Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education (JSHE)
ISSN2746-623X, Vol 4, No 1, 2023, 1-19 https://doi.org/10.35912/jshe.v4i1.1500

Academic dishonesty in online classes: Investigating self-reports using McCabe's Academic Integrity Survey

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Article History
Received on 16 May 2023
1st Revision on 19 May 2023
2nd Revision on 14 June 2023
3rd Revision on 24 July 2023
Accepted on 1 August 2023

Abstract
Purpose: To investigate the cause of academic dishonesty in online higher education in the Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Research methodology: A descriptive-analytical study was conducted in a Manila-based higher education institution using McCabe's Academic Integrity Survey Report (2010) to collect data from 360 first- and second-year students.
Results: While institutional policies were perceived as high, a low positive correlation was found between policy awareness and the tendency to engage in academic dishonesty in one category. Plagiarism-detecting software may deter some forms of cheating; however, opportunities for other forms of academic misconduct still exist. The prevalence of academic misconduct was higher among second-year students, indicating the normalization of such behavior among peers.
Limitations: The study was conducted at one institution and may not be generalizable to other settings.
Contribution: This study provides insights into the prevalence of academic misconduct and its contributing factors, highlighting the need for continued efforts to prevent and address academic dishonesty in online learning environments.
Novelty: This study sheds light on the challenges in maintaining academic integrity during the COVID-19 pandemic and the importance of addressing academic misconduct in online higher education.
Keywords: *Covid-19, Online learning, Online classes, Academic dishonesty, Plagiarism*
How to cite: Lichauco, T. A. N. B., Molina, A., Tengco, D., & Vidallo, M. F. (2023). Academic dishonesty in online classes: Investigating self-reports using McCabe's Academic Integrity Survey. *Journal of Social, Humanity, and Education*, 4(1), 1-19.

1. Introduction

Higher education institutions have adopted online learning in the Philippines in response to the health and safety concerns brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Online learning has become a lifeline for students worldwide to continue their education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without it, millions of students would have been forced to stop learning (Hossain & Yasmin, 2022; Putra & Herawati, 2017). This was implemented by the Commission on Higher Education and the Department of Education to avoid complete cessation of academic progression in response to the implementation of school closures throughout the country. In the elementary, junior high school, and senior high school levels, a learning continuity plan was implemented allowing schools to identify the mode of learning that will best address the needs of their learners (Peregrino, Javillonar, Caballes, Necio, & Ramirez, 2022). Colleges and Universities responded in the same manner by shifting the conduct of their classes from traditional face-to-face to synchronous and asynchronous methods. A shift to online learning has

been unprecedented. Education stakeholders must deal with immediate ramifications in their institutions. The shift to online learning affected most countries around the world and has significantly affected educational policies creating a need to review existing methods (Amiri, Khademi, Khafri, Akbari, & Jangjoo, 2022). Although some studies attest to the effectiveness of online learning in improving academic performance at lower grade levels (Baron, 2023), its effectiveness of online learning remains questionable. In a study by Farooqi (2022), while digital learning was convenient, self-paced, and time-saving, there were also issues, such as Internet access, affordability, and digital skills. One of the most significant concerns is the reliability of assessments. Answers to the assessments were easily accessible to the students online. Three years after the shift, students slowly returned to face-to-face classes, but the option of conducting classes online remains available. It is crucial to understand how this shift may have affected the definition of academic dishonesty among students and to evaluate the likelihood of students committing acts of academic dishonesty to minimize its occurrence throughout online classes and to promote integrity in learning.

Harris, Harrison, McNally, and Ford (2020) defined academic integrity as one of the main priorities of administrators and faculty in maintaining a positive learning environment. This factor entails that the principles of responsibility, fairness, respect, and honesty are well-practiced and observed, maintaining a virtuous reputation of the institution (Holden, Norris, & Kuhlmeier, 2021). Moreso, the book of Eaton and Christensen Hughes (2022) about Academic Integrity in Canada, further emphasized that upholding these principles is essential for the success of education, especially in higher education. This implies that a certain degree of learning and skills is genuinely achieved in preparation for a specific profession, improving one's work performance and perspective in decision-making (Guerrero-Dib, Portales, & Heredia-Escorza, 2020). Conversely, academic dishonesty is the act of students presenting other people's work as their own and cheating, and can be categorized into four types: (a) the act of transferring information between individuals, (b) copying and receiving answers from other students, (c) using third-party tools during assessments, and (d) weakness exploitation (Chala, 2021). Cheating is a subcategory of academic dishonesty (Alvarez et al., 2022). Research has shown that learners often engage in and commit dishonesty during assessments, such as examinations, exercises, and homework. Considering the continuous change in the educational setup, this raises concerns about strengthening academic integrity among students and preventing misconduct. Academic dishonesty is not a new phenomenon in the traditional setting; it has evolved over the years and is even aggravated by the use of technology, including media (Pramono & Indriyani, 2019; Zachek, 2020).

In the online setting, an increasing trend of incidents of academic dishonesty in various forms throughout the COVID-19 pandemic was observed in a study by Augusta and Henderson (2021) using data from the University of Saksatchewan in Canada. Additionally, studies have claimed that asynchronous learning provides new opportunities and challenges for students and teachers (Adzima, 2020). It was also stated that the immediate switch to an online setup contributed to professors' negative experiences in the provision of assessments. Students can now easily access information through the screenshot feature to get answers from other students (Bedford, Gregg, & Clinton, 2011), as cited by Adzima (2020)), methods to minimize the occurrence of cheating were suggested. Some of these methods include using randomized questions from question banks, limiting the number of attempts, and discussing academic dishonesty in the syllabus. However, research has yet to fully grasp where to focus on deterrence methods and how to do so. Additionally, there is still some disconnection between actual student behavior and the faculty's beliefs about cheating. While some believe most students cheat, others remain in denial of this happening in their own classes (Peterson, 2019). Understanding when and how students cheat is tantamount to identifying methods that discourage such acts of academic dishonesty, even in online classes.

In the Philippines, Aguilar (2021) asserted that a modern approach to online learning led to increased academic misconduct. However, this does not imply that the percentage of academic dishonesty in the online setting is higher than that in the traditional setting. Balba and Caingcoy's study (as cited in Beruin (2022)) of Bukidnon State University Impasug-ong Satellite Campus college students revealed that age contributed to the likelihood of participating in academic dishonesty. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results suggest that younger students were more likely to cheat, while older students were less likely to

do so. In a survey by Alvarez et al. (2022), 65% of the students from Pampanga State Agricultural University were found to have committed academic dishonesty on assignments, tests, or quizzes during their synchronous and asynchronous classes, with the primary reason for cheating being stress and worry (87.5%). In the pessimistic view (25.71%) of the students from the study by Kocdar, Karadeniz, Peytcheva-Forsyth, and Stoeva (2018), several factors influenced cheating, including online assessments and the professor's ability to monitor and identify cheating and plagiarism. Specifically, it involves exam distribution, false identity, and Internet or mobile device use. The optimistic view (33.88%) of the students, on the other hand, emphasized the availability of video surveillance and plagiarism detector software; the majority expressed that online assessments will not increase the cases of cheating in their institution and that they would not risk their final grades while being fully informed of the usage of plagiarism detectors.

A study by Gaizauskaite, Bieliauskaite, and Valaviciene (2017) revealed that students and lecturers recognized academic integrity as the most critical factor in academic ethics; however, students' perceptions of integrity in learning were mainly based on compliance with the agreed rules and policies within the institution. Moreover, in the research conducted by Hamblin (2017), there is an existing phenomenon of "blurred lines," which refers to the increasing confusion of educators and students regarding the practices of academic dishonesty in the digital age because of insufficient knowledge. Cheating using technology has gone beyond plagiarizing (copying and pasting) online content. Various applications, such as artificial intelligence (ChaptGPT), are now employed by students to assist them in their assessments and to obtain higher scores (Peterson, 2019; Putra & Suprapti, 2019). Changes in students' perspectives on cheating practices or misconduct are not recognized because of the availability of information on the Internet. Inevitably, Ayoub/Al-Salim and Aladwan (2021) stated that 21st-century technological advancement enabled collaboration with other students to achieve a common goal, for example, using Discord, Messenger, and Telegram applications. Technological reliance on students provides an opportunity to learn the easiest way possible, and learners are not encouraged to memorize details using smartphones with cameras (Ng, Hassan, Nor, & Malek, 2017). Wahab, Mansor, Halid, and Rahman (2022) reported that students' dishonest behaviors are aggravated when online platforms such as YouTube and Tiktok provide videos that support cheating, such as websites that offer answers for assignments (free or with payment). The permanent nature of technology made students even more reluctant to use textbooks and reliant on the Internet (Abdul Rahman et al., 2016, as cited by Wahab et al. (2022)). Peterson (2019) also added that numerous companies can now be hired students to answer examinations, write essays, and attend a class for them. This is referred to as the "New Cheating Economy," and academic staff are not familiar with the new method of cheating (Wolverton, 2016). Dishonest practices may be either intentional or unintentional. The perception of students engaging in such practices is mainly influenced by social factors, especially how often they encounter other students cheating (Morris, 2018). With this, various researchers claimed that the online environment is conducive to cheating (Hamblin, 2017; Herdian, Mildaeni, & Wahidah, 2021; Wahab et al., 2022; Zachek, 2020).

For decades, studies have focused on how staff and learners understand academic misconduct, specifically dishonesty in the traditional setting, and other factors that affect students' behavior. However, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how academic dishonesty is practiced in the digital age. This research aims to expand prior work in line with the problem of disconnection between students and faculty's perception of academic dishonesty using the McCabes Academic Integrity Survey 2010 for students. This research sought to determine how undergraduate students from higher education institutions perceive academic dishonesty during the pandemic, from second-semester S.Y 2020–2021 to first-semester S.Y 2022–2023, when education shifted to an online environment, especially asynchronous learning. One of the most critical factors in school management is the deployment of specific policies to maintain discipline, which directs students to display acceptable behavior (Fekadu, 2019). Technological advances have challenged academic staff to address academic dishonesty and maintain academic integrity. Practices of misconduct in an educational setting harm the future work ethics of students and the institution's reputation. This study highlights salient points in understanding how learners perceive academically dishonest practices online to improve school policies on technology-assisted learning and prevent the occurrence of dishonesty. The development of technology-

assisted learning policies will reinforce students' academic performance and the institution's quality of education.

2. Research Methodology

A descriptive-analytical research approach was utilized in this study to produce an in-depth comparison of the variables and to present their similarities and differences. This research design focuses on explaining facts, while offering information about the data to generate provable assumptions. The respondents were undergraduate students at a higher education institution in Manila. First-year and second-year college students across different degrees of programs met the inclusion criteria.. Third-to sixth-year students were excluded from the study to ensure that all participants had only been exposed to higher education through online learning. This study employed Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error to determine the sample size. A and sixty (360) samples were analyzed from a population of first- and second-year undergraduate students (5,477). The population was divided into two strata or subgroups (first and second years) with one hundred and eighty (180) respondents each to ensure that the number of samples drawn from each stratum reflected the population.

The researchers performed a digital survey using Google Forms, which was made accessible through students' institutional email accounts. This ensured that the data would be accessible only by the bona fide students of the university and that each student would only be able to access the questionnaire once. The survey employed guided-response questions with multiple-choice and multiple-response options, adapted from DuPree and Sattler (2010). It encompasses the demographic profile of students, their perception of the institution's academic environment, and specific behaviors related to academic integrity. The previous survey report served as the template for the evaluation of academic integrity, as it included a comprehensive list for the classification of misconduct, questions concerning students' perceptions of the culture of academic honesty at their institution, and measurements of the beliefs about cheating, its justifications, and its behavioral influences. Moreover, the instrument was validated with large-scale respondents (over 2500 students from various research universities and higher education institutions in the United States and Canada. As a result, the survey's measures could be tested against a representative sample of different undergraduate and graduate students; validation research findings showed strong evidence that each measure was connected to the others in a way that was compatible with theory and that it was also internally consistent (Rettinger, 2022). The questionnaire was only adapted to reference "online collaboration, " as the students were engaged in online learning during the first and second semesters of 2021-2022.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections: (a) demographics, (b) academic environment, and (c) specific behaviors. The researchers gave the respondents 15-20 minutes to complete the online questionnaire. Before proceeding to the statistical treatment, the responses of the students were evaluated to remove responses that did not fulfill the criteria of the study. Different requirements were placed before withdrawing from the study: (1) the respondent did not complete the questionnaire using their CEU Gmail account, (2) the questionnaire was incomplete due to a lack of time, (3) the participant provided highly sensitive information, (4) the respondent refused to complete the questionnaire, and (5) the respondent opted to withdraw from the study, in which case they may do so without incurring any penalties.

The statistical tools of IBM SPSS version 26 and Microsoft Excel were used to arrange and analyze the data according to the different questionnaire parts. The data were subjected to Spearman correlation to determine significant correlations and the Kruskal-Wallis H test to identify significant differences and draw conclusions. The outcomes were evaluated and used to address research problems.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

1. Gender	f	%
Male	78	21.7%
Female	282	78.3%
2. Year Level		
Freshman	180	50%
Sophomore	180	50%
3. Program Enrolled		
Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA)	18	5.0%
Bachelor of Science in Management Accounting (BSMA)	14	3.9%
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration International Management major in Marketing Management (BSAMM)	17	4.7%
Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology (BSMT)	31	8.6%
Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)	20	5.6%
Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy (BSP)	86	23.9%
Bachelor of Science in Psychology (BSPSY)	20	5.6%
Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD)	74	50.6%
Bachelor of Science in International Hospitality Management (IHM)	34	9.4%
Bachelor of Science in International Tourism and Travel Management (ITTM)	46	12.8%

Table 1 presents the demographic profiles of the respondents, with female students comprising 78.3% of the total population and male students representing only 21.7%. The samples were stratified according to their respective year levels, with 180 respondents in each category. Most respondents majored in Dental Medicine (50.6%), followed by Pharmacy and Tourism Management (23.9% and 12.8 %, respectively). In contrast, BSMA students exhibited the lowest numbers, with 3.9%, BSAMM students (4.7%), and Accountancy students (5.0%).

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Results

This section presents the significant results from the data collected using McCabe's Academic Integrity Survey Report (2010).

Table 2. Self-Reported Academic Dishonesty

Have you, in any shape or form, committed any acts of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism and other such behaviors?			
YES		NO	
First Year	Second Year	First Year	Second Year
25.0%	43.3%	75.0%	56.7%

As presented in Table 2, most second-year students stated that they had committed acts of academic dishonesty (43.3% and 56.7 %, respectively). In contrast, only 25.0% of first-year students affirmed that they participated in the study by Aguilar (2021), which emphasized the increasing trend of academic dishonesty in the online mode of learning in the Philippines, and in contrast to the study by Balba and Caingcoy (as cited in Beruin (2022)), which stated that younger students were more likely to perform academic misconduct, the higher year students were found to be more likely to engage in cheating behaviors.

Table 3. Perception of the academic environment

B3. Faculty's Understanding of Policies	**Y1**	1.7%	2.3%	13.1%	38.1%	44.9%
	Y2	0.0%	1.2%	18.6%	39.5%	40.7%
B4. Student support of these policies	**Y1**	1.1%	5.7%	29.7%	39.4%	24.0%
	Y2	0.6%	11.0%	34.7%	37.0%	16.8%
B5. Faculty support of these policies	**Y1**	1.1%	1.1%	15.5%	39.1%	43.1%
	Y2	0.0%	2.9%	17.4%	40.1%	39.4%
B6. Effectiveness of these policies	**Y1**	1.7%	4.0%	18.5%	41.0%	34.7%
	Y2	1.2%	6.9%	32.9%	38.2%	20.8%

From Table 3, first- and second-year students agreed that the severity of the institution's policies concerning academic dishonesty was high, at 36.7% and 42.2%, respectively. In general, first-year students (High = 41.3% and Very high = 19.8%) exhibited a better understanding of said policies in contrast to second-year students (high = 33.9% and very high = 13.5%), and all students were in support of these policies (Y1 = 39.4% and Y2 = 37.0%), with 41.0% of first-year students stating that they are highly effective and 38.2% of second-year students agreeing. Both year levels agreed that the institution's policies are effective (Y1 High = 41.0% and Y2 High = 38.2%), and both year levels have acknowledged that the faculty members of the institution have in-depth knowledge and understanding of the practices and policies for academic dishonesty, despite the novel methods for such behaviors. However, less than half of the respondents (44.9% and 40.7%) agreed that the faculty fully understood

the policies on academic integrity. Wolverton (2016) as cited in Peterson (2019)) explained that in some cases, members of the faculty may greatly underestimate their students' capability to cheat. It may be possible that teachers are either ignorant of the new ways that students cheat, or deny that these instances happen in their own classes. Such an underestimation may increase the number of students who cheat.

Table 4. Kruskal Wallis Test for the Perception of Policies on the Academic Environment (1st year and 2nd year)

	Kruskal Wallis - H	df	Asymp. Sig.
B1	0.197	2	0.906
B2	1.944	2	0.378
B3	6.111	2	0.047
B4	1.849	2	0.397
B5	1.128	2	0.569
B6	0.244	2	0.885

With the significance level set at 0.05 (p=0.05), Table 4 displays the findings of the Kruskal-Wallis Test for the Perception of the Academic Environment (policies) of first- and second-year students. There was no statistically significant difference between the first- and second-year students' perceptions of the school's academic environment (all p-values > 0.05).

Table 5. Awareness of Policies Regarding Academic Integrity

Have you been informed about the University policies as regards academic integrity?			
	Yes	**No**	**Not Sure**
Y1	89.3%	2.25%	8.43%
Y2	81.46%	1.69%	16.85%

Table 5 presents the students' awareness of the policies on academic integrity; 89.3% of first-year students and 81.46% of second-year students responded that they had been informed about the policies.

Table 6. Occurrence of Cheating as Observed by Students

How often, if ever, have you seen another student cheat during a test or examination throughout the implementation of the online mode of learning?					
	Never	**Once**	**A Few Times**	**Several Times**	**Many Times**
First Year	62.1%	13.0%	19.2%	4.5%	1.1%
Second Year	40.6%	14.4%	32.8%	8.9%	3.3%

In Table 6, it is worth mentioning that most of the first-year (62.1 %) and second-year (40.6 %) students did not observe cheating in the online examinations. However, these results may be affected by the online learning modality, as most of the students had never seen their classmates in person. More

importantly, despite their lack of face-to-face interaction, 19.2% of first and 32.8% of second year students were certain that they had seen other students cheating on several occasions.

Table 7. Frequency of Instructors' Policy Discussion

Since the beginning of the online mode of learning, how often, on average, did your instructors discuss policies concerning:		Never	Very Seldom	Seldom	Often	Very Often
E1. Plagiarism	**Y1**	2.8%	1.7%	14.7%	29.4%	51.4%
	Y2	2.2%	9.4%	21.1%	32.2%	35.0%
E2. Guidelines on group work or collaboration	**Y1**	0.6%	3.4%	10.9%	32.8%	52.3%
	Y2	1.7%	6.9%	19.7%	36.4%	35.3%
E3. Proper citation/referencing of written sources	**Y1**	1.1%	4.0%	15.9%	31.8%	47.2%
	Y2	1.1%	8.6%	21.3%	28.2%	40.8%
E4. Proper citation/referencing of Internet sources	**Y1**	0.6%	4.5%	15.3%	31.8%	47.7%
	Y2	1.1%	8.5%	21.1%	26.9%	42.3%
E5. Falsifying/Fabricating course lab data	**Y1**	5.1%	4.5%	14.2%	35.8%	40.3%
	Y2	5.7%	9.1%	21.7%	30.9%	32.6%
E6. Falsifying/Fabricating Research Data	**Y1**	5.1%	5.7%	13.6%	35.2%	40.3%
	Y2	5.1%	9.1%	20.6%	32.6%	32.6%

Table 7 shows how often instructors discuss policies concerning academic integrity. Respondents from the first and second groups noted that faculty members discussed plagiarism policies very often (51.4% and 35%, respectively). However, guidelines on group work or collaboration were discussed very often for first-year students (52.3%) and only often for second-year students (36.4%). Proper citations/referencing is also very often discussed for both written sources (47.2% and 40.8%) and internet sources (47.7% and 42.3%, respectively). Instructors also discussed very often the policies regarding falsifying and fabricating course lab data in the first year (40.3%) and second year (32.6%). In falsifying/fabricating research data, first-year students responded very often with 40.3% while second-year students responded often and very often with the same percentage of 32.6%. Faculty members should discuss academic dishonesty standards with students to ensure that they understand the repercussions and values of acting with integrity. Students can learn which activities are considered unethical and how to avoid them when faculty members take the time to clarify and discuss academic dishonesty regulations.

Table 8. Frequency of Academically Dishonest Practices

How frequently do you think the following occur?						
		Very Low	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**	**Very High**
F1. Plagiarism on written assignments	**Y1**	9.0%	14.0%	32.0%	32.6%	12.4%
	Y2	6.7%	10.6%	34.4%	33.3%	15.0%
F2. Inappropriately sharing work in group assignments	**Y1**	11.3%	14.7%	30.5%	28.8%	14.7%
	Y2	8.6%	15.5%	30.5%	27.0%	18.4%
F3. Cheating during tests or examinations	**Y1**	15.9%	18.8%	29.4%	20.6%	15.3%
	Y2	14.8%	15.4%	25.4%	27.8%	16.6%

Table 8 presents students' perceptions of specific behaviors of academic dishonesty since the beginning of the online mode of learning. First-year students reported a high (32.6%) tendency toward plagiarism on written assignments and second-year students with medium (34.4%). This mimicked the results in Table 1, where first-year students reported that they were more likely to commit academic dishonesty than second-year students. Regarding inappropriate sharing of work in group assignments, both first- and second-year students answered the medium with the same percentage (30.5 %). Lastly, first-year students responded with a medium tendency, with 29.4% cheating during tests or examinations, while second-year students answered high with 27.8%. On the other hand, perceptions of first- and second-year students can be correlated with the study of Kocdar et al. (2018), who stated that the sharing of assessments and the use of mobile devices were factors that influenced the tendency of students to cheat during online examinations. The study also cited that some students of their institutions will not engage in cheating behaviors, such as plagiarism, because of the availability of software to detect such actions.

Table 9. Students' Self-Reported Engagement in Acts of Academic Dishonesty

How often have you, yourself, engaged in the following behaviors throughout the online mode of learning?		Never	Once	More than once	Not Relevant
I1. Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography	Y1	6.8%	85.9%	3.4%	4.0%
	Y2	5.6%	78.3%	8.9%	7.2%
I2. Collaborating in person when the instructor asked for individual work	Y1	2.8%	80.1%	8.0%	9.1%
	Y2	5.7%	53.7%	20.0%	20.6%
I3. Collaborating through digital means when the instructor asked for individual work	Y1	4.5%	70.5%	11.4%	13.6%
	Y2	2.3%	44.0%	24.6%	29.1%
I4. Getting questions or answers from someone who has already taken a test.	Y1	3.4%	79.4%	9.7%	7.4%
	Y2	5.1%	63.4%	22.9%	8.6%
I5. In a course requiring computer work, copying another student's program rather than writing your own.	Y1	3.4%	89.7%	4.6%	2.3%
	Y2	4.0%	77.6%	13.2%	5.2%
I6. Helping someone else cheat on a test	Y1	4.0%	88.6%	4.0%	3.4%
	Y2	2.9%	74.1%	14.4%	8.6%
I7. Fabricating or falsifying lab data	Y1	5.1%	92.0%	0.6%	2.3%
	Y2	6.9%	84.5%	6.3%	2.3%
I8. Fabricating or falsifying research data.	Y1	4.0%	93.1%	0.6%	2.3%
	Y2	5.2%	86.7%	5.8%	2.3%
I9. Copying from another student during a test or examination with his or her knowledge.	Y1	2.8%	86.4%	6.3%	4.5%
	Y2	5.2%	68.4%	15.5%	10.9%
I10. Copying from another student during a test or examination without his or her knowledge.	Y1	3.4%	94.3%	0.6%	1.7%
	Y2	2.9%	89.1%	5.2%	2.9%
I11. Using digital technology to get unpermitted help from someone during a test or examination.	Y1	2.8%	87.5%	5.7%	4.0%
	Y2	2.9%	77.0%	9.2%	10.9%
I12. Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment	Y1	3.5%	85.5%	5.8%	5.2%
	Y2	2.3%	70.9%	14.5%	12.2%
I13. Copying (by hand or in person) another student's homework.	Y1	4.5%	87.5%	4.5%	3.4%
	Y2	3.5%	78.0%	13.3%	5.2%
I14. Copying (by using digital means such as Instant Messaging or email) another student's homework.	Y1	4.5%	85.2%	5.1%	5.1%
	Y2	4.0%	73.4%	15.0%	7.5%

I15. Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from a written source without citing the paper	Y1	4.0%	75.0%	9.7%	11.4%
	Y2	1.7%	51.4%	25.1%	21.7%
I16. Submitting a paper you purchased or obtained from a Using websites and claiming it as your own work	Y1	4.0%	90.3%	2.8%	2.8%
	Y2	5.1%	89.3%	5.1%	0.6%
I17. Turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper "mill" or website	Y1	4.0%	90.9%	2.3%	2.9%
	Y2	7.5%	85.0%	6.4%	1.2%
I18. Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from an electronic source without footnoting it in a paper	Y1	2.8%	70.5%	16.5%	10.2%
	Y2	2.9%	46.0%	31.0%	20.1%
I19. Using unpermitted crib notes (or cheat sheets) during a test	Y1	5.1%	85.2%	6.3%	3.4%
	Y2	5.3%	71.9%	18.1%	4.7%
I20. Using electronic crib notes (stored in PDA, phone, or calculator) to cheat on a test or exam	Y1	4.5%	80.7%	6.8%	8.0%
	Y2	4.6%	73.4%	15.0%	6.9%
I21. Using an electronic/digital device as an unauthorized aid during an exam	Y1	3.4%	80.5%	8.6%	7.5%
	Y2	5.2%	68.0%	16.3%	10.5%
I22. Copying material, almost word for word, from any written source and turning it in as your own work	Y1	2.9%	89.1%	4.6%	3.4%
	Y2	2.9%	81.4%	10.5%	5.2%
I23. Turning in a copied paper	Y1	3.4%	88.0%	4.6%	4.0%
	Y2	3.5%	84.2%	10.5%	1.8%
I24. Using a false or forged excuse to obtain an extension on a due date or delay writing an exam	Y1	4.0%	89.7%	2.9%	3.4%
	Y2	3.5%	89.0%	6.4%	1.2%
I25. Turning in work done by someone else	Y1	3.4%	92.6%	1.1%	2.9%
	Y2	4.7%	88.8%	5.3%	1.2%
I26. Cheating on a test in any other way	Y1	5.2%	77.3%	9.3%	8.1%
	Y2	4.8%	63.5%	20.4%	11.4%

The data in Table 9 reveal that most respondents committed academic dishonesty at least once. Although respondents only admitted to committing these acts once, the overwhelming results ranged from 44.0% (Collaborating through digital means when the instructor asked for individual work) to 94.3% (copying from another student during a test or examination without his or her knowledge), demonstrating widespread academic misconduct among the respondents.

Table 10. Perceived Level of Cheating on Different Academic Dishonesty-Associated Behaviors

Rate the specific behaviors below as to the level of cheating you believe is involved with each.		Not Cheating	Trivial Cheating	Moderate Cheating	Serious Cheating
J1. Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography	Y1	20.5%	35.2%	27.8%	16.5%
	Y2	5.56%	78.33%	8.89%	7.22%
J2. Collaborating in person when the instructor asked for individual work	Y1	18.8%	36.4%	27.3%	17.6%
	Y2	5.71%	53.7%	20.0%	20.57%
J3. Collaborating through digital means when the instructor asked for individual work	Y1	9.1%	10.8%	18.8%	61.4%
	Y2	2.29%	44.0%	24.57%	29.14%
J4. Getting questions or answers from someone who has already taken a test.	Y1	11.4%	7.4%	19.4%	61.7%
	Y2	5.14%	63.43%	22.86%	8.57%
J5. Copying another student's program rather than writing your own.	Y1	3.4%	89.7%	4.6%	2.3%
	Y2	4.0%	77.6%	13.2%	5.2%
J6. Helping someone else cheat on a test	Y1	4.0%	88.6%	4.0%	3.4%
	Y2	2.9%	74.1%	14.4%	8.6%
J7. Fabricating or falsifying lab data	Y1	5.1%	92.0%	0.6%	2.3%
	Y2	6.9%	84.5%	6.3%	2.3%
J8. Fabricating or falsifying research data.	Y1	4.0%	93.1%	0.6%	2.3%
	Y2	5.2%	86.7%	5.8%	2.3%
J9. Copying from another student during a test or examination with his or her knowledge.	Y1	2.8%	86.4%	6.3%	4.5%
	Y2	5.2%	68.4%	15.5%	10.9%
J10. Copying from another student during a test or examination without his or her knowledge.	Y1	3.4%	94.3%	0.6%	1.7%
	Y2	2.9%	89.1%	5.2%	2.9%
J11. Using digital technology to get unpermitted help from someone during a test or examination.	Y1	2.8%	87.5%	5.7%	4.0%
	Y2	2.9%	77.0%	9.2%	10.9%
J12. Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment	Y1	3.5%	85.5%	5.8%	5.2%
	Y2	2.3%	70.9%	14.5%	12.2%
J13. Copying (by hand or in person) another student's homework.	Y1	4.5%	87.5%	4.5%	3.4%
	Y2	3.5%	78.0%	13.3%	5.2%
J14. Copying by using digital means of another student's homework.	Y1	4.5%	85.2%	5.1%	5.1%
	Y2	4.0%	73.4%	15.0%	7.5%
J15. Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from a written source without citing the paper	Y1	4.0%	75.0%	9.7%	11.4%
	Y2	1.7%	51.4%	25.1%	21.7%
J16. Submitting a paper you purchased or obtained from a Using websites and claiming it as your own work	Y1	4.0%	90.3%	2.8%	2.8%
	Y2	5.1%	89.3%	5.1%	0.6%
J17. Turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper "mill" or website	Y1	4.0%	90.9%	2.3%	2.9%
	Y2	7.5%	85.0%	6.4%	1.2%
J18. Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from an electronic source without footnoting	Y1	2.8%	70.5%	16.5%	10.2%
	Y2	2.9%	46.0%	31.0%	20.1%

J19. Using unpermitted crib notes (or cheat sheets) during a test	Y1	5.1%	85.2%	6.3%	3.4%
	Y2	5.3%	71.9%	18.1%	4.7%
J20. Using electronic crib notes (stored in PDA, phone, or calculator) to cheat on a test or exam	Y1	4.5%	80.7%	6.8%	8.0%
	Y2	4.6%	73.4%	15.0%	6.9%
J21. Using an electronic/digital device as an unauthorized aid during an exam	Y1	3.4%	80.5%	8.6%	7.5%
	Y2	5.2%	68.0%	16.3%	10.5%
J22. Copying material, almost word for word, from any written source and turning it in as your own work	Y1	2.9%	89.1%	4.6%	3.4%
	Y2	2.9%	81.4%	10.5%	5.2%
J23. Turning in a copied paper	Y1	3.4%	88.0%	4.6%	4.0%
	Y2	3.5%	84.2%	10.5%	1.8%
J24. Using a false or forged excuse to obtain an extension on a due date or delay writing an exam	Y1	4.0%	89.7%	2.9%	3.4%
	Y2	3.5%	89.0%	6.4%	1.2%
J25. Turning in work done by someone else	Y1	3.4%	92.6%	1.1%	2.9%
	Y2	4.7%	88.8%	5.3%	1.2%
J26. Cheating on a test in any other way	Y1	5.2%	77.3%	9.3%	8.1%
	Y2	4.8%	63.5%	20.4%	11.4%

Using the same academic dishonesty-related behaviors in Table 9, Table 10 presents the students' perceptions of the level of cheating associated with each. While some behaviors such as *Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography* (20.5%) and *Collaborating in person when the instructor asked for individual work* (18.8%) were classified by first-year students as "not cheating," most respondents agree that the listed behaviors were considered as cheating. The majority of the respondents classified the acts as "trivial cheating," with *Copying from another student during a test or examination without his or her knowledge* receiving the most responses from first-year students (94.3%) and *Submitting a paper you purchased or obtained from a Using websites and claiming it as your work* from second-year students (89.3%). First-year students considered asking *questions or answers from someone who had already taken a test* to be the most serious of the acts mentioned (61.7%), while for the second year, it was *collaborating through digital means when the instructor asked for individual work* (29.14%).

Table 11. Spearman Correlation for the Policy Awareness and Tendency to Engage in Specific Behaviors of Academic Dishonesty

Policy Awareness and Tendency to Engage in Specific Behaviors of Academic Dishonesty							
	Correlation Coefficient	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**N**		**Correlation Coefficient**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**N**
I1	0.004	0.965	159	I14	0.059	0.463	159
I2	0.228	0.004	159	I15	0.118	0.140	159
I3	0.151	0.057	159	I16	0.034	0.666	159
I4	0.043	0.589	159	I17	0.052	0.514	159
I5	-0.027	0.736	159	I18	0.026	0.743	159
I6	0.088	0.272	159	I19	-0.037	0.647	159
I7	-0.041	0.609	159	I20	0.117	0.141	159
I8	-0.60	0.451	159	I21	0.093	0.243	159
I9	0.040	0.613	159	I22	0.012	0.876	159
I10	0.017	0.834	159	I23	-0.048	0.545	159
I11	0.006	0.939	159	I24	-0.026	0.749	159
I12	-0.119	0.136	159	I25	-0.007	0.926	159
I13	0.087	0.275	159	I26	0.128	0.107	159

The results in Table 11 confirm only the data in Tables 8 and 9. Spearman Correlation was performed on the data from the previous two tables, the significance level was set at 0.05 (p=0.05), and the correlation coefficient was calculated to identify significant relationships. The Spearman Correlation found that the awareness of both first-year and second-year students was statistically significant (computed value = 0.00, p-value < 0.05) in terms of collaboration in individual works with a low positive correlation with r (157) = 0.23, showing that they are directly proportional.

Table 12. Student Perception of the Disapproval of Other Individuals

If you had cheated in a course and the following individuals knew about it, how strongly would they disapprove?					
		VERY STRONGLY	**FAIRLY STRONGLY**	**NOT VERY STRONGLY**	**NOT AT ALL**
O1. A close friend	Y1	21.8%	41.8%%	26.1%	10.3%
	Y2	15.8%	34.5%	39.8%	9.9%
O2. One of the students you go around with	Y1	20.0%	45.5%	20.6%	13.9%
	Y2	14.4%	39.5%	35.9%	10.2%
O3. Your parents	Y1	49.7%	26.7%	10.3%	13.3%
	Y2	50.0%	26.2%	14.3%	9.5%

Based on the data collected in Table 12, the students reported that most of the individuals mentioned would disagree strongly with cheating. However, this disapproval decreased among second-year students.

3.2. Discussion

Aguilar (2021) emphasized the increasing trend of academic dishonesty in online learning in the Philippines. Recent research by Ayoub/Al-Salim and Aladwan (2021) also confirmed that collaborative forms of academic misconduct have been widespread using messaging applications such as Facebook Messenger and Telegram. Academic dishonesty is a serious problem in educational institutions; therefore, students must be informed about the rules and sanctions that apply to it. Educating students about behaviors considered dishonest will help them avoid breaking academic policies unintentionally. The results of this study also show that simply understanding the rules of the school and the repercussions of academic dishonesty or using facilities to catch cheaters may be inefficient in curbing academic misconduct in online classes.

In contrast to the study by Balba and Caingcoy (as cited in Beruin (2022)), which stated that younger students had more potential to engage in academic misbehavior, results from the data collected showed that the higher-year students were found to be more likely to engage in academic dishonesty. In Table 12, we also see that students' perception of other individuals' disapproval of their cheating was also lower in the second year than in the first year, showing that cheating may be more normalized in this group than in the first-year level. Considering the results in Table 2, we can conclude that cheating is more socially acceptable for second-year students than for first-year students. The results in Table 3 also show that both first- and second-year students affirmed that they thoroughly comprehend the rules, regulations, and their severity. The Kruskal-Wallis test conducted on both groups (Table 4) shows that they have similar perspectives on academic dishonesty policies, their severity, students and faculty's knowledge of them, their support for them, and their efficacy. However, despite the students' reported knowledge of them (Table 2), they continued to cheat. The results only show that while students express an understanding of the policies, the occurrences of academic dishonesty and temptation to cheat remain ever-present. Making the results more interesting is that in Table 11, it was identified that as students become more aware of academic dishonesty policies, they are more likely to work together, despite being assigned individual activities. Students continue to engage in academic dishonesty, despite knowing that they are doing something inappropriate. Cheating has become a widespread phenomenon in online classes, to the point that even traditionally recognized cheating behaviors have been classified by the respondents as "trivial" (Tables 8 and 9).

It is evident from the results that respondents were unfazed by their understanding of the consequences of their actions, contrary to the theory of Rational Choice, which explains that deciding to cheat is made after balancing the benefits of the misbehavior and the associated consequences(Nagy & Groves, 2021). The data in Table 3 support that these rules and regulations are not only effective but also largely supported by both students and faculty members. However, because less than half of the respondents noted that the faculty understands plagiarism policies, measures must be taken to inform members of the faculty of the new ways that students cheat, such that they do not underestimate the students' capabilities for academic dishonesty in their classrooms. Kocdar et al. (2018) suggested that some students refuse to engage in academic misconduct such as plagiarism because of the availability of software to detect such actions. Additionally, the students' rating of plagiarism as serious cheating (Table 10) may reflect how the availability of such plagiarism-detecting platforms may be deterring plagiarism; However, their rating of the other forms of academic misconduct as "trivial" cheating may be pointing to the availability of opportunities to cheat in other scenarios. According to Kocdar et al. (2018), sharing assessments and using mobile devices influence students' tendency to cheat during online examinations. According to Opportunity Theory developed by Cohen and Felson (1979), crime is more likely to occur when three elements come together: *a motivated offender, a suitable target*, and *the absence of a capable guardian*. Initially created as a theory of criminology, this theory has since been used to explain various forms of deviant behavior, including academic misconduct. In other words, cheating occurs when there is an opportunity to do so. One researcher who has used this theory to explain cheating in college is McCabe, the proponent of the methodology used in this study. Their

research in 1997 replicated that conducted by Bowers in 1964. McCabe and Trevino (1997) as cited in McCabe, Treviño, and Butterfield (2001)), showed that incidences of collaborative cheating (unpermitted collaboration on written individual assignments) increased. This mirrors the data collection results in this research (Table 10) and is further strengthened by the finding that as the respondents become more aware of the policies, they are more likely to work together on individual assignments. According to McCabe et al. (2001), this is because the definition of plagiarism changes over the years. The findings of McCabe's study showed a disappointing increase within the 30 years that spanned between Bower's and their study, but the findings of this research present even more staggering numbers. Students rated more traditional cheating behaviors such as "*Copying from another student during a test or examination without his or her knowledge"* and "*Submitting a paper you purchased or obtained using websites and claiming it as your work"* as trivial. It may be deduced that online learning has further amplified the rate at which the definition of cheating changes. McCabe et al. (2001) also stressed that peer behavior significantly affects academic misconduct. They explained that "*the strong influence of peers' behavior may suggest that academic dishonesty is not only learned from observing the behavior of peers, but that peers' behavior provides a kind of normative support for cheating*." (p. 222) This also mirrors the results of the data gathered in this study, where older students were found to be more likely to cheat, but it was also found that cheating behavior was more normalized in their group (Table 12). Contextual factors, such as peer behavior, peer disapproval, and perceived severity of penalties for academic misconduct, have been proven to be the most influential factors in cheating behavior. This can perhaps be best explained by Bandura's social learning theory Bandura (1986), as cited by McCabe et al. (2001)). As shown in Table 6, both groups indicated that they had seen their classmates cheating at some point despite the lack of face-to-face interaction. Interestingly, the figures also show an increase in the second year (32.8%) compared to the first-year data (19.2%). Students who observe and model their peers' behavior are more likely to engage in academic misconduct, especially if these behaviors are not punished.

The results also mirror the Neutralization Theory by Sykes and Matza (1957), as cited in Lilly, Cullen, and Ball (2018)). Sykes and Matza (1957), as cited in Lilly et al. (2018)) presented a theory of crime in delinquents called the Neutralization Theory to explain why delinquents commit crimes in their youth, but can settle down as law-abiding citizens later in life. This theory explains that delinquents commit crimes knowing that they are wrong, but because they have learned *techniques of neutralization* or, in simpler terms, excuses. This neutralizes the control of these rules without necessarily rejecting them. According to Sykes and Matza (1957), as cited in Lilly et al. (2018)), there are five techniques of neutralization: (1) denial of responsibility, (2) denial of injury, (3) denial of the victim, (4) condemnation of the condemners, and (5) appeal to higher loyalties. As the results show that while students understand the rules and regulations of the school, they still commit cheating, and this act is more socially accepted in higher years, we can deduce that the students make the same excuses when committing academic misconduct. Storch, Storch, and Clark (2002) used this theory to explain how cheating occurs in college classes; however, Ives (2020) suggested that the neutralization theory may be able to explain why students cheat, but it is not an adequate model to guide interventions for academic misconduct because students' reasons for committing academic misconduct may not always conform to the five-factor model. Instead, Ives (2020) suggested using Achievement Goal Theory instead of prescribing interventions. This theory suggests that students are more likely to cheat if motivated by external goals such as getting better grades or even acquiring approval from others (Ives, 2020). Instead, curbing academic misconduct may be reduced if students are motivated internally. Ives (2020) recommended that institutions highlight the value of being honest in assessments, such as improving one's skills and helping people in the future with the skills they will learn. Ives (2020) also highlighted that genuine interest in the content and appreciation of the subject matter contributes to these internal motivations. McCabe and Trevino (1997) findings, as cited in McCabe et al. (2001)), also found that the existence of a culture of academic integrity propelled by these internal motivations decreases the instances of cheating in institutions. Unfortunately, the results of this research found that cheating is widespread among respondents, which points to the need to cultivate such values.

4. Conclusion

4.1. Conclusion

Conclusion: This study suggests that academic dishonesty is a widespread concern in online learning, with implications for institutions of higher education. Institutions need to take steps to address this problem as the shift to online learning becomes permanent.

4.2. Limitation

The study was conducted at a single higher education institution in an urban area, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts.

4.3. Suggestion

To address academic dishonesty in online learning, institutions of higher education should implement clear and consistent policies on academic dishonesty, provide students with a more informative orientation, reiterate the rules on academic integrity and the consequences of cheating, create a more supportive learning environment that allows students to ask for help when necessary, cultivate a culture of academic integrity that values integrity and honesty, and make plagiarism detection tools more accessible to both students and faculty members. Through these suggestions, higher education institutions may reduce the incidence of academic dishonesty in online learning.

Acknowledgment

The authors acknowledge the support of the BAPS4A-1 class of 2023 for conducting this study.

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