



2023 Canadian Student Wellbeing Survey

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CHAPTER 2: Artificial Intelligence, Academic Integrity, & Cheating

Research carried out by
Angus Reid, January 2023

Introduction



Background

Universities and colleges around the world partner with Studiosity to provide academic writing and core skills support 24/7, connecting students to help when they need it. They currently work with 75% of universities in Australia, 23 universities in the United Kingdom, and currently 9 institutions in Canada.

As of 2023, Studiosity's services are available worldwide to over 1.6 million students.

This is the third annual survey of student wellbeing in Canada, and has been a trusted & reliable source of insight into student life. For a number of years, Studiosity has also run annual Student Wellbeing Surveys in Australia and the United Kingdom. Once again this year, Angus Reid was commissioned by Studiosity to conduct this wave of research among current postsecondary students in Canada.



Research objectives

This annual survey seeks to better understand the motivations, emotions, and demands of postsecondary students in Canada, and how to better tailor initiatives and solutions. The survey investigates key areas of student wellbeing.

This year, the survey focused on topics such as student commitments, motivation, engagement with their institution, artificial intelligence, cheating, assessment, student stress, intent to withdraw, optimism for the future, thoughts on peer-to-peer support, study habits, and more.

In addition, specific results were benchmarked with the 2021/2022 surveys to better understand how behaviours and attitudes have changed and how feelings have shifted year-over-year.



Methodology & Sample

Studiosity produced the questions for this survey and Angus Reid Forum gathered the responses from current Canadian postsecondary students via an online survey.

The survey ran from March 6 to March 17, 2023 and gained a total of 1,010 responses.

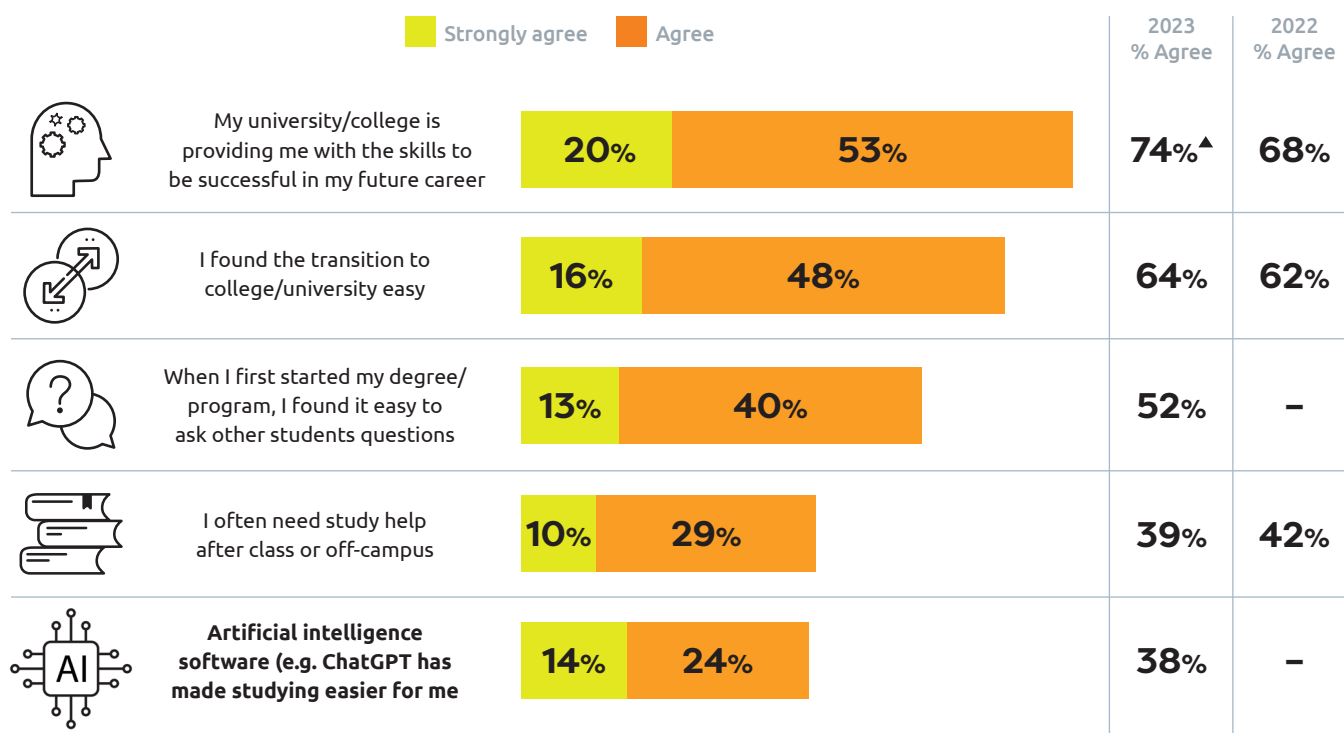
The sample frame was balanced to ensure representation of men and women in proportion to their overall share of the Canadian postsecondary student population (56% female, 43% male), as well as to ensure statistically significant representation from regions across the country.

The sample was comprised of 80% full-time students and 20% part-time students, and was conducted in English and French.

Study findings

The growth of AI software, including ChatGPT, appears to be having a major impact on the way students are studying, particularly those in business, engineering or law programs.

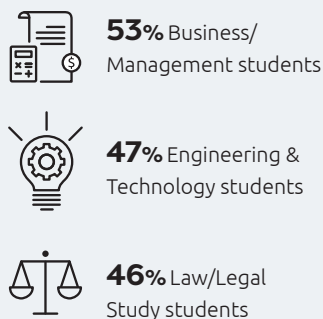
Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?



As the use of artificial intelligence becomes increasingly prevalent in educational settings, it is essential to understand how students perceive the impact of AI software on their studying experience. This question aims to provide valuable insights into the attitudes of different student groups towards AI-driven tools, which may have implications for academic integrity and cheating.

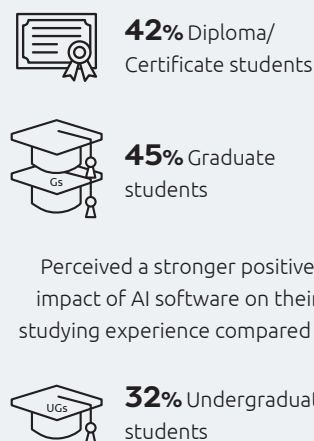
The student responses revealed that students' perceptions of the impact of AI software on their studying experience varied across different categories.

Program of study



Most likely to agree that AI software has made studying easier for them.

Program type



The growth of AI software, including ChatGPT, appears to be having a major impact on the way students are studying, particularly those in business, engineering or law programs.

Student type



37%

Full-Time students



39%

Part-Time students

Expressed a positive perception of AI software's impact on their studying experience, with similar net agreement percentages.

Employment status



57%

Students working Full-Time

Demonstrated highest net agreement % suggesting a strong positive impact of AI software on their studying experience.



30% Students working Part-Time



29% Students working Casual/temporary



22% Students not currently employed

Reported lower net agreement % reflecting a relatively less positive perception of AI software's influence on making studying easier.

Gender



46%

Male students



32%

Female students

On average, males perceived artificial intelligence software to have a more positive impact on their studying experience than females.

Age



49%

Students aged 30 and above

Showed the highest net agreement % suggesting that individuals in this age range are more likely to believe that AI software has made studying easier for them.

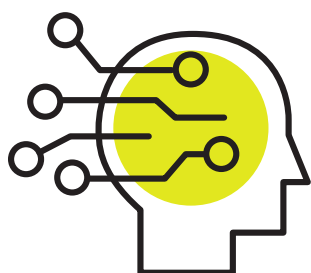
Location



47%

Students from Ontario

Exhibited a higher net agreement % compared to other regions which implies that students in Ontario perceive a greater impact of AI software on making studying easier.



In conclusion, the research provided valuable insights into how different factors, such as program enrollment, student type, employment status, gender, age, and region, influence students' perceptions of AI software's impact on studying. The findings indicate varying attitudes towards AI-driven tools among different

student groups and underscore the importance of considering these factors when implementing AI technologies in educational settings. However, further analysis and context would be necessary to draw more definitive conclusions from the data and to inform potential implications for academic integrity and cheating.

More than half of students say they have witnessed some form of cheating in the past year alone. This rises to two-thirds (65%) among grad students.

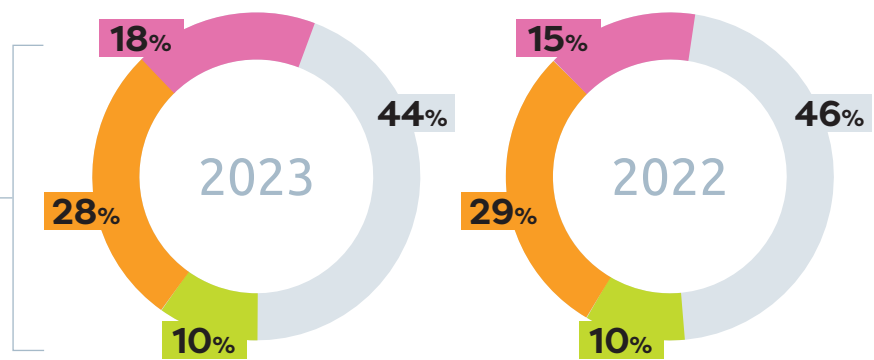
Q. In the past year, have you personally witnessed one of your fellow students cheating on an academic assignment?

38% of grad students say they personally witness cheating all the time, significantly more than the proportion of students in undergraduate (14%) or diploma/associate programs (11%).

HAVE WITNESSED CHEATING IN THE PAST YEAR

- No, I have never witnessed cheating
- Yes, it happens occasionally
- Yes, but it was an isolated incident
- Yes, I see it all the time

56%
of students have witnessed some form of cheating in the past year



One-in-four students even say they personally would be willing to cheat if they knew their classmates were doing it, including nearly half of grad students.

Q. Would you be more likely to cheat if you knew other students in your classes did?

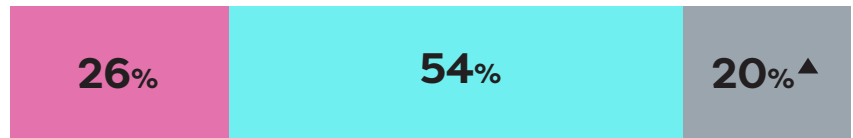
Academic dishonesty, including cheating, is a pressing concern in educational settings. The prevalence of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital tools has introduced new challenges in detecting and preventing cheating. Understanding how peer behaviour affects students' likelihood of engaging in academic dishonesty is crucial for educators and policymakers seeking to maintain academic integrity. This question aims to provide valuable insights into the impact of peer influence on students' attitudes towards academic cheating.

The responses revealed interesting patterns regarding students' likelihood of cheating based on different factors.

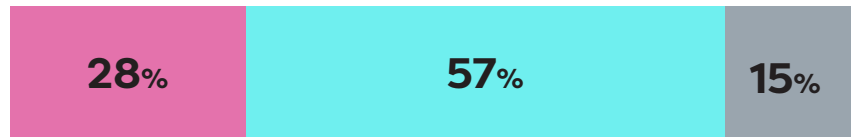
INCREASED LIKELIHOOD TO CHEAT IF OTHERS DID

Yes No Don't know/not sure

2023



2022



45%
Graduate students

Showed a significantly higher tendency to be more willing to cheat if they knew other students were doing it, compared to



24%
Undergraduate students



38%
Part-Time students

Exhibited a higher likelihood of indicating they would be more likely to cheat, as opposed to



24%
Full-Time students



27%
Domestic students

Displayed a slightly higher likelihood of indicating they would cheat if they knew others were doing it, compared to



23%
International students



1 in 4 Students (26%) stated they would be more likely to cheat if they knew their peers were engaged in cheating behaviour.



1 in 5 Students (20%) seemed uncertain or lacked clarity about their inclination towards cheating in such scenarios.



36%

Students working Full-Time indicated a higher likelihood they would be more likely to cheat if other students engaged in cheating behaviour, compared to students



23%

Working Part-Time



22%

Not currently unemployed



16%

With Casual / Temporary work

The results emphasize the significant influence of peer behaviour on students' likelihood of engaging in academic cheating. On the surface Graduate students, in particular, appear to be more susceptible to this influence, however, they often facilitate tutorials and it may be that they are reporting on the behaviour of undergraduate students. Additionally, the higher cheating tendencies observed among part-time students and those employed full-time suggest the potential influence of stress-related factors, underscoring the need for further examination in this area.

This research provides valuable insights into the complex relationship between peer behaviour and academic cheating among students. Understanding the nuances of this influence is crucial for devising effective strategies to promote academic integrity and mitigate dishonest behaviour. The study highlights the importance of further investigation to delve deeper into the underlying factors shaping students' attitudes towards cheating.

Usage of AI software to complete essays or assignments appears to be a major aspect of cheating at Canadian colleges and universities, particularly in graduate programs.

Q. In the past year, have you personally witnessed one of your fellow students using artificial intelligence software (e.g. ChatGPT) to complete an essay or assignment?

The responses showed significant findings related to students' observations of their peers using artificial intelligence (AI) software for academic cheating. The prevalence of AI usage was found to be higher in Ontario, where 54% of respondents reported witnessing such behaviour. Additionally, academic programs in Business/Management and Engineering exhibited a higher percentage of students (58% and 54%, respectively) observing cheating using AI software.

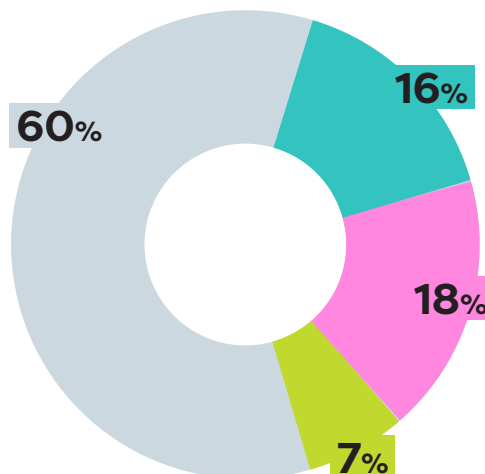
Gender differences emerged, with men more likely to report witnessing AI-based cheating (52%) compared to women (32%). Moreover, international students showed a significantly higher likelihood (63%) of observing cheating involving AI tools in comparison to domestic students (38%).

Considering education status, 40% of full-time students witnessed AI usage, while part-time students displayed a slightly higher percentage at 43%. Furthermore, Graduate students had the highest proportion of AI usage witnesses at 48%, whereas Undergraduate students reported a lower percentage at 36%.

Employment status also played a role, with students working full-time showing a higher percentage (52%) of witnessing AI usage, while those working part-time or engaged in casual/temporary work reported lower percentages (37% and 38%, respectively).

HAVE WITNESSED CHEATING USING AI SOFTWARE

- No, I have never witnessed this
- Yes, but it was an isolated incident
- Yes, it happens occasionally
- Yes, I see it all the time



40% of students have witnessed cheating using AI tools in the past year

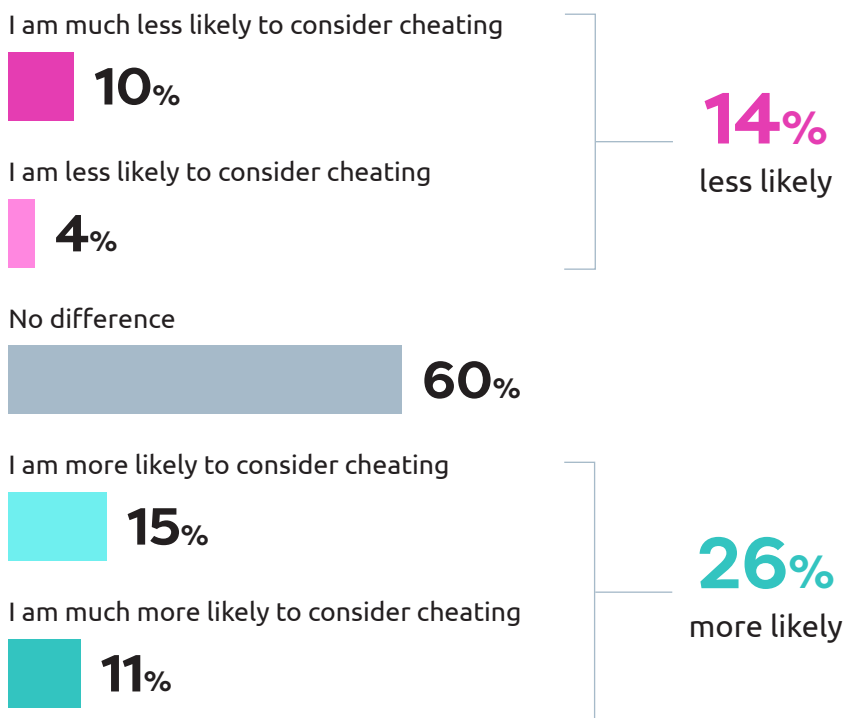
One-in-four students, including 44 percent of grad students, say they are more likely to consider cheating now that ChatGPT and other AI tools have become more widespread and accessible.

Q. How has your attitude towards cheating changed as tools (e.g. essay mills, AI writing software) have become more widespread and accessible?

This question aimed to explore how students' attitudes towards cheating have evolved in response to the widespread availability and accessibility of tools like essay mills and AI writing software. The insights gained from this research shed light on the impact of technological advancements on academic integrity and the demographic variations in students' perspectives on cheating.

The responses revealed that a considerable proportion of postsecondary students have experienced shifts in their attitudes towards cheating. Around 26% of respondents reported being more inclined to consider cheating due to the increasing availability of cheating tools. On the other hand, 14% of students indicated that they are now less likely to engage in academic dishonesty as these tools have become more accessible. Surprisingly, the majority (60%) expressed that their attitudes towards cheating remained unchanged despite the proliferation of technological aids.

PERCEPTIONS OF CHEATING AS AI SOFTWARE IS MORE WIDESPREAD



44%
Graduate students

Were found to be significantly more influenced by the availability of AI software, stating an increased likelihood of considering cheating.

This percentage was notably higher compared to undergraduate students, where only 22% showed a similar inclination towards academic dishonesty.



24%
Undergraduate students



33%
Male students

Displayed a higher likelihood of considering cheating compared to females when exposed to the accessibility of cheating tools such as essay mills and AI writing software.

This gender disparity highlights the need for further investigation into the underlying factors contributing to these variations.



20%
Female students



39%
students aged
30 and above

Exhibited a higher tendency to consider cheating compared to younger age groups. These age-related differences may be indicative of generational attitudes towards academic integrity.



23%
students aged
18-22



23%
students aged
23-25

One-in-four students, including 44 percent of grad students, say they are more likely to consider cheating now that ChatGPT and other AI tools have become more widespread and accessible.



39%
students
from Ontario

Geographical locations also played a role in shaping attitudes towards cheating. Notably, students in Ontario showed a higher likelihood of considering cheating compared to students from other regions. These regional variations suggest the influence of local academic cultures and educational environments.



36%
Students with household
incomes over \$50K

Displayed a higher likelihood of considering cheating compared to those with lower incomes. This correlation indicates that financial pressures may impact students' attitudes and decisions with regards to cheating.



20%
Students with lower
household incomes

The survey provides valuable insights into the changing landscape of attitudes towards cheating in the context of technological advancements in academia. The findings indicate that a significant proportion of postsecondary students have experienced shifts in their perspectives on academic dishonesty with the increased availability of cheating tools. Moreover, demographic variations, including gender, age, region, and income, have been shown to influence students' attitudes towards cheating. Further research is warranted to delve deeper into the reasons behind these shifts and devise targeted interventions to foster ethical behaviour among students in the face of technological advancements.



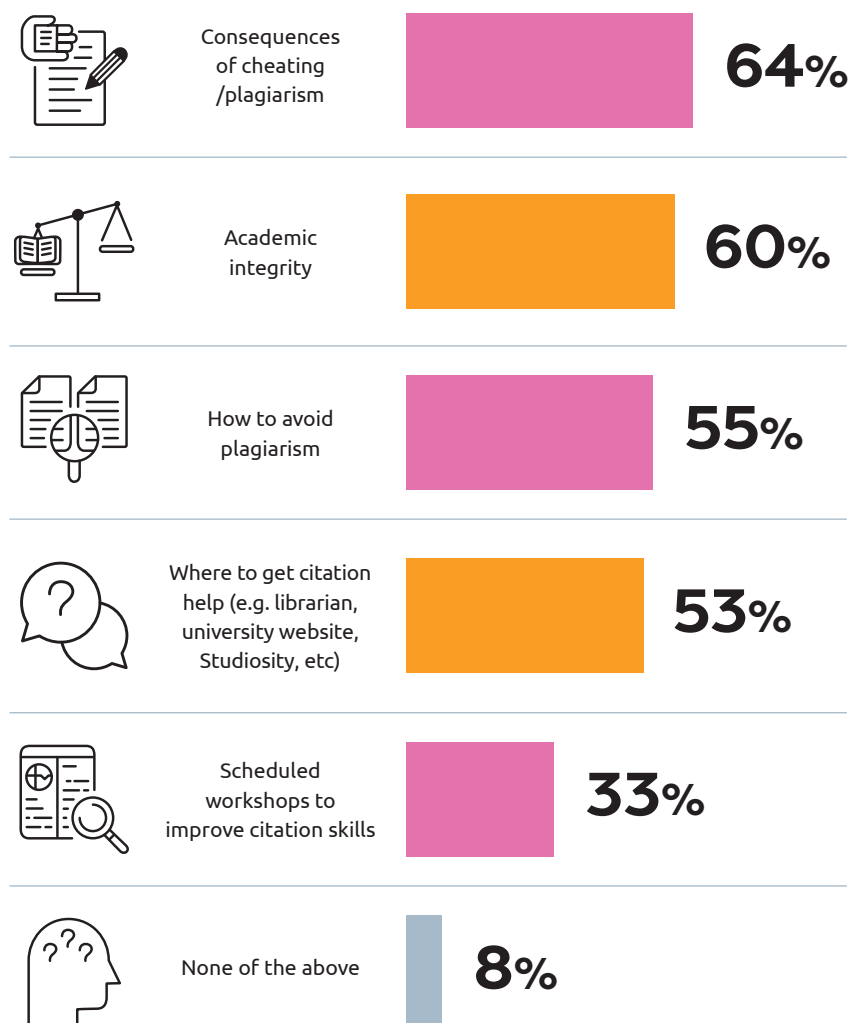
Undergraduates and full-time students appear most engaged with their college/university’s communications and resources about academic integrity, proper citations, and avoiding cheating/plagiarism.

Q. In the past year, do you recall hearing about any of these topics from your college/university?

The aim of this question was to examine the extent to which students recalled receiving information on key subjects such as the consequences of cheating/plagiarism, academic integrity, how to avoid plagiarism, where to get citation

help, and scheduled workshops for improving citation skills. The insights gained from this research shed light on the level of exposure to critical academic integrity practices and their implications for promoting ethical scholarship.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AWARENESS



FINDINGS

Recall of Different Academic Integrity Topics:

Among the various academic integrity and citation-related topics, “Consequences of cheating/plagiarism” was the most commonly recalled, with 64% of all respondents reporting awareness of this subject. “Academic integrity” followed closely as the second most mentioned topic, with 60% of respondents recalling hearing about it. Additionally, a significant percentage of respondents mentioned being informed about “How to avoid plagiarism,” “Where to get citation help,” and “Scheduled workshops to improve citation skills.”

A small percentage (8%) of respondents stated that they heard about “None of the above,” indicating a lack of familiarity with any of the mentioned academic integrity and citation-related topics from their college or university.

Consequences of Cheating/Plagiarism Awareness:

The responses uncovered that only 33% of students in Atlantic Canada recalled receiving information about the consequences of cheating and plagiarism from their college/university. Conversely, in all other regions of the country, at least three-in-five students reported awareness of this crucial academic integrity topic.

Undergraduates and full-time students appear most engaged with their college/university’s communications and resources about academic integrity, proper citations, and avoiding cheating/plagiarism.

Where to get citation help awareness:

Notably, students in Atlantic Canada demonstrated significantly lower awareness of where to obtain citation help within their institution, with only 30% recalling such information. In contrast, 53% of students in other regions of Canada were familiar with available citation resources.

Scheduled workshops for improving citation skills:

Approximately 48% of graduate students recalled scheduled workshops aimed at enhancing their citation skills. This finding highlights the importance of tailored academic support for students at different educational levels.

CONCLUSION

The survey findings provide valuable insights into the level of awareness among postsecondary students regarding academic integrity and citation-related topics. The study indicates regional disparities in awareness, with Atlantic Canada exhibiting lower levels of exposure compared to other regions. Furthermore, the variation of awareness among different student types highlights the need for targeted educational initiatives to promote academic integrity across diverse academic profiles.

Given the significance of academic integrity in fostering ethical scholarship, institutions should leverage these findings to enhance awareness campaigns and provide accessible resources for students. Tailored interventions, such as scheduled workshops for improving citation skills, can effectively address the specific needs of different

student groups. By equipping students with comprehensive knowledge and support, academic institutions can foster a culture of integrity and uphold the principles of ethical academic practices. Further research could delve into the reasons behind the regional and demographic variations to optimize strategies aimed at promoting academic integrity and citation excellence among students in higher education.





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