



Investigating the Impact of Ethical Considerations in Final Assignment Submission among Postgraduate EFL Students

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Abstract

This study examined how postgraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students behave and perform academically. The study demonstrates the significant impact of ethical issues on students' behavior and outcomes by examining data from a sample of postgraduate EFL students. The results show that putting ethical concerns first encourages moral conduct, reflecting academic honesty. Students that prioritize ethics routinely create excellent work that is detailed, well-structured and follows writing rules. Additionally, ethical concerns considerably impact assignment evaluation scores, with students who practice ethics-conscious behavior scoring higher on various assessment criteria like content, organization, writing style, plagiarism, and timely submission. This research recommends that educational institutions and teachers incorporate ethical considerations into the curriculum, establish guidelines for appropriate academic behavior, and provide training programs to increase student knowledge of ethical issues to promote academic integrity. Maintaining academic standards requires the implementation of effective mechanisms to identify and manage plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. The results highlight the significance of creating precise regulations and procedures that spell out the repercussions of academic misconduct to promote an integrity culture inside educational institutions. Students are more likely to appreciate the importance of academic integrity and make ethical decisions throughout their educational journey when an atmosphere that emphasizes ethical behavior is fostered.

Introduction

Postgraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education is vital in preparing students for academic and professional success. Ethical considerations are important in this context, particularly during the final assignment submission. Ethical considerations encompass principles such as honesty, integrity, academic integrity,

and respect for intellectual property rights. Adhering to these ethical guidelines shapes students' academic experiences and profoundly impacts their future careers.

Students who adhere to ethical standards ensure that their work is evaluated, promoting honesty and integrity among peers. Academic integrity is demonstrated by ethical behavior (Head, 2020) in final assignment

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submission, which includes a correct portrayal of one's work, proper citation and reference, and avoidance of plagiarism. Such procedures encourage the development of a sound ethical compass, critical thinking abilities, and appropriate academic conduct. The final assignment submission procedure provides postgraduate EFL students with the knowledge and moral principles they need to succeed professionally. The professional world highly regards the responsibility, honesty, and respect for intellectual contributions fostered by these moral behaviors (Cilliers, 2017). Students that include ethical issues in their academic work improve their learning opportunities and build a solid basis for moral decision-making and success in their future jobs.

In the context of Thailand's educational landscape, ethical considerations among postgraduate EFL students play a pivotal role in shaping academic integrity and assignment outcomes. Thailand, known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse educational settings, faces unique challenges and opportunities in cultivating a conducive learning environment that prioritizes ethical behavior and academic honesty (Alemi, 2020; Anuyahong, 2011; Thomas, 2017). The dynamics of EFL classrooms in Thailand, influenced by learner-centered methodologies and online learning platforms, underscore the need to address ethical issues that students encounter during assignment submissions (Aroonsrimarakot et al., 2023; Wongsasung, 2018). Amidst the pedagogical advancements and digital transformations in Thai educational institutions, concerns regarding plagiarism, academic misconduct, and adherence to ethical standards remain pertinent (Bowen & Nanni, 2021; Butcha & Khampusaen, 2018; Charubusp, 2015). The prevalence of plagiarism and the perception of academic dishonesty among Thai students and educators underscore the complexity of navigating ethical dilemmas in academic settings (Collins et al., 2014; Nomnian, 2017). Factors such as cultural norms, educational policies, and instructional approaches contribute to the multifaceted landscape of ethical considerations among postgraduate EFL students in Thailand (Garcia & Ganuelas, 2017; Kettanun, 2015).

Against this backdrop, understanding the impact of ethical issues on students' conduct, academic integrity, and assignment outcomes becomes imperative. While studies have explored various dimensions of ethics in educational contexts, gaps persist in comprehensively addressing the interplay between ethical considerations and student behaviors in Thai EFL classrooms (Paapa &

Boakye, 2017; Suamuang et al., 2020). Furthermore, the efficacy of interventions, such as professional learning communities and project-based learning, in fostering ethical awareness among postgraduate EFL students warrants further investigation (Atiwithayaporn et al., 2020; Garcia & Ganuelas, 2017). Considering ethical issues before submitting final work is crucial for ensuring fair and equal evaluation, promoting academic integrity, and fostering an environment of trust and honesty among postgraduate EFL learners. Ethical practices also support the development of critical thinking, research abilities, and responsible scholarly activity. Investigating how ethical factors impact the submission of final assignments is essential for enhancing educational quality and encouraging ethical behavior among students. Thus, this study aims to examine how ethical issues influence postgraduate EFL students' submission of final assignments in Thailand, considering the contextual nuances, cultural dynamics, and instructional modalities inherent in Thai educational settings.

Objectives

The followings are the objectives of the study;

1. Ethical Considerations

To examine the influence of ethical considerations on postgraduate EFL students' behavior during the submission of final assignments.

To assess the relationship between varying degrees of ethical concerns and the actions taken by postgraduate EFL students in submitting their assignments.

2. Academic Integrity

To investigate the impact of ethical considerations on the academic integrity of postgraduate EFL students.

To determine whether different levels of ethical concerns affect postgraduate EFL students' adherence to academic honesty norms during assignment submission.

3. Assignment Outcomes

To explore the relationship between ethical issues and the standard and results of postgraduate EFL students' assignments.

To assess the influence of varying degrees of ethical considerations on the quality and success of assignments submitted by postgraduate EFL students.

This study adds to the body of knowledge on ethical practices in higher education, particularly in postgraduate EFL education, by addressing these research

aims. The remainder of this research paper is organized into the following sections: a thorough literature review; an explanation of the research methods; a presentation and analysis of the data; a discussion of the implications and future directions of the study; and a conclusion with significant conclusions and suggestions. By conducting this study, we hope to add to the continuing conversation on ethical issues in education and offer insight into how ethical concerns impact postgraduate EFL learners' final assignment submission processes.

Literature Review

Ethics serve as the foundation of responsible scholarship and professional conduct within education and academia (Head, 2020). Ethics encompass principles such as honesty, integrity, fairness, respect for intellectual property, and adherence to academic integrity standards (Zaman et al., 2020). Upholding ethical considerations ensures a high standard of conduct, fosters a climate conducive to knowledge pursuit, and maintains institutional credibility and trustworthiness. Integrity, an essential element of academic ethics, involves responding to obstacles or temptations in line with one's moral convictions (Luniachek et al., 2020). Fairness entails providing equitable learning and assessment opportunities while treating individuals objectively and impartially (Peters, 2015). Respecting intellectual property rights involves crediting and referencing others' scholarly contributions to prevent plagiarism and unauthorized use of information (Peters, 2015). Academic integrity, comprising honesty, fairness, and respect for intellectual property, is fundamental in education (Lock et al., 2019). Upholding academic integrity entails compliance with institutionally established rules and regulations regarding collaboration, source citation, and plagiarism, thereby maintaining both personal integrity and institutional reputation (Lowery, 2020). Ultimately, integrating ethics into education nurtures students' moral compass and fosters responsible academic and professional growth.

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In submitting the final project, it is ethically responsible for upholding intellectual property rights. Students should obey such rules and regulations when utilizing works protected by copyright and obtain the appropriate authorizations or licenses (Bretag et al., 2014). By doing this, people show their dedication to moral behavior and stay out of trouble with the law. Previous studies have examined postgraduate EFL students' ethical behavior in submitting their final assignments. Bretag et al. (2014) performed a survey in Australia to investigate student academic honesty. The study aimed to learn more about how students perceive and experience academic dishonesty and pinpoint areas that may be improved. A sizable sample of students from different academic levels and disciplines participated in the survey, providing data. The results showed that even though most students clearly understood what constitutes cheating, a sizable percentage nevertheless experienced dishonest behavior. The study revealed several variables affecting academic integrity, such as time constraints, rivalry, and repercussions. The findings also showed how much students wanted to learn about academic integrity and receive assistance. Recommendations from the study included enhancing institutional policies and procedures, promoting awareness and education on integrity issues, and implementing interventions to discourage misconduct. The study contributes to understanding students' academic integrity challenges and provides valuable insights for developing strategies to foster a culture of integrity in higher education.

Further research, particularly through ANOVA analysis, is needed to quantify the impact of ethical issues on postgraduate EFL students' final assignment outcomes. This type of study could provide a comprehensive understanding of how ethical factors like plagiarism, citation standards, originality, and respect for intellectual property rights influence assignment quality and academic achievement. Exploring demographic variables such as age, gender, and cultural background within the ANOVA framework could offer deeper insights into the complex relationships between ethics and assignment results. Ethical considerations play a crucial role when postgraduate EFL students submit their final assignments, encompassing behaviors like avoiding plagiarism, correctly crediting sources, maintaining originality, and upholding intellectual property rights. More research is necessary to evaluate the impact of ethical concerns on assignment outcomes and identify relevant demographic variables, with the aim of informing educational institutions' efforts to promote moral behavior and enhance the academic experiences of postgraduate EFL students.

Previous studies have illuminated postgraduate EFL students' ethical conduct and perspectives about ethical issues in assignment submission, offering insightful information. Several research has aided our knowledge of moral behavior among postgraduate EFL students. The importance of cultural values and norms was highlighted in their study; the difficulties of maintaining academic integrity in the Muslim world were studied by Akbar & Picard (2020). They created a conceptual map to investigate the impact of cultural influences on integrity-related behaviors in educational contexts. According to the study, collectivism, hierarchy, and face-saving are a few cultural traits linked to academic dishonesty. The results emphasized the significance of context-specific techniques to foster integrity, considering cultural norms and sensibilities. The study highlights the cultural barriers to upholding academic integrity and points to the necessity for culturally sensitive treatments. Overall, the study advances our knowledge of academic integrity within a cultural context and emphasizes the need to create solutions to these problems.

One theme focuses on understanding the prevalence and factors associated with academic dishonesty. Zhang et al. (2018) investigate academic dishonesty among Chinese undergraduate students, specifically examining the role of gender. Similarly,

Bretag et al. (2014) surveyed Australian students to gain insights into their perspectives on academic integrity and the need for education on proper educational practices. While Aurangzeb & Akhtar (2019) compare postgraduate students' views against plagiarism, Sadruddin (2021) adopts a phenomenological case study technique to investigate the causes of plagiarism among postgraduate research students. Strategies and programs to enhance academic integrity are related issues. In their discussion of methods for fostering academic integrity in higher education, Boehm et al. (2009) focus on faculty participation and creating a positive learning environment. Gamage et al. (2020) focus on the COVID-19 pandemic, examining the difficulties and mitigation measures for maintaining academic integrity during online delivery and assessment. Some other studies address specific contexts and cultural aspects related to academic integrity. Akbar & Picard (2020) create a conceptual map of obstacles to academic honesty in the Muslim world by addressing cultural variables. Gow (2014) investigates how mainland Chinese master's degree recipients from UK institutions experienced their return to China and how they perceived academic integrity. The relationship between students' epistemic beliefs and self-regulated learning and their perceptions of online knowledge and academic misconduct is examined by Huang et al. (2023).

Researchers Atikuzzaman & Yesmin (2023) studied academic dishonesty among research students in a public university in Bangladesh. The study examines the authorities' worries about this matter and seeks to advance academic integrity. The study highlights common instances of dishonesty, such as plagiarism and unlawful collaboration, using interviews and focus groups. The findings provide insight into the causes of these behaviors, such as the pressure to publish and general ignorance about ethical research. The survey also highlights issues university officials are worried about, such as consequences for reputation and morality. Educational initiatives, specific rules, better monitoring, and tools to deal with dishonesty are all suggested. The study gives insights for creating strategies to promote an ethical culture at the university and helps comprehend the institution's difficulties. Previous studies have shed light on the frequency and contributing factors of ethical conduct among postgraduate EFL students, yet significant gaps remain to be addressed. While academic dishonesty has been extensively studied, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the distinct

moral elements considered during final assignment submission, including integrity, citation adherence, and respect for intellectual property rights. While earlier research has mainly relied on descriptive and qualitative analyses to explore ethical behavior, there is a lack of quantitative studies utilizing statistical analyses to examine the impact of ethical issues on assignment submission. Addressing this gap requires an ANOVA study to comprehensively evaluate the relationship between moral concerns and assignment outcomes. In conclusion, further research is necessary to inform educational interventions and promote ethical conduct, emphasizing the importance of understanding specific ethical dimensions and conducting quantitative analyses to assess their impact on assignment outcomes. Sadruddin (2021) used a phenomenological technique to investigate the reasons for plagiarism among postgraduate research students. The study made clear the importance of educational interventions to address the problem of plagiarism. The subject of academic integrity's cultural component was also noted. A conceptual framework was developed by Akbar & Picard (2020) to comprehend the difficulties in maintaining academic integrity in the Muslim world. It has been shown that cultural factors like face-saving and collectivism impact behaviors connected to honesty. Additionally, several research looked into certain aspects of academic dishonesty. The impact of gender on academic dishonesty among Chinese undergraduate students was examined by Zhang et al. (2018), while the attitudes of postgraduate students regarding plagiarism were contrasted by Aurangzeb & Akhtar (2019). Gamage et al.'s (2020) study was on the difficulties and solutions for preserving academic integrity in online learning. There are still research gaps that need to be filled despite the advancements.

Several pertinent theories and models are used in the theoretical framework to study how ethical issues affect postgraduate EFL students' submission of their final assignments. The reciprocal interplay between people, their behavior, and their environment is emphasized by Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. According to this idea, cognitive processes like self-regulation, self-efficacy, and observational learning impact how ethical issues are considered while submitting an assignment. Social modeling and the reinforcement they receive from their academic environment might affect students' understanding of moral principles, willingness to act ethically, and capacity to self-regulate

their assignment submission procedures. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Conduct, published in 1991, offers more insights into the variables affecting people's conduct. This theory contends that intentions, which are impacted by attitudes, subjective standards, and the perception of behavioral control, determine an individual's conduct. In this study, students' attitudes toward ethical considerations, subjective norms (such as perceptions of peer and instructor expectations), and perceived control over their assignment submission behaviors can impact their intentions to engage in ethical practices and submit high-quality assignments. According to the proposed theoretical framework, which considers these theories, cultural factors further moderate students' ethical considerations (mediated by social cognitive processes) and intentions to engage in ethical assignment submission practices (mediated by the Theory of Planned Behavior). As prior research (Bandura, 1986; Ajzen, 1991) underlined, the paradigm also recognizes the significance of students' awareness, knowledge, motivation, and self-regulated learning in mediating the relationship between ethical concerns and assignment performance. The theoretical framework integrates these theories to provide a thorough understanding of the factors that influence ethical considerations in final assignment submission among postgraduate EFL students, highlighting the reciprocal interaction between cognitive processes, cultural influences, and individual intentions and behaviors. The synthesis of the studies reveals several significant discoveries and research gaps in academic integrity. In Australia, Bretag et al. (2014) surveyed to learn more about students' perceptions and experiences with academic dishonesty. The study stressed the requirement for organizational guidelines, education campaigns, and interventions to support honesty.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study integrates Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Conduct to investigate the influence of ethical issues on postgraduate EFL students' academic integrity and assignment outcomes. Social Cognitive Theory posits that cognitive processes such as self-regulation, self-efficacy, and observational learning shape the consideration of ethical issues during assignment submission, while Ajzen's Theory of Planned Conduct suggests that intentions, influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, dictate individual conduct. The independent variable,

Ethical Issues, reflects students' moral concerns regarding academic honesty and integrity, with Academic Integrity and Assignment Outcomes serving as dependent variables to assess adherence to integrity norms and assignment quality. The model proposes that ethical considerations, shaped by cognitive processes and intentions, may influence students' adherence to integrity norms, thereby impacting assignment quality and outcomes. Employing a quantitative approach, the study utilizes descriptive statistics, comparative analysis, and ANOVA to analyze data from postgraduate EFL students. The conceptual framework underscores the importance of cultivating honesty and integrity in educational environments to enhance academic achievements, recognizing the pivotal role of cognitive processes and intentions in shaping students' ethical behavior and academic outcomes.

Quantitative research utilizing ANOVA analysis is required to comprehend the influence of ethical issues on assignment outcomes among postgraduate EFL students. To thoroughly understand the link between ethics and assignment outcomes, it is also essential to look at demographic factors like age, gender, and cultural background. The synthesis, seen as a whole, emphasizes the value of moral conduct, the necessity of interventions to support academic integrity, and the significance of cultural and contextual variables in influencing integrity-related behaviors. The results highlight the need for a continuing study to comprehend better and solve the difficulties in maintaining academic integrity in higher education. We will learn more about ethical behavior and develop strategies to promote it throughout the final assignment submission process to fill these research gaps.

Research Methodology

This study used a quantitative research methodology to examine how ethical issues affect postgraduate EFL students' final assignment submission results. To comprehensively explore the influence of several ethical aspects on assignment quality and academic performance, an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) research was carried out.

1. Population & Samples

Thirty-eight postgraduate EFL students enrolled in five institutions' MA-level English language programs made up the study's participants. The participating institutes are mainly in the northern Thailand with three universities in the north and two

other universities in center and southern Thailand. Three universities were public and two universities were private. Purposive sampling was used to choose individuals who had finished their final projects. The sample size was determined based on power analysis to provide enough statistical power to identify significant differences between the groups.

2. Research Instrument

For this study, the researcher developed a comprehensive survey questionnaire as the primary instrument to assess participants' perceptions and experiences regarding ethical issues during the final assignment submission process. The survey questionnaire was distributed online via the Google Forms platform, providing participants with a convenient and straightforward method to respond. The questionnaire was meticulously structured, comprising a combination of open-ended questions, Likert scale items, and multiple-choice questions. These diverse question formats were strategically designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data regarding participants' views on ethical considerations throughout the assignment submission procedure. In addition to survey data collection, the researcher investigated how various ethical considerations among postgraduate EFL students affected assignment quality and academic achievement. A random sample of final assignments, totaling 12 submissions, was collected for examination. These assignments were graded by teachers who also provided feedback to the students. Some of the final projects were returned by lecturers, contributing to the diversity of the sample. The researcher subjected these assignments to further evaluation through a rubric to check their quality and adherence to ethical standards.

3. Data analysis

The analysis of the final assignments allowed the researcher to triangulate the findings from the survey data, enriching the study's insights into the relationship between ethical considerations and assignment outcomes among postgraduate EFL students. By integrating both survey responses and the examination of final assignments, the study was able to provide a better understanding of how ethical issues impact assignment quality and academic achievement in the context of postgraduate EFL education. Each participant received a unique link to the online survey, which they could use whenever it suited them. Considering the length of the study and the thoughtful replies needed, it took

participants 30 minutes to complete it on average. Fifty-two students who satisfied the study's inclusion requirements received the questionnaire. Considering that they were enrolled in pertinent courses, these students were chosen. Thirty-eight of the fifty-two students responded and filled out the survey, with a response rate of almost 73%. The thirty-eight students served as the final sample for the data analysis.

The principal researcher's contact information, including email and phone number, was included in the questionnaire to help with communication and answer any potential questions or concerns from the participants. When the data was being collected, participants were urged to contact us if they had any inquiries or needed further clarification. Participants were offered a three-week waiting period to have enough time to finish the questionnaire. This window of time ensured that participants had enough time to complete the survey into their schedules and prompted deliberate and precise replies. The ANOVA analysis investigated how various ethical considerations among postgraduate EFL students affected assignment quality and academic achievement. ANOVA is a statistical technique used to compare the means of several groups and ascertain whether there are any appreciable differences between them. ANOVA was used in this study to see whether ethical issues, including plagiarism, honesty, observance of citation rules, and respect for intellectual property rights, affected assignment results significantly.

Instruments Quality Index values

In the initial phase of this research, a pilot study was conducted to refine the research questionnaire before its implementation in the main study. The pilot study aimed to assess the questionnaire's clarity, coherence, and alignment with the study's objectives (validity and reliability). Through this process, potential ambiguities and inconsistencies in the questionnaire were identified and addressed, maximizing its ability to collect accurate data. The pilot study involved 12 EFL graduate students, including both Thai and international students, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation across different academic and cultural backgrounds. Participants provided valuable feedback that informed improvements to the questionnaire's design, wording, and substance.

Data collection was conducted using an electronically distributed questionnaire, evaluating the robustness of the questionnaire with statistical analysis revealing significant levels of internal consistency for

both constructs, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha coefficients above 0.8. The initial findings from the pilot study provided insights into the questionnaire's effectiveness, guiding subsequent phases of the main study. The pilot study underscored the importance of refining research instruments through iterative processes to ensure validity and reliability in data collection.

Table 1: Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)

Reliability Analysis	
Section	Cronbach's Alpha
Section 1 (Items 1-20)	0.90
Section 2 (Items 21-40)	0.89

The reliability analysis of the questionnaire used in the pilot study revealed strong internal consistency. In Section 1, which assessed problem-solving abilities (Items 1–20), a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90 indicated good internal consistency. Similarly, Section 2, focusing on critical thinking abilities (Items 21–40), showed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.89, suggesting high internal consistency. These findings affirm that the questionnaire effectively addressing the objectives of the study. The robust Cronbach's alpha values for both sections underscore the questionnaire's reliability as a consistent tool for evaluating these variables among postgraduate students. These results instill confidence in the questionnaire's ability to assess the study's key components, enhancing the validity of the research findings.

A panel of experts (three) with Ph.D. qualifications and over seven years of teaching experience at graduate and postgraduate levels in various foreign contexts, specializing in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), was convened to evaluate the validity of the rubric. These experts were renowned figures in their field, having made significant contributions to academic literature and holding editorial positions in esteemed academic publications for at least five years. The experts' level of agreement on the relevance of rubric items and their alignment with the core construct of problem-solving and critical thinking abilities was assessed using the Index of Congruence (IOC). IOC values, ranging from -1 to +1, provided a quantitative measure of the degree to which expert assessments matched the intended construct. Higher IOC scores indicated stronger expert consensus and greater alignment with research objectives.

Table 2: Instrument Validation (Rubric)

IOC Validity Assessment		
Rubric	IOC value	Validity
Expert 1	0.90	valid
Expert 2	0.88	valid
Expert 3	0.86	valid

Results

This ANOVA research was conducted to determine the effects of ethical issues on postgraduate EFL students' academic honesty and assignment results. One-way ANOVA was used to assess the data from thirty-eight students to see whether there were any significant differences between the groups.

The findings for the Ethical Considerations variable (addressed in the first objective in this study) are shown in Table 3. The F-value of 0.956 and related p-value of 0.393 indicate no appreciable differences in the groups' ethical considerations. This suggests that the participants' claimed degrees of moral concern did not significantly change their conduct while submitting their final assignment. According to the analysis of variance, the Ethical Considerations variable's sum of squares (SS) had 2 degrees of freedom and was 68.658. The determined mean squares (MS) value was 34.329. These numbers help to explain the overall pattern of the data's apparent variability. By dividing the residual mean squares by the MS of the ethical considerations variable, the F-value of 0.956 was determined. It was discovered that this F-value's p-value was 0.393. There is insufficient data to reject the null hypothesis since the p-value exceeds the chosen significance level (0.05). Therefore, it can be said that the various ethical levels stated by the postgraduate EFL students did not significantly affect their actions while submitting their final project.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA Results for Ethical Considerations

Variable	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Squares (MS)	F-value	p-value
Ethical Considerations	68.658	2	34.329	0.956	0.393

The results imply that ethical considerations may not significantly influence this sample of postgraduate EFL students' actions when turning in final assignments. It is significant to emphasize that these findings should be interpreted within the study's parameters since they are based on the information given.

The outcomes for the Academic Integrity variable (which is the focus of the second objective of the study)

are shown in Table 4. According to the F-value of 0.363 and p-value of 0.698, there are no appreciable variations in academic integrity depending on the various degrees of ethical considerations. This shows that the participants' expressed ethical concerns did not significantly affect their adherence to the principles of academic honesty while turning in their final assignment. According to the analysis of variance, the theoretical integrity variable's sum of squares (SS) had 2 degrees of freedom and was 26.105. The determined mean squares (MS) value was 13.052. These values aid the overall comprehension of the findings and shed light on the data variability. By dividing the residual mean squares by the MS of the Academic Integrity variable, the F-value of 0.363 was calculated. The associated p-value of 0.698 indicates that there is not enough data to rule out the null hypothesis. As a result, it can be said that the postgraduate EFL students reported varying levels of ethical concerns that did not significantly affect their academic integrity while submitting their final assignments. These results suggest that ethical issues may not significantly impact the academic integrity of this particular sample of postgraduate EFL students. It is significant to emphasize that these findings should be interpreted within the study's parameters since they are based on the information given.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA Results for Academic Integrity

Variable	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Squares (MS)	F-value	p-value
Academic Integrity	26.105	2	13.052	0.363	0.698

In conclusion, the ANOVA analysis on the Academic Integrity variable indicates no appreciable variations in academic integrity across the groups with different levels of ethical considerations. These findings show that the postgraduate EFL students' perceptions of ethical issues did not significantly affect their adherence to the standards of academic honesty throughout the submission of their final assignments.

The outcomes for the third objective, the Assignment Outcomes variable, are shown in Table 5. The resultant p-value is 0.423, and the computed F-value is 0.883. These findings imply that the groups with various ethical considerations did not provide assignments with noticeably different results. Therefore, it can be said that ethical issues had little to no impact on the standard and results of the student's studies.

According to the analysis of variance, the Assignment Outcomes variable's sum of squares (SS) has 2 degrees of freedom and is 63.526. The result of the mean squares (MS) calculation is 31.763. These values aid the overall comprehension of the findings and shed light on the data variability. By dividing the MS of the Assignment Outcomes variable by the residual mean squares, the F-value of 0.883 is found. According to the calculated p-value of 0.423, the data does not strongly support the null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that the various ethical levels stated by the postgraduate EFL students had little to no influence on the results of their tasks. These results suggest that ethical issues might not significantly impact the standard and success of assignments for postgraduate EFL students in the context of the data presented. But it's crucial to recognize that these findings are based on the currently available information and should be taken within the context of the study's constraints. Further study with a more extensive and varied sample is advised to confirm these results and investigate other potential factors impacting assignment outcomes concerning ethical issues.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA Results for Assignment Outcomes

Variable	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Squares (MS)	F-value	p-value
Assignment Outcomes	63.526	2	31.763	0.883	0.423

Overall, the ANOVA analysis on the Assignment results variable shows no appreciable changes in assignment results across the groups with various ethical consideration levels. According to these findings, the postgraduate EFL students' perceptions of ethical issues did not significantly affect the standard and results of their assignments.

This ANOVA research examined how ethical issues affected postgraduate EFL students' conduct, academic honesty, and assignment results. The findings from Tables 1, 2, and 3 consistently showed that the groups with various degrees of ethical considerations did not differ significantly. The lack of statistically significant differences in Table 1 specifically showed that ethical concerns did not affect students' actions during the submission process for their final assignments. Additionally, Table 2 showed that varying ethical concerns had no discernible impact on academic honesty. This implies their ethical issues did not significantly impact postgraduate EFL students'

commitment to academic integrity norms.

Additionally, Table 3 demonstrated that ethical concerns had no appreciable influence on the standard and results of the student's work. These conclusions imply that ethical concerns may not significantly impact postgraduate EFL students' behavior, academic integrity, and assignment results in the circumstances of the data presented. Acknowledging the study's limitations and promoting further research using more significant and varied populations to confirm these results and investigate additional potential factors impacting these variables is crucial. Nevertheless, these findings offer insightful information for educators and institutions hoping to encourage moral behavior and improve academic honesty among postgraduate EFL students.

To perform a quantitative analysis of the findings, descriptive statistics and comparative statistical tests were used to examine the data.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Assignment Evaluation Scores

Criteria	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Content and Depth	4.32	0.78	3.10	5.00
Organization and Structure	4.14	0.92	2.80	4.90
Ethical Considerations	3.92	0.67	2.70	4.80
Writing Style	4.05	0.81	2.90	4.70
Plagiarism	2.78	0.92	1.20	4.50
Late Submission	3.20	0.67	2.00	4.30

The mean scores presented in Table 4 offer valuable insights into the average performance of postgraduate EFL students across various evaluation criteria. Firstly, with a mean score of 4.32, postgraduate EFL students demonstrate excellent levels of depth and quality in the content of their assignments, indicating their proficiency in developing comprehensive and insightful materials. Secondly, the mean score for organization and structure is 4.14, suggesting a high level of proficiency in arranging and presenting information within the assignments. This reflects students' ability to effectively organize their thoughts and ideas, resulting in coherent and well-structured academic documents. However, the mean score for ethical considerations is 3.92, indicating a moderate level of consideration for ethical issues in assignments. While students show reasonable awareness of ethical concerns, there is room for improvement in integrating ethical considerations more comprehensively into academic work. Additionally, the mean score of 4.05 for writing style demonstrates proficiency in communication and expression of ideas, highlighting students' use of clear

and articulate language to convey arguments and insights. Conversely, the lowest mean score of 2.78 for plagiarism suggests a concerning tendency towards plagiarism in specific assignments, underscoring the need for additional guidance on principles of academic integrity. Lastly, with a mean score of 3.20 for late submission, students exhibit a moderate tendency towards late submission of assignments, indicating room for improvement in meeting deadlines while also reflecting the majority's adherence to submission timelines within acceptable limits. In summary, the mean scores provide valuable information about the strengths and weaknesses of postgraduate EFL students in various aspects of assignment evaluation, guiding efforts towards enhancing overall academic performance and integrity.

Table 7: Comparative Analysis of Assignment Evaluation Scores

Criteria	Group A (n = 25)	Group B (n = 13)	p-value
Content and Depth	4.45	4.12	0.047
Organization and Structure	4.25	3.95	0.231
Ethical Considerations	4.02	3.81	0.376
Writing Style	4.10	4.00	0.624
Plagiarism	2.60	3.00	0.092
Late Submission	3.15	3.40	0.541

The findings of the Comparison between Group A and Group B are shown in Table 7. Group A comprises twenty-five students who are slightly overdue for their assignments, whereas Group B includes thirteen students who had no problems with late submission. The p-values show the statistical significance of the differences between the two groups. A significant difference in the "Content and Depth" criterion's findings ($p = 0.047$) indicates that Group A outperformed Group B regarding content quality and depth. The other measures, such as "Plagiarism" ($p = 0.092$) and "Late Submission" ($p = 0.541$), however, showed no discernible differences. The quantitative analysis sheds light on group differences and overall performance in the assignment evaluation. The results show the assignments' advantages and disadvantages about several parameters and provide insight into how late submission affects the caliber of the content. For a complete knowledge of the student's experiences and opinions about ethical issues, it is crucial to supplement these findings with qualitative analysis. Based on the ANOVA analysis, the results indicate the following significant differences and patterns:

1. Ethical Considerations: According to the analysis, the groups had no appreciable moral differences ($F\text{-value} = 0.956$, $p\text{-value} = 0.393$). This shows that the

participants' reported degrees of ethical concerns did not significantly affect how they behaved while submitting their final assignment.

2. Academic Integrity: Based on various degrees of ethical considerations, there were no appreciable changes in academic integrity ($F\text{-value} = 0.363$, $p\text{-value} = 0.698$). This suggests that the participants' perceptions of ethical issues did not significantly affect their adherence to the norms of academic honesty during the final assignment submission procedure.

3. Assignment Results: According to the study ($F\text{-value} = 0.883$, $p\text{-value} = 0.423$), there were no appreciable changes in assignment results between the groups with different levels of ethical considerations. This shows that moral concerns had little to no influence on the standard and results of the students' tasks.

Overall, our results suggest that, in the setting of the data presented, ethical concerns may not have a significant impact on the conduct, academic integrity, and assignment outcomes of postgraduate EFL students.

The findings of the comparison analysis point to the following:

1. Content and Depth: There was a statistically significant difference in range and depth between Group A (somewhat late submission) and Group B (no late submission) ($p = 0.047$). In comparison to Group B, Group A did better on this criterion.

2. Additional Criteria: Organization and structure, moral concerns, writing style, plagiarism, and late submission did not significantly differ between the two groups.

These results demonstrate that more outstanding performance in the "Content and Depth" criteria was related to late submission. It's crucial to remember that the other factors did not reveal any appreciable differences between the groups.

The influence of ethical concerns on postgraduate EFL students' conduct, academic integrity, and assignment outcomes was examined using an ANOVA analysis and the findings are presented in this study. The study used two data sets with the summaries shown in Tables 3 and 4. The results in Tables 3, 4, and 5 show no appreciable variations between the groups with various degrees of ethical considerations. The lack of statistically significant changes in Table 1 explicitly indicates that ethical concerns did not impact students' actions during the submission process for their final assignments. Furthermore, Table 4 shows that the various ethical factors did not substantially affect academic honesty.

This implies their ethical issues did not significantly impact postgraduate EFL students' commitment to academic integrity norms. Additionally, Table 5 demonstrates that ethical concerns had little to no effect on the standard and results of the students' tasks.

These conclusions imply that ethical concerns may not significantly impact postgraduate EFL students' behavior, academic integrity, and assignment results in the circumstances of the data presented. Further research with more extensive and varied samples is encouraged to confirm these results and examine additional potential factors impacting these variables. However, it is vital to recognize the study's limitations, such as the sample size and possible biases. Table 3 also includes descriptive statistics that give an overview of the assignment assessment scores for several categories in addition to the quantitative analysis. The greatest mean score was attained in the "Content and Depth" criteria, suggesting a high degree of material quality and depth. The mean scores show the average performance of students in each measure. However, the requirements for "Plagiarism" had the lowest mean score, indicating a slight predisposition to plagiarize in specific tasks. The findings of a comparison study between Group A and Group B are shown in Table 4. The investigation sought to determine how the two groups' assignment assessment scores varied. The findings show a substantial difference in the "Content and Depth" criterion, indicating that Group A outperformed Group B regarding content quality and depth. However, no appreciable variations were found in the other measures, such as "Plagiarism." and "Late Submission." With a focus on the impact of late submission on content quality, these findings provide light on the overall performance and variations across groups in the assignment evaluation.

Last but not least, the findings of this study suggest that, in the context of the available data, ethical concerns may not significantly influence postgraduate EFL students' conduct, academic integrity, and assignment outcomes. These results give educators and organizations important information they may use to encourage moral behavior and strengthen academic integrity among postgraduate EFL students. To confirm these results and investigate additional factors that could have an impact on these variables, further study is nonetheless required. Additionally, qualitative research is advised to supplement quantitative analysis to better understand students' experiences with and views of ethical issues.

Discussion

This research was conducted to determine the effects of ethical issues on postgraduate EFL students' academic honesty and assignment results. According to the results, there were no significant variations between variables, academic integrity, or assignment results between the groups with different levels of ethical considerations (Ajzen, 1991). The analysis of the Ethical Considerations variable showed that the participants reported degrees of ethical concerns did not significantly affect how they behaved when submitting their final assignment (Akbar & Picard, 2020). The examination of the Academic Integrity variable also showed that ethical considerations did not significantly influence students' commitment to the standards of academic integrity (Bretag et al., 2014). Last but not least, the study of the Assignment Outcomes variable revealed that ethical issues had no significant impact on the standard or results of the student's assignments (Atikuzzaman & Yesmin, 2023). Moving forward, the findings suggest that ethical concerns may not significantly impact postgraduate EFL students' conduct, academic integrity, and assignment results when considering the context of the supplied data (Akbar & Picard, 2020; Atikuzzaman & Yesmin, 2023).

These results conclude that ethical concerns may not significantly impact postgraduate EFL students' conduct, academic integrity, and assignment results when viewed in the context of the supplied data (Akbar & Picard, 2020; Atikuzzaman & Yesmin, 2023). The sample size and inherent biases are just two examples of the study's shortcomings, which must be acknowledged. It is advised to conduct further studies using more extensive and varied samples to confirm these results and investigate additional potential influences on these variables (Bretag et al., 2014; Lowery, 2020). Acknowledging the limitations of the study, such as the sample size and inherent biases, it is crucial to conduct more extensive and varied studies to confirm these results and explore additional potential influences on these variables.

The descriptive statistics for the assignment assessment scores across several categories, i.e., Content and Depth, Organization and Structure, Ethical Considerations, Writing Style, Plagiarism, and Late Submission. The standard deviation numbers demonstrate the degree of diversity within each criterion, while the mean scores represent the average performance of students in each measure. A comparison between Group A (students who submitted their work somewhat late)

and Group B (students who submitted their work on time). Regarding the "Content and Depth" criterion, the findings show a substantial difference between the two groups, indicating that Group A outperformed Group B regarding content quality and depth. However, the other criteria had no appreciable variations, such as "Plagiarism" and "Late Submission." These results shed light on group differences and overall performance in the assignment evaluation (Gamage et al., 2020; Sadruddin, 2021). They throw light on the advantages and disadvantages of the assignments about several criteria and discuss the impact of late submission on the caliber of the content (Bretag et al., 2014). To further illuminate the students' experiences with and views of ethical issues, qualitative analysis can be used to supplement these findings (Sadruddin, 2021). Moving from the descriptive statistics of assignment assessment scores to the ANOVA analysis, the study's noteworthy differences and trends provide deeper insights into the impact of ethical considerations on student behavior and assignment outcomes.

The study's noteworthy differences and trends were identified using the ANOVA analysis. First, the findings showed that the participants reported degrees of ethical concerns did not significantly affect how they behaved when submitting their final assignments. This implies that ethical considerations did not impact how the pupils behaved. Second, despite various levels of honest attention, the investigation revealed no appreciable variations in academic honesty (Cilliers, 2017). This suggests that ethical considerations did not significantly influence the student's commitment to academic integrity standards while submitting their final assignments (Boehm et al., 2009; Cilliers, 2017). Last but not least, the results showed no appreciable changes in assignment results across the groups with various ethical considerations. This indicates that ethical issues did not significantly affect the expected and final results of the students' work. These findings demonstrate how little ethical concerns impact students' behavior and how assignments are applied to postgraduate EFL instruction (Ajzen, 1991; Huang et al., 2023). The findings of the comparison study showed a substantial difference in the "Content and Depth" criteria between Group A and Group B, indicating that late submission was linked to superior performance in this criterion. In contrast, there were no appreciable variations in the other criteria. These results shed important light on the connections between moral issues, the results of assignments, and the impact of late

submission on the caliber of the content. It is advised that additional investigation be conducted with more extensive and varied samples to confirm and explore these results (Gow, 2014; Luniachek et al., 2020).

The research demonstrates that ethical issues are significant in determining how students behave, maintain their academic integrity, and complete their assignments that agrees with (Cilliers, 2017). Plagiarism, honesty, and conformity to academic norms are only a few examples of the many ethical issues covered (Zaman et al., 2020; Imanipour, 2012). According to earlier research, students who feel strongly about their moral obligations tend to demonstrate higher levels of academic integrity and turn in higher-quality work. The current study did not find any statistically significant differences between the groups with different levels of ethical considerations, despite previous studies emphasizing the significance of ethical considerations in affecting students' behavior and academic achievements (Akbar & Picard, 2020; Atikuzzaman & Yesmin, 2023). This shows, in this study, that ethical concerns may not significantly influence conduct, academic integrity, and assignment outcomes within our research setting and the unique sample of postgraduate EFL students. The heterogeneity of the results can be attributed to several variables, including sample characteristics, educational environments, and cultural variations. Studies with various study methods, procedures, and measures may also be included in the literature, which can further skew the results (Boehm et al., 2009). Further research with more extensive and varied groups is required to confirm our findings and resolve any conflicts with the current literature. To further understand the influence of ethical concerns on the academic integrity and assignment outcomes of postgraduate EFL students, future studies might take a variety of aspects into account, apply qualitative methodologies, and investigate additional elements that may interact with ethical considerations (Bretag et al., 2014). Our findings add to the continuing discussion about the importance of ethical issues in academic situations, even though they may differ from some of the previous work. They provide important insights for educators, organizations, and academics working in the field of EFL education by highlighting the necessity for ongoing study into the particular variables that affect students' behavior and academic performance. Future research endeavors should prioritize expanding the participant pool to include diverse demographics, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of how

ethical considerations influence behavior and academic outcomes. Employing a mixed methods approach can deepen insights by combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies to triangulate findings and capture nuanced perspectives. Longitudinal studies are essential to track the dynamics of ethical attitudes and behaviors over time, informing targeted interventions and policies. Collaboratively designing and implementing educational interventions and institutional policies can foster a culture of integrity within academic settings, promoting ethical conduct among postgraduate EFL students. Exploring interdisciplinary perspectives from psychology and sociology can enrich understanding and inform evidence-based interventions to nurture ethical behavior and academic integrity within educational contexts.

The current investigation has several implications for postgraduate EFL instruction. First, the absence of discernible changes in conduct, academic integrity, and assignment results among postgraduate EFL students with various levels of ethical considerations raises the possibility that conventional strategies for fostering ethical behavior and academic integrity must be reconsidered. This might entail giving clear instructions on intellectual honesty, encouraging a culture of honesty through open dialogue, and putting preventative measures like plagiarism detection systems in place. Second, the findings show that a deeper comprehension of the variables influencing the conduct and academic performance of postgraduate EFL students is required. The context-dependent impacts on students' behavior, such as cultural influences, institutional regulations, and academic support systems, should be further explored in a future study. The results also highlight the value of continuing professional development for EFL educators. This can entail educating teachers on successful pedagogical techniques, encouraging a reflective teaching style, and giving teachers the tools and materials to handle ethical issues effectively. The study results further highlight the need to provide postgraduate EFL students with a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. Although ethical issues may not have directly impacted assignment results in this study, this does not lessen the possible impact they may have had on students' overall academic experiences. Institutions should prioritize developing a trusting environment where students feel comfortable asking for help and assistance. Based on the thorough analysis and insights gleaned from the discussion and findings presented above, it is evident that several vital recommendations

can be proposed to enhance the integrity and efficacy of postgraduate EFL education. These recommendations stem from the identified gaps and limitations in the study and the potential areas for improvement highlighted by the reviewers. By implementing these recommendations, educators and institutions can foster a more conducive learning environment that promotes ethical behavior, academic integrity, and optimal assignment outcomes among postgraduate EFL students. To strengthen the study's depth and relevance, expanding the participant pool is crucial, considering diverse demographics and academic backgrounds. At the same time, qualitative research methods should complement quantitative analysis, offering more profound insights into students' ethical perceptions and behaviors. Longitudinal studies can track evolving trends and inform targeted interventions over time. Educational interventions and institutional policies should be designed collaboratively, focusing on raising awareness, reinforcing integrity norms, and providing practical support for postgraduate EFL students, promoting ethical behavior and enhancing assignment outcomes.

The goal of this study was to research how postgraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' conduct, academic honesty, and assignment results are affected by ethical issues. The study focused on how ethical concerns affected assignment assessment ratings. It offered suggestions for fostering ethical behavior and boosting academic honesty among postgraduate EFL students, and several significant conclusions were drawn. First, it was discovered that although ethical issues may have significantly impacted how students behaved while submitting their final assignments, this study did not find any significant impact. The study also clarified how ethical factors are considered when assigning grades for assignments. Different assignment grading criteria, such as content, organization, writing style, plagiarism, and on-time submission, were affected by ethical considerations and were not to a significant degree. The results showed that students who prioritized ethical issues scored higher on evaluations for all of these categories, demonstrating the beneficial effects of ethical behavior on academic achievement. It is critical to note the limitations of this study. The fact that the study only included a specific sample of postgraduate EFL students may restrict how broadly the results may be applied to other student demographics or academic fields. Therefore, future research should seek to repeat this study with more

extensive and diverse groups to confirm the results and examine potential changes across other situations.

In conclusion, this study offers insightful information on the connections between moral considerations, students' conduct, academic honesty, and assignment results among postgraduate EFL students. Educational institutions may create a culture of honesty and integrity by recognizing the value of ethical behavior and implementing tactics to support it. This will eventually improve the learning process and ensure the validity of academic accomplishments.

Suggestions

Several suggestions can be made to improve the efficacy and integrity of postgraduate EFL education in light of the study's findings. First, participant samples must include a more comprehensive demographic representation range to enhance the generalizability of results. Providing a thorough knowledge of how ethical considerations intersect with behavior and academic outcomes across distinct groups requires involving people from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds and academic situations. Second, combining qualitative research techniques with quantitative analysis can provide a more in-depth understanding of the complex subtleties of students' ethical beliefs and actions. Qualitative data can lighten individuals' experiences and motives, enhancing the comprehension of ethical dynamics in academic contexts and serving as a valuable supplement to quantitative indicators. Furthermore, longitudinal research is necessary to monitor the changes in postgraduate EFL students' ethical beliefs and behaviors over time. Researchers can inform targeted treatments and policies aiming at developing sustained ethical conduct within educational environments by tracking changes over time. Finally, educators, administrators, and students must work together to develop and implement institutional policies and educational interventions. This cooperative approach guarantees that all parties understand moral standards and fosters an atmosphere that supports ethical conduct and academic honesty. By putting these suggestions into practice, educational establishments can foster an environment of honesty and integrity, improving the learning process's quality and validating students' academic accomplishments in postgraduate EFL courses.

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