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FEATURE

Cheating During Examination: Inference on Human Capital Quality

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Abstract. *School management sets the norms of conduct for the guidance of its constituency. Cheating violates a norm of conduct and symbolizes decadence of value. Anchored on personal value and social disorganization theory, this case study involving college sophomore, junior, and senior student-participants of a government school in Eastern Samar, Philippines who were purposively referred by their class adviser, revealed that cheating was dictated by the desire of the student to avoid failing grade yet lazy to study. The participants' laziness to study indicated absence if not decadence of industry, diligence, and perseverance. Instead, they were hounded with mediocrity that is the foundation of laziness. They gamble for the stealthy misdeed to satisfy instant gratification to pass the examination. The study likewise revealed that the participants loosely nurtured the value of honesty and self-respect, which justified their cheating. The participants stated that dishonesty and lack of self-respect are brought to the workplace manifested in lack of self-confidence, dependence on others, and easy-go-lucky attitude.*

Keywords: Cheating; social disorganization; workplace attitude; academic integrity; qualitative research; case study

Introduction

Going to school to attend classes and learn from all the class lessons, interactions, and activities necessitates the interplay of thoughts, feelings or emotions, and actions. Expectedly, when a student is called upon to participate or

perform an activity in the class, his or her actions have to be in conformity with the norms of the class enforced by the institution he or she is part of. However, there are students who violate the norms or standard of conduct of the institution. In fact, during examinations, the research participants from a government school in Eastern Samar, Philippines do their cheating vice, which is actually a gross violation of academic dishonesty. This fact is affirmed by the result of a similar study conducted by Morante (2002) that student-respondents from the same government school were guilty of cheating, and the researcher concluded that the student-respondents cheated because they were lazy to study.

Undoubtedly, cheating is academic dishonesty. It is an offense against the norms of morality, or a violation of the good and order of the institution. It is a manifestation of a weak academic discipline. A cheater has to feel the guilt for the commission of the misdeed and may be haunted by the shame resulting from the same misdeed commission. The act of cheating is conduct unbecoming of a student. *Merriam-Webster's ninth collegiate dictionary* (1990) defines shame as "a painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, short-coming, or impropriety", and "something that brings strong regret, censure, or reproach". Psychology considers shame as a sign of emotional instability and writers in psychology describe shame as a scourge of the psyche, which is an emotion totally without redeeming value that is responsible for a broad range of psychological disorders, including depression, addiction, sexual dysfunction, and emotional problems (Ruggiero, 2008).

Despite the presence of school rules and regulations banning cheating, students continue to cheat during examination, and according to McCabe, Butterfield, and Trevino (2012), this habit of cheating during major examinations and during quizzes has persisted even before the students had attended college level of education. Hence, a student has to develop desirable personal values in life, as behavior is influenced by personal values and standards. For sure, the student will live a life nurtured by his or her desirable personal values. According to San Juan and Centeno (2011), values affect the setting of goals and the standards by which a person chooses actions and lives or manages his or her life. Ruggiero (2008) associates the meaning of values to ethical norms or standards, which tackle specific issues on what is right or wrong for the people and society.

The value of honesty must start at home, and lucky are the children whose parents gave them time in instilling the value of honesty. The making of Heidi Mendoza, the Filipino Audit Commissioner with integrity, started with the very early inculcation of the value of honesty in her family. When giving them money for their snack during class break, her father would line up the coins. The young Heidi and her siblings get only what is due them, and those not ready for school must not get any coin. It was one of the ways their father trained them to become honest. Her father would always tell them that "while you are still at home, you should learn and practice how to value honesty". Heidi's father set for them the

standard that was realistic and attainable and Heidi translated the standard or value of honesty as having the things that she has worked hard for because she was trained that way (Mendoza as cited in Alejo, 2010).

Late Philippine Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago motivated students to work hard and achieve. She said, "There is no substitute for hard work no matter what you say. If you are willing to work hard by spending long hours of studying, you will become successful in your academic career" (The Legacy of Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Facebook Post 2017).

Review of Literature

The following literature presents the context of cheating during examination. It also presents the connectivity of the theoretical anchorage with the topic, and from the same literature the themes of the study had evolved.

Cheating and Its Circumstances

Cheating is a form of academic dishonesty. Cheating during examination is a felt problem in the school. It is a manifestation of a student's non-readiness to tackle the academic challenge. Cheating is to violate rules of honesty (*Merriam-Webster's ninth collegiate dictionary*, 1990). McCabe, Butterfield, and Trevino (2012) defined cheating as presenting or submitting the work of another person, working on homework jointly with others, presenting false bibliographical information, asking for examination questionnaire ahead of the examination date, and glancing on lecture notes during examination. These researchers discovered that the cheating attitude of students had been developed during their high school, and that males, younger students, athletes, and those involved in extracurricular activities were more prone to cheating.

Clever students consider cheating during examination as a privilege. In order not to fail a subject or a course, they cheat. Yee (2012) documented that a senior high school student copied on a scratch paper a table of specification, which he could look at during the examination. Conflict in the utilization of time is also a reason for students to cheat. Yee (2012) likewise documented that the same senior high school student did not memorize the table of specification due to conflict in the use of time for completing class assignments.

Other students tarnish their self-respect and integrity as they cheat in order to get high scores, and consequently high grades. Others cheat in order to pass the subject or course. Still others cheat on the subject not interesting to them, and because the setting or the classroom environment is favorable to cheating. This claim is supported by Thompson (n.d.) who agreed that cheating seems like the ideal solution when a student does not study or struggles, to avoid failing a class or course. Morante (2002) disclosed that the main reason for cheating during examination centers on not having studied (42%). Other reasons were the

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following: students do not know the answer (19%); they want to get high grade (11%); they are afraid to fail (9%); the proctor is lenient (6%); everybody cheats anyway (4%); the room is overcrowded (3%) the instructor does not teach well (2%); and the activity or lesson is hard (2%). Some specific forms of cheating during examination according to McCabe, Butterfield, and Trevino (2012) include copying answers from seatmates; copying from notes, books, or electronic sources; submitting take-home examination copied from other students; and pretending to have ailment to be able to solicit from the professor a favorable consideration. Morante (2002) concluded that the most serious cheating attitude was looking at another paper, and using a prepared list of would-be answers. Their cheating habit was influenced by classmates (56%). More than half of the research participants (54%) blamed themselves for cheating because they were irresponsible. They put the rest of their blame on their mentors, parents, friends, community, school officials, and school facilities and resources.

Cheating during examination happens when a student does not answer the examination questions based on mental capacity and preparation instead copies the answers from a seatmate or from notes. This student may not have studied his or her lessons but wants to get high scores and maintain academic performance. When a student can afford to cheat during examination in the presence of other students, there is greater possibility that such a student will cheat during take-home examinations or assignments as the student is given the free will.

Most if not all academic pursuits are challenging, and to be able to hurdle academic challenges necessitates not only physical and mental preparations, but more importantly the possession of moral stamina. Any good academic institution shall always promote the virtues of excellence and integrity, and whosoever enters into the doors of the academe is expected to be prepared to take the challenge to grab the virtues of excellence and integrity. However, the main issue fronting the academic challenge is competition. Students have always been indoctrinated that getting high grades leads them to high honors and recognition, and getting to the top of the class requires the corresponding intelligence quotient plus physical and moral stamina to sustain the recognition. Only those who are ready for the charge can make it to the finish line of the academic pursuit. Canegie (as cited in Curtis, 2006) emphasized that “while the law of competition maybe is sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it ensures the survival of the fittest” (p. 51).

Yet, there are students who try all the possibilities to get to the end of the academic finish line despite lesser intellectual capacity. At this instance, it is required of the student to make adequate preparations for his or her academic activities, and when intellectual inadequacy is reached, the student may opt for some sort of academic dishonesty to be able to complete his or her educational journey. The interview document of Yee (2012) recorded that a senior high school student cheated on a chemistry examination. “It’s like, I’ll keep my integrity and

fail this test—no. No one wants to fail a test”, the student said, explaining how he and other students persuaded themselves to cheat (p. 3).

The Impact of School Policies on Cheating

Basically, all schools are equipped with laws and regulations to safeguard the schools’ academic integrity. But while these laws and regulations exist, cheating during examination continues to be a habit of the students. Middleearthnj (2014) disclosed that the attitude of cheating started during students’ early school life with the use of gadgets with recorded course data, formulas, or history dates. The continuity of the habit of cheating during examination may indicate laxity of law and regulation enforcement, if not a total neglect of it. Either the former or latter is proper for the academe as it is the venue for the training of lifelong moral discipline. The academe is expected to develop wholesome attitude and conduct of its student-clients manifested in their words and deeds of integrity. This is what Roosevelt (as cited in Curtis, 2006) emphasized when he said, “to educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society” (p. 102). Gresser (as cited in Alejo, 2010) described integrity as the ability of a person to stand firmly composed, impartial, and integrated with the norms of morality, imbued with ethical and conscious action. The conduct of a person with integrity is in conformity with what is acceptable and cherished by the society. This would mean that anyone particularly a student with integrity prohibits himself or herself from being tarnished with deceitful words and deeds in order to stand morally sincere and pure.

Molding honesty or integrity in the student is everyone’s duty. Relaxed implementation of the code of conduct and ethical standards in the schools must be an alarm for the state to institute preventive actions, as character building among the students must be a common concern of both the state and the school. As Velayo (2003) emphasized, teaching is not merely a matter of imparting a lesson but a test of instilling discipline and eagerness to learn for life. Hence, the state through the school is expected to transform the students into morally upright and productive citizens. So, the school must be firm in instilling discipline among its students in order to mold good character. It must produce graduates who are morally responsible and disciplined. Otherwise, the school has not served at all as development conduit of the state.

Consequences of Cheating

Cheaters cherish the outwardly manifested result in the form of good grades and this motivates them to continue with the same practice of dishonesty in the classroom. However, cheaters endure the consequences of their action. Middleearthnj (2014) deduced that cheating lowers self-confidence and self-esteem, and cheaters who were hired for work because of good grades may be

unable to solve problems, offer good ideas, or maintain their work assignment as cheaters have less ability for critical thinking, and more likely to manifest dishonesty in the workplace.

Indeed, cheating is a morally bad habit. Such misdeed is motivated by wickedness and evil thoughts that are truly in conflict with the good and order of the school. If cheating will persist in an academic institution, it is as good as saying that the institution is espousing and tolerating the bad habit to be institutionalized.

School-Based Intervention on Cheating

School-based intervention on cheating made by one university includes imposition of academic penalties based on the gravity of the cheating offense, which could either be an outright failing grade on the examination or a failing grade for the subject. Depending on the case, instructors are given the leeway to decide how to handle violations of academic integrity. Harsh disciplinary sanctions like suspension and expulsion are imposed (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, n.d.). For other schools, legal suit, lost academic reputation as habitual cheater, and marking the student's transcript of academic record with some sort of violation of academic honesty are likewise harsh penalties (Thompson, n.d.)

To safeguard academic integrity, schools establish their policies and standards of discipline and apply for all their students. For the case of a local university in Region 8, it has promulgated its rules and regulations in regards to moral character and personal discipline, which stipulate the following: (a) The student must express thoughts and demonstrate actions, which are in consonance with the standards of righteousness, (b) the student must be honest to self and strive to improve and change, (c) the student must suppress self-enjoyment in favor of the greater good of society (Chapter XII, Sec. 5, University Code 2005, Eastern Samar State University). It is understood that the preceding rules of conduct shall guide the students in any of their academic engagement. The same rules stipulate the penalties when someone is caught cheating: warning (for the first offense), deduction of 20% of grade from the subject (for the second offense), and automatic failing grade plus suspension (for the third offense). Any disciplinary administrative action has to be attuned with aforesaid policies and standards of discipline.

In most course outlines and syllabi in the schools, the citation of the policy of academic honesty is emphasized, with clear conditions of what to do with violations thereof. The school as a system must strongly be an advocate of academic honesty, encourage students' responsibility for academic integrity, implement fair assessment of student performance and cultivate an environment of trust in the academic process (University of Georgia, n.d.).

The most significant among all the school-based interventions on cheating is the full implementation and enforcement of the rules of discipline, including its

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sanctions by all those concerned in the institution. Another intervention could be that of imbuing the student with the habit to study regularly and cultivating self-discipline or self-control. Without self-control a student can commit easy and instant gratification in one's desires. With low self-control in times of pressure, the student responds to the situation with stealth and deception. Anyone devoid of self-control is inflexible and cannot withstand a challenge (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 2011).

The foregoing literature presents the general information concerning academic dishonesty happening in learning institutions but does not consider location-specific situations or conditions, which incite the commission of the cheating misbehavior. The conduct of this study seemed fitting in order to fill the literature gap. It is also important to compare the result of the study with similar studies to reveal similarities and differences.

Theoretical Framework

This case study is anchored on social disorganization theory which holds that misbehavior is caused by the collapse of the standard of conduct and discipline. In this theory, an organization or an institution is considered as a social system composed of elements to perform specific interdependent roles for the building-up of the system and any misalignment thereof can disable the system or organization (San Juan & Centeno, 2011). Anent this theory, cheating among students, which is a violation of the school rules and regulation, is caused by the collapse of the moral tone of honesty and academic integrity in the schools or universities. This situation, in effect, calls for the modification and enhancement of the school rules and regulations or the strengthening of its implementation and enforcement in order to ascertain proper functioning of the school rules and regulation for the welfare of the whole academic institution and society (Lorenzana, 2003).

This study likewise considered personal values as a theoretical anchorage. Personal values like honesty, integrity, and honor represent the rules of a culture that governs a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions (Mercado, 2009). It follows then that an honest student has honest thoughts, feelings, and actions in creating an academic output beyond reproach. Thus, a student either succeeds or fails in academic pursuits depending on his or her personal values.

This study explored the root cause of cheating, the result of the anti-cheating policy implementation, and the inference of cheating on workforce quality. It likewise explored the intervention methods to address the misbehavior. Findings of the study would serve as additional information to the body of knowledge stored for the topic under consideration.

Specifically, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What does cheating mean to the students, and what are the conditions behind cheating during examination?
2. What is the result of the implementation of the school anti-cheating policy?
3. What inference does cheating have on human resource quality?
4. What intervention methods should be used to address cheating?

Methodology

To have an in-depth exploration of the topic, qualitative research was preferred, using case study. Validation or cross-checking of firsthand information from reliable sources, analysis of secondary information, use of researchers' notes and observation, theoretical views, and insights gathered were incorporated as deemed appropriate for a triangulated presentation of data and results of the study. The methodology includes the research design, research instrument, sampling, and research setting. It likewise includes data collection, ethical considerations, data analysis, and researcher's reflexivity.

Research Design

Case study was the research design utilized in this study so as to explore the root cause of cheating, its impact on school policies enforcement, and its inference on workforce quality. It was utilized to be able to come up with and recommend interventions to stop cheating during examination. Case study is a qualitative research design which explores an issue or phenomenon utilizing varied sources of information to make sure that it is not only revealed in one perspective but with a variety of perspectives in order to have a good understanding of such issue at hand (Baxter & Jack, 2008). It is an in-depth examination of a particular case or several cases (Lichtman, as cited in Wa-Mbaleka, 2016). A case study illustrates a problem and indicates a means for solving it (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-made semi-structured interview guide, which was validated by a senior faculty researcher and by the members of the research technical working group of the university. The interview guide, which was written in English, was made of 20 items; six were close-ended questions, the majority about demographics, and 14 were open-ended questions related to the topic under consideration. The same interview guide was utilized in generating information from the participants through personal interview. A test-run of the interview guide was done among a number of high school students. The test-run ascertained that the items therein were clearly understood and answered by the interviewees, and it

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likewise ascertained that the data generated from the interview were the needed data for the study. Expression, reaction, and other important observations as a result of the personal interview were noted as inputs for the discussion of results.

Sampling and Research Setting

The selection of the research participants was purposive because the data that must be taken from them had to be based on a true-to-life experience. In effect, the selection of the research participants among college students, from sophomore to seniors, was purposive to ascertain appropriate information for the topic under exploration. The identification of the research participants was with consultation and recommendation of faculty member-advisers who were knowledgeable about the classroom behavior of their respective advisees, and with the consent of the participants. Fifty percent of the participants were taken from the College of Agriculture and Allied Sciences, 25% from the College of Education, and 25% from the College of Information and Communication Technology. There were no freshmen students during the conduct of the study due to the K-12 senior high school program implementation.

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

In order to collect the data from the target participants, the researchers escorted all of them to a specific classroom and with their consent each of them was interviewed one at a time by the researchers, who seated in front of each research participant, forming like a panel of interviewers facing the interviewee. Utilizing the interview guide, the personal interview was conducted in the Waray language, being the native tongue in the area. The intentional use of Waray helped maintain rapport during the interview and created a casual or ordinary mode of conversation between the parties. Each participant was asked probing questions to ascertain clarity. The data elicited from the interview were saved in a digital recorder, with permission from the participant. The purpose of the interview and its confidentiality were made known to the participants. To maintain confidentiality, the participants were coded as Participant 1, Participant 2, up to Participant 12. The number as suffix to each participant represented the sequence of the interview with them. Conducting the study was with due approval by the dean of the department where each participant belonged.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data was done immediately after its verbatim transcription. Data were translated in English. The grouping of thematic information was a primary consideration for data analysis. All data were analyzed in conjunction with the organization of the information significant in defining the conclusion and

recommendations, and of course in conjunction with setting of the answers to the research questions.

Researchers' Reflexivity

As researchers, we are also teachers who are fully aware of students' misdeeds in the classroom. Our lack of personal attention on the impact of the misdeeds as in the case of cheating during examination would have lessened the utilization of the information and facts elicited from the participants. However, eagerness to relate the findings of the study to the good and order of the educational system prompted us to fully utilize the information generated from the study.

Results and Discussion

The following are the thematic presentations of the results and discussion of the study. Themes 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively present the information concerning the research questions.

Theme 1: Meaning of Cheating According to the Participants and the Conditions Behind Cheating During Examination

When asked of what cheating means to them, students replied with open conscience that "cheating is a form of dishonesty" (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6 & P7). "It is a bad habit" (P4 & P9); "it is lying and betrayal to self-trust" (P11 & P12); and "it is foolishness" (P10). By their answers, the students admitted that cheating is dishonesty that devaluates their dignity as human beings. They further admitted that cheating during examination is foolishness, lying, disgrace, and betrayal to self-trust. Thus, by being dishonest, being imbued with the habit to cheat, and betraying the self-trust in exchange of self-vested motive to pass or get a high grade, the student is driven to cheat during examination.

The foregoing answers of the participants are captured in the social disorganization theory of San Juan and Centeno (2011), which claims that the cause of cheating is the breakdown of the value of honesty. In relation to the personal value of honesty that governs the thoughts, feelings, and actions of a person as emphasized by Mercado (2009), the responses of the participants reflected that cheating resulted from dishonest thoughts and intentions. Thus, the research participants who have dishonest thoughts and intentions admitted that cheating is a dishonest act, bad habit, lying, betrayal, and foolishness.

Theme 2: Result of the Implementation of School-Based Anti-Cheating Policy

When the research participants were asked if they had cheated during quizzes or examination, they honestly answered "yes" (P1, P2, P3, P5, P7, P9, P11, & P12). Other participants answered "sometimes" (P4, & P8), and "always" (P10).

Only participant 6 answered “no”. When asked about their feeling when they cheated, the research participants answered that they felt nervous (P10, P11, & P12). Other participants felt guilty (P4, & P5): “I feel guilty and not comfortable” (P3); “I feel not comfortable and nervous” (P7); “I feel guilty and nervous” (P9); “I feel satisfied but not comfortable” (P1); “I feel that I am fooling myself” (P2); and “I am not contented” (P8). On the basis of the foregoing responses, it is clear that the research participants cheated or violated a school rule or regulation on cheating. Their admission and acceptance of guilt and their feeling of nervousness were clear indications of being guilty as they were aware of their violation of the school rule or regulation on cheating. These students who cheated have shown complete disregard of the rule or policy of the school. For these erring students, the school’s anti-cheating policy never deterred them in pursuing their self-gratification. It did not stop them from committing the cheating misdeed.

If education focuses on lifelong learning, then development of good attitudes and habits must be emphasized in the teaching-learning activities of the school, and its manifestation in the student life must be a primary requisite before degree conferment. It is therefore necessary that the school advocates and develops the desirable attitude in its student-clients; otherwise, all efforts invested in education are useless and unjustifiable. This calls for the necessity that the school authorities must announce and clarify with students that the first and foremost priority in the academe is to promote and develop the culture of desirable attitude and values among students and other school constituents.

The student, who has positively responded to the call of the school for instilling desirable values like honesty and integrity, and has been thoroughly immersed with the code of proper conduct enforced by the school, is expected to become a respectable and morally upright person, not only in thoughts and in words, but also in workplace deeds. The same student is likewise expected to become a fully grown professional whose actions and decisions are beyond reproach.

The fact that the participants admitted their cheating misbehavior, their responses paralleled with the social disorganization theory of San Juan and Centeno (2011). This would further mean that the participants admitted the breakdown of their personal value of honesty, which resulted to their cheating. Participants’ responses likewise paralleled with the personal values, which Mercado (2009) emphasized that values of honesty, integrity, and honor govern a person’s thoughts, feelings, and actions. The research participants cheated because they did not have the honest thought, feeling, and action during the examination. Moreover, the responses of the research participants are opposed to the self-determination theory of Deci and Ryan (Nhu, 2014) because the participants lacked self-control. Self-determination is based on the assumptin that a person must have control over his or her activities and actions. The participants’ lack of self-control

fueled their strong yearning to cheat. Lack of self-control served as the external locus of causality, which initiated and motivated cheating (Nhu, 2014).

Theme 3: Impact of Cheating on Human Resource Quality

The student-participants recognized that cheating has a negative impact on the quality of the human resources. Their responses reflected that the attitude of cheating is carried over to the workplace. They were straight with their answers that a cheater is likely to become a dishonest worker (P8, P11, & P12). Other participants said a cheater has no self-confidence (P5, P6, & P10); a cheater will always be dependent on others (P3, P4, & P9); “a cheater will expect displacement from work” (P2); “a cheater will become an easy-go-lucky employee” (P7); and “cheating will be brought to the work place” (P1). When the participants were asked whether cheating affects work quality most of them answered “yes” (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, & P12). This means that the participants who were chosen due to their commission of the cheating misbehavior were fully aware of the would-be disadvantageous effects of cheating in relation to the quality of the work that will turn out from the cheater.

Because of the breakdown of the important values of honesty and integrity of the person as emphasized in the social disorganization theory of San Juan and Centeno (2011), such deficiency can cause a malfunction in the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of the person because the malfunction of any working element will incapacitate the person or the whole system. The expectancy value theory of Atkinson, Fishbein, Eccles, Wigfield and Wigfield, and Tonks (Chauncey, n.d.) provides a different perspective, as it describes that a person is goal-oriented and this same person behaves in response to his or her beliefs and values appropriate to achieve a goal or purpose. Accordingly, the person orients himself or herself to the world based on expectations and evaluations. His or her behavior or attitude is seen as a function of expectancy, which is the perceived probability that a goal possesses a particular attribute or result. Then, there is evaluation, which is the degree of positive or negative effect toward an attribute or result (Chauncey, n.d.). In effect, the worker’s goal in life will at most determine the attitude towards work and work outcome.

Theme 4: Intervention Methods Used to Address Cheating

Intervention or the undertaking of a corresponding step to prevent cheating is a significant task that the school must pursue to help the erring student resuscitate one’s fading radiance of virtuous life caused by the dishonor resulting from the misconduct or vice. In the school where the study was conducted, yearly orientation programs were conducted among freshmen including returnees in order to disseminate and guide them on their proper conduct and decorum. Moreover, during examination, the instructor or the proctor always cautions everyone to

refrain from cheating. During class sessions, students are informed by their instructors regarding how their class performance is being evaluated, what comprises their final grade, and other aspects of the grading system. The students are always made aware that their term examination and quizzes comprise 60% of their grade, so that they can prepare well during every examination and quiz. Performance evaluation is reciprocal. Students in return rate the classroom performance of their instructors in terms of commitment (25%); knowledge of the subject (25%); teaching for independent learning (25%); and management of learning (25%). Instructors' attendance in in-service trainings and capability building and enhancement is contingent upon the availability of the budget.

When the participants were asked regarding what situation triggered them to cheat, they gave the following paraphrased answers: "lazy to study" (P2, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, & P11); "fear of failing grade" (P1, P3, & P4); and "inability of comprehension" (P12). With the responses as backdrop, laziness in studying, which comprised as the majority response indicated that there was low motivation and encouragement among the students, suggesting that the school and perhaps the family or home was soft in enforcing study habit and in inculcating hard work, industriousness, diligence, and perseverance in the consciousness of the students. As expected, hard work, industriousness, diligence, and perseverance help develop self-reliant and respectful students the fact that their tolerance and self-control is put to test. Self-respect is the foundation of integrity and integrity strengthens credibility. Velayo (2003) indicates that integrity knows no name, social status, measure of power, or amount of money. Velayo (2003) further emphasizes that "there is no compromise when credibility is threatened, and there is no grey area when integrity is concerned, it is always black and white" (p. 46).

Laziness must be eradicated in the mindset of the students through the inculcation of hard work, industriousness, diligence, and perseverance. One strategy is by being strict with assignments or homework and other academic outputs. Teachers must never consider low-quality performance of the students. They must never accept requirements or homework which are inconsistent with acceptable academic standards. By this practice, the students will be immersed into the acceptable standard of academic performance and proper work orientation; hence, the formation of correct attitude and habit shall be developed in them. This view is consistent with the viewpoint of Velayo (2003) on teaching, which highlights that

"the nobility of teaching lies in the opportunity of a person to shape young minds to make them sensible and reasonable individuals. Teaching is not merely a matter of imparting lessons; it is a test of instilling discipline and an eagerness to learn for life" (p. 38).

Velayo (2003) reminds that falling prey to mediocrity is a commission of a big mistake, as competition will always exist.

If laziness will control the academic life of the student, failure will be certain and work opportunities will be lost. In a social organization, San Juan and Centeno (2011) state that elements must be working harmoniously through a pattern of relationship. Thus, in essence, a student will never become productive when lazy, and a lazy workforce can never transform into a productive workforce institution.

When participants were asked “what can be done to prevent cheating?” they were straight with their responses. Most of them agreed that to prevent cheating, one has to study the lessons always (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10, P11, & P12). Other answers were “study and control oneself from cheating” (P1); “teachers should be strict on their students” (P7); and “teachers should discuss lessons well” (P8). From the foregoing answers, the participants recognized that their primary role as students is to study well, and it is only when they burn their midnight candles that they will not be tempted to cheat and become confident with their capacity to do, hence, will eventually carry such attitude onward to the workplace.

While it appears from the foregoing results that the enforcement strategies utilized by the school where the study was conducted seemed too soft or toothless in halting cheating, it is not yet late to undertake other practically applicable schemes of intervention so as to strengthen the implementation of the code of conduct as regards honesty and integrity in the academic dealings of the students. The school has to give priority attention to this concern.

Conclusion

From the thematic presentation of information, it can be deduced that during quizzes or examinations, students take advantage of their cheating habit, and this habit of cheating may likely continue in the same institution because of the students’ disregard of the anti-cheating rules and regulations. Only when such enforcement of rules and regulations on cheating will result in suspension and expulsion sanctions, as explicitly provided for in the anti-cheating policy, shall cheaters automatically refrain from their deceitful vice for fear of the sanctions. Collaborative efforts between the school, family, and community for the re-orientation of student’s values including development of correct study habit would also be an excellent option to carve cheating. Cheating needs to be evaluated and addressed by the school supervisors, faculty members, and other school authorities in the context of human and material resources, instructional preparation and compatibility, and students’ needs and concerns. The merit of the reciprocal evaluation among faculty members and students needs to be revisited in fairness to academic integrity.

Cheating, which is a self-destructing attitude and at the same time destructive to the prestige of the academic institution, will continue to be a plaque in the educational system, and will downgrade the recognition of the educational institution, if unchecked. It would be a waste of investment in education if in the

real sense of it the graduate has not matured with the lifelong virtues of honesty and integrity compatible with the workplace roles that sooner or later the graduate shall take responsibility for. Therefore, the development of correct workplace attitude and virtues, particularly honesty and integrity, must always be a primordial responsibility of the school or academe, the fact that the majority of the time in the student's formative life is spent at school.

Viewed from the participants' admission of cheating during examination, such situation must serve as a caution in the giving of recognition and honors to students as it may not be worthy of its purpose if academic performance is tainted by academic dishonesty. Hence, giving of grade point average to students must be done carefully through blind evaluations in both the qualitative and quantitative performances of the students. The faculty members must exert effort to go out of the four walls of the classroom to validate, measure, and conclude that the grade point average supposedly to be given to the student is in accord with academic integrity standards. With this practice, the bestowing of the academic honors shall even become more dignified.

With the responses of the study participants as basis, we conclude that the highest honors that any academic institution must bestow to its students is the academic integrity award. This is to recognize that the awardee possesses the morally acceptable attitudes, and has never once in his academic life been observed, found, or reported to have infringed the code of proper conduct and discipline or other laws on intellectual honesty. For sure, only those who have self-respect will excel in the pursuit of the challenge. The awarding of the academic achievement identified through high grade point averages may come next to the prestigious academic integrity award. By doing so, the development of the virtues of integrity and honor is being given utmost priority and profound consideration in the academic institution which in reality must be the case. According to Velayo (2003), a person who has a litany of achievements will lose honor when integrity falters. Therefore, integrity is above any other academic achievement.

Recommendations

On basis of the results of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Rules and regulations concerning cheating must be strictly enforced in the school or institution.
2. Students must develop and sustain their study habit. Parents and advisers must provide students with sustained guidance and motivation to study hard, and must reinforce the study habit of their students.
3. Signage on cheating restrictions must be visible within the classrooms. Surveillance cameras must be turned-on in the

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examination venue to easily pinpoint the deceitful or cheater to face appropriate sanction after lawful due process. In the absence of the surveillance cameras, the proctor must be equipped with innovative strategies that will deter cheating.

4. A committee preferably chaired by the guidance counselor to push for and safeguard academic integrity in the campus must be created.
5. An academic integrity award must be the highest award in an academic institution to emphasize high regard for the development of the virtues of honesty and integrity among the students.
6. A class performer may only be given the recognition after a thorough evaluation of academic honesty or academic integrity. Such evaluation will insure the bestowing of the honors beyond reproach.
7. It is recommended that the academic community give awards for academic honesty or academic integrity as frequently as possible like during monthly programs or in time with the giving of the awards based on the dean's lists to strongly promote and strengthen the embodiment of said virtues among the students.
8. The family or home, school, and the community must always highlight compatible virtues of honesty and integrity to preclude confusion in the development of the same lifelong virtues among the students.
9. In-service trainings, capability building and enhancement of the faculty and staff must be regularly scheduled and sustained with attendant budget. Their role as guidance teachers, motivators, mentors, and molders of lifelong values must always be reinforced.

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