

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN THE NEW NORMAL EDUCATION

Written by: JAY-ANN D. CASTILLO

It is in the learners' deepest solitude during the pandemic that they realize how significant the feeling of liberty is. During the pandemic, they were not able to visit the place that they usually visiting like the church, malls, supermarkets, and other places. Their socialization with other people was also limited. The way they express their feelings through gestures and affections, and laughing together without being afraid to get some health threats were some of the few things that the learners missed to do. Commonly, not only the learners but everyone missed the old ways of being free from anything that might harm them without compromising their comfort. It is where in the present that they felt severely uncomfortable letting themselves be contained inside their homes, not meeting their friends or relatives. Some experienced separation anxiety because of quarantine.

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced the learners to a new life that compelled higher education institutes and systems throughout the globe to transfer to online learning which includes assessments and evaluation in various forms. In line with this new educational way, some problems were encountered that might threaten the well-established curriculums and the quality of education supposed to be fairly given to students. The truth is it takes courage to uphold honesty, respect, fairness, and trustworthiness during this time. Studying at home and taking online classes inevitably tempts even the most ethical and honest student to cross the line. In the earliest part of the pandemic. According to the article by Proctorio (2020), a Platinum Sponsor for OLC Innovate 2020 entitled "The Threat to Academic Integrity", declared statistics that nearly 70 percent of undergraduates admit to having cheated on exams or writing assignments. In the same studies, 95 percent of students (primary grades to junior and senior high schools) admitted to participating in cheating in some form, either on a test, a writing assignment, or homework. It is impossible to neglect the fact that this admits how they handle technology in times when they need to separate HONESTY from needing HELP. In fact, the world wide web stores trillions of information that gives the students the facets of accessing information and data that can help them in studying and most of the online learning time, cheating. In this part, they can see the advantage of using technology in making the most out of it just to pass a certain subject evaluation. Moreover, it also encourages most of the students in opportunistic tools in facilitating dishonesty in quarterly exams and even tampering with unpermitted online research just to cite a source for a reason that no private or public library is accommodating students.

They do not interfere with the norm of technology execution in this contemporary academic era where lives are in fast pace transition every minute of every hour. In addition, the pandemic makes it more difficult than usual. Now that the students are experiencing a crisis over the said problem, it mostly affects how they handle their time management. Most of the students in this remote learning situation deal with having part-time jobs, family commitments, mental health problems, and other after-school responsibilities that can make them more tempted to commit academic dishonesty

because it really helps them minimize the time spent having the trouble of answering educational evaluations. More so, it may be the quickest thing to do to answer examinations properly, but it has a long-term effect once it runs into their veins. It might be addictive that they usually do it all the time already. It gives them emotional and psychological problems that lead to a loss of self-confidence in doing certain academic tasks. The students might experience self-blaming because they trusted so much to a source rather than their own knowledge and understanding. If they have a self-blaming situation, it might cause rage toward themselves or the people around them. Plus, it will give them poor performance to work efficiently and effectively. Subsequently, post-traumatic disorder for a reason that they already do not trust their selves and their capabilities to work on their experience and learning.

Having identified the problems and their possible long-term effect on them, teachers and personnel in the academe cannot change the fact that it is inevitable already for every student to commit this matter since distance learning makes it somewhat possible for them too. On the other hand, do they have a solution for this? A site called Education Weekly proposes four tips to prevent this from happening.

First is emphasizing critical thinking and inquiry. It is a big part of the solution for the educators to make engaging tasks for the students which require them to analyze information, make an impactful but creative presentation, explain their thinking, and express their opinions like in reports and debates and many more cognitive activities while in the distant learning.

Second is creating a classroom culture that discourages cheating. It means that making it a point that one must establish rules and regulations for their students to follow. Always reminding them of the essence of honesty and integrity to help them build their dreams and future through their hard work and perseverance is imperative. As they say, "We are talking about character and what character is composed of and how they can be a good person when nobody is watching,".

Third is using peer feedback and doing daily assignments. It basically allows the learners to assess or examine each other's work. In addition, brainstorming is one of the best ways to prevent cheating. There is more to learning when it is engaging and collective for which students acquire skills that will help them champion teamwork in tasks given.

Lastly is having students turn on their computer cameras. Technology nowadays helps educators to facilitate learning. They can still monitor and observe the activities of each student in online classes. The activities or assessments are done while the camera is on. The use of technology can help them be a better person.

They are all guilty that somehow cheating helped them in some other way they no longer control, especially when time allowance among all the busy work they do daily gets in the way. Nevertheless, they are still more than what is cheating. It might be part of their ignorant youth but being responsible for their action will make them better people with

integrity. At the end of the day, doing the right thing is what matters most, just like what C.S. Lewis said: "Integrity is doing the right thing even if end no one is watching".