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Echo From Techno-Classroom Exploring Teachers: Exploring Teachers` Perspectives On The Threats Of Artificial Intelligence To Academic Honesty In The Digital Age

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ABSTRACT

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has significantly reshaped teaching and learning practices, creating both opportunities and challenges for academic integrity in the digital age. This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically narrative inquiry, to explore teachers' perspectives on the threats of AI to academic honesty. The research was conducted among teachers in the North District of the City Schools Division of Tacurong City during the school year 2025–2026. The study aimed to understand educators' experiences in addressing AI-related academic dishonesty and to inform the development of responsive academic integrity policies and teacher training initiatives. Findings revealed that teachers encounter substantial challenges in detecting AI-generated student outputs, regulating gadget use in the classroom, and ensuring the authenticity of learners' academic work. These

concerns reflect the growing complexity of maintaining academic honesty in technology-rich learning environments. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrate a strong sense of professional responsibility by implementing preventive strategies, promoting responsible AI use, and balancing disciplinary measures with empathy and guidance. Rather than relying solely on punitive approaches, educators emphasize the importance of fostering digital ethics, critical thinking, and values formation to sustain academic integrity. Moreover, teachers perceive AI as having a dual influence on student learning. While AI may encourage shortcut behavior, dependency, and reduced independent thinking, it can also function as a supportive learning tool when integrated responsibly. Teachers therefore position themselves as ethical mentors who guide students in the proper use of technology, model integrity, and encourage open dialogue about responsible digital practices. Overall, the findings highlight the evolving role of teachers as facilitators of ethical technology integration and advocates of authentic learning in the AI-driven classroom.

Keywords: digital ethics, technological accountability, learning authenticity, instructional

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In the digital era, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has profoundly transformed the educational landscape, offering groundbreaking innovations such as personalized learning pathways, intelligent tutoring systems, and the automation of routine administrative tasks. These advancements have enhanced both teaching efficiency and student engagement, creating more accessible and adaptable learning environments. However, alongside these benefits, AI has also introduced complex and pressing challenges to academic integrity on a global scale. The increasing accessibility of AI-driven tools—such as automated writing generators, plagiarism rephrasers, and homework solvers—has raised serious ethical concerns among educators and institutions.

Globally, educators are sounding the alarm over a rise in academic misconduct enabled by AI, including various forms of plagiarism, contract cheating, and unauthorized use of generative AI tools in completing assignments or assessments (Sutherland-Smith, 2018; Bretag et al., 2020; Dawson, 2023). These practices undermine the fundamental values of honesty, fairness, and personal accountability that education seeks to uphold. Department of Education (DepEd) to seek better financial opportunities, career advancement, and improved working conditions overseas.

Moreover, the subtle and sometimes undetectable nature of AI-generated outputs makes it increasingly difficult for educators to verify authentic student work, potentially eroding trust in academic credentials and weakening learning outcomes. As such, the integration of AI into educational settings necessitates not only technical adaptation but also a reexamination of ethical guidelines, pedagogical practices, and institutional policies to safeguard academic integrity in the age of intelligent machines.

In the Philippines, the rapid integration of technology in classrooms has amplified these challenges, with teachers expressing apprehension about students leveraging AI tools to bypass

genuine academic effort, thus compromising educational standards (Delgado & Reyes, 2021; Ledesma & Morales, 2023). Despite this, limited empirical research explores Filipino teachers' firsthand perspectives on how AI impacts academic honesty, especially in less urbanized regions.

In South Central Mindanao, where educational resources and digital literacy vary widely, the intersection of AI use and academic integrity remains underexplored, leaving a critical knowledge gap about the region's unique challenges and educators' coping mechanisms (Mendoza & Cruz, 2022). Specifically, in Sultan Kudarat, where digital transformation is still evolving amidst socio-cultural complexities, understanding teachers' insights is crucial for developing context-sensitive interventions (Abad, 2023).

This study addresses these gaps by investigating the lived experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding AI's threats to academic honesty in Sultan Kudarat's techno-classrooms, thereby contributing to policy and practice at local and national levels. Aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities (United Nations, 2015), this research seeks to safeguard educational integrity amid technological advancement.

The goal of the study is to explore and document teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age.

Research Questions

This research delved into exploration and documentation of teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026.

Specifically, research problem revolved around understanding the following key questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of teachers in confronting academic dishonesty associated with the use of artificial intelligence in the classroom?
2. How do teachers perceive the impact of AI tools on students' academic integrity and ethical behavior?
3. What personal meanings and reflections do teachers attach to their role in upholding academic honesty in a technology-driven learning environment?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically **narrative inquiry**, to explore and describe the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the

digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026.

Narrative inquiry is appropriate because it allows researchers to capture the lived experiences of participants and the meanings they attach to their personal and professional practices (Clandinin, 2020). Through storytelling and reflection, teachers' experiences in creating and sharing vlogs can be examined within the broader context of their professional identity and responsibilities (Kim, 2020). Qualitative narrative approaches provide a deeper understanding of how teachers navigate tensions between personal expression and institutional expectations (Savin-Baden & Van Niekerk, 2021).

Moreover, it enables the researcher to uncover patterns of behavior and values that influence teachers' performance and conduct (Webster & Mertova, 2020). Using narrative inquiry ensures that the study is grounded in authentic experiences while producing insights relevant to shaping professional conduct interventions (Riessman, 2022).

Respondents of the Study

The participants of this study will consist of **15 carefully selected teachers from** North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026, who will qualify the criteria set by the researcher.

Table 1. Participants' Inclusion Criteria

Qualifications
Participants: *15 Teachers*
1. **Active Teaching Status** – Teachers must be currently employed and actively teaching in the North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City during the school year 2025–2026. 2. **Minimum Teaching Experience** – Teachers should have at least **two years of teaching experience** to ensure they have sufficient exposure to classroom dynamics and student behavior in the digital age. 3. **Technology Integration** – Participants must regularly incorporate **digital tools and technology** in their teaching, including online platforms, e-learning applications, or AI-powered educational resources. 4. **Willingness to Participate** – Teachers must voluntarily consent to participate in the study and be willing to share their **perspectives and experiences** regarding the impact of artificial intelligence on academic honesty.

Sampling Technique

During the conduct of this study, a Purposive Sampling Technique will be intentionally utilized to carefully select fifteen **15 teachers from** North District, City Schools Division of

Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026, who meet the specific inclusion criteria established by the researcher.

Purposive sampling, alternately referred to as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, constitutes a variant of non-probability sampling. Within this approach, researchers exercise their own judgment and discretionary acumen in the selection of individuals from the population to partake in their survey endeavors (Alchemer, 2021). This method of sampling mandates that researchers possess prior knowledge of the objectives underpinning their study so as to effectively pinpoint and make contact with eligible participants through online survey platforms like Alchemer. Researchers resort to purposive sampling in order to secure access to a distinct subgroup of individuals, whereby all survey respondents are meticulously chosen based on their alignment with a specific demographic or criterion.

Research Instruments

In this study, a semi-structured interview will function as an exploratory instrument during both in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to explore and describe the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026.

The validity and appropriateness of this tool will be substantiated through a rigorous evaluation process conducted by a panel of experts who possess expertise in the development of relevant research instruments.

Data Transcription Process

All gathered raw data from the participants through interviews and FGDs were transcribed using the transcription process as described by Flick (2014), Ngag (2023), and Braun (2009), involves the systematic categorization of textual components, including statements, phrases, and words, into organized groupings or categories. These categories will be either derived from established frameworks or custom-developed to align with the study's specific objectives.

This rigorous transcription process ensured the trustworthiness and credibility of the qualitative data, which served as the foundation for the subsequent narrative analysis and the meaningful interpretation of the gathered raw data.

These categories were either drawn from established frameworks or custom-crafted to align with the study's objectives. To execute this analytical process, a series of vital steps were meticulously followed:

Step 1: Data Organization and Preparation. Initially, all data sources, such as interview transcripts, notes from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and relevant documents, will be meticulously organized and prepared for analysis. This phase ensures the systematic arrangement and accessibility of the data.

Step 2: Data Immersion. Subsequently, the researcher will deeply engage with the data by conducting a thorough review of interview transcripts and FGD notes. This immersive process aids in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the content and context embedded within the collected information.

Step 3: Systematic Coding Process. The third step involves initiating a systematic coding process. Initial codes will be generated by identifying meaningful segments or patterns within the data. These codes will capture essential concepts, ideas, or themes related to the narratives of the teachers with regard to their professional development and its outcomes in their teaching effectiveness.

Step 4: Clustering and Preliminary Themes. Following coding, the identified codes will be grouped into preliminary themes based on shared meaning or relevance. This step aims to establish an initial structure for organizing the data.

Step 5: Theme Scrutiny and Refinement. Next, the emerging themes and their corresponding codes will undergo a process of review and refinement. Researchers will ensure the consistency and clarity of these themes, making necessary adjustments. Each refined theme will be assigned a descriptive name that succinctly represents the content it encapsulates, facilitating easy identification and interpretation.

Step 6: Linking Data Excerpts. Relevant data excerpts, such as quotes or segments extracted from interviews and FGDs, will be selected and associated with the respective themes. These excerpts will serve as supporting evidence for the identified themes.

Step 7: Thematic Analysis. Finally, the thematic analysis will extend beyond surface-level identification. Researchers will interpret the meaning and implications of each theme within the context of the study's objectives. They will seek patterns, connections, and variations within the themes to provide a comprehensive understanding of narratives of the teachers.

This meticulous and structured process of thematic analysis will enable researchers to systematically explore and comprehend the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026.

Data Analysis

In this study centered on uncovering the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026**,** a content or thematic analysis approach will be employed to examine the collected data. This methodology, as described by Flick (2014), Ngag (2023), and Braun (2009), involves the systematic categorization of textual components, including statements, phrases, and words, into organized groupings or categories. These categories will be either derived from established frameworks or custom-developed to align with the study's specific objectives.

Scope and Limitations

This study aims to investigate the perceptions of elementary and secondary teachers regarding the potential risks posed by artificial intelligence (AI) to maintaining academic integrity. The respondents of this research are the teaching personnel from selected public schools in the North District of the City Schools Division of Tacurong City during the school year 2025–2026. Utilizing a qualitative research design through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, the study seeks to understand how teachers identify, experience, and respond to AI-related challenges such as plagiarism, unauthorized content generation, and digital cheating.

The research focuses exclusively on teachers' perspectives, thereby excluding students' views, and is confined to the North District to provide a manageable and context-specific analysis. This inquiry is conducted to generate insights that can inform policy formulation, professional development, and the creation of practical strategies for upholding academic honesty in increasingly AI-integrated educational environments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the digital era, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** has profoundly transformed the educational landscape, offering groundbreaking innovations such as personalized learning pathways, intelligent tutoring systems, and the automation of routine administrative tasks.This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically **narrative inquiry**, to explore and describe the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026.

The findings reveal that teachers experience significant challenges in addressing AI-related academic dishonesty, particularly in detecting AI-generated outputs, managing gadget use, and ensuring authenticity of student work. Despite these difficulties, teachers demonstrate strong ethical commitment by balancing discipline with empathy, implementing preventive classroom strategies, and promoting responsible AI use.

The results highlight a shift from purely punitive approaches toward fostering digital and ethical literacy, critical thinking, and values formation to uphold academic integrity in technology-driven learning environments.

Further, the findings reveal that teachers perceive AI tools as having a significant dual impact on students' academic integrity and ethical behavior. While AI increases the risk of shortcut behavior, overreliance, and weakened critical thinking, teachers also recognize its potential as a supportive learning tool when used with proper guidance. The results highlight the need for clear ethical standards, intentional instruction on responsible AI use, and strong values formation to ensure that technology enhances rather than compromises academic honesty.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that teachers attach profound ethical and professional meaning to their role in upholding academic honesty within a technology-driven learning environment. They view themselves as moral role models, responsible guides in the ethical use of AI, facilitators of student independence and self-discipline, promoters of open dialogue, and

adaptive mentors in the digital age. Rather than perceiving AI as a threat, teachers frame it as a tool that must be integrated responsibly while maintaining integrity, critical thinking, and authentic learning as core educational values.

Conclusion

The following inferences were made in light of this study's findings:

The academic integrity in the age of AI is no longer sustained by rules alone but by intentional mentorship, ethical guidance, and adaptive teaching practices. As AI continues to evolve, educators must be supported with clear policies, professional development, and assessment innovations to ensure that technology enhances learning without compromising honesty and authenticity.

It has been also concluded that sustaining academic integrity in a technology-driven learning environment requires a balanced and proactive approach—one that integrates AI responsibly while strengthening ethical awareness, critical thinking, and character formation. Rather than resisting AI, educators must intentionally shape how it is used to preserve the core values of honesty, accountability, and authentic learning.

Moreover, sustaining academic honesty in the AI era depends not merely on policies or technological controls, but on teachers' ethical leadership, intentional mentorship, and commitment to cultivating integrity as an internalized value among learners.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings, the following were recommended:

1. DepEd may develop clear National AI Use Guidelines for students and teachers. They may provide age-appropriate, subject-specific policies defining acceptable and unacceptable AI use, including sample classroom scenarios.
2. School Administrators may create clear School-Level Gadget and AI Use Policies by establishing structured gadget-use schedules and supervised integration of AI tools during learning activities. They may also promote Process-Based and Authentic Assessment Practices. Encourage teachers to require drafts, progress checks, in-class writing, oral explanations, and project defense to ensure authenticity.
3. Policy Makers may institutionalize AI Ethics Education in Curriculum Standards. They can do it by embedding digital ethics and responsible AI use in national curriculum frameworks and teacher standards. They may also develop Research-Based AI Governance Frameworks for Basic Education. Ensure policies are responsive to emerging technologies and grounded in classroom realities.
4. Future Researchers may develop Reliable Local Tools for Detecting AI-Generated Outputs. They can aslo study the Long-Term Impact of AI on Critical Thinking and Integrity.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

In preparation for the conduct of this study, all the aforementioned plans and recommendations will be presented to East-West Mindanao Colleges Inc to ensure compliance with prescribed procedures and protocols. Within the context of the research focused on

examining the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026, it is imperative to emphasize the paramount importance of ethical considerations. Prior to commencing this study, the following ethical principles will be highlighted:

Informed Consent:Before participation, explicit and informed consent will be diligently obtained from all school heads involved in the study. It is imperative that they possess a comprehensive understanding of the study's objectives, methodologies, potential risks, and benefits. Furthermore, participation will remain entirely voluntary, affording participants the autonomy to withdraw from the study at any juncture without encountering any adverse consequences.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:To safeguard the identities and responses of the teachers, rigorous measures will be enacted to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Rather than using actual names, pseudonyms or codes will be employed, upholding the privacy of the participants. The collected data will be securely stored with access restricted solely to the research team.

Avoiding Harm:Delicate subjects, such as the challenges inherent in their roles, will be discussed with meticulous consideration for the potential emotional and psychological impact on the participants. Strategies will be in place to minimize distress, and a support system will be readily available to assist participants should the need arise.

Researcher-Participant Relationship:The researcher will maintain a professional and respectful rapport when engaging with the school heads. Any actions that may exploit or cause harm to the participants will be scrupulously avoided, ensuring their utmost dignity and respect throughout the research process.

Data Protection:Adherence to data protection regulations and laws will be unwaveringly followed to safeguard the personal information of the participants. Stringent measures will be employed to ensure the secure storage and transmission of data.

Voluntary Participation:Participants will be assured that their involvement in the study is wholly voluntary, devoid of any form of coercion or external pressure.

Researcher Bias:The researcher will remain vigilant regarding potential biases that might influence data collection and analysis, upholding objectivity and transparency throughout the research endeavor.

Institutional Approval:Before initiating the study, the researcher will diligently seek ethical clearance from the pertinent institutional review boards or ethics committees.

Honesty and Integrity:The research findings will be reported truthfully and accurately, devoid of any manipulation or distortion to align with preconceived notions or biases.

Beneficence:The potential benefits of the research to educational practices and policies will be thoughtfully considered, ensuring that the study positively contributes to the enhancement of the education system.

Cultural Sensitivity:The researcher will display cultural sensitivity by respecting local customs, beliefs, and practices within the research setting, refraining from imposing external values on the participants.

Inclusion and Diversity:The study's structure will prioritize inclusivity and diversity, encompassing a wide spectrum of the teachers' perspectives on AI-related academic dishonesty threats to inform the creation of effective academic integrity policies and educator training programs in the digital age, especially in North District, City Schools Division of Tacurong City, for school year 2025-2026.

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Declaration AI Tools Utililization

I do hereby declare the use AI tools, such as Chat GPT and Grammarly for grammar checking and sentence organization purposes only.

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