

# Academic Integrity in Educational Psychology: A Chronological Review

Nor Syamimi Mohamed Adnan<sup>1\*</sup>, Junainor Hassan<sup>2</sup>, Suzana Sulaiman<sup>3</sup>, Syed Muhamad Shahril Syed Jaafar<sup>4</sup>, Kamarul Zaman Khamis<sup>5</sup>, Siti Balkis Mohamed Ibrahim<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Faculty of Business and Communication, UniCITI Alam Campus, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, 02100 Padang Besar, Perlis, Malaysia

<sup>4,5,6</sup>College of Law, Government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia 06010 Sintok, Kedah Darul Aman, Malaysia

**\*Corresponding Author**

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## ABSTRACT

Academic integrity has become an increasingly important area of discussion within educational psychology due to its significant role in shaping ethical behaviour, moral reasoning, learning practices, and responsible academic conduct among students. Rapid technological advancement, the expansion of online learning environments, and the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted educational tools have transformed traditional understandings of academic integrity and introduced new ethical challenges in higher education. Despite growing scholarly attention, the development of research within this field remains fragmented, with limited understanding of how research trends have evolved across different periods. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the chronological development of academic integrity research within educational psychology and identify major shifts in research focus and scholarly progression over time. A systematic advanced search strategy was employed using the Scopus database to retrieve relevant publications. The search process utilized major keywords including academic integrity, academic honesty, academic misconduct, academic dishonesty, ethical behaviour, moral reasoning, AI ethics, online learning ethics, AI-assisted cheating, educational psychology, and higher education. To ensure quality and relevance, specific inclusion criteria were applied during the screening process. The initial search identified a larger pool of publications, and after screening and refinement procedures, a final dataset consisting of 128 primary studies was selected for analysis. The findings revealed a clear progression of scholarly development and publication growth across four chronological phases: Foundational Emergence Phase (2010–2016), Early Development and Expansion Phase (2017–2020), Transitional Intensification Phase (2021–2023), and Rapid Growth and Contemporary Transformation Phase (2024–2026). The analysis demonstrates a gradual transition from traditional concerns related to academic honesty and misconduct toward broader discussions involving psychological determinants, digital learning environments, and AI-related ethical issues. The findings suggest that academic integrity research within educational psychology has evolved into a dynamic and rapidly expanding field, highlighting the increasing need for adaptive ethical frameworks and responsible educational practices in contemporary learning environments.

**Keywords:** Academic Integrity, Educational Psychology, Academic Misconduct, Moral Reasoning

## INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity has become a central concern in contemporary educational psychology as learning environments become increasingly competitive, technologically mediated, and academically demanding. Within higher education, academic integrity extends beyond the absence of cheating and plagiarism; it reflects a commitment to fundamental values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage that guide students' learning behaviours, assessment practices, and interactions within academic communities [1][2][3]. Educational psychology offers important theoretical perspectives for understanding why students either uphold

or violate these principles by examining the influence of motivation, self-regulation, stress, social norms, cognitive biases, and institutional culture on academic behaviour [4][5].

Over the past decade, research has documented various forms of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, examination cheating, data falsification, contract cheating, and, more recently, artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted misconduct [6][7][2][8][5]. These behaviours are frequently associated with academic pressure, fear of failure, limited understanding of institutional policies, and perceptions that dishonest practices provide short-term advantages. Conversely, studies consistently demonstrate that academic integrity contributes to meaningful learning, critical thinking development, academic achievement, and the cultivation of ethical values that extend beyond educational settings into professional practice [6][4][2]. These findings highlight the importance of fostering integrity not only as a compliance issue but also as a fundamental component of student development and lifelong learning.

The rapid advancement of digital technologies, particularly generative artificial intelligence, has introduced new opportunities and challenges for maintaining academic integrity. While AI-powered tools may facilitate plagiarism, unauthorized content generation, and other forms of misconduct, they also offer innovative mechanisms for learning support, assessment redesign, and integrity monitoring [9][10][11][12][13][14][15]. Consequently, educational psychologists and educators are increasingly required to develop evidence-based interventions that promote ethical academic behaviour within evolving technological environments.

Such interventions include ethics education, self-regulated learning strategies, peer assessment systems, integrity-focused institutional policies, and technology-supported monitoring frameworks [4][16][1]. Understanding how research on academic integrity has evolved over time is therefore essential for identifying emerging trends, research gaps, and future directions in educational psychology.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic integrity is a cornerstone of educational psychology, shaping the ethical and moral framework within which students, educators, and institutions operate. It is built on values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage, which are essential for fostering a culture of ethical behaviour and academic excellence [17][18]. The integration of academic integrity into educational practices not only enhances the quality of learning but also prepares students to uphold these principles in their professional and personal lives [17] [19]. However, the challenges of maintaining academic integrity have grown in complexity, particularly with the advent of digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI), which have introduced new dimensions to academic misconduct [20][21].

Educational psychology emphasizes the importance of proactive and developmental approaches to academic integrity. Rather than focusing solely on punitive measures, institutions are encouraged to adopt strategies that promote ethical behaviour through education, policy development, and curriculum integration [22] [23]. For instance, formative assessments, feedback mechanisms, and authentic learning tasks can help students internalize the values of academic integrity while reducing opportunities for misconduct [22][24]. Additionally, fostering a culture of integrity requires institutional support, including clear policies, faculty training, and student engagement initiatives [25][26]. These measures not only deter dishonest behaviours but also create an environment where integrity is viewed as a skill to be developed rather than merely a rule to be enforced [27][28].

The role of technology in academic integrity is both a challenge and an opportunity. Tools like plagiarism detection software and AI-powered proctoring have been employed to address misconduct, but they are not foolproof and must be complemented by educational strategies [21][29]. Moreover, the ethical use of AI tools like ChatGPT has become a pressing issue, necessitating updated guidelines and policies to balance innovation with integrity [20] [30]. Educational psychology can contribute by exploring how these technologies impact learning behaviours and by developing frameworks that integrate ethical considerations into their use [31][32].

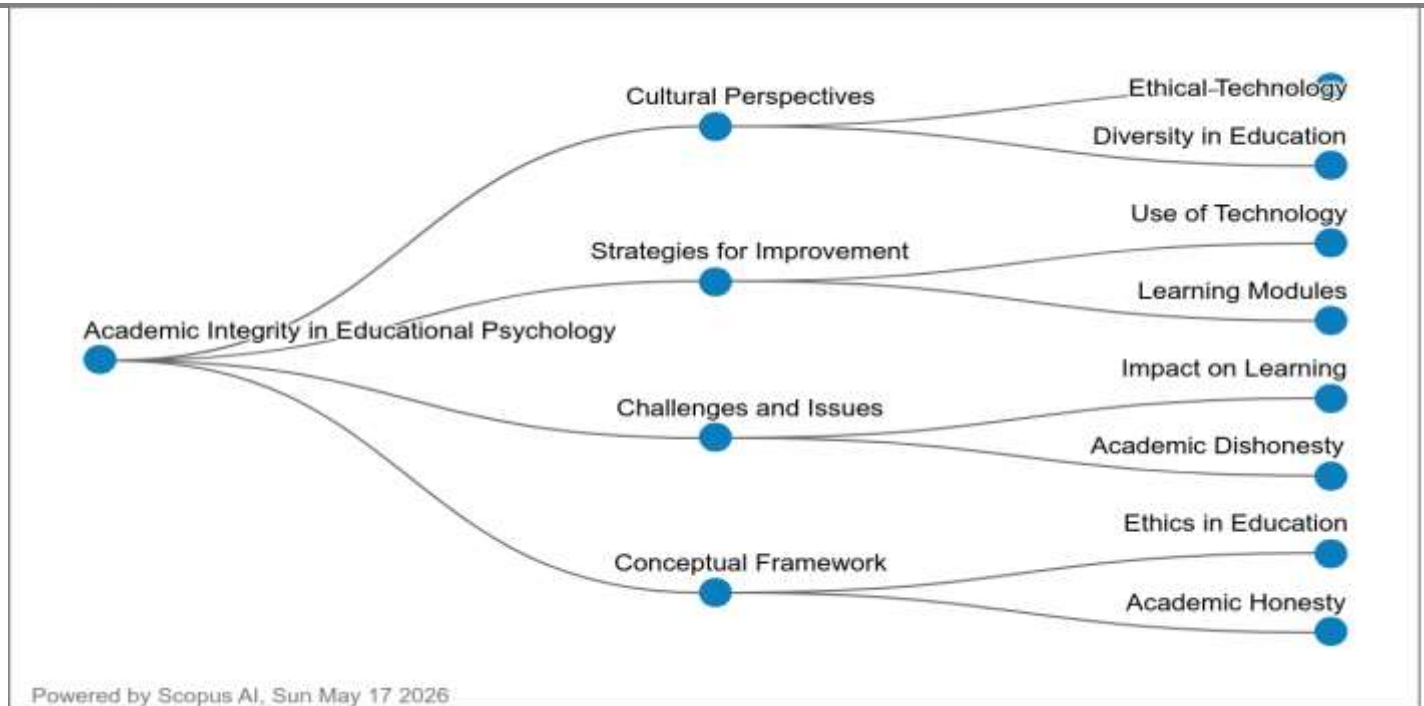


Figure: Thematic Framework of Academic Integrity in Educational Psychology

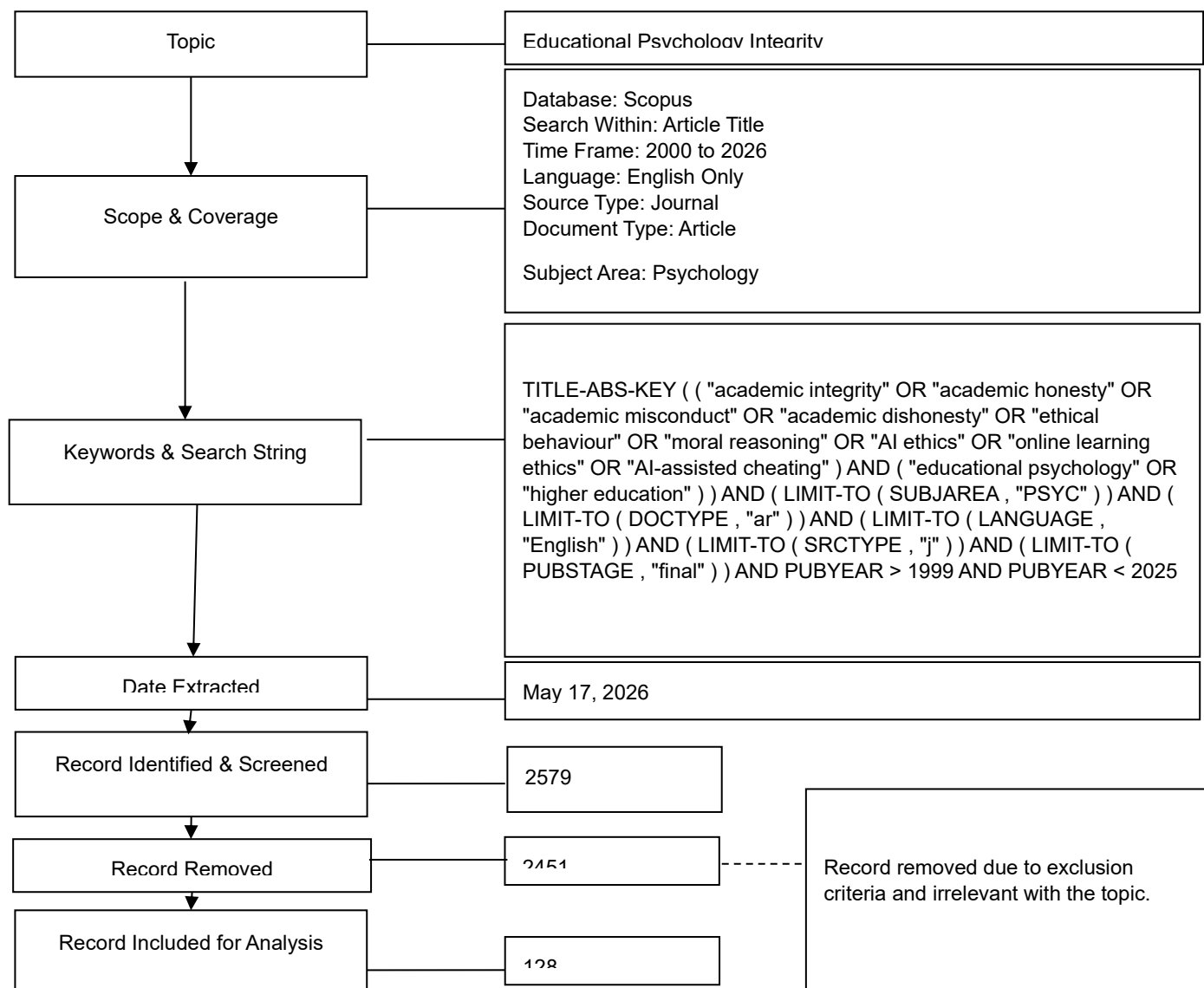
Finally, the global and cultural dimensions of academic integrity cannot be overlooked. Factors such as cultural norms, institutional policies, and societal expectations significantly influence perceptions and practices of integrity [33][34]. Comparative studies have shown that academic misconduct varies across regions, highlighting the need for context-specific interventions [34]. Educational psychology can play a pivotal role in understanding these dynamics and in designing inclusive, culturally sensitive strategies to promote academic integrity [34][35]. By addressing these multifaceted challenges, the field can ensure that academic integrity remains a foundational element of education in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

## MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

### Data Collection

Academic integrity has emerged as a central concern within educational psychology due to its close relationship with ethical behaviour, moral reasoning, student learning processes, and the overall quality of educational outcomes. In contemporary educational environments, academic integrity extends beyond traditional concerns involving plagiarism and cheating and increasingly encompasses broader ethical challenges associated with technological advancement, digital learning environments, and the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted educational practices. Educational psychology provides an important perspective for understanding academic integrity because it emphasizes the cognitive, behavioural, and social factors that shape students' attitudes and decision-making processes within learning environments. The rapid transformation of educational systems, particularly through digitalization and AI integration, has significantly altered the nature of academic practices and created new ethical concerns related to responsible technology use, authorship, academic honesty, and learning behaviour. Consequently, understanding how academic integrity research has evolved over time is essential for identifying major research developments, shifts in scholarly focus, and emerging patterns that continue to shape the field. A chronological review approach provides a structured mechanism for tracing the progression of research and identifying how the field has transitioned from traditional discussions of academic honesty toward contemporary concerns surrounding AI ethics and responsible educational practices. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the chronological evolution of academic integrity research within educational psychology and to provide a comprehensive understanding of its developmental trajectory across different periods.

The present study employed a single-step data collection process using the Scopus database to identify and select relevant, high-quality scholarly publications for analysis. Scopus was selected because of its extensive international coverage, rigorous indexing standards, and comprehensive representation of peer-reviewed literature across multiple disciplines. A structured search strategy incorporating carefully selected keywords and predefined inclusion criteria was implemented to ensure consistency and relevance in identifying publications directly associated with academic integrity and educational psychology. The search process was further refined through restrictions based on document type, language, subject area, publication stage, and publication period to maintain methodological rigor and improve the quality of the retrieved dataset. Rigorous and systematic data collection procedures are particularly important in chronological review studies because they establish a reliable foundation for examining research progression and ensuring the credibility of identified trends. Without standardized selection procedures and clearly defined criteria, review findings may become vulnerable to bias, inconsistencies, and interpretative limitations that reduce both validity and reproducibility. A systematic approach enhances transparency and allows researchers to accurately trace the development of scholarly discourse, identify major research phases, and interpret changes in thematic focus over time. Consequently, a robust data collection strategy strengthens the reliability, validity, and interpretability of longitudinal research patterns and provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the evolving nature of academic integrity research within educational psychology.



**Figure 1.** Flow diagram of the search strategy. Source: Moher et al. (2009) [36]



The data collection strategy was designed to ensure a rigorous, transparent, and focused selection of literature on academic integrity within the field of educational psychology. Scopus was selected as the main database because it provides broad international coverage of peer-reviewed scholarly publications and is widely used in systematic, bibliometric, and chronological review studies. The search was limited to article titles using the TITLE-ABS-KEY function with keywords related to academic integrity, academic honesty, academic misconduct, academic dishonesty, ethical behaviour, moral reasoning, AI ethics, online learning ethics, and AI-assisted cheating, combined with educational psychology and higher education. The publication period from 2000 to 2026 was chosen to capture the development of academic integrity research from traditional concerns such as plagiarism and dishonesty to more recent issues involving online learning and artificial intelligence.

To maintain quality and relevance, the search was restricted to the Psychology subject area, journal articles, English-language publications, final publication stage, and Scopus-indexed journal sources. This screening process initially identified 2,579 records. After applying exclusion criteria and removing studies that were outside the scope, duplicated in theme, weakly related to educational psychology, or not directly aligned with academic integrity issues, 2,451 records were excluded. Finally, 128 articles were retained for analysis. This final dataset provides a focused and reliable foundation for examining the chronological evolution, major research patterns, and emerging ethical challenges in academic integrity research within educational psychology.

### Data Clustering

In chronological review studies, the clustering or grouping of publication data represents an important analytical approach for understanding the developmental trajectory and progression of a research domain across time. Rather than presenting publication trends as isolated annual frequencies, clustering enables researchers to organize publication outputs into meaningful temporal phases that reflect shifts in scholarly attention, research intensity, and thematic evolution. The present study utilized publication data retrieved from the Scopus database, a reputable and comprehensive source of peer-reviewed scholarly literature, through the application of carefully selected keywords and advanced search strategies to ensure the retrieval of relevant and high-quality publications. The use of a systematic retrieval process strengthens the credibility and comprehensiveness of the dataset while minimizing inconsistencies in publication selection. Clustering based on publication year and publication volume is particularly valuable because research development rarely occurs in a linear manner; instead, scholarly fields typically experience periods of emergence, gradual growth, transitional expansion, and rapid advancement. By grouping years with similar publication patterns, researchers can identify major developmental stages and interpret how the research field has evolved in response to emerging issues, technological changes, and shifts in academic interest. Furthermore, clustering enhances the interpretability of publication patterns by transforming raw numerical data into meaningful research phases that facilitate deeper analysis of trends and scholarly behaviour. Such an approach allows researchers to identify periods of research acceleration or stagnation, recognize emerging areas of interest, and provide stronger contextual explanations regarding changes in research productivity. Consequently, clustering serves as an effective mechanism for generating a more structured and comprehensive understanding of literature development and provides valuable insights into the evolution of academic integrity research within educational psychology.

The classification of publication periods was established based on observable variations in publication frequency across the timeline. The first phase (2010–2016) contained only six publications and reflected limited scholarly attention. The second phase (2017–2020) showed modest growth with eleven publications, suggesting early expansion in research interest. The third phase (2021–2023) demonstrated stronger growth with twenty-two publications, indicating increasing research activity. The final phase (2024–2026) recorded eighty-nine publications and represented the highest concentration of publication output, indicating substantial research acceleration. These differences in publication volume provide empirical justification for the formation of four chronological clusters.

### Phase 1 (2010–2016): Foundational Emergence Phase

This phase represents the initial stage of research development in academic integrity within educational psychology. Scholarly output during this period remained relatively limited, indicating that academic integrity had not yet emerged as a major research priority. Existing studies primarily concentrated on traditional concerns

related to academic honesty, plagiarism, cheating behaviour, and ethical responsibility among students. Research during this period focused largely on conceptual understanding and identifying fundamental issues surrounding ethical conduct in educational settings.

### Phase 2 (2017–2020): Early Development and Expansion Phase

The second phase reflects an initial expansion of scholarly attention toward academic integrity issues. Increased publication activity suggests that researchers began recognizing the importance of psychological and educational factors influencing academic behaviour. Research during this stage expanded beyond conventional discussions of cheating and plagiarism to include broader themes such as student motivation, moral reasoning, ethical decision-making, and institutional approaches toward maintaining academic integrity within educational environments.

### Phase 3 (2021–2023): Transitional Intensification Phase

The third phase marks a transition toward stronger research productivity and broader thematic development. The increasing publication pattern indicates greater scholarly concern regarding changing educational practices and technological developments. The increase in publication activity during this period suggests broader scholarly attention toward emerging educational and technological factors influencing academic integrity. This phase reflects a transitional period in which academic integrity research began responding to evolving educational realities.

### Phase 4 (2024–2026): Rapid Growth and Contemporary Transformation Phase

The final phase demonstrates a substantial increase in publication output and represents the most active research period identified in the dataset. The significant rise in publications suggests heightened academic concern regarding emerging ethical challenges within educational psychology. Research in this period increasingly addresses AI ethics, generative artificial intelligence, AI-assisted academic misconduct, responsible technology use, and ethical implications associated with digital learning environments. This phase reflects the transformation of academic integrity research from traditional academic honesty concerns toward broader discussions surrounding technology-driven educational ethics and responsible academic practices.

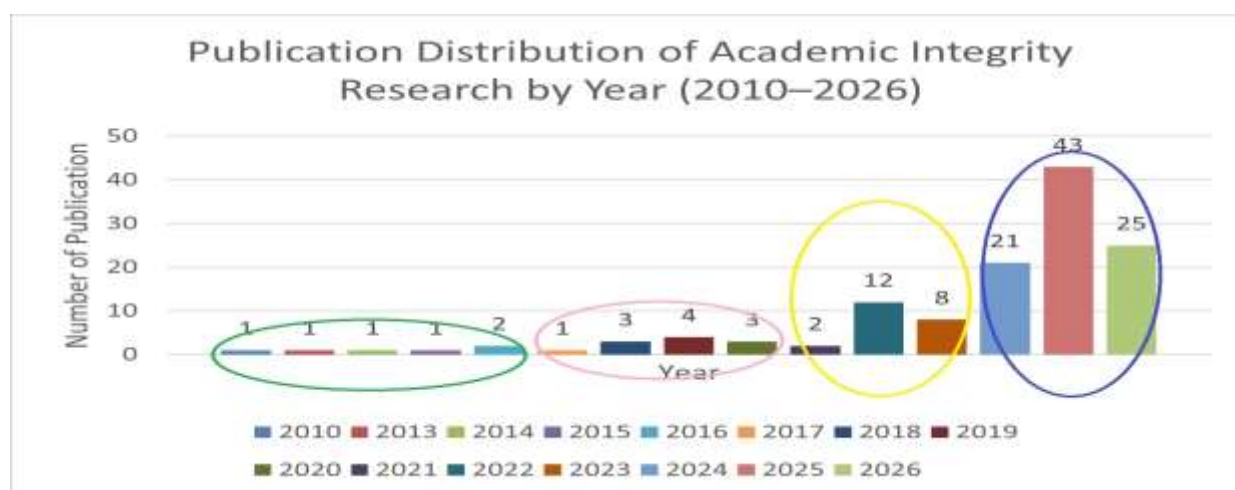


Figure 2: Chronological Clustering of Publication Trends in Academic Integrity Research in Educational Psychology (2010–2026)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Foundational Emergence Phase (2010–2016)

During the Foundational Emergence Phase (2010–2016), research on academic integrity within educational psychology evolved from an initial emphasis on ethical information use toward a broader psychological

understanding of academic misconduct, moral reasoning, and student integrity. In the earliest study, findings indicated that employers strongly valued information security, confidentiality, and ethical behaviour as essential ICT literacy competencies, whereas business school faculty reported limited instructional emphasis on ethical and legal dimensions [37]. These findings suggest a gap between professional expectations and educational preparation, particularly in relation to ethical technology use. By 2013, the focus shifted toward moral development, where improvements in students' moral reasoning and changes in personal values, including stronger universalism and security orientations, were observed [38]. These findings indicate that higher education functions not only as a platform for academic learning but also as an environment that contributes to ethical judgement and value development.

From 2014 to 2016, the research focus became more specific toward academic dishonesty and integrity-related behaviour. Findings indicated that moral attentiveness influenced ethical judgement, which subsequently affected students' intentions to report unethical peer behaviour [39]. This finding highlighted the importance of internal moral awareness in shaping responses toward academic misconduct. A meta-analytic review further strengthened the psychological direction of the field by demonstrating that conscientiousness and agreeableness were negatively associated with academic dishonesty [40]. These findings suggest that personality characteristics became important explanatory factors influencing the likelihood of dishonest academic behaviour among students. Further evidence showed that the Theory of Planned Behaviour explained a substantial proportion of variance in both behavioural intention and academic misconduct behaviour, indicating that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control served as significant predictors of misconduct [41]. Additional findings broadened the understanding of integrity by showing that students interpreted integrity not only as avoiding plagiarism and cheating, but also as encompassing honesty, responsibility, work ethic, professionalism, and moral commitment beyond university contexts [42]. Overall, this phase demonstrates that early scholarly attention gradually shifted from ethical skills and moral reasoning toward broader psychological explanations of integrity, including moral attentiveness, personality traits, behavioural intention, and students' wider understanding of ethical responsibility.

### **Early Development and Expansion Phase (2017–2020)**

During the Early Development and Expansion Phase (2017–2020), research on academic integrity within educational psychology expanded from general discussions of integrity development toward more specific psychological, institutional, and contextual explanations of academic dishonesty. Findings indicated that drama-based learning approaches strengthened students' confidence and ethical courage when dealing with complex value-based situations, suggesting that integrity education gradually shifted toward more active and experiential learning approaches rather than relying solely on formal instruction [43]. Further evidence demonstrated that students perceived academic dishonesty through multiple perspectives, including moral transgressions, pressure-related transgressions, and confused transgressions, indicating that dishonest behaviour was increasingly understood as a multifaceted issue influenced by morality, academic pressure, and uncertainty [44]. Additional findings reported gender differences in plagiarism awareness, where female students displayed stronger negative attitudes toward plagiarism [45]. Research during the same period also expanded the discussion from individuals directly involved in cheating toward the perspectives of student observers, showing that although many students disclosed dishonest behaviour when questioned, direct confrontation with peers remained relatively uncommon [46]. Collectively, these findings indicate that the early part of this phase broadened scholarly understanding of academic integrity by incorporating perspectives related to perception, awareness, peer influence, and experiential approaches to ethical learning.

From 2019 to 2020, the literature demonstrated greater diversification by incorporating organizational ethics, transnational education, course-related motivation, research culture, assessment design, and family-related psychological factors. Findings indicated that perceived organizational support significantly influenced ethical behaviour among higher education faculty members, with moral ownership functioning as an important mediating factor [47]. This suggests that academic integrity was increasingly examined beyond student behaviour and extended toward institutional and employee-related ethical dimensions. Additional evidence showed that students in transnational higher education frequently demonstrated misunderstandings regarding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, and acceptable collaboration practices, indicating the need for clearer

communication of academic integrity policies across different cultural and institutional contexts [48]. Research also emphasized that issues surrounding re-search integrity should be understood from broader systemic perspectives involving institutional policy, ethics, organizational culture, and methodological practices [49]. Furthermore, findings revealed that beliefs supporting cheating behaviour were stronger among students enrolled in disliked courses, particularly within mathematics and science disciplines, and were associated with sensation-seeking tendencies [50].

In 2020, research increasingly focused on contextual and psychological influences related to academic dishonesty. Findings demonstrated that students did not strongly associate academic fraud with unethical professional behaviour in future careers and also perceived certain assessment methods as contributing factors that encouraged dishonest practices [51]. During the same period, rapid educational changes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges in assessment implementation, where alternative assessment approaches generated tensions related to academic integrity, institutional regulations, and instructional readiness [52]. Additional evidence expanded the psychological perspective by showing that overparenting behaviours and perfectionistic concerns contributed to academic entitlement, while gender differences remained significantly associated with academic dishonesty [53]. Overall, this phase reflects a substantial expansion from individual-level explanations of cheating behaviour toward broader psychological, cultural, organizational, and assessment-related factors influencing academic integrity.

### **Transitional Intensification Phase (2021–2023)**

During the Transitional Intensification Phase (2021–2023), research on academic integrity within educational psychology became more intensive and methodologically diverse, with greater emphasis placed on psychological predictors, online learning environments, and technology-related integrity challenges. Findings demonstrated that personality dimensions such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, mastery, and religiosity were significantly associated with students' attitudes toward cheating, while mastery and religiosity indirectly influenced the relationship between conscientiousness and cheating attitudes [54]. These findings suggest that academic dishonesty was increasingly interpreted through a broader psychological perspective involving individual characteristics, personal beliefs, and motivational factors. Additional evidence revealed a high prevalence of cheating behaviour among students in Islamic higher education contexts, with common practices including answer sharing, copying information from online or printed sources, and collaboration in assignments intended for individual completion [55]. The findings further indicated that dishonest behaviour was influenced by external factors such as difficult examinations, excessive workloads, and time constraints, as well as internal factors including fear of failure and strong desires for academic achievement. Collectively, these findings indicate that academic dishonesty during this period was increasingly understood through the interaction of personality traits, motivation, religiosity, moral awareness, and academic pressure.

In 2022, the literature demonstrated substantial expansion toward psychological modelling, moral judgement, institutional policy, and measurement development. Findings indicated that academic entitlement, particularly externalized responsibility, functioned as a mediating factor in the relationship between Dark Triad personality traits and academic misconduct [56]. Additional evidence showed that intentions toward contract cheating were indirectly shaped through attitudes, subjective norms, and anticipated moral emotions, including guilt and shame [57]. Research during the same period also examined institutional responses toward academic integrity, where faculty members' intentions to use anti-plagiarism detection tools were significantly influenced by attitudes and perceived behavioural control, whereas previous use was associated with academic rank and perceived understanding of the technology [58].

Further studies expanded the scope of investigation beyond misconduct-related behaviour alone. Findings revealed that students' experiences associated with the Gaokao examination involved psychological conflict, external pressure, and perceptions of social inequality [59]. Additional evidence demonstrated that corrupt intentions in higher education were associated with perceived justifiability, risk perception, and the perceived prevalence of corruption [60]. Research also emphasized that the quality of postgraduate education should extend beyond academic achievement by incorporating moral cultivation and psychological well-being, particularly because academic misconduct and academic pressure were identified as important concerns affecting educational quality [61]. Collectively, these findings suggest that 2022 represented a major expansion stage, during which



academic integrity evolved from a narrow focus on preventing dishonest behaviour toward broader psychological, cultural, institutional, and policy-related perspectives.

The same year also reflected increasing scholarly attention toward intervention strategies, student understanding, and theoretical reconceptualization of academic integrity. Findings indicated that an online academic integrity induction module improved students' confidence, accessibility, perceived usefulness, and understanding of academic integrity resources, highlighting the potential of structured interventions in strengthening integrity awareness [62]. Additional evidence demonstrated that moral equity, contractualism, and behavioural intention significantly predicted students' ethical evaluations across different academic misconduct scenarios, while variations were observed according to cultural background, gender, and educational level [63]. Re-search also revealed that many students possessed unclear or inconsistent under-standings of academic integrity, particularly within rapidly expanding university environments, suggesting that institutional growth may weaken integrity awareness when academic culture is insufficiently developed [64].

Further studies expanded the discussion toward social influence, theoretical interpretation, and measurement development. Findings showed that peer influence exerted the strongest effect on cheating behaviour, while openness as a personality characteristic was associated with a greater likelihood of engaging in dishonest behaviour [65]. A different theoretical perspective reconceptualized academic dishonesty as a struggle for recognition rather than solely as a moral deficiency, offering a broader explanation for unethical academic behaviour [66]. Additional evidence supported the validity of an academic dishonesty tendency scale for graduate students and identified education level as an important explanatory factor influencing dishonesty tendencies [67]. Overall, 2022 represented a substantial broadening of the field, where scholarly attention moved beyond individual dishonest behaviour toward ethical judgement, peer influence, institutional culture, measurement quality, and deeper theoretical interpretations of academic integrity.

By 2023, the research focus shifted more clearly toward applied solutions, digital systems, AI-related concerns, and academic integrity management. Findings demonstrated that academic integrity had become an important component of broader institutional quality assessment frameworks, where integrity indicators were incorporated into quality-sustainability models for evaluating higher education systems [68]. Additional evidence indicated that needs-based plagiarism management approaches in second-language writing contributed to reductions in plagiarism within subsequent student essays, although improvements in citation interpretation remained relatively limited among students with lower levels of English proficiency [69]. Research also proposed a holistic framework for addressing contract cheating through awareness, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms, reflecting stronger movement toward institution-based prevention strategies [70]. Further studies validated measures of academic maladjustment and demonstrated that dishonest and unethical behaviour formed part of broader maladjustment patterns, which were positively associated with intentions to discontinue academic studies [71].

The literature during the same period also demonstrated increasing concern regarding the implications of emerging technologies and AI-supported educational environments. Findings identified generative artificial intelligence as both a major challenge and a potential opportunity within higher education, particularly in areas related to plagiarism detection, academic integrity, critical thinking development, and institutional policy formulation [72]. Additional evidence revealed that plagiarism intentions during emergency online learning environments were influenced by multiple sociocognitive factors, including fear associated with COVID-19, academic self-efficacy, attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and prior behaviour [73]. Technological approaches to maintaining academic integrity also received increasing attention, where similarity detection systems for programming contexts demonstrated potential for identifying dishonest practices efficiently [74]. Furthermore, AI-cantered proctoring systems were shown to strengthen identity verification and trust in online examinations while simultaneously introducing concerns regarding privacy and ethical use of technology [75]. Overall, the findings indicate that 2023 represented a major transition from explaining misconduct toward developing practical, technological, and policy-oriented mechanisms aimed at strengthening academic integrity within digitally mediated higher education environments.

## Rapid Growth and Contemporary Transformation Phase (2024–2026)

During the Rapid Growth and Contemporary Transformation Phase (2024–2026), re-search on academic integrity within educational psychology shifted substantially to-ward the influence of generative artificial intelligence, digital assessment, online learning environments, and responsible academic behaviour. In 2024, the literature primarily reflected a dual perspective regarding AI, where it was simultaneously viewed as a learning support mechanism and a potential academic integrity risk. Findings demonstrated that students in science and mathematics disciplines perceived generative AI as beneficial for learning and research activities, although concerns emerged regarding its use in the absence of ethical regulation and responsible guidance [76]. Similar evidence indicated that ChatGPT had increasingly become integrated into students' academic routines; however, concerns related to accidental plagiarism and unclear institutional expectations remained evident [77]. Additional studies reported that generative AI contributed positively to learning motivation, engagement, confidence, and educational support, while simultaneously emphasizing the need for ethical guidance and critical use practices [78][79]. Further research expanded under-standing of AI adoption by examining behavioural, cognitive, emotional, gen-der-related, and technology acceptance dimensions associated with students' perceptions and use of AI technologies [80][81]. Collectively, these findings suggest that 2024 represented an important turning point, where academic integrity discussions ex-tended beyond traditional concerns surrounding cheating and plagiarism toward broader considerations involving psychological readiness, trust, confidence, and ethical awareness within AI-supported learning environments.

The 2024 studies also demonstrated stronger concern regarding assessment design, institutional preparedness, and academic integrity management within digital learning contexts. Findings indicated that educators were actively developing new approaches for integrating generative AI into student assessment; however, institutional policies and clearly defined ethical criteria remained necessary to ensure responsible implementation [82]. Additional evidence suggested that ChatGPT had the potential to enhance pedagogical innovation and experiential learning, although concerns associated with plagiarism and reduced interpersonal skill development remained significant [83]. Research further showed that students within ICT-related disciplines perceived generative AI as beneficial for tutoring, coding assistance, feedback generation, and creative support, while simultaneously associating its use with risks such as over-reliance, dishonest behaviour, and weakened academic independence [84].

Further studies expanded the discussion by examining behavioural and contextual in-fluences within digital learning environments. Findings indicated that online group communication platforms could normalize dishonest academic behaviour through rationalization processes and peer-based justification mechanisms. Additional evidence associated academic dishonesty with low attendance, reduced self-efficacy, remote learning conditions, and peer acceptance of fraudulent behaviour [85]. Research also demonstrated that online assessment practices implemented during and after the COVID-19 period generated practical challenges involving policy awareness, digital competence, infrastructure readiness, workload management, assessment design, and academic integrity concerns [86][87]. Collectively, these findings suggest that 2024 re-search progressed beyond identifying AI-related risks toward understanding the interaction between institutional systems, assessment practices, and student behaviour within increasingly digital learning environments.

In 2025, the research focus became increasingly solution-oriented, with stronger emphasis placed on policy development, ethical training, alternative assessment approaches, AI literacy, and psychological mechanisms associated with academic integrity. Findings indicated that educators expressed concerns regarding privacy issues, academic integrity, AI-generated content, plagiarism, and the possible weakening of critical thinking abilities resulting from excessive reliance on AI technologies [88]. Additional evidence showed that students engaged in dishonest academic practices due to factors such as grade pressure, career-related concerns, language barriers, and low confidence levels, suggesting that traditional forms of academic dishonesty continued to exist alongside emerging AI-related challenges [89]. Research also demonstrated that instructors adapted to AI-dependent learning environments by implementing alternative assessment approaches, including reflective activities, scaffolded assignments, time-restricted assessments, and reflective journals [90].

Further studies highlighted students' perceptions regarding the use of ChatGPT and other AI-based educational tools. Findings indicated that AI technologies were generally viewed as beneficial for learning and academic

support; however, concerns persisted regarding excessive dependence, misinformation, academic misconduct, ambiguous institutional policies, and issues related to moral responsibility [91][92][93][94][95]. Additional evidence introduced a stronger psychological perspective by demonstrating that moral reasoning and moral intuition mediated the relationship between cognitive-affective factors and work ethic [96]. Collectively, these findings indicate that 2025 represented a consolidation stage, where academic integrity research increasingly focused on establishing a balance between the educational advantages of AI technologies and the need for ethical regulation, student accountability, and institutional governance.

By 2026, the literature reflected a more advanced stage of AI governance, ethical literacy, and responsible-use frameworks within educational contexts. Findings indicated that teacher education students increasingly utilized generative AI for information retrieval, data analysis, study guidance, examination preparation, and broader academic support activities. However, concerns remained regarding excessive dependence on AI systems, reduced learning effort, weakened critical thinking abilities, misinformation, and potential underdevelopment of essential skills [97]. Additional evidence demonstrated that disciplinary teachers in English-medium universities expressed substantial concern regarding the use of generative AI in academic writing and emphasized the importance of developing institutional policies together with stronger ethical literacy initiatives [98]. Research also proposed a four-pillar framework for student activity that identified recurring concerns related to academic integrity, privacy, bias, student agency, deskilling, and governance limitations [99].

Further studies expanded the discussion toward the practical implications of AI use and its influence on academic behaviour. Findings indicated that students increasingly utilized AI technologies for summarization, writing assistance, and improving learning efficiency; however, concerns associated with originality, ethical use, and meaningful cognitive engagement suggested the need for stronger AI literacy development [100]. Additional evidence broadened the discussion beyond student learning and highlighted the potential influence of performance-driven environments on research behaviour, suggesting that pressure associated with measurable academic outputs may contribute to unethical publishing practices [101]. Overall, the 2026 studies indicate a movement beyond basic AI acceptance toward more comprehensive discussions in-volving governance frameworks, institutional policy development, responsible integration, ethical literacy, privacy protection, equity considerations, and the preservation of authentic learning experiences.

## CONCLUSION

This chronological review aimed to examine the developmental trajectory of re-search on academic integrity within educational psychology through a structured analysis of publication trends across the period from 2010 to 2026. Publication data were systematically retrieved from the Scopus database using predefined search strategies and carefully selected keywords related to academic integrity, academic misconduct, educational psychology, ethical behaviour, and emerging technology-related concerns. The main objective of this review was to investigate the evolution of research patterns and identify major shifts in scholarly attention, thematic development, and emerging directions within the field. A final dataset consisting of 128 studies was analysed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how aca-demic integrity research has progressed across different chronological periods.

The findings demonstrate a clear progression in publication growth and research development throughout four major phases: Foundational Emergence Phase (2010–2016), Early Development and Expansion Phase (2017–2020), Transitional Intensification Phase (2021–2023), and Rapid Growth and Contemporary Transformation Phase (2024–2026). During the earliest phase, scholarly attention remained limited and focused primarily on ethical behaviour, moral reasoning, and traditional aca-demic misconduct issues. The subsequent period reflected broader attention toward psychological and contextual explanations of dishonest behaviour, including institutional influences and educational practices. Research activity intensified during the transitional phase through increased methodological diversity and stronger emphasis on psychological predictors, intervention approaches, and technology-related challenges. The most recent phase demonstrated substantial research acceleration and reflected the integration of artificial intelligence, digital learning environments, online assessment systems, and ethical governance frameworks within academic integrity discussions.

Several dominant patterns emerged across the reviewed literature. Research focus gradually shifted from conventional concerns involving plagiarism and cheating toward broader perspectives involving behavioural mechanisms, psychological determinants, institutional factors, technological developments, and responsible educational practices. Methodological development also evolved from conceptual and descriptive approaches toward more sophisticated psychological modelling, scale validation, intervention studies, and technology-assisted frameworks. Furthermore, the integration of AI technologies and digital systems introduced a new dimension to academic integrity research, reflecting increasing scholarly concern regarding ethical AI use, governance structures, privacy issues, and responsible technology adoption. These developments collectively suggest that the field has progressed from isolated behavioural explanations toward a more integrated and multidimensional understanding of academic integrity.

The chronological organization of literature contributes significantly to knowledge development by providing a structured perspective on the evolution of scholarly inquiry across time. Unlike traditional thematic reviews that focus primarily on topic similarities, chronological analysis offers a clearer understanding of developmental progression and allows emerging patterns to become more visible. Grouping studies according to temporal phases improves the interpretability of publication growth and facilitates the identification of transitions in research priorities, conceptual shifts, and periods of rapid advancement. Such an approach strengthens the ability to interpret the dynamic nature of research evolution and provides a deeper understanding of the maturity of the field.

The observed trends also carry important practical and research implications. The evolution of academic integrity research highlights the increasing need for adaptive educational strategies capable of addressing contemporary ethical challenges within technology-driven learning environments. Educational institutions may benefit from strengthening ethical literacy initiatives, integrating AI-awareness training, improving institutional policies, and developing assessment approaches that encourage authentic learning and critical thinking. Future research may further contribute by examining behavioural responses to emerging technologies, evaluating intervention effectiveness, and exploring the psychological mechanisms underlying ethical decision-making in increasingly digital educational contexts.

Several limitations should also be acknowledged. The present review relied on a single database source, which may limit the inclusion of relevant studies indexed elsewhere. The use of predefined keywords and specific inclusion criteria may have restricted the breadth of retrieved publications. In addition, the selected publication period may not capture emerging studies published beyond the extraction timeline. Future investigations may benefit from incorporating multiple databases, broader search strategies, interdisciplinary perspectives, and real-world educational contexts to strengthen understanding and enhance generalizability across diverse educational settings.

Overall, chronological reviews provide an effective framework for capturing the dynamic evolution of scientific knowledge across time. Time-based analysis enables a clearer understanding of research progression, identifies emerging patterns that may otherwise remain unnoticed, and strengthens evidence-based development within a field. As educational environments continue to transform through technological innovation and evolving ethical challenges, chronological approaches remain valuable for guiding future research directions and supporting sustainable advancement within academic integrity research and educational psychology.

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