Students' Perception of Academic Dishonesty in a Senior High School

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study aims to identify students' perceptions and knowledge related to Academic Dishonesty (AD), specifically plagiarism and cheating. This is a survey study. The data were collected using an adapted questionnaire developed by Ledesma (2011); the data were gathered from students whose school applies academic integrity as the basic rules. Nine statements in four domains are included in the questionnaire. Non-probability sampling technique was used in this survey study by involving 122 respondents from various senior high schools. The result shows that students do not perceive Academic Dishonesty (AD) as misconduct. Out of 9 examples of AD, most of the participants agree that cheating is only when they copy their peers' exact answers on a certain test. Meanwhile, they tend to discount other statements as a form of AD. This research could be an underlying base for stakeholders to know the students' perception of AD, which eventually will help implement the Indonesia Ministry of Education's character-building program. **Keywords:** academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, senior high school

INTRODUCTION

Academic institutions have been working on building academic integrity since long ago. Over these two decades, educational institutions have been concerned academic integrity. Until today, Indonesia's government is working on a new program to develop academic integrity in this country. The character-building program is being promoted to all stages of schools, from elementary to university, to build and strengthen academic integrity among students. This program hopes that students can be well-developed emotionally and spiritually by initiating 18 values in it, one of them is honesty. Meanwhile, honesty is often being betrayed by cheating and plagiarism. These things lead to academic misconduct and academic dishonesty, which then inhibit the development of academic integrity.

Studies related to academic integrity have been conducted by researchers over the years. In their journal, McCabe et al., (2001) stated that a survey of more than 5,000 students of 99 samples in the US colleges and universities was conducted by Bowers in 1964. The research found that three-fourths of the respondents engaged in academic dishonesty. It was also duplicated by McCabe and Trevino (1997), engaging nine schools who participated in Bower's research in 1964. Academic dishonesty is a field of academic integrity that takes much attention. Academic misconduct done by students is an issue that many researchers are interested in. Research regarding academic integrity is prevalent in inner-circle countries. Research of integrity in academic fields has risen in the Western culture.

However, research on students' academic dishonesty is still relatively rare in the EFL context. Bacha et al., (2012) were the first researchers who conducted academic integrity research on the Lebanese context. The respondents of the study were 3,986 high schoolers in Lebanon. The study compared high schoolers' perceptions of cheating and plagiarism among different grades. The result of the study was that students were more likely tolerated cheating peers on examination and chose to remain silent to the teachers. Another study was conducted by (Rathore et al., 2015). The respondents of this study were 421 medical students and 95 faculty members in a medical school in Pakistan. It turned out that the author suggested that students in medical schools in Pakistan should be given the ethical code of the academic environment. This study showed that students represent their approval toward plagiarism, with 55% of medical students and 82,7% of faculty members.

Other studies related to academic integrity in the EFL context were conducted in Middle Eastern (McCabe et al., 2001), South Korea (Ledesma, 2011), Lebanon (Bacha et al., 2012), Doró (2014); Razek (2014); Hu & Lei (2015), and Rathore et al., (2015). Meanwhile, to the researcher's knowledge, no research related to high schoolers' perspectives toward academic dishonesty has been done in the Indonesian context. Thus, this study was conducted to fill the gap in AD research from the high school students' point of view. It aims to identify students' perceptions and knowledge related to academic dishonesty, specifically plagiarism and cheating.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is designed to identify the high schoolers' perceptions on Academic Dishonesty, which in this case is cheating and plagiarism in many high schools have been a serious concern in big cities in Indonesia. This study is categorized as quantitative research, specifically belongs to survey study. The data were gathered using a questionnaire adapted from Ledesma (2011). The questionnaire then reveals how students

generally perceive cheating and plagiarism, which are part of Academic Dishonesty. Survey questionnaires were deployed to the students through an online platform – Google Form. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS 25 (Statistical Package for The Social Sciences) and Microsoft Excel.

High school students are the focus of this research. The specification of this research is high school students whose school applies academic integrity as the basic rules. The students vary from grade 10 to 12. The total respondents of this research are a hundred-twenty-two (N=122) students from various senior high schools from Bekasi, Jakarta, and Yogyakarta. The number of samples was chosen by using the non-probability sampling technique. The table below shows the details number of respondents based on their region.

Table 1. The distribution of respondents based on their region

Regions	Respondents
Bekasi (from six different schools)	61
Jakarta	10
Yogyakarta (from two different schools)	51
Total	122

Since this research was conducted in the global pandemic, there were challenges faced by the researcher. During this global pandemic, Indonesia's government sets up rules for civilians to continue their lives at home, including teaching and learning processes. In line with School from Home, the researcher found it difficult to gather the data from only one school. Therefore, the researcher decided to collect the data by using Google Form as the most feasible online platform to collect the data without meeting students face-to-face. The link was shared on the researcher's social media account (through WhatsApp messages to her relatives, Instagram, and LinkedIn). After accepting responses in Google Docs for two weeks, the collected data were analyzed using SPSS 25 (Statistical Package for The Social Sciences) and Microsoft Excel. The cities which the researcher chose are Bekasi, Jakarta, and Yogyakarta. The researcher grew up in Bekasi, so it was easier to gather the data from her colleagues in Bekasi and near Jakarta.

Meanwhile, Yogyakarta is the domicile city of the researcher during her undergraduate program. A basic requirement applied in this survey study is that the respondents must study at a school that implements academic integrity in its learning and teaching process. Otherwise, the data would not be valid and reliable.

The students who study at a school that does not implement academic integrity in the learning process are not allowed to take this survey. As the data has been gathered, a few students break the rules. The data of these students are not included in the data analysis.

The instrument used in this research is a questionnaire developed by Ledesma (2011). The questionnaire is adapted and translated into Bahasa Indonesia to avoid misunderstanding among the respondents. There are four domains: Cheating, Outside Help, Plagiarism, and Tolerance. From the domains, nine statements in the questionnaire will reveal the academic misconduct activity that students never or often do.

Table 2 Distribution of Questionnaire Item

Items	Statements (translated to Bahasa Indonesia)	Domain
CHTG-1	*Menyalin jawaban dari siswa lain selama ujian*	Cheating
CHTG-2	*Menggunakan "lembar contekan" selama ujian*	Cheating
CHTG-3	*Menyalin jawaban dari siswa lain selama ujian tanpa persetujuan*	Cheating
OUHP-4	*Bekerjasama dengan siswa lain saat mengerjakan tugas individu*	Outside Help
OUHP-5	*Meminta informasi tentang ujian yang akan datang dari siswa lain yang telah mengambilnya*	Outside Help
OUHP-6	*Berbagi informasi tentang ujian dengan siswa lain yang belum mengikuti*	Outside Help
PLAG-7	*Menyalin beberapa kalimat dari sumber yang dipublikasikan tanpa menyebutkan atau merujuk sumber*	Plagiarism
PLAG-8	*Menemukan atau membeli karya ilmiah dari internet dan mengumpulkannya sebagai karya sendiri*	Plagiarism
TOLC-9	*Mengetahui siswa lain menyontek dan tidak melaporkannya*	Tolerance

Each statement uses a five-points Likert's scale which is Never (coded as 1), Once (coded as 2), Twice (coded as 3), Three times (coded as 4), and More than three times (coded as 5). In terms of validity, the content validity was validated through expert judgement. The researcher translated the English version into Bahasa Indonesia and then ask the expert of English Education to give judgment of the instrument and stated that it was ready to use. Then, in terms of reliability, the reliability test was run by using SPSS. It was then found that the Cronbach's Alpha was .779 which can be interpreted as reliable.

Table 3. The Result of Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.779	9

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this survey study is dominated by females. Out of a total 122 participants, 65% of the participants are female with 79 people. Meanwhile, the male participants are 43 people, with 35% of the total.

Academic honor codes may differ from one to another place, however, it still needs to be respected. Students' academic development will grow healthily in an environment that

encourages, promotes, and protects student responsibility for academic integrity. Otherwise, students will not implement integrity in their lives. According to Jones (2011), younger and immature learners are involved in various academic dishonesty on a more continuous basis. It happens more when the punishment toward academic dishonesty is low.

Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is not an uncommon thing amongst high schoolers in several cities in Indonesia. Even if the school has applied a set of rules or honor codes concerning integrity in academic fields, pupils seem to be still ignoring both honesty and integrity in their daily lives. From the collected data, 7 of 9 statements gained more than 50% "one or more times" answer in the questionnaire. It indicates that most of the participants of this study have done activities against academic integrity frequently.

Ledesma (2011) in his study regarding academic dishonesty in undergraduate students in South Korea found out that the likelihood of cheating is higher on males than females. This result is supported by McCabe and Trevino (1997); Hrabak et. al. (2004); Eastman et al., (2008) that male is more likely to have a higher level of academic dishonesty than females. Ledesma (2011) mentioned that Kerkvliet (1994) had a slightly different result on his study. He conducted a study toward academic misconduct and found out that men are less likely to cheat than women, even though in the next study (Kerkvliet & Sigmund, 1999) it was mentioned that gender did not play a role in academic misconduct.

In this part, the researcher describes the statements from each domain from the highest to the lowest percentage of the students who were reported to do academic misconduct from "never" to "one or more times."

Based on the spelled data, the fourth statement on the questionnaire on the domain of Outside Help (OUHP-4: "Working with another student on a paper assigned as individual work" or translated as "*Bekerjasama dengan siswa lain saat mengerjakan tugas individu*") has the highest percentage of 93% for one or more times working with another student on a paper assigned as individual work. Meanwhile, the rest of 7% or 41 students admitted that they never do working with another student on a paper assigned as individual work. Students perceive this as a way to help their peers, as cultural society in Indonesia teaches them to help one another. It is more considered as giving aid to their friends rather than a sort of cheating. This behavior is acceptable as a kind of 'helping friends' type of relationship, even when students are on an examination where help from outside is not allowed, for it might either give them negative labelling by their peers or break their friendship (Bacha, 2007). In her study of cheating in Lebanon's high schoolers, Bacha (2007) explained that for most high schoolers, it is more likely to be difficult not to help their peers as they think that they would betray their friendship or that it would be rude not to help friends.

The fifth statement on the Outside Help domain (OUHP-5: "Asking for information about a forthcoming test from another student who has taken it" or translated as "*Meminta informasi tenang ujian yang akan datang dari siswa lain yang telah mengambilnya*") has 75% of the participants or 92 students who agree that they ask for information about a forthcoming test from other student(s) who has taken it for one or more times during their school lives.

Furthermore, it is in line with the next highest percentage, the sixth statement on the questionnaire (OUHP-6: "*Berbagi informasi tentang ujian dengan siswa lain yang belum mengikutinya*"). There are 71% of the participants who agree sharing information about a test with another student who has yet to take the test on for once or more, regardless of the rules

that they should keep the information about a test they have taken before and keep the learning environment both sportive and competitive in a healthy way.

Followed by the ninth statement on the domain of Tolerance of the questionnaire (TOLC-9: "observing another student cheating and not reporting it" or translated as "*Mengetahui siswa lain menyontek dan tidak melaporkannya*") which has the second-highest percentage of 89%. There is only one statement in the domain of Tolerance. It is found that students tend to observe another student cheating and do not report it to their teacher in the class. As Ledesma (2011) explained in his study about Tolerance, tolerance is when students distinguish their peers' involvement in cheating and choose not to report it. Whether they realize that this is violence against academic integrity or not, students still tolerate this kind of activity.

The following highest percentage is from Cheating domain (CHTG-1: "copying from another student during a test" or translated as "*Menyalin jawaban dari siswa selama ujian*"). Based on the collected data, 66% of high schoolers agree on this statement. The second statement of the questionnaire in Cheating domain (CHTG-2: "using a 'cheat sheet' during a test" or translated as "*Menggunakan 'lembar contekan' selama ujian*") has 47% of the participants or 57 students who agree on using a "cheat sheet" during a test. On the other hand, the least percentage comes from Cheating domain (CHTG-3: "copying from another student during a test without consent" or translated as "*Menyalin jawaban dari siswa lain selama ujian tanpa persetujuan*"). 15% of high schoolers or 18 students admit that they copy another student's answers during a test without their consent. The rest of the participants, which are 85 students, deny that they copy answers from peers without their consent. This implied that students let their peers copy their answers during a test. The relation between cheating and peers' behavior is also being explained by McCabe et al., (2001). As McCabe et al., (2001)) quoted McCabe and Treviño (1997), they hypothesized relation between cheating and peers' behavior:

> "*The strong influence of peers' behavior may suggest that academic dishonesty not only is learned from observing the behavior of peers but that peers' behavior provides a kind of normative support for cheating. The fact that others are cheating may also suggest that, in such a climate, the non-cheater feels left at a disadvantage. Thus, cheating may come to be viewed as an acceptable way of getting and staying ahead.*" (p. 533)

The domain of Plagiarism (PLAG-7: "copying a few sentences from a published source without mentioning or referencing the source" or translated as "*Menyalin beberapa kalimat dari sumber yang dipublikasikan tanpa menyebutkan atau merujuk sumber*") has the exact same of percentage with the first statement in Cheating domain. 66% of the participants or 81 students admit that they copy a few sentences from a published source without mentioning or referencing the source. Moreover, they also admit to finding or buying a paper off the internet and submitting it as their own work. Rocklin (2005) stated "that much of plagiarism students commit is also theft." Students do not consider ideas to be a private thing, even when they comprehend a general theory of intellectual property. That being said, it is difficult for students to realize that giving credit to the author or the originator of a certain idea is important in an academic field. Otherwise, this kind of fraud will be considered as academic misconduct. However, it is not supported by the next statement in the domain of Plagiarism (PLAG8: "finding or buying a paper of the Internet and submitting it as own work" or translated as "*Menemukan atau membeli karya ilmiah dari internet dan mengumpulkannya sebagai karya sendiri*") has 13% of students who reported on one or more times. 109 students reported they never found or bought a paper off the internet, then submitted it as their work.

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the participants in this study perceive "cheating" as only when they copy their peers' exact answers on a certain test. Other options that are counted in Cheating and Plagiarism are not being considered by students for many reasons. Meanwhile, students tend to have a high tolerance to academic misconduct. It is proven by the data that shows students cover their peers when they are cheating or involved in academic dishonesty. One of the implications for the teachers is that they need to anticipate the students' behaviours while doing the assignments. The way to do this is probably by setting the basic rules or even learning contracts to prevent Academic Dishonesty. In terms of limitation, his study does not depict the whole perception of students in Indonesia as an EFL country. It is also limited since the non-probability sampling technique is applied to collect data. Further and deeper study regarding this specific field is highly recommended.

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