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IDENTIFYING STRATEGIES TO MAKE ASSESSMENT MORE FOOLPROOF AGAINST CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM IN THE AGE OF AI USING THE NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

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Abstract: *Artificial intelligence (AI) is now widely utilized in a variety of industries, including education sector. Now more than ever, AI is being put to use in many fields, including the classroom. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that more challenges and impediments will arise in AI in the forthcoming years. One prominent concern pertains to an excessive dependence on AI, potentially resulting in issues such as academic dishonesty, intellectual theft, and insufficient educational development. Thus, the nominal group technique (NGT) was employed to present conclusions and recommendations from experts on managing academic dishonesty in the era of AI. The results of the study indicated that there are 14 strategies that can be used to make assignments more resistant to academic dishonesty in the age of AI. The findings of this study hold significance in generating numerous other strategies. Educators ought to explore new approaches to ensure assignments' continued relevance and efficacy in the era of artificial intelligence.*

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Academic Dishonesty, Nominal Group Technique*

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Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a technological system that emulates human intellect to carry out cognitive functions, such as learning and problem-solving, using predetermined rules and environmental factors (Wang, 2019). Presently, the use of AI has become pervasive across several sectors, including but not limited to business, science, art, and education. It aims to augment user experience and optimize operational efficacy by implementing cutting-edge technical advancements such as machine learning and neural networks (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). The integration of AI has significantly influenced several aspects of our professional and personal lives by automating chores and enhancing our ability to make decisions, plan, and seek information (Wang, 2019).

In higher education, the integration of AI into the teaching process has gained momentum due to the pressing need for skilled professionals at the senior level. This application of AI has proven advantageous in facilitating knowledge transfer to senior talents and fostering the development of their professional literacies (Zhou, 2020). According to Holmes et al. (2019), it would be unrealistic to assume that AI will not influence teaching and learning, both technologically and from the perspectives of pedagogy, ethics, and the development of educator competency.

Integrating AI technology in education has shown promising prospects for the future. However, a careful examination of AI's challenging and complex developmental trajectory in education over the past few decades reveals that numerous challenges and impediments are likely to persist in the future. One concern is the excessive dependence on AI, which can result in abuse such as cheating, plagiarism, overreliance on AI tools for answers, laziness, and inadequate learning.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty (AD) refers to the engagement of one or more individuals in activities that are not considered legal, intending to obtain an unfair advantage in an academic setting (Benson et al., 2019). AD refers to any behaviour exhibited by a student that contravenes the moral and ethical guidelines established by an educational institution. AD can sometimes be referred to as academic misconduct or academic fraud. The antithesis of AD is academic integrity. According to Sefcik (2020), academic integrity necessitates the presence of trust, respect, fairness, and responsibility. Academic integrity, which entails the adherence to ethical norms in academic endeavours, is consistently prioritized by educational institutions. It also fosters values such as honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, respect, and accountability. Academic integrity encompasses the act of refraining from engaging in plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication while also discouraging any actions that may promote academic dishonesty. Maintaining the legitimacy and worth of educational institutions and the work generated by their students is of utmost importance (Sutherland-Smith, 2008).

Conversely, unethical academic conduct, often known as academic dishonesty, encompasses several transgressions, such as cheating, engaging in fraudulent behaviour, or committing plagiarism (Pan, 2019). The occurrence of cheating prompts an inquiry into the actual scope of learning and its consequential impact on long-term career viability, specifically concerning knowledge acquisition and unethical conduct. Imran and Nordin (2013) reveal that AD's detrimental impacts extend beyond the immediate consequences for students and educational institutions. Furthermore, it has been found that engaging in AD might influence students' perception and comprehension of workplace misconduct in subsequent professional settings.

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The repercussions of engaging in AD during the formative assessment phase for students encompass the forfeiture of the chance to enhance their learning, hence increasing the likelihood of lagging in the summative evaluation. AD has emerged as a significant concern, posing a threat not only to the integrity of online learning and educational institutions but also to society (Batane & Tshepo, 2010).

Academic Dishonesty in Higher Education

AD behaviour among students in higher education is becoming more prevalent. In Canada, 57.3% of students in college or university let another student copy their work. In the same way, 61% of Swedish undergraduates took information from a book or other source without citing the source. 53% of students from four different Australian universities said they had worked together on a project that should have been done individually, and 36% of students from four various German universities said they had copied from someone else's paper at least once (Baran & Jonason, 2020). The statistics as mentioned earlier serve as compelling evidence that AD represents a substantial issue, hence contravening established academic standards and principles of equity. Academic dishonesty is a prevalent issue observed in universities globally, resulting in unfavourable outcomes for students and the education system.

The student's general attitude towards cheating is one of the most well-established variables that predict AD. According to Whitley et al. (1999), a comprehensive analysis of 107 studies revealed that endorsing a positive attitude towards cheating was identified as a contributing factor to the development of Antisocial Disposition (AD). This finding was consistent with other factors, such as expectations regarding the consequences of cheating, previous engagement in cheating behaviours, and perceived benefits associated with cheating. A recent study by Zhang et al. (2018) examined a sample of 2009 students from eastern China. The findings of this study revealed that individuals who perceived AD as less serious or were more inclined to participate in such behaviour.

Another component that has been proposed as universally influential in engagement with AD is the various demands, stresses, and challenges associated with being part of higher education, together with the societal expectation to complete education expeditiously and achieve excellent academic performance. Participating in higher education can be a challenging experience; this is a well-established fact (Roe, 2022). According to Sandberg and Kubiak (2013), those pursuing higher education aspire to attain the concept of the "good life." This pursuit is driven by various motivations, including securing future employment, fostering personal development, or satisfying societal expectations. The "good life" concept can encompass various aspects, such as achieving personal or financial success.

For students, pursuing higher education may be driven by societal or familial expectations, and attaining the "good life" could involve liberation from these pressures once graduation. The attainment of acknowledgement for the fulfilment of advanced education necessitates achievement in formal evaluation. Students are mandated to perceive their academic pursuits as a means to achieve a fulfilling and prosperous existence, wherein the expeditious and efficient completion of their assessments becomes an integral aspect of their quest for validation. Individuals who demonstrate excellent levels of performance may be commended by their peers, family members, or teaching staff, particularly in situations where the evaluation is not conducted in a blinded manner. This recognition can contribute to an

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increased sense of esteem. Conversely, failing to attain the prescribed norm can result in contrasting outcomes (Roe, 2022).

This phenomenon could explain why students know the potential consequences associated with AD yet continue to engage in such behaviour. To accomplish their objectives and attain a state of fulfilment referred to as "the good life," individuals must overcome obstacles to their self-actualization (Sandberg and Kubiak, 2013). This necessitates obtaining recognition for their successful engagement in assessment through any available means, striving for the highest possible grade, and expediting the process. We are currently transitioning into what may be referred to as the third era of academic honesty. The first epoch pertains to the era before the advent of digital technology, while the second epoch aligns with the gradual integration of Information Communication Technology (ICT). The present generation encompasses sophisticated and adaptable ICT systems, which contain applications of AI. The utilization of AI applications has, in several aspects, introduced a novel era characterized by increased instances of plagiarism and academic dishonesty (Xiao et al., 2022).

Academic Dishonesty Using AI

According to Crawford et al. (2023), the recent development of AI technology has given rise to a modified academic dishonesty landscape, hence posing new obstacles for educators. The escalation of AI technology has led to an increased focus on the issue of academic dishonesty. Students can input essay prompts into bot technologies, such as ChatGPT, which can produce written responses that mimic genuine student work. Although these AI bots cannot create original or innovative ideas, they can amalgamate pre-existing knowledge and structure it into coherent and rational arguments. The progress of AI has afforded students a plethora of resources to generate homework assignments that closely resemble authentic work effortlessly. Several AI-powered technologies have facilitated academic misbehaviour for contemporary students. These tools encompass essay generators, online essay mills, and custom writing businesses.

The growth of AI has significantly expanded the range of possibilities for students to participate in acts of academic dishonesty. The ease of access to essay mills, paraphrase software, and other AI driven tools has facilitated plagiarism and the production of seemingly authentic work by students (Manley, 2023). By 2023, a considerable volume of scientific literature has been produced, exploring the utilization of AI particularly ChatGPT, to assist students in their writing pursuits (MohammadKarimi, 2023). The notable increase in academic contributions emphasizes the importance and pertinence of the examined subject matter.

There is a widespread concern that both students and scholars may increasingly rely on AI to outsource their writing tasks. Based on preliminary observations of initial responses to essay prompts at the university level, there is reason for concern among professors and lecturers over the future viability of essays as a means of assessment. Stokel-Walker (2022) asserts that some of the responses ‘‘are so lucid, well-researched and decently referenced’’. Despite its inherent limits and ethical concerns, this technology has significant implications for enhancing academic integrity on a broader scale.

Failure to effectively address AD involving AI might potentially undermine educational institutions' reputation and threaten civilization's advancement in the long run. In addition, an overreliance on AI-generated content could hinder the development of students' critical

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thinking and research abilities. Students may regard the utilization of AI in academic settings as a means to achieve academic achievement without fully engaging in the necessary intellectual processes that are integral to genuine learning. Educators are required to carefully consider the possible enduring impacts of academic dishonesty facilitated by AI on the educational development of students (Chan & Tsi, 2023).

Despite the increasing acknowledgement of the challenges that result from academic dishonesty in students' written work within the context of AI, there is a notable gap in the literature regarding educators' approaches to addressing this matter. Existing research has examined various aspects of AD, including its evolving nature, techniques of detection, and its effects on teaching methods. However, there has been limited exploration of educators' strategies for addressing AI-driven academic misconduct while using AI in assessment. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of educators' distinct perspectives and contemplations can yield significant insights for formulating efficacious treatments, policies, and support structures tailored to address their unique requirements in addressing academic dishonesty in the era of AI. Addressing this disparity in the existing body of knowledge will enhance the overall comprehension of the matter and streamline the adoption of focused strategies to uphold academic honesty.

Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this research were:

1) The objective of this study is to examine the perspectives and professional suggestions about the management of AD, specifically cheating and plagiarism using AI in higher education.
2) This study aims to present conclusions and recommendations about the management of cheating and plagiarism among students in the era of AI

Research Methodology

The current research employed the nominal group technique (NGT), an organized method to generate ideas and uncover solutions inside group settings to provide recommendations for optimal practices (Daveson, 2015). It is a systems science technique that involves examining and resolving real-world issues, encompassing socio-economic concerns, through applying integrative and holistic thinking. The NGT has been recently employed with notable efficacy to elicit a diverse array of pertinent inquiries from various knowledgeable individuals, including patients, relatives, members of the general public, and stakeholders, within a condensed timeframe (de Wolf-Linder et al., 2019). Srivastava et al. (2019) highlights various scholars' unique application of an NGT in diverse domains such as literary systems, social sciences, spiritual systems, supply chain management, and security management. The benefits of employing the NGT approach in comparison to the Delphi method, focus groups, or brainstorming sessions include an avoidance of any single participant from dominating the discourse, ensuring equal participation from all individuals, generating a substantial collection of items, and facilitating straightforward implementation (Gallagher et al., 1993).

Srivastava et al. (2019) state that NGT utilizes a procedure akin to structured brainstorming, which capitalizes on the participants' expertise, proficiency, and emotions. This system's design paradigm is rooted in the second-generation approach, wherein users are regarded as knowledgeable individuals who play an integral role in the decision-making process. From a theoretical standpoint, NGT strategically utilizes the expertise of individuals within a specific field to systematically generate solutions for highly intricate problems while minimizing the

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required inputs or exerted efforts. This procedural approach systematically facilitates consensus within a limited number of individuals. The NGT methodology effectively mitigates the risk of prematurely fixating on a singular concept, thereby fostering an environment that encourages open discussion and respectful disagreement among its participants while discouraging argumentative tactics. A nominal group is a collective of individuals who engage in solo work while physically present in each other's company. There is a distinction between a group that interacts and engages in discussions among its members. In NGT, there is an additional participant known as a moderator. The position of the moderator is of significant importance in the context of the NGT, as they play a crucial role in fostering group consensus democratically by managing and mitigating individual dominance. The NGT task entails the process of group members ranking objects. Ranking refers to the systematic procedure of evaluating and comparing multiple items, followed by arranging them in a specific order based on their relative weight or significance, typically measured on a scale of importance or priority.

The standard process of NGT generally encompasses four sequential stages:

Silent Generation of idea: The initial stage of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) involved the participants being presented with a predetermined question, which the facilitator read aloud. The participants were instructed to engage in autonomous work and generate a comprehensive list of concepts accurately reflecting their viewpoints.

Round Robin session: The participants proceeded to disseminate their replies to the group in a round-robin manner while the group moderator transcribed the responses. The facilitator employed a strategy of consolidating comparable statements and eliminating redundancies in order to promote and streamline the next debate. These revised statements were subsequently presented to the group. Engaging in a discourse regarding the ideas is prohibited.

Discussion of the list of ideas: This phase facilitated the opportunity for participants to inquire, seek further elucidation, and express their concurrence or dissent with any elements presented in the inventory. The items were addressed sequentially, allowing participants to combine items with comparable meanings or remove redundant items. During this phase, the facilitator was responsible for guiding the discussion and ensuring that the impact of the group's more assertive or influential individuals was mitigated.

Vote: Without any deliberation or additional consultation, each individual inside the group was instructed to participate in an anonymous voting process, wherein they were allowed to cast their votes as either "yes," "no," or "maybe" about the proposed ideas. Subsequently, the facilitator proceeded to gather the rating forms and proceeded with the task of tabulating the outcomes to ascertain the group's prioritization. The objective of this stage is to consolidate the evaluations of individual participants to show the determined significance of particular elements.

Sampling

A disagreement exists over the optimal sample size for conducting investigations utilising NGT. NGT can potentially be used on a single cohort or a big group. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the method can also be adapted to smaller groups in order to facilitate effective communication, depending on the specific requirements of the study (Hussin et al., 2017). In

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order to address this objective, prior researchers have employed various sample sizes, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

Reseachers	Sample sizes
Van de Ven dan Delbecq	5 – 9 experts/participants
Horton	7 – 10 experts/participants
Carney et al.	Min. 6 experts/participants
Steward	5- 8 experts/participants
Holmes	6 – 12 experts/participants

Source: Adapted from Lennon (2012)

Based on the above citation, the investigator opted to engage five experts in the NGT procedure for this research topic. To meet the eligibility criteria, participants must possess at least five years of teaching experience in higher education. In addition, individuals must comprehensively understand the application of AI within education.

Finding:

Table 2

Items / Elements	Voter 1	Voter 2	Voter 3	Voter 4	Voter 5	Total item score	Percentage	Rank Priority	Voter Consensus
Supervise Students During Assessment	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable
Oral Assessment	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67	3	Suitable
Focus on the process than the final product (diary, logbook)	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable
Make assessment more personel	3	3	3	2	2	13	86.67	3	Suitable
Use recent information for assessment (students perspective, , experience & cultural capital)	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable
Assignment combine visuals with text	2	2	2	3	3	12	80	4	Suitable
Writing assignments are anchored in scientific source	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.33	2	Suitable
Peer Reviews	3	3	3	3	2	14	93.33	2	Suitable
Predict the predictive text of AI	3	2	3	3	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable
Project base learning	2	2	3	3	2	12	80	4	Suitable
Analyse or Critique AI Text	3	3	3	2	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable
Revise, refine an AI generated text	3	3	3	2	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable
Fact check AI	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable
Employ writing process (submit draf, leave feedback, make revisions)	2	3	3	3	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable

Source: Researchers

Table 2 presents the aggregate ratings for the solution component to prevent cheating and plagiarism using AI, as perceived by experts. The results of this investigation briefly suggest that the percentages of the assessed constituents are all within an appropriate range for

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utilization, which has exceeded the requisite threshold of 70% (Hussin et al., 2017). The researcher can conclude that every experts in the group concurs with the acceptability and usability of the primary components in the developed model. According to our findings from the research, it is evident that the strategies discussed in this study possess different levels of effectiveness and ranking. Table 3 presents an overview of the hierarchical positioning of each strategy.

Table 3

Ranking	**Rank 1**	**Rank 2**	**Rank 3**	**Rank 4**
Strategies	1. Supervise Students During Assessment 2. Focus on the process than the final product 3.Use recent information for assessment 4. Fact check AI	1. Writing assignments are anchored in scientific source 2. Peer Reviews 3. Predict the predictive text of AI 4. Analyse or Critique AI Text 5. Revise, refine an AI generated text 6. Employ writing process	1. Oral Assessment 2. Make assessment more personel	1. Assignment combine visuals with text 2. Project base learning

Source: Researchers

Discussions

This study aimed to ascertain effective ways to reduce occurrences of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, within higher education. A total of fourteen strategies were successfully compiled through the utilization of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) methodology. Nevertheless, based on the study's results, only four techniques have obtained agreement among experts, thereby justifying their categorization as top-ranked. These four strategies have garnered consensus among experts as being efficacious in reducing cases of academic dishonesty, specifically cheating and plagiarism, among students.

Certain AIs exhibit shortcomings in terms of the quality and reliability of the information and data they provide. Upon examining this particular element, it has been agreed upon by experts that a potent approach to mitigate dependence on AI involves the "use recent information for assessment" and “Fact check AI”. Nevertheless, these two strategies require increased effort on the educator's part. When educators prioritise the comprehensive process of assignment production, they inevitably face the challenge of allocating their instructional time. Educators may be required to oversee students as they complete a segment of a written task during a classroom session. Educators may ask students to keep journals or logbooks, which should be considered for inclusion in the final grade assessment. Additionally, educators may hold interviews with students to discuss their work and request that they explain their thought processes, for instance. Despite the seeming obsolescence of these two approaches, they possess the potential to effectively deter students from engaging in plagiarism when completing their tasks. These two strategies will impose constraints on student's ability to depend entirely on AI, hence necessitating the utilization of their cognitive skills.

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The ability of the AI to judge the veracity of specific assertions is still restricted (Marsden & Meyer, 2019). Contemporary AI systems possess the limited capability to discern implicit claims or assertions contained inside intricate phrase structures, in contrast to humans who demonstrate greater proficiency in recognizing such claims (Graves, 2018). AI systems have not yet achieved proficiency in comprehending fundamental human concepts such as sarcasm and irony, and are unable to effectively tackle more intricate types of deception (Vincent, 2019). As a result of AI's flaws, the experts concur that six strategies should be given second priority for reducing the likelihood of cheating and plagiarism in the era of AI. The utilization of assessments in this particular format has significant importance, particularly when considering the inquiry around the capacity of AI to generate novel, meaningful, unexpected, or valuable creations. When considering the limitations of AI, it becomes apparent that the evaluation of students in the current AI-driven era should incorporate human elements such as viewpoint, experience, and cultural knowledge to enhance the assessment process. It is anticipated that by employing these strategies, the academic output of students will exhibit superior quality and significance compared to the work generated by AI.

The third rank compasses oral assessment and enhances the personalization of assessments. Neither of these solutions is considered most effective in guaranteeing assessment integrity as students still can employ AI to complete their assignments. For instance, oral assessments still give students the chance to gain resources from AI. Both strategies require explicit guidance from the lecturers to decrease the risk of excessive dependence on AI among students. For instance, while it is conceivable that the content for the oral presentation could be sourced from AI, this scenario can be circumvented by incorporating components of critical thinking into the evaluation by the lecturers. A similar outcome is likewise anticipated if the assessment is rendered more personalized. This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that it allows students to rely highly on external sources. Nevertheless, when this particular approach is integrated with any of the tactics outlined in ranks 1 and 2, it can facilitate the development of assignments resistant to cheating and plagiarism.

The fourth rank entails the integration of graphics with text and the implementation of project-based learning. Although both of these approaches are more critical in nature, they nonetheless give students the chance to rely totally on AI. Using assignments with visual aids has not yet proven effective in deterring students from becoming overly dependent on AI. This phenomenon can be attributed to the proliferation of AI systems adept at processing visual information, allowing students to depend on them. Project-based learning also does not possess the capability to effectively reduce students' dependence on artificial intelligence (AI). These two strategies can only be considered foolproof against plagiarism when combined with strategies described in Ranks 1 and 2.

Conclusion

While it is true that using AI to commit academic dishonesty is an emerging phenomenon in today's world, educators must not impose prohibitions on the utilization of AI by students. They must encourage students to use cutting-edge technology to stay caught up in the technological domain. There are currently a variety of AI-based technologies that can facilitate the learning process and pique students' interest in education. Preventing and restricting the use of AI is not the correct solution. The use of AI to complete duties is still permissible so long as it is not so reliant on humans as to compromise their holistic development. As shown by the findings obtained through this study, educators and practitioners in education should consider exploring ways to develop culturally relevant

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assessments in response to the emergence of AI so that educational institutions can adapt to the ever-changing norms of society.

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