

## Status of Academic Integrity in Special Education Schools for Children with Visual Impairment: Parents' Perception

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### Abstract

Parents are the key stakeholders in the special education services for children with visual impairment. Students with visual impairment suffer in their educational, social, and domestic lives due to their visual challenges. This study intends to seek the perception of the parents about academic integrity in the special education schools for visually impaired students. This study was quantitative and descriptive. The instrument of the study was a structured questionnaire. A sample of the study was the parents ( $N = 66$ ) of children with visual impairment who were selected through the convenience sampling technique. Data was analyzed through SPSS software version 21. Descriptive and inferential statistics were administered to reach the results. Findings of the study revealed that few students with visual impairment are facilitated without an exam in their schools (mean = 4.14). Additionally, a vast majority of parents observed that teachers are required to perform responsibly because the majority of teachers come late to classes, and some of them are involved in non-professional activities during school times (mean = 3.62). This study recommended the implementation of effective policy and monitoring measures in the special education schools to promote academic integrity measures for the sake of quality learning of children with visual impairment.

**Keywords:** Parents, children with visual impairment, Academic Integrity, Special Education, Schools

### Introduction

In an academic context, academic integrity is the dedication to truthfulness, fairness, respect, trust, and accountability. It includes submitting original work and giving due credit to others for their contributions. It includes the moral principles and guidelines that control academic behavior, such as being truthful in assignments, tests, and research. The idea of academic integrity can be especially difficult for visually challenged students, who frequently face extra challenges along their educational travels. Higher education institutions (HEIs) place a high priority on concerns of academic integrity and academic misconduct. Certain groups may be more vulnerable as a result of phraseologies and behaviors that confuse inadvertent errors with intentions to obtain an unfair advantage (Harrad et al., 2024). To maintain academic integrity, information related to academic integrity and AI in higher education is needed in order to provide timely and fact-based recommendations (Moya et al., 2024).

In special education institutions, academic integrity is especially important, although it is important in all educational settings. Promoting an atmosphere of integrity and moral conduct is crucial for students with impairments, especially the blind, for a number of reasons. Developing Respect and Trust, a culture of trust between parents, teachers, and students is fostered by academic honesty. Trust is essential for productive teamwork in special education, where students frequently need extra help and accommodations. Scholars have two perspectives on academic integrity: a rule-based approach that emphasizes regulations rather than discretion, and a principle-based approach that emphasizes opportunities for discretion and self-correction (Amigud & Pell, 2021). To study academic integrity policy, academic integrity academics have created conceptual frameworks. Research from Australia, Europe, and North America is

included in the corpus of literature on academic integrity policy analysis. Though there is a lack of knowledge about some parts of the world (Moya et al., 2024).

By maintaining academic integrity, dishonest methods are avoided, and all students are evaluated equitably based on their skills and efforts. Because it encourages students to value their own accomplishments, this fairness is crucial for preserving motivation and self-esteem. For visually impaired children to flourish and succeed, parents are essential. Their participation can have a big impact on their children's education and socialization, among other areas of their lives. Children who are visually impaired are more likely to experience hardship, have their emotional and social health badly impacted, and have fewer chances for future work, all of which raise the financial burden on society through support (Loh et al., 2024). Parents must speak up in favor of suitable instructional materials and modifications. This means that their child has access to the tools they need, like mobility training, assistive technology, and specialized instruction. In order to establish an inclusive learning environment, parents and school administrators should collaborate.

Parents' opinions have a big impact on their children's educational experiences and results, and academic integrity is crucial in special education, especially for visually impaired pupils. The conviction that their children will be treated properly and morally is fostered by parents' trust in instructors and school administration. Concerns regarding the fairness of tests and modifications are frequently voiced by parents, which affects how they perceive academic integrity. Parents feel more involved in their children's education when schools communicate openly and honestly, which increases their confidence in the way academic integrity is maintained. Though there is a lack of knowledge about some parts of the world (Moya et al., 2024).

### **Statement of Problem**

Parents are the major stakeholders in the education of their blind children. Parents play an important role because it depends on the parents to show keen interest or to avoid interest in the education of their children. Academic integrity requires such an apex interest in all stakeholders that could result in the everlasting success of the children. When it is a matter of the education of visually impaired children, then parents are responsible for observing the influence or degradation of academic integrity in the schools of their visually impaired children. Therefore, this study seeks the perception of parents about academic integrity in the schools of their visually impaired children.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. Find out the perception of the parents about the status of academic integrity in special education schools for visually impaired students as per their demographics, i.e, gender and qualification.
2. Highlight the efforts of the parents in sustaining academic integrity in the schools of their visually impaired children.

### **Questions of the Study**

The following are the questions of the study:

1. What is the perception of the parents about the status of academic integrity in special education schools for visually impaired students, as per their demographics, i.e, gender and qualification?
2. What are the efforts of the parents in sustaining academic integrity in the schools of their visually impaired children?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is related to seeking the perception of the parents with regard to academic integrity in the schools of their visually impaired children. This study will be very useful for the parents, especially to understand their role as key stakeholders in the education of their visually impaired children. This study will play a significant role in delivering a clear indication to the school community, serving visually impaired children to consider and understand the important role of the parents in the education of their visually impaired children. Moreover, this study will give rise to thoughts about the firm existence and the key role of academic integrity in the school and outside of the school for visually impaired children.

### **Limitations and De-Limitations of the Study**

The limitations and delimitations of the study were:

1. This study was limited to the province of Punjab only.
2. A structured questionnaire was developed by the researchers due to the non-availability of a standardized questionnaire.
3. Only the parents of visually impaired children were included in the sample of this study.

## Literature Review

According to Jahanzaib et al. (2024), academic integrity is a fundamental need of any educational system because it guarantees honesty and accountability at every stage of the learning process, which helps the system achieve its predetermined learning objectives. To continue offering visually impaired students a top-quality education, academic integrity is crucial for every special education institution and its stakeholders (Iqbal & Ashraf, 2024). The solution to preserving honesty in schools for children with visual impairments is academic integrity.

A crucial component of high-quality education is academic integrity, which stands for honesty, dependability, and moral behavior (Balalle & Pannilage, 2025). According to the WHO's criteria of blindness and vision impairment, children with visual impairments are often categorized and given academic help based on their best corrected visual acuity and/or visual fields (Loh et al., 2023). Children who are blind or visually impaired have significant challenges in their everyday lives (Loulidi et al., 2025). Caring qualities are essential to human development, and parents are the ideal people to talk about, model, and commit to caring for their children (Pagliuca et al., 2009). When it comes to examining the academic integrity of the schools that their visually impaired children attend, parents are crucial observers (Iqbal et al., 2024). According to Tören & Gökçearslan (2024), a robust, functional family depends on the independence, adaptability, and social support of its members. Family quality time is one of the most important activities in child-parent interactions. However, there hasn't been much study done on the difficulties parents of children with vision impairments (VI) encounter when interacting with them (Szapiro & Keleynikov, 2024). Parental attitudes are a significant but little-researched element influencing academic integrity practices in special education settings for children with visual impairments. According to studies done in Pakistan, parents are worried about the quality of the teaching materials, accommodations for assessments, and monitoring practices. These parents associate these elements with varying standards of academic integrity and equity (Iqbal et al., 2024; Jahanzaib et al., 2024). Research indicates that parents frequently evaluate integrity based on perceived equity in assessment accommodations and observable classroom supports (such as the availability of braille or accessible materials); when accommodations are applied inconsistently or unclearly, parents may believe there is a greater chance of academic misconduct or lower standards (Iqbal et al., 2024; Jahanzaib et al., 2024).

According to studies on larger disability contexts, parental involvement significantly influences attitudes toward assessment procedures and educational outcomes. This suggests that parents' opinions can either strengthen or weaken institutional integrity, depending on how confident they are in school procedures (Fernández Cerero et al., 2024).

Lastly, discussions over whether accommodations are an "unfair advantage" or a necessary equity indicate that more explicit rules and parent-school communication are required to match expectations around academic integrity for students with disabilities (Nieminen, 2024). To improve the perceptions and reality of academic integrity in special education settings for children with visual impairments, recent research collectively suggests accessible resources, focused parent communication, and clear accommodation processes.

## Methodology of the Study

**Research Design:** This was a Quantitative and descriptive study.

**Population of the Study:** Parents of children with visual impairment were considered the population of the study.

**Sample Size & Sampling Technique:** The sample of the study were the parents ( $N = 66$ ) of children with visual impairment were taken as the sample of the study. Random sample technique was used for this study.

**Instrument of the Study:** A structured questionnaire was developed by the researchers as an instrument of the study.

**Validity & Reliability of the Instrument:** The validity of the instrument was examined through the expert opinion ( $N = 3$ ), and the reliability of the instrument was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha .827.

**Data Collection Procedure:** Data was collected by complying with the research ethics. Respondents were engaged through informed consent. A simple random sampling technique was used in this study to collect the data.

**Data Analysis:** Data was analyzed through the data analysis software SPSS Version 23. Descriptive statistics were administered to reach the results of the study.

**Quantitative Data Analysis of Parents of Visually Impaired Students Responses**

**Table:** *Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of the Parents' Responses to the Statements Framed to Elicit their Answer to the above Question of the Study (N=66)*

**Table:** *Responses of the respondents (N=66)*

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Do heads of schools conduct time-to-time meetings with you on improving academic integrity among visually impaired children?	3.06	1.518
Are there any guidelines provided by the school to you for maintaining the level of academic integrity among children with visual Impairment?	2.97	1.529
Does your child report the incidence of others' misbehavior frequently?	3.27	1.473
Does your visually impaired child trust friends during exams to get help from them?	2.35	1.364
Does your child have a good level of sharing with their teachers?	2.17	1.223
Do parents trust the teachers of visually impaired students for the proper delivery of instructions?	2.12	1.117
Do teachers indulge in negative activities during class time, like gossip, etc?	3.62	1.345
Do teachers perform personal assignments during class time?	2.15	1.292
Do teachers talk for a long time on the phone during class?	2.02	1.283
Do teachers provide feedback to the students on their homework?	2.00	1.150
Do teachers observe regularity and punctuality?	3.80	1.303
Do teachers give appropriate punishment to your child for misbehavior?	2.18	1.201
Has any incident of disrespect occurred between the teacher and your child in school?	1.94	1.122
Does your school have an honour code?	2.48	1.304
Do teachers show a lack of interest in teaching students with visual Impairment?	2.47	1.384
Do teachers of your visually impaired child say to your child not to cheat on the class tests?	2.58	1.446
Are teachers of visually Impaired children unprepared for the lesson?	2.67	1.396
Has your child received any facilitation without any exam in school?	4.14	1.135
Do teachers allow their visually impaired students to show their papers during the exam to other students?	1.92	1.114

Do teachers of visually impaired students offer their help before or during exams to their students with visual Impairment?	3.55	1.394
Have you discussed with teachers about unfair practices for their students in school?	2.80	1.470
Does your child feel comfortable discussing any problem with the teachers?	2.17	1.223
Are parents allowed to discuss their problems openly with school staff?	3.85	1.350

This table depicts the mean and standard deviation of the responses of a few parents on their perception of academic integrity in the school (s) of their children with visual impairment. This table highlights the facilitation of students with visual impairment without any exam in the school (mean = 4.14). It depicts also a vast majority of parents responded that heads of the schools conduct time-to-time meetings with them on improving academic integrity among visually impaired children (mean=3.06), indulging teachers in non-professional activities during class time like gossip, etc (mean=3.62), the regularity of the teachers (mean=3.80), and offering of help before or during exam to the students with visual impairment (mean=3.55). Moreover, a vast number of parents (mean=3.85) have permission to discuss their problems with school staff. The table contains the responses of the respondents about reporting the incidence of others' misbehaviors frequently (3.27).

This table shows that a good number of the parents expressed the provision of guidelines by school for maintaining the level of academic integrity among children with visual impairment (mean=2.97), taking of help during exams by visually impaired children (mean=2.35), good level of sharing of visually impaired students and feeling comfortable while discussing anything with their teachers (mean = 2.17), parents' trust on the teachers of children about well delivery of instruction (mean=2.12), performing the personal assignments by teachers during class time (mean=2.15), talking during class time on the cell phones (mean=2.02). Moreover, parents (mean=2.00) contemplate the provision of feedback by the teachers to their students on the homework.

The table shows that decent numbers of the parents uphold the opinion that teachers give appropriate punishment for misbehavior (mean=2.18), the existence of an honor code in the school (mean=2.48), lacking interest among teachers in teaching visually impaired students (mean=2.47), saying of teachers to children with visual impairment for not cheating in the class tests (mean=2.58), unprepared teachers for the lesson (mean=2.67). However, according to the parents of visually impaired students, unfair practices in the schools are also discussed by them with teachers (mean=2.80).

The few numbers of the parents illustrate their perception about the prevalence of the disrespect incident between the child and teacher in the school (mean=1.94), and permitting the visually impaired students to show their papers during the exam (mean=1.92).

The statistical figures show that heads of the schools try to conduct meetings with the parents for maintaining the level of academic integrity among the students with visual impairment, but there is also an involvement of the teachers in a kind of few non-professional activities during class times, such as gossips, using the cellphones, and offering the help to the students before or during exams. Parents' observations include the regularity of the teachers in their school timings and permission to discuss their problems with the school staff. Some of them also received appropriate guidelines to strengthen academic integrity in their schools. Perhaps some of the parents also perceive the exhibition of a few non-professional behaviors among teachers as becoming the source of developing academically dishonest behaviors in the schools of their visually impaired children. These tendencies would be concealed in professional demeanor and behavior.

Inferential statistics

Comparison based on the gender of the parents

**Hypothesis Test Summary**

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of total is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.715	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Comparison based on the academic qualifications of the parents

**Hypothesis Test Summary**

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of total is the same across categories of Academic Qualification.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.778	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Based on the experience of teachers

**Hypothesis Test Summary**

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of total is the same across categories of Work Experience.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.331	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Based on educational Qualifications

## Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of total is the same across categories of Academic Qualification.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.778	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

### Findings

The responses from 66 parents of visually impaired students offer a detailed insight into their perceptions of academic integrity and teacher behavior within inclusive educational settings.

The highest mean score ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 1.135$ ) was recorded for the item "Have your child got facilitation without any exam in school?", indicating a widespread perception among parents that students are sometimes advanced academically without formal assessment. This may point to a lack of academic rigor or overcompensation due to disability status.

Parents also strongly agreed ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 1.350$ ) that they are allowed to discuss their concerns openly with school staff. Similarly, they perceived teachers as generally regular and punctual ( $M = 3.80$ ,  $SD = 1.303$ ), showing that institutional commitment to discipline may be present.

However, several problematic trends emerged. A high mean ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 1.345$ ) was reported for the statement that "teachers indulge in non-professional activities during class time like gossip, etc.", which reflects unprofessional behavior. In addition, the offering of help by teachers during or before exams ( $M = 3.55$ ,  $SD = 1.394$ ) also implies breaches of academic integrity.

Parents moderately agreed that "heads of schools conduct time-to-time meetings" on improving academic integrity ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.518$ ), and that schools provide guidelines for maintaining academic honesty ( $M = 2.97$ ,  $SD = 1.529$ ). This shows effort from the administration, but possible inconsistency in implementation.

A mean of 3.27 ( $SD = 1.473$ ) was reported for the statement that children report others' misbehavior frequently, suggesting awareness among students regarding school dynamics and peer behavior.

For items assessing teacher-student and parent-teacher relationships, the scores were mostly low: children trusting friends during exams ( $M = 2.35$ ,  $SD = 1.364$ ), comfort in discussing problems with teachers ( $M = 2.17$ ,  $SD = 1.223$ ), and parental trust in teachers for instructional delivery ( $M = 2.12$ ,  $SD = 1.117$ ). These indicate weak relational bonds and possible gaps in inclusive communication.

Low means were recorded for statements such as Teachers talk for a long time on the phone during class ( $M = 2.02$ ,  $SD = 1.283$ ), Teachers provide feedback on homework ( $M = 2.00$ ,  $SD = 1.150$ ), Incidents of disrespect between teachers and child occur ( $M = 1.94$ ,  $SD = 1.122$ ), Teachers allow students to show their paper to others during exams" ( $M = 1.92$ ,  $SD = 1.114$ ).

These results reflect a relative absence of extreme misconduct but do not rule out concerns about low engagement or supervision.

Moderate means were recorded for items like Teachers give appropriate punishment for misbehavior ( $M = 2.18$ ,  $SD = 1.201$ ), Teachers perform personal assignments during class ( $M = 2.15$ ,  $SD = 1.292$ ), Teachers being unprepared for lessons ( $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 1.396$ ), Existence of an honor code ( $M = 2.48$ ,  $SD = 1.304$ ), Teachers say not to cheat in tests ( $M = 2.58$ ,  $SD = 1.446$ ), Teachers show lack of interest in teaching ( $M = 2.47$ ,  $SD = 1.384$ ), Parents have discussed unfair practices with teachers ( $M = 2.80$ ,  $SD = 1.470$ ).

These mid-range scores suggest that while certain formal mechanisms may be in place (like punishment policies and honor codes), they are not sufficiently institutionalized or practiced.

Collectively, the findings depict a school environment where administrative efforts to promote academic integrity are visible but inconsistently supported at the teacher-student level. Empirical evidence shows that there are significant gaps

in teacher preparedness, the provision of feedback, ethical behavior, and the ability to communicate effectively with students and parents. The fact that schools may demonstrate outward compliance in the form of written policies and formalized meetings will not necessarily translate into the depth and moral modeling that should occur within the experiential classroom environment, as parents report.

### Discussion

A recent study describes a long-standing disconnect between the intentions of administrators and classroom realities in schools serving visually impaired (VI) students in Pakistan. Despite the institutionalization of policy directives and integrity meetings, their impact at the classroom level is low, as the performance of the domains of teacher feedback, instructional preparedness, and student teacher engagement is low.

According to Malik and Mahmood (2025), in Pakistan, general education teachers are often undertrained and under-resourced to meet the needs of VI students, and they are forced to use outdated materials and rigid curricula. The gaps in these deficiencies reflect the perceptions of the participants on the lack of feedback and poor planning of lessons, thus depicting a critical gap in implementation.

In their systematic review, Kamran and Bano (2023) point out that inclusive education still has persistent issues, and teacher training on how to implement differentiated instruction and assessment accommodations is needed. Without such capacity, integrity initiatives at the classroom level are only skin deep, in line with low scores on student teacher trust and modeling classroom honest behavior.

Parveen et al. (2024) also report that VI students frequently face delays in the provision of accessible formats like Braille or screen readers in assessments, which forces them to use the help of peers to pass their exams. This finding is in line with the fact that students with moderate mean scores (~2.35) sought peer help when taking exams in the current study, which is an indication of structural impediments to academic honesty.

Sarwar et al. (2023) outline the prevalence of contract cheating and negligence of supervision in Pakistan in the context of higher education, which is not confined to university education but is present in special education. These trends highlight how cultural and systemic norms undermine honor codes and integrity policies, with structural accountability being weak. At the same time, Ilyas et al. (2024) argue that the problem of overcrowded classrooms, insufficient resources, and lack of institutional support do not help teachers to adopt inclusive roles. Kamran, Siddiqui, and Adil (2023) claim that a positive attitude to teaching and self-efficacy are associated with a higher level of engagement in inclusive pedagogy, which is especially important in a situation when parental trust and student-teacher relations are poor.

Combined, these results indicate that integrity programs should go beyond documentation and become a part of pedagogy, interpersonal relations, and organizational culture. Good teacher preparation, open assessment policies, and long-term maintenance of ethical standards are relevant to the creation of conditions in which integrity, even integrity in the case of learners with visual impairment, can thrive.

### Conclusion

The present study shows that, even though the institutions where visually impaired learners are supposed to study usually have frameworks aimed at preserving academic integrity, in many cases, classroom-level practices turn out to be unsatisfactory. The informal practices of teachers, their low participation, and poor communication undermine the efforts introduced by school management. Not only do parents express dissatisfaction, but they are also more concerned with the ethical development of their children. Academic integrity cannot be guaranteed by policy alone, but by educators who are well-trained, ethically conscious, and responsible and consistently practice it. Enhancing teacher-student-parent partnership and renewing ethical standards throughout the entire school operation are thus the primary ways of ensuring the integrity and inclusiveness of the educational process in students with visual impairments.

### Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the study:

1. Inclusivity of visually impaired students in the classrooms should be taught to teachers as a mandatory part of their preparation in the teachers' education programmes.
2. The schools are also supposed to develop and maintain a code of academic conduct which should be documented and made to be assessable by regular classroom checks and administrative checks.
3. Within parents and teachers, there should be better communication via formal feedback systems, wherein the parents get to discuss their concerns, and jointly set resolutions to their issues towards academic growth.
4. Teachers' ratings must incorporate responses of students and parents regarding professional behavior, ethical practices, performance, and contribution to effective teaching and assisting in the case of promotion and retention.
5. Random monitoring & evaluation system should be conducted by the concerned academic authorities and academic specialists of the relevant field only to ensure fairness in exam approach and scoring by students,

especially those of special education schools, to avoid any unfair promotions, and standards are not compromised.

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