

LITERATURE REVIEW ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY IN ONLINE EXAMINATIONS DUE TO TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT: THE CASE OF DOWNLOADING AND HACKING OF ANSWERS.

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Abstract: Online teaching and learning are an appropriate alternative for sustained continuity, in case of interrupted learning by pandemics or crises. It has been faced with multiple challenges of dishonesty that have intensified due to technological advancement and the smartness of youth in technology. The focus of this paper is on the literature review analysis on the case of downloading and hacking of the exams that has become a norm with online examination administration. The objective of the paper is to investigate the incidence of downloading of answers with online invigilation measures available. It also seeks to confirm whether exams are hacked into prior to the examination hour and with what effects on the overall class performance. Literature review analysis through desktop research was conducted by examining cross cutting publications on the topic. Special focus evolved around studies that were done from the pandemic in the year 2020 to date, when the unpreparedness for instructors was high and the tension with the learners so critical. Qualitative research was used in the study. It is assumed remotely that as the adjustment took place and instructors were equipped, things may have improved for the better. With standardized agreed upon technological interventions, instructors can help reduce the incidences of online academic dishonesty in examinations. Recommendations have been made to educate online instructors on the keenness required to achieve integrity in exam participation by learners who will in turn apply the same in life.

Keywords: literature review analysis, academic dishonesty, hacking, downloading, online learning and problem-based learning.

Introduction

The research on academic dishonesty in online examinations due to technological advancement is very key and especially on the case of downloading and hacking of answers (Newton, 2023). This is a big issue that needs to be handled well if we are to have integrity in institutions of higher learning. With interest of online learning taking a central seat in institutions of higher learning we need to handle this issue with a lot of keenness to keep the integrity of the institution's certification of their graduates (Wafula 2023).

With the current economic situation many interested people who want to continue their education still have to work so that they can meet their daily needs, thus online education has become a go to, to improve one's papers to hopefully improve their earnings (Azader et al 2022). This has made

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institutions of higher learning continue with online teaching even after the COVID 19 lockdown has subsided and physical learning resumed. It is with this increased need for online learning that there is necessity of ensuring integrity in the examination process.

To guide the research there were three objectives. There are to examine whether there is downloading and hacking for answers in online exams, to explore the correlation between technological advancement and academic dishonesty in online exams, and to analyze the facilitating factors behind academic dishonesty.

Literature Review

To guide this desktop research the three objectives have been researched as indicated below.

The reality of downloading and hacking for answers online.

In recent years, online exams became popular in public and private universities and other educational institutions (Riad, 2023). This greatly affected the integrity of online examination administration.

The phenomenon of hacking and downloading in online examinations exists and escalating cases have been reported where students have attempted to deceive using various methods such as unauthorized resources, using external devices in software to gather answers, or collaborating with others during exams (Cosmas, 2021, Riad 2023).

While it occurs, not every student engages in such activities. Majority of students uphold exam and academic integrity and adhere to rules, regulations and policy set by their institutions (Riad, 2023, Cosmas, 2021).

Majority of educational systems and universities are aware of this issue and have taken steps to mitigate cheating with security on online platforms, utilizing proctoring services or developing custom exam formats to deter cheating attempts (Malik et al 2023, Meital et al 2021). This leads to the next discussion on the relationship between technological advancement and academic dishonesty.

Correlation between technological advancement and academic dishonesty in online exams.

Availability and accessibility of technology can both enable and deter academic dishonesty depending on how it is used and managed. The key points of consideration should evolve around: increased opportunities for cheating which stipulates that technological advancement provides more opportunities for dishonesty (Chiang et al 2022, Riad 2023), widespread devices availability of interconnected

devices, online resources and communication tools that enhance plagiarism, dishonesty, and unauthorised collaborations. (Malik et al 2023, Ababneh 2021).

Secondly, sophisticated cheating methods like hacking into systems, using software like spyware and real ware to gain unauthorised access to exam materials or employing advanced plagiarism detection evasion techniques are gaining momentum (Chiang, et al 2022, Riad 2023).

Thirdly, detection and prevention tools have been put in place to combat dishonesty due to technological advancement (Cosmas, 2021). These tools have been employed to detect plagiarism, to provide remote proctoring services and secure online exam delivery through monitoring and deterring exam dishonesty attempts.

Fourthly, ethical considerations as technology evolves are becoming critical in its use in academic situations. Privacy, fairness, and appropriate use of technology in exams and assessments arise as institutions navigate the balance between preventing cheating and respecting student's rights (Chiang et al 2022). The next objective focuses on the key factors facilitating online academic dishonesty in exams.

Facilitating factors behind academic dishonesty.

Several factors have facilitated academic dishonesty. Firstly, there is the element of peer pressure which has become socially accepted among the student community which compels individuals to engage in such behaviour (Chiang et al 2022, Ababneh 2021). Secondly, technological loopholes and vulnerabilities continue to prevail in the technological tools and platforms that can easily be exploited by the tech savvy individuals. Hacking, using virtual machines, apps, Artificial Intelligence, manipulating software settings are clear examples of how students may exploit weaknesses in the systems.

Thirdly, lack of effective monitoring and proctoring devices is a major barrier in many institutions of higher learning and can be rated as expensive. Besides, they need to be put in place and efforts to ensure that they work (Cosmas 2022, Ababneh 2021).

Fourthly, there is pressure to perform. High academic expectations to achieve good grades from parents and teachers pushes students towards dishonest practices. The fear of failure leads to dishonesty in achieving academic success. (Malik et al 2023). Fifthly, anonymity and distance reduce the fear of getting caught since they are not being invigilated directly or observed by proctors (Meital et al 2021, Ababneh 2021, Riad 2023). Sixthly, accessibility of information avails vast spectrum of prewritten essays, answer keys, and other resources that can be easily used to cheat (Chiang et al 2022). This leads

the students to be tempted to divert to shortcuts, plagiarizing or extracting and copying answers from online sources.

Seventhly, internet issues of connectivity create tension that can be driving factor (Newton, 2023). This is in line with what others above have also confirmed (Malik et al 2023 & Cosmas 2022).

The eighth point evolves around the level of awareness in technology for the instructors and facilitators. There is a big disconnect between the technology savvy youth and the teacher's providing knowledge and supervising them (Musau 2023, Ababneh 2021, Riad 2023). Dishonesty has also been known to emanate from the instructors who enable the students to participate in the online dishonesty because they are equally stressed.

Lastly, time constraints while engaging in online exams is usually limited (Wafula 2023). This increases stress on students to improvise shortcuts. This leads us to discussing probable recommendations that can be implemented.

Methods

The Study Area

The research was a review of literature and analysis using desk top research thus it was not restricted to any geographical area. The research was seeking to find out the academic dishonesty in online examinations due to technological advancement and especially on the case of downloading and hacking of answers.

Research Design

The design that was used in the study was review of literature and analysis using desk top research. This was qualitative in nature. The researchers sought to find out what others have done and said about the academic dishonesty in online examinations due to technological advancement and especially on the case of downloading and hacking of answers with a view of making positive viable recommendations.

Sample Size Determination

The researchers undertook a desk top research and investigated to see what 10 other researchers have done on the said subject. It is a new subject knowing that increase in online study came to the limelight after the COVID 19 that was first confirmed in Kenya and Africa as a whole in 2020. This limited the

number of studies that have been done on the topic. This is an area that is now picking up so the studies are also gaining momentum.

Sampling Procedures

The research sought data from other studies that have been done and information that has been written by others in relation to the study.

Ethical Considerations

Being a desk top researcher, the main ethical consideration is to acknowledge the various authors of the information that we have used. The research has effectively recognized the sources that were used in the study.

Results and Discussion

All the literature reviewed articles are in agreement to the fact that online exam dishonesty continues to intensify with technological advancement in the digital space. Downloading and hacking continue to challenge the integrity of administration of exams online in institutions of Higher Learning in Kenya and elsewhere.

The analysis revealed the existence of academic dishonesty in online examination administration in most institutions of higher learning worldwide as a major challenge to grapple with. Most institutions of higher learning are aware of the intensity and magnitude of the ever-escalating rate. Yet there are students who still maintain academic integrity in spite of the pressure to conform to the vice.

Secondly, the research also revealed a strong relationship between advancement in technological know-how ahead of their facilitators that necessitated the need for the tutors to be trained to be able to cope with the trend. There was also great need to revitalize the measures in place intended to curb hacking, plagiarism and downloading.

Thirdly and lastly, factors facilitating academic dishonesty were vast and included: peer pressure, loopholes in monitoring and tracking tools coupled with low levels of awareness of the trackers in technology, interference from Artificial Intelligence, pressure to perform from family and parents, fear of failure, lack of intentional supervision and the availability of prewritten resources and answers tempting them to divert to short cuts online.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there appears to be significant levels of misconduct in examinations conducted online in institutions of Higher Education. Students have different driving forces that cause them

to cheat. They are very likely to cheat on their own, motivated by the delivery and design of the examination.

Limitations of the Study

The study faced several limitations namely, lack of time and space for mixed methods where quantitative methods could have been employed to strengthen the representativeness of the research.

Besides, the study had no access to the respondents, the online students to further pursue the actual prevalence of academic dishonesty in exam administration for this was a literature review study. There is still room for further investigations on the topic above using a quantitative approach.

Focus groups and an accompanying questionnaire would have contributed greatly to the richness and results of the study. The research lacks the flavour of a multidisciplinary perspective.

Recommendations

From the study we have come up with the following recommendations.

1. Regularly review and update exam online policies.
2. Clear academic integrity policies that students need to be made aware of on a very regular basis.
3. Educate students constantly on the importance of honesty, proper citation, and responsible academic practices. Through training raise awareness on the negative consequences of cheating on personal and professional development.
4. Establish a reporting mechanism and raising alarms on time.
5. Randomize question orders, use question banks to reduce predictability.
6. Utilize online proctoring services to monitor during exams. It involves the use of videos, audio recording to observe students remotely, detect suspicious behaviour and ensure exam integrity.
7. Use plagiarism detection tools such as Turnitin, to detect and identify scenarios of copied content and levels of plagiarism. This could act as an effective deterrent factor.
8. Design robust assessment methods such as case studies, projects, and critical problem-based learning.
9. Foster a supportive learning environment so that it is fun filled and enjoyable. There will be no need to feign fake answers and search for short cuts.
10. Create time limited exams.

Further Research

Future research on academic integrity stands to benefit from a multidisciplinary approach across all types of universities, private and public ones to get a richer picture of the nature of the problem so that strategies to mitigate on the ever-increasing threat on exam validity.

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