**Students Academic Cheating**

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**Introduction**

Student academic misconduct has been a fertile topic for educational research. Estimates of the number of students who engage in academic dishonesty vary in different research results. This variation is partly due to the fact that researchers generally focus on different types of academic cheating and use different methods for assessing the frequency of it. However, findings strongly suggest that cheating has increased over the course of the past several decades especially due to development of ICT.

**Objectives**

The aim of our study was to investigate the overall frequency and motivation to different forms of cheating (or not cheating) among students. In order to get a better understanding of the problem, the objective was also to relate the outcome to subjects’ backgrounds in terms of sex, age, academic experience (number of study years), etc.

**Methods**

We used a quantitative method - a questionnaire with 11 items: three items examining the forms of student academic dishonesty, two items evaluating the motivation to cheat, two items researched preventive measures encouraging honesty (to motivate to act honestly), other items were used for personal identification (faculty, major, year level). A Facebook student group platform was used to gain the answers of technical university respondents. Data collection was carried out in January 2021 during Covid-19 era, when fully distant education occurred at all universities of the country. 646students participated in the survey and their responses are represented in the circle graphs or pie charts.

**Results**

More than 50 % of students cheated at least once during their studies (83, 3 % of cheaters declared they have been cheating repeatedly), 7, 3% answered they have never cheated. Our assumption considered plagiarism to be the most common form of cheating, but this hypothesis was not confirmed as informal search for information on tests was the most frequent student answer. There were no statistically significant differences between sexes. Lack of time was the most frequent „excuse“ for cheating, followed by criticism that test items were of an inappropriate standard for inclusion in assessment. Students tended to cheat more when they saw other students cheating. We also examined the students view on teacher attitudes and behavior: some teachers seemed to ignore student cheating, some imposed strict measures in order to reduce the student dishonesty. There were small differences in cheating frequency among 9 faculties of technical university.

**Conclusions**

Academic dishonesty and cheating has been conducted by the students as a common behavior in the educational context. The greater effort needs to be used to minimize it. Results indicated that students took motives into account when evaluating the acceptability of academic cheating. Cheating behavior was more common among those who evaluated cheating leniently, and among high schoolers. Teacher behavior played an important role in regulating student moral integrity.