**

In line with NEP 2020, higher education institutions should integrate digital competence, ethical reasoning, and critical thinking into curriculum design and assessment frameworks. Establishing institution-level AI ethics committees can support NEP 2020's vision of responsible technology adoption and quality assurance.

- **Directions for Future Research:**

Future studies may explore discipline-wise differences in AI usage and academic integrity. Longitudinal research can assess the long-term impact of AI ethics training on academic behavior. Advanced analytical techniques such as SEM or mixed-method approaches may provide deeper insights into AI-integrity dynamics.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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