Chapter 12

Ethical Data Management and Research:
Managing Ethical Issues for Research Integrity in Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on the concepts of ethical issues and research integrity. Those unethical issues in research such as copyright violation, submitting articles for publication to more than one journal, and author biases are mentioned. The chapter also investigates the causes of unethical issues in research like inadequate national concept benchmark accorded publication, political influence and economic factors, the aftermath and the way forward for enhancing research integrity in Nigerian education is also recommended for rectification.

INTRODUCTION

Educational research is an effective backbone of quality education. It should be noted that many researchers conducted do not accord integrity because of the violation of the ethical principles that guide the conduct of research work. According to Felix (2015), failure of educational programs attributes to the low integrity accorded educational researches in developing countries.

Ethics is an elusive word with different opinions in accordance to the way individual views it, ethics can be defined as the determination of an action whether good or
bad, right or wrong, standard or substandard, respect or disrespect. Ethical value is therefore regarded as the rules, principles and guidelines which aid the conduct of individual actions towards maintaining the standard of the organization. Kazi (2007) described ethical issues as those actions or processes which guide individuals to cherish or hate good or bad habit towards effective ethical issues that enhance positive habit, integrity, self-conscience or action in the society.

Abdulrahaman (2011) described ethical issues as those standard or moral convictions that individuals set for themselves, regarding to what is right or wrong in the society. Ethical value orientation therefore serves as the principles, rules and guidelines to choose a right type of good behavior that will give total respect for the individual, society and the world in general. Jimba (2009) defined ethics as the guided principles, values, moral standard and convictions which guide individual actions, decisions, procedures and as a system in an organization in order to pave the way for respect, dignity conscience and high integrity in such an organization or society. Research integrity can be described as the systematic way of valuing good, right, positive behavior and actions that will give respect to the members of the society and the nation at large in respect to the conduct of research.

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

Fleet (1999) sees ethics as those standard or moral convictions that a person sets for himself regarding to what is good and bad or right and wrong or positive or negative in the perpetration of ethical issues in the society. The good behavior will therefore guide an individual to make rational decisions in the choice of action. However, honesty and strict adherence to the principle guiding effective conduct of research in education will command respect for the individual research activities and the individuals and the institutions where the researches are conducted command high respect. The need to conduct quality research in education is therefore called for. The integrity of the research work that has ethical values in the conduct would be respected.

Many definitions have been accorded for research in Nigeria. According to Adewumi (1995) research is the process of investigating or finding out the aspects of knowledge or ideas that the people have not known or they are not clear about. The author went further to define research as the process finding out new information, new methods of doing things and extension of boundary of knowledge. Research integrity is the extent to which high level confidence, respect and dignity is associated with the results or findings derived from the research conducted. Ogwuche (2009) described research integrity as the process of conducting effective research with quality assurance, integrity, dignity and respect for the research conduct and the researchers. A researcher that is having an ethical value orientation, and conducted
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