

Teaching with Integrity: English Teachers' Awareness on the Ethical Practices on the Use of Online Materials

Carmelin P. Mosa¹ and Carmela D. Resare²
PhD Surigao del Norte State University, Philippines¹
Melgar National High School, Philippines²
cpmosa@ssct.edut.ph¹ and cresare@gmail.com²

Abstract: *This study focused on determining the awareness of English teachers on the ethical guidelines on the use of online materials. Specifically, the study sought to look into information on the demographic profile of the respondents as to sex, age, highest educational attainment, number of years in teaching, grade level taught and the number of hours spent using the internet per day. Significant relationship between the demographic profile and the level of awareness on the three components were also looked into. Further, crafting of intervention program that can serve as guide for teachers and students into safe and responsible use of online materials was also made possible.*

The study made use of descriptive-quantitative research design wherein the researcher utilizes a researcher-made survey questionnaire consisting of two parts: (1) demographic profile, (2) statements to determine awareness of teachers on the ethical guidelines on the use of online materials.

The data collected were analyzed and interpreted using the following statistical tools; Frequency Count and Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation, Pearson r, Spearman Rank Correlation, and Point Biserial Correlation. The study revealed the following findings; majority of the English teachers in San Jose, Dinagat Islands are young female who have finished only with their bachelor's degree, and spent a minimal time online. It was also noted that the respondents are "very much aware" on the ethical practices in using online materials in terms of authenticity, textual resource, and audio-visual resource. Moreover, data of the study also revealed that the educational attainment has significant impact on the level of awareness on ethical guidelines in using online materials. Hence, an intervention program needs to be crafted and to be implemented to sustain their awareness.

Keywords: Teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

Education, a quintessential human endeavor, has always evolved in response to changing times, technologies, and societal needs. With the advent and rapid progression of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), a transformational wave has swept across the educational landscape, redefining the traditional classroom experience. In this digital era, the educational sector has witnessed a significant shift towards an online community of e-Learners and e-Teachers, harnessing the power of e-Learning technologies and digital resources to achieve educational goals.

This paradigm shift, often necessitated by external factors such as the global pandemic, has given rise to a new normal in education. The move towards flexible learning, spanning both basic and higher education, has brought with it a plethora of challenges. Among these challenges is the proliferation of online platforms and content repositories, where educators and students interact, collaborate, and access learning materials. Notably, instances of intellectual property infringement have emerged, as evidenced by the alleged replication of educational content from platforms like TeacherPH by websites such as depedcommunity.com (Llego, 2020).

The development of modular instructional materials, a cornerstone of contemporary pedagogy, has posed a particularly thorny challenge. In the haste to produce materials and meet the demands of this new educational landscape, some educators have inadvertently neglected to cite credible sources, thus compromising the quality and integrity of educational materials (Mutya, 2020). With mounting pressures and time constraints, educators have sometimes resorted

to the expedient but ethically questionable practice of copying and pasting from existing sources, be they from the internet or printed texts, inadvertently undermining the scholarly contributions of authors.

Information technologies, the very tools and resources that have fueled this educational transformation, offer both opportunities and ethical dilemmas. Çiftçi (2019) highlights the advantages of technology in education, such as reducing learning time, providing diverse learning environments, and enabling individualized learning experiences. Kozma (2019) underscores its positive impact on attitudes towards learning, collaborative behaviors, and the acquisition of new skills. However, as Anderson and Simpson (2017) caution, ethical issues loom large in this digital learning landscape. The responsibility to maintain ethical principles and integrity in online educational environments has become an integral aspect of the teaching profession. Educators are uniquely positioned to guide students in the responsible use of technology, imparting valuable lessons on digital ethics and appropriate internet conduct.

In light of these considerations, this research endeavors to explore the awareness and practices of English teachers regarding ethical conduct in the use of online educational materials. In an era where the digital frontier blurs the lines between accessibility and accountability, this study aims to shed light on the challenges faced by educators in upholding ethical standards and fostering responsible digital citizenship within the realm of online education. By delving into the perceptions and practices of English teachers, we hope to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on the ethical use of technology in education and chart a path forward towards a more responsible and inclusive digital learning environment.

II. METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the awareness and practices of English teachers concerning ethical conduct in the utilization of online educational materials, this research had employed a mixed-methods approach combining the qualitative and quantitative research methods.

A structured online survey was designed and distributed to a sample of English teachers. The survey included questions related to their awareness of ethical considerations in online education, their practices in using digital resources, and their experiences with the tools mentioned in the provided text. In-depth interview was also conducted with a select group of English teachers to gain deeper insights into their perspectives on ethical conduct in the use of online materials. The interview was semi-structured, allowing for open-ended discussions on their experiences and challenges. The responses from the survey questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively using statistical software. This analysis will include descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, to summarize survey data. For qualitative data collected from interviews, thematic analysis was employed. Themes and patterns related to ethical practices and challenges were identified to enrich the research findings.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 below offers a comprehensive profile of the survey respondents, encompassing factors such as gender, highest educational attainment, grade levels taught, age, years of teaching experience, and daily internet usage in hours.

Profile		f (n=60)	Percent
Sex	Female	39	65.0
	Male	21	35.0
Highest Educational Attainment	College Graduate	46	76.7
	MA Units	9	15.0
	MA Grad	4	6.7
Grade Level Taught	PhD Grad	1	1.7
	Grade 7	9	15.0
	Grade 8	14	23.3
	Grade 9	8	13.3
	Grade 10	16	26.7
	Grade 11 & 12 (Senior High)	13	21.7
		Mean	SD
Age		32.70	7.43
Number of Years in Teaching		5.72	5.42
Number of Hours Spent in the Internet Per Day		3.01	1.49

As observed in Table 2, the distribution of respondents by gender revealed that females (65%) outnumbered males (35%). This finding aligns with Kelleher's assertion in 2021, which underscores the higher representation of female

teachers in primary and secondary education, as these roles often benefit from the societal traits and behaviors encouraged in women.

Turning to the highest educational attainment among respondents, only 1.7% hold a doctorate degree, indicating a relatively small proportion of participants pursuing advanced qualification. Regarding the grade levels taught, 13.3% of respondents indicated that they teach grade 9, representing the least common grade level among the participants.

Thus, the analysis of age data yields a mean age of 32.70, with a notable standard deviation of 7.43, reflecting the diversity in age among the respondents. Similarly, in terms of years of teaching experience, the mean is 5.72, with a significant standard deviation of 5.42, illustrating a wide range of teaching experience among the participants. Lastly, respondents reported spending an average of 3.01 hours per day on the internet, with a notable standard deviation of 1.49, indicating variations in daily internet usage patterns.

On the other hand, Table 3, as presented, delves into the awareness of English teachers regarding ethical practices in the use of online materials, specifically focusing on authenticity. As evident in Table 3, the respondents have overwhelmingly expressed a "strong agreement" with all the criteria related to ethical guidelines for the use of online materials, particularly concerning authenticity. This high level of agreement underscores their profound awareness of the importance of maintaining authenticity when utilizing online resources in their teaching practices.

Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
1. with clear and legitimate authors.	3.87	0.34	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
2. with current and updated contents.	3.85	0.36	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
3. with proper citations/references.	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
4. from refereed journals.	3.52	0.50	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
5. from government websites.	3.55	0.57	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
6. from reputable educational institutions.	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
7. from credible news outlets.	3.63	0.49	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
8. from credible e-books.	3.48	0.57	Agree	Aware
9. which are not from blogsites.	3.52	0.60	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
10. which are not commentary by nature.	3.55	0.57	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
<i>Average</i>	<i>3.63</i>	<i>0.33</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Very Much Aware</i>

However, when assessing their disposition toward the use of credible e-books, the respondents indicated a rating of "agree" with a mean (M) of 3.48. This suggests that while the teachers do acknowledge the value of e-books, they may not be fully inclined to incorporate them into their teaching resources to a significant extent.

Interestingly, this result appears to challenge the findings of Carty (2017), who emphasized the prevalence of studies on the use of e-books in classrooms as an effective teaching medium. These studies typically highlight the positive impact of e-books on the learning process. In an era of rapid technological advancement, the use of e-books in the classroom has indeed become increasingly prevalent.

The contrast between the respondents' agreement on ethical authenticity and their somewhat reserved approach to e-books usage prompts a closer examination of the factors influencing their resource choices and instructional practices in the context of online education.

Moreover, Table 4, presented below, illustrates the level of awareness among English teachers regarding ethical practices in the utilization of online materials, particularly in the context of textual resources.

A notable observation from the table is that "respect for copyright" received the highest mean value of 3.87. This



finding resonates with Igudia's (2016) assertion that copyright awareness not only ensures legal compliance but also fosters greater creativity and productivity in the professional environment. A profound understanding of copyright principles can effectively mitigate concerns related to fair use and fair dealing.

In contrast, the statement related to "photocopying from references with the consent of the publisher" (item six) yielded the lowest mean value of 3.33. This rating falls within the category of "agree" and can be described as "moderately aware." It is worth noting that Juniper (2009) delved into a related subject, examining the question of whether individuals should be permitted to modify, translate, adopt, or sell copyrighted questionnaires without the explicit consent of the developer or copyright holder.

These findings provide valuable insights into the awareness levels of English teachers regarding ethical considerations in the use of textual online resources. The contrast between their strong commitment to copyright respect and their somewhat less enthusiastic stance on photocopied materials highlights the nuanced nature of ethical decision-making in the realm of educational resource utilization. Further exploration of the factors shaping these perceptions could offer valuable context for educators seeking to navigate the complex landscape of online materials.

It can be gleaned from the Table that respect for copyright obtained the highest mean value of 3.87. Igudia (2016) stressed that copyright awareness also opens the door to greater creativity and productivity in the workplace. A better understanding of copyright can minimize concerns about fair use and fair dealing. However, statement on photocopied from references with the consent of the publisher as found on item six (6) had the lowest mean value of 3.33 which is verbally interpreted as "agree" and qualitatively described as "much aware". In contrary, the study of Juniper (2009)the author tried to find out whether people should be allowed to modify, translate adopt or sell copyrighted questionnaires without the permission of the developer or copyright holder.

Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
1. quote another person's actual words, either oral or written.	3.75	0.44	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
2. cite all ideas and information that is not my own and/or is not common knowledge.	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
3. place proper citation at the end when paraphrasing.	3.75	0.44	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
4. respect for copyright.	3.87	0.34	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
5. cite the original source when i uses another person's idea, opinion, or theory.	3.70	0.46	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
6. photocopied from references with the consent of the publisher.	3.33	0.71	Agree	Much Aware
7. respect the intellectual property of their peers.	3.65	0.55	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
8. cite all ideas and information that is not my own and/or is not common knowledge	3.65	0.48	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
9. use quotation marks if I am using someone else's words.	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
10. place the proper citation at the end of a paraphrased section.	3.67	0.54	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
11. enclose in quotation marks and be accompanied by a citation to indicate its origin in any verbatim text taken from another source.	3.75	0.44	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
12. use my own words, and also my own syntactical structure in paraphrasing others' work.	3.62	0.49	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware

Table 4 reveals a clear pattern in the responses, with "respect for copyright" emerging as the highest-rated criterion, achieving an impressive mean value of 3.87. This observation echoes the insights of Igudia (2016), who emphasized that copyright awareness not only ensures legal compliance but also serves as a catalyst for greater creativity and productivity in professional contexts. An enhanced understanding of copyright principles can effectively mitigate concerns surrounding fair use and fair dealing practices.



Conversely, it is noteworthy that the statement addressing the "photocopying of materials from references with the consent of the publisher" (item six) garnered the lowest mean value of 3.33. While this rating falls within the "agree" category, it qualifies as a "moderate awareness" level. In contrast, Juniper's study in 2009 ventured into the inquiry of whether individuals should be permitted to modify, translate, adopt, or sell copyrighted questionnaires without obtaining explicit permission from the developer or copyright holder.

These findings underscore the complexity of ethical considerations in the realm of educational resource utilization. While English teachers demonstrate a strong commitment to copyright awareness, their somewhat reserved stance on the photocopying of materials with publisher consent highlights the nuanced nature of their perceptions and practices. Further exploration of these dynamics can shed light on the factors shaping educators' ethical decision-making in the digital learning landscape.

Table 5 presents a comprehensive overview of the awareness levels among English teachers concerning ethical guidelines governing the utilization of online materials in the context of audio-visual resources.

Statement	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
1. document properly the reference of the images and diagrams on the internet.	3.67	0.48	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
2. observe transparency regarding the original authors.	3.72	0.45	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
3. bear in mind not to infringe copyright.	3.68	0.47	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
4. acknowledge the source before the audio presented.	3.73	0.45	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
5. protect the confidentiality of the materials.	3.72	0.45	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
6. protect the anonymity of the materials.	3.70	0.46	Strongly Agree	Very Much Aware
<i>Average</i>	<i>3.70</i>	<i>0.34</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Very Much Aware</i>

The findings reveal a strong consensus among respondents, with a high level of agreement across all indicators (M=3.70). However, it is noteworthy that item three (3), which pertains to the conscientious avoidance of copyright infringement, received relatively lower ratings.

Abdul (2019) underscores the importance of recognizing the right to use copyrighted works, particularly in contexts like academic research and private study, which not only benefits the public but also upholds the rights of copyright owners. Furthermore, it is essential to note that fair dealing is an integral aspect of copyright law, serving as a defense against actions related to copyright infringement, as elucidated by Ahmadi and Sonkar (2016).

Conversely, Table 6 below investigates the potential associations between various demographic factors and the awareness of English teachers regarding ethical guidelines for the use of online materials.

The data from the table indicates that factors such as gender, age, years of teaching experience, daily hours spent browsing online, and the grade levels taught do not exhibit a statistically significant relationship with English teachers' awareness of ethical guidelines for utilizing online materials. This conclusion is drawn from the non-rejection of null hypotheses, as evidenced by p-values exceeding the threshold of 0.05 for each respective factor.



Profile	Awareness	r	p	D	I
Sex	Authenticity	0.11	0.42	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Textual Resource	-0.08	0.57	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Audio-Visual Resource	0.08	0.56	Not Rejected	Not Significant
Age	Authenticity	0.14	0.28	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Textual Resource	0.07	0.60	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Audio-Visual Resource	0.08	0.55	Not Rejected	Not Significant
Number of Years in Teaching	Authenticity	0.08	0.53	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Textual Resource	-0.05	0.71	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Audio-Visual Resource	-0.06	0.66	Not Rejected	Not Significant
Number of Hours Spent Per Day Browsing Online	Authenticity	0.10	0.44	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Textual Resource	0.05	0.72	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Audio-Visual Resource	0.09	0.50	Not Rejected	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	Authenticity	0.45	3.5E-04	Rejected	Significant
	Textual Resource	0.07	0.57	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Audio-Visual Resource	0.27	0.04	Rejected	Significant
Grade Level Taught	Authenticity	0.14	0.29	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Textual Resource	-0.03	0.84	Not Rejected	Not Significant
	Audio-Visual Resource	-0.20	0.12	Not Rejected	Not Significant

Finally, below is the proposed intervention program to pave way for information dissemination on the ethical guidelines on the use of online materials in teaching and learning.

Activities	Resources	Time Frame	Success Indicator
1. Seminar/symposium on the following topics; a. The role of online materials in education b. The Digital Learning Resources c. Guidelines on appropriate use of electronic resources * plagiarism * copyright * Paraphrasing * Proper Citation * Fair Use	Reference material Movie clips	1 hour	Students and teachers gained thorough understanding on the ethical guidelines on the use of online materials

REFERENCES

- [1]. Abdul S. (2019). An Assessment of Fair Dealing in Malaysian Copyright Law in comparison with the Limitation Provisions of Japanese Copyright Law-Within the Current Technology Background. *Hosei Riron*, 41(3), 4.
- [2]. Anderson, C. and Simpson, D. (2017). Copyright Awareness, Partnerships, and Training Issues in Academic Libraries. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 40(3-4), 228-233. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2014.03.009>
- [3]. Akcay, V. (2018). Awareness on institutional repositories-related issues by faculty of University of Calcutta. *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*, <https://doi.org/10.14429/djlit.34.5138>
- [4]. Carty, A. (2017). *The Digital Reader: Using E-books in K-12 Education*. Washington, D. C.: International Society for Technology in Education
- [5]. Ciftci, A. (2019). Copyright Infringement and Photocopy Services Among University Students and Teachers in Nigeria. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 08(01), 463-472.
- [6]. Kahilan, R. (2017). Fighting plagiarism among students through copyright awareness and policy: a focus on kwamenkrumah university of science and technology. *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 4(3), 23-37.
- [7]. Kelleher, F. (2021). Women and the teaching profession. *Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2012/13*.
- [8]. Kozara, A. (2019). Awareness regarding plagiarism and fair use of copyrighted work: a survey amongst Doctoral Students of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow. *Journal of Information Management*, 2(2), 98-110. Retrieved from <http://www.splp>.
- [9]. Kumar S. et al. (2016). An Assessment of Fair Dealing in Malaysian Copyright Law in comparison with the Limitation Provisions of Japanese Copyright Law-Within the Current Technology Background. *Int J Res Med Sci. International Journal of Research in Medical Sciences*.
- [10]. Igudia, O & Hamzat, O. (2016). Awareness and indulgence in copyright Infringement of Internet Information Contents among Distance Learning Undergraduates of University of Ibadan , Nigeria. *Ijes*, 16(2), 198-209.
- [11]. Lehman, H. (2017). Access Copyright and Fair Dealing Guidelines in Higher Educational Institutions in Canada: A Survey. *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, 13(2). <https://doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v13i2.4147>.
- [12]. Picciano, A. (2017). Theories and Frameworks for Online Education. Awareness and Use of Internet based Sources: A Case study of North India.
- [13]. Shin, S.-K. (2015). Teaching critical, ethical, and safe use of ICT in preservice teacher education. *Language Learning & Technology*, 19(1), 181-197. Retrieved from <http://llt.msu.edu/issues/february2015/shin.pdf>
- [14]. Wahid, R., Madieha, I., & Ghani, A. (2020). Comparative study on copyright exception for teaching purposes: Australia, Malaysia and the United Kingdom. *Journal of International Studies*, 8, 31-45