



Prevalence, Types and Reasons for Academic Dishonesty among College Students

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Abstract

This study examines the prevalence, types, and reasons of academic dishonesty among a sample of 106 college students. A mixed methodology was used in order to obtain the required data. An experimental observation was done to know the prevalence of cheating behavior in experimental settings. A standardized self-report instrument was used to study the prevalence of types of academic dishonesty behaviors that the students are engaged in and focus group discussions were carried out to explore the reasons for academic dishonesty behavior from the student perspective. Results: The prevalence of cheating behavior of students in the experiment is 61.6 % and 75% from faculty and student perspective respectively. The self-reporting survey showed 93.4% of students engaging in academic dishonesty. Findings suggest that taking help from external sources, plagiarism, lying, and cheating in the examination were admitted as the most prominent behaviors with 76.4%, 72.6%, 50.9%, and 55.7% involvement respectively. Parental expectations, conformity, taking up courses due to external influence like parental choice or societal pressure, high competition in getting grades, reservations in education are found as the most vital reasons for students involving in academic dishonesty.

Key words: Academic Dishonesty; Cheating behavior; College students; Factors influencing; reasons.

Introduction

Dishonesty is the most common phenomena in present society, and it may be defined as the act or else trying to perform the act without honesty. It is used to describe a lack of virtue or integrity, cheating, lying, or being deliberately misleading and deceptive. The fundamental component of a majority of offenses (violation of the law) is dishonesty relating to the achievement (Munir & Shahzadi, 2011). Academic dishonesty can be defined as a means of dishonesty in the academic setting. Various studies in diverse fields conducted on assessing the prevalence of the act, found the considerably worrisome amount of academic dishonesty. One of the largest studies conducted in the USA and Canada found 47% to 84% of academic dishonesty (McCabe, 1997; McCabe et al., 2002 & McCabe, 2005). One of the explorative studies in Midwestern, private liberal-arts college, indicated 89% of academic dishonesty (Kisamore et al., 2007). In another study among medical students in Croatia showed 97% of dishonesty (Kukolja Taradi et al., 2012). Jones (2011) in his research found that next to business students engineering students involved in academic dishonesty behavior, as results from their study showed 74% of dishonesty among engineering students and 84% in business students, higher than science and humanities students with 67% and 63% respectively,

which was in line with research conducted by McCabe in 1997 with 84% academic dishonesty in business students and 72% in engineering students.

Researchers got interested in various unethical means of gaining advantages in academic settings and found that the dishonesty behaviors varied widely and evolved from traditional methods to use of advanced technology which includes techniques like cheat sheets, unauthorized discussion, forged data or statics, unauthorized use of electronics in the examination, unsanctioned group work, use of someone else paper in exams with-out permission (Bjorklund & Wenestam, 1999; Nyamawe & Mtonyole, 2014) Use of false excuses when deadlines are missed, using information from other students without their permission in exams, quizzes and assignments (Nelson et al., 2013) which is considered as cheating behavior. Academic dishonesty can be broadly classified as such plagiarism, falsification, cheating behavior, manipulation, taking outside help, and cheating in exams. (Bashir & Bala, 2018).

There may be various factors influencing academic dishonesty like parental pressure, peer pressure (Maring et al., 2018), high academic achievement, low morality (Miller et al., 2011; Henning et al., 2013), poor time management, value issues, lack of professionalism, fear of failure, emotional issues, laziness or lack of effort in teaching methods and curriculum issues, the problem in understanding issues (Henning et al., 2013), commercialization of schools and universities (Kezar & Bernstein, 2016). Few kinds of research concentrated on demographic variables like gender, socio-economic conditions, and cultural beliefs and found the existence of a relationship with academic dishonesty behavior (Newstead et al., 1996; Tibbetts, 1997; Whitley et al., 1999). As such in the research conducted by Genereux and McLeod (1995) on college students to explore the circumstances surrounding cheating, gave a stimulating division of factors or reasons surrounding cheating. Whether it may be a planned or a spontaneous act of cheating the reasons may be influential and un-influential. Some factors may act as influential but don't trigger the act of cheating and vice versa.

Some theories gave a detailed explanation of what triggers academic dishonesty. Most of the factors that were pressurized as vital are external factors that emphasized obtaining the desired output which was explained in Agnew's general strain theory (1992). In this theory, it has been discussed how decisions were taken based on strains obtained due to conflict between socially desirable, approved, and most emphasized goals with an inadequate opportunity to the person to achieve the goal with legitimate institutional means. Initially, this theory was developed in criminology in 1992, but got more attention in the educational system. Smith et al., in 2012 in their study on the impact of college stressors on deviant reactions of undergraduate students provided partial support to the Angew's strain theory (1992). They tested the effect of frustration due to 1. Blocked goals and cumulative stress like academic shortcomings and perceived injustice where an individual believes that the others may have an unfair advantage in the job market or getting into post-baccalaureate like engineering, medical and law colleges. 2. Measures of negatively valued stimuli like having uninteresting or meaningless classes and 3. Removal of positive stimuli on academic dishonesty. Students indulging in academic dishonesty due to parental and societal expectations can be explained by this theory.

But this is not all, as academic dishonesty doesn't take place solely on unjust strains but also other factors like Individual attitude, personality, diverse motives, and diverse intentions play a vital role in deciding one's act. Social beings make and transform the world in which they live according to their intentions and motives as explained by Social practice theory (Reckwitz, 2002; Starovoytova et al., 2016), which explained the dynamic relationship between social structure and human agency can be called as "routinized behavior" in Social practice theory. This is how academic dishonesty is slowly becoming an acceptable norm (Madara et al., 2016). Daumiller & Janke (2019) in their research developed a model which showed that appearance goals acted as a moderator which considerably influenced the relationship between appearance goal condition and cheating in social norm condition. Individual motivation, acceptance, and neutralizing the deviant behavioral act with external reasons can be explained by social practice theory (2002).

Academic dishonesty is a form of deviant behavior (Blankenship & Whitley, 2000). The research found that if a person involves in one form of deviant behavior they would involve in other forms of deviant behavior. In a research carried out on undergraduate students to study the profile of academic offenders they found a strong association between academic dishonesty and different personal perceptions, the academic performance, and involvement in other perilous behaviors. The behaviors included driving violations, causing accidents, deviance, and daring behaviors. They also established a relationship with health risks like smoking, drug abuse, misguided nutrition practices, and multiple sexual partners. (Korn & Davidovitch, 2016).

Sutherland (1939) in his differential association theory explained that even though criminal behavior is due to general needs and values of a human agency but the behavior can't be justified by those reasons because non-criminal behavior can also be due to similar reasons. The person comes in contact with behavior and he will be making the decision either to or not to imitate the behavior. Here the individual attitude matters the most. This theory was further extended into the academic setting. According to Aker's social learning theory (1966), academic dishonesty behavior is obtained from modeling and observation (Starovoytova et al., 2016).

Aker (1998) provided stages of modeling of the behavior of an individual in committing a violating act. It says initially the individual gets in contact with those who commit, model, and support violations of social and legal norms as we can say the students come in contact with those students who are involved in academic dishonesty which is a social violation in an academic institution. And later, the behavior is differentially reinforced in conformity with the group, which is considered in general terminology as peer pressure or peer influence. The individual gets exposed to more deviant (academic dishonesty) than conforming norms and gradually develops their learned definitions of deviant behavior (Starovoytova et al., 2016; Walker & Holtfreter, 2015).

There are huge research shreds of evidence proving facts that conduct deviance in early childhood age if not given proper focus leads to criminal acts in the future. Dishonesty was considered as one of the strongest childhood predictors of adult offending (Losel et al., 2012). Even after a number of researches showed the seriousness effect of academic dishonesty on the degradation of the quality of the education system and societal squalor In India the focus on academic dishonesty is very less as student cheating is considered as a general mistake done by a child and is a part of development. As the emphasis is less the research done on exploring factors influencing academic dishonesty are very few. This paper discussed the reasons for students involving in academic dishonesty through focused group discussion.

Research Objectives

1. To find the prevalence of academic dishonesty among undergraduate students.
2. To find gender differences in the prevalence of academic dishonesty among undergraduate students.
3. To assess the frequency of academic dishonesty behavioral types.
4. To explore reasons influencing academic dishonesty.

Methodology

Research Design

Sample

The study consists of a sample of 130 students with a mean age of 20.2 enrolled in various technical courses of a large college with strength of around 5000 in a city from Andhra Pradesh, India. The researcher approached the college and gave a brief account of the purpose and procedure of the research. The research was conducted in three phases, starting with the experimental observation in phase 1 where an exam was piloted for experimental observation by dividing the sample randomly into 3 groups, namely group 1, group

2, and group 3, and was conducted in 3 computer laboratories. The sample was assigned according to the department and lab capacity as instructed by the college administration. In Phase 2, a survey was conducted through the questionnaire for assessing the frequency of types of academic dishonesty. The inclusion criteria decided for analysis are based on answering the survey by the students' i.e questionnaires which were marked randomly, incomplete, or with missing values were eliminated. The response rate was 80.7% of total sample i.e out of 130 students' 106 responses of which 45.3% males and 54.7% females were included for analysis. It was followed by a focus group discussion on a sample selected randomly from the 3 groups that involved in the experiment on two following subsequent days. The number of groups for focus group discussion was based on the saturation limit of the discussion (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011; Hennink et al., 2019). Here we got a saturation limit with 4 groups consisting of 12 members in each group giving a total of 48 members. The selection of samples for focus group discussion was based on the voluntary participation of the students.

Procedure

Objective 1- The researcher had approached the sample as a staff of a consultant company conducting reasoning and aptitude test in collaboration with placement cell, which is a unit in the college that looks over the career opportunities and skills improvement of the students for preparing them for career opportunities. The sample was informed that it is an evaluation test conducted by placement cell as a part of which they would be undergoing the first round of exam consisting of the standard questionnaire of aptitude and reasoning with low and medium difficulty questions. The experiment was carried with the help of college faculty who were trained to do invigilation in the exam for the experiment. The exam was conducted online. During the exam, the investigators were instructed to be mere observers rather than active participants. They were instructed to allow students to be comfortable and observe their exam behavior i.e no honor codes were instructed, but it was clearly informed that it is an exam to evaluate their performance. The research supervisor has been a passive observer of the examination lab.

Objective 2- The survey method was opted to assess the frequency of academic dishonesty behavioral types by using a standardized scale of academic dishonesty. The questionnaire is given to the same sample immediately after completion of the debriefing of the experiment. The sample has explained the significance of the study and the importance of its truthful contribution.

Objective 3- Focus group method was opted to explore the reasons for the involvement of students in academic dishonesty. The research got a saturation limit with 4 groups consisting of 12 members in each group giving a total of 48 members. The selection of samples for focus group discussion was based on the voluntary participation of the students.

Tools

For experiment, the exam paper contains a total of 40 questions that include Verbal Ability and Numerical Ability which are taken from Standardized Differential Aptitude Test DBDA. David's Battery of Differential Abilities test was selected in order to maintain the standard of the exam conducted as per requirement of the experiment. The items include vocabulary and understanding proverbs under verbal ability part and manipulating numbers rapidly in items involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

A standardized Academic Dishonesty Scale (ADS) was designed with a six factor structure was employed to study the types academic dishonesty which was constructed by Bashir and Bala (2018). The six factors include cheating in examination, plagiarism, outside help, prior cheating, falsification and lying about academic assignments. The questionnaire consists of 23 behavioral items that comes under mentioned above types. The items are designed in form of general acts of academic dishonesty like "During examination I use signals to fetch answers from my friends.", "I give false explanations when I miss

deadline of my educational project.” which are given response in terms of likert scale consisting of “never”, rarely, “sometimes”, “often” and “always”.

Focus group discussion the researcher acted as a moderator and all the discussions were recorded in form of notes and audio recording. The questioning for the discussion in the session was divided into three stages- probe questions, follow up questions and an exit question. Questions like “what do you mean by academic dishonesty” were asked as probe questions which intend to explore the perception of students on academic dishonesty and also to make group comfortable with the each other and with the discussion. In order to generate required data an open ended question was asked “What do you think that are influencing factors for academic dishonesty”. Follow up questions like “what do you think about community influence” were asked whenever the moderator felt the discussion is going out of frame or when it was felt the discussion was dawdling.

Results

Experimental Observation:

The prevalence of cheating behavior in examination is taken in from three sections. Two sections are obtained from faculty and student perceptive in the experimental observation method and third one is from a self-reporting questionnaire. In section 1 interview was taken from the invigilators about the prevalence of cheating behavior that was shown by the sample in the exam hall. They were asked “to what percentage of students do you think were involved in academic dishonesty”. Faculty gave the observed frequencies as 65%, 40% and 80% of cheating behavior in Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3 respectively.

Later in Section 2, the prevalence was obtained from students by orally questioning students who were part of focus Group Discussion. They were questioned “in your opinion how much percentage of people around you involved in academic dishonesty in the experiment”. The opinion was taken as a group where each group agreed to 90%, 70%, 80% and 60% of Academic dishonesty respectively in the experimental examination from 4 groups of focus group discussion.

Self- reporting questionnaire:

In section 3, the prevalence rate is obtained from self-reporting academic dishonesty questionnaire (table 1), where the frequency of students admitted to one or the other form of academic dishonesty is 93.4% projecting a high prevalence rate of dishonesty behavior among students, which was supported by other researches where they found the prevalence of about 82.1% by Hunter (2015), 80% Clayton (1999) and 97% by Kukolja Taradi et al., (2012).

Table 1

Academic Dishonesty Prevalence Percentage Table

Types of dishonesty	Q.No	No	Yes
	During examination I use signals to fetch answers from my friends.	44.3	55.7
Cheating in examination	I use prohibited things like hidden notes, calculators and other electronic devices during examination	88.7	11.3
	I interchange my allotted answer book with other student in examination room	87.7	12.3

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	During an examination, I solve answers on question paper and handover to my classmates.	60.4	39.6
	During an examination, I solve answers on question paper and handover to my classmates.	55.7	44.3
Plagiarism	I copy summary of a story/poem/chapter from a textbook & claim it as completed by me.	72.6	27.4
	For submitting assignment, I copy and change few sentences/lines/words and phrases from other sources.	27.4	72.6
	I use online resources in my personal educational assignment/project without citing the author.	34.9	65.1
	For personal comments I manipulate scientific information on internet and claim it as written by me.	79.2	20.8
Outside help	I attempt to make special considerations to attain or getting favors i.e. (bribery)	79.2	20.8
	In an individual work/assignment I take help from others to complete it.	23.6	76.4
	I use unfair means to obtain information about the content of the test before it was given	70.8	29.2
	Before examination I try to know questions asked in paper.	52.8	47.2
	I write expected answers on table/wall/hand/paper etc. in prior time	83.0	17.0
Prior cheating	I interchange my allotted seat near efficient student to get better grade in examination.	86.8	13.2
	Before examination I encourage other classmates to do cheating.	82.1	17.9
	I submit the assignment in my name after getting it prepared by my friends.	87.7	12.3
Falsification	I damage library books so that classmates do not get required content.	94.3	5.7
	In a course I submit the same educational assignment more than one time	86.8	13.2
	I give false explanations when I miss deadline of my educational project.	49.1	50.9
Lying about academic assignments	I buy a project/assignment/paper online & submit it as my individual effort.	79.2	20.8
	Before exam I pay someone to write a paper/homework for me	89.6	10.4
	I provide false excuses to teacher, to gain extra time on project/assignment.	58.5	41.5

The second objective is to find the difference in frequency of academic dishonesty in gender has been analyzed from self-reporting academic dishonesty questionnaire (Table 2) . It was found that there is a significant difference between male and females ($t= 4.857, p<0.000$) where males admitted to high level of academic dishonesty with mean 40.50 compared to females with mean of 31.55 academic dishonesty.

Table2*Gender Differences in Academic Dishonesty Dimensions Table*

Scale	Dimensions	Mean		t-value	p- value
		M	Fe		
Academic Dishonesty Scale	Cheating in exams	8.35	6.41	4.451	0.000**
	Plagiarism	8.85	7.17	3.147	0.002**
	Outside help	7.90	6.21	3.400	0.001**
	Prior cheating	4.42	3.34	3.482	0.001**
	Falsification	3.88	3.26	2.360	0.020**
	Lying about assignments	7.10	5.16	4.601	0.000**
	Total score	40.50	31.55	4.857	0.000**

M-male, Fe- female. * Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) **Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The further analysis of frequencies of behavioral types was shown in Table 3. As we can see the type of dishonesty behavior involved by the sample ranged from minimum of 5.7% to maximum of 76.4%. The total percentage of students admitted to academic dishonesty (including rarely, sometimes, often and always) is about 93.4% indicating a high prevalence of academic dishonesty among students. Only 6.7% have admitted as that they never done academic dishonesty.

Table-3*Percentage of prevalence of academic dishonesty behaviors table.*

Sl.No	Behavior	Prevalence (%)				
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	During examination I use signals to fetch answers from my friends.	44.3	34.9	17.0	3.8	0
2	I use prohibited things like hidden notes, calculators and other electronic devices during examination	88.7	8.5	8.5	0	0
3	I interchange my allotted answer book with other student in examination room	87.7	11.3	0.9	0	0
4	During an examination, I solve answers on question paper and handover to my classmates.	60.4	28.3	10.4	0	0.9

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5	During an examination, I solve answers on question paper and handover to my classmates.	55.7	25.5	14.2	3.8	0.9
6	I copy summary of a story/poem/chapter from a textbook & claim it as completed by me.	72.6	14.2	9.4	2.8	0.9
7	For submitting assignment, I copy and change few sentences/lines/words and phrases from other sources.	27.4	19.8	30.2	16.0	6.6
8	I use online resources in my personal educational assignment/project without citing the author.	34.9	14.2	19.8	20.8	10.4
9	For personal comments I manipulate scientific information on internet and claim it as written by me.	79.2	11.3	5.7	1.9	1.9
10	I attempt to make special considerations to attain or getting favors i.e. (bribery)	79.2	12.3	5.7	2.8	0
11	In an individual work/assignment I take help from others to complete it.	23.6	33.0	29.2	10.4	3.8
12	I use unfair means to obtain information about the content of the test before it was given	70.8	12.3	11.3	3.8	1.9
13	Before examination I try to know questions asked in paper.	52.8	24.5	17.0	1.9	3.8
14	I write expected answers on table/wall/hand/paper etc. in prior time	83.0	5.7	6.6	0.9	3.8
15	I interchange my allotted seat near efficient student to get better grade in examination.	86.8	10.4	0.9	0	1.9
16	Before examination I encourage other classmates to do cheating.	82.1	11.3	4.7	1.9	0
17	I submit the assignment in my name after getting it prepared by my friends.	87.7	6.6	2.8	0.9	1.9
18	I damage library books so that classmates do not get required content.	94.3	2.8	1.9	0.9	0
19	In a course I submit the same educational assignment more than one time	86.8	8.5	2.8	0	1.9

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20	I give false explanations when I miss deadline of my educational project.	49.1	23.6	20.8	4.7	1.9
21	I buy a project/assignment/paper online & submit it as my individual effort.	79.2	13.2	4.7	1.9	0.9
22	Before exam I pay someone to write a paper/homework for me	89.6	8.5	0.9	0	0.9
23	I provide false excuses to teacher, to gain extra time on project/assignment.	58.5	18.9	18.9	0.9	2.8

Taking ‘outside help’ has been found to be the most prominent form of academic dishonesty behavior with 76.4% of students admitting that they take help from others in order to complete the individual assignment assigned to them. Followed by plagiarism which was found to be 72.6% and 65.1% of students are using online information for personal assignments without citing the author has been admitted as most often academic dishonesty, followed by submitting assignment by copying and making few changes in few aspects of the sentence format or words from other sources. The fourth dimension of the scale ‘Lying about academic assignments’ found to be around 50.9% where the most prominent behavior is giving false excuses to faculty, when students fail to meet the deadline. Cheating in examination can also be taken as prevalent academic dishonesty as more than 50% ie 55.7% have admitted to involve in cheating in exams by fetching answers from others by using signals supported by previous researches. (Genereux & McLeod, 1995; Kukolja Taradi et al., 2012; Birks et al., 2018).

Focus group discussion

The reasons for students involving in academic dishonesty are explored through thematic analysis of focus group discussion, which is summarized below. It has been found that the reasons for academic dishonesty among students might be either influential or un-influential. The influential reasons may be due to the presence of triggers or due to lack of deterrents and sometimes both combine and contribute to academic dishonesty. The themes obtained from analysis are achievement motivation, neutralization attitude, parental influence, college/faculty influence, societal influence.

Discussion

Academic dishonesty is progressive and alarmingly prevalent in nature among engineering students (McCabe & Drinan, 1999; McCabe & Trevino, 1997). The students admitting to act is more worrisome as it is indicating how it became a normalized behavior among students. It has been observed that the perception of faculty regarding academic dishonesty is different from students. There can be various reasons for the incongruence of perception. A student is more likely to have more information regarding their peers than compared with faculty. As such students try their level best not to get a bad impression from the faculty they do act in an intelligent modus where they would not get caught by the invigilator like using signals to fetch answers from their peers (55.7% of students agreed to do this type of academic dishonesty behavior in self-reporting questionnaire). Other reasons might be like upholding their image as admitting to students cheating in their presence would reflect negatively their managing ability of a classroom, perceiving that academic dishonesty as a less offensive act which doesn’t need much attention, not being able to produce evidence (Coalter et al., 2007) and not having awareness on different types of cheating behaviors or methods opted by students.

The result obtained in the analysis of gender differences in academic dishonesty was supported by many researches (e.g., Michaels and Miethe, 1989; Newstead et al., 1996; Tibbetts, 1997). In a study done by Ip et al., (2018) found that there is no significant difference based on gender (e.g., Jereb et al., 2018). The

differences in the result might be due to differences in cultural environment of the place of living. India is one of male dominated country (Jayachandran, 2015). A. C. McCabe et al. (2006) in their research mentioned that male dominated cultures are seeing more male indulging in academic dishonesty when compared with female as they have inbuilt nature of being in competitive environment proving themselves in the front line (Calabrese & Cochran, 1990) in the race which might be the one of the reason for the male being involved in academic dishonesty in this study. Similarly individual who are inclined more towards religion where being moral and honest (Whitley et al., 1999) provides pride indulge less in deviant behaviors. A female being more religious compared to males and having more moral constrains (Smith & Paternoster, 1987) than males make them less indulging in academic dishonesty. Where Tibbetts (1997) in his research found explained that low self-control and high intension to cheat are projected by men and women project high levels of shame and perceived external approvals.

Achievement motivation: Individual motivation for gaining high marks is and comparing themselves with others is the most agreed reason by the students. Owunwanne et al. (2010) in their research emphasized more on an individual point of view to get involved in academic dishonesty where he mentioned reasons like unrealistic expectations, greater emphasis on success, lack of preparedness as vital reasons, which was also supported by the research conducted by Smith et al., in 2012. A student mentioned that “unlike in olden days children now are spending more time in coaching centers and all their focus is concentrated on only one aspect which is excelling in academics as result of which they are not developing skills to face different kinds of situations. When difficulties come they doubt their capacities and they are going for academic dishonesty”. Other reasons include lack of preparation, incapability, low self-esteem and inferiority complex (McCabe citation).

Neutralization attitude: An individual mentioned that “if it is for helping a friend it is okay”. On the other hand, few behaviors were not even perceived as Academic dishonesty like bunking of class, reading from an abridged version (All in one, Guides etc.) of a subject rather than the original textbook. The behaviors are neutralized with reasons like non interest or less informative teaching procedures or availability of more informative lessons in the internet (Naghdi pour & Emeagwali, 2013). Another student mentioned that it was not a serious exam so they helped out each other, which is contradictory to research by Genereux and Mcload (1995) where they found that the requirement of the course don't play as an influencing reason.

Parental pressure: Parents want their children to get successful and lead a good life because of which they try to provide continuous monitoring on their academic progress of the students. This was mentioned as one of the indirect pressurizing behavior of parents on students to involve in means which would satisfy their parents. They also mentioned that sometimes due to responsibilities that they have to take up at home, they go for academic dishonesty as they want to have a degree and a good salary. One student mentioned, “no parent would actually teach or support academic dishonesty but their expectations from their child compel the child to choose the path.”

Peer influence: Another most prominent point raised in discussion was peer pressure. Almost every individual possess need for affiliation they mentioned reasons like “to avoid alienation”, “conformity” and “avoiding sarcasm” (Briggs et al., 2013). Even they want to study their peer group make fun of them leading them to do things that doesn't make them different from others. Not only with study feel alienated. They said that everyone else do so they are allowed to do. A student explained “when we do not understand what faulty are saying we may better bunk the class and can learn from online classes”.

Societal influence: Most of the participants in the focus group discussion mentioned the main factor for academic dishonesty is “taking up a course with-out interest due to external pressure” which includes parental decisions, societal inclination or responsibilities. As India is a collective society (Chadda & Deb, 2013), the decision making generally depends on subjective norms (Hossain & Ali, 2014). Unlike in western society children in India are under parental care until they get into perceived people's view of independence. For example, males are considered as independent if they have obtained a job and for female

when they have entered into marital life. The sample expressed that they are not able to choose their career as parents expect them to go into widespread profession which are considered as high profiled jobs by society like either medical or engineering irrespective of their capabilities and interests. Next major point in the student's perspective is "faulty education system" including reservation system which is a policy made and followed by Indian government in order to enhance the Quality of life of underprivileged communities and people (Indian constitution, Article 15(4), Article 15 (5) and Article 15(6), Article 16(4) and Article 16(6)). They explained that due to reservation system where in which the person who secured less marks in the exam gets placed in good colleges and government jobs where the persons who are in non-reserved category misses the chances even when their score is higher and this very reason make them very angry and making them to accept academic dishonesty something unfair is being done to them that was explained by strain theory by Angnew's (1992) and was study by Smith et al., in 2012 in academic setting. The other concern they have shown is increase in number of private colleges than government colleges and also with high college fees. India has given more importance to private colleges than government colleges making more demand for seats in those colleges (Frayer & Pathak, 2019). But due to the reservation system and management seats, where people who couldn't make into colleges by merit take admission in colleges (Sahoo, 2017) and the students who are actually eligible are not getting chance (Nagarajan, 2018) to get into the colleges, which is making them loose interest to maintain ethical means, as mentioned in Agnew's general strain theory (1992) which as seen as unjust are seen higher in magnitude leading in association with decreasing social control and creating incentive or social pressure to engage in criminal coping.

College and Community: Other reasons include traditional teaching methods, unrevised or irrelevant syllabus said to be a reason for losing interest in course learning, but since they need a degree they have to gain marks ultimately walking towards academic dishonesty. The students perceived that there should be revision in the syllabus and make it more practical approach than theoretical which is making them to lose interest in their field. Also they explained that there is vast syllabus and they have to cover with in a limited period of time which pressurizes them to take aid of unethical means to reach the standard in global competition. Teachers showing partiality among students by giving marks and chances based on impression formation, cooperating or allowing cheating in order to maintain the college name which is also mentioned by research done by Chirikov and Shmeleva (2018) on whether university system encourage dishonesty. Another research conducted to explore the faculty and peer influence among college students by Teodorescu and Andrei (2008) found a different perspective from the result obtained. They found that either perceived faculty dishonesty or interaction between faculty and student has no significant influence on student's act of cheating in exams. Whereas the research supported the notion of relevance of courses and quality of teaching methods of the faculty.

Another mentioned point is lack of recreational activities. A student mentioned that "playing sports increases the sportive spirit and the person who plays sports would like to have achievement based on his capabilities but not by cheating", which is a contradictor to research conducted by Lambert et al. (2003) where it was explained that reducing time in recreational activities would increase time spent on academics (and this would decrease the incentive to cheat) whereas research conducted by Elliott (2014) in mid-western liberal arts schools which showed no significant relationship amid extra-curricular activities and academic dishonesty.

Conclusions

From the study, it is concluded that the academic dishonesty among students is high and the way students admitting to the act shows turning of behavior into an acceptable and common norm. Since the reasons addressed by the students involving in academic dishonesty varied from individual motivation to community influence, the strategies or interventions for addressing the problem should be developed accordingly.

Recommendations

The result from the research conforms the alarming raise in academic dishonesty in different forms which has to be addresses as early as possible. Limitations of the study was observed, since the study is limited to single campus from a particular place so the result obtained can't be generalized to other places with different culture. Increasing the sample size and conducting on various other heterogeneous sample would be suggestible. Few reasons stated by the sample mainly related with external reasons may not be truly the reason, as the research questions are based on the direct questioning it's the tendency of the individual to rationalize their socially undesirable internal behaviors on to external factors. Also, the study of factors influencing academic dishonesty was carried forward from student perspective as such it would be more improved if faculty views can be added as faculty are also important stockholders of the academic environment.

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