ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENTS' MORAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Academic dishonesty is an illegal activity in which students are involved in different ways for the temporary benefit of ignoring other aspects of this illegal activity. One aspect of this activity enchants students to get temporary success in exams through unlawful activity. On the other hand, the second aspect is very terrible, which spoils all students' abilities. This study aims to highlight the effect of academic dishonesty on students' moral development and personality. This study was conducted at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. Out of a total seven faculties faculty of social sciences was chosen purposively. A total of 105 students were selected randomly from the chosen faculty. The researcher collected data through a validated and pre-tested questionnaire. Collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of this study indicate that lack of confidence, Failure to explore ideas, and lack of hard work have adverse effects on students' personalities. Lack of discipline among students and low acceptance of students' opinions lowered students' moral development. This study suggested that academic dishonesty is minimized by using institutions' ethical, professional standards and building student confidence.

INTRODUCTION

Dishonesty means acts of deceit and fraud for personal satisfaction. Dishonesty removes emotional regulation, empathy, efficient communication, healthy social engagement and social independence. In the educational field, several students conduct acts of academic dishonesty, which gives them short success; in the future, these acts will prove disastrous for them (Merced, 2013). Cheating, bullying, duplicate submission, falsifying, illegally helping others in other exams, academic misconduct, and disinterest are significant scholastic dishonesty. These types of academic dishonesty can increase their grades, but in practical life, students face several issues as they have no command of the subject and show dishonesty (Sabates et al., 2014). The reasons for academic dishonesty may be the factors that commonly affect persons' educational and economic status (Cazan & Icob, 2014). Academic dishonesty is an unhealthy and illegal learning activity usually done to get good marks and pass exams. Academic dishonesty deteriorates fair and compassionate social values and norms. These misconducts can increase students' grades of students but morally, students fail in all fields of life (Cowel & Smith, 2015).

The main motivation behind academic dishonesty is to surpass others by achieving excellent grades. These students might harbour jealousies toward the skills, prowess, methods of labour, and interpersonal

interactions of others (William, 2015). Students who behave dishonestly desire to dominate and take advantage of others. Most often, pupils who engage in excessive dishonesty end up acting corruptly. Students who engage in academic dishonesty tend to lose their fair and empathetic beliefs. Academic dishonesty can also occur when someone tries to divert attention from facts that could negatively impact their standing in society. Some people never comprehend the demands of the situation and lose their temper easily. They attempt to subdue others by engaging in unlawful dishonesty (Gregon et al., 2016).

Word Harmful behavior during class that lowers the standard and caliber of education in all countries is known as educational dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is now regarded as a serious problem and cause for concern. When students engage in harmful dishonesty, they frequently utilize it against one or more peers. These actions are considered to be a component of the violence that is spreading quickly around the globe. Several rules and regulations can eliminate this violence in schools caused by educational dishonesty. Tight rules are required to prevent academic dishonesty from contaminating the educational process (Kibriya, 2017). Academic dishonesty has several types which negatively affect the personality of students. To gain personal satisfaction, the students perform various kinds of cheating, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy, fabrication, collusion, duplication, and academic misconduct. However, all these acts are illegal and make students habitual in doing any immorality in their practical lives (James & Crawford, 2021).

Christine and James's (2008) study looked at the degree of academic dishonesty among students based on five personality variables. The results demonstrated that conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism did not affect students' willingness to cheat, but openness had a moderate impact. Aslam and Nazir (2011) investigated the relationship between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness in students and their academic dishonesty. 932 respondents who were enrolled in graduate and undergraduate programs at different Pakistani universities provided the information for the study. The study found that students' personalities greatly impacted opinions regarding academic dishonesty and that there were some notable relationships between personality variables and the frequency of student cheating.

According to Bogart et al. (2012), academic dishonesty has a negative cause-and-effect link and will negatively impact students' performance in the future. They emphasized the intricate problem of dishonesty by highlighting its three contributing factors: children who cheat on tests or exams in class engage in play-acting, those who tease others become more aggressive and disobedient, and those who fabricate information have a greater propensity for snacking. In a different study, Cook et al. (2012) found that students increasingly use personal computers to plagiarize other people's work and cheat on written tests. Moral and social values in educational institutions are increasingly being destroyed by the personalities or dispositions of students who engage in dishonest activities. Various variables and motives motivate students to participate in unethical behaviors, such as the company.

Academic dishonesty was a prevalent issue in post-secondary institutes and has increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Arellano et al., 2024). They further revealed that students exhibited lower honesty in a moral context. Evaluation methods, integrating ethical considerations into the curriculum, offering supplementary classes, and enforcing stricter penalties for cheating students can alleviate academic dishonesty among students. This was endorsed by Krou et al. (2021), who examined the relationship between academic dishonesty and motivation among students using a meta-analysis of literature focusing on academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty was negatively correlated with motivational factors like classroom mastery goal structure and intrinsic motivation. At the same time, it is positively associated with motivation and extrinsic goal orientation, and age was a significant moderator. Age was a key mediator and is also favourably connected with extrinsic goal orientation and motivation.

In the current study, efforts are made to explore academic dishonesty among university students and its impacts on their moral and personality development.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

Punjab is 2nd largest province of Pakistan by land area and population. Faisalabad is also the most significant industrial city in Punjab. Faisalabad, formerly Lyallpur, is known for its industry and rich educational facilities. The total area of Faisalabad District is 5856 square kilometers' Faisalabad is a developed city also known as an institutional city. Faisalabad is also known for having the oldest University of Agriculture. This study was conducted at the University of Agriculture in Faisalabad, Pakistan (UAF). The University of Agriculture Faisalabad was founded in 1906. There are seven faculties overall at UAF: Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences, Faculty of Animal Husbandry, Faculty of Agricultural Engineering and Technology, Faculty of Food Nutrition and Home Sciences. One faculty of Social Sciences was selected randomly from the seven faculties. There are three institutes IARE, IBMS and IAEERD, with selected faculty and one Institute of Agricultural Extension, Education and Rural Development was chosen randomly.

Population, sample and Sampling

The total population of this study was 144 students studying in M. Phil Education 2nd semester 'Section A' 124 students and 2nd semester 'Section B' 20 students. The sample size of the study was 105 students, which was determined using online available software i.e.; www.surveysystem.com, keeping confidence interval at 5% and 95% confidence levels For the selection of respondents, a proportionate sampling technique was used. Ninety (90) students were selected from Section A and 15 from Section B.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

The data were collected through a validated and pre-tested questionnaire. A questionnaire was prepared to collect data from chosen respondents. The questionnaire consists of close-ended questions, 5-point Likert scale i.e. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided 4=agree, 5=strongly agree was used. The questionnaire was pre-tested on 20 respondents other than the sample size. The face and content validity technique was used to check the study instrument's validity by a group of experts from the University of Agriculture Faisalabad's Institute of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, who reviewed the questionnaire for this reason. The reliability of a research instrument was assessed by Cronbach's alpha, also known as the coefficient of internal consistency, with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Internal consistency had an average value of 0.712. This indicates that the questionnaire was reliable enough for the data collection. The value excessing 0.6 endorses the internal consistency.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the quantitative data that had been collected. Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentages, weighted scores, and mean values, were computed for the meaningful interpretation of results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Perceived effects of academic dishonesty on the personality of students.

Effect on personality of students	Mean	Std. Deviation	R.O.
Lack of confidence	3.83	0.878	1.
Fail to explore the idea	3.78	0.960	2.
Cooperation ability never flourish	3.76	1.051	3.
Students forget the honest dealing	3.75	0.938	4.
Negative consciousness increased in students	3.67	0.925	5.
Optimism among students becomes reduced	3.60	0.956	6.
Deviation from the objectives	3.53	1.038	7.
The hard-working nature of students become deteriorated	3.50	1.101	8.

1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Undecided, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree

Table 1 presents the respondent's opinions regarding the effects of academic dishonesty on students' personalities. The top ranking factor was lack of confidence with a mean value of 3.83, which lies between undecided and agreeing but more toward agreement. NIU (2019) reported that students involved in cheating could have low self-esteem and negative feelings in their personalities. Due to the disrespect they received, these students may experience issues with their families, careers, and other significant facets of their lives. Failure to explore ideas received 2nd ranking order with a 3.78 mean value between undecided and agreeing but more tended toward agreement.

The 3rd ranked factor was the cooperation ability, which never flourished with a 3.76 mean value lying between undecided or agreeing but more leading toward agreement. Respondents who think about the students forget the honest way of dealing with 4th ranked degrees with a mean value of 3.75, which lies between undecided or agreeing but tending more toward agreement. In their last semester, Hilbert (1985) discovered a direct link between academic dishonesty and unethical actions in a clinical environment.

Negative consciousness increased in students was ranked 5th with a 3.67 mean value and optimism among students reduced was ranked 6th with a 3.60 mean value. Results further indicated that deviation from the objectives got 7th rank with a 3.53 mean value, and the hard-working nature of students deteriorated received 8th ranked order with a 3.50 mean value. Similar results were reported by Aslam and Nazi (2011) found that a student's personality had a significant impact on academic dishonesty. The results made a strong case for academicians to assist students in strengthening their moral and ethical character so that businesses can employ people with solid moral foundations in the workforce. Eshet et al. (2014) also reported a negative correlation between academic dishonesty and the personality qualities of emotional stability and conscientiousness.

Table 2. Perceived effects of academic dishonesty on the moral development of students.

Effect on moral development	Mean	Std. Deviation	R. O
Decrease the habit of creating discipline in the institution	3.48	1.01	1.
Low acceptance another opinion	3.48	1.06	2.
Decrease the sense of quality among students	3.42	1.08	3.
Decrease the habit of giving respect to others	3.38	1.22	4.
Decline the habit of gratitude among students	3.33	1.33	5.
Self-related honesty	3.33	1.05	6.
Unable them how to talk positively	3.29	1.27	7.

1= Very Low, 2=Low, 3=Medium, 4=High, 5=V. High

Table 2 represents the respondents' opinions about the effects of academic dishonesty on the moral development of students. The highest ranking factor decreases the habit of creating discipline in the institution with a 3.48 mean value between medium and high but tending toward high. By diminishing the habit of creating discipline in the institution, students may fail personally and professionally and lose their temper. They forget their moral values and norms. So, educational institutions should maintain discipline and an honest environment for students' moral and ethical development. The same study by Heriyati and Ekasari (2020) established that academic dishonesty moderately impacts moral reasoning. His research also indicated that universities should protect academic integrity by fostering an environment where academic dishonesty is not tolerated and by lowering the likelihood of students engaging in such behavior, as anyone can engage in it regardless of morality.

The low acceptance received the ranking order 2nd, another opinion with a 3.48 mean value, which lies between medium and high but tends toward high. By creating discipline in the institution, students will show a disciplined attitude and follow the institution's rules by accepting other opinions. According to Rigby and Bortolozzo (2013) research on the social psychology of education school children's self-acceptance is not associated with favorable attitudes towards victims, but acceptance of others is rather

strongly associated with pro-victim attitudes decreases the sense of quality among students was received 3rd ranking order and mean value of 3.42 lies between medium or high but tending towards high. By creating an honest and disciplined environment, students accept others' opinions and also maintain the quality of their institution and thoughts. The 4th ranked factor was the decrease in the habit of respecting others, with a 3.38 mean value between medium and high but tending towards high. Decline the habit of gratitude among students received 5th ranked order with a 3.33 mean value between medium and high but tending towards high and the ranked order 6th received by the self-related honesty with a 3.33 mean value between medium or high but tending toward high.

According to the study of Appiah et al. (2022), honesty involves supporting, shielding, and remaining faithful to a colleague. Honesty also demonstrates a sense of "we feeling" or "solidarity," therefore any student who behaves dishonestly is viewed as dishonest. Another study by Fitriah and Madjid (2020) indicated that an individual's physical and emotional well-being are positively impacted by honesty. Sincerity and psychological traits are connected. As a result, it was advised to incorporate motivations into educational honesty since an honest student would refrain from engaging in harmful behaviors.

Unable to talk positively received 7th ranked order with a 3.29 mean value, which lies between medium and high but tends more toward high. Findings are similar to the study conducted by Harding et al. (2007) they applied a modified version of the idea of planned behavior. The pressure to perform well academically, the pressure to land a job, a lack of accountability, a lack of moral integrity, a poor self-image, a lack of pride in a job well done, and a lack of personal drive are some of the elements that might lead to cheating (McCabe et al., 1999). McCabe et al. (2001) determined that immaturity and a lack of moral development are two main reasons for academic dishonesty, among other factors. It was revealed that by developing mature behavior and ethical values, we could remove illegal activities among students. If we fail to establish moral values in students, they may cheat in their future lives. The study by Cazan (2017) reported that it's challenging to anticipate which pupils will cheat in the future because a person's moral character and personal circumstances play a significant role in whether or not they will cheat in school.

Table 3. Suggestions made by respondents to control academic dishonesty.

Sr. No	Statements	F	%
1	Academic dishonesty can be minimized by using moral and professional standards by educator and motivational forces which enhance productivity.	15	14.28
2	Students should work on his \her verbal skills and should improve confidence.	11	10.47
3	Need to cooperate with students and provide financial aid to remove academic issues.	9	8.57
4	Academic dishonesty minimized by to set moral behavioral standard.	5	4.76
5	Build confidence among students.	4	3.81
6	Teacher should deal students without discrimination in this way they may feel confident in their study or professional life.	10	9.52
7.	The Teacher should deliver lecture on ethical value in the class and tell them the importance of hard work.	8	7.62
8	There is dire need for teachers should focus on the development of students regarding morality and social values. This action would help students pass out honest academic profiles.	3	2.86
9	Teacher should create friendly environment.	3	2.86
10	Reduce favoritism, students should be honest with work and reduce gap between teacher and students.	6	5.72
11	Students should start their assignments on time or stay on task.	2	1.91
12	The university sets rules against cheating and implements on these rules.	4	3.81
13	Don't encourage students when they misbehave. Focus on student character building and morality.	6	5.72
14	Academic dishonesty can be reduced by making some rules and laws in institution.	12	11.5

15	All students cannot understand English language as quickly which is important. So, teacher should use appropriate language in class.	9	8.72
16	Teach the students how important honesty is by referencing the Quran and Seerat-e- Nabwai.	7	14.29
17	Institutions must be facilitated students with a good amount of scholarship in this way they avoid doing part-time job and they pay full attention on their studies.	6	5.72
18	Students should read the syllabus carefully. Seek clarification from your instructors regarding class policies.	2	1.91
19	Work with a librarian or the writing center to integrate and cite your sources to avoid plagiarism.	5	4.76
20	Students should learn their lesson daily and complete every task on time.	1	0.25
21	Teacher should fully prepare before delivering lecture and use relevant teaching methods.	7	6.67
22	Parents should create a friendly environment with their children and fulfill the desire of them.	3	2.88
23	Strictness from parents and children must be avoided.	5	4.76

Table 3 shows that 14.29% of respondents suggested teaching the students how important honesty is by referencing the Quran and Seerat-e-Nabwai. The Quran says honesty is a good attribute and a blessing of Allah. Education in the Quran is the best way to reduce dishonesty in all fields and among students. Of the respondents, 14.28% suggested that academic dishonesty can be minimized by using moral and professional standards by educators and motivational forces that enhance productivity. So, educational institutions should establish moral and professional standards and admit those students in institutions who fulfill those standards. In class rooms, teachers also should have moral standard to eliminate those dangerous activities. Slightly more than one-tenth (11.5%) of respondents suggested that academic dishonesty can be reduced through rules and laws in institutions. Academic dishonesty may be reduced if the institution makes strict rules against dishonesty. Strict rules and regulations will make students loyal, responsible, disciplined and honest. One-tenth (10.47%) of respondents suggested that students should work on his their verbal skills and should improve their confidence. If students improve their verbal ability, they learn well, and their verbal skills enhance their understanding level. In this way, their confidence level will grow up. Of study participants, 9.52% suggested that teachers should deal with students without discrimination. In this way they may feel confident in their study or professional life. Only 8.72% of students cannot understand English as quickly as required. Teachers should use appropriate language in class and 8.57% of respondents suggested that they need to cooperate with students and provide financial aid to resolve academic issues. Mostly, students do part-time jobs, which have an impact on their studies university should give financial assistance to fulfil their expenses and students should fully concentrate on their studies. Only 7.62% of respondents suggested that the teacher should deliver a lecture on ethical value in the class and tell them the importance of hard work.

Only 5.72% of respondents suggested that institutions must facilitate students with a good amount of scholarship. In this way, they avoid doing part-time jobs and pay full attention to their studies. Only 4.76 % of respondents suggested that Strictness from parents and teachers must be avoided. Strictness may spoil the ability of the students. Parents should create a friendly environment with their children and fulfil their desires, as suggested by 2.8% of respondents. A deficient proportion of 1.91% of respondents suggested that students read the syllabus carefully. Seek clarification from your instructors regarding class policies. If they read the syllabus carefully there is no chance of exam failure.

CONCLUSIONS

Academic dishonesty is harmful for below-average students, average and talented students who are working hard in their academic sessions. Educational institutions should create a disciplined environment where all immoral activities, including dishonesty, should be discouraged. Teachers, principals, parents

and other educational members should be aware that immoral activities like academic dishonesty damage students' creativity, positivity, moral, ethical and personality. They should be aware of them through different practical examples, seminars and classes on these harmful activities. They should establish check and balance criteria to discourage academic dishonesty and punish those who intentionally and unintentionally are involved in these dangerous activities. Universities should uphold academic integrity by creating an environment where academic dishonesty is unacceptable and reduce the opportunity to commit dishonest acts because everybody might commit such acts regardless of their morality. Parents and teachers should understand and encourage the students' choice in subject selection and encourage them to work hard to become more successful and confident rather than spend too much time on immoral activities. Institutions should work on students' moral development and develop strong personality traits influenced by others.

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