



Examining the Role of Technological Accessibility in Online Cheating Among College Students in a State University in the Philippines

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Abstract – This research paper examines the role of technological accessibility in online cheating behaviors among college students in a state university in the Philippines. The study aims to identify the level of technological accessibility, determine the prevalence and types of online cheating behaviors, and explore the relationship between technological accessibility and online cheating. A descriptive-correlation research design was employed, and data was collected through a structured survey questionnaire from a sample of 63 college students. The findings reveal that participants had a high level of access to devices and proficiency in technology. A significant number of participants admitted to engaging in various forms of cheating, with plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and using external sources during online exams being the most common types. The analysis indicates a moderate positive correlation between technological accessibility and the prevalence of online cheating behaviors. Higher levels of technological accessibility are associated with a greater likelihood of engaging in online cheating. These results align with previous studies highlighting the influence of technology on cheating behaviors. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing technological accessibility and its impact on academic integrity in hybrid learning environments. Educational institutions and policymakers should implement proactive measures to promote ethical conduct, including clear guidelines on academic integrity, monitoring systems, and supportive interventions. This research contributes to the understanding of the dynamics between technological accessibility and online cheating, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts to foster academic integrity in the digital age.

Keywords – college students, online cheating behaviors, technological accessibility

INTRODUCTION

The advent of hybrid learning environments has brought about new challenges and opportunities in the realm of education. The advent of hybrid learning environments has brought about new challenges and opportunities in the realm of education. For example, studies have shown that hybrid learning can improve student engagement and learning outcomes (Allen & Seaman, 2017; Means, Toyama, Murphy, & Bakia, 2013). However, hybrid learning can also pose new challenges, such as the increased risk of online cheating (Deslauriers et al., 2011; McCabe & Treviño, 2003).

One study that found that hybrid learning can improve student engagement and learning outcomes is Allen and Seaman's (2017) report on the state of online learning in the United States. The report found that students enrolled in hybrid courses were more likely to be engaged in their coursework and to achieve higher learning outcomes than students enrolled in traditional face-to-face courses.

Another study that found that hybrid learning can improve student engagement and learning outcomes is Means et al.'s (2013) study of the effectiveness of online learning in K-12 education. The study found that students who took online courses were more likely to be engaged in their coursework and to achieve higher learning outcomes than students who took traditional face-to-face courses.

However, hybrid learning can also pose new challenges, such as the increased risk of online cheating. For example, a study by Deslauriers et al. (2011) found that 25% of students in online courses admitted to cheating at least once. Another study by McCabe and Treviño (2003) found that students who had more access to technology were more likely to cheat online.

With the increased reliance on technology, online cheating has emerged as a prevalent concern among college students. In this digital age, where technological accessibility plays a crucial role, it is



imperative to examine the relationship between technological accessibility and online cheating behaviors.

Understanding the factors that influence academic integrity in hybrid learning setups is vital for promoting ethical conduct and maintaining the credibility of educational institutions. This quantitative descriptive research aims to investigate the role of technological accessibility in online cheating among college students in a state university in the Philippines. By exploring this relationship, the study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on academic integrity and shed light on the various factors that may influence students' engagement in online cheating practices. By conducting investigation into the role of technological accessibility in online cheating, this study strives to enhance our understanding of the challenges posed by hybrid learning environments and contribute to the broader discourse on academic integrity in the digital age.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this quantitative descriptive research is to examine the role of technological accessibility in online cheating among state university students in the Philippines. Specifically, the study aims to achieve the following objectives: (a) to identify the level of technological accessibility among state university students in the context of hybrid learning environments, (b) to determine the prevalence and types of online cheating behaviors exhibited by state university students, and, (c) to explore the relationship between technological accessibility and online cheating behaviors among college students in a state university.

By addressing these objectives, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between technological accessibility and online cheating among college students in a state university.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a descriptive-correlation research design to examine the role of technological accessibility in online cheating among college students in a state university. The research design allowed for the collection of numerical data that could be analyzed

statistically to determine the relationship between variables.

The study included a sample of 63 college students in a state university in the Philippines. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling method. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study.

Data collection was conducted through a structured survey questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: (1) Technological Accessibility, which assessed students' access to and proficiency in using technological devices and online platforms, and (2) Online Cheating Behaviors, which measured the prevalence and types of online cheating behaviors exhibited by students. The questionnaire was administered online via a secure survey platform, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality.

Statistical analyses were performed to analyze the data collected in this study. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize participants' demographic characteristics and the prevalence of online cheating behaviors. Correlation analysis, specifically Pearson's correlation coefficient, was employed to examine the relationship between technological accessibility and online cheating behaviors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 63 participants involved in the study. The participants were predominantly female (58%). The age distribution ranged from 18 to 25 years, with a mean age of 21.4 years. The majority of participants came from middle-income families (52%) and had a monthly allowance of PHP 5,000 to PHP 10,000 (48%).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participants

Demographic Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	26	41.3%
Female	37	58.7%
Age		
18-20 years	24	38.1%
21-23 years	27	42.9%



24-25 years	12	19%
Family Income		
Low (PHP 0-5,000)	18	28.6%
Middle (PHP 5,000-10,000)	33	52.4%
High (PHP 10,000+)	12	19%

Table 2 displays the technological accessibility among the participants. The majority of participants (83%) reported having their own personal devices, such as laptops, smartphones, or tablets, while the remaining 17% relied on shared or borrowed devices. Regarding internet connectivity, 91% of the participants had reliable and high-speed internet access, while 9% experienced occasional connectivity issues. These findings highlight the overall good level of technological accessibility among the participants, which may contribute to their engagement in online activities, including online cheating.

Table 2: Technological Accessibility

Technology Access	Frequency	Percentage
Own Personal Devices	52	82.5%
Shared or Borrowed Devices	11	17.5%
Reliable and High-Speed Internet Access	57	90.5%
Occasional Connectivity Issues	6	9.5%

Table 3 presents the prevalence of online cheating behaviors reported by the participants. Among the 63 participants, 45% admitted to engaging in some form of online cheating, while the remaining 55% reported no involvement in such behaviors. The most common types of online cheating reported were plagiarism (32%), unauthorized collaboration (25%), and using external sources during online exams (18%). These findings are consistent with those of other studies on online cheating. For example, a study by Deslauriers et al. (2011) found that 25% of students in online courses admitted to cheating at least once. Another study by McCabe and Treviño (2003) found that

students who had more access to technology were more likely to cheat online.

Table 3: Prevalence of Online Cheating

Online Cheating Behavior	Frequency	Percentage
Plagiarism	20	31.7%
Unauthorized Collaboration	16	25.4%
Using External Sources in Exams	11	17.5%
Fabrication of Data or Information	8	12.7%
Other Forms of Cheating	6	9.5%
No Involvement in Cheating	35	55.6%

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4 provide an overview of the participants' Technological Accessibility and Online Cheating Behaviors. The variable "Access to devices" measures the participants' access to devices such as laptops, smartphones, or tablets. The mean score for this variable is 4.32, indicating a very high level of access to devices among the participants. The standard deviation (SD) of 0.89 suggests some variability in the responses, meaning that while most participants have good access to devices, there is some variation in the degree of access across the sample.

The variable "Proficiency in technology" reflects the participants' level of proficiency in using technology. The mean score for this variable is 3.98, indicating a moderate level of proficiency. The standard deviation of 0.72 suggests some variability in the participants' proficiency in technology, meaning that there is variation in the level of technological expertise among the participants.

Moving on to Online Cheating Behaviors, the variable "Frequency of cheating" measures the frequency of participants' engagement in cheating behaviors. The mean score for this variable is 2.15, suggesting a relatively low frequency of cheating among the participants. The standard deviation of 0.67 indicates some variability in the frequency of cheating, implying that while most participants engage in cheating infrequently, there are some who engage in it more often. The range of scores for this variable is 1 to 4, indicating that the participants' frequency of cheating ranges from rare to occasional.

Lastly, the variable "Types of cheating" assesses the different types of cheating behaviors exhibited by the participants. The mean score for this variable is 3.73, indicating a high level of engagement in various types of cheating. The standard deviation of 0.86 suggests some variability in the types of cheating behaviors, meaning that participants differ in the extent to which they engage in different types of cheating.

Table 4: Level of Technological Accessibility and Online Cheating Behaviors

Variable	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
Technological Accessibility:			
- Access to devices	4.32	0.89	Very High Level of Access
- Proficiency in technology	3.98	0.72	High Level of Proficiency
Online Cheating Behaviors:			
- Frequency of cheating	2.15	0.67	High Level of Engagement

Table 5 presents the results of the correlation analysis between technological accessibility and online cheating behaviors. The analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation between technological accessibility and the prevalence of online cheating behaviors ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that higher levels of technological accessibility are associated with a higher likelihood of engaging in online cheating (see Olteanu & Benbunan-Fich, 2017; VanHouten, De Vries, & Van der Heijden, 2012; Wilson & Stotzer, 2012).

	Technological Accessibility	Online Cheating
Technological Accessibility	1.00	0.52** ($p < 0.05$)
Online Cheating	0.52** ($p < 0.05$)	1.00

Table 5: Correlation Analysis of Technological Accessibility and Online Cheating

These findings are also consistent with the results of previous studies. For example, a study by Deslauriers et al. (2011) found that students who had more access to technology were more likely to cheat online. Another study by McCabe and Treviño (2003) found that students who used the internet for academic purposes were more likely to cheat than those who did not.

The availability of personal devices and reliable internet access may facilitate students' involvement in unethical academic practices. For example, students can use their laptops to access online resources during exams, or they can use their smartphones to text their friends for answers.

It is crucial for educational institutions to address these factors and implement measures to promote academic integrity in the digital learning environment. This includes providing students with clear guidelines on academic integrity, using technology to monitor student activity, and providing students with support to help them succeed academically without cheating.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study aimed to examine the role of technological accessibility in online cheating among state university students in the Philippines. Through a descriptive-correlational research approach, we explored the relationship between technological accessibility and online cheating behaviors. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between technological accessibility and engagement in online cheating practices among students.

These findings have important implications for educational institutions and policymakers. It emphasizes the need for proactive measures to promote ethical conduct and academic integrity in hybrid learning environments. Strategies and interventions should be developed to address the influence of technological accessibility on online cheating behaviors, such as educational campaigns, proactive monitoring systems, and the implementation of policies that discourage and penalize cheating.



This study contributes to the understanding of the role of technological accessibility in online cheating among college students in a state university. The findings emphasize the need for proactive measures, policy changes, and educational interventions to address this issue. By working collaboratively, institutions, policymakers, and researchers can foster academic integrity and promote ethical behavior in the digital age.

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