International Journal of Modern Education
IJMOE
EISSN: 2637-0905
Volume: 8 Issue: 30 (June 2026) PP. 800-816

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MODERN EDUCATION (IJMOE)
www.gaexcellence.com/ijmoe

CHARTING THE EVOLUTION OF STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY RESEARCH: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF GLOBAL TRENDS, KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE, AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

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Article Info:

Article history:
Received date: 02.04.2026
Revised date: 28.04.2026
Accepted date: 31.05.2026
Published date: 30.06.2026

Abstract:

The concept of student academic integrity has gained increasing prominence in higher education as institutions seek to preserve ethical benchmarks and safeguard the credibility of academic credentials. Nevertheless, even with an expanding body of scholarly work, the field's conceptual architecture and thematic progression, as well as patterns of scholarly collaboration continue to appear dispersed and not

International Journal of Modern Education
IJMOE
EISSN: 2637-0905
Volume: 8 Issue: 30 (June 2026) PP. 800-816

To cite this document:

Abidin, N. H. Z., Mat Junus, M. D., Sabri, A., & Mazlan, E. M. (2026). Charting the Evolution of Student Academic Integrity Research: A Bibliometric Analysis of Global Trends, Knowledge Structure, and International Collaboration. *International Journal of Modern Education, 8*(30), 800-816.

yet adequately integrated. This research responds to this deficiency by charting the intellectual terrain of student academic integrity through an extensive bibliometric examination. The dataset was obtained from Scopus via a refined search approach grounded in the principal keywords "student" as well as "academic integrity." The dataset spans publications from 1983 to May 2026, yielding a total of 605 documents after systematic data cleaning and standardization using OpenRefine. Bibliometric analyses were conducted using the Scopus Analyzer and VOSviewer to investigate keyword co-occurrence, publication trends, authorship patterns, as well as international collaboration networks. The results indicate a pronounced upward trajectory in scholarly output over time, particularly after 2010, reflecting heightened global attention to issues such as plagiarism, academic misconduct, and ethical education. Keyword co-occurrence analysis reveals that "academic integrity," "higher education," "plagiarism," and "academic dishonesty" constitute the core thematic cluster, while emerging areas focus on digital learning environments and integrity education strategies. In terms of geographical distribution, research productivity is dominated by developed countries, although participation from developing regions has been steadily rising over time. An examination of co-authorship patterns also indicates a moderate degree of cross-border collaboration, with a number of key countries and institutions exerting significant influence on the development and direction of the field. To conclude, this study delivers a systematic, data-informed examination of the evolution and current state of student academic integrity research, offering valuable insights for future scholarly work, particularly in strengthening ethical frameworks and institutional practices in higher education.

DOI: 10.35631/IJMOE.830051

Keywords:

Student, Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, Higher Education, Academic Misconduct

Introduction

The preservation of academic integrity among students is fundamental within higher education because it underpins both learning quality and the ethical development of future professionals. Across the world, universities are grappling with cheating, plagiarism and technology-enabled misconduct, which threaten educational standards and public trust in degrees. Recent research highlights not only the prevalence of academic dishonesty but also its complex causes, far-reaching consequences and the need to shift from purely punitive control to an educative, culture-building approach.

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Definitions, Forms and Growing Concern

Academic integrity is generally understood as an adherence to core principles, including trust, honesty, respect, fairness, responsibility, as well as courage and its breach is labelled academic misconduct or dishonesty (Neto et al., 2024). Misconduct includes plagiarism, exam cheating, copying, contract cheating, misuse of artificial intelligence and other digital tools (Ahmad & Fauzi, 2024; Sozon, Alkharabsheh, et al., 2024; Yavich & Davidovitch, 2024). Studies and reviews from multiple regions indicate that cheating and plagiarism are widespread and increasing, particularly with the expansion of online learning and easy access to internet resources (Jones, 2011; Sozon, Pok, et al., 2024). In some student groups, half or more believe academic dishonesty is legitimate or admit to engaging in it at least once (Jones, 2011; Yavich & Davidovitch, 2024). This trend has generated strong institutional responses, including honor codes, academic integrity tutorials and plagiarism-detection software, yet evidence suggests that these measures alone have not solved the problem (Jones, 2011; Yavich & Davidovitch, 2024).

Key Drivers and Risk Factors

A large body of work identifies multi-level factors that push students toward dishonest behavior. At the individual level, pressure for high grades, fear of failure, low self-efficacy, amotivation, extrinsic goal orientations, laziness and time constraints all correlate with higher rates of cheating as well as plagiarism (Krou et al., 2020; Mukasa et al., 2023). Qualitative and quantitative studies report learning difficulties, lack of interest, poor study skills, procrastination, language barriers and confusion over expectations as important triggers (Asgher et al., 2023; Mulenga & Shilongo, 2024). Meta-analytic findings show that dishonesty is negatively related to mastery goals, utility value, intrinsic motivation, as well as internal locus of control, while it is positively associated with amotivation and extrinsic goals, indicating that how students are motivated matters greatly for integrity (Krou et al., 2020). Social and contextual pressures, such as intense competition, social rejection, low self-worth and perceived norms of peer cheating, further normalize misconduct (Asgher, 2023). Institutional, cultural and technological factors contribute as well: inadequate emphasis on integrity values, outdated or unclear honor codes, high workloads, difficult exams and the ease of copying or outsourcing work via digital tools and AI systems (Sozon, Sia, et al., 2024; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). Nursing and health-related programs raise special concern because academic dishonesty is associated with later clinical dishonesty, directly threatening patient safety and professional ethics (Mukasa et al., 2023).

Policies, Student Experiences and Institutional Response

Research on academic integrity policy shows that many universities rely on punitive, legalistic frameworks that are hard to access, difficult to understand and strongly focused on student misconduct rather than shared responsibility (Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022; Moya & Eaton, 2024). Analyses of policy documents in Western Canada and Chile find that definitions of misconduct, especially plagiarism and contract cheating, are often vague or inconsistent, with limited guidance on emerging issues like generative AI (Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). Support structures for teaching, learning and prevention tend to be sparse, and most documents emphasize procedures for discipline rather than education, training or culture-building (Moya & Eaton, 2024) (Sozon, Sia, et al., 2024). Student-centred research further suggests that

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procedures for handling breaches can provoke intense anxiety, stress and even disengagement or withdrawal from study, particularly when students feel accused of intentional cheating despite perceiving their actions as unintentional or rooted in misunderstanding (Cutri et al., 2021). Students often report limited understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, poor referencing, acceptable similarity thresholds and proper use of sources, especially when transitioning from school to university or studying in a second language (Stone, 2022; Cutri et al., 2021; Mukasa et al., 2023). Conceptual work at the doctoral level argues that academic integrity should be treated as a developable skill, requiring ongoing instruction, scaffolding of academic literacy and reflective supervisory practices, rather than simply a rule to be enforced (Cutri et al., 2021).

Interventions, Consequences and Emerging Directions

There is a growing consensus that effective responses must combine clear policies with education, support and motivational strategies. Systematic reviews emphasize updating honor codes, integrating ethics and integrity education, and running awareness programmes and workshops to improve students' understanding of rules, repercussions, as well as the enduring effects of dishonest conduct on both careers and professional reputation (Yavich & Davidovitch, 2024; Sozon, Alkharabsheh, et al., 2024). Institutions increasingly deploy plagiarism-detection and identity-verification technologies, but evidence suggests these need to be embedded in a broader, supportive academic environment that strengthens self-efficacy, time management, and appreciation of genuine learning (Ahmad & Fauzi, 2024; Krou et al., 2020; Mukasa et al., 2023). Studies link academic dishonesty not only to academic under-preparation but also to later unethical behavior at work, underscoring the societal stakes of university integrity cultures (Ahmad & Fauzi, 2024; Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022; He et al., 2024). Recent work also calls for tailored support for vulnerable groups, including international students and doctoral candidates, who may struggle with language, advanced academic writing and feelings of impostorism, making unintentional misconduct more likely (Moya & Eaton, 2024). Overall, the literature points toward a shift from viewing student academic integrity as purely a matter of compliance and punishment, toward a more holistic approach that integrates policy reform, explicit skill development, motivational support and ethical culture.

Research Question

1. What are the temporal trends in the annual volume of scholarly publications on academic integrity from 1983 to May 2026?
2. Which scholarly articles on academic integrity are the most influential, as measured by citation-based indicators such as total citations and citations per year?
3. What core and emerging themes can be identified in academic integrity research through keyword co-occurrence analysis?
4. What are the patterns of international research collaboration in academic integrity based on country-level co-authorship networks?

Methodology

Bibliometric analysis refers to the structured process of retrieving, organizing, and critically assessing bibliographic data originating from academic literature (Alves et al., 2021; Assyakur & Rosa, 2022; Verbeek et al., 2002). In addition to traditional descriptive indicators such as

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EISSN: 2637-0905
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publication outlets, chronological patterns of research output, and principal contributors (Wu & Wu, 2017), bibliometric methodologies now increasingly employ more sophisticated analytical tools, including co-citation analysis at the document level, to reveal the underlying intellectual architecture of a research domain. Conducting a thorough literature review requires an iterative and methodologically sound procedure that includes the careful construction of search terms, exhaustive interrogation of academic databases, and comprehensive evaluative analysis. This systematic approach supports the development of a robust and exhaustive literature corpus, thereby strengthening the credibility and reproducibility of the resulting insights (Fahimnia et al., 2015).

In this context, the current study places emphasis on high-impact scholarly works due to their fundamental importance in constructing the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research field. To uphold data precision and uniformity, Scopus was selected as the principal database for retrieving information (Al-Khoury et al., 2022; di Stefano et al., 2010; Khiste & Paithankar, 2017). In addition, in order to preserve academic rigor, the dataset was strictly limited to peer-reviewed journal articles, with non-scholarly materials such as books and lecture notes intentionally omitted (Gu et al., 2019). Leveraging the extensive indexing provided by Scopus, pertinent publications covering the timeframe from 1983 through May 2026 were methodically gathered for further examination.

Data Search Strategy

The bibliometric dataset employed in this study was obtained in a systematic manner from Scopus through a clearly defined and reproducible search framework. As illustrated in Table 1, the search formulation was constructed to identify publications directly engaging with the nexus of *academic* as well as *integrity*, by restricting the query to article titles through the expression: *TITLE (academic AND integrity)*. In order to preserve disciplinary pertinence, the dataset was subsequently narrowed by applying subject area constraints to Arts and Humanities (ARTS) as well as Social Sciences (SOCI), ensuring consistency with the dataset's conceptual and theoretical focus of the study. Additional filters were applied to enhance data consistency and comparability, including limiting the corpus to English-language sources and restricting document type to journal articles (SRCTYPE = "j"), a category generally considered to represent rigorously peer-reviewed scholarly outputs. This systematic query yielded an initial corpus, which was subsequently refined to a final dataset of 605 publications suitable for bibliometric analysis.

Following the initial retrieval process, a screening procedure was implemented in accordance with predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, as outlined in Table 2. This screening process was designed to guarantee the relevance, quality, and analytical consistency of the resulting dataset. Only English-language publications were considered eligible, whereas works published in other languages were excluded to preserve uniformity in linguistic analysis. In a similar manner, the scope of the study was deliberately confined to the Arts and Humanities as well as Social Sciences disciplines, thereby excluding materials originating from other subject areas that fall outside the scope of academic integrity discourse. In terms of source type, the selection was restricted solely to journal articles, while alternative forms of scholarly output, including conference books, proceedings, as well as book chapters, were omitted to ensure a high standard of scholarly rigor. This two-stage process, integrating both targeted search

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strategies (Table 1) and systematic screening criteria (Table 2), strengthens the validity and reproducibility of the bibliometric dataset.

Table 1: The Search String

Scopus	TITLE (academic AND integrity) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j"))

Table 2: The Selection Criterion is Searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Subject	Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities	Others
Source type	Journal	Others

Data Analysis

VOSviewer is a well-established and user-oriented bibliometric analysis application created by Nees Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman at Leiden University (van Eck & Waltman, 2010, 2017). It is purpose-built to facilitate the visualization and systematic examination of scientific literature, providing sophisticated capabilities for generating network-based visual representations, grouping interconnected elements through clustering procedures, and producing density-based mapping outputs. The tool's analytical adaptability supports the investigation of multiple forms of bibliometric relationships, such as co-authorship linkages, co-citation structures, and keyword co-occurrence patterns, thereby enabling an in-depth inspection of the intellectual architecture within a given research field. With its interactive interface and ongoing methodological enhancements, VOSviewer ensures streamlined, scalable, and responsive analysis of extensive bibliometric datasets. In addition, its functionality extends to the calculation of bibliometric metrics, the refinement and customization of visual representations, and the integration of data drawn from multiple sources, collectively reinforcing its position as a powerful and dependable instrument for scholarly analytical work.

A major advantage of VOSviewer is its capacity to convert intricate bibliometric datasets into structured, coherent, and readily interpretable visual forms. The tool is especially effective in network-oriented analyses, such as grouping interrelated items through clustering techniques, detecting patterns of keyword co-occurrence, and producing density maps that illustrate variations in research intensity across a field. Its user-friendly interface supports both early-stage and advanced researchers in efficiently exploring, interpreting, and integrating evolving scholarly trends. Ongoing enhancements to the software further strengthen its applicability and ensure sustained relevance across a wide range of bibliometric contexts, with particular strength in the examination of authorship structures and citation networks.

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In the current investigation, bibliographic records were extracted in PlainText format from Scopus, encompassing publication years, article titles, author information, source journals, citation metrics, and keywords, spanning the timeframe from 1983 through May 2026. The dataset was then processed and examined using VOSviewer (version 1.6.20). By employing VOS mapping alongside clustering procedures, the software enabled the generation and structured analysis of bibliometric networks. Unlike the traditional Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) framework, VOS mapping arranges elements in a reduced-dimensional space in such a manner that the distances between items faithfully represent their level of relatedness (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). While it bears conceptual similarity to MDS (Appio et al., 2014), the VOS methodology incorporates normalization strategies that are specifically tailored for co-occurrence data, most notably the association strength metric (AS_{ij}), which is formulated as follows (Van Eck & Waltman, 2007):

$$AS_{ij} = \frac{C_{ij}}{W_i W_j}$$

which is described as "the ratio of the observed frequency of co-occurrence between items i and j to the expected frequency under the assumption of statistical independence between the two items" (Van Eck & Waltman, 2007).

Result and Discussion

There are 4 research questions being discussed in this section.

RQ1: What Are the Temporal Trends in The Annual Volume of Scholarly Publications on Academic Integrity From 1983 To May 2026?

The temporal distribution of publications on students' academic integrity, as presented in Figure 1 and Table 3, demonstrates a clear transition from a nascent to an increasingly established research domain. Between the early 1990s and approximately 2009, scholarly output remained consistently low, with annual publications rarely exceeding ten articles and contributing marginally to the overall corpus. This limited output reflects the relatively peripheral status of academic integrity within higher education research during that period, where it was often subsumed under broader discussions of pedagogy, assessment, and student behaviour. Furthermore, the pre-digital learning environment constrained both the scale and visibility of academic misconduct, thereby reducing the impetus for extensive empirical investigation. A gradual increase is observed from 2010 to 2019, indicating the growing institutionalisation of academic integrity through formal policies, honour codes and the adoption of plagiarism detection systems. This phase represents the consolidation of academic integrity as a legitimate and independent field of scholarly inquiry.

A pronounced escalation in publication output is evident from 2020 onwards, culminating in a peak in 2025 (20.50%) and sustained high levels in 2024 (12.89%) and 2026 (6.94%, partial year). This surge can be attributed to structural and technological shifts within higher education, most notably the swift shift toward online as well as remote instructional models during the COVID-19 pandemic. The extensive integration of digital assessment practices has amplified apprehensions surrounding academic misconduct, contract-based cheating, as well as the responsible application of emerging technologies, thereby stimulating substantial research interest. In addition, the proliferation of artificial intelligence tools has increasingly

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blurred the limits that define academic integrity, prompting renewed theoretical as well as methodological engagement. The recent upward trajectory also reflects heightened emphasis on governance, quality assurance, and institutional accountability in higher education systems globally. Collectively, these developments justify the exponential growth in recent years, underscoring the transformation of academic integrity from a peripheral concern into a central and strategically significant area of research.

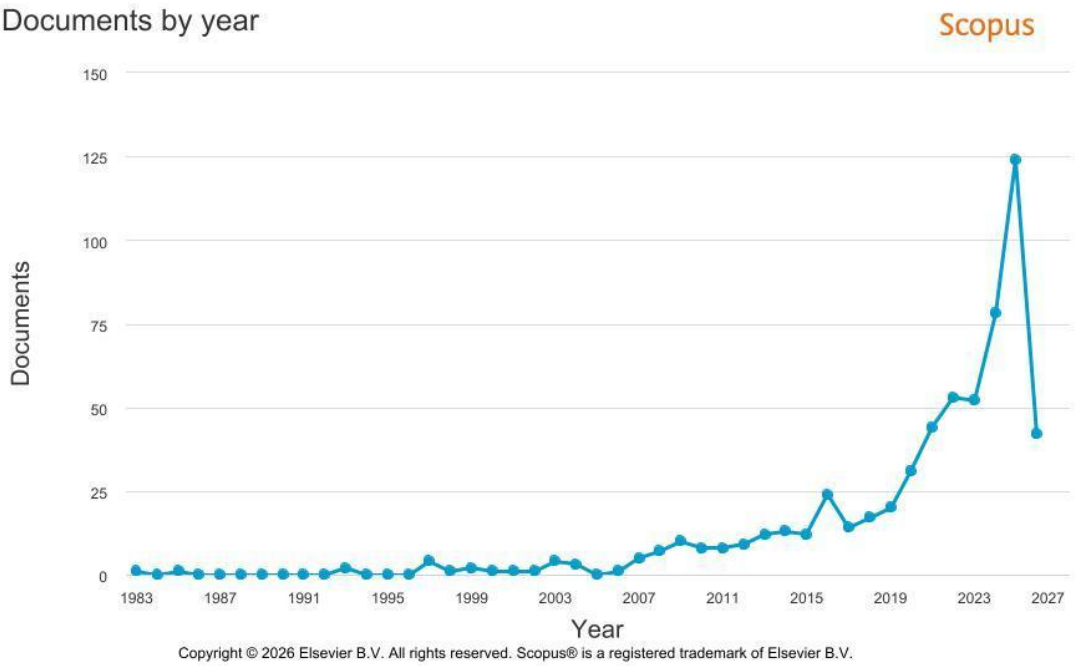

Figure 1: Trend Of Research in Academic Integrity by Years

Table 3: Publication Percentage by Year

Year	Number of Publications	Percentage (%)
2026	42	6.94
2025	124	20.50
2024	78	12.89
2023	52	8.60
2022	53	8.76
2021	44	7.27
2020	31	5.12
2019	20	3.31
2018	17	2.81
2017	14	2.31
2016	24	3.97
2015	12	1.98
2014	13	2.15
2013	12	1.98
2012	9	1.49

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RQ2: Which Scholarly Articles on Academic Integrity Are the Most Influential, As Measured by Citation-Based Indicators Such as Total Citations and Citations Per Year?

Table 4 highlights a striking concentration of highly cited publications in recent years, particularly those addressing the intersection of academic integrity and emerging digital technologies. The most frequently cited work, authored by Cotton et al. (2024) and accumulating 1,710 citations, alongside other leading works published between 2023 and 2024, underscores the rapid and intense academic reaction to the advent of generative artificial intelligence, especially ChatGPT. These articles dominate the citation landscape, collectively accounting for a substantial proportion of total citations, which indicates not only their high relevance but also the immediacy of the research agenda. This pattern reflects a paradigm shift in the field, where academic integrity is no longer confined to traditional issues such as plagiarism or cheating, but is increasingly framed within the context of AI-assisted learning, authorship authenticity, and ethical boundaries in knowledge production. The exceptionally high citation counts within a short publication window suggest accelerated knowledge diffusion, driven by the urgency of addressing AI-related disruptions in higher education.

At the same time, Table 4 also reveals the enduring influence of foundational studies, particularly those by McCabe et al. (1999), which continue to be highly cited despite their earlier publication dates. These works provide critical theoretical and empirical grounding, particularly in understanding the role of institutional context, such as honor codes, in shaping student behaviour. Similarly, literature reviews and pandemic-related studies (e.g., Macfarlane et al., 2014; Gamage et al., 2020) maintain strong citation performance, reflecting their integrative and contextual contributions during periods of systemic change. The coexistence of classic foundational works and highly cited contemporary studies suggests a layered knowledge structure within the field: earlier research establishes core theoretical frameworks, while recent studies respond to emergent challenges, particularly technological advancements and shifts in learning environments. This dual dynamic justifies the citation distribution observed, indicating that the domain of academic integrity is simultaneously constructed through cumulative development and undergoing swift transformation in response to external disruptions.

Table 4: Most Cited Author

No.	Authors	Title	Year	Source title	Cited by
1	Cotton et al. (2024)	Chatting and cheating: Ensuring academic integrity in the era of ChatGPT	2024	Innovations in Education and Teaching International	1710
2	Sullivan et al. (2023)	ChatGPT in higher education: Considerations for academic integrity and student learning	2023	Journal of Applied Learning and Teaching	656
3	Perkins, M. (2023)	Academic Integrity considerations of AI Large Language Models in the	2023	Journal of University	603

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		post-pandemic era: ChatGPT and beyond		Teaching and Learning Practice	
4	Yusuf et al. (2024)	Generative AI and the future of higher education: a threat to academic integrity or reformation? Evidence from multicultural perspectives	2024	International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education	348
5	Bin-Nashwan et al. (2023)	Use of ChatGPT in academia: Academic integrity hangs in the balance	2023	Technology in Society	312
6	McCabe et al. (1999)	Academic integrity in honor code and non-honor code environments: A qualitative investigation	1999	Journal of Higher Education	271
7	McCabe et al. (2002)	Honor codes and other contextual influences on academic integrity: A replication and extension to modified honor code settings	2002	Research in Higher Education	256
8	Macfarlane et al. (2014)	Academic integrity: a review of the literature	2014	Studies in Higher Education	235
9	Gamage et al. (2020)	Online delivery and assessment during COVID-19: Safeguarding academic integrity	2020	Education Sciences	215
10	Holden et al. (2021)	Academic Integrity in Online Assessment: A Research Review	2021	Frontiers in Education	200

RQ3: What Core and Emerging Themes Can Be Identified in Academic Integrity Research Through Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis?

Figure 2 illustrates the keyword co-occurrence network, highlighting a strongly centralized structure in which the term "academic integrity" occupies a dominant position. It exhibits the greatest frequency of occurrence, recorded at 363, alongside the highest total link strength of 565. This pattern suggests that the field is highly cohesive, with "academic integrity" functioning as the principal conceptual anchor that connects multiple sub-themes. Closely linked high-frequency keywords such as "higher education" (86 occurrences; TLS = 194), "plagiarism" (83; 182), "academic misconduct" (58; 121), "cheating" (52; 107), and "academic dishonesty" (46; 101) form the core intellectual cluster. The prominence and strong interconnections among these terms suggest that the literature remains grounded in traditional concerns surrounding student behaviour, rule violations, and institutional responses. Moreover, the consistent presence of "ethics" (37; 88) and "integrity" (15; 24) indicates that the discourse extends beyond detection and enforcement toward normative and value-based considerations. This pattern justifies that academic integrity research is both behaviourally and ethically oriented, reflecting its dual role as a regulatory and educational construct within higher education systems.

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At the same time, Figure 2 reveals a significant expansion of the research landscape driven by technological and contextual shifts. Emerging keywords such as "artificial intelligence" (44; 104), "ChatGPT" (39; 99), "generative AI" (19; 48) and "large language models" (5; 23) demonstrate strong linkages with core integrity terms, indicating a rapid integration of AI-related concerns into the field. This suggests a paradigm shift from conventional plagiarism issues toward more complex challenges involving authorship, originality, and machine-assisted content generation. Additionally, contextual factors such as "COVID-19" (16; 45), "online learning" (10; 25), and "online assessment" (5; 9) highlight how the pandemic expedited the expansion of digital education while simultaneously reshaping integrity-related risks. The presence of applied and governance-oriented terms such as "policy," "assessment," "contract cheating," and "research integrity" further reflects the diversification of the field into institutional, regulatory, and disciplinary dimensions. Collectively, these patterns indicate that academic integrity research is evolving into a dynamic, technology-driven and interdisciplinary domain, shaped by both digital transformation and increasing demands for robust governance in higher education.

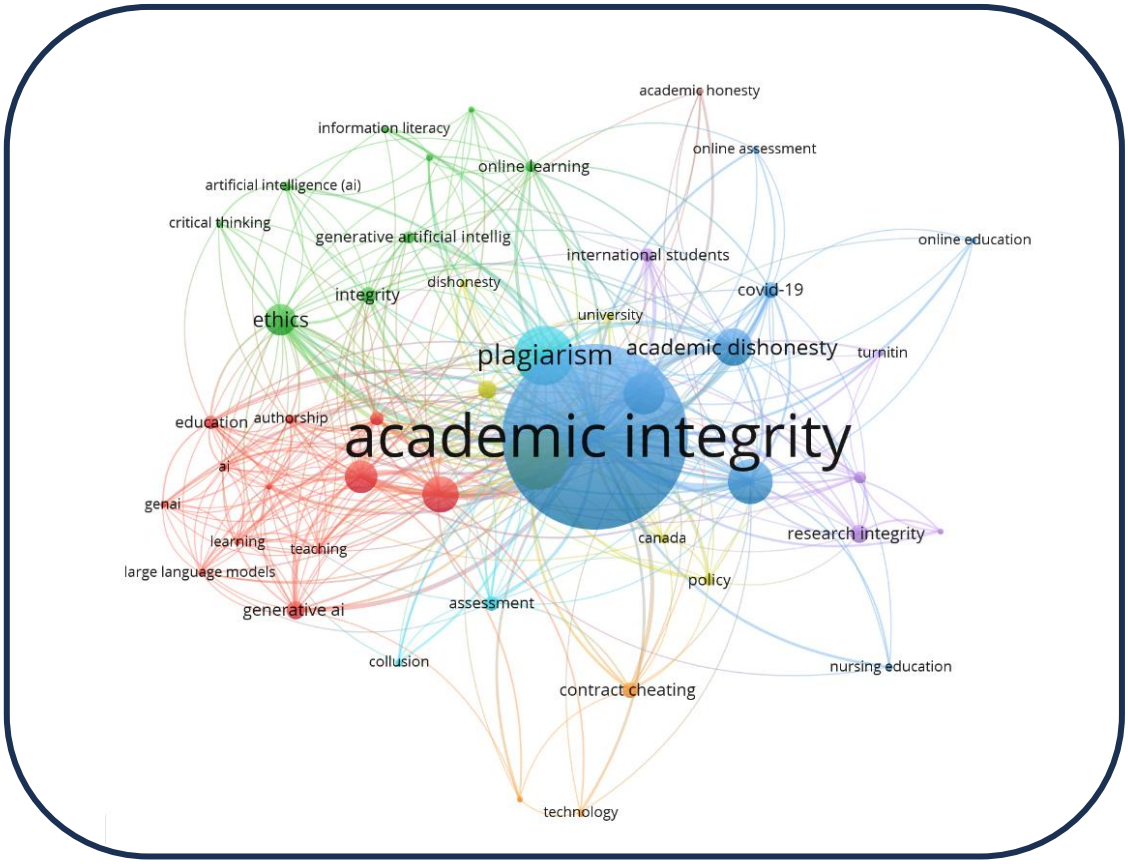

Figure 2: Network Visualization Map of Keywords' Co-Occurrence

RQ4: What Are the Patterns of International Research Collaboration in Academic Integrity Based on Country-Level Co-Authorship Networks?

Figure 3 presents the country-level co-authorship network, revealing a highly stratified structure dominated by a small number of leading countries with substantial research output and strong collaborative linkages. The United States stands out as the leading contributor in productivity, producing 144 documents and accumulating 2,919 citations. It is followed by the

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United Kingdom (57 documents; 2,923 citations; highest total link strength = 31) and Australia (82 documents; 2,918 citations; TLS = 24). These countries occupy central positions within the network, indicating both high productivity and strong international collaboration. The relatively high total link strength of the United Kingdom and Australia, compared to their document counts, suggests that these countries are not merely highly productive in research output but are also extensively integrated within international research partnerships. Similarly, China (TLS = 19) demonstrates significant integration into the international collaboration network, reflecting its growing investment in higher education research. This pattern can be justified by the presence of well-established research infrastructures, access to funding, and strong institutional emphasis on academic integrity within advanced higher education systems. In contrast, many developing and emerging countries, including Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, and several Middle Eastern and African nations, exhibit moderate to low publication outputs and weaker collaborative linkages, as indicated by lower total link strength values. However, some exceptions are notable; for instance, the United Arab Emirates (TLS = 14) and Turkey (TLS = 11) demonstrate relatively strong collaboration despite moderate publication counts, suggesting strategic engagement in international research networks. Additionally, the presence of countries such as Viet Nam with high citation counts relative to a small number of publications indicates the influence of a few highly impactful studies. The uneven distribution observed in Figure 3 reflects structural inequalities in global research capacity, including disparities in funding, access to scholarly networks, and institutional support. Nevertheless, the expanding participation of non-Western countries indicates a gradual globalization of academic integrity research, driven by shared challenges such as digital learning environments, international student mobility, as well as the universal influence of emerging technologies.

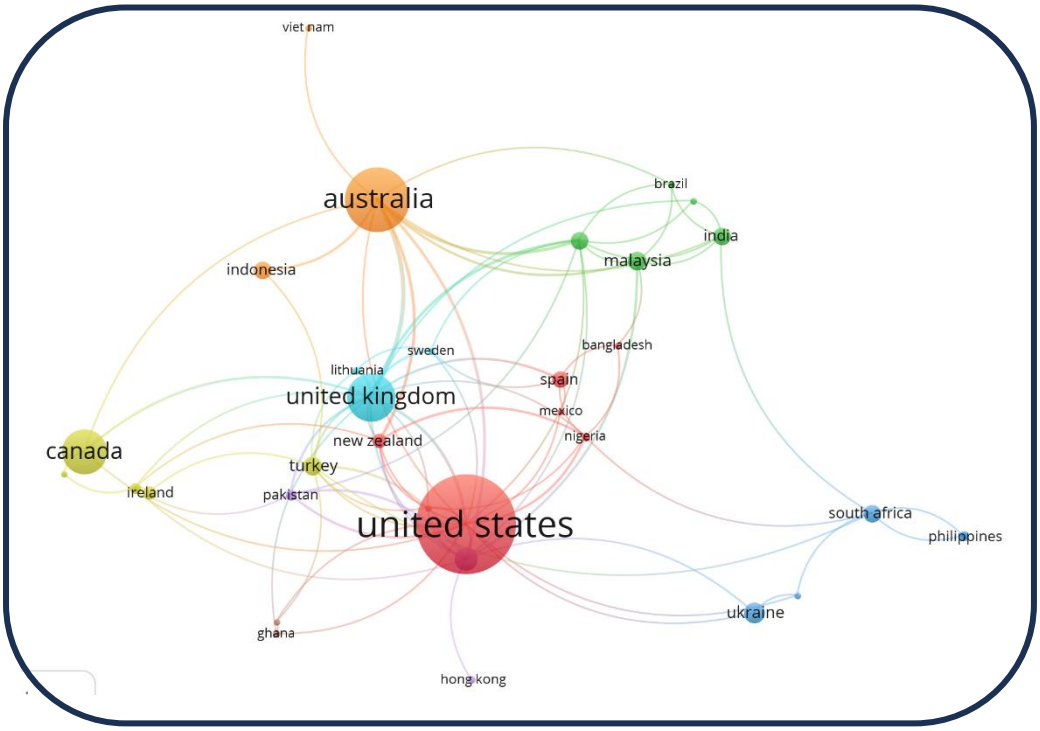

Figure 3: ***Patterns Of International Research Collaboration***

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EISSN: 2637-0905
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Conclusion

The aim of this investigation was to chart the scholarly terrain surrounding student academic integrity by scrutinizing the evolution of research trajectories, seminal publications, thematic configurations, and patterns of international scholarly collaboration. The inquiry was structured around central questions addressing longitudinal publication growth, citation impact and influence, dominant as well as emerging thematic areas, and the organization of global co-authorship networks. Based on a dataset of 605 publications covering the period from 1983 to May 2026, the findings indicate a clear transformation of the field from a limited and fragmented area of study into a more established and rapidly expanding domain. A noticeable increase in research output is observed after 2010, with a more accelerated growth in recent years, reflecting heightened concern toward academic integrity issues within higher education systems.

The analysis further reveals that the field is strongly anchored in traditional themes such as plagiarism, academic misconduct, and ethical behaviour, which continue to form the core of the research structure. At the same time, the emergence of new themes related to digital learning environments and artificial intelligence indicates a gradual shift toward more complex and technology-driven challenges. Citation patterns show a combination of long-standing foundational studies and highly cited recent publications, suggesting that the field evolves through both continuity and adaptation. In terms of global collaboration, research output is largely concentrated in developed countries, although there is increasing participation from emerging regions, indicating a gradual expansion of the research landscape.

This study advances the field by delivering a structured, data-informed mapping of research on student academic integrity, thereby yielding a more refined understanding of its intellectual architecture and developmental trajectory. Its outcomes carry significant applied relevance, especially for higher education institutions and policy actors, as they support the reinforcement of integrity systems and the recalibration of pedagogical strategies in response to emerging and evolving challenges. Nevertheless, the scope of the investigation is constrained by its dependence on a single database and a narrowly defined keyword approach, which may have resulted in the omission of pertinent studies. Subsequent research is encouraged to adopt broader data sources and more diverse methodological approaches to enhance coverage and depth. In conclusion, bibliometric analysis proves to be a robust methodological tool to understand research patterns and guide future directions, highlighting the importance of continuous investigation in addressing academic integrity within an evolving educational context.

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EISSN: 2637-0905
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Acknowledgements: The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to University Utara Malaysia for providing the necessary resources and support throughout the course of this research. Special appreciation is extended to colleagues and peers who contributed valuable insights and constructive feedback, which greatly enhanced the quality of this paper.

Funding Statement: No Funding

Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. All authors have contributed to this work and approved the final version of the manuscript for submission to the International Journal of Modern Education (IJMOE).

Ethics Statement: This study did not involve any human participants, animals, or sensitive data requiring ethical approval. The authors confirm that the research was conducted in accordance with accepted academic integrity and ethical publishing standards.

Author Contribution Statement: All authors contributed significantly to the development of this manuscript. [N.H.Z.A] was responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, and overall supervision of the study. [M.D] handled data collection and analysis. [A.S] examined and interpreted the research findings. [E.M.M] contributed to the literature review, drafting, and critical revision of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript prior to submission.

International Journal of Modern Education
IJMOE
EISSN: 2637-0905
Volume: 8 Issue: 30 (June 2026) PP. 800-816

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