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Supporting Ethical, Independent Learning Behavior Among University Students in the Arabian Gulf

Dr. Judith Mavodza
Judith.Mavodza@zu.ac.ae
Dr. Mary Sengati-Zimba.
Mary.Sengati-Zimba@zu.ac.ae

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Outline

- Background to the study
- Definition of terms
- The study
  – Area of study-Methods of data collection
- Literature
- Findings
- Conclusion and recommendations
- Question and answers

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Introduction

- Based on a pilot study

- Newspapers, students and discussion with colleagues indicated there are issues with academic environment in the region.

- Literature review and research on the Internet revealed discussions on issues of academic integrity in the region.

Ethical Behaviour in Academia

- Producing and presenting own work .
- Acknowledging sources of information appropriately.
- Presenting results from real conducted research as found-out.
- Using quotation marks when using others' words, and or writing verbatim.

Plagiarism-Definition

".. is an act of taking the writings of another person and passing them off as one's own" (Encyclopedia Britannica online 2014)

…recently has expanded to include cheating, plagiarism, falsification or fabrication of data or information, copying without acknowledging, submitting outsourced assignments.

Plagiarism

Norvaiša (2011) adds.. questionable research practice…which includes improper authorship, dual submission, salami slicing, redundant publication, improper citation and many other related actions.

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Independent Learning-Definition

"…is autonomous learning, independent study, self-directed learning, student initiated learning, project orientation, discovery and inquiry, teaching for thinking, learning to learn, self-instruction and lifelong learning".. (Meyer, Haywood, Sachdev and Faraday 2008)

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Purpose of the study

- Find-out faculty perspectives on ethical behavior including academic integrity and how instances of plagiarism in the classrooms are handled.

- Gather ideas from faculty on how to improve academic integrity (AI) culture.

- Promote AI awareness in academic institutions.

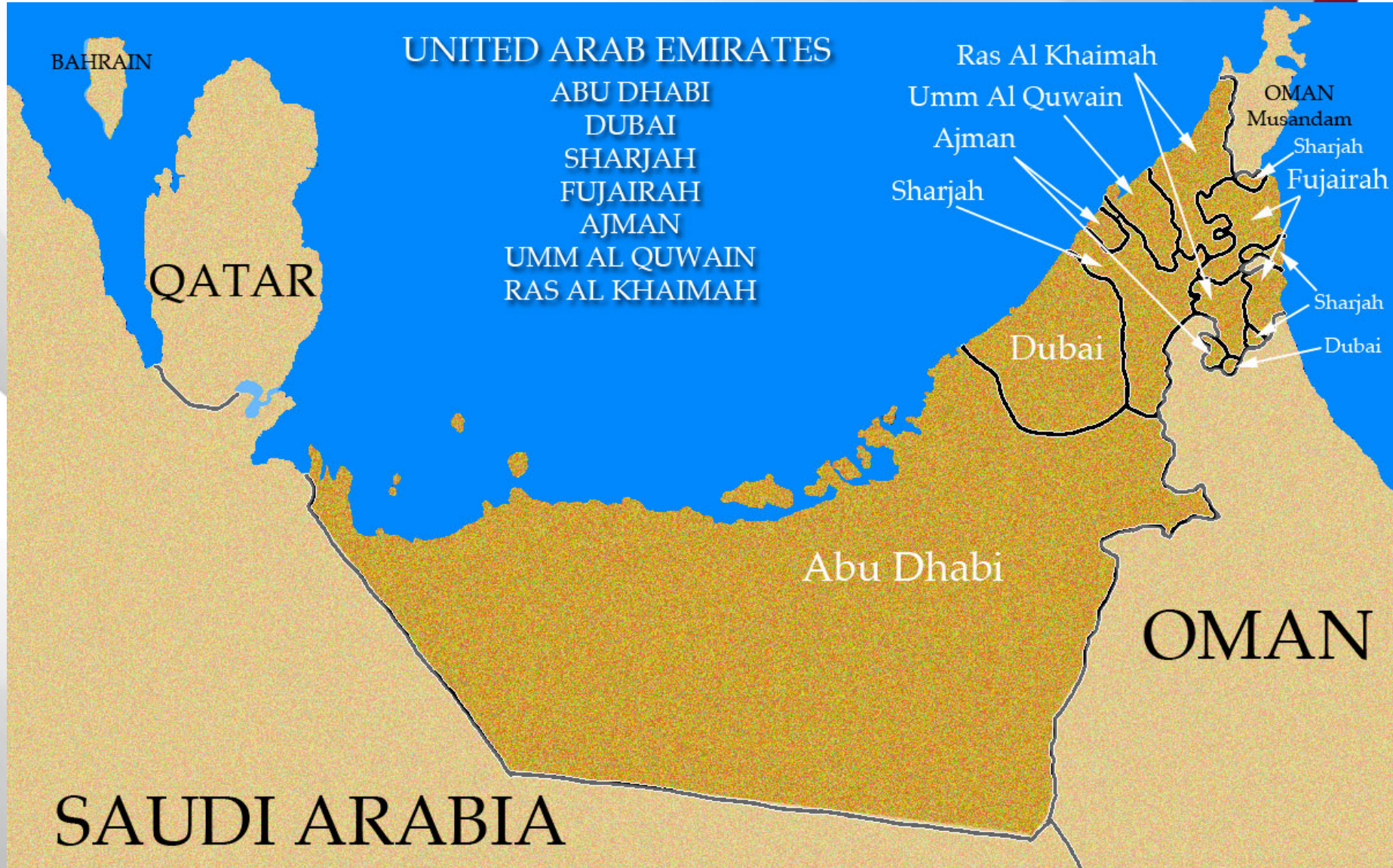- Contribute to knowledge about academic integrity in the Arabian Gulf

Research Methodology

- Exploratory case study design
- One institution in the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi.
- Population: 18 faculty and librarians
- Data Collection tools:
  - 27 item-Web based survey
  - Face to face interview
  - Literature review

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Area of Study

Area of Study

Limitations and Strengths

- **Limitation**
  - small sample-results cannot be generalized

- **Strength**
  - Confirmed a need for a broader study

What other studies say

Reasons for plagiarizing

- Language challenges (Wheeler & Anderson, 2010)
- Cultural/ societal factors (McCabe, Feghali & Abdulla, 2008; Thomas, Raynor & MacKinnon, 2013).
- Peer pressure
- Heavy workloads
- Lack of time/time management issues
- Social pressure for high grades

(AlMahri, Alshehhi, Alshehhi, AlBusaeed & AlBusaeed 2010)

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Findings: Faculty involvement with institutional AI issues

- Learned about AI in their institutions from a variety of sources.

- Learnt about AI policies from university catalogs and staff meetings, some had no idea policies existed.

- Penalties for academic dishonesty- not severe.

- Challenges with understanding AI policies.

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Findings: Faculty perceptions of student involvement with AI issues

- Copy and paste plagiarism- common
- Contracted or papers written by another person - common
- Purchased papers
- Fabricated results

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Findings: **Faculty management of AI issues**

- Majority – not sure if problems/cases of academic dishonesty are reported.
- Never report
- Prefer to manage and guide students

Findings: Faculty opinions and suggestions

- Introduce compulsory completion of AI quizzes to all students
- Provide regular/scheduled AI workshops/tutorials for students and faculty.
- Reinforce consistent use of SafeAssign, Turnitin or other plagiarism detection tools.
- Institute institutional-wide approach to dealing with AI matters to sensitize faculty and students.
- Use of positive approaches to educate students about AI.
- Promote institutional wide consistency in teaching, and managing AI.

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Conclusion

Academic Integrity matters have become complicated and require educated strategies to be managed comprehensively.

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Recommendations

- Create an AI awareness inventory to assist the development and creation of appropriate institutional-wide policies and practices.

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Discussion

Q &A

Shukran!

Thank you for Listening

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