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An Exploration to the Academic Misconduct of the Generation Alpha: Reference for Policy Enhancement

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Abstract: *This research study explored the levels of academic misconduct of Generation Alpha students who were enrolled in an elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga, Philippines. Using a mixed methods research design, specifically concurrent triangulation, the study surveyed 139 intermediate grade students to explore their reasons, attitudes, and methods in terms of cheating as well as the causes, attitudes, and experiences in terms of plagiarism. The instruments used were modified survey questionnaires to collect quantitative data and unstructured interviews to get qualitative thoughts. The data were also analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency, percent, standard deviation, and mean, and inferential analyses such as t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Based on the findings, it shows that there was academic misconduct occurring among the students, with significant differences according to their age, grade levels, and academic achievements in terms of cheating. There were also significant differences according to the students age and grade levels, but not academic achievements in terms of plagiarism. The conclusions drew the essentials of targeted early life interventions and educational programs to promote academic integrity. Some recommendations suggested are developing integrity programs, inserting ethical lessons into everyday teaching, and creating a supportive learning environment for all. To summarize, the study points out that academic misconduct among Generation Alpha students is a complicated issue and the importance of collaborative efforts in promoting academic integrity involving teachers, school administrators, guidance counselors, policymakers, community stakeholders, parents, and future researchers.*

Keywords—academic misconduct; concurrent triangulation; Generation Alpha; integrity

1. INTRODUCTION

Expediency over integrity is a Big C to education quality. When convenience rules, accurate learning becomes a casualty. Expediency is defined as a situation in which an action is advantageous or helpful in a certain situation but occasionally not ethically correct [1]. In education, expedient behaviors, in which students do acts like plagiarism and cheating to obtain high grades, can be seen as academic misconduct. Based on the study, academic misconduct has become more prevalent over time, with a rise in incidence observed in recent decades [2].

In higher education institutions, there has been a growing concern regarding academic misconduct among students worldwide [3]. Several definitions of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct exist. In relation to academic work, it is believed to be a deliberate act or acts of deception [4]. Academic misconduct, often referred to as academic dishonesty, is defined as actions that compromise academic integrity [5]. Cheating is one type of academic misconduct and has grown to be one of the main issues in educational institutions. In 2020 study, it examined whether academic performance after adjusting for individual and background characteristics can explain cheating. According to the findings, academic success and cheating are positively and significantly connected [6]. Students from Generation Alpha attending ten elementary schools outside of Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo, make up the study's respondents. The first generation born fully in the twenty-first century is called Generation Alpha, and they are born between 2010 and 2025 [7].

Additionally, although primary school cheating has been around for a while, it is still a challenge for educators and educational institutions to combat this issue [8]. The majority of forms of cheating are incredibly common in the Philippines. Studies indicate that cheating among public school students is consistently higher than among private school students. Big schools are known for their anonymity, which could make it simpler for students to hide their cheating from teachers and, more crucially, from other students [9]. Furthermore, students' motivations for cheating vary across different educational stages [10]. Specifically, elementary school students are primarily driven by fears of punishment, peer rejection, or teacher humiliation. This pressure to excel academically prompts students to seek external sources for answers, whether by consulting friends or accessing online resources [11]. Therefore, high expectations for high school applications and the difficult demands of the curriculum are significant contributing factors to the problem of children resorting to cheating due to overwhelming parental pressure to succeed in school.

Further reasons for academic dishonesty include inadequate teaching methods by educators [12] and student

lack of interest or laziness [13]. Moreover, concerns from students about teachers and courses usually revolve around the idea of uninteresting or boring teaching methods [14].

Academic cheating can start as early as age five, if not younger [15]. Academic cheating has been observed starting at age 5 in all school levels and all geographical areas [16]. Thus, in order to stop academic cheating from becoming a habit, researchers have stressed how crucial it is to begin a scientific investigation of the practice in early infancy [17]. Despite children typically possessing a full understanding that cheating is ethically wrong by the age of 8, this awareness does not necessarily deter them from engaging in such behavior. While cheating tends to decline as children mature, by the age of 8, motivations for cheating often shift from impulsive actions to concerns about potential negative repercussions. Additionally, younger students demonstrate a higher inclination towards opportunistic cheating compared to their older counterparts [18].

Amidst claims of online cheating, the Department of Education insisted that it “does not and will not tolerate” any type of academic dishonesty [19]. The pandemic became an eye-opener for educational institutions worldwide, pushing them into the world of distance learning, which posed unprecedented challenges for both educators and students. DepEd reaffirmed this after the Facebook group "Online Kopyahan" gained popularity online. Before being inaccessible, the Online Kopyahan published exam, module, and online learning test answers. Online cheating is the result of students' struggles with distance learning, due to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) problem in the country. Furthermore, it was claimed by DepEd Undersecretary Diosdado San Antonio that tolerating cheating would not be beneficial to students in the long run [20].

Another study included synchronous and asynchronous learning as a form of distance education, and it was conducted during a pandemic. The findings showed that the majority of students cheated on tests, quizzes, and assignments; that stress and worry were the main causes of cheating; and that homework was the type of assessment that most encouraged cheating. Exam outcomes from synchronous or asynchronous administered proctored exams are equivalent. Since most students are less inclined to cheat on proctored exams, they thought it would be a good idea to use these tests as a means of monitoring distance learning. Proctored synchronous and asynchronous exams act as a deterrent against academic dishonesty and cheating among students [21].

Furthermore, cheating was investigated among elementary school students using a creative performance task, and it was found that children with higher socioeconomic status and IQ have a higher likelihood of cheating [22]. This correlation may arise because students with higher abilities are more concerned about achieving favorable outcomes, or they may possess greater skills in the act of cheating [23]. Moreover, expanding upon this idea, high-achieving students attributed more significance to "the emphasis on attaining high grades in my studies" as a motivating factor for cheating, contrasting with the perspectives of low-achieving students.

Aside from cheating, plagiarism has historically been the most prevalent type of academic misconduct. With the advancement of digital technologies for their detection, the problem of misconduct has changed. Plagiarism is described as the copying or use of another person's work that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, misleads a third party about the authorship or ownership of the work [24]. Many students end up pasting information from multiple sources without giving due credit, paraphrasing concepts without citing the source, and coming up with original ideas [25]. Copying assignments from classmates or plagiarizing 5ections of published works for papers continues to be a widely used method [26].

Four major categories of plagiarism are distinguished by the University of Louisiana at Monroe: copying, patchwork, paraphrasing, and accidental plagiarism [27]. Plagiarism can take several forms: for instance, patchwork, which is when someone incorporates ideas from multiple sources into a single paragraph without giving due credit; paraphrasing, which is when someone summaries or paraphrases another person's work without giving credit to the original author; and unintentional plagiarism, which occurs when someone mentions an alternate source for an idea they have cited.

Additionally, accidental plagiarism can happen when you are unsure how to correctly paraphrase, quote, and cite your sources. A lack of knowledge about proper documentation methods can lead to students unintentionally presenting someone else's words or ideas as their own. Essentially, if one paraphrases information from a book, article, or website but fails to include an in-text citation, the reader will assume that the ideas and/or words are that person’s rather than someone else's [28].

According to the Stevens Institute of Technology, plagiarism is defined as unethical, unlawful, against all academic norms of conduct, and deprives the plagiarizer of valuable abilities [29]. Consequently, Grammarly, Inc. developed a plagiarism detector that analyzes written content by cross-referencing it with various domains on the Internet [30]. It determines a particular percentage depending on how much plagiarism a writer has done. Apart from that, Grammarly also offers the following features: grammar, spelling, fluency, conventions, conciseness, and clarity. The writer can also alter the setting to suit their needs. These exclusive features are only accessible with a premium membership, though. The University of Oxford emphasizes that students should stay away from plagiarism and, above all, maintain academic integrity [31].

As schools attempt to function in an increasingly complicated environment, it is unlikely that the factors that contribute to academic misconduct can be simply eliminated. Each educational institution implements its own set of policies and disciplinary actions, and faculty members may differ in

their approaches to addressing academic dishonesty. Employing a multiple-case study approach, researchers examined how academic misconduct is perceived in Australian, New Zealand, and UK institutions through interviews with students and administrators. The results demonstrate that academic misconduct is a systemic issue with a wide range of manifestations that calls for an equally wide range of management strategies and more uniformity in the rules and practices. Managing the variations of academic misconduct that continue to afflict the higher education industry worldwide requires emphasizing preventative education for both staff and students [32].

Furthermore, about two-thirds of the more than a thousand undergraduate students at an Australian university who participated in a recent poll admitted to having plagiarized in some capacity [33]. Since COVID-19 began, there has been a rapid move to online education. Consequently, because online testing has become unreliable, there has been a spike in the use of websites associated with cheating [34]. To overcome problems when completing assessments like unproctored online tests, students can easily look up solutions online, collaborate with other students, utilize ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence content generator, or pay for "homework help" websites [35].

Education providers now face more issues in upholding academic integrity due to the growth of online learning and the recent release of generative artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT [36]. Besides, using artificial intelligence for academic dishonesty is an example of ‘disruptive technology’ [37]. Any form of academic dishonesty undermines academic standards and the credibility of higher education worldwide [38]. Recent developments in AI chatbots like GPT-3 and ChatGPT, created by OpenAI, a firm specializing in artificial intelligence applications, have heightened concerns about academic dishonesty (AD). These advanced chatbots use generative AI, relying on algorithms and predictive text to produce new content in response to user prompts. By analyzing extensive datasets from sources such as Wikipedia, Reddit, and various online platforms, they can generate text. ChatGPT and its Google counterpart, Bard, can produce grammatically correct content through massive data processing [39]. This content can appear legitimate enough to bypass anti-plagiarism software [40]. However, Turnitin® claims it can now detect text generated by ChatGPT [41]. Although chatbots trained on large datasets might produce convincing output, this information can be misleading or incorrect due to the absence of human verification [42]. Additionally, these chatbots may fabricate quotes from sources, falsely enhancing their credibility [43]. While they have various uses, it is important to remember that they are machines without human intelligence, merely reflecting and potentially distorting human-contributed internet content [44].

A student website reports that ChatGPT is not yet advanced enough to generate a complete 2000-word essay. However, users can input a series of questions and piece together the resulting text into a plausible essay, supplemented with in-text references from their module reading list, which may be sufficient for a passing grade [45]. Additionally, AI capabilities are rapidly evolving. For instance, in March 2023, OpenAI released GPT-4, an enhanced version of ChatGPT, available to users for a $20 monthly subscription [46].

Furthermore, the use of artificial intelligence tools does not inherently amount to academic dishonesty; the determining factor is how these tools are employed [47]. For instance, applications like ChatGPT can assist hesitant writers in creating a preliminary draft, which they can subsequently revise and improve. In this context, the technology serves as a learning aid for students. Additionally, it can be a resource for teaching students fact-checking and critical thinking skills, given that ChatGPT’s outputs often contain inaccuracies. Conversely, when students rely on tools or others to complete their homework, it constitutes academic dishonesty because it bypasses the learning process. Therefore, the crucial distinction lies in the students' intentions: using technology as a learning aid versus using it to cheat. Ultimately, it is the students’ choices, not the technology itself, that determine whether it is used for learning or dishonesty.

To define plagiarism in the context of Philippine law and court cases, the Department of Justice (DOJ) released Advisory Opinion No. 02, Series of 2012 [48]. Within academic circles, plagiarism is primarily seen as a transgression of the strict originality requirements that academic community members adhere to, as well as an infraction against academic integrity. Leila M. de Lima, the Secretary of Justice, stated that recent events have highlighted the significance of precisely defining plagiarism and clarifying the misconception that it is not illegal in our country [49].

Plagiarism has been defined by the Supreme Court as the "deliberate and knowing presentation of another person's original ideas or creative expressions as one's own," and the Advisory Opinion clarifies that it might be against the law under the Cybercrime Prevention Act, the E-Commerce Act, or the Intellectual Property Code [50]. Given that plagiarism is defined as an inappropriate action that deprives another party of their original work in violation of proprietary norms, the counsel offers suggestions for how to prevent, detect, and address plagiarism. The main points are as follows: (1) Plagiarism should be avoided regardless of the penalties that may be applied. (2) Get into the habit of attributing. Whenever in doubt, offer a source. (3) Anyone can be impacted by plagiarism at any time. (4) Always be on the lookout for instances of plagiarism. (5) Encourage companies to put anti-plagiarism procedures in place. In the interest of a just and peaceful republic, the DOJ hopes to use its advisory opinion to further increase social trust and community understanding.

2. Conceptual Framework

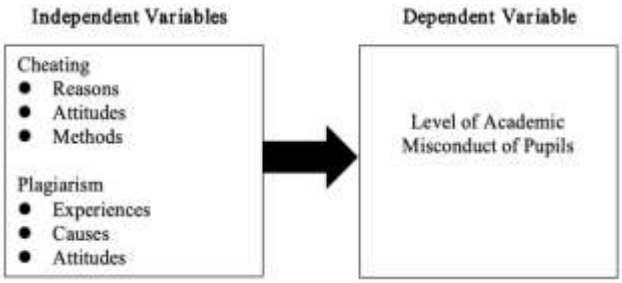

Fig. 1. *Conceptual framework of the study*

The independent variables in the study were the reasons, attitudes, and methods concerning cheating, as well as the experiences, causes, and attitudes related to plagiarism. The Level of Academic Misconduct committed by the students served as the dependent variable. The students had a low level of academic misconduct if they thought that cheating and plagiarism were unethical and bad. Otherwise, there was a high degree of academic misconduct or dishonesty on the part of the students if they considered plagiarism and cheating to be acceptable behaviors.

3. Research Locale

The study was conducted in an elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga, with the consent of the principal, teachers, and parents. This locale served as a suitable venue to respond to queries about the academic misconduct behavior of Generation Alpha. The intermediate grade students were given an instrument measuring academic misconduct that focused on their cheating and plagiarism practices. The topic is quite sensitive so the researchers asked for assistance from the designated guidance counselor of the school to assure the integrity and transparency of the study. The main objective of the study was to explore the levels of Academic Misconduct among intermediate grade students in an elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga, in terms of their reasons, attitudes, and methods of cheating, as well as their experiences, causes, and attitudes toward plagiarism.

4. Statement of the Problems

The main objective of the study was to explore the levels of Academic Misconduct among intermediate grade students in an elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga, in terms of their reasons, attitudes, and methods of cheating, as well as their experiences, causes, and attitudes toward plagiarism.

Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:
1.How may the respondents be described according to:
1.1 Grade Level,
1.2 Age, and
1.3 Academic Award?

2. What is the level of reasons, attitudes, and methods of Generation Alpha pupils towards academic misconduct in terms of cheating?

3. What is the level of experiences, causes, and attitudes of Generation Alpha pupils towards academic misconduct in terms of plagiarism?

4.Is there a significant difference in the academic misconduct of Generation Alpha pupils when grouped according to their profile?

5. Scope and Delimitation

The scope of the study focused on the reasons, attitudes, and methods regarding cheating, as well as the experiences, causes, and attitudes regarding plagiarism among intermediate-grade pupils in an elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga. The respondents to the study were enrolled during the academic year 2023-2024.

6. Significance of the Study

The researchers aimed to explore the Academic Misconduct of Generation Alpha: Reference for Policy Enhancement. This study may benefit the following:

Students. Students will learn about the importance of being honest in their schoolwork and personal growth through this study. Recognition programs with awards for upholding integrity can encourage students to avoid cheating and plagiarism. Inserting plagiarism and integrity lessons in their classes, give the students knowledge and values to establish good choices in school and in their lives.

Teachers. Teachers could use what they learn from this study about ethics to tell their students. By pointing out why it's important to be fair in a supportive classroom, teachers motivate students to understand why integrity is important to tackle. This perspective helps students avoid cheating and copying others' work while developing a classroom where everyone feels respected and can do their best.

School Administrators. School administrators may use this research to establish clear guidelines against cheating and plagiarism. These rules might help the students to understand what they should not do and what will happen if they cheat. Administrators can also support programs that teach students why honesty is important and how cheating hurts everyone.

Guidance Counselors. Guidance counselors can use this study to improve the support of students. They may offer individual counseling and group workshops on handling stress and making healthy choices. Counselors provide a safe environment for students to voice their concerns, allowing them to understand why some students may commit cheating.

Policy Makers. Policymakers can use this study to settle clear rules against cheating in schools. They should collaborate with teachers, school leaders, and the community to start these programs to explain why honesty is important. Focusing on avoiding cheating, teaching about honesty, and enforcing these rules might improve schools. Improving these rules regularly keeps them fair and effective, making sure students understand and follow them.

Community Stakeholders. Community stakeholders such as local businesses, organizations, and parents, can use this study to assist schools in promoting honesty among students. They can offer financial support, materials, and participate in conversations regarding ethics and academic integrity. When schools and communities help each other, they establish a supportive place for students. This collaboration promotes honesty among students in their academic and personal lives.

Parents. Parents can use this study to realize the importance of teaching honesty to their children. They have an important role in shaping their child's mind so they should promote this good behavior at their home. Parents can help through support programs that encourage honesty and by listening to their child's concerns so that they will become more truthful to themselves.

Future Researchers. Future researchers can use this study to further their investigation into academic misconduct committed by the Generation Alpha students. It is recommended that they expand on these findings by investigating additional factors that affect children to engage in any kinds of academic misconduct. Better understanding these issues would help researchers develop new strategies and interventions to improve academic integrity.

7. Definition of Terms

To improve understanding in this research, the following words were defined conceptually and operationally for the study:

Academic Misconduct - is described as an action of trying to do something that could harm yourself and other pupils. This includes behaviors like collecting information illegally, creating fake academic records, plagiarism, and cheating [51]. The word "academic misconduct" in this study is referring to the behaviors that were forbidden in schools, particularly the cheating or plagiarism, which is the unauthorized use of another person's work without proper credits to the source.

Attitudes - are described as a person's tendency to react positively or negatively to someone or something [52]. In this study, the term "attitudes" referred to students' opinions on cheating and plagiarism.

Causes - are defined as factors that can trigger a person's action or response [53]. In this study, the term "causes" referred to the reasons that motivated the students to perform plagiarism.

Cheating - is described when a student gives, takes, or presents any information or material fraudulently to help themselves or someone else with any academic work that is taken into account in any manner when determining the final grade [54]. In this study, the term "cheating" is defined as, but not limited to, students who copy or are allowed to copy any academic works, including activities, quizzes, tests, and similar materials, using any method.

Experiences - is used to refer to the collection of life's experiences, wisdom, and lessons learned. It is the outcome of engaging with the surroundings, meeting obstacles, and drawing lessons from them [55]. In this study, the term "experiences" referred to the exposure of the students to plagiarism throughout their academic journey, including instances where they may have been exposed to it, whether through observation or direct involvement. These experiences may vary, encompassing both intentional and unintentional plagiarism, and can occur at different stages of their education.

Generation Alpha - is used to refer to the population that was born (or will be born) between 2010 and 2025 [56]. In this study, the term "Generation Alpha" referred to the generation of the respondents. This generation is characterized by their upbringing in an environment heavily influenced by technology, social media, and digital tools.

Methods - is described as a process for carrying out a task [57]. The word "methods" in this study referred to the means by which the students committed cheating, be it tactics or procedures.

Plagiarism - is the use of another person's words, ideas, or works without giving credit [58]. The term "plagiarism" refers to students who borrow words, ideas, or works from another individual without giving credit to the original author and are referred to as engaging in plagiarism in this study.

Reasons - can be used to describe an underlying concept, rationale, goal, inspiration, or drive [59]. The term "reasons" in this study refers to the motivates for the student to engage in cheating.

8. Research Design

The researchers used a mixed-methods research design in this study, specifically concurrent triangulation. This design explored the reasons, methods, and attitudes in terms of cheating, along with the experiences, causes, and attitudes in terms of plagiarism among intermediate grade students at an elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga.

In mixed-methods, qualitative and quantitative methodologies are combined to address research problems. By combining the advantages of qualitative and quantitative research, mixed methods can provide a deeper understanding than either design alone [60].

Moreover, the concurrent triangulation research design improves the reliability and precision of research findings [61]. Research methods include using different types of techniques, theories, data sources, or researchers to examine a subject from multiple perspectives. This helps in minimizing errors and offers a clearer understanding of the topic.

9. Respondents of the Study

The students who participated in the study were from Apalit Elementary School in Pampanga. They answered surveys and interview questions about cheating and plagiarism at their school. The purpose of the study was to explore the level of academic misconduct among intermediate grade students by exploring their reasons, methods, and attitudes behind cheating as well as their experiences, causes, and attitude towards plagiarism.

10. Sampling Technique

The total population used by the researchers consisted of three hundred and two intermediate grade students enrolled at elementary school in Apalit, Pampanga. The population consists of all the subjects the researcher wants to learn more about [62]. To have a better understanding of the extent of academic misconduct related to cheating and plagiarism among intermediate grade students, the researchers used convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method that chooses sample units according to those most readily available to the researcher. This could be explained by factors such as closeness in location, accessibility at a specific time, or readiness to engage in the study [63]. Selecting a portion of the population of interest is known as sampling. It is not practical to include the entire population of interest, hence data from a smaller sample is typically collected for study purposes [64].

11. Instruments

The researchers collected data through modified survey questionnaires and unstructured interviews. The first cheating questionnaire took its cues from Salehi & Gholampour [65]. There were four (4) sections to the questionnaire. The first section, which included six (6) items, was on reasons not to cheat. Ten (10) items in the following section deal with attitudes toward cheating. The next section contained seventeen (17) items that dealt with reasons for cheating. The final section, which had thirteen (13) items, dealt with cheating methods. There were 46 items in the questionnaire in all. The questionnaire's confidentiality allowed students to freely express their reasons, attitudes, and methods for cheating. Cronbach's alpha for each item was 0.74, indicating strong reliability.

Conversely, Muñoz-Cantero et al. validated the content of the second questionnaire about plagiarism, which was based on the "Questionnaire of Attributions for the Detection of Coincidences in Academic Works" (CUDECO) [66]. The original questionnaire contained 50 items and three dimensions; this was trimmed to a total of 30 items. The following were the contents of these dimensions: "I think my classmates..." (10 items), "Throughout the race..." (8 items), and "Causes that have motivated you to perform the previous actions" (12 items) made up these dimensions. This updated configuration was used to calculate the instrument's reliability. This reliability analysis's Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.924, which is two points higher than the reliability analysis that came before it.

Four (4) validated open-ended questions were used in the qualitative part to validate the respondents' quantitative responses.

12. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection for this study on academic misconduct among Generation Alpha students followed a structured and ethical approach. Initially, approval was obtained from the Department of Education (DepEd), the school principal, teachers, and the students' parents or guardians. The participants were thoroughly briefed about the study's objectives, and informed consent was secured from all relevant parties. To collect data, a combination of methods was used: a Likert-scale survey was distributed to gather quantitative insights on students' level of academic misconduct, while open-ended essay questions provided qualitative data about their perspectives. Additionally, unstructured interviews were conducted to validate the respondents' quantitative responses. Throughout the data collection process, confidentiality was maintained by securely storing all personal information and ensuring that it was only accessible to authorized researchers. The data was anonymized to protect the identities of respondents, and all procedures were in full compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Finally, the collected data was carefully compiled and organized to ensure consistency across all responses. It was then coded and cross-checked for accuracy, ensuring its readiness for thorough statistical analysis.

Fig. 2. *Data collection*

13. Data Analysis

In this study, data from surveys about academic misconduct among Generation Alpha students were analyzed by the researchers. Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, standard deviation, and mean were used to obtain a deep understanding into the patterns of responses related to cheating and plagiarism. Moreover, a t-test and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to determine whether there were differences in responses among different groups of students. Using descriptive and inferential statistics, researchers gained deeper understanding into the key reasons,

attitudes, methods, experiences, and factors contributing to academic misconduct behaviors among Generation Alpha students, such as cheating and plagiarism. This allowed researchers to explore the problem of academic misconduct within Generation Alpha and offer recommendations for enhancing policies.

14. Ethical Considerations

The researchers considered ethical considerations while conducting the study. To ensure that participation was voluntary, the researchers secured informed consent from DepEd, the principal, teachers, the assigned guidance counselor, and parental approval before distributing questionnaires to the students. All information presented here was handled with the highest level of confidentiality and it is safe to be according to the Data Privacy Act of 2012. The process of collecting data, which primarily depended on the information provided by respondents, was among the most vital parts in the construction of this study. Before the data collection procedure, three techniques were used to gather data: surveys with a Likert scale, 4 (four) open-ended questions essay, and unstructured interviews with open-ended questions. The study was carefully planned to ensure its reliability and trustworthiness. The researchers took great care to make sure every step was followed to avoid mistakes and guarantee accurate results. Before taking part in the study, all respondents were informed about the study's purpose, goals, and procedures so they could make an informed decision about their participation. This clear explanation allowed the respondents to understand the study and give their consent voluntarily. The researchers were especially careful with the students' privacy, as they were minors, and ensured their personal information was protected. Strict rules were followed to keep sensitive data safe and private. Respondents were reassured that their names and answers would remain confidential, helping to build trust in the study. The researchers also explained how the data would be used, ensuring respondents understood the process clearly. Only the researchers knew the progress of the study, preventing potential issues and keeping everything secure. Respondents had the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns at any time. By following these ethical practices, the researchers ensured the study was conducted honestly, with findings that were both reliable and meaningful.

15. Results and Discussions

Table 1: Descriptions of the Respondents according to their Grade Level

The data above provides a breakdown of respondents based on their grade levels, specifically in grades 4, 5, and 6. Among the surveyed population totaling 139 individuals, grade 6 students comprised the largest proportion at 47.5%, followed by grade 5 students at 30.2%, and grade 4 students at 22.3%. This distribution shows that more students respond as they move up in grade levels, with the most responses coming from grade 6. This could suggest that older students are more likely to take part in studies as they get closer to finishing elementary school. The higher number of responses from grade 6 may also indicate that these students are more comfortable sharing their opinions. This might be because they are older and understand why their opinions matter. Also, they may feel more confident sharing their thoughts after being in school for many years.

Table 2: Descriptions of the Respondents according to their Age

Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
10 and below	38	27.3
11	37	26.6
12 and above	64	46.0
Total	**139**	**100.0**

The given table presents a distribution of respondents based on their age, encompassing a total of 139 individuals. According to the data, there are age discrepancies among the respondents in three different groups. The major portion of responders, or 46.0% of the sample as a whole, were older than 12 years old. In contrast, 27.3% of responders were less than 10, and 26.6% of them were 11 years old. Based on the distribution, it appears that a slightly higher proportion of respondents are older, with respondents aged 12 and above constituting the largest category. The smallest group, however, consisted of respondents who were 11 years old. Understanding the age distribution of the participants is crucial for identifying any potential patterns or trends related to different age groups within the study. Age can influence various factors, such as behavior, academic performance, and susceptibility to academic misconduct. By analyzing the age distribution, researchers can determine whether certain age groups are more likely to engage in specific behaviors, such as cheating or plagiarism. Understanding these trends helps identify if younger or older students are more prone to academic misconduct, highlighting patterns that may vary across different grade levels. This insight ensures that the sample being studied accurately reflects the broader population, making the findings more reliable and applicable to real-world settings. Moreover, recognizing age-related behaviors allows educators to develop targeted interventions that address the unique challenges faced by specific age groups. By tailoring strategies to meet the needs of different age groups, educators can promote a culture of integrity and reduce the likelihood of misconduct over time.

Table 3: Descriptions of the Respondents according to their Academic Award

Grade Level	Frequency	Percent (%)
4	31	22.3
5	42	30.2
6	66	47.5
Total	**139**	**100.0**

Academic Award	Frequency	Percent (%)
No Academic Award	109	78.4
With Academic Award	30	21.6
Total	**139**	**100.0**

The table shows information about 139 students and their academic awards. Most, or 78.4%, did not receive any awards, while 21.6% did. This tells us about how students are recognized for their academic achievements. Understanding these numbers helps us see how students are doing academically and if there are differences in their opportunities.

Table 4: Respondents' Level of Reasons for Not Cheating

Indicators **I am not cheating…** *(Hindi ako nandadaya…)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. Because it affects the rights and scores of other students (*Dahil ito ay nakakaapekto sa mga karapatan at marka ng ibang mga mag-aaral)*	2.705	1.277	Sometimes
2. Because it is not religiously acceptable *(Dahil hindi ito tinatanggap ng relihiyon)*	2.216	1.382	Rarely
3. Because it may bring shame and dishonor (*Dahil ito ay maaaring magdala ng kahihiyan)*	3.209	1.437	Sometimes
4. Because I am afraid of cheating *(Dahil natatakot ako sa pandaraya)*	3.367	1.499	Sometimes
5. Because it is possible to cheat *(Dahil posible ang mandaya)*	2.748	1.341	Sometimes
6. Because it is morally and socially unacceptable *(Dahil ito ay hindi katanggap-tanggap sa moral at panlipunan)*	3.122	1.511	Sometimes
Total Mean	**2.894**	**1.408**	**Sometimes**

As can be seen in Table 4, showing the students' reasons for not cheating, the mean values ranged from 2.216 to 3.367. Item number 2, "*Because it is not religiously acceptable*," had the lowest mean, which is 2.216. This indicates that students perceived religious beliefs as a reason for not cheating. Students "rarely" recognized this reason as academic misconduct. However, to contradict the result of the quantitative phase, here are some of the responses of the participants in written form.

> "*Hindi kopo ito ginagawa dahil ito aymali/kasalanan* (I don't do this because it is wrong/sin)." - R53 (WR)

> "*Hindi, dahil ito ay isang kasalanan at kung ikw/ako ay mabab ang grado pwede naman tayong bumawi sa susunod na pag-susulit* (No, because it is a sin and if you/I get a low grade we can make up for it in the next test)." - R55 (WR)

These responses suggest that some students do consider cheating to be morally wrong, contradicting the low mean score of 2.216 for religious unacceptability as a reason for not cheating. To give substantial information, here is the response of the participant to an unstructured interview.

> "*Huwag mandaya kasi lahat nakikita ng Diyos* (Don't cheat because God sees everything)." - S17 (UI)

On the other hand, the recorded mean of 3.367 was the highest for item number 4, "*Because I am afraid of cheating*." This means that respondents' reason for cheating was "sometimes" because they were afraid of cheating, which was the highest item for academic misconduct. This indicates that respondents being afraid of cheating is perceived as academic misconduct.

In general, the data showed that with a total mean of 2.894 and a standard deviation of 1.408, respondents "*sometimes*" recognized their level of reasons for not cheating in dealing with academic misconduct.

> "*Hindi, kahit kulang ako sa oras hindi parin ako mangongopya sa aking katabi. Ang pagduruga o cheating ay masama* (No, even if I don't have enough time, I still won't copy my seatmate. The cheating or cheating is bad)." - R56 (WR)

This clearly shows that the respondents "sometimes" recognized their reasons for not cheating in dealing with academic misconduct. The results from this variable to some degree, seem congruent and comparable with findings from previous research. Among the various factors contributing to academic cheating, low levels of religiosity are particularly critical. Religiosity plays a fundamental role in deterring students from engaging in academic fraud [67]. Religiosity encompasses a person's sense of spirituality and their awareness of God's presence [68]. Essentially, a higher level of religiosity means a stronger spiritual connection and consciousness of religious principles. Since religiosity influences daily behavior [69], students with high levels of religiosity are generally more inclined to avoid academic fraud, recognizing that their religion prohibits dishonest actions [70]. Additionally, even though religiosity has a significant effect on academic misconduct, it may not be an overwhelming effect [71]. However, it continues to be an important part in preventing this type of misconduct. This is supported by a study showing that a student's possibility of committing academic misconduct is influenced by their level of religiosity [72].

Overall, the results point to the importance of students' spiritual commitment and awareness of religious principles in deterring academic dishonesty. Religion may not have a huge

effect, but it still has a big enough deterrent effect on academic fraud. This highlights the potential role of spiritual values in shaping students' behavior and decision-making. By fostering an environment that encourages moral development and ethical awareness, schools can further reduce instances of academic dishonesty. Integrating discussions about integrity, ethics, and values into the curriculum may help reinforce students' understanding of right and wrong. Additionally, collaboration with families and communities to promote consistent moral guidance can create a stronger foundation for ethical behavior.

Table 5: Respondents' Level of Attitudes toward Cheating

Indicators **My attitudes toward cheating are…** (*Ang aking mga saloobin sa pandaraya ay…)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. Cheating is not right, even if the exam is difficult *(Hindi tama ang pandaraya, kahit mahirap ang pagsusulit)*	3.813	1.391	Agree
2. Cheating is not right, even if there is a chance I might fail *(Hindi tama ang pandaraya, kahit na may pagkakataon na bumagsak ako)*	3.907	1.256	Agree
3. Cheating is not right, even if my goal is to get an academic award *(Hindi tama ang pandaraya, kahit na ang layunin ko ay makakuha ng akademikong award)*	3.964	1.299	Agree
4. Cheating is not right, even if it does not affect other students' scores *(Hindi tama ang pan-daraya, kahit na hindi ito nakakaapekto sa mga marka ng ibang mga mag-aaral)*	3.684	1.362	Agree
5. Cheating is wrong, even if the teacher has not taught the relevant materials during the grading period *(Mali ang pandaraya, kahit na hindi itinuturo ng guro ang mga kaugnay na materyales sa panahon ng pagmamarka)*	3.684	1.280	Agree
6. Cheating is not the right thing to do, even if I have the chance to cheat *(Ang pandaraya ay hindi tamang gawin, kahit na may pagkakataon akong mandaya)*	3.842	1.315	Agree
7. Cheating is not the right thing to do, even if the teacher is not fair in correcting papers *(Ang pandaraya ay hindi tamang gawin, kahit na ang guro ay hindi patas sa pagwawasto ng mga papel)*	3.655	1.344	Agree
8. Cheating is not right, even if its profit is greater than its loss *(Ang pandaraya ay hindi tama, kahit na ang makukuha dito ay mas malaki kaysa sa pagkawala nito)*	3.691	1.318	Agree
9. Cheating is not right, even if I do not have enough time to study *(Ang pandaraya ay hindi tama, kahit na wala akong sapat na oras upang mag-aral)*	3.669	1.416	Agree
10. Cheating is not right, even if all students do it *(Ang pandaraya ay hindi tama, kahit na gawain ito ng lahat ng mga estudyante)*	3.705	1.472	Agree
Total Mean	**3.761**	**1.345**	**Agree**

As shown in Table 5, which displays the respondents' attitudes toward cheating, the mean values ranged from 3.655 to 3.964. Item number 7 "*Cheating is not the right thing to do, even if the teacher is not fair in correcting papers*" had the lowest mean which is 3.655.

This proves that the respondents agreed that cheating is not the right thing to do, even if the teacher is not fair in correcting papers. On the other hand, the recorded mean of 3.964 was the highest for item number 3 "*Cheating is not right, even if my goal is to get an academic award*". This means that the respondents "agreed" cheating is not right, even if their goal is to get an academic award. To validate the result, here are some of the statements of the participants from written responses.

> "*hindi dahil nakakaapekto ito sa pag aaral* (No, because it can affect my studies)." - R33 (WR)
>
> "*no because it will harm studies* (hindi dahil nakakasama ito sa aking pag aaral)." - R38 (WR)
>
> "*HiNDi KASE HiNDi PO AKO PAPASA* (No, because I'm not going to pass)." - R76 (WR)

In general, the data showed that with a total mean of 3.761 and a standard deviation of 1.345, respondents' level of attitudes toward cheating (cheating is not right / cheating is wrong / cheating is not the right thing to do) indicated an "*agree*" stance towards academic misconduct.

"*hindi dahil tapat ako* (no because I'm honest)." - R6 (WR)

"*hindi dahil ito ay maling gawaing* (no because it is n wrong doing)." - R45 (WR)

This indicates that the respondents "agreed" that cheating is not the right thing to do as an attitude toward cheating. The results demonstrate that most respondents hold a strong belief that cheating is unethical, as reflected in the average attitude score of 3.761. Individual comments highlighting honesty and the recognition of cheating as wrong further support this collective stance. This suggests that students are generally aware of the moral implications of cheating and value integrity in their academic work. Encouraging this positive mindset through continued education and open discussions about ethics can help reinforce their commitment to honesty.

Table 6: Respondents' Level of Reasons for Cheating

Indicators **I committed cheating because of…** *(Nandadaya ako dahil sa…)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. Not being ready for test *(Hindi handa para sa pagsusulit)*	2.058	0.976	Rarely
2. Not having enough time for studying *(Walang sapat na oras para sa pag-aaral)*	1.827	0.955	Rarely
3. Having stress at the time of the exam *(Pagkakaroon ng stress sa oras ng pag-susulit)*	2.353	1.301	Rarely
4. The difficulty of the exam *(Mahirap ang pag-susulit)*	2.403	1.172	Rarely
5. Not having enough motivation to study *(Walang sapat na motibasyon sa pag-aaral)*	1.820	1.098	Rarely
6. To enjoy it *(Para tangkilikin ito)*	2.014	1.308	Rarely
7. Pressures or persuasion from classmates *(Mga panggigipit o panghihikayat mula sa mga kaklase)*	1.705	1.309	Rarely
8. No severe punishment for cheating *(Walang matinding parusa para sa pandaraya)*	1.914	1.189	Rarely
9. The same behavior with the cheaters and non-cheaters *(Ang parehong pag-uugali sa mga mandaraya at hindi mandaraya)*	1.856	1.081	Rarely
10. The bulkiness of the materials *(Ang karamihan ng mga materyales)*	2.122	1.182	Rarely
11. The uselessness of the materials *(Ang kawalang-silbi ng mga materyales)*	1.799	1.085	Rarely
12. Being ready for the exam but wanting a better score *(Ang pagiging handa para sa pagsusulit ngunit nais ng mas mataas na marka)*	2.561	1.347	Sometimes
13. The weakness of managing and organizing the exam *(Ang kahinaan ng pamamahala at pag-aayos ng pagsusulit)*	2.237	1.243	Rarely
14. Lack of teaching materials *(Kakulangan ng mga materyales sa pag-tuturo)*	2.000	1.090	Rarely
15. Not liking teachers *(Hindi gusto ang mga guro)*	1.547	1.051	Rarely
16. Getting a better score *(Pagkakaroon ng mas mataas na marka)*	2.590	1.250	Sometimes
17. Other reasons *(Iba pang dahilan)*	2.173	1.268	Rarely
Total Mean	**2.058**	**1.155**	**Rarely**

As can be seen in Table 6, which shows the respondents' reasons for cheating, the mean values ranged from 1.547 to 2.590. Item number 15, "*Not liking teachers*," had the lowest mean, which was 1.547. This indicates that respondents were "rarely" inclined to cheat because they did not like teachers.

On the other hand, the recorded mean of 2.590 was the highest for item number 6, "*Getting a better score*." This means that respondents "sometimes" cheat to get a better score. To validate the result, here are some of the statements from written responses.

"*oo dahil gusto ko ng mataas na skor* (Yes because I want a high score)." - R9 (WR)

"*opo, para po tumaas ang score* (Yes, to get a better score)." - R114 (WR)

In general, the data showed that with a total mean of 2.058 and a standard deviation of 1.155, respondents "*rarely*" considered their level of reasons for cheating regarding academic misconduct.

"*OPo, dahil hindi ko maintindihan* (Yes, because I don't understand)." - R93 (WR)

"*Opo,dahil minsan ay natutukso ako* (Yes, because sometimes I am tempted)." - R113 (WR)

"*opo, kulang sa oras magreview* (Yes, not enough time to review)." - R132 (WR)

"*Opo. kasi hindi po ako nakapag review (Balikaral)* (Yes. because I was unable to review (returnee))." - R137 (WR)

These qualitative responses suggest that some students cheat due to a lack of understanding or temptation, which are specific and relatable reasons for academic misconduct. This contradicts the quantitative finding that students "rarely" recognized reasons for cheating, indicating that individual experiences and temptations might play a more significant role in cheating behavior than the overall data suggests. To give substantial information, here are some of the responses of the participants from unstructured interviews.

"*It's because, last minute situation cause, it was… I was absent when my adviser assigned the homework to us* (Dahil ito, ay huling minutong sitwasyon dahilan, ito ay... Ako ay lumiban nung ang guro ng tagapayo ko ay itinalaga ang takdang aralin namin." - S4 (UI)

"*Nape-pressure na po kasi ako sa parents ko. Gusto po nila mataas yung grades ko* (I'm under pressure from my parents. They want my grades to be high)." - S8 (UI)

"*Gusto ko po kasi manalo tapos maging proud po sila sa akin* (I want to win so they can be proud of me)." - S15 (UI)

This clearly shows that the respondents "rarely" engaged in academic misconduct. The results from this variable are in contrast with the other findings. Several reasons for cheating among students have been identified, including dissatisfaction with teachers and a lack of effective teaching methods [73]. Students often cheat because they are uninterested in their classes or too lazy to complete the work themselves, and their complaints frequently center around teachers being boring or presenting interesting subjects in an unengaging manner [74]. Furthermore, when teachers are not used to teaching or assessing online, they might create questions or tasks that are not well-made [75]. This can make cheating more likely.

One significant additional incentive for cheating is to raise one's grade. 93.4% of students at a college in Andhra Pradesh, India, admitted to committing some form of academic misconduct [76]. Comparably, students seek answers from friends or the internet when they are under pressure to achieve excellent scores. If parents push their children too hard, especially at the beginning of high school, it can lead students to commit cheating. Similarly, hoping for a perfect report card can lead students to cheat.

To sum up, students cheat because they aren't happy with how they're taught, feel pressured to get top grades, and are influenced by their parents and society. These reasons show how complicated cheating is and why students do it. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that focuses on improving teaching methods, reducing academic pressure, and fostering a healthier learning environment.

Table 7: Respondents' Level of Different Methods toward Cheating

Indicators **My Different Methods of Cheating are…** *(Ang iba't-ibang paraan ko ng pandaraya ay…)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. Looking at other students' test sheets and copying answers *(Pagtingin sa sagutang papel ng isang estudyante at pag kopya ng mga sagot)*	2.029	1.076	Rarely
2. Using notes written on pieces of paper *(Paggamit ng mga tala na nakasulat sa mga piraso ng papel)*	1.676	0.942	Rarely
3. Using notes written on various parts of your body such as palms or wrists *(Paggamit ng mga tala na nakasulat sa iba't ibang bahagi ng iyong katawan tulad ng mga palad o pulso)*	1.733	1.114	Rarely
4. Talking to neighboring students *(Pakikipag-usap sa mga katabing estudyante)*	2.540	1.298	Sometimes
5. Using different signs to get answers from other students *(Paggamit ng iba't ibang senyales upang makakuha ng mga sagot mula sa ibang mga mag-aaral)*	1.942	1.172	Rarely
6. Changing the answer sheet with other classmates *(Pagbabago ng sagutang papel sa ibang mga kaklase)*	1.547	1.009	Rarely
7. Using cellphones and communication tools like text messages, Bluetooth, hands-free, and so on *(Paggamit ng mga selpon at mga kasang-kapan sa komunikasyon tulad ng mga text message, Bluetooth, hands-free, at iba)*	1.799	1.292	Rarely
8. Letting others look at your answer sheet *(Hinahayaan ang iba na tumingin sa iyong sagutang papel)*	2.022	1.201	Rarely
9. Changing the pencil and eraser with the written answer on them, putting rolled pieces of paper inside a pen tube, or using a similar stationery *(Ang pagpapalit*	1.496	0.904	Never

ng lapis at pambura na may nakasulat na sagot sa mga ito, paglalagay ng mga piraso ng papel sa loob ng pen tube, o paggamit ng stationery)			
10. Saving educational material in a calculator or other digital instruments *(Pag-save ng materyal na pang-edukasyon sa isang calculator o iba pang mga digital na instrumento)*	1.684	1.180	Rarely
11. Using resources and tests of past years (*Paggamit ng mga mapagkukunan at pagsusulit ng mga nakaraang taon)*	1.705	1.059	Rarely
12. Asking others to take the test instead of you *(Paghiling sa iba na kumuha ng pagsusulit sa halip na ikaw)*	1.662	1.032	Rarely
13. Using your class notes or books at the exam session *(Gamit ang iyong mga tala sa klase o mga aklat sa sesyon ng pagsusulit)*	1.806	1.122	Rarely
Total Mean	**1.819**	**1.108**	**Rarely**

As can be seen in Table 7 showing the respondents' different methods toward cheating, the mean values ranged from 1.496 to 2.540. Item number 9, "*Changing the pencil and eraser with the written answer on them, putting rolled pieces of paper inside a pen tube, or using similar stationery*," had the lowest mean, which is 1.496. This indicates that respondents "never" change the pencil and eraser with the written answer on them, putting rolled pieces of paper inside a pen tube, or using similar stationery as a method toward cheating. However, to contradict the result, here are some of the statements from written responses.

> "*pag aabot ng papel na may sagot* (Handing over the paper with answer)." - R21 (WR)
>
> "*ISUSULAT SA PALAD AT MAGBIBIGAYAN NG SAGOT* (Will write on the palm and give an answer)." -R30 (WR)
>
> "*isa sa mga posibleng gamitin halimbawa sa pag sulat ng sagot sa upuan* (One of the possible uses for example in writing the answer in the chair)." - R99 (WR)
>
> "*Pagsulat ng mga sagot. isusulat ko sa papel at ipapasa sa iba* (Writing answers. I will write it on paper and pass it to others)." - R114 (WR)

These qualitative responses suggest that students engaged in covert methods of sharing answers, such as writing on the palm or handing over papers with answers. This contradicts the quantitative finding that students "never" use stationery-based cheating methods, indicating that while specific methods like altering stationery are rare, students still employ other creative and covert methods for cheating. To give substantial information, here are some of the responses of the participants from unstructured interviews.

> "*Pagsulat ng sagot sa upuan* (Writing an answer in the chair)." - S14 (UI)
>
> "*Ahh opo, kaklase ko po siya lalaki po , then may paper po siya. Nandoon yung mga sagot* (Ahh yes, he's my classmate he's a boy, then he has a paper. The answers are there)." - S20 (UI)

On the other hand, the recorded mean of 2.540 was the highest for item number 4, "*Talking to neighboring students*." This means that the respondents "sometimes" talked to their neighboring students as a method of cheating. To validate the result, here are some of the statements of the participants from their written responses.

> "*nakikipag usap* (Talking)." - R7 (WR)
>
> "*asking for the answers* (Nagtatanong ng mga sagot)." - R14 (WR)
>
> "*Nagtatanong ako* (I am asking)." - R27 (WR)
>
> "*nagtatanong ako sa katabi ko ng sagot minsan dahil ako ay nalilito* (I ask the person next to me for an answer sometimes because I am confused)." - R45 (WR)

Generally, the data showed that with a total mean of 1.819 and a standard deviation of 1.108, respondents "*rarely*" utilized level of different methods of cheating in dealing with academic misconduct.

> "*lalakad ako konwari tapos titingin ako sa papel ng iba* (I pretend to walk then look at other people's papers)." - R3 (WR)
>
> "*tatayo ako at kokopya sa kaklase ko* (I will stand up and copy on my classmate)." - R16 (WR)
>
> "*binuksan nya ang notebook ng kaklase ko* (he opened my classmate's notebook)." - R26 (WR)
>
> "*ginagamit nila yung kamay na ABCD* (They use their hands to sign ABCD choices)." -R104 (WR)
>
> "*Meron silang hawak na salamin at aangat para makita ang sagot ng iba* (They have a mirror in their hand and will lift it to see the other's answer)." - R125 (WR)

These qualitative responses indicate that some students do engage in active and deliberate methods of cheating, such as pretending to walk and looking at others' papers or standing up to copy from classmates. This contradicts the quantitative finding that students "rarely" used different cheating methods, suggesting that while the overall frequency might be low, certain students employed direct and opportunistic tactics to cheat, highlighting the presence of such behaviors despite the

general data. To give substantial information, here are some of the responses of the participants from unstructured interviews.

> "*Uhm, I check when my classmates not looking to their answer sheet and I straighten my neck and check their answer sheet. (Giraffe method)* (Uhm, sinusuri ko kapag hindi tumitingin ang mga kaklase ko sa sagutang papel nila at tinutuwid ko ang leeg ko at sinusuri yung sagutang papel nila. (Paraan ng giraffe))." - S4 (UI)
>
> "*Signs* (Senyas)." - S17 (UI)

It clearly shows that respondents might consider various methods of cheating as academic misconduct. The results from this variable to some degree, seem congruent and comparable with the findings from the study [77]. For instance, some students use creative methods, such as writing notes on rubber bands. They stretch the rubber band, write barely legible notes, and during an exam, they stretch and unstretch the rubber band to read the answers. This demonstrates the lengths some students will go to in order to cheat, highlighting the need for stricter monitoring and preventive measures during exams. Such methods also reflect the level of resourcefulness and effort students put into avoiding proper study. Educators must address the root causes of cheating, such as academic pressure and lack of preparation, to encourage honest learning habits. By fostering a supportive learning environment, schools can help students build confidence in their abilities and reduce the temptation to cheat. Implementing clear academic integrity policies and offering guidance on effective study strategies can also help prevent such dishonest behaviors.

Table 8: Respondents' Level of Experiences toward Plagiarism

Indicators **Throughout the race, my experiences are…** *(Sa buong paglalakbay, ang aking mga karanasan ay...)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. I have delivered some work done by others in pre-vious classes (*Ako ay nagbi-bigay ng ilang mga gawaing papel na ginawa ng iba sa mga nakaraang klase)*	2.029	1.197	Disagree
2. I have copied parts of work delivered in previous classes for a new activity *(Kinopya ko ang mga bahagi ng gawaing papel na ibinigay sa akin noong mga nakaraang klase para sa isang bagong gawaing papel)*	2.000	1.116	Disagree
3. I have copied from web pages fragments of texts and, without quoting, those that incorporated to the work that I had written *(Kinopya ko ang mga bahagi ng mga teksto mula sa web page ng hindi binabanggit ang may-akda at hindi sinasama ang mga ito sa gawaing papel na isinulat ko)*	2.122	1.195	Disagree
4. I have copied fragments of printed sources (books, newspapers, magazine articles, etc.) and without citing them, I have incorporated them into the work I had written (Kinopya ko ang mga parte ng mga nakalimbag na mapag-kukunan katulad ng mga aklat, pahayagan, artikulo sa magasin, at iba pa ng hindi binabanggit ang mga may akda at isinama ko ang mga ito sa gawaing papel na isinulat ko)	2.281	1.302	Disagree
5. I have delivered as my own some complete work downloaded from the Internet, without modifying it *(Nakagawa ako ng ilang kumpletong gawaing papel na na-download ko mula sa Internet, nang hindi ito binabago)*	2.317	1.263	Disagree
6. I have done some work entirely from fragments copied literally from web pages *(Nakagawa ako ng ilang gawaing papel nang buo mula sa mga parte na kinopya ko mula sa mga web page)*	2.302	1.317	Disagree
7. I have done some work entirely from printed sources, without putting the authors *(Nakagawa ako ng ilang gawaing papel nang buo mula sa mga naka-print na mapagkukunan, ng hindi inilalagay ang mga may-akda)*	2.086	1.107	Disagree
8. I have used fragments of the teacher's notes to elaborate some work, without citing them *(Gumamit ako ng mga parte sa mga tala ng guro upang ipaliwanag ang ilang gawain ng hindi binabanggit ang mga may akda nito)*	2.244	1.227	Disagree
Total Mean	**2.173**	**1.215**	**Disagree**

Table 8 shows the students' experiences with plagiarism, the mean values ranged from 2.000 to 2.317. Item number 2 "*I have copied parts of work delivered in previous classes for a new activity*" had the lowest mean which was 2.000. This suggests that students have reused parts of their previous work for a new assignment, which is considered academic misconduct. By copying sections of their past submissions, they are not demonstrating original effort for the current task.

On the other hand, the recorded mean of 2.317 was the highest for item number 5 "*I have delivered as my own some complete work downloaded from the Internet, without modifying it*". This means that respondents "disagreed" with their experience of having delivered as their own some complete work downloaded from the Internet, without modifying it as the highest item for academic misconduct. This indicates that respondents disagree with the experience of having delivered as their own some complete work downloaded from the Internet, without modifying it perceived as academic misconduct. However, to contradict the result, here is one of the statement from written responses.

> "*Ang pag-gamit ng documents o mga apps na nakakatulong upang tumaas ang kanilang grade* (The use of documents or apps that help to have a better grade)." - R55 (WR)

This qualitative response suggests that some students used external resources like documents or apps to improve their grades, indicating a reliance on downloaded materials. This contradicts the quantitative finding that respondents "disagreed" with submitting unmodified, complete work from the Internet as their own, suggesting that despite the general data, some students engaged in academic misconduct through the use of external aids to enhance their grades. To give substantial information, here are some of the responses of the participants from unstructured interviews.

> "*Pag copy po sa… pag nagtatanong po sa mga AI* (When copying from... when asking those AI)." - S9 (UI)

> "*Nagtatanong po ako sa AI, kung ano po yung… Kung ano, tinitignan ko po yung ano, tas ipapaste po sa AI tas sasagutin na po nila* (I am asking the AI, what is it... What, I'm looking at what, then I will paste it in the AI then they will answer it)." - S9 (UI)

In general, the data showed that with a total mean of 2.173 and a standard deviation of 1.215, respondents "*disagreed*" with their level of experience with plagiarism in dealing with academic misconduct.

> "*pagamit ng cici or ai* (Use of cici or ai)." - R69 (WR)

These qualitative responses indicate that some students used AI tools to assist with their work, suggesting a form of academic misconduct involving plagiarism. This contradicts the quantitative finding that respondents generally "disagreed" with having experience of plagiarism, highlighting that despite the overall data, some students engaged in plagiarism using AI and similar technologies. This suggests a disconnect between students' self-reported attitudes and their actual behaviors. It also raises questions about the effectiveness of current measures in preventing plagiarism, especially with the rise of AI tools. To address this, schools may need to adopt more comprehensive policies and educational strategies to promote academic honesty in the digital age.

Table 9: Respondents' Level of Causes toward Plagiarism

Indicators **I committed plagiarism because of…** *(Inaangkin ko ang ideya ng iba dahil sa…)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. It is a "shortcut" accepted by all *(Ito ay isang "short-cut" na tinatanggap ng lahat)*	2.230	1.253	Disagree
2. My classmates do it *(Ginagawa ito ng mga kaklase ko)*	2.612	1.354	Neither Agree nor Disagree
3. Access to material via Internet is easy and convenient *(Ang pag-access sa materyal sa pamama-gitan ng Internet ay madali at kapaki-pakinabang)*	2.719	1.324	Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. It allows me to obtain better academic results *(Ito ay nagpapahintulot sa akin na makakuha ng mas mataas na mga resulta sa akademiko)*	2.353	1.233	Disagree
5. I was unaware of the existence of regulations in my school that would penalize *(Hindi ko alam ang pagkakaroon ng mga regulasyon sa aking paaralan ay maaaring magparusa)*	2.295	1.207	Disagree
6. The sanctions are serious *(Ang mga sanksyon ay seryoso)*	2.799	1.363	Neither Agree nor Disagree
7. I did not know that I had to always quote *(Hindi ko alam na kailangan kong ulitin ang sinusulat ng iba sa lahat ng oras)*	2.331	1.176	Disagree
8. Lack of precise instructions on how to do the job *(Kakulangan sa tagubilin kung paano gawin ang trabaho)*	2.496	1.293	Disagree

9. Lack of motivation *(Kakulangan ng motibasyon)*	2.266	1.219	Disagree
10. Lack of time *(Kakulangan sa oras)*	2.662	1.300	Neither Agree nor Disagree
11. Work overload *(Tambak na gawaing papel)*	2.489	1.293	Disagree
12. What is on the Internet is common property *(Ang nasa Internet ay karaniwang pag-aari)*	2.446	1.275	Disagree
Total Mean	**2.475**	**1.274**	**Disagree**

As seen in Table 9, which shows the respondents' causes of plagiarism, the mean values ranged from 2.230 to 2.799. Item number 1, "*It is a "shortcut" accepted by all*," had the lowest mean, which is 2.230. This proves that the respondents "disagreed" with plagiarism, which is a shortcut accepted by all. To validate the result of the quantitative phase, here is one of the responses of the participants from an unstructured interview.

> "*Para pong naano ko lang po 'yung pagka unfair po kase po yung ano pinaghirapan nila yung sagot nila tas yung iba kokopyahin lang pero hindi naman po nila pinaghirapan* (It seems to me that it's unfair because what they worked hard for is their answer and the others will just copy it but they didn't work hard for it)." - S1 (UI)

On the other hand, the recorded mean of 2.799 was the highest for item number 6, "*The sanctions are serious*." This means that the respondents "neither agreed nor disagreed" in the sense that the sanctions were serious.

In general, the data showed that with a total mean of 2.475 and a standard deviation of 1.274, respondents "*disagreed*" with the level of causes toward plagiarism concerning academic misconduct. However, to contradict the result, here are some of the statements from written responses.

> "*napasin ko na kinokopya ang gawa ko* (I noticed they copied my work)." - R7 (WR)
>
> "*noong lumabas ako sa banyo nakita kong binuksan nya ung folder ko* (When I came out of the bathroom I saw him/her open my folder)." - R10 (WR)
>
> "*When i went out of the bathroom i saw my classmate open my folder* (Paglabas ko ng banyo nakita kong binuksan ng kaklase ko ang folder ko)." - R12 (WR)
>
> "*opo? kinokopya ang sagot ko pagwala ako* (Yes? copying my answer when I am not around)." - R37 (WR)
>
> "*Opo, kumokopya sila sakin ng walang paalam* (Yes, they are copying to me without permission)." - R50 (WR)
>
> "*Opo, nakita kong sinusulat o ginagawa ng aking kaklase ang ideya ng iba kong kaklase* (Yes, I saw my classmate writing or doing the idea of my other classmate)." - R84 (WR)
>
> "*Opo, may nakita ako na isa kong kaklase na ginaya nya ang gawa ng isa ko pangkaklase* (Yes, I saw one of my classmates who imitated the work of one of my classmates)." - R81 (WR)
>
> "*kukunin ko ang papel nya kunwari kukuha ng ideya:)* (I will take the paper and pretend to get an idea:))." - R106 (WR)

These qualitative responses indicate that instances of plagiarism occurred, with students noticing their work being copied or accessed without permission. This contradicts the quantitative finding that respondents generally "disagreed" with the causes of plagiarism, suggesting that despite the overall data, there were specific instances and experiences of plagiarism among students.

The written responses match findings from other studies, showing similar patterns in academic misconduct. Students often cheat even though they know it is wrong because they feel a lot of pressure to do well in school [78]. This pressure was also seen in the current study, where many respondents gave similar reasons for their actions. School rules about cheating and plagiarism affect how students see and deal with these issues. These results show the need to focus on both the pressures students face and the rules schools have to handle academic dishonesty better.

Table 10: Respondents' Classmate Level of Attitude toward Plagiarism

Indicators **I think my classmate…** *(Sa tingin ko, ang kaklase ko…)*	**Mean**	**SD**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. Have delivered a work done by a partner in previous classes *(Ay natapos nila ang gawaing papel ng may kasama sa nakaraang mga klase na ginawa nila ang gawaing papel)*	2.496	1.247	Disagree
2. Have copied parts of the work they have delivered in previous classes for a new one *(Ay kinopya nila ang mga bahagi ng gawaing papel na ibinigay noong mga nakaraang klase para sa isang bagong gawaing papel)*	2.561	1.252	Neither Agree nor Disagree
3. Have copied from web pages fragments of texts and, without citing, they have incorporated them to the work that they had written *(Ay kinopya nila mula sa mga website ang mga parte ng*	2.245	1.185	Disagree

mga teksto at hindi binabanggit ang may-akda at hindi sinasama ang mga ito sa gawaing papel na isinulat nila)			
4. Have copied fragments of printed sources (books, newspapers, magazine articles, etc.) and without citing them, they have incorporated them into the work they had written *(Ay kinopya nila ang mga parte ng mga nakalimbag na mapagkukunan katulad ng mga aklat, pahayagan, artikulo sa magasin, at iba pa ng hindi binabanggit ang mga may akda at isinama ang mga ito sa gawaing papel na isinulat nila)*	2.460	1.193	Disagree
5. Have delivered a complete work downloaded from the Internet, without modifying it, as their own *(Ay nakagawa sila ng ilang kumpletong gawaing papel na na-download mula sa Internet ng hindi ito binabago)*	2.518	1.182	Neither Agree nor Disagree
6. Have done a job entirely from fragments copied literally from web pages *(Ay nakagawa sila ng ilang gawaing papel ng buo mula sa mga parte na kinopya nila mula sa mga web page)*	2.295	1.182	Disagree
7. Have done a job entirely from printed sources *(Ay nakagawa sila ng ilang gawaing papel ng buo mula sa mga naka-print na mapagkukunan)*	2.496	1.315	Disagree
8. Have used fragments of the teacher's notes to make a work, without citing them *(Ay gumagamit sila ng mga parte sa mga tala ng guro upang ipaliwanag ang ilang gawain ng hindi binabanggit ng mga ito may akda)*	2.353	1.221	Disagree
9. Have copy more in classroom work than in the final project *(Ay mas marami silang kinokopya na gawain sa silid-aralan kaysa sa huling proyekto)*	2.669	1.348	Neither Agree nor Disagree
10. Have admit as appropriate the method of "cut" and "paste" when presenting a job *(Ay inaamin na naaangkop ang paraan ng "cut" at "paste" kapag gumagawa ng gawaing papel)*	2.374	1.241	Disagree
Total Mean	**2.447**	**1.237**	**Disagree**

As seen in Table 10, which shows the respondents' classmate attitudes toward plagiarism, the mean values ranged from 2.245 to 2.269. Item number 3, "*Have copied from web pages fragments of texts and, without citing, they have incorporated them into the work that they have written*," had the lowest mean, which is 2.245. This indicates that respondents' classmates "disagreed" with having copied from web pages fragments of texts and, without citing them, incorporated them into the work that they had written. However, to contradict the result in the quantitative phase, here is one of the statements of the participants from the written responses.

> "*Google minsan dun tumatakbo ang mga istudyante kase kahit anong isearch modun ay makukuha muna ang iyong nais tumingin sa papel ng katabi* (Google sometimes students run to google because whatever they search there they will get what they want by looking at the paper next to them)." - R128 (WR)

This qualitative response suggests that students frequently used Google to find and incorporate information without proper citation. This behavior contradicts the quantitative finding that classmates "disagreed" with copying fragments from web pages without citing, indicating that in practice, students might often rely on online sources without proper attribution, despite their reported attitudes. This suggests a gap between students' understanding of academic integrity and their actual practices.

On the other hand, the recorded mean of 2.669 was the highest for item number 9, "*Have more copies in classroom work than in the final project*." This means that the respondents' classmates "neither agreed nor disagreed" on copying more classroom work than in the final project. To validate the result, here is one of the statements of participants from their written responses.

> "*kunwari nakikidaldal pero tumitingin sila sa papel ko* (Pretending to be talking but they are looking at my paper)." - R8 (WR)

In general, the data showed that with a total mean of 2.447 and a standard deviation of 1.237, respondents "*disagreed*" with the level of classmate attitudes toward plagiarism in academic misconduct. However, to contradict the result on the quantitative phase, here is one of the statements from an unstructured interview.

> "*Opo. kapag po kunware po may test, may quizzes. Para po maging mataas po yung score nila kahit alam po*

nilang hindi po tama yung ginagawa nila (Yes, when for example there is a test, there is quizzes. To have a high score even though they know what they are doing is not right).” - S1 (UI)

This qualitative response indicates that some students were aware that their classmates engaged in dishonest behavior during tests and quizzes to achieve higher scores, despite knowing it was wrong. This contradicts the quantitative finding that respondents generally "disagreed" with classmates' attitudes toward plagiarism, suggesting that while the overall data might show disagreement, individual accounts revealed that academic misconduct was still prevalent among classmates.

The results from written responses to some degree, seem congruent and comparable with findings from another study. Popular methods of cheating include copying a classmate's assignment or plagiarizing parts of published works for a paper.

Table 11: Summary towards Cheating (Part 1)

Cheating	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Reasons for Not Cheating	2.894	1.408	Sometimes
2. Attitudes Toward Cheating	3.761	1.345	Agree
3. Reasons for Cheating	2.058	1.155	Rarely
4. Different Methods of Cheating	1.819	1.108	Rarely
Grand Mean	**2.633**	**1.254**	**Sometimes / Neither Agree nor Disagree**

The table summarizes students' perspectives on cheating, including their reasons for not cheating, attitudes toward cheating, reasons for cheating, and different methods of cheating. The mean values ranged from 1.819 for "Different Methods of Cheating" (sd = 1.108) to 3.761 for "Attitudes Toward Cheating" (sd = 1.345). This indicates that while students rarely engaged in different methods of cheating, they tended to agree with certain attitudes against cheating. "Attitudes Toward Cheating" has the highest mean, showing a stronger stance against cheating, whereas "Different Methods of Cheating" had the lowest mean, reflecting infrequent use of cheating methods.

To validate the result in the quantitative phase, here are some statements of the participants from written responses regarding their attitudes toward cheating.

"*Hindi pa po kasi po masama po iyon* (Not yet because it is bad).” - R32 (WR)

“*hindi po, para matutunan hindi mandadaya* (Not yet, for learn not to cheat).” - R34 (WR)

“*Hindi po kase po babagsak ppako* (Not yet because I might fail).” - R100 (WR)

However, contradicting these attitudes with the reality of cheating methods can be found in other participants' statements from written responses.

“*there are different types of cheating po, like they can change their answer while checking and sumisilip sa sagot ng kaklase nila. etc* (There are different types of cheating, like they can change their answer while checking and peeking at their classmate's answer. etc).” - R116 (WR)

“*Paggamit ng senyales gamit ang kamay po. Gamit ang mga daliri po tulad po pag 4 nadaliri ang nakataas is letter D poyun* (Using hand signals. With your fingers, like if you have 4 fingers, the one that is raised is the letter D).” - R124 (WR)

“*I sometimes use the giraffe method, or whatever you call it. to do it is you need to check if your classmate is not looking, then straighten your neck to see their answer* (Gumagamit ako minsan ng giraffe method, o kahit anong tawag mo dito. para gawin ito ay kailangan mong tingnan kung hindi nakatingin ang iyong kaklase, pagkatapos ay ituwid ang iyong leeg upang makita ang kanilang sagot).” - R135 (WR)

To give substantial information, here are some of the responses of the participants from unstructured interviews.

“*Nangongopya ng ano, pasikretong pangongopya* (Copying of something, secretly cheating).” - S5 (UI)

“*Pagtingin sa katabi* (Looking at the seatmate).” - S6 (UI)

“*tatanungan po sila ng sagot at nagtitinginan po sila ng papel* (They will be asked the answer and they look at the paper).” - S7 (UI)

“*Nakita ko po ang mga kaklase ko, nagpapalitan ng sagot, nagtatanong po sa isa kong kaklase* (I saw my classmates, exchanging answers, asking one of my classmates).” - S19 (UI)

“*Side eye po* (Side eye).” - S25 (UI)

This response highlights that, despite students' reported attitudes against cheating, various methods of cheating occurred, such as altering answers during self-checking and looking at classmates' answers. This contradiction suggests that while students may express strong anti-cheating attitudes, practical instances of cheating behavior still exist, indicating a discrepancy between reported attitudes and actual behaviors.

The grand mean of 2.633 suggested a general perspective of "sometimes" or "neither agree nor disagree" toward cheating behaviors overall. This indicates that while there are varying degrees of engagement and attitudes towards

cheating, students generally do not consistently agree or disagree with cheating behaviors. The total standard deviation of 1.254 indicates moderate variability in student responses, showing that there is some diversity in how students view and engage in cheating.

This clearly shows that the respondents "sometimes / neither agree nor disagree" engaged in cheating. The results from this variable to some degree, seem congruent and comparable with findings from previous research. Academic cheating is also related to students' attitudes and behaviors [79]. Additionally, the willingness to cheat depends on individual personality traits [80].

In summary, the data reflects that students' engagement in cheating is infrequent and varies based on personal attitudes, behaviors, and personality traits. This means that cheating behavior is influenced by both internal factors, such as personal disposition, and external factors, such as situational and educational context. Students may cheat when they feel overwhelmed, unsupported, or face high academic pressure. External influences like peer behavior or easy access to online resources can also contribute to unethical practices. Addressing these factors through education, support systems, and clear policies can help minimize cheating and promote academic honesty. Creating a culture of integrity requires consistent messaging and reinforcement of ethical values both inside and outside the classroom. Encouraging open discussions about the consequences of cheating can also help students better understand its impact on their academic and personal growth. Involving parents and the community in fostering a supportive environment can strengthen the overall commitment to academic honesty. Additionally, integrating technology responsibly into education can help students navigate online resources while upholding ethical standards.

Table 12: Summary towards Plagiarism (Part 2)

Plagiarism	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Throughout the race	2.173	1.215	Disagree
2. Causes	2.475	1.274	Disagree
3. I think my classmate	2.447	1.237	Disagree
Grand Mean	**2.365**	**1.242**	**Disagree**

The table summarizes students' perspectives on plagiarism, covering experiences throughout their studies, causes for plagiarism, and their perceptions of classmates' behaviors. The mean values ranged from 2.173 for "throughout the race" (sd = 1.215) to 2.475 for "causes" (sd = 1.274), indicating that students generally disagreed with engaging in plagiarism, regardless of the context. The lowest mean was for personal experiences ("Throughout the race"), suggesting that students less frequently admit to committing plagiarism themselves. In contrast, the highest mean was for the causes of plagiarism, implying a slightly higher, yet still overall negative, agreement with the reasons given for why plagiarism might occur.

To validate the result in the quantitative phase, here are one statement of the participant from written responses regarding their personal experiences ("Throughout the Race") toward plagiarism.

> "*hinde po hinde papo aka nakaexpirice nngganon* (No I have never experienced that)." - R117 (WR)

However, the written responses provide some insight into the various causes students may still resort to plagiarism despite this overall disagreement.

> "*lack of understanding* (Kakulangan sa pang-unawa)." - R72 (WR)

> "*Kasi nahihirapan ako at wala akong malaman* (Because I'm struggling and I don't know anything)." - R16 (WR)

> "*Opo, dahil nakita ko ang kaklase ko na maganda ang gawa nya* (Yes, because I saw my classmate doing a good job)." - R81 (WR)

These statements align with the quantitative data, which shows a slightly higher agreement with the causes of plagiarism. However, it is important to note that even though some students acknowledge these causes, the overall data remains negative towards plagiarism. So, while some students may recognize factors that could lead to plagiarism, it does not necessarily mean they condone or justify it. In summary, the written responses provide additional context to the quantitative findings, showing that while there may be underlying reasons for plagiarism, the majority of students still express a negative stance towards it.

The grand mean of 2.365 reinforced that students overall disagreed with plagiarism. This indicates that, on average, students did not support or engage in plagiarism. The total standard deviation of 1.242 indicates moderate variability in responses, reflecting some differences in individual experiences and perceptions.

In conclusion, the data highlights a consistent disagreement with plagiarism among students, whether they are reflecting on their actions or observing their peers. This suggests that while there are occasional instances of plagiarism, most students do not frequently engage in or support such academic misconduct. The findings imply that students generally understand the importance of academic integrity and are aware of the negative consequences of plagiarism. Despite this awareness, the occasional occurrence of plagiarism points to the potential influence of external factors, such as academic pressure, time constraints, or unclear guidelines on proper citation. Therefore, while students may reject plagiarism in principle, additional measures, such as clearer educational programs and support systems, may be needed to reinforce these values and ensure that students are better equipped to avoid plagiarism in their

academic work. These measures could include workshops on academic integrity, practical guidance on proper citation, and strategies for effective time management to reduce the temptation to plagiarize. Teachers can also play a key role by modeling ethical behavior and providing consistent feedback on students' work.

Table 13: Comparing Cheating and Plagiarism

Variables	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Cheating	2.633	1.254	Sometimes / Neither Agree nor Disagree
Plagiarism	2.365	1.242	Disagree
Total	**0.268**	**0.012**	

The table compares students' perspectives on cheating and plagiarism, showing the grand means and standard deviations for each. The mean values were 2.633 for cheating and 2.365 for plagiarism, with a total difference of 0.268. This suggests that students were more neutral or uncertain ("sometimes/neither agree nor disagree") about cheating, while they tended to disagree with plagiarism. The standard deviations are very close, 1.254 for cheating and 1.242 for plagiarism, with a total difference of 0.012, indicating similar variability in responses for both behaviors.

The unique finding here is that while students exhibited some tolerance or uncertainty towards cheating, they more consistently disagreed with plagiarism.

The grand mean indicates that, on average, students are more lenient towards cheating than plagiarism, reflecting different attitudes towards these two forms of academic misconduct.

The results from two variables to some degree, seem congruent and comparable with findings from a study [81]. In the study, 60% of students admitted to frequently cheating, while 30% acknowledged cheating at least once during an online exam. An earlier survey indicated that 80% of students engaged in academic cheating. These findings align with the current data. The students' lower assessments of the seriousness of academic cheating suggest a broader acceptance of such behavior among them. This indicates that students may not fully understand the long-term consequences of cheating on their personal and academic growth.

In conclusion, the data shows that although students tended to be neutral or uncertain about cheating, they generally disagreed with plagiarism. This suggests that students view plagiarism more negatively than cheating, highlighting a stronger ethical stance against copying others' work directly.

Table 14: Significant Difference on Respondents' Profile and Contributory Factors in terms of Cheating

Profile		Mean	SD	F value	Sig.
Grade Level	4	2.280	0.404	5.682	0.004*
	5	2.428	0.488		
	6	2.585	0.396		
Age	10 and below	2.312	0.471	7.925	0.001*
	11	2.366	0.391		
	12 and above	2.622	0.406		
Academic Award	No Academic Award	2.500	0.475	1.486	0.039*
	With Academic Award	2.368	0.287		

The table presents the mean scores and standard deviations (SD) for different groups. The highest mean score was 2.622 with an SD of 0.406 for students aged 12 and above, suggesting they report more cheating compared to other age groups. The lowest mean score was 2.280 with an SD of 0.404 for Grade 4 students, indicating they report the least cheating.

To validate the result of the quantitative phase, here are one statement of the participant from written responses regarding their Grade Level, Age, and Academic Award.

Grade 4, 9 years old, and with Academic Award

"*HindI Po* (No)." - R18 (WR)

However, contradicting these results is the reality of cheating based on grade level, age, and academic award. The higher the grade level, age, and whether students have academic awards, the more likely they are to engage in cheating. Here are some statements from written responses.

Grade 6, 11 years old, and No Academic Award

"*Oo, para po makapasa* (Yes, to pass it)." - R104 (WR)

Grade 6, 12 years old, and No Academic Award

"*nangopya ako dahil hindi ko ma-gets ang tanong sa exam* (I copied because I couldn't get the question in the exam)." - R78 (WR)

Grade 6, 13 years old, and No Academic Award

"*Nakulangan sa oras para mag-review* (Lack of time for review)." - R101 (WR)

Grade 6, 14 years old, and No Academic Award

"*OPo, dahil hindi ko maintindihan* (Yes, because I don't understand)." - R93 (WR)

Grade 6, 15 years old, and No Academic Award

"*Opo. kasi hindi po ako nakapagreview (Balikaral) (Yes. because I was unable to review* (Returnee))." - R137 (WR)

Looking at the extremes, students aged 12 and above had the highest mean score, implying they were more likely to cheat, while Grade 4 students had the lowest mean score, suggesting they were the least likely to cheat. Additionally, students with no academic awards had a mean of 2.500 with an SD of 0.475, which was relatively high, showing they also reported a higher incidence of cheating. This suggests that students who may not be as recognized for their academic achievements might feel less invested in maintaining academic integrity. It also highlights the need for targeted interventions to support these students and encourage ethical behavior, regardless of their academic standing.

The analysis revealed that there were significant differences in cheating based on grade level, age, and whether students had academic awards, as shown by the F and Sig. values. For Grade Level (F = 5.682, Sig. = 0.004), Age (F = 7.925, Sig. = 0.001), and Academic Award (F = 1.486, Sig. = 0.039), the Sig. values were significant, meaning that the differences were smaller than 0.05.

The survey found that more than half of participants admitted to cheating online because it was frequent and beneficial for them. These methods include adding points, asking others for help, using textbooks, and copying answers from Google. Stress during exams, lack of experiences and understanding, the need for better grades, technology issues, and lack of guidance are some of the main reasons students were influenced by this behavior [82].

The data given in the table also contradicts other study findings about the differences in the grade levels of the respondents. Younger students are more likely to commit cheating than older students.

In comparison, the findings of the table support earlier conclusions about significant age difference among respondents. According to reports, younger students cheated at a higher rate than older ones [83]. The previously mentioned pattern suggests that although cheating becomes less common as children become older, younger pupils are more likely to cheat for distinct reasons than their older peers. Younger students may cheat as they struggle with impulse control, whereas older students may cheat because they are under stress or are afraid of what will happen.

Regarding the significant variations in respondents' academic achievements, the table's conclusions conflict with other research findings. According to the findings, high achievers are more likely than low achievers to believe that "the importance of obtaining high grades in my studies" was a valid reason for cheating. This suggests that the pressure to maintain high academic performance may lead some students to justify unethical behaviors in pursuit of success. These students may view cheating as a necessary shortcut to meet the expectations placed on them by parents, teachers, and society. Additionally, the competitive nature of academic environments could reinforce the belief that achieving high grades is more important than the process of learning itself. To combat this, it may be helpful to focus on promoting intrinsic motivation and teaching students the value of honest effort and personal development over external validation.

Table 15: Significant Difference in Respondents' Profile and Contributory Factors in terms of Plagiarism

Profile		Mean	SD	F value	Sig.
Grade Level	4	2.081	0.916	4.946	0.008*
	5	2.455	0.806		
	6	2.614	0.687		
Age	10 and below	2.026	0.771	8.192	0.000*
	11	2.538	0.857		
	12 and above	2.644	0.696		
Academic Award	No Academic Award	2.473	0.817	0.703	0.507
	With Academic Award	2.359	0.747		

The mean score was 2.026 with an SD of 0.771 for students aged 10 and below, suggesting they reported the least plagiarism.

To validate the result of the quantitative phase, here are some statements of the participants from written responses regarding their Grade Level and Age.

Grade 4 and 10 years old

"*hindi dahil tapat ako* (No because I'm honest)." - R6 (WR)

"*Hindi pa po ksi po masama po iyon* (Not yet because that is bad)." - R32 (WR)

"*Hindi dahil nakakaapekto ito sa pag aaral* (No because it affects the study)." - R33 (WR)

However, contradicting these results with the reality of plagiarism based on grade level and age. The higher grade level and age, the more likely they were to engage in plagiarism, here are some statements from written responses.

Grade 6 and 12 years old:

"*Oo dahil minsan nahihirapan ako sa ibang subject* (Yes because sometimes I'm struggling with other subjects)." - R41 (WR)

"*opo, dahil hindi nagreview* (Yes, because didn't review)." - R44 (WR)

"*opo, kase po ako ay gustong magka malaking marka* (Yes, because I want to get a high grade)." - R83 (WR)

"*opo, kulang sa pag aaral* (Yes, lack of study)." - R94 (WR)

Grade 6 and 13 years old

"*Nakulangan sa oras para mag-review* (Lack of time to review)." - R101 (WR)

Grade 6 and 14 years old

"*OPo, dahil hindi ko maintindihan* (Yes, because I don't understand).". - R93 (WR)

Grade 6 and 15 years old

"*Opo. kasi hindi po ako nakapag review* (Balikaral) (Yes. because I didn't do a review (Returnee))." - R137 (WR)

Looking at the extremes, students aged 12 and above had the highest mean score, showing they were more likely to engage in plagiarism, while those aged 10 and below had the lowest mean score, indicating they were the least likely to plagiarize. Additionally, students in Grade 5 had a high mean of 2.455 with an SD of 0.806, showing they also reported a relatively high level of plagiarism. This suggests that students in Grade 5 may be more susceptible to engaging in plagiarism compared to other grades. The relatively high mean indicates that a significant number of students in this group may not fully understand the ethical implications of copying or misrepresenting others' work. The standard deviation also points to some variability in responses, implying that while some students may report high levels of plagiarism, others may not engage in this behavior as frequently.

The analysis revealed that there were significant differences in plagiarism based on grade level and age, as indicated by the F and Sig. values. For Grade Level (F = 4.946, Sig. = 0.008) and Age (F = 8.192, Sig. = 0.000), the Sig. values were less than 0.05, indicating that these differences were significant. However, there were no significant differences based on academic awards (Sig. = 0.507).

16. Summary of Findings

16.1 Profile of the respondents

The profile of the respondents showed important details about their grade level, age, and academic awards. Among the 139 students surveyed, the largest group was from grade 6 at 47.5%, followed by grade 5 at 30.2%, and grade 4 at 22.3%, suggesting that older students were more interested in participating. In terms of age, 46.0% of the respondents were 12 years or older, 27.3% were 10 or younger, and 26.6% were 11, showing that older students made up the biggest group. As for academic awards, 78.4% of students did not have any awards, while 21.6% received recognition, showing a big difference between the two groups. This information helps understand students' achievements and highlights areas where support may be needed to ensure more equal opportunities for academic success.

16.2 Level of reasons, attitudes, and methods of Generation Alpha pupils towards academic misconduct in terms of cheating

The data showed that Generation Alpha pupils had varying reasons, attitudes, and methods when it came to academic misconduct. On average, respondents "sometimes" recognized reasons for not cheating, with a mean of 2.894 and a standard deviation of 1.408. When it came to attitudes, respondents "agreed" that cheating is wrong, with a mean of 3.761 and a standard deviation of 1.345. However, they "rarely" considered reasons for cheating, with a mean of 2.058 and a standard deviation of 1.155. Lastly, they "rarely" used different methods of cheating, with a mean of 1.819 and a standard deviation of 1.108. These findings show that students agree cheating is wrong but rarely think about or use cheating methods.

16.3 Level of experiences, causes, and attitudes of Generation Alpha pupils towards academic misconduct in terms of plagiarism

The data showed that Generation Alpha pupils had certain experiences, causes, and attitudes toward plagiarism in academic misconduct. On average, respondents "disagreed" with their level of experience with plagiarism, with a mean of 2.173 and a standard deviation of 1.215. They also "disagreed" with the level of causes for plagiarism, with a mean of 2.475 and a standard deviation of 1.274. Additionally, respondents "disagreed" with their classmates' attitudes toward plagiarism, with a mean of 2.447 and a standard deviation of 1.237. These findings suggest that students do not strongly identify with experiencing, causing, or agreeing with plagiarism in academic settings.

16.4 Significant difference to the academic misconduct of Generation Alpha pupils when grouped according to their profile

The analysis showed significant differences in academic misconduct among Generation Alpha pupils when grouped by their profile. For cheating, differences were found based on grade level, age, and whether students had academic awards, with Sig. values less than 0.05, indicating that these factors significantly influenced cheating behavior. Specifically, grade level (F = 5.682, Sig. = 0.004), age (F = 7.925, Sig. = 0.001), and academic awards (F = 1.486, Sig. = 0.039) all played a role. As for plagiarism, significant differences were found based on grade level (F = 4.946, Sig. = 0.008) and age (F = 8.192, Sig. = 0.000), but no significant difference was found based on academic awards (Sig. = 0.507).

17. Conclusions

17.1 The distribution suggests a gradual increase in the number of respondents as grade levels progress, with the highest representation from grade 6. Additionally, the distribution indicates a slightly higher representation of older

respondents, with those aged 12 and above constituting the largest group. Furthermore, the distribution indicates a significant prevalence of respondents without academic recognition compared to those with awards.

17.2 Students sometimes recognized their reasons for not cheating when dealing with academic misconduct and indicated an agreeable stance towards attitudes regarding cheating. However, they rarely considered their reasons for cheating or utilized different methods of cheating in these situations.

17.3 Students disagreed with their experiences and causes related to plagiarism when dealing with academic misconduct, as well as with their classmates' attitudes towards plagiarism in these situations.

17.4 The analysis of the data showed significant differences in cheating behaviors among students of different grade levels, age groups, and those who had received academic awards. This suggests that cheating varies as students progress through grades and age groups, possibly due to changes in academic stress, maturity, or their ethical views. Additionally, students who had received academic awards showed different cheating behaviors compared to those who hadn't, likely because of the pressure to perform well or the ethical principles they follow. Similarly, significant differences in plagiarism were found across grade levels and age groups, indicating that as students grow, their tendency to plagiarize may change due to different pressures or maturity. However, no significant difference was found in plagiarism behaviors based on whether or not students received academic awards.

18. RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 Encourage Participation in Academic Recognition Programs: Schools can motivate honesty by rewarding students with certificates and medals for ethical academic behavior. Recognizing integrity encourages students to strive for success without cheating.

18.2 Increase Focus on Ethical Reasoning in Academic Settings: Teachers should lead discussions on the consequences of cheating and plagiarism to enhance students' moral reasoning. Understanding the impact of dishonesty helps students make more responsible choices.

18.3 Address Differences in Cheating and Plagiarism Across Grade Levels: Older students facing more pressure should receive lessons on managing stress while maintaining honesty. Teachers and counselors can guide them in overcoming challenges without resorting to cheating.

18.4 Develop Comprehensive Policies and Support Systems for Academic Integrity: Schools need clear rules on academic dishonesty and accessible resources for students under pressure. Counseling and workshops can teach strategies for handling stress ethically. A supportive environment fosters trust and encourages honest academic behavior.

18.5 Encourage Future Research on Academic Misconduct: Research should explore the factors driving various forms of academic misconduct. Insights into students' pressures at different ages can inform targeted prevention strategies. These studies are essential for creating effective policies and fostering integrity. Collaboration between educators and researchers can help translate findings into practical solutions for schools.

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