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MARKETING OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: WIDER AND DEEPER THAN SIMPLE ADVERTISING

Artem Artyukhov

*DSc in Economics, PhD in Engineering, Associate Professor
Sumy State University*

ORCID ID: 0000-0003-1112-6891

artyukhovartem83@gmail.com

This article explores the "marketing of academic integrity" concept within higher education. It argues that promoting academic integrity requires a strategic and multifaceted approach, drawing parallels to traditional marketing concepts. A two-stage bibliometric analysis was conducted to investigate the existing research landscape. The absence of a direct link between "marketing" and "academic integrity" terms in this visualization further supports the argument for more research in this area. To address this gap, a framework for marketing of academic integrity is presented. This framework positions knowledge as the foundation, emphasizing the interconnectedness of knowledge economy, marketing, sharing, and management. Marketing of academic integrity emerges as a central concept, influencing and being influenced by other knowledge-related activities. A cyclical model for marketing of academic integrity as a process is also presented. This model highlights the importance of research, stakeholder analysis, strategic planning, effective communication, and continuous innovation. This article emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to marketing academic integrity. It highlights the potential of marketing principles to promote a culture of ethical conduct within higher education and calls for further research to explore this promising area.

Key words: *Academic integrity, university, marketing, promotion.*

Introduction. Let's unusually start this section, with the prompt to GenAI (Gemini, <https://gemini.google.com/>): "Marketing of academic integrity. What do you know about it?". The answer is very interesting: "Marketing of academic integrity might sound unusual, but it's essentially about effectively communicating its importance and encouraging ethical behavior within the university community."

This answer shows that marketing in the context of promoting academic integrity is not a standard for universities. Promoting academic integrity is a narrower activity than using a set of marketing tools and algorithms to create an honest educational and scientific environment.

Academic integrity, while a fundamental principle of higher education, requires proactive and sustained efforts to be effectively instilled within the university environment. Simply stating policies is insufficient; a comprehensive approach necessitates a multifaceted strategy aptly termed "marketing" of academic integrity. This involves strategically communicating the importance of ethical conduct to all stakeholders, fostering a shared understanding of its value, and encouraging its active practice.

This "marketing" effort must go beyond traditional information dissemination. It requires a nuanced understanding of the target audience – students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders – and their specific needs, concerns, and motivations.

Analysis of recent research and publications. A strong system for ensuring academic integrity is not merely about detecting and punishing violations; it is fundamentally about creating a supportive and ethical learning environment where students are empowered to develop their intellectual potential honestly and responsibly.

This paper does not conduct a classic literature review. There are several reasons for this:

1. The concepts of "marketing" and "academic integrity" are not considered as interrelated categories. A short review of the literature reveals topics that are close to these categories but rather describe elements of advertising rather than marketing: pedagogical techniques (Sbaffi & Zhao, 2022), promoters (Çelik & Razi, 2023), behavioral models (Guerrero-Dib et al., 2020), cases of various educational fields (Hsu, 2021), formation of a list of violations (Parnther, 2020), influence of external stakeholders (Mattar, 2021) and the community (The importance of community in promoting a culture of academic integrity, n.d.). Some articles (for example, (Teymouri et al., 2022) lay the foundation for marketing academic integrity, but these are narratives rather than technological and marketing solutions.

2. In the scientific literature, the concepts of "marketing" and "academic integrity" have a partially negative connotation due to the study of these concepts in the context of dishonesty, for example, article mills (Chen & Liu, 2024) and contract cheating (Lancaster, 2024) or cheating of industrial companies (Comas-Forgas et al., 2021).

So, it was decided to conduct a two-stage bibliometric analysis of the relationship between marketing, educational promotional activities, and academic integrity.

Stage 1.

Query: "marketing" AND "integrity" AND "education"

Total number of articles in Scopus database: 111.

Period of analysis: all years.

Areas: all areas.

Total number of keywords in VOSviewer: 1139. Keywords for analysis – 265 (not less than two occurrences in search results).

Keywords map: Figure 1.

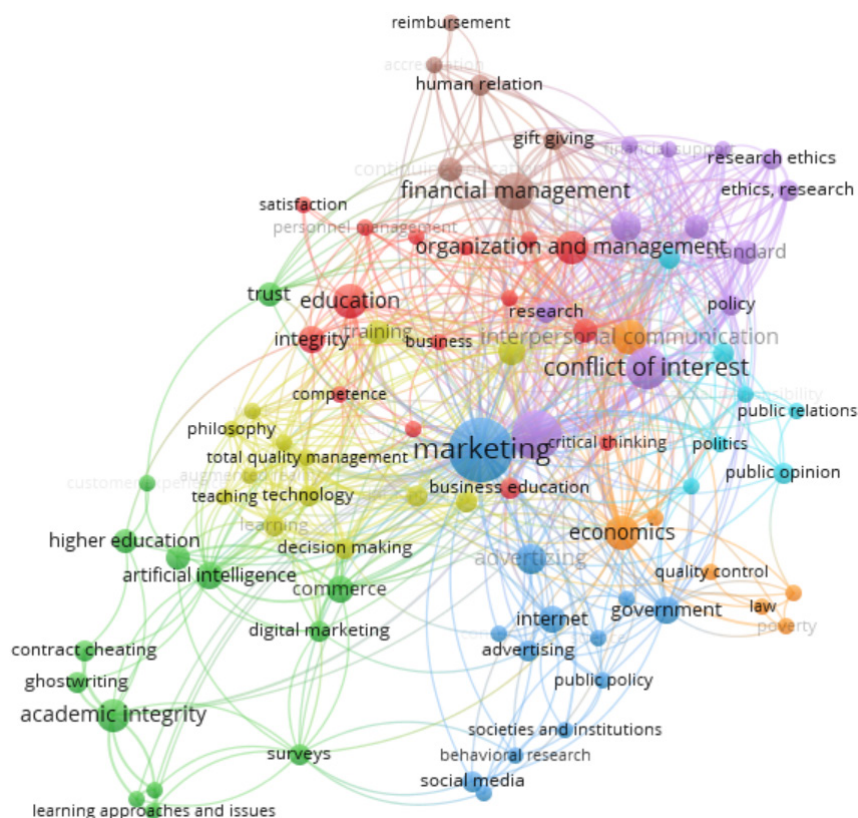


Fig. 1. Keyword map on query "marketing" AND "integrity" AND "education" (article database – <https://www.scopus.com/>, analysis tool – VOSviewer, version 1.6.19, ©2009–2023 Nees Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman)

Figure 1 explanation.

1. Clusters:

- green cluster focuses on topics related to academic integrity, education, and artificial intelligence;
- yellow cluster deals with marketing, business education, commerce, and digital marketing;
- blue cluster focuses on economics, advertising, Internet, government, and public policy;
- red cluster represents organization and management, financial management, and related interpersonal and ethical topics;
- purple cluster highlights research ethics, public relations, and communication;
- orange cluster connects to public policy, law, government, and institutions.

2. Central topics:

- marketing occupies the central position in the diagram, indicating it serves as a critical link connecting various themes such as education, economics, organization, and ethics;
- other central concepts include conflict of interest, organization and management, and academic integrity;

3. Key terms in clusters:

- green cluster:
 - core concepts: academic integrity, higher education, artificial intelligence, learning approaches, contract cheating, ghostwriting;
 - topics: academic challenges, unethical educational practices, and emerging technologies affecting academic processes.
- yellow cluster:
 - core concepts: marketing, business education, commerce, decision-making, digital marketing;
 - topics: Focuses on educational aspects of business, decision-making, and the role of marketing in education.
- blue cluster:
 - core concepts: economics, government, Internet, advertising, quality control;
 - topics: economic and policy-level discussions intersecting with advertising, governance, and the Internet;
- red cluster:
 - core concepts: Financial management, interpersonal communication, trust, ethics;
 - topics: management issues, ethical concerns, and financial accountability.
- purple cluster:
 - core concepts: research ethics, public relations, communication;
 - topics: ethical dimensions of research, public relations, and societal perceptions.
- orange cluster:
 - core concepts: public policy, law, politics, government;
 - topics: governance, policy-making, legal considerations, and their implications on broader societal structures.

4. Interconnections:

- marketing has the highest density of connections, linking it to nearly all other clusters, which suggests its integral role in tying together education, economics, ethics, and management;
- strong connections are also visible between:
 - academic integrity and higher education (green cluster);
 - conflict of interest and organization/management (red cluster);
 - public policy and economics/government (blue and orange clusters).

5. Peripheral topics:

- some peripheral topics, like philosophy, law, public opinion, and ghostwriting, indicate specialized or less interconnected areas within the broader topics.

6. Overall interpretation.

This map could be used to explore the multidimensional relationships between academic, ethical, managerial, and marketing topics. It highlights:

- the role of academic integrity and how it interfaces with fields like education, ethics, and technology;
- the overlap between management, ethics, and public policy, suggesting governance challenges in education and commerce;
- the pivotal role of marketing as a connecting topic across diverse disciplines, linking educational strategies, business practices, and policy-making.

Stage 2.

Query: "academic" AND "integrity" AND "promotion"

Total number of articles in Scopus database: 156.

Period of analysis: all years.

Areas: all areas.

Total number of keywords in VOSviewer: 1069. Keywords for analysis – 179 (not less than two occurrences in search results).

Keywords map: Figure 2.

Figure 2 explanation.

1. Clusters:

- green cluster focuses on academic integrity, plagiarism, publication ethics, and predatory journals;
- red cluster highlights methodology, education, responsibility, trust, and interpersonal communication;
- blue cluster deals with ethics, research, writing, and academic success.
- yellow cluster includes cheating, contract cheating, and qualitative research;
- orange cluster focuses on job satisfaction and job performance.

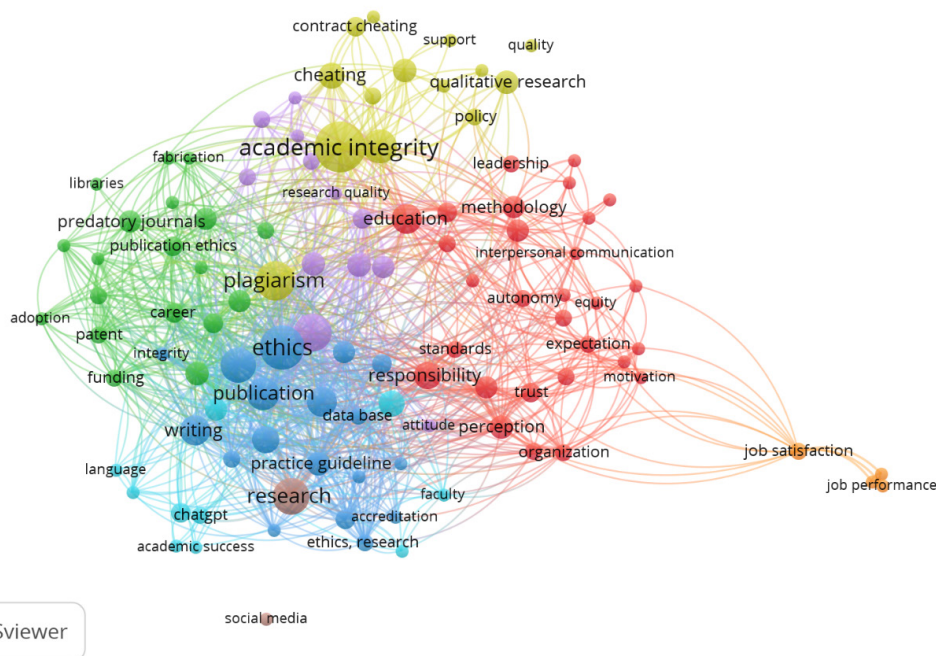


Fig. 2. Keyword map on query "academic" AND "integrity" AND "promotion" (article database – <https://www.scopus.com/>, analysis tool –VOSviewer, version 1.6.19, ©2009–2023 Nees Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman)

2. Central topics:

- academic integrity is a central topic, strongly connecting to topics like plagiarism, ethics, and predatory journals;
- ethics term serves as another key node, linking to concepts like research, publication, writing, and practice guidelines.
- education and methodology terms are prominently linked to other ethical and interpersonal topics like responsibility, trust, and standards;
- cheating and contract cheating highlight unethical behaviors in academia, connecting to broader discussions about qualitative research and academic integrity.

3. Key terms in clusters:

- green cluster:
 - core concepts: Academic integrity, plagiarism, predatory journals, publication ethics, fabrication;
 - topics: integrity issues, issues with unethical publication practices, and fraudulent behaviors.
- red cluster:
 - core concepts: education, methodology, trust, responsibility, interpersonal communication;
 - topics: ethical responsibility in education, leadership, and interpersonal skills required to maintain high standards.
- blue cluster:
 - core concepts: ethics, research, writing, publication, academic success;
 - topics: focus on ethical research practices, academic performance, and proper writing guidelines.
- yellow cluster:
 - core concepts: cheating, contract cheating, qualitative research;
 - topics: unethical academic practices and their relation to research methods.
- orange cluster:
 - core concepts: Job satisfaction, job performance;
 - topics: the impact of ethical practices and responsibility on workplace satisfaction and productivity.

4. Interconnections:

- academic integrity is at the heart of the green cluster and connects heavily to ethics, plagiarism, publication, and predatory journals;
- the ethics node in the blue cluster links strongly to research, practice guidelines, and publication, indicating its foundational role in academic and scientific practices;
- the education node in the red cluster is closely tied to methodology, trust, and interpersonal communication, showing the ethical considerations involved in teaching and management;
- the cheating node in the yellow cluster is linked to contract cheating and broader research quality and integrity discussions.

5. Peripheral topics:

- ChatGPT appears in the blue cluster, suggesting discussions about AI tools and their role in academic ethics;
- social media appears at the bottom, connecting to themes of communication and possibly ethical implications in research dissemination.

6. Overall Interpretation:

- This visualization provides a comprehensive overview of the key challenges and areas of focus in maintaining academic integrity, ethical research practices, and responsible education. It highlights:
- the central role of academic integrity and ethics in academic success, education, and research;
 - the interrelation of unethical practices like plagiarism, contract cheating, and predatory journals with broader academic and educational concerns;
 - the impact of ethical behavior on job satisfaction and performance suggests that integrity also influences professional settings.

While Figures 1 and 2 present a rich network of interconnected concepts, a notable absence is a direct link between "marketing" and "academic integrity." This lack of connection suggests several potential interpretations.

1. Limited current research focus.

The absence of a direct link might indicate that the intersection between marketing principles and academic integrity has not been extensively explored in the existing literature. This observation could be an area for future research, investigating how marketing strategies can be effectively employed to promote academic integrity within the university setting.

2. Distinct domains of study.

While both are important in higher education, marketing and academic integrity might be primarily studied and researched within separate academic disciplines. This fact could lead to limited cross-disciplinary research and a lack of direct connections between these two domains in the visualized networks.

3. Methodological limitations.

The specific keywords and search terms used in the analysis might not have captured the nuances of how marketing principles can be applied to promote academic integrity. For instance, terms like "communication strategies," "public relations," and "social marketing," which are closely related to marketing, might not have been adequately represented in the data.

4. Emerging area of study.

The lack of a strong connection could suggest that applying marketing principles to academic integrity is a relatively new and emerging area of research. As more research is conducted in this area, we might expect stronger connections between these concepts in future network visualizations.

Despite the absence of a direct link, it is essential to note that several concepts within the visualizations are relevant to both marketing and academic integrity. For example, "communication," "ethics," and "public relations" are crucial for both effective marketing campaigns and promoting a culture of academic integrity.

The aim of the article. This article aims to create a framework for the marketing of academic integrity for the successful implementation of best educational practices and marketing cases regarding the values of academic integrity.

Results and discussion. An approach to marketing of academic integrity is presented in two dimensions: as a framework (Figure 3) and as a marketing process (Figure 4).

Figure 3 represents an interconnected framework emphasizing the role of knowledge and its components in promoting the marketing of academic integrity as a central concept. Knowledge is the foundation of the framework, which acts as the primary resource driving all subsequent elements. From this foundation, a knowledge economy arises, showcasing the value and application of knowledge in driving innovation and economic systems. Simultaneously, knowledge marketing promotes and strategically utilizes knowledge for specific purposes, including educational values and ethical awareness. Another key element is knowledge sharing and shared learning, which involves collaborative processes where knowledge is distributed, exchanged, and applied collectively for mutual growth. Finally, knowledge management is responsible for organizing, storing, and effectively using knowledge within this system.

Marketing of academic integrity is positioned as a direct outcome of knowledge marketing, signifying its role as the bridge between the general use of knowledge and the promotion of ethical practices and values. The placement of marketing of academic integrity at the core indicates that it is not only the primary objective of the framework but also a key influencer in maintaining the integrity of the entire system.

The framework uses curved arrows to illustrate its components' cyclical and interactive relationships. Knowledge flows into both the knowledge economy and knowledge marketing, while

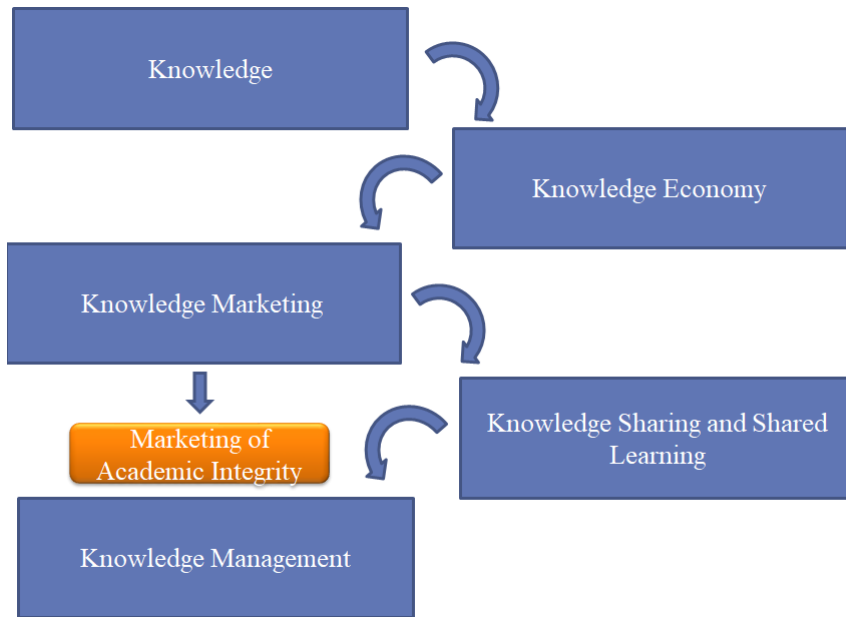


Fig. 3. Marketing of academic integrity as a framework



Fig. 4. Marketing of academic integrity as a marketing process

knowledge marketing directly leads to the marketing of academic integrity, demonstrating its role in promoting ethical awareness. Meanwhile, knowledge sharing, shared learning, and knowledge management contribute to and benefit from each other in a feedback loop, ensuring sustained knowledge dissemination and application.

The marketing of academic integrity occupies a pivotal role in this framework. It is depicted as both influenced by and influencing other system elements. Knowledge marketing depends on effectively framing and disseminating its principles while simultaneously impacting knowledge sharing and learning by fostering collaboration and trust in academic environments. Furthermore, it feeds into knowledge management, ensuring integrity in the organization, storage, and utilization of knowledge.

Overall, this framework illustrates a holistic approach in which knowledge is leveraged as a resource across multiple domains to emphasize the importance of marketing of academic integrity. This central goal upholds ethical standards in educational systems while being integral to ongoing processes that continuously refine and sustain knowledge practices.

Figure 4 presents a cyclical model for marketing of academic integrity as a marketing process within a higher education setting. It parallels traditional marketing concepts, suggesting that promoting academic integrity requires a strategic and multifaceted approach. The model is structured around nine interconnected components:

1. Research: emphasizes the need for ongoing research to understand factors influencing student behavior and identify innovative strategies for promoting ethical conduct.

2. Customer: recognizes that the "customers" of academic integrity are not just students but also graduates and employers, emphasizing the need to consider the needs and expectations of all stakeholders.

3. Solution: emphasizes the need for a "change of worldview" regarding academic integrity, moving beyond simply enforcing rules to creating a culture of ethical conduct and personal responsibility.

4. Innovation/Update: highlights the need for continuous improvement and adaptation, incorporating new research findings and best practices to refine academic integrity initiatives.

5. Concept/Product: suggests that "academic integrity" can be viewed as a "product" – a new system of relationships and values – that must be developed and marketed to the university community.

6. Advertising: Highlights the role of effective communication strategies, utilizing various channels and "agents of change" (faculty, staff, students) to disseminate messages about academic integrity.

7. Branding: Focuses on creating a strong and positive brand image for academic integrity within the institution by developing a system of values related to ethical conduct and communicating these values effectively.

8. Strategy: Suggests the use of strategic frameworks (like "elephant," "frog," and "orange" – likely representing different scales or approaches) to guide decision-making and resource allocation.

9. Opportunity: Encourages institutions to go beyond conventional approaches and explore new and innovative ways to foster academic integrity.

The cyclical nature of the model emphasizes the iterative and interconnected nature of these components. It suggests that promoting academic integrity requires a continuous and evolving effort that involves research, strategic planning, effective communication, and a focus on creating a positive and sustainable culture of ethical conduct.

The analysis of Figures 3 and 4 reveals a multifaceted understanding of marketing of academic integrity. Figure 3 emphasizes the foundational role of knowledge, highlighting its interconnectedness with knowledge economy, marketing, sharing, and management. Within this framework, marketing of academic integrity emerges as a key outcome, influencing and being influenced by other knowledge-related activities. Figure 4, on the other hand, presents a cyclical model for marketing academic integrity as a process. This model emphasizes the importance of research, stakeholder analysis, strategic planning, effective communication, and continuous innovation in promoting a culture

of ethical conduct. Both figures underscore the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to marketing academic integrity, recognizing it as a dynamic and evolving process that requires ongoing attention and adaptation to foster a culture of ethical scholarship within higher education.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. Academic integrity, a cornerstone of higher education, requires a multifaceted approach to its promotion and maintenance. While the terms "marketing" and "advertising" might seem unconventional in this context, they aptly describe the strategic communication efforts needed to convey the importance of ethical conduct within the university effectively. In this context, marketing focuses on understanding different stakeholders' needs and motivations and crafting messages that resonate with their values and concerns. Conversely, advertising refers to the specific channels and methods used to disseminate these messages to the target audience.

Distinguishing between marketing and advertising in the context of academic integrity is crucial. Marketing involves a deeper understanding of the target audience and their perceptions of academic integrity. It requires careful consideration of their needs, concerns, and motivations. For example, students might be more responsive to messages emphasizing the long-term benefits of academic integrity for their personal and professional growth. At the same time, faculty may be more receptive to messages highlighting the importance of maintaining trust and ethical conduct within their academic departments.

Conversely, advertising focuses on the specific channels and methods used to deliver these messages. This list includes selecting appropriate communication channels, such as online platforms, in-person workshops, and printed materials. Effective advertising also involves crafting compelling messages that are clear, concise, and engaging. For example, storytelling, real-life examples, and interactive elements can make the message more memorable and impactful.

By carefully differentiating between marketing and advertising efforts, universities can develop more effective strategies for promoting academic integrity. This nuanced approach allows institutions to tailor their messages to specific audiences, select the most appropriate communication channels, and ultimately create a more impactful and sustainable culture of ethical scholarship.

Further research is needed to explore the potential applications of marketing principles to enhance academic integrity initiatives. This research could include investigating persuasive communication strategies, targeted messaging campaigns, and stakeholder engagement techniques to promote ethical conduct and discourage academic misconduct. By bridging the gap between marketing and academic integrity, universities can develop more effective and impactful strategies for fostering a culture of honesty and ethical scholarship.

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