



A Proposed Strategy for Achieving Institutional Integrity at the University of Ha'il in the Light of NCAAA Standards

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to set a proposed strategy for achieving institutional integrity in the University of Ha'il (UoH), Saudi Arabia, in the light of the National Centre of Assessment and Academic Accreditation (NCAAA) Standards. This was accomplished through acknowledging theoretical and philosophical frameworks of institutional integrity and their obstacles in university educational institutions and displaying the institutional standards of the National Centre of Assessment and Academic Accreditation. This research depended on the descriptive method and employed the (SWOT) Analysis to examine the status of UoH. The research confirmed that UoH implemented policies to support institutional values and research integrity. Furthermore, the university has employed mechanisms and procedures for institutional values and mentorships and has a declared policy for disclosure of information and access of necessary information to all beneficiaries. The university needs to set some mechanisms in place to ensure fairness and equality in performance assessments or to implement integrity standards in processes of employment and recruitment.

Keywords Strategy · Institutional Integrity · NCAAA · Standards

Introduction

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has witnessed a number of great changes and developments. On February 17, 2007, The KSA government launched The National Strategy to Preserve Integrity and Combat Corruption at the local, national, and international levels in

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its different types and forms. It aims to protect Saudi society from corruption by supporting ethical and educational values: guiding the citizens and residents toward acceptable behaviors and respecting the rules and regulations of the KSA. In so doing, it supports a healthy climate for the success of economic and social development plans and participates in efforts that aim to develop and support cooperation in achieving fairness and justice among society members (Nazaha, 2007, p.3).

The university plays an important role in establishing integrity, transparency, and ethics through the implementation of clearly stated policies, regulations, and procedures to support public, institutional and professional values. This is accomplished by working on its development and follow-up commitments among its employees at the level of recruitment, promotion, scientific research ethics, intellectual property rights, and copyrights. Therefore, the University of Ha'il implements mechanisms ensuring fairness, equality, and integrity in all its practices by enacting regulations and laws that clearly define how complaints, grievances, and disciplinary violations are handled. The university also provides information to external authorities to monitor the extent of the application of justice and equality among its employees.

Similarly, (Gurzawska, 2015, p.3) noted that the integrity of institutions refers to the university from its ethical leadership to its individual employees. It further involves the entire public administration system, where integrity is defined as the correct functioning of the institution and its fitness for purpose, its coherence, and its perception as being legitimate (Grebe & Woermann, 2011, p.8). This concept is interconnected to the principle of transparency leading to a successful organizational culture.

Institutional integrity can be practically defined as the level at which UoH protects its members from the external forces exerted within a university's community. It also involves its ability to maintain the quality of its programs and to direct regulations in order to achieve fairness and demonstrate faithful abidance to the institutional mission, compliance with regulations, honesty, truthfulness, and accuracy at all levels of the university's practices.

In addition, academic ethics and integrity are necessary elements for accomplishing quality education as these are considered the cornerstone of the learning process. Therefore, some universities attempt to promote academic integrity and prevent academic misconduct on campus by providing clear guidelines, equitable resolutions, increased student engagement, increased opportunities for part-time faculty to share and disseminate ideas, demonstrated student learning, a focus on the integrity policies of workforce-oriented certification programs, and a clear policy and shared mission (Parnter, 2016, p.2).

Institutional integrity implies the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in an academic setting, leaving no part or element wanting. It, further, suggests an unimpaired or uncorrupted state: the soundness of moral principles, the character of uncorrupted virtue, uprightness and honesty: and adherence to moral principles. Institutional integrity adapts these general concepts to the university domain. It, therefore, includes the integrity of the academic endeavor as practiced by each element of the university community, and as embraced by each academic institution (Winchester, 2019, p.188). Consequently, achieving integrity is not merely combating corruption. It also concerns other forms of misbehavior and inappropriate actions, for example: financial transactions, manipulation of knowledge and information, all forms of discrimination, as well as biased rules and processes in favor of power and special interests (Gurzawska, 2015, p.5).

In fact, institutional integrity in university education helps to achieve transparency in all academic and managerial practices, create a dynamic academic life, promote scientific progress, and support academic performance. It empowers universities to perform its tasks in congruence with its intended purpose and operate in a transparent, accountable, decent,

ethical, faultless and invulnerable manner. This implies openness, communication and accountability, support of university assessment of policies, practices, and procedures, and how students, employees, and the community can be aware of them. Institutional integrity, by its very nature, suggests accomplishing fairness, clarity, equity, accessibility, appropriateness of publications and student grades, and performance, within a strong code of ethical conduct and implementation of positive values.

ETICO (2012, p.2) summarized the key bases of integrity more broadly including academic integrity and ethical conduct of research, equity, justice and non-discrimination, accountability, transparency and independence. ETICO further indicated the necessity for critical analysis and respect for reasoned opinions, responsibility for the stewardship of assets, resources and the environment, free and open dissemination of knowledge and information, and fair treatment of international partners. In the same context, Robinson et al. (2018) investigated the basics of integrity and confirmed that they include: the rational basis for trust, coherence of purposes, and the consistency of action with those stated purposes, and cultivating ethical culture, and rule compliance.

Mattar (2021) confirmed that academic integrity has become a key element in the process of evaluating and assessing university performance and an indicator for granting accreditation as many accreditations and quality assurance commissions incorporate academic and institutional integrity in their evaluation and assessment and attempt to determine whether universities meet these standards or not.

For this purpose, the UOH Strategic Plan confirmed the importance of “providing an institutional governance-base managerial system” which includes some sub-goals and initiatives that focus on developing the competencies and skills of academic and administrative leaders, restructuring of some university units, achieving transparency, fairness, accountability and participation in the decision making process, developing an evaluation system to support the excellent managerial performance, and cultivating a system of recruitment and selection of academic and administrative leaders. Therefore, the University of Ha'il attempts to achieve continuous performance development in a framework of integrity, transparency, equality and fairness in a supportive institutional environment.

The National Centre of Assessment and Academic Accreditation aims to support quality and excellence in universities through the processes of quality assurance and accreditation through the implementation of 11 institutional standards which have been modified these standards and become 8 standards including the second standard “Governance, Leadership, and Management” that is composed of 6 sub-standards including "Integrity, Transparency and Ethics" which confirm achieving integrity (NCAAA, 2018, p.13).

In pursuance of NCAAA standards, Saudi universities, including UoH, seek to uphold and protect their integrity by abiding by the laws and regulations of the Civil Service Laws, the Ministry of Education's policies, regulations, financial bylaws, student academic regulations, and other governing and regulating bodies and guidelines. Follow-up systems and internal financial auditing further ensure institutional integrity. This requires ensuring that all faculty members understand academic policies, that academic and administrative leaders follow an open-door policy that encourages staff to discuss ideas, concerns or problems with their managers, and that they consider the development of ideas suggested by university members in the university policies, procedures and initiatives carried out by UoH in the future.

In addition, some researches and studies (Alshancheity, 2015; pp.269–292; Al-Harby, 2017; pp.207–283; Razek, 2014; pp.143–154; Alsherbeni & Abd Elmola, 2019) confirmed that Saudi universities may suffer from some violations of institutional integrity such as: plagiarism, literary theft, low commitment with integrity policies and regulations,

fabrication of scientific results and documents, obtaining unfair advantages, abetting and aiding academic dishonesty, and infringing upon intellectual property.

Similarly, Kirya (2019) claimed that corruption and fraud in university education range from favoritism in admissions, to diversion of funds and academic dishonesty which includes cheating, fabrication, falsification, improper collaboration, multiple submissions, plagiarism, and helping another person to obtain an unfair academic advantage. It also involves corruption in licensing and accreditation, corruption in student selection and admissions, corruption in staff recruitment and promotion, and financial mismanagement. Thus, accountability and anti-corruption measures should be set out as a central part of accreditation and assessment standards.

Institutional integrity may face obstacles such as ignorance and impunity, deficient detection mechanisms and research misconduct, lack of clarity about the role of staff, responsibility in tackling academic dishonesty, the absence of unified and enforced rules to curb misconducts, lack of intrinsic motivation to study, deficient hiring and firing procedures and practices (Kvit, 2018, p.6). The temporary nature of employment contracts and abuse of performance evaluation procedures, low salaries and lack of financial and material compensation, lack of professional motivation, weak regulation and poor application of conflict of interest norms, and willingness to maximize private gain are also barriers to institutional integrity (Breit & Forsberg, 2016, p.25).

In addition, there are some reasons for violating academic integrity. They include The socio-economic circumstances of the individual who perpetrates the misconduct, tolerance to the manner of violating the social rules, little effectiveness in sanctions, inequity in dealing with students, and the absence of a positive university culture (Ayala-Enríquez et al. 2020).

Therefore, the current research attempts to establish a strategy for achieving institutional integrity at the University of Ha'il in the light of NCAAA Standards, acknowledging the degree to which the standards of integrity, transparency and ethics are definitively applied at UoH, and setting characteristics, basics of the proposed strategy and requirements and mechanisms that apply it at UoH.

Methodology

Research Method

A cross-sectional/ descriptive and analytical method was used to analyze, describe, and investigate to acknowledge the degree to which standards of institutional integrity are applied in UoH, Saudi Arabia from both academic leaders and teaching staff's point of view. In addition, the SWOT technique was used to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the status at the university. This combination between the two methods helped the researchers to set the proposed strategy for achieving institutional integrity in University of Ha'il in light of NCAAA standards.

Research Population and Sample

The research population consisted of 1035 members. A total number of 267 members (including 165 male and 102 female) with different experiences and academic degrees and from six colleges located at the University of Hail: College of Medicine, College of

Pharmacy, College of Sciences, College of Engineering, College of Education, and College of Art, participated in the research. The sample included 69 academic leaders (3 vice presidents, 3 deans, 39 vice deans, 24 department heads) representing 25.8% and 198 teaching staff representing 74.2%.

Research Tool

A questionnaire of university staff was conducted to gain an insight into the degree of compliance with applying the standard of "Integrity, Transparency and Ethics" set by the NCAAA. The questionnaire included 28 items divided into 4 domains that encompassed NCAAA criteria for the standard: 1 Culture of Integrity and Accountability, 2 Disclosure and Information Transparency Policies, 3 Intellectual Property System and Publication Ethics, and 4 dealing with corruption, grievances, and complaints. Data were collected from December 2020 to February 2021 with the aid of a web application. The prepared questionnaire contained multiple-choice questions that were calculated based on a three-point scale (agree, neutral, and disagree). Some statistical techniques such as Chi-Square, relative weight, and SPSS 21.0 software were used for the statistical analysis of the data compiled through surveys. Moreover, the research purpose and procedures were explained to the participants and informed consent was taken upon enrollment. The research protocol was approved by the Research Ethics standing committee of the University of Hail, on 10 May 2020.

Validity of the Research Tool The Pearson correlation was used to calculate the internal validity between each item and the total degree of dimension to which it belongs. Coefficients were calculated between each dimension and the total degree of the questionnaire and the results showed that the correlation coefficients were high and statistically significant at the level of (0.01), indicating the validity of the questionnaire.

Reliability of the Research Tool Cronbach's alpha was calculated to verify the reliability of the questionnaire and the results showed high values, indicating the validity of the questionnaire in its final form, its trustful application, and, thus, the reliability of the results.

Research Results

Analysis of the Questionnaire Dimensions

The researchers attempted to acknowledge the degree to which the standard "Integrity, Transparency and Ethics" was definitively applied at UoH. The results are as follows:

Culture of Integrity and Accountability The findings shown in Table 1 indicated that 39.3% of academic leaders and teaching staff agreed that the culture of integrity and accountability prevailed in UoH but 25.2% of the participants disagreed. The analysis of results showed that UoH applies, develops, and monitors policies and procedures to support public, institutional and professional values in a highly satisfactory manner. Furthermore, it was found that the university monitors the teaching staff's commitment to the institutional and professional values and ensures fairness, equality, and integrity in enrolling

Table 1 Sample Responses on the Culture of Integrity and Accountability

#	Item	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-Square	Relative Weight (%)	Rank
1	The university applies stated policies to support institutional values in the academic community	55.2	43.7	1.1	129.7	84.64	1
2	Academic leaders develop public and professional values by applying clear mechanisms and procedures	55.1	40.4	4.5	108.4	78.65	4
3	The university monitors teaching staff's commitment with the institutional and professional values	62.5	28.1	9.4	119.7	84.39	2
4	The university applies stated mechanisms to ensure fairness and equality in performance assessment	6.8	40.4	52.8	91	51.31	6
5	The university is committed to accomplish equal opportunities in enrolling professional development programs	63.0	25.8	11.2	123.2	83.89	3
6	The university administration works to achieve integrity in processes of employment and recruitment	2.2	41.6	56.2	124.6	48.68	8
7	The university administration applies adopted mechanisms to achieve fairness in job promotion and its procedures	61.8	32.6	5.6	126.4	75.65	5
8	The university administration applies various mechanisms for academic and managerial accountability	7.9	31.4	60.7	117.5	49.01	7
	Total	39.3	35.5	25.2	117.5	69.52	

in professional development programs and job promotion. In addition, academic leaders develop public and professional values through applying clear mechanisms and procedures.

Unfortunately, UoH has not completely applied the same mechanisms to ensure fairness, equality, and integrity in the recruitment of faculty members and employees, or for performance evaluations and appraisals. The university administration doesn't apply various mechanisms for academic and managerial accountability. Although the university Committee for Promotions reformulates the university procedures to evaluate the performance of employees periodically, transparently, and impartially according to performance indicators related to their duties, employees asserted that the performance evaluation procedures should be improved in order to realize their purpose and assure more satisfactory fairness and equality.

Clearly, these results are in consistent with Kentab's findings (2018) that confirmed that supporting integrity practices depends on the dissemination of a positive culture of transparency and applying stated policies to support institutional values in the academic community.

Disclosure and Information Transparency Policies The findings shown in Table 2 indicated that 44.7% of academic leaders and teaching staff agreed that disclosure and information transparency policies were implemented in UoH while 23.6% disagreed. The analysis of results showed that the UoH seeks to implement and adopt a declared policy for disclosure of information related to its activities, to achieve financial integrity through financial auditing, to demonstrate a high degree of integrity and transparency in most of its practices. University administration is committed to the credibility, accuracy, and transparency in the information it disseminates for beneficiaries and stakeholders. This can be achieved through different means including: University TV, Twitter account and different social media platforms. Therefore, it has gradually implemented a scale for measuring the satisfaction of University members regarding the efficiency of the UoH system for providing information about current and new developments. Unfortunately, The University doesn't implement a clear policy and procedural disclosure of information for beneficiaries and stakeholders and doesn't work to ensure the avoidance of conflicts of interest for its academic and administrative transactions.

These findings explain part of the consistent results of Kwong et al. (2018, 53–72) which asserted that integrity culture is one of the cornerstones for achieving institutional integrity as this encourages academic honesty among graduate students.

Contrary to the preceding results, the university administration did not implement a clear and published policy for disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interest for its academic, administrative, and financial transactions in a highly satisfactory manner, nor did they work to ensure avoidance of conflict of interest for academic and administrative transactions.

In addition, the results of this dimension can explain part of the consistent results of some studies Grebe and Woerman (2011) and Alsherbeni and Elmola (2019) asserted the importance of transparency in information, achieving financial integrity, and availability of a clear policy and procedures disclosure of information for beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Intellectual Property System and Publication Ethics The findings shown in Table 3 indicated that 22.5% of academic leaders and teaching staff agreed that intellectual property procedures and publication ethics have been enhanced in UoH while 23.6% disagreed. Furthermore, the analysis of results shows that UoH, on the one hand, adopted a declared

Table 2 Sample Responses on Disclosure and Information Transparency Policies

#	Item	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-Square	Relative Weight (%)	Rank
1	The university has a stated and adopted policy for disclosure of information related to its activities	62.9	25.8	11.2	113.7	83.89	3
2	The university implements a clear policy and procedural disclosure of information for beneficiaries and stakeholders	4.5	38.2	57.3	114.5	49.01	6
3	The university administration works to ensure avoidance of conflicts of interest for its academic and administrative transactions	10.1	36.0	53.9	77.7	52.05	5
4	The university is keen to achieve financial integrity through financial auditing	64.0	33.7	2.2	152.9	87.26	2
5	The university transparently accesses necessary information to all beneficiaries	56.2	33.7	10.1	85	82.02	4
6	Top management is committed to the credibility, accuracy, and transparency in the information it disseminates for beneficiaries and stakeholders	69.7	23.6	6.7	169.9	87.64	1
	Total	44.7	31.8	23.6	118.9	73.68	

Table 3 Sample Responses on Intellectual Property System and Publication Ethics

#	Item	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-Square	Relative Weight (%)	Rank
1	The university has a system that ensures the adherence of its employees to intellectual property	10.1	21.3	68.5	153.9	47.2	6
2	The university has specific regulations for procedures and rights of intellectual property	10.1	23.6	66.3	137.8	47.9	5
3	The university implements stated mechanisms for supporting intellectual property rights of researchers and teaching staff	9	30.3	60.7	108.1	49.4	4
4	The university has a declared charter of scientific research ethics	19.1	74.1	6.7	206.3	70.8	3
5	The university implements clear criteria for scientific publishing and benefits from research findings	61.8	28	11.2	107.2	83.5	1
6	The deanship of scientific research continuously develops the values of scientific integrity for researchers and teaching staff	25.8	62.5	11.6	110.7	71.4	2
	Total	22.5	40	37.5	137.3	61.7	

charter of scientific research ethics, implements clear criteria for scientific publishing and benefiting from research findings, and continuously develops the values of scientific integrity for researchers and teaching staff. On the other hand, the university does not have a system that ensures the adherence of its employees to intellectual property, does not implement stated mechanisms for supporting intellectual property rights of researchers and teaching staff, and doesn't set specific regulations for procedures and rights of intellectual property.

The researchers confirm that UoH, after establishing its first strategic plan is about to purposefully implement regulations governing intellectual property rights and roles and is committed to supporting and activating intellectual property rights through the preparation of an integrated plan that includes an examination of all regulations issued by the Saudi Intellectual Property Organization.

The results of the current research can be compared with the studies by Alsharif (2019) and Kentab (2018) which confirmed that protecting intellectual property rights requires the adherence of employees to intellectual property, publishing rights, and the values of scientific integrity through a highly satisfactory system.

Dealing with Corruption, Grievances, and Complaints Table 4 shows the percentages of the responses of academic leaders and teaching staff regarding how the UoH administration deals with corruption, grievances, and complaints.

The findings shown in Table 4 indicate that there was "high agreement" by 38.8% of academic leaders and teaching staff respondents that the university deals fairly with corruption, grievances, and complaints while 25.5% of them disagreed. The analysis of results showed that UoH has documented regulations and procedures determining how to deal with grievances and complaints. It has adopted mechanisms to report and deal with academic and administrative corruption issues so it obviously implements appropriate mechanisms to report and deal with academic, administrative, and financial irregularities. These include special procedures for reporting such outcomes to the National Anti-Corruption Commission (Nazaha). In addition, academic leaders implement disciplinary procedures on members who violate university laws and consequently university members follow the determined procedures for handling complaints and lodging grievances. On the contrary, the university doesn't apply the same mechanisms for dealing with complaints of students, employees, and teaching staff or regularly measures members' satisfaction levels with mechanisms for dealing with complaints and grievances.

In accordance with these results, the study conducted by Al-Harby (2017) which ensured that the university administration should apply resolute actions to deal with irregularities and corruption in all activities and prepare disciplinary procedures and mechanisms for dealing with complaints and ensuring fairness and equality.

Analysis of the Standard: "Integrity, Transparency and Ethics"

Table 5 summarizes the relative weights of the four domains of the questionnaire related to the different practices included in the standard: "integrity, transparency and ethics. Findings indicated in the table reveal that the indicators of the standard are "high" according to the perceptions of the respondents with a relative weight of 69.90%, which represents the degree of satisfaction of the sample responses regarding the application of the standard at

Table 4 Sample Responses on Dealing with Corruptions, Grievances and Complaints

#	Item	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Chi-Square	Relative Weight (%)	Rank
1	The university has documented and adopted mechanisms to report and deal with academic and administrative corruption issues	40.4	47.2	12.4	54.7	76	5
2	The university administration applies resolute actions to deal with academic, administrative and financial irregularities	62.9	32.6	4.5	136.8	86.1	2
3	The university has regulations and procedures that determine how to deal with grievances and complaints	56.2	28.1	15.7	68.8	80.1	4
4	The university applies declared mechanisms for dealing with complaints of students, employees and teaching staff	10.1	32.6	57.3	89.2	50.9	8
5	University members follow the procedures for handling complaints and lodging grievances	51.7	32.6	15.7	51.8	72.3	6
6	Academic leaders adhere to disciplinary procedures on members who violate university laws	59.5	28.1	12.4	92.5	82.4	3
7	There is a committee for confidentially examining complaints and grievances and responding to them	13.5	42.7	43.8	47.4	56.5	7
8	The university constantly measures members' satisfaction level about mechanisms for dealing with complaints and grievances	15.7	41.6	42.7	37.3	93.3	1
Total		38.8	35.7	25.5	72.3	74.7	

Table 5 Analysis of the standard: "Integrity, Transparency and Ethics"

Areas	Relative Weight (%)	
Culture of Integrity and Accountability	69.52%	3
Disclosure and Information Transparency Policies	73.68%	2
Intellectual Property System and Publication Ethics	61.7%	4
Dealing with Corruptions, Grievances and Complaints	74.7%	1
The Standard as a Whole	69.90%	

UoH. In addition, all the criteria set by the NCAAA had "moderately high" indicators of practice at UoH according to the participants' perceptions.

Discussion

After displaying the findings of the four dimensions, the researchers, on the one hand, attempted to analyze and diagnose the external environment and changes in the community to specify and classify the factors that may affect the UoH and its efforts to achieve institutional integrity in two categories: opportunities and threats. On the other hand, the field study results were classified and divided into strengths and weaknesses. The SWOT matrix, shown in Table 6, clarifies the analysis of the internal environment of UoH which showed that there were, on the one hand, some strengths that can be maximized to support the institutional capacity of the university and some weaknesses that should be manipulated; otherwise, they will lead to obstacles in achieving institutional integrity. The diagnosis of the external environment revealed some opportunities that can be invested to achieve a competitive advantage for the university. A number of threats were found that should be neutralized. The researchers attempted to set the proposed strategy depending on maximizing both strengths and opportunities and minimizing weaknesses and threats.

Therefore, there is an urgent need for setting a proposed strategy for achieving institutional integrity at the UoH in light of NCAAA standards as follows:

Objectives of the Proposed Strategy

The proposed strategy aims to achieve integrity in all activities of the university (Teaching, Scientific research, community service, and partnerships; administrative and financial affairs), spread the culture of institutional integrity in the academic society; achieve the accreditation standards and requirements by reinforcement of institutional integrity; increase the perceptions and awareness of academic staff and leaders of basics of institutional integrity and strengthening their commitment with the institutional and professional values; and provide mechanisms for achieving Academic integrity and ethical conduct of research.

Table 6 SWOT Analysis of the Real Status Quo of Institutional Integrity

Internal Environment	Strengths (S)	Weaknesses (W)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementation of declared policies for supporting institutional values and research integrity ● Clear mechanisms and procedures for institutional values and mentorship of teaching staff commitment to them ● Equal opportunities in enrolling professional development programs ● Existence of disclosure of information and access of necessary information to all beneficiaries ● University administration support for achieving financial integrity through financial auditing ● Applying resolute actions to deal with irregularities and violations of university laws ● Implementation of regulations and procedures for grievances and complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Absence of declared mechanisms to ensure fairness and equality in performance assessment ● Lack of integrity standards in processes of employment and recruitment ● Absence of clear policies and disclosure of information and avoidance of conflict of interest ● The need for a system of adherence of employees to intellectual property and regulations for procedures ● Absence of declared mechanisms for supporting intellectual property rights ● Ineffectiveness of applying declared mechanisms for dealing with complaints of students, employees and teaching staff ● Absence of a standing committee for examining complaints and grievances and measuring members' satisfaction level
External Environment	<p data-bbox="659 1143 679 1294">Opportunities (O)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open and supportive leadership of KSA ● Emphasis of Vision 2030 in supporting transparency and integrity in all community sectors ● The National Strategy to preserve Integrity and combat Corruption ● Strategic plan of Ha'il University focuses on achieving transparency and integrity in all practices and decisions ● Future intent of Ministry of Education to support transparency and integrity 	<p data-bbox="659 754 679 848">Threats (T)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changes in the priorities of university administration ● Changes in the strategic orientations of KSA ● Low number of strategic partnership related to achieving integrity ● Decrease in ratio of applying policies and procedures of integrity ● The impact of socio-cultural context on faculty commitment of integrity policies

Premises of the Proposed Strategy

There are some premises of the proposed strategy such as the findings of the field study, the strategic orientations of the university and the Ministry of Education, the international and national experiences that focus on achieving institutional integrity, the National Strategy to Preserve Integrity, and Combat Corruption, and the institutional standards of NCAAA and their implications in universities.

Bases of the Proposed Strategy

The Strategy is centered on some bases, first; the establishment of declared and documented policies for academic integrity, intellectual property, disclosure and information transparency and conflict of interest, second; enhancing the responsibility of academic leadership in demonstrating an active, evidence-based commitment to integrity through developing the integrity policy and the code of conduct, third; supporting the involvement of leaders, staff, and in implementing integrity management system and providing pertinent education and training program that focus on integrity issues and organized awareness raising to reinforce trust, fourth; reinforcing the positive university culture that contributes to developing acceptable institutional and professional values related to achieving institutional integrity and transparency, fifth; university ethics that provide the direction and guidance to university members working to ensure they behave in a manner expected of public and stakeholders, and six; establishing academic governance system for achieving integrity and combating corruption and developing an effective administrative system based on fairness, transparency and equity.

Requirements of Achieving the Proposed Strategy

Achieving the proposed strategy requires; providing academic integrity in teaching and research through clear policies and procedures related to integrity issues and sanctioning academic misconduct, supporting self-controlled, integrity-based practices and positive culture toward transparency and integrity, and disseminating academic integrity in teaching and learning, scientific research, and community service and partnerships, building a system to ensure that teaching staff adhere to intellectual property laws, and an approved and published policy of compliance with intellectual property rights has been implemented, and providing a continuous assessment of the complaints' mechanisms is crucial for setting up corrective actions to improve the university's performance in dealing with complaints.

Also, The UoH University needs to develop educational programs to uphold ethical values and academic integrity through different tools such as integrating academic integrity issues as part of the curriculum, uphold equity, justice, equal opportunity, fairness and non-discrimination by: developing clear standards, practices and procedures concerning hiring, promotion and dismissal of all personnel, as well as for student admissions; and dealing with complaints and appeals and in a timely and transparent manner, reinforce accountability and transparency in all operations by establishing clear and transparent internal mechanisms for quality enhancement and disseminating information; and equally applying rules of conduct among academic community members, avoid all abuse of power by any member of the academic community by developing and disseminating clear rules governing conflict of interest, abuse of power and establishing mechanisms to lodge and respond to complaints, encourage social responsibility at the institutional and individual

level, including, the responsibility for promoting equity in access and success in higher education; sustainable development; human rights and democratic citizenship, among others, support fair management of intellectual property and promotion of free and open dissemination of knowledge and information, develop a system to improve the institutional integrity of the university and controls the protection of intellectual property, enhancing the values of scientific integrity, transparency and disclosure of information periodically and dealing with issues of academic, administrative and financial corruption, establish a complaint box and activate the complaint and grievance mechanism, and sustain an integrity management system through setting a code of ethics and integrity plans; implementing the integrity management action plans; checking the organizational key performance indicators and report the results; and taking actions to continually improve organizational performance in preventing corruption.

Mechanisms for Achieving the Proposed Strategy

Achieving the proposed strategy can be carried out through some mechanisms such as; reinforcing the application of clear mechanisms and procedures among members in order to support public and professional values, improving performance evaluation processes and procedures, and the application of developed mechanisms in order to consolidate fairness and equality, legislating prevention-oriented measures, including access to information laws and policies protecting and promoting corruption reporting and freedom of expression rights, promoting public awareness and public education through anti-corruption bodies and through the development of university curricula, setting and implementing clear mechanisms and procedures to curb any conflict of interest at the academic and administrative level, and developing a management information system to provide necessary and transparent information to all beneficiaries.

In addition, this can be done through; determining and implementing procedures and incentives in order to encourage the scientific publishing and thus enhance its quality and benefits from its findings, formulating a standing committee examine complaints and grievances efficiently respond to the members' satisfaction level regarding dealing with complaints and appeals, this should be continually monitored, and promoting performance-based accountability through developing the system of performance evaluation and enhancing continuous academic audit.

Conclusion

The essence of academic quality and excellence is a transformative change that enables a university community to become more stable, aspiring, just, and prosperous, with shared values and interests grounded in integrity, academic freedom, transparency and equity. Therefore, the current study attempted to diagnose and analyze the real status of institutional integrity at UoH and build an integrative strategy to achieve institutional integrity in light of NCAAA standards and improve its practices and support its values that direct the behaviors of academic leaders, teaching staff and employees. The study emphasized the fact that there is an urgent need to develop and spread the culture of integrity in all academic and administrative units, develop document-based and efficient policies

for supporting institutional integrity and mechanisms to tackle academic and administrative corruption, implement a declared policy for the resolution of conflicts of interest in all activities in the university. Moreover, top management support and decisions that support the university's strategic intents to achieve institutional integrity and governance are needed to achieve the intended outcomes.

Abbreviations UoH: University of Ha'il.; NCAAA: National Centre of Assessment and Academic Accreditation.; SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.; KSA: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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