

## **The Prevalence of Academic Dishonesty among Nursing Students in Kenya Medical Training Colleges in Western Province, Kenya**

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**ABSTRACT** :Documentary evidence of to amplify the number of investigations for academic dishonesty with nursing students was a reason for the study, the main aim was to investigate academic dishonesty in Medical Training Colleges in western region, specifically to scrutinize the nature and prevalence of academic dishonesty. Nursing studies provide an intersection for students to change to professional roles through various aspects of trainings including clinical practice. Despite the various studies conducted globally, regionally, nationally and county level, academic dishonesty is still a major problem, not so much effective strategies to detect and deter have been arrived at. The study therefore was to investigate more on the same. It was therefore essential to understand what predicts nursing students' intention to behave with academic integrity; so that efforts could be directed to initiatives focusing on strengthening their commitment to have academic integrity. This would reduce the real role of students graduating with deficiencies in their knowledge and ethics. The main target population was 450 nursing students from the three colleges from western Heads of departments, principals, examination coordinators, disciplinary committee chair persons and administrative officer totalling to population of 462, a cross sectional descriptive design was used in the study. Sample size determination was by Fisher's method which was modified by Mugenda and Mugenda. Multistage sampling technique was employed, simple random sampling for the three campuses, purposive sampling for the staff in the three colleges in three counties and cluster sampling for students in terms of year of study. Proportionate allocation was used to sample students from different colleges and Systematic sampling was used to pick individual students. Data collection tools included structured questionnaires with closed ended questions for students. Interview schedules with open ended questions to key informants (principals, heads of departments, examination co-ordinators and disciplinary committee chairpersons and administrative officers). Data analysis was done using descriptive statistical analysis which was used to yield frequencies, means and standard deviations accordingly. Inferential statistical analysis was also used to test associations/relationships between variables and included chi square, MacNemar and Analysis of variance (ANOVA). Validation of the content will be measured by the use of content valid index; study reliability and validity was done.

**KEY WORDS:** Academic dishonesty, Students, prevalence

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the back ground on academic dishonest which will be presented. The chapter will cover problem statement, Justification of the study, objectives both broad and specific, research questions, hypothesis and relevant conceptual framework

#### **1.1 Background**

Academic dishonesty is the use of unauthorised assistance with intent to deceive an instructor or other person who may be assigned to evaluate the work of students in meeting course requirements (Open education Database, 2010). It is a long standing issue for faculty and administrators, academic dishonest has been the subject of ethical debate for many years (McCabe, *et al.*, 2011). There are many complex, moral, ethical, cultural and social issues revolved around academic dishonesty (Jones, 2011). Academic dishonest has been prevalent in varying degrees since the founding of higher institutions, Aristotle's works on politics and ethics influenced academic integrity. The crux of the Hippocratic Oath has been a model that includes a commitment to serve others selflessly and to avoid cheating (Burnus, Graham & Walker M, 2011). Colonial schools and colleges adhered to policies requiring moral and ethical conduct (Hamlin & Powell, 2008).

There were instances of deviation and dishonesty pertaining academics that were highly punished Hensley, (2013). Honour, hard work, truth, accuracy and integrity were expected and rewarded generously at all levels Newton (2016).

Therefore, there is need to be vigilant around the nature of global standards of what is acceptable scholarly behaviour. As a consequence, institutions could unite and implement policies and guidelines that will have universal credibility and therefore likely to be globally more uniform and effective (McCabe *et al.*, 2001).

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Throughout training, students are guided by what is now recognised as ‘the code and standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses which emphasizes professionalism (Centre for academic integrity, 2012). This is because cheating is part and parcel of their life and they cannot do without it hoping to excel through shortcuts (McMillan, &Schumacher, 2010).

Students’ academic misconduct is a growing problem in higher education and middle colleges. Globally more than 80% of college students believe cheating is necessary to get ahead (Mckiban, &Burdsal, 2013). About 70% of all college students now admit to having engaged in different forms of academic dishonesty (Centre for academic integrity, 2012). Students are expected to produce their independent work with acknowledgement of the sources from which they receive information (Owunwanne, Rustalgi&Dada,2010). Previous studies report that the reasons why students commit academic dishonest acts are complex. Some of reasons as to why students engage in academic cheating are such as stress, pressure to perform well and gain employment post-graduation, lack of preparation and competition among peers are reasons for dishonest. Moreover, status and power in society are associated with having a college qualification; so to conform to society’s expectations, students are willing to take extreme measures, even if it means engaging in dishonest acts (Finn & Frone, 2004).

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Academic dishonesty is of ethical debate globally. Studies have shown that the prevalence of academic dishonesty in colleges is above 70% (Centre for Academic Integrity, 2012). A survey done in South Korea in the year 2016, revealed that a total of 9,229 cases of academic dishonest were recorded in one year out of these 143 students were expelled with the average rate of plagiarism being 0.72% equivalent to 7 cases in every 1000. Globally more than 80% of college students believe cheating is necessary to get ahead (Mckiban, &Burdsal, 2013). About 70% of all college students now admit to having engaged in different forms of academic dishonesty (Centre for academic integrity, 2012). In Kenya about 50% academic dishonesty occurs in most campuses with various forms being reported in the year 2012(Centre for academic dishonesty, 2012).

Kenya Medical Training College Campus report for the years 2015/2016 show that there is an increase in cheating in most campuses nationwide. This is contrary to the fact that students are expected to be 100% honest in their work since their future career revolves around taking care of peoples’ lives (Centre for academic integrity, 2012).There is an urgent need to restoration and upholding of academic integrity among nursing students as this has adverse consequences which can negatively impact on patients by credentialing students who lack the professional skills jeop Academic dishonesty among students is a rising issue in higher education and middle colleges. Globally, above 80% of college students accept that cheating is essential to forge ahead in higher learning [19]. Over 70% of all college students now confess to having engaged in different forms of academic dishonesty [6]. Students are expected to produce their independent work with acknowledgement of the sources from which they receive information [29]. Previous studies report that the explanations for student academic dishonesty are complex. Some of reasons as to why students engage in academic cheating include stressful environment, burden to perform well and acquire employment after graduation, peer competition and lack of preparation (Finn&Frone, 2004).

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Kenya Medical Training College report for the years 2015/2016 showed that there was an upsurge of Academic Dishonesty in most Colleges nationwide. This is contrary to the expectation that students should be 100% honest in their work since their future career revolves around taking care oflives[6].There is an urgent need for restoration and upholding of academic integrity among nursing students as this has adverse consequences which can adversely affect patients by graduating students who lack the required qualifications thus jeopardizing the quality of care provided to patients [11]. However, in western region of Kenya, there is little evidence of studies having been carried out as far as contributory factors of academic dishonesty are concerned. Therefore, this study aims at investigating Academic Dishonesty and single out its major contributing factors (Nurses code of ethics handbook; 2008).

## BACKGROUND

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 2.1 Factors Contributing To Academic Dishonesty

Literature under this section is reviewed in context with the conceptual framework of Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB).Behavioural beliefs serve as a link to produce an expected outcome of an action or behaviour. These beliefs influence an individual’s attitude towards behaviour and assign a positive or negative value to the behaviour. In the context of this research, it is

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believed that the behavioural beliefs students towards control beliefs positively or negatively influences their attitude towards adopting behaviours consistent with AI throughout their training (Coren,2012).These control believes include students' orientation, software for plagiarism detection, establishment of honour codes, integrity training, manual review of students' assignment and penalty. Control beliefs contribute to a person's perceived behavioural control around what will support their ability to perform a targeted behaviour.

These control beliefs include all strategies used in deterring academic dishonesty. The stronger the control belief the more power persons will feel they have to behave in a certain way and the lesser involvement in acts of academic dishonesty. In this study the causes given fall in either behavioural (inborn), Normative (social aspect of it) and control believes (laid down policies and procedures as far as Academic Integrity is concerned. These believes are the major triggers of the causes discussed below (Coren, 2012).

The reasons why students commit academically dishonest acts are complex including lack of familiarization and education of students to standards of academic integrity across all colleges (centre for Academic integrity, 2012).Lack of honour codes and their limits is a cause of academic dishonesty. In response to this growing problem, many universities, colleges and professional schools have developed student honor codes, usually accompanied by the academic policies and procedures needed for application and enforcement. These codes must be affirmed by all new students as a condition of matriculation. In addition to this, new students are required to acknowledge receipt and awareness of the related school policies on academic integrity as included in their student handbook. This is an essential prerequisite for creating a climate of academic integrity in order to decrease student involvement in cheating and plagiarism (Kitahara*et al.*,2015).

There are a number of causes influencing whether a student engages in academic dishonesty including pressure to succeed, opportunities and internet sources, students' attitude, academic standards, cultural influences and deteriorating moral standards in society(Cole,Swartz&Shelley,2014).In his anonymous survey study carried out in the USA,he further discovered that pressure to succeed facilitated students' cheating. He concluded that several factors are important determinants of cheating: pressures for good grades, students' stress, ineffective deterrents and condoning teachers. A similar study was carried out in New York and it showed that academic dishonesty is a significant problem among students from elementary school through college (Finn & Frone,2014).They further emphasized that good grades and increased pressure to perform was seen as problematic suggesting risk is elevated when achievements stakes are high and there is personal consequence for failure (Finn &Frone,2014).Research has demonstrated that cheating behaviour is influenced by student's actual performance(Onuka&Obiala,2004).Students with lower academic performance resort to cheating more frequently than students with higher academic performance. This was collaborated by a study in England in which it was found that students who received failing marks cheated considerably more than students who received upper 2<sup>nd</sup> class and 1<sup>st</sup> class marks(Newstead,Franklyn-Stokes and Armistead,1996).Another study conducted in USA demonstrated a significantly negative correlation between grade point average and frequency of cheating. Students who frequently cheated were found to have lower grades points; according to Singhal,1982) as much as 68% of students regarded the wish to get good grade points as the main reason for cheating. These findings were confirmed by Davis and Ludvigson,1995who also pointed out that pressure for good grades is an important determinant in academic dishonesty. All the findings point to pressure for good grades especially for academically weak students as the reason to cheat. Students may be provided with opportunity to cheat by practices and systems both internal and external to the institutions (Gallant,2008).This include academic staff leaving examination papers in photocopying rooms, pressure to everyday life and the internet. Students attitude and personal traits may also be an influencing factor (Mckibban&Burdsal, 2013).

There are more arguments that students may perceive academic misconduct as the only way to guarantee that their higher level needs are met, suggesting that they may be willing to take risks and make sacrifices to meet their self -actualization needs (Maslow, 2008).Maslow's need-goal motivation model was used as a framework linked to perception of their involvement in academic misconduct. In order to achieve academic integrity, it is worth to consider whether students' needs are met in each of Maslow's categories of needs to limit their temptation of engaging in academic cheating in order to ensure that these needs are met at all levels in their lives. The needs include physiological, security, social, self-esteem and self -actualisation (Maslow, 2008).

Literature asserts that poor role modelling by lecturers, administrative staff and public figures is another genesis of academic misconduct. The students are also quoted to have justified engaging in academically dishonest acts because of the behaviours they see in connection with public figures and institutions of higher education in the media, also known as poor role modelling from those in authority or rather faces of impunity (Jones, 2011). According to Standard Newspaper dated on 22<sup>nd</sup> march 2017,there are many prominent figures whom allegedly hold questionable degrees but are more powerful in the society. This has acted as a catalyst to encouraging students to follow suite in order to be also prominent. Therefore, the reasons as to why students participate in Academic Dishonesty can be summarized as due to behavioural, deteriorating moral standards and Social and cultural influences adopted from Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Coren,2012).

There has been a number of high profiled cases of plagiarism with extensive media coverage involving professionals, politicians and high profiled people whose involvement triggers the cheating among students(Hensley,2013).Dr. Raj Persaud a consultant

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psychiatrist at the Medley Hospital in London who was given a three-month suspension from practising by the general medical council(GMC)fitness to practice panel for copying the work of his peers in journal articles and a book he published without proper acknowledgement of others work(Hensley,2013).

These can act as a catalyst to cheating by students and also brings into question the validity of other work undertaken by these professionals including supervision of students who pass through their hands. From the net, using electronic devices such as mobile phones, pen scanners, programmable watches, writing notes on clothing, inside caps and pleats of skirts and back labels on drinks(Cole *et al.*,2014).

### **2.2 Lack of Early Integrity Training Complementation with Course Level Reinforcement**

This is to the fact that some academic misconduct is based on the students differing in their perceptions as to what behaviours are unacceptable. To end this, institutions require all new students to complete a training programme on academic integrity that addresses what it is, why it is important and how to recognise and avoid violating its tenets. Alternatively, most institutions lack integration into the curriculum required professional ethics confessed that include academic integrity as a key topic where appropriate student training on ethical uniting and proper sourcing and can be included as a component of courses on information literacy (McCabe,2015).

### **2.3. Lack of Plagiarism Detection Software and Manual Review**

The internet can be very effective in detecting the appropriation of words and ideas. Often a quick internet search of a suspicious phrase is all it takes to immediately reveal an unreferenced source. The internet can be very effective in detecting the appropriation of words and ideas (Mcmillan&Schumachers,2010). Often a quick internet search of a suspicious phrase is all it takes to immediately reveal an unreferenced source.Un ethical behaviour as cited by students such as stress, pressure to perform well and gain employment post-graduation are factors that contribute to cheating in exams. Another study by Mara mark and Maline(1993),found out that competition for jobs, scholarships and admission to post graduate program are also a factor for cheating, they noted that emphasis on high grade in job hiring and graduate admissions increases chances of cheating. The frequent use of technology has also sky rocketed the ability to engage in academically dishonest behaviours (Nahirans Aslam, 2010).There are typology of reasons why students plagiarise including genuine lack of understanding like referencing protocols, efficiency gain to set better grades, personal values/attitudes, defiance and lack of respect for authority, students attitudes towards teachers and class assignments, denial neutralization passing blame on others, temptation and opportunity and lack of deterrence where benefits outweigh the risk(Kitahara*et al.*,2012).

### **2.4 Cultural Influences, Psychosocial and Deteriorating Moral Standards in the Society**

Studies done in China in 2009 report that India students advocate that finding out cultural attitudes to knowledge amongst Chinese students suggesting plagiarism is alien to the Chinese students suggesting plagiarism is alien to the Chinese Culture where there is no ownership of intellectual property and where a claim to be the originator of knowledge could be dangerous (Newton,2016). Lack of proper preparation for examinations and competition among peers, status and power in the society are associated with having a college degree. To conform to society's expectations, students are willing to take extreme measures even if it means engaging in dishonest behaviours (Jones,2011).Pressure for good grades, student stress, ineffective deterrent and condoning teachers all contribute to Academic Dishonesty (Finn &Frone,2004),High profile cases of plagiarism with extensive media coverage involving health care professionals and senior academics like copying of work of peers in journal articles and without proper acknowledgement of others work (Novotney,2011).

It has been noted that students who are encouraged to learn for the sake of learning and who exhibit higher intrinsic value of education are less likely to cheat than those who are encouraged by primarily grades and other intrinsic rewards (Bowers, 1964).Bowers found out that some students may feel pressured to develop unorthodox means to get competitive and credentials. He also noted that fear of failure the most important reason for students to cheat and that most students doubted their capability to pass examinations. Psychologists note that all people tend to follow the norms of their peer group, which would include norms about academic dishonesty. In an environment where students experience their peers cheating and are not caught they too will develop an attitude of 'everybody else does it 'This was supported by a study which observed that pressure is an important cause of academic dishonesty. Students who believe that their peers disapprove of cheating are less likely to cheat (Johnson,2012). Standardizing the quality of care they provide to patients in their future career (Hensley, 2013). Academic dishonesty is not a situation specific and should be of concern to educators as it is carried over to the workplace as learned behaviour through shortcuts on nursing procedures (Smith *et al.*, 2013). However, in western region, there is little evidence of studies having been carried out as far as academic dishonesty is concerned.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

A cross-sectional analytical design was employed in this study. Participating colleges were selected randomly from the rest of the

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colleges in Western region. Nursing students in all three colleges were selected using simple random sampling technique (Webuye, Busia and Kakamega) from 450 nursing students, other Staff respondents were selected purposively as follows principals, examination coordinators, disciplinary committee chairpersons and administrative officers. Qualitative data was collected from lecturers, administrators, examination coordinators, disciplinary committee chair persons using Key informant interview schedules. Structured questionnaires were administered to 202 students sampled systematically and available academic Existing college records and registers on prevalence and incidences of academic dishonesty were also accessed for quantitative data. Data entered in SPSS version 25 software and analysis done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Odds ratio and p value were used to determine the strength of association. A p-value of less than or equal to 0.05 was considered significant.

## FINDINGS

### 4.0 SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

Most respondents as shown in Table 1 were females 55% (n=111) while males comprised 45% (n=91). More than half, 51.6% (n=97) of the respondents were above 20 years followed by those below 18 years at 27.3% (40/202). Majority, (98.5%) were Christians. Most of the students were in their second year at 44.1% followed by first years at 35.1%.

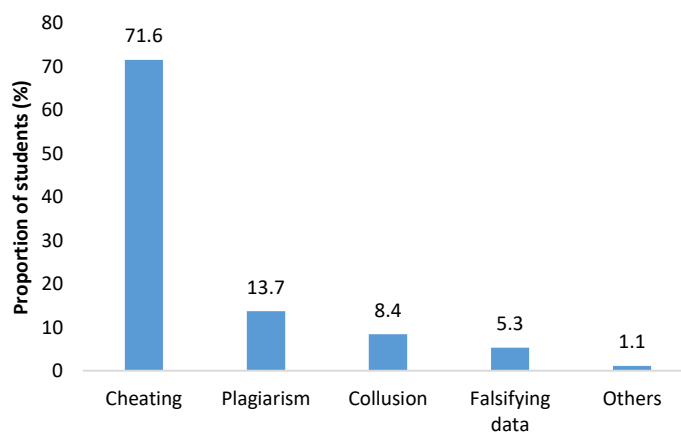
**Table 1: Socio demographic Characteristics of respondents**

Variable	Categories	N	%
Gender	Male	91	45.0
	Female	111	55.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100</b>
Age group in years	<18	51	25.3
	18 – 20	54	26.7
	>20	97	48.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100</b>
Religion	Christian	199	98.5
	Muslim/Others	3	1.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100</b>
Year of study	Year 1	71	35.1
	Year 2	89	44.1
	Year 3	42	20.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>100</b>

### 4.1 Prevalence and nature of academic dishonesty

The findings revealed that of the 202 students, about 47% got involved in academic malpractices of which most respondents were females. The one year reviewed academic disciplinary committee records revealed a prevalence of 42% of academic dishonesty in Kakamega MTC, 40% in Bungoma MTC and 18% in Webuye MTC.

Figure 1 presents nature of academic dishonesty categorised into specific forms. Findings show that cheating is leading (71.6%) followed by plagiarism (13.7%), collusion (8.4%) and falsifying data (5.3%). Other categories included clinical misconduct such as falsifying patients' records, at (1.1%).



**Fig.1. Nature of academic dishonesty.**

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Findings from key informant interview (*DCCI*) support that cheating is the most common form of academic dishonesty: 'Most of our students are usually found with small notes in the examination room. A few would have with some writings on the palm of their hands while others being involved in clinical misconducts' (*DCC 1*).

### 4.2 Sources of Information on academic Dishonesty

Figure 2 shows that the main source of information for the students on academic dishonesty in the three colleges was students' handbook issued to them at the beginning of training at 40.1%, while lecturers comprised 23.8% and school website 11.4%. Among the respondents, 11.9% never got any information on academic dishonesty and only 5.4% got the information during orientation. This is contrary to what one of the key informants stated:

*'It is mandatory that all students are given orientation at the beginning of their training which includes pointing out on the dire consequences of academic dishonesty. It is against college policies for any lecturer to deny students such an opportunity as it can compromise quality of education and care' (Principal 3).*

### 4.3 Scope and nature of academic dishonesty

#### 4.3.1 How did you receive information on academic dishonesty at the beginning of the training?

The pie chart below presented data on the way respondents received information on academic dishonesty at the beginning of the training with highest number stating that they received information through student's handbook  $n=82(52\%)$ , followed by through lecturers  $n=48(24\%)$ , then school website, through  $n=23(11\%)$ , student's orientation  $n=11(5\%)$  classmates  $n=8(4\%)$ , course syllabi  $n=4(2\%)$  and the last being Specific of academic Integrity  $n=3(2\%)$ .

How did you receive information on academic dishonesty at the beginning of the training?

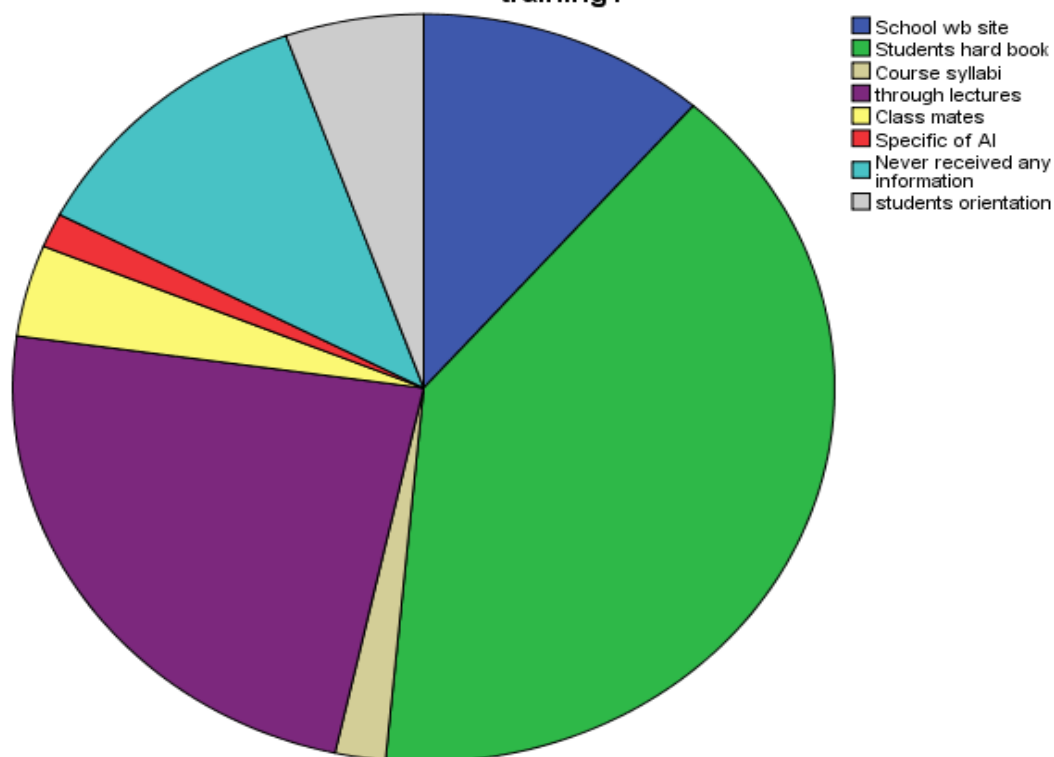
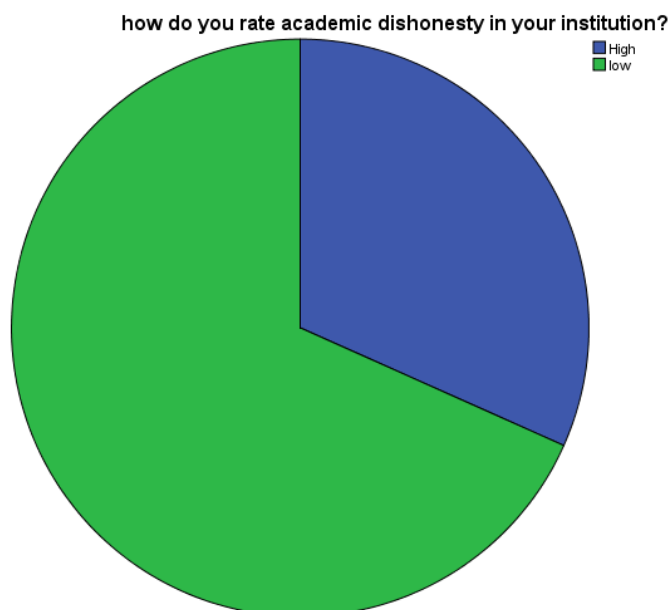


Figure 2:

#### 4.3.2 Prevalence of academic dishonesty

The pie chart below presents information on the prevalence of academic dishonesty where most respondents felt it was low (51%) and others felt it was low with (49%).

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### 4.3.4 Forms of academic dishonesty in relation to academic dishonesty

Cheating was the most common form of academic dishonesty accounting for 70.3 % followed by Plagiarism (8.4%) and forgery and fabrication (8.4%). Other forms of academic dishonesty were clinical misconduct (6.4%) and collusion (6.4%).

**Table 3:**

Nature of academic dishonesty	No.	%
Plagiarism	17	8.4
clinical misconduct	13	6.4
Cheating	142	70.3
Collusion	13	6.4
forgery and fabrication	17	8.4
Total	202	100.0

### 4.3.5 Forms of academic dishonesty in relation to Sex of the respondents

The table below shows Overall, there was significant association between the nature of academic dishonesty and sex of the respondents ( $X^2=11.345$   $P=0.023$ ). Males are more likely to cheat ( $P=0.002$ ) than females and account for 61.9% of the respondents. While females are more likely to collude than males ( $P=0.001$ ). Again females are more likely to be involved in forgery and fabrication ( $P=0.051$ ) than males. 70.6% of those involved in forgery and fabrication were females. **Respondents**  
 $X^2=11.345$   $P=0.023$

**Table 4:**

Forms of academic dishonesty in the campus	Sex of the respondents		Total
	Female	Male	
Plagiarism	9	8	17
clinical misconduct	7	6	13
Cheating	54	88	142
Collusion	9	4	13
forgery and fabrication	12	5	17
Total	91	111	202

### 4.3.6 Forms of academic dishonesty in relation to the year of study of respondents

The table below shows that there was no significant difference between the means of the forms of academic dishonesty and year of study. Students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year (45%) were more likely to cheat ( $p=0.026$ ) and collude ( $P=0.045$ ) than their counterparts in senior 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 1<sup>st</sup> year of study. Over half (52.9%) of those who were involved in forgery and fabrication were fresh more. None of the 3<sup>rd</sup> years were involved in clinical misconduct.

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**Table 5:**

Nature of academic dishonesty in colleges		Year of the study of respondent			Total
		Fresh more(1st )	Junior( 2nd)	Senior ( 3rd)	
	Plagiarism	6	8	3	17
	clinical misconduct	6	7	0	13
	Cheating	45	62	35	142
	Collusion	5	7	1	13
	forgery and fabrication	9	5	3	17
<b>Total</b>		71	89	42	202

**4.3.7 Involvement in academic dishonesty by year of study, age of the students, and awareness of the school administration on academic dishonesty** There was significant association between year of study and involvement in academic dishonesty ( $\chi^2=5.232$ ;  $p=0.025$ ). Students in second year were more likely to be involved in academic dishonesty ( $p=0.006$ ) than their counterparts in 1 year and 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Of those who had been involved in academic dishonesty they accounted for 49.6%. Age of the respondents were not statistically significant ( $\chi^2=2.232$ ;  $p=0.325$ ), although majority (45.2%) of the respondents who had been involved in academic dishonesty were over 20 years.

**Table 6:**

		Have ever been involved in academic dishonesty		Total	Test statistic and P- Value
		YES	NO		
Year of the study of respondent	Fresh more(1st )	32	39	71	$\chi^2=5.232$ ; $p=0.025$
	Junior( 2nd)	47	42	89	
	Senior( 3rd)	16	26	42	
	Total	95	107	202	
Age of the respondents in years	Below 18 years	27	39	71	$\chi^2=2.232$ ; $p=0.325$
	18-20 years	25	42	89	
	Above 20 years	43	26	42	
	Total	95	107	202	
Awareness of the school administration on exam malpractices	Yes	60	79	139	$\chi^2=3.345$ ; $P = 0.05$
	No	35	28	63	
	Total	95	107	202	

## DISCUSSION

### 5.0 RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC DISHONESTY.

The three colleges had majority of respondents above 20 years, followed by 18 years and the least between 18 and 20 years of age. This study did not reveal any association between respondents' age and the acts of academic dishonesty; this is contrary to McCabe and Trevino, (1997) who revealed that the age of students influenced their involvement in the academic dishonesty. This study further indicated that the year of study of respondents had some significance to the purpose of the study with juniors or second years cheating more than their counterparts in the first and final years of study, this was in line with previous researches which stated that in the year 2012 in Kenya, 10% on incidents of students undertaking second year end college examinations had taken in materials which were not permitted and were discovered by invigilators (Centre for Academic Dishonesty; 2012). The study indicated that college administrators were aware of examination malpractices, this is in consensus with a study by Lanthrop and Foss; 2016 which asserted that cheating was an act by which students deceived and presented work that was not theirs and some of these cases administrators were aware. This study also highlighted that students in every college usually received information about academic dishonesty through different methods which included students handbook as the major way used to sensitize students, followed by lecturers, school website, and students' orientation. Classmates inform them, course syllabi and specific academic integrity lessons. This is a true reflection of Kitahara's et al., 2015 who confirmed stated that before commencement of training, it is important that students pass through specific training to help minimize acts of academic dishonesty. Although the rate of academic dishonesty is expected to be at zero or negligible, this study found out that majority of respondents felt that academic dishonesty was high with a



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few agreeing that it is low, this agrees with McCabe(2009) asserted that most undergraduate students' academic acts are at a higher rate.

The most common form of academic dishonesty students engaged in was cheating and results revealed that males cheated more than females. On the other hand females were more involved in collusion and forgery and fabrication than their male counterparts, this concurred with a study done by Tibbet; 2012 which stated that most males cheated in their exams than females.

## **5.1 FACTORS INFLUENCING OR CAUSING INVOLVEMENT IN ACADEMIC DISHONESTY ACTS**

The study revealed that reasons for students' involvement in academically dishonest acts are complex across all colleges. There were various causes and not only one as discussed below, this was in agreement with previous researchers who found out that both students, lecturers and environmental factors contributed to students' dishonesty acts as far as academic dishonesty is concerned (Kitahara et al.,2015).The study further revealed that overcrowding during examinations and how lecturers administered examinations and invigilated were the second causes and students' laziness being the third major cause and lastly pressure from family members to perform well. This is a true reflection of a study done by Cole ,Swartz and Shelley,2014 who affirmed that there were number of causes influencing whether a student engaged in academic dishonesty including pressure from parents to succeed,opportunities,students'attitude,academic standards and college environment were all triggering factors for the students involvement in acts of academic dishonesty. However the study disagreed with Hensley; 2009 who maintained that students who cheated in examinations performed well. This study did not reveal any association between academic dishonesty and good performance in class.

## **5.2 SUMMARY**

The research results indicated that there has been little evidence of respondents 'demographic characteristics influencing involvement in academic dishonesty. The year of study of respondents had significance to the purpose of the study where we had the second years or juniors cheated more than their counterparts in the first and second years of study. Other characteristics like age did not significance on the purpose of the study.

The most common form of academic dishonesty engaged by students was cheating. There was close association between forms of academic dishonesty and sex of the participants where males cheated more than females. Females were involved more in collusion and forgery and fabrication than their male counterparts. The study also pointed out that those students who were involved in academic dishonesty knew that the school administration was aware of college examination malpractices.

The study highlighted that the leading causes of academic dishonesty among nursing students were overcrowding and lack of proper invigilation by lecturers. The other causes included laziness among students; environment supporting academic dishonesty and peer influence were also among the common causes of academic dishonesty.

Study results also indicated that those students who cheated knew that academic dishonesty acts could be prevented and therefore there were strategies put in place to prevent academic dishonesty acts in the medical colleges. The most applied strategy was use of punishments to the culprit followed by online educational model, remedial approach, college classes, honour codes and the least applied strategy was use of plagiarism detection devices.

## **5.3 CONCLUSION**

The students' year of experience triggers them to be involved in academic dishonesty acts. The first years were less likely to be involved in dishonesty; this could be due to them being new in college and not well versed with ways of cheating. Third years were less involved; this could be that they were mature enough to realize the consequences of their actions. On the other hand second years could be more lazy than the rest and that is why they were involved most. Overcrowding among students promoted cheating; it could be that when students stayed close during examinations, they could be easily tempted to copy from one another. Lack of proper invigilation encourages cheating as students were free to mingle and copy from one another.

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