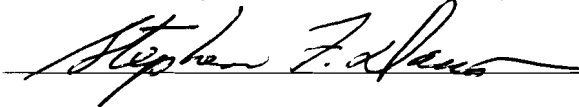


AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Susan Renee' Burns for the Master of Science

in Psychology presented on November 10, 1997

Title: Academic Dishonesty: A Cross-Cultural Expedition

Abstract approved: 

One hundred and thirty-two Japanese students and 210 South African students completed a questionnaire originally employed by Davis and Ludvigson (1995) examining factors associated with academic dishonesty. In comparison to established American academic dishonesty trends, Japanese students violated what is typically seen as “normal” cheating trends. Rates of academic dishonesty increased from high school to university for both men and women. Also, women reported in engaging in academic dishonesty more often than men at the university level. South African students followed the established American trends, but rates of academic dishonesty were at significantly lower levels. Further investigation of determinants, techniques and diverse deterrents are included.

Academic Dishonesty:
A Cross-Cultural Expedition

A Thesis
Presented to
The Division of Psychology and Special Education
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

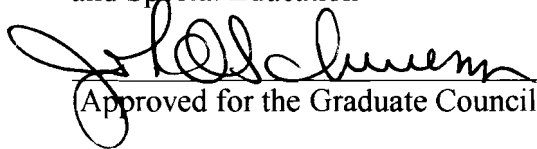
In Partial Fulfillment
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The long-standing epidemic of dishonesty, specifically academic dishonesty, is on the rise. According to the 1979 Carnegie Council Report, an “ethical deterioration” exists within academic life (Baird, 1980). Reasons for cheating are as numerous as cheating culprits. In many instances, students plead ignorance and claim to be confused when identifying exactly what qualifies as academic dishonesty (Barnett & Dalton, 1981; Eve & Bromley, 1981). Those students brave enough to acknowledge what constitutes cheating typically have no strong sentiments towards cheating (Drake, 1941). Others justify their or classmates’ dishonest behavior by mentioning “some forms of cheating are necessary to get the grade they want” (Baird, 1980, p. 515). More often than not, academic dishonesty is attributed to external factors and pressure to perform. Through examination of prevalence, techniques, and diverse deterrents, this paper seeks a greater awareness of the problem at hand. Beyond this awareness, the present research also identifies the presence of academic dishonesty in other cultures. Is the epidemic as widespread outside of the United States?

Prevalence and Determinants

The literature reflects an overwhelming concern for the rise of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty rates have consistently risen and now soar to an all time-high. Drake (1941) reported a cheating rate of 23%, whereas Goldsen, Rosenberg, William, and Suchman (1960) reported rates of 38% and 49% for 1952 and 1960, respectively. Jendrek (1989); Davis, Grover, Becker, and McGregor (1992); and Davis

and Ludvigson (1995) placed the typical rate at between 40% and 60%, but noted other rates as high as 82% (Stern & Havlicek, 1980) and 88% (Sierles, Hendrickx, & Circle, 1980). As these rates increase, researchers seek to identify what factors contribute to cheating behavior.

Baird's (1980) participants attributed cheating to situational factors including the seating arrangement, knowledge of peer performance, existence of low grades, the curriculum, and surveillance during testing. Moreover, he sought to identify the relationship between academic dishonesty and several additional student characteristics such as sex, age, classification, grade point average, fraternity-sorority membership, and involvement in extracurricular activity. Age and classification (year in school) were not found to be a determinant of academic dishonesty. However, classification was related to cheating style(s) used. In examining the sex of the participants, men admitted cheating more than women. Women disapproved more of cheating and admitted feeling guilty if involved in academic dishonesty. Academic achievement, or grade point average, was found to be inversely related to academic dishonesty. Fraternity-sorority membership also was a determinant of cheating behavior. Fraternity and sorority members admitted to cheating more and in more courses than non-Greek participants. Lastly, Baird found those participants involved in three or more extra-curricular activities to be less approving of academically dishonest behavior. The college students serving as participants in Baird's study felt that cheating is morally wrong, and felt guilty for engaging in such behavior but continued to practice it anyway. Other external reasons mentioned in justifying academic dishonesty included competition for grades (35%),

insufficient study time (33%), large workload (26%), instructor pressure (9.5%), graduate school or job pressure (8.5%), parent pressure (8%), and influence of friends (7%).

Barnett and Dalton (1981) examined six factors in cheating behavior. Stress was the first factor addressed; participants often saw cheating as a coping mechanism for stress. Overwhelming numbers of students report pressure for good grades from several sources: parents, relatives, instructors, and universities. Students feel faculty do not realize and fully appreciate the great pressure and stress they feel. The second factor Barnett and Dalton explored is the physical environment. Houston (1976) specified conditions under which cheating flourishes. Some of those conditions include the use of multiple choice exams in large crowded rooms with an inadequate number of proctors, a pervading emphasis on grades, the opinion among students that “everyone cheats,” and the absence of apprehension of cheaters. Participants in Barnett and Dalton’s study viewed test environments as less strictly structured and supervised than did faculty. These students also described peer pressure as an environmental factor. The third factor influencing cheating behavior is intelligence. Research disagrees on the importance of this factor. Most research (e.g., Barnett & Dalton) reports a strong negative correlation between intelligence and cheating. The fourth factor investigated was the participants’ personality characteristics. Those participants with a high need for approval were found to cheat more often. Once again, sex of the participant was evaluated; men reported more academic dishonesty than women. The fifth factor influencing academic dishonesty was the unclear definition (from the students’ perspective) of cheating. Most participants

communicated confusion as to what constitutes academic dishonesty. The sixth and last factor exerting influence on cheating behavior was moral judgement and will. In theory, individuals who are “more” moral should be less likely to cheat, but what is reported by research is inconclusive. As in previous studies, Barnett and Dalton concluded competition and pressure for good grades to be the single most stated cause of cheating.

In an attempt to use sociological theorizing to explain academic deviance, Eve and Bromley (1981) considered two different theories, the internal social control theory and the culture conflict theory. In explaining academic dishonesty with the internal social control theory, deviance comes from the weakening of the individual’s social-psychological commitments to the conventional social order. In other words, social control has eroded, and people are free to be deviant. The culture conflict theory states that deviants are members of groups with norms that conflict with those of a more powerful external group, for example fraternity or sorority membership. The researchers used a survey to assess the prevalence of the two theories and provided data that supported the operation of both mechanisms.

Davis et al. (1992) described two major categories of determinants of cheating behavior, situational and dispositional determinants. Among those situational determinants mentioned, stress and pressure headed the list. Davis et al. note research from Keller (1976) in which 69% of participants justify cheating with good grades. Dispositional determinants include a negative correlation between intelligence and cheating, a negative correlation between need for social approval and frequency of cheating, and a positive correlation between personal work ethic and resistance to

academically dishonest behavior. No reliable sex differences were found. The authors also believe ineffective deterrents, condoning teachers, and an overall diminishing sense of academic integrity contributes to the rise in academic dishonesty.

Gardner, Roper, Gonzalez, and Simpson (1988) are in agreement with other studies addressing factors associated with academic dishonesty. Although participants could not be identified as chronically honest or dishonest, cheating tended to be associated with lower grades. The authors also found that participants felt grades and social approval were enhanced by cheating. Students also attributed cheating to little time for routine assignments and increased academic workload through the semester. Issues of moral development and social learning factors were also components of academically dishonest behavior. Finally, participants in this study felt situational factors such as not understanding the assignment, moods associated with poor health, social problems, and bad grades contributed to cheating behavior.

Johnson and Gormly (1972) attributed academic cheating to personality and situational variables. They concluded the personality factors associated with cheating included the inability to delay reward, low need for achievement, and external control. Situational variables investigated were total number of examination errors, grade, and perceived probability of detection. The authors also found those participants choosing small, immediate rewards were no more likely to cheat than those choosing the larger, delayed rewards. In assessing the internal-external control issue, cheaters indicated they perceived their failures and successes in the classroom as contingent on forces out of their control.

Aaron and Georgia (1994) assessed administrator perceptions of academic dishonesty and found that two-thirds agreed “cheating increases when students perceive grading to be unfair” (p. 6), and likewise, two-thirds of the students agreed “the likelihood that any given student will be dishonest increases to the extent that fellow classmates cheat” (p. 6). Almost 73% of faculty say that students look the other way when they observe cheating in the classroom. Only slightly more than one-third of the participants indicated there is an association between poor teaching and student cheating.

Techniques

Much of how we define academic dishonesty stems from the techniques employed as cheating behaviors. Graham, Monday, O’Brien, and Steffen (1994) explored student and faculty attitudes toward cheating. They reported the academically dishonest behaviors receiving the greatest degree of agreement between students and faculty consisted of looking at notes during a test, arranging to give or receive answers by signal, copying during an exam, taking a test for someone else, asking for an answer during an exam, giving an answer during an exam, copying someone else’s term paper, allowing a student to copy on a test, having someone write a term paper for you, and finding a copy of an exam and memorizing the answers. Cheating behaviors which students and faculty disagreed on included giving test questions to a student in a later session, using an old test to study without the teacher’s knowledge, and using a paper for more than one class. Faculty perceived these infractions as more severe forms of cheating than did students.

Carmack (1983) describes an incident in which students were caught plagiarizing. Their behavior included erroneously crediting authors, copying entire paragraphs without

references, and using a project from another class. In these instances the students claimed they did not know what they were doing was wrong. They also insisted they did not know how to write term papers. Although their complaints may have been valid, the behavior is still considered academically dishonest and calls for attention.

Barnett and Dalton (1981) also presented a list of academically dishonest behaviors. These behaviors included arranging signals with other students, copying someone else's exam without their knowledge, turning in a purchased paper, getting questions/answers from someone who has already taken the exam, adding to a bibliography, working together on homework when an instructor does not allow collaboration, and copying sentences without appropriate citation.

Baird (1980) listed the most prevalent cheating techniques (lower ranks = more frequent usage). The top 10 behaviors included: (1) obtaining test information from other students, (2) allowing someone to copy your work, (3) copying someone else's assignment, (4) plagiarism (from books and articles), (5) copying someone else's test work, (6) concealing professor's errors in grading, (7) illegal test information (crib sheets), (8) stealing/copying a test, (9) changing test paper, and (10) taking the test for someone else. This research also asked participants "if you saw someone cheating, what would you do?" Of those questioned, 40.5% said they would not be disturbed and would do nothing, 40% said they would be disturbed but would do nothing, 20% did not answer the question, and only 1% stated they would report the incident.

Eve and Bromley (1981) also described some of the more common techniques used as cheating behavior. Among these behaviors were such techniques as giving another student answers during an exam, copying answers from another student during an exam, copying material without footnoting, adding items to the bibliography without reading them, writing papers for other students, and using notes or books during a test when instructor prohibited their use. More unique, and perhaps disturbing, techniques including faking illness to avoid taking the test and developing a relationship with the instructor to get test information.

Stern and Havlicek (1986) compared faculty and student definitions of academic misconduct and found a great discrepancy in opinion regarding some cheating behaviors. When asked whether “previewing an examination from a ‘test file’ when the teacher does not permit the students to keep copies of exams and does not know that such a file exists” (p. 133) constitutes academic misconduct, only 57% of students agreed whereas 94% of faculty agreed. Only 63% of students felt “asking another student for the answers to an examination that he/she had taken and you were about to take” (p. 133) was cheating, whereas 87% of faculty believed it was wrong. A small percentage of students (19%) agreed that “reading a condensed version of a novel/play/etc. rather than the assigned full-length version” (p. 133) was dishonest, whereas 63% of faculty agreed that it was academic misconduct. Perhaps a more disturbing finding is that only one out of four students thought “faking the results of a laboratory experiment or project that you ‘ran’ but for which correct results were not obtained” (p. 133) was academic not misconduct. Even more disturbing, 2% of the faculty condoned such dishonest behavior. Only in one

case did a higher percent of students than faculty deem a behavior as academic misconduct. This was true for the case of “taking an examination for another student” (p. 133). It was alarming although the percentages were close (students-98% and faculty-97%).

Davis et al. (1992) offered additional “unique” techniques their participants had employed: “I hid a calculator down my pants, the answers were tape recorded before the test and I just took my Walkman to class and listened to the answers during the test, I’ve done everything from writing all the way up my arm to having notes in a plastic bag inside my mouth, and I would simply make a paper flower, write notes on it, and then pin it to my blouse” (p. 18). At first glance these techniques may seem almost humorous, but in fact they are quite disturbing. Although creative, these techniques exemplify the fact many students put more time and effort into cheating than learning.

Deterrents

The previous research suggests there is a lack of successful deterrents for academically dishonest behavior. From a faculty member’s perspective, students caught cheating should be subjected to some form of punishment. Often, teachers turn to university policies for guidance. Most universities have some form of code or policy regarding academic dishonesty; however, according to Jendrek (1989), the creation of such codes does not guarantee faculty members will use them. In this study, 60% of faculty members reported witnessing some form of cheating, but only 20% met with the student and the department chairperson. For the policies to be effective, Jendrek suggests

both students and faculty members need to understand clearly what happens when a report is filed.

Perhaps students are not aware of the academic dishonesty policy because faculty fail to discuss the issue. In support of this contention, Nuss (1984) reported approximately one-third of the participants involved in her study responded that faculty never or rarely (less than 10 % of the time) discussed their requirements. She also suggests consideration should be given to incorporating a discussion of definitions and expectations for academic integrity. This discussion, to be most effective, should take place early in the course, possibly even during the initial class period. Nuss also believes the importance of penalties in clarifying an institution's commitment to academic integrity cannot be overlooked. Possibly a failing grade for students is not an effective deterrent because they are already in jeopardy of failing the course. A failing grade can also be misleading to other schools that might accept the student as a transfer. Not only must a university be clear in the development of academic dishonesty policies, faculty must relay the importance of such policies and follow through if a situation arises.

Kibler (1994) addresses what institutions are and are not doing when confronting academic dishonesty. From his survey research, he offers six major conclusions. Disciplinary policies are prevalent and are the primary source guiding how institutions address academic dishonesty. Most universities hold these policies for legal reasons should there be any problems with the disciplinary process. Honor codes are not a prevalent system used among universities. Only one-fourth of the participants attended institutions with honor codes; programs to promote academic integrity are not prevalent

in universities. The absence of such programs decreases awareness among students and faculty. The only prevalent forms of communication about academic dishonesty are and books, catalogs, and new student orientation. The lack of communication in the educational environment only fosters cheating behaviors. Moreover there is little communication with faculty about academic dishonesty. Not only is there an insignificant amount of communication, but there is also little effort on the part of faculty members to enforce the policies and encourage academic integrity. There is little involvement on the part of students to develop and reinforce academic dishonesty policies. The separation of students from this process reinforces the feeling that it is “us against them” and encourages cheating behaviors.

Hardy (1981) offers tips for preventing and dealing with academic dishonesty. Professors must explicitly define the punishment for cheating. Mentioning the university’s policy is important, but clearly outlining the steps that would be taken if someone is caught cheating is often more effective. Next, it is of value to avoid asking the same questions or using the same examinations repeatedly as the test may be on file at one of the fraternity or sorority houses on campus. This approach helps discourage cheating behavior. Teachers should also keep tight security on their examinations. Once tests are copied and are ready to be distributed the next day, they should be locked away in a secure place. Another tip the author offers is to know where students are sitting. Have they changed their seating to sit next to a cheating partner? Are they arranged in a pattern enabling them to pass exams back and forth? These are questions teachers must ask themselves. Another piece of advice suggests, if many students are present in a large

lecture hall, alternate forms of the test should be used. Next, professors must be on guard for “ringers” or students paid to take examinations for other students. This tactic is usually only a problem in large lecture classes. Possibly the best prevention for this dishonest behavior is to require students to “check in” presenting their student identification card before they are allowed to take the test. Finally, faculty must proctor their own exams. Professors need to create an atmosphere that values academic integrity.

Singhal and Johnson (1983) report the first step in preventing academic dishonesty lies in having a plan. The first and possibly most important element of the plan stems from having a clear definition of academic dishonesty at the beginning of the term. This consideration of academic dishonesty should include a definition of plagiarism; instructors must make the ground rules clear. Second, teachers should seek to ensure equal access to study materials. The more available these materials are, the less a student feels like they “need” to cheat for the grade. Third, instructors should minimize the effect of grades which cannot be closely controlled. If a professor includes such assignments, the total worth should only be a small part of the total grade. The fourth aspect of the plan ensures requirements for examinations are challenging but not overwhelming. If students feel overwhelmed, they are more likely to cheat. The fifth tip concerns the physical setting in which the examination takes place. The authors’ advice includes methods such as spreading out desks and proctoring techniques to decrease the possibility of cheating behavior.

Stern and Havlicek (1986) compared student and faculty opinions concerning factors influencing the frequency of academic misconduct. They found students and faculty differed on 7 of the 14 factors that might possibly affect academic misconduct. Faculty, more than students, thought the following techniques would be effective in deterring academic dishonesty: vigilant proctoring of tests, smaller classes, larger testing areas, increased proctor-to-student ratios, oral reporting of written papers, honor codes, and consistent penalties for misconduct. Implied from these data is the fact that for techniques to be effective in deterring academic dishonesty, they must be considered effective both by the instructor and the students.

Davis et al. (1992) suggest delayed action is a less effective deterrent and may signal to the students tacit approval of the behavior. Student perceptions of effective techniques consisted of telling the students to “keep their eyes on their own paper” (p. 18). More than 20% of the students suggested taking the test away and allowing the student to start over. Another 20% of the participants endorsed giving a failing grade to someone caught cheating. The authors called for the necessity of written guidelines included in university policy. If such broad codes are not present, the responsibility then falls on the individual departments and faculty members within the university to write one. The confusion created by such multiple policies will do little to discourage cheating.

Cross-Cultural Data

More recently, research activity has sought to provide a global perspective to the issue of academic dishonesty. Research conducted by Newstead, Franklyn-Stokes, and Armstead (1991) at an English university yielded results similar to those reported in the

United States. Men reported higher rates of academic dishonesty than did women. A number of behaviors including copying each other's work, plagiarism, and altering and inventing research data were admitted by more than 60% of the participants.

Davis, Noble, Zak, and Dreyer (1994) produced discrepant results by investigating cheating patterns in Australia. Although substantial numbers of American students report cheating behavior in college, the number of Australians reporting cheating at the collegiate level fell to almost null levels. The authors also found, when comparing American and Australian students' motivation, American students are more highly motivated by the grades they achieve, whereas Australian students are motivated more by the learning experience.

The results of these studies suggest the prevalence of academic dishonesty cross-culturally can vary significantly. Possibly levels of academic misconduct are not as high in other countries due to more effective deterrents, greater fear of punishment, clearer definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty, and a higher value placed on education rather than grade. The chance to sample students in Japan and South Africa offered a unique opportunity to address these issues.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

Japan. Samples of 132 physics and applied physics majors (17 women, 115 men), 53 French literature majors (all women), and 43 physical engineering majors (7 women, 36 men) enrolled at two Japanese Universities volunteered to participate in the present research.

South Africa. Samples of 210 South African students (145 women, 65 men) volunteered to participate in the present study. Participants were enrolled in one of two South African Universities: a historically Black university (88 women, 32 men) or a historically White university (57 women, 33 men). The majority of participants were psychology majors (87.1%).

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument originally employed by Davis and Ludvigson (1995) was translated and modified as needed for the Japanese and South African participants (see Appendix A). This instrument consists of seven questions that ask for information concerning participants' cheating patterns in high school (Question 1). If participants answer "Yes," suggesting they cheated in high school, they are then asked to indicate "how often" with a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (once or twice) to 7 (very frequent, 13 or more times), and whether or not they were ever caught. Question 2 assessed cheating behavior in college, including the same follow up questions as Question 1. The participants' fear of being caught was addressed in Question 3. If the participants

answer “yes,” they indicate “how much” using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (minimally fearful) to 7 (very fearful). A second followup question was included to measure the extent to which this fear influenced whether or not they will cheat. This assessment is made on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (minimal influence) to 7 (great influence). Question 4 asked the participants to indicate whether or not they feel cheating improves a person’s exam score. If they answer “yes,” they indicate “to what extent” on a Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 (minimally) to 7 (greatly). Question 5 measured the influence of strict penalties on cheating behavior. An open-ended question (Question 6) was included to ascertain procedures participants’ deemed as effective penalties. Lastly, participants indicated their reasons for cheating. A list of 10 reasons was included with an added option for “other” reasons. The participants also indicated their sex, age, academic major, academic classification, and whether they held a job while attending college. If they held a job, they were asked to indicate how many hours a week they worked.

Procedure

All surveys were completed during a regular class session. The procedure in its entirety took approximately 10 minutes. Anonymity was maintained in all instances.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The data from the Japanese and South Africa samples are presented separately. In those instances where chi square tests of significance compared these data with American cheating rates, the lowest high school (i.e., 78 %) and collegiate (i.e., 40 %) percentages reported by Davis et al. (1992) were used as expected frequencies. An alpha level of .05 was employed in all instances.

Japanese Sample

As can be seen from Figure 1, a small portion (20.36 %) of the Japanese students reported cheating in high school. This distribution of Japanese cheaters and non cheaters differed significantly, $\chi^2(1) = 193.61$ $p < .001$, from the expected distribution based on the American percentages. Japanese men's (22.70 %) cheating rates in high school did not differ from Japanese women's (18.80 %), $\chi^2(1) = .36$. Figure 1 also shows that, unlike the American pattern reported by Davis et al. (1992) and Davis and Ludvigson (1995), the cheating rates for both Japanese men and women increased from high school to college. More specifically, the overall cheating rate increased from 20.36 % to 41.70 % (just slightly above the lower limits of the American collegiate cheating rate).

Corroborating the magnitude of this change from high school to college, the distributions of Japanese high school and college cheaters and noncheaters differed significantly, $\chi^2(1) = 17.72$, $p < .001$. However, the distribution of Japanese collegiate cheaters and noncheaters did not differ significantly from an expectation of equality, $\chi^2(1) = .14$, ns. It also is interesting to note that, although the distributions did not differ from an

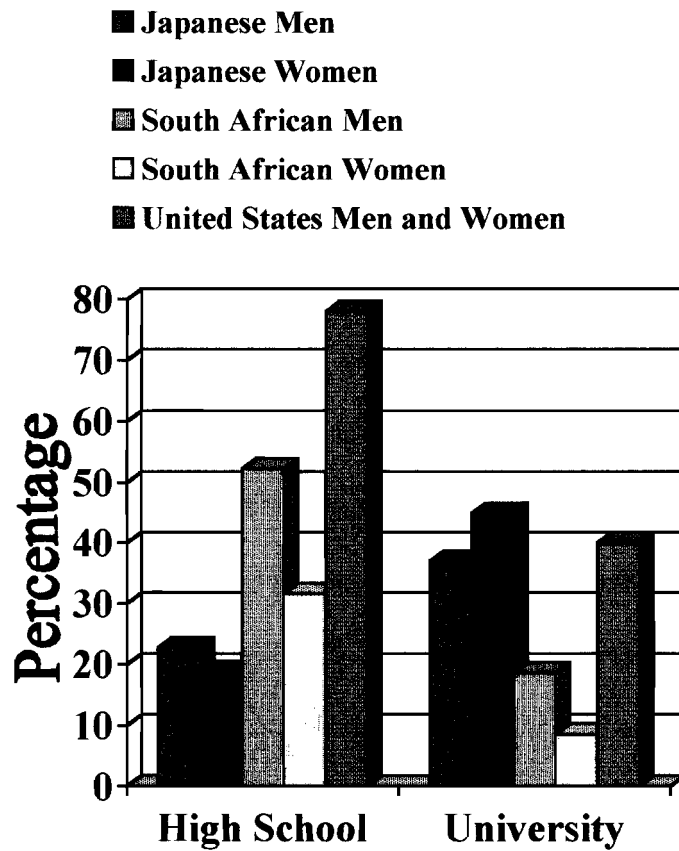


Figure 1. Comparisons of academic dishonesty rates among Japanese, South African, and American high school and university students.

expectation of equality, $\chi^2(1) = .76$, ns, 44.87 % of the Japanese women admitted to cheating, whereas 36.95 % of the Japanese men did.

An examination of differences among the three majors represented by the Japanese students indicated the physical engineering majors reported the highest rate of academic dishonesty (45.90 %). They were followed, in turn, by the French Literature majors (43.40 %) and the physics majors (29.40 %). Despite sizeable differences, these percentages failed to differ significantly from an expectation of equality, $\chi^2(1) = 3.99$, $p < .10$.

Of the Japanese students reporting cheating in high school (20.36 %), 46.4 % were repeat offenders. Some students reported cheating 13 or more times. A larger portion of the collegiate cheaters (53.68 %) reported cheating more than once. When answering Question 7 (reasons for cheating), the students selected four reasons most often: “usually don’t study,” “it is easier to cheat than study,” “I do study, but cheat to enhance my score,” and “just can’t make the grade if I don’t cheat.” The high percentage of the “cheat to enhance my score” suggests Japanese students felt cheating improves one’s scores. When asked to provide types of penalties most likely to prevent cheating, expulsion or suspension from school was mentioned most often. Award no grade/no credit given to those who cheat also was mentioned. Other creative forms of effective punishment included: reporting to parents, using a red pen for a year, slapping the person, calling the offender to the office and giving the student a good scolding, and spanking the person’s buttocks.

South African Samples

Historically Black university. The students from the historically Black university reported rather low cheating rates for both high school (26.7 %) and college (7.5 %). As with the United States data, men reported cheating more at the high school level (43.75 %) than did women (19.31 %), and cheating rates for both men (21.87 %) and women (4.54 %) were lower in college than in high school.

Historically White university. As with the Black South African university, respondents reported lower rates of academic dishonesty compared to data from the United States. However, the participants from the historically White university reported higher percentages of cheating in high school (46.6 %) and college (12.2 %) than the participants from the historically Black university. The distribution of cheaters and noncheaters between the two South African universities differed significantly, $\chi^2(1) = 10.80$. $p < .01$, for the high school data, but not for the collegiate data, $\chi^2(1) = 2.24$. In agreement with the American data and the Japanese high school data, the South African men reported higher rates of cheating in both high school (54.54 %) and college (15.15%) than did the South African women (40.35 % and 12.28 %, respectively).

Pooled data. Because the high school and college cheating patterns of the students at both South African universities were similar (i.e., higher percentage of high school than college cheaters), their data were pooled for comparison with the Japanese and American data. The pooled data yielded cheating rates of 41.93 % and 13.53 % for high school and college, respectively, for the South African students.

The distribution of self-reported cheating in high school for the South African students differed significantly from the comparable distributions for the Japanese, $\chi^2(1) = 28.69, p < .001$, and American, $\chi^2(1) = 75.81, p < .001$, students. Likewise the distribution of self-reported cheating in college for the South African students differed significantly from the comparable distributions for the Japanese, $\chi^2(1) = 29.18, p < .001$, students. Thus, it is arguable the South African students cheat: (a) less than their American counterparts, but more than their Japanese counterparts, in high school, and (b) less than both comparison groups in college.

Of the 41.93 % of South African participants reporting academic dishonesty in high school, 37.5 % had cheated on more than one occasion. Also, 25.0 % of the collegiate cheaters (13.53 %) reported being repeat offenders. Unlike the Japanese participants, more than half (51.9 %) of the South African students did not feel cheating improves one's scores. Many of the South African participants did not choose a reason for cheating, and mentioned "I do not cheat." Of those offering reasons, many reported usually not studying and feeling pressure from parents to get good grades. In examining the types of penalties that would keep them from cheating, again, suspension from school was mentioned numerous times. Another punishment mentioned frequently was "embarrassment." One participant indicated "being a disappointment to parents and family" would be an effective penalty. Obviously shame is a more important factor in keeping students from cheating in South Africa than America. Other effective penalties included arresting the culprit, putting the offender in jail for 20 years, and publishing the person's name.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Results from this study indicate academic dishonesty exists in cultures other than the United States, but at much lower rates. In examining the literature, it is evident basic trends have been established for the United States (Baird, 1980; Barnett & Dalton, 1981; Davis et al., 1992; Drake, 1941). These trends suggest: (a) men engage in academically dishonest behavior more often than women, (b) rates of cheating decrease from high school to college, and (c) students blame external factors such as pressure for good grades and stress of academic life for engaging in academic dishonesty.

South African students, for the most part, mirror these American trends: men cheated more than women, both in high school and university, and self-reported rates of academic dishonesty decreased from high school to college. However, differences with the American pattern also were noted. For example, reasons for cheating varied greatly and no distinct patterns for engaging in cheating were established. Many South African students did not feel cheating enhanced scores. This sentiment may account for the lower rates of dishonesty. Unlike the American students, the South African respondents expressed considerable fear of being caught.

When examining trends from the Japanese samples, it is apparent academic dishonesty is present but is expressed in a much different manner. The Japanese sample violated most of the “norms” established by students in the United States. Although men reported higher cheating rates in high school than did women, women reported cheating more often than men as university students. Because women cheated more than men in

each of the three majors sampled in this study, this result appears robust. Unlike the pattern typically seen in American samples, the cheating rates in the Japanese samples increased from high school to college (see Figure 1). On the other hand, reasons offered by the Japanese students for cheating were more consistent with the American results. Specifically, they reported feeling a pressure to “get the grade” and agreed that they do study but use cheating as a means to enhance their scores. Unlike the American students but like the South African students, the Japanese students (both cheaters and noncheaters, but especially the cheaters) feared being caught.

Several issues remain to be addressed: why are rates of academic dishonesty lower in other cultures, what are students’ motivations in the academic realm, and what can be done to create some sort of reform. Lower rates found in this study (both for Japanese and South African students) are consistent with findings reported by Davis et al. (1994). These investigators assessed students’ attitudes toward academic dishonesty and cheating rates in Australia and found that “internal factors,” such as personal standards and morals, play a greater role in the determination of academic dishonesty than do “external factors,” such as pressure for grades. This research also examined whether students were learning oriented (focused more on the educational process rather than the attainment of grades) or grade oriented (more interested in attaining grades than the learning process). Although American students say they are interested in the learning process (i.e., learning oriented), their behavior exhibits the exact opposite sentiment (i.e., grade oriented). Australian students, expressed more equivalent and high learning-oriented attitudes and learning-oriented behaviors. Several respondents in the present

study reported cheating does not enhance grades. These comments possibly suggest they are more interested in learning rather than boosting the grades received. Perhaps American students are interested in learning, but the education they are seeking is how to cheat.

Are students motivated solely by the grades they receive? Most of the research agrees they are (e.g., Davis et al., 1992; Hardy, 1981; Hetherington & Feldman, 1964). Davis et al. (1992) also suggest stress, ineffective deterrents, condoning teachers, and the diminishing sense of academic integrity serve to encourage academic dishonesty. Sherrill, Salisbury, Horowitz, and Friedman (1971) suggest the mere fact that students strive to keep cognitions and behaviors consistent motivates those who view cheating in a positive manner to engage in academically dishonest behavior. These students also were found to exaggerate their score in a class, report higher cheating prevalence for other members in their classes, and exhibit less concern about cheating as a problem. Kibler (1994) agrees by stating the decision to cheat involves issues of moral development, values, and ethics. On the other hand, Drake (1941) explains the motivation of students to cheat “grows out of the competitive system under which college credits are awarded” (p.420). In most cases, student motivation to cheat can be explained by social psychology phenomena, such as attribution theory and the actor-perceiver bias (Davis & Palladino, 1997). This bias exists when the actor attributes his/her behavior to external forces and the perceiver attributes the actor’s behavior to internal forces. In the case of academic dishonesty, the cheater is more likely to blame external forces such as pressure for grades or the demands

of academia, whereas the perceiver (typically the teacher or researcher) attributes the academically dishonest behavior to internal forcers (i.e., characteristics of the cheater). By administering the LOGO II (Eison, 1981) to American and Australian students, Davis et al. (1994) examined the question of students' motivation from a cross-cultural perspective. This survey measures learning-oriented attitudes and behaviors and grade-oriented attitudes and behaviors. The Australian students scored highly on both learning-oriented attitudes and behaviors. Although the American students had high learning-oriented attitudes, they had low learning-oriented behavior scores and high grade-oriented behavior scores. These results suggest different motivations when comparing students from different cultures. For the Australian students it appeared that "internal factors, such as personal standards and morals, play a greater role in the determination of academic dishonesty than do external factors, such as pressures for grades" (Davis et al., 1994, p. 356).

Regardless of the motive behind the crime, reform is needed. Many researchers suggest techniques and deterrents which may be effective as immediate responses to academic dishonesty. For example, giving the student a zero on the examination or failing the class may offer a short-term solution. However, for long-term rates of academic dishonesty to decrease, there must be a renewed commitment on the part of the students and teachers to the educational process. Presently too much emphasis is placed on "getting the grade" for students to look beyond and appreciate the education they are receiving. Kibler (1994) indicates that prevention must begin at the institutional level

where there is a promotion of academic integrity. Kibler also suggests educators must help students develop values needed to deal with these moral dilemmas. No longer can we address academic dishonesty as a behavioral problem. It must be viewed from a moral perspective by using and reinforcing honor codes.

Aaron and Georgia (1994) note it is critical for faculty to educate students concerning the importance of academic integrity. Slightly more than one-half of the participants in their sample agree their institutions are committed to addressing academic dishonesty on campus. These authors contend unchecked academic dishonesty creates injury to the respect for the institution involved, including damage to the reputation of the honest students. Barnett and Dalton (1981) agree institutions should not only promote but also demonstrate their commitment to the importance of academic integrity. On the individual level, there needs to be better training for teaching assistants and proctors to prevent and deal with instances of academic dishonesty. Students and faculty must take responsibility in the issue of academic dishonesty. The lower academic dishonesty rates shown by the Japanese and South African samples in the present study, in conjunction with the higher learning-oriented scores shown by the Australian students (Davis et al., 1994), suggest there is a higher commitment to academic integrity in other cultures. Students in other cultures are not as focused on grades, in comparison to American students, and often disregard cheating as a means for enhancing performance. The trend of rates increasing from high school to college in Japan may possibly be explained by the increased competition reported by students at the university level. This trend also

suggests the Japanese students are becoming more externally motivated in their academic careers.

Future research in the area of academic dishonesty needs to incorporate more cross-cultural data to develop and test additional trends outside of the United States. In examining the literature, it also is apparent a greater awareness of academic dishonesty, in general, is needed. Institutions and educators in the United States and other countries need to develop clear definitions as to what constitutes academic dishonesty and stand firm and consistent in disciplinary actions following the occurrence of cheating.

Educational systems need to provide alternatives to cheating, whether it is a reform in the learning process, stress management courses dealing with the pressures of academia, or teaching better study skills for students. Teachers, administrators, and institutions need to become more involved with the process of discouraging cheating and encouraging academic integrity.

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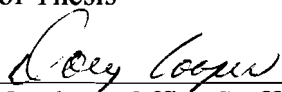


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