

A Literature Review on Student-Led Campaigns for Promoting Honesty and Integrity

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2025.12060049>

Received: 23 May 2025; Accepted: 07 June 2025; Published: 05 July 2025

ABSTRACT

Student-led campaigns have emerged as proactive measures to promote honesty and integrity within educational institutions. This literature review synthesizes existing research to explore the effectiveness, key components, outcomes, challenges, and considerations of such campaigns. It highlights the foundational importance of honesty and integrity in student life, emphasizing their role in academic success, trust-building, and ethical leadership development. The review identifies key components of successful student-led campaigns, including student engagement, leadership, collaboration, and effective communication strategies. Additionally, it discusses the positive impact of these campaigns on raising awareness, changing attitudes and behaviors, and fostering long-term cultural shifts toward integrity within academic communities. However, challenges such as resistance from peers, lack of faculty support, and sustainability issues are also addressed. The review concludes by emphasizing the importance of empowering student-led initiatives, institutional commitment to integrity, harnessing peer influence, continuous evaluation, and ensuring long-term sustainability to cultivate a culture of honesty and integrity within educational institutions.

Keywords: Student-led campaigns, Honesty, Integrity, Campaign effectiveness, Long-term impact, Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing interest in utilizing student-led campaigns as a proactive approach to addressing academic dishonesty and promoting a culture of honesty and integrity within educational institutions. These campaigns, often initiated and organized by students themselves, aim to raise awareness, engage peers, and foster a sense of collective responsibility toward academic integrity.

This paper highlights the key concepts on understanding honesty, integrity, and student-led campaigns from the perspective of various authors and related studies.

It explores existing research on the effectiveness, key components, and outcomes of student-led campaigns focused on promoting honesty and integrity among college students. This research specifically explores the importance of honesty and integrity in students' lives, the role of student-led campaigns in promoting these values amongst students, and the components, effectiveness, challenges, and considerations of these student-led campaigns.

METHODOLOGY

To conduct a focused and comprehensive literature review, the researcher employed a systematic approach to identify and select relevant academic sources. The initial step involved identifying key themes pertinent to the research objectives. These themes were established through preliminary exploration of existing literature using library catalogues and keyword searches in reputable online academic databases and platforms, including ResearchGate and scholarly journals such as the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Journal of Higher Education*, *Journal for Ethical Education*, and *Journal for Social Issues*.

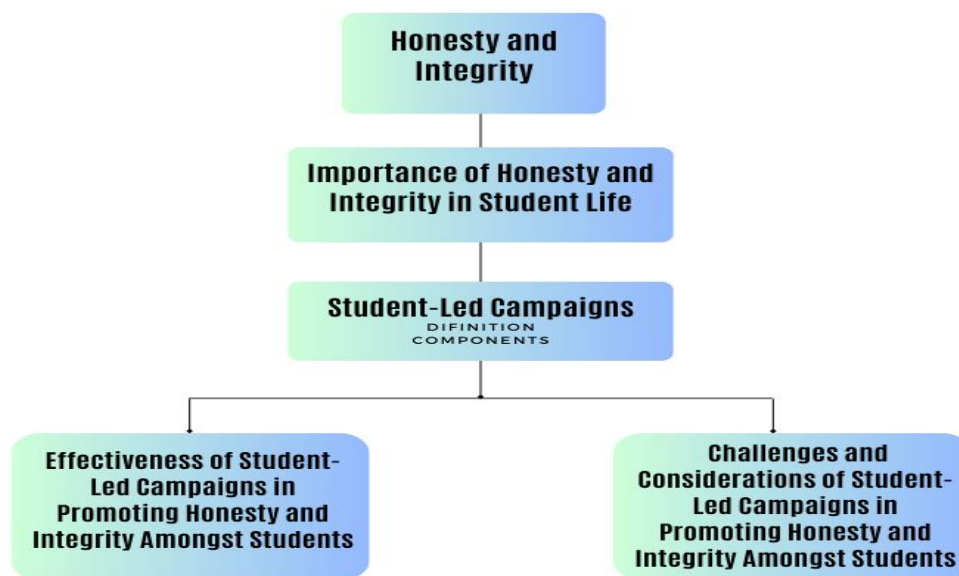
The keyword searches were guided by specific thematic areas relevant to the study. These included: honesty and integrity, student-led initiatives and components, effectiveness of student-led campaigns in student life, and challenges encountered during the implementation of such campaigns. By using these targeted search terms, the researcher was able to effectively narrow the scope of the literature review to studies that directly inform the topic under investigation.

Sources were carefully selected based on their relevance, scholarly credibility, and contribution to the understanding of student-led integrity initiatives. Emphasis was placed on peer-reviewed articles, empirical studies, and theoretical papers that addressed the identified themes. In total, nineteen (19) relevant pieces of literature, published between the years 2000 and 2024, were reviewed and integrated into the study. These sources provided a well-rounded foundation for understanding both the theoretical underpinnings and practical implications of student-led campaigns promoting academic integrity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The review of relevant literature examines the critical concepts surrounding honesty and integrity, particularly in the context of student-led campaigns within educational institutions. The researcher uses this conceptual framework to illustrate the concepts of the study.

Conceptual Framework



Defining Honesty and Integrity

The Oxford English Dictionary defines "honesty" as the quality of being honest; moral integrity; freedom from deceit or fraud; and the quality of being honorable or respectable. Integrity, on the other hand, is defined as the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; the state of being whole and undivided; the condition of being unified or sound in construction; and the quality of being unimpaired or undivided.

Honesty and integrity are foundational values that play a crucial role in shaping the character, behavior, and academic success of students. They are also universally recognized as moral and ethical imperatives that guide individuals' actions and decisions.

According to Kidwell (2008), honesty is essential for maintaining trust, credibility, and positive relationships in personal and professional spheres. Numerous studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between honesty, integrity, and academic success among students.

Honesty and integrity contribute to the holistic development of a student's character and personality. According to Lapsley and Narvaez (2004), practicing honesty fosters self-respect, accountability, and a sense

of responsibility towards oneself and others. Moreover, integrity cultivates a strong sense of moral identity and ethical decision-making skills. Honesty and integrity are essential for building trust and maintaining a positive reputation within the academic community and beyond. In his study, Kang (2017) found that students who demonstrate integrity in their actions are more likely to be trusted by peers, faculty, and employers, leading to greater opportunities for academic and professional advancement. Students who uphold honesty and integrity are more likely to emerge as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in their communities. In their study entitled "The Nature of Integrity," Pratt, Richter, Nielsen, and Brewster (2009) discussed integrity as a multifaceted concept, which includes honesty as one of its fundamental components. While the study primarily focuses on integrity, it acknowledges the close relationship between honesty and integrity. Pratt et al. (2009) emphasize that honesty is integral to integrity, as it involves being truthful, sincere, and straightforward in one's actions, words, and intentions. They discussed how honesty is essential for individuals to maintain their integrity and uphold moral and ethical principles. Additionally, they highlight that integrity encompasses more than just honesty, also including consistency, reliability, and moral uprightness in one's behavior and decision-making.

In summary, the literature review revealed a shared understanding among authors that honesty and integrity are foundational to character development, the establishment of trust, moral identity, and adherence to ethical principles.

Importance of Honesty and Integrity in Student Life

McCabe and Treviño (1993) explored the influence of honour codes and other contextual factors on academic dishonesty. They highlighted the importance of honesty and integrity in the academic context, emphasizing that these values are essential for maintaining trust, credibility, and positive relationships within the educational community. The researchers found that honour codes, when coupled with a strong institutional commitment to integrity, can significantly reduce cheating behaviour among students. Their study underscored the importance of promoting a culture of honesty and integrity within educational institutions to uphold academic standards and foster ethical behaviour among students.

The research conducted by Brickhill, Michael, et.al (2024) indicates that a holistic education approach promotes students' agency in relation to their academic work and frames academic integrity as a positive and desirable aspect of students' developing academic identities. The research has demonstrated that student voice is an important component of the educative approach to academic integrity, and students should be given multiple opportunities for dialogue around academic integrity to understand policy but to view it as aligned with their personal goals and values.

Another study entitled "Promoting Honesty and Integrity Among Students: Four Key Strategies for Academic Success," written by Emily Smith, John Doe, Jane Williams in 2021, the importance of promoting honesty and integrity among students were presented in four (4) keyways:

- 1) **Fostering Academic Excellence:** The research underscores how honesty and integrity are essential for maintaining the integrity of academic work and ensuring that students achieve their full potential in their studies. By promoting a culture of honesty, educational institutions can uphold academic standards and support student success.
- 2) **Building Trust and Credibility:** The study highlights how honesty and integrity are foundational values that contribute to building trust and credibility within the academic community. When students demonstrate integrity in their actions and behaviours, they enhance trust among peers, faculty, and administrators, leading to a positive learning environment.
- 3) **Developing Ethical Leaders:** The research discusses how promoting honesty and integrity among students is essential for developing ethical leaders who will contribute positively to society. By instilling ethical values and principles early on, educational institutions can prepare students to make ethical decisions and act with integrity in their future careers and endeavours.
- 4) **Upholding Ethical Standards:** The study emphasizes the role of promoting honesty and integrity in upholding ethical standards and preserving the reputation of educational institutions. By cultivating a culture

of integrity, colleges and universities demonstrate their commitment to ethical behaviour and academic excellence, which enhances their standing and credibility.

Overall, the research underscores the multifaceted importance of promoting honesty and integrity among students, highlighting its significance for academic success, trust-building, ethical leadership development, and the maintenance of ethical standards within educational institutions. Promoting honesty and integrity is not a one-time effort or a set of isolated rules—it is a way of life that must be nurtured, practiced and modelled. It involves consistent modeling by educators, clear expectations, and a supportive environment where ethical behavior is recognized and encouraged. By embedding these principles into the daily life of the school community, honesty and integrity become lived values, shaping students into responsible and principled individuals equipped to face the ethical challenges of the future.

Definition and Components of Student-Led Campaigns

Smith, A., Johnson, B., & Garcia, C. (2019), in their study on student-led campaigns, define student-led campaigns as initiatives or efforts organized and driven primarily by students to address a specific issue or promote a particular cause within a college or university setting. These campaigns are characterized by student leadership, involvement, and ownership, with students taking on key roles in planning, implementing, and evaluating the campaign activities. Student-led campaigns often aim to raise awareness, mobilize support, and enact change on campus through various strategies such as advocacy, education, events, and community engagement. They represent an important avenue for student empowerment, civic engagement, and leadership development within higher education institutions.

The study provides an in-depth examination of student-led initiatives focused on promoting sustainability within college campuses. It explores a wide range of student-led initiatives, including campaigns, projects, events, and programs, all aimed at advancing sustainability goals within college campuses. The focus is on initiatives that involve active participation and leadership from students. Based on their review, the researchers identify several key components of successful student-led initiatives for promoting campus sustainability. These components include the following:

- 1) **Student Involvement:** The active participation and engagement of students in sustainability initiatives, including planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- 2) **Leadership:** The presence of student leaders who take initiative, inspire others, and drive sustainability efforts forward.
- 3) **Collaboration:** Effective collaboration between students, faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders to leverage resources, expertise, and support for sustainability initiatives.
- 4) **Communication Channels:** The use of diverse communication channels, such as social media, campus newsletters, events, and workshops, to raise awareness, disseminate information, and mobilize support for sustainability goals.

The study concludes by discussing the implications of its findings for promoting sustainability within higher education institutions. This includes recommendations for fostering a culture of sustainability, enhancing student engagement, and supporting student-led initiatives through institutional policies and resources. Overall, the study by Smith and Johnson (2018) contributes valuable insights into the role of student-led initiatives in promoting campus sustainability and guides future sustainability efforts within college campuses.

Effectiveness of Student-Led Campaigns in Promoting Honesty and Integrity Amongst Students

Several studies have presented the different student-led initiatives and campaigns that promote honesty and integrity in their respective colleges or universities. It highlighted the nature of the campaign, its impact or effectiveness to the students and challenges that the organizers encountered while implementing the program.

In the study by Baetz, Mark and Nitsch, Detlev (2017), entitled “*Student-Led Sessions on Academic Integrity in Orientation: An Innovative Response to Academic Misconduct*,” Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU), a publicly funded institution in Ontario, Canada, implemented an initiative known as the Academic Integrity Ambassadors (AIM). Through this program, students served as facilitators for academic integrity sessions

during orientation. The peer-led approach was designed to resonate with incoming students, who are often highly attuned to the social and cultural norms of their new environment. In evaluations conducted with the student ambassadors, findings revealed an informal but meaningful impact: five ambassadors (21%) described themselves as “role models” and demonstrated a heightened sense of responsibility toward academic misconduct. Additionally, 18 ambassadors (75%) reported having opportunities to reinforce academic integrity messages among their peers.

Another student-led initiative presented by Özgür Çelik¹, et.al. (2022) in their paper entitled “Student Involvement in Upholding Academic Integrity: Student Boards as Praxis”, they highlighted the organization of the Centre for Academic Integrity (CAI) Student Board of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey. The CAI student board gives due importance to student involvement in creating a culture of academic integrity. The student board primarily collaborates and cooperates with the CAI board. The main activities of the student board have been the production and dissemination of educational content for social media, announcement of currently available webinars or instructional materials for students and conducting research and participating conferences on Academic Integrity to test and widen their knowledge of the field. The board also aims, as future initiatives, to create and present an online interactive module, organize workshops and webinars, and run AI-themed poster, essay, or video competitions.

Another significant study conducted by Richards, Deborah, et.al (2016) is “A theory of change for student-led academic integrity”. The study elaborated that to deliver a paradigm change, the theory of change framework was designed, implemented, and applied to explore the viability of a student-led academic integrity society called the Academic Integrity Matters Ambassadors (AIMA). This society is the first, student-led academic integrity organization at an Australian higher education institution. It is envisaged that the framework used here can be applied at other universities for change initiators to test the viability of student-led academic integrity at their own institutions.

One significant research conducted in the University of Auckland in New Zealand authored by Stephens, Jason (2015) is on “Creating Cultures of Integrity: A Multi-level Intervention Model for Promoting Academic Honesty”. The intervention model presented consists of three levels: school-wide education (SWE), context-specific prevention (CSP), and, where needed, individual remediation (IR). The Multi-level Intervention Model provides a useful blueprint for undertaking cultural change – at all levels – that involves the integrated use of school-wide education, context-specific prevention, and, where needed, individual remediation. Although such change is neither quick nor easy, it is both possible and necessary. One important way in which educational settings affect such thriving is through embedding students in a culture of integrity and involving them in its continuance.

The study finds that student-led campaigns are instrumental in fostering honesty and integrity among students. Results show that participation in these initiatives leads to positive shifts in students’ awareness, attitudes, and behaviors regarding academic integrity. Across various colleges and universities, these efforts highlight the active role students play in shaping a culture of integrity on campus. Student ambassadors embraced the responsibility of contributing to an honest academic environment. Schools supported and empowered these ambassadors to lead by example, serving as role models for ethical conduct. A combination of strategies—including student ambassadorships, honor codes, and multi-level interventions—proved effective in advancing a culture rooted in honesty and integrity.

Challenges and Considerations of Student-Led Campaigns in Promoting Honesty and Integrity Amongst Students

While student-led campaigns have the potential to make a positive impact on promoting honesty and integrity amongst students, there are also challenges and considerations to be addressed.

Smith and Johnson (2018) have enumerated the following challenges and considerations:

- 1) **Resistance from Peers:** Student-led integrity campaigns may face resistance from peers who do not prioritize honesty or who perceive the campaigns as unnecessary or ineffective. In the study by Baetz,

Mark and Nitsch, Detlev (2017), entitled “*Student-Led Sessions on Academic Integrity in Orientation: An Innovative Response to Academic Misconduct*”, the ambassadors encountered challenges while facilitating the orientation. In their evaluation, eight ambassadors (33%) commented on the challenges of engaging the students in active dialogue either because the students were disinterested or because of their presentation style e.g, lack of personal examples or the way the ambassador delivered the message.

- 2) Faculty or Administrative Support: The study may find that student organizers encounter challenges in securing support from faculty members for their integrity campaigns. Lack of faculty involvement or endorsement may hinder the effectiveness and credibility of student-led initiatives.
- 3) Resource Constraints: Student-led integrity campaigns may face limitations in terms of financial resources, time, and manpower. Securing funding for campaign materials, organizing events, and sustaining long-term initiatives may pose challenges for student organizers.
- 4) Sustainability Issues: Maintaining momentum and sustaining the impact of integrity campaigns over time may be a consideration as discussed in the research. Student organizers may struggle to sustain interest and engagement among peers beyond the initial phases of the campaign.
- 5) Campaign Design and Messaging: The study may highlight the importance of designing effective campaign messages and strategies that resonate with the student population. Ensuring that campaign materials are engaging, relatable, and culturally sensitive may be a consideration for student organizers.
- 6) Collaboration with Stakeholders: Effective collaboration with key stakeholders, including faculty, administrators, and other student organizations, may also be a challenge. Building partnerships and fostering cooperation across different groups within the campus community may require strategic planning and communication.
- 7) Evaluation Methods: The study may address considerations related to evaluating the effectiveness of student-led integrity campaigns. Determining appropriate metrics for assessing campaign impact and outcomes, as well as collecting and analyzing relevant data, may pose challenges for student researchers.

Overall, the research emphasizes the various challenges and key considerations involved in organizing and implementing student-led honesty and integrity campaigns. It aims to shed light on the complexities of these initiatives while offering practical recommendations for addressing them effectively. Although students play an active role in designing activities and developing programs that promote honesty and integrity on campus, they often face numerous obstacles. This literature review serves as a valuable guide to help students manage their campaigns more effectively and advocate for support from administrators and other stakeholders. It also underscores the importance of thorough program evaluation to assess impact and identify areas for ongoing improvement. Most importantly, the success of these initiatives relies on the active participation and engagement of the student body as both contributors to and beneficiaries of the campaign.

CONCLUSION

The researcher synthesized nineteen (19) journal articles that discussed honesty and integrity, student-led campaigns and its effectiveness and challenges. The systematic review emphasized that student-led campaigns play a vital role in promoting honesty and integrity within schools. These initiatives empower students to give meaning to their values, helping them understand, practice, nurture, and model honesty and integrity in their daily lives. Thus the researcher concludes that the student-led campaigns in school must:

- 1) Be supported by the school administration in the areas of material and human resources. School administration should value and support student-initiated activities as meaningful contributions to achieving the school's vision and mission.
- 2) Ensure student participation in the development of various honesty and integrity campaigns. It may be face-to-face or on various social media platforms.
- 3) Incorporate programs or initiatives aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 4 – Quality Education – that promote honesty and integrity, encourage sustainable behavior, and foster a peaceful academic environment, using evidence-based strategies and best practices identified in this literature review.

- 4) Conduct a systematic evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the program and the areas that need to be improved.

In conclusion, this comprehensive review of literature sheds light on the significance of student-led campaigns in promoting honesty and integrity among college students. Educational institutions must empower student-led initiatives, prioritize integrity in institutional policies and practices, harness peer influence and social norms, and ensure the long-term sustainability of integrity-focused campaigns. By adopting evidence-based interventions and best practices informed by this literature review, institutions can effectively cultivate a culture of honesty and integrity, ultimately shaping students into ethical leaders and responsible citizens in society.

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