Learning Enhancement and Innovation Bids 2022-23

GEM AWARD GAP AT UON

Academic Misconduct Among Global Ethnic Majority Students: A Perspective of Academic Integrity Officer at the University of Northampton

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FACULTY: *FBL*

SUBJECT AREA:
HRM & ORGANISATIONAL
BEHAVIOUR

FACULTY: *FBL*
SUBJECT AREA:
BUSINESS SYSTEMS
& OPERATIONS

FACULTY: *FAST*

SUBJECT AREA:
*JOURNALISM, MEDIA
& PERFORMANCE*

FACULTY: *FAST*

SUBJECT AREA:
COMPUTING

Dr Amar Daxini: Research Assistant

Teaching Boot and Shoe students
Northampton College of Technology c.1950's

Technical drawing
Northampton School of Art 1959

Senior Typing Class, 1960
Northampton College of Technology

Students relaxing by the Brampton
Building, School of Health 1992

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Once upon a time the University would have served the county of Northamptonshire's needs….

Within the last ten years, we've seen…

- Increasing competition

- A growing number of students from Black And Minority Ethnic backgrounds (BAME/GEM), particularly Black British/African students coming from London

Challenges Faced by GEM Students in HE

- Cultural shock / cultural adjustment/ food/ Weather/Language

- Different education systems and assessment standards for international students

- Racism and discrimination

- Financial difficulties

- Child care

- **Deficit model**

- Imposter syndrome

- Accommodation/visa/late resumption

- Access to university services/societies

- Physical and Mental health issues

- **Academic misconduct referrals**

Background (1)

- Academic misconduct comprises **cheating, plagiarism, fabrication** of information, or facilitation of such misconduct.

- Research has indicated a rise among students engaging in academic misconduct **globally in recent years.**

- Academic misconduct **poses a threat** to the ethical codes that higher education institutions abide by.

- Academic misconduct undermines the integrity of learning outcomes and the value of qualifications.

- Academic misconduct is studied to understand its prevalence, determinants of participation and to find solutions for reducing it

Background (2)

- Studies examining academic misconduct can be organised into investigations into perceptions, determinants, and **reasons for engaging in academic misconduct**.

- Reasons for engaging in academic misconduct can be **intentional** or **unintentional**.

- Academic misconduct is often more prevalent among **international students.**

- The study extended the literature by focusing on **racial minority** students from both **international and home status.**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Mixed Methods research

- Opinion-based and subjective in nature

- Semi-structured interviews with 5 AIOs*

- Secondary Data Analysis

- Ethics approval

* Academic Integrity Officer (AIO)
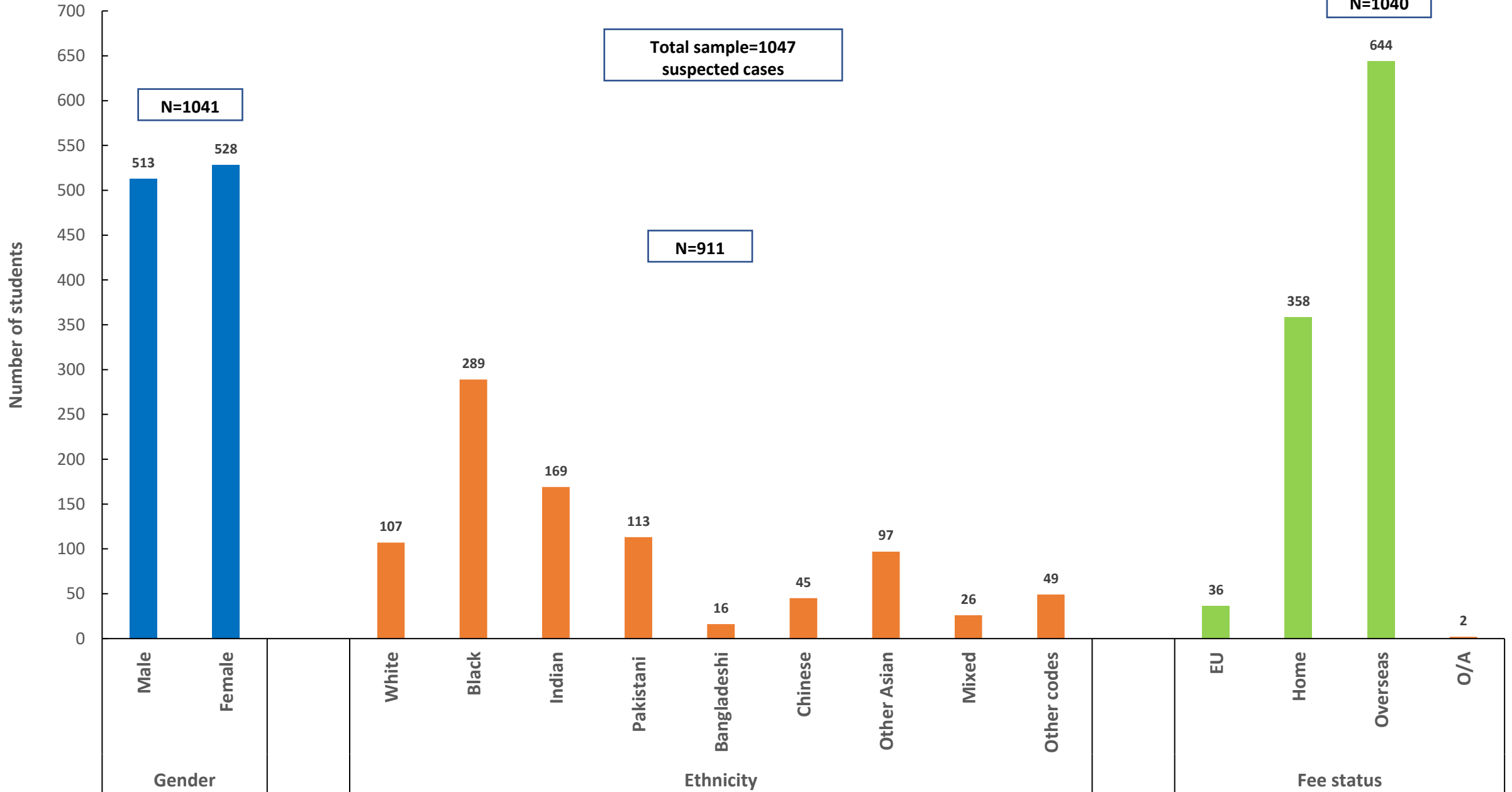
Sample Demographic Characteristics (2021-2022)

Table 1. Sample academic misconduct statistics for suspected cases and outcome

Variable		Sample size	N	%
Academic misconduct offense		1026		
	Collusion		197	19
	Contract cheating		102	10
	Plagiarism		686	67
	Turnitin		5	0
	Mixed		32	3
	Cheating		1	0
	Commissioning		2	0
	Other		1	0
Academic misconduct outcome		776		
	Academic misconduct has not occurred		96	12
	Academic misconduct has occurred		659	85
	Referred to panel		21	3

Findings (1)

- Academic misconduct **affects both international and home students** at UK universities, but international students may be more susceptible to academic misconduct due to **differences in educational systems and cultural norms.**

- International students may not be adequately **trained** or prepared about the **education system in the UK,** which can result in unintentional plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct.

- Home students may engage in academic misconduct due to **pressure to perform well** or a sense of privilege.

- Academic misconduct **referrals** are influenced by **racism and unconscious bias,** which leads to unfair treatment and outcomes for minority students.

- **Minority students are disproportionately affected** by academic misconduct, which can have a significant impact on their higher education experience.

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- *"I think one of our biggest problems is that we're trying to make an academic system fit an international audience of students who have come from an incredibly diverse range of academic institutions across the world, some of which actively encourage their students to write in a way that is verbatim from their teachers and students, give you a really good example. Two students who I've seen this week, actually one of them from Nigeria.* **She was very, very clear that the best grades and marks that she would get were the ones where she would copy what the professor or the doctor said to her word for word into her writing**. *And so. The outcome to that is you get a high similarity score and she'd done her undergrad and her postgrad lots of studies in Nigeria and had arrived in the UK […] So within a couple of months, six months of arriving in UK, she's in a new education system that has different educational standards and it's these different educational standards that end up penalising her for something that's not her fault.* **(P1**)

Academic judgment influenced by Racism and unconscious bias (2)

 […] *"I'm one of them driven by that frustration and outraged that actually, you know, students are being unfairly penalised. You know, within a system that is inherently discriminatory towards them because of background, because of skin color etcetera, etcetera.* **So You know it's, I mean, it's undeniable that large and small institutions are often in denial about pockets of discrimination and racism both implicit and explicit.** *And I think that's one of the things that large institutions like universities, don't want to acknowledge that if you have systems that are inherently set up. And governed and delivered by a particular background for such a long time that there will be some very implicit boundaries or implicit perceptions of people from different backgrounds to them, and that will manifest in the way in which they work with one another. So, I think"* […] (**P3**).

The Importance of Providing Training to novice Lecturers on Academic Misconduct referrals (3)

[…] "I think we'd need uh. Definitely need to rethink about the rigor of the tutor **induction into the system**, so lecturers and that would have to be done not. So you could start that by starting when people start and they do get that in the induction lot more. But the key problem we probably got so make that would be revisiting that making sure that's fit for purpose I think it is but it's always a good starting point but you don't want to keep adding to the pile of people that we've got. Because it isn't part of the mandatory training. So like we do fire safety and you know we've got like display cream equipment and make sure we don't get bad backs and all of that well maybe we need to think about plagiarism as one of the mandatory courses for all staff so that we do this initial training" […] (**P2**).

Findings (2)

- Academic misconduct is linked to unconscious bias, **white privilege,** and **institutional racism.**

- Lack of **training provided to new lecturers** on how and when to refer students for academic misconduct can have significant consequences for both students and staff.

- Lecturers may struggle to identify when a student has committed academic misconduct without adequate training.

- It is crucial to differentiate between students who commit academic misconduct by **careless mistake** or **ignorance** and those who engage in more **malicious behavior.**

- Referring all students for academic misconduct can **discourage students from seeking help.**

Conclusion & Recommendations

- Academic misconduct is a prevalent issue in UK universities that affects both **home and international students.**

- To combat academic misconduct, universities must create more awareness of the consequences and promote a culture of academic integrity and honesty.

- Universities should provide **training and resources** for all students, including international students, and promote a culture of academic honesty and integrity through policies and procedures that are clearly communicated.

- Universities must **address racism, unconscious bias, white privilege, and institutional racism in their policies and practices to create a more inclusive and equitable higher education** system.

- By taking proactive steps to address academic misconduct and issues of racism, universities can create a more just and equitable educational environment that supports all students in achieving their academic goals while upholding the values of academic integrity.

- **ChatGPT**

THANK YOU

G E M

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