Factors Affecting Cheating Behavior at Quetta- Pakistan

Muneeb Ur Rahman[1], Aadersh Hamza[2], Abdul Rehman[3]
[1,2,3] Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) at BUITEMS
Airport Road, Baleli, Quetta – Pakistan
[1]muneebnasar@yahoo.com
[2]hamzaaadersh@yahoo.com
[3]rehmanbazai@gmail.com

Abstract

Cheating in examinations across the globe is an issue of growing concern. This study argues that the culture of cheating in exams in Balochistan has reduced the efficiency of human resource and has resulted in producing students with high qualifications but less potential in the province. Therefore, it is very important to explore the factors contributing to cheating in exams and to suggest a course of action to mitigate the menace it poses. A quantitative research method was employed for this study. Similarly, statistical techniques such as correlation and logistic regression were conducted for statistical analysis and explanation of the study using SPSS. Theoretically, the study is inspired by rational choice theory. The findings of the study show a significant relationship between personal, institutional, and situational factors. Personal factors that contribute to cheating were found to be students' desire to excel, low GPA, and slow learning. Institutional factors include the weak administrative role of institutions, poor academic policies, overload on students, and weak performance of the teachers. Situational factors such as the poor management strategy of the examiner, time pressure, and technological tools were found to be instigating students towards cheating. The study suggests that an appropriate exam hall setting, effective monitoring, concept-oriented exams, and a strong honor code can decrease cheating.

Keywords: cheating, education, students, teachers, classroom, Balochistan.

Introduction

Socioeconomic Overview of Balochistan

Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan by area and covers about 44% of the total area of Pakistan. The population density of Balochistan is very low due to the mountainous area, which is mainly dry with a significant lack of water, which makes human survival difficult. The major languages of the province are Balochi, Brahui, Urdu, and Pashto. The temperature in the mountainous areas is very cold, and in the desert areas, it is very warm. Very little infrastructure development work has been done in the various sectors of the province. The economy of the province is mostly dependent upon natural resources like coal, minerals, and natural gas. On the other side livestock, fishing, and partial agriculture farming are also counted as significant sources of income for the local people.

Educational Scenario of Balochistan

Education plays a very important role in the formation of human capital. It produces skilled human resource and raises the efficiency and productivity of individuals. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, every citizen has the right to education, and it is considered a basic human right. Article 25A of the 1973 constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan says "The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such a manner as may be determined by law". Ensuring education for all children without any discrimination is the social and constitutional responsibility of the state. However, after the 18th amendment, education comes under the domain of the provinces. When it comes to the state of education in Balochistan, this province paints a very dismal image.

Low enrolments, high gender disparity, and high dropouts rates are some of the primary challenges the education department of the province is facing (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2020). In addition, the educational sector of Balochistan is also suffering from poor quality of teaching, management, implementation of policies, supervision, and an insufficient educational budget. The infrastructure of educational institutions in the province is also the poorest in the country. The reports show that Balochistan is among the regions needing the highest percentage of major changes to its educational institutions. As a result, Balochistan has the lowest literacy rate in the country among all other provinces of the country (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Defining Cheating

Based on cultural background, students have different concepts and definitions of academic cheating around the globe (Hu & Lei, 2015). Although there is no universal definition of academic cheating, many researchers have agreed that cheating consists of actions that disrupt the rules for managing exams and involves any conduct that provides an unfair gain to the students (Cizek, 2004) detect, and discourage cheating, this resource will aid in achieving more accurate assessments, which are important in the current accountability-driven educational climate. Highlights of the book include high-tech sources that aid students in cheating and plagiarizing, or aid educators in combating the problem; characteristics of students and classrooms associated with cheating; simple classroom changes that can prevent cheating; and specific techniques for responding to cheating. K-12 teachers, principals, school board members, and policymakers may benefit from the suggestions and approach offered in this source on cheating. (PsycINFO Database Record (c. This study defines academic cheating as a conscious effort to use banned information in exams for educational credit. Academic cheating is a widespread phenomenon across all educational institutions almost at all levels of studies. It is not possible to present the exact data for the frequency of cheating in exams in different educational institutions due to the gaps during the investigation of such phenomenon. However, many research studies have confirmed that academic cheating has been on the rise at universities, colleges, and schools in previous years (Turner & Beemsterboer, 2003).

Cheating in Examinations in Balochistan

Apart from other issues, one major cause behind the failure of the educational system in Balochistan is cheating in examinations. Students from school to college and even at the university level have become habitual in cheating to avoid failing courses (Iqbal et al., 2021). Cheating in examinations, especially in board exams, has become a regular practice, particularly in Balochistan. Some common cheating practices include leaking question papers, carrying copied material into exam halls, providing cheating material by the helpers gathered outside the exam hall, using mobile phones for cheating, and hiring someone to take an exam in the place of the original candidate (Khan et al., 2022). Another common practice being witnessed is that sometimes teachers themselves are also found involved in providing cheating material to students during exams.

Cheating is considered to be wrong because a cheater receives undeserved high grades which is unfair to those who do not cheat. This also gives them an unfair benefit over all other students (Makridis & Englander, 2021). Besides that, students graduating from educational institutions are the country's future leaders. If the students at the campus cheat and can get away with it, the province would have a human resource with good qualifications but less potential. If academic cheating continues to be prevalent and acceptable, then assessment tests will not remain as a measuring method of student's achievements and skills but would only serve as means of checking students` cheating skills (Bouville, 2009). The education department of Balochistan in the last few years is running a media campaign to curb academic cheating in exams. The awareness slogans include "cheating is the death of merit," and "cheating is the death of knowledge" (PPIU, SED, 2020). Although some faculty members of academic institutions and the education department of Balochistan look concerned about cheating, no such steps have been taken to control it. So, there is a need to fight against the culture of academic cheating, and the educational administration in this regard should devote increased resources to deal with this issue and develop a mechanism to manage and curtail the level of academic cheating. Controlling academic cheating is not a herculean task (Forsha, 2021). There are exams in the country such as CSS/PMS, where cheating is almost impossible. So, it requires sincere and strong interventions from all stakeholders of the province to curb academic cheating.

Cheating in exams is a rising issue of great concern worldwide (Harper et al., 2020). On the one side, the cheater gets higher marks than what he/she may deserve while on the other hand, it reduces the efficiency of human resources and educational institutions. In addition, students who cheat would not learn what they are required to learn (Colnerud & Rosander, 2009). A university's or college`s basic aim is to transfer knowledge to students but cheating prevents students from acquiring the knowledge and skills for which the degrees and courses are designed (Malesky et al., 2021). Furthermore, it also stops students from engaging in moral and intellectual struggles for their personal growth and development. Besides that, students graduating from educational institutions are the country's future leaders, and studies have found that students who cheat in college and university go on to cheat in professional life and are found involved in unethical practices (Whitley & Spiegel, 2021).

The implementation of educational and ethical standards is essential for achieving quality education. Especially regarding holding students accountable for the information and knowledge they are required to learn. This requires a closer look at the process of assessment, especially the examination process. It is no secret that students in the country at large often rely on dubious methods to pass their examinations or to get higher scores. Massive academic cheating has been reported at all educational levels in educational institutions in Balochistan (Ahmed & Baloch, 2017). As this issue has not been managed effectively in the province. It is one of the major factors reducing efficiency and quality in the educational institutions of the province (Ahmad, 2022). This study argues that the culture of academic cheating in Balochistan has reduced the efficiency of human resource and has resulted in students with high qualifications but less potential in the province. Therefore, it is very important to explore the factors contributing to academic cheating in exams and to suggest a course of action to mitigate the menace it poses.

Research Questions

This Research study proposes the following research question:

1. What are the institutional factors that contribute to academic cheating?
2. What are the personal factors that contribute to academic cheating?
3. What are the situational factors that contribute to academic cheating?
4. How academic cheating can be minimized?

Literature Review

Cheating is considered an immoral practice to learn in the educational environment. Studies have investigated that cheating was very common during the ancient Chinese civil exams. The candidates found with crib notes used to be limited to the individual halls to avoid collaboration (Whitley, 1998). A common perception of academic staff about cheating is that it is difficult to identify who cheats, which is why most of the time cheating in exams goes undetected (Denisova-Schmidt, 2020). Academic misconduct is unfavorable to educational institutions because it has negative impacts on students, faculty, and administration. Academic misconduct leads to a loss of integrity within the institution and students have less respect for ethics and values. In addition, faculty members fail to produce

institutional leadership across campus (Simpson, 2016). A review of the literature shows that academic cheating is a context–related term, and there is no generally accepted definition of academic cheating. Studies conducted to see students' behavior toward academic misconduct show that different cultures and different nationalities have different perceptions of cheating (Lim & See, 2001). Given the context, the following section will discuss some of the factors that contribute to and motivate students toward academic cheating in exams.

Demographic Factors

The dependent variables for academic misconduct can be gender, age, socio-cultural background, parents' education (Awdry & Ives, 2022) religious practices, grades of students, types of educational institutions, cheating experience, the workload of students, the attitude of peers towards academic misconduct, size of exam rooms, competition between class fellows and residence of the students. These variables can have a positive or negative effect on the behavior of students toward academic cheating (Desalegn & Berhan, 2014). A study carried out in Tehran to investigate the factors affecting the probability of academic dishonesty of students shows that socioeconomic status, discipline, and rules are closely related to cheating in exams. Parents' education, age, and educational level are the significant factors that motivate cheating in exams. The study explores that around 95.6 percent of students have admitted to being involved in academic dishonesty once every academic year (Khodaie et al., 2011).

The studies to see the impact of age on academic cheating to a great extent support the idea that age is a very important predictor of cheating. Studies have confirmed through research that the rate of cheating among juvenile students is higher than that of older (Sheard et al., 2010). A relationship between marital status and age has also been found and research suggests that the number of young and unmarried cheating students is higher than those of married and adults (Klein et al., 2006). A study conducted by Bushway and Nash (1977) found that the number of females involved in academic cheating is less than that of males. Interestingly, the new study to see gender-based differences shows that fewer males and more females confess to academic cheating (Tibbetts & Myers, 1999). In addition, a recent study conducted by Kayışoğlu and Temel (2017) suggests that cheating did not affect the altitudinal tendencies of the student's gender (Kayışoğlu & Temel, 2017). Results of some studies show that though academic dishonesty is insidious, many students

confess it as usual behavior. The researchers have also stated that students from the higher class cheat less than students from the lower class (Ramberg & Modin, 2019).

Motivational Factors

A review of the literature shows that students with low grades or average grades cheat more than those with high grades (Alsuwaileh et al., 2016). The researchers have also found that students cheat more when they see their peers cheating and not getting punished. While, in comparison to this, cheating is less in those educational institutions where there are strong honor codes for academic cheating. The research has suggested that strong honor codes have a positive role in controlling academic cheating, and through honor codes, academic cheating can be decreased (Raman & Ramlogan, 2020). The other findings show that students also cheat more when the assigned work to them is boring or inappropriate. In addition, when students perceive that the purpose and aim of learning is to get higher grades then they cheat more commonly. And when the instructor emphasizes high grades and values academic performance, cheating directly increases (Diego, 2017).

Academic Cheating and Technology

"E-cheating" is a term that is currently used to describe the violation of academic honesty through the use of new technological tools. In recent years, many modern technological devices have been produced that can help students to cheat in academic exams (Holden et al., 2021). Many educationalists have earlier suggested that modern computer technology would work as a catalyst for cheating practices in exams. A survey shows that computer technology has increased academic dishonesty four times over the past five years. Other reviews show that information technology has made cheating much easier, and cheating increases when opportunities are improved (Sayed & Lento, 2015). Furthermore, wearable technology devices such as smartwatches, Bluetooth earpieces, and smart glasses have made academic cheating more problematic (Lancaster & Clarke, 2017). It has also been found that in elite schools, students cheat more in writing assignments while in local schools, more cheating in exams has been reported (Shrader et al., 2012).

Methods of Cheating

Many studies have investigated the traditional methods of academic misconduct and plagiarism like cheat sheets, submitting others' work, teamwork on assignments that are assigned to be worked on individually, and whispering in exam rooms (Parnther, 2020). Other traditional ways used by students to cheat in exams include writing answers on water bottles, body parts, and clothes, and the use of signs and code languages (Parks-Leduc et al., 2021).

Theoretical Framework

A review of the literature shows competing theoretical frameworks used by researchers investigating different aspects of academic cheating in exams. These frameworks include deterrence theory, rational choice theory, social learning theory, and neutralization theory (Madara et al., 2016). On the other side, a number of studies have not utilized any explicit theoretical framework. This study is inspired by the Rational Choice Theory because this is very appropriate in terms of investigating the contributing factors to academic cheating in exams. See (Sattler et al., 2013; Simkin & McLeod, 2009). Researchers have applied rational choice theory in a variety of areas, including sociology, psychology, philosophy, and international relations. According to the theory, people weigh their choices and make the choice that they think will assist the best in their interest (DiPietro, 2010). The assumption of rational choice theory can be used in a wide range of contexts, including the behavior of individuals. The rational choice theory views dishonest behavior as a rational being decision. The final decision is chosen after weighing the benefit, risks, and effort that is associated with a particular behavior (Ogilvie & Stewart, 2010). So, the decision to cheat in an exam is based on cost–benefit analysis. This includes less effort in cheating rather than studying. Other benefits may include increasing the marks and grades in less time as compared to spending time completing these academic tasks the other way. The fear of punishment and the severity of being caught is also correlated with academic cheating. Academic cheating in this regard is not an unintentional behavior instead it is a pre-planned calculated behavior (Simkin & McLeod, 2009). The rational choice theory assumes that individuals rationally calculate the benefit and costs of their behavior in a given situation (Ogilvie & Stewart, 2010). The result of this study suggests that rational choice theory had great potential for explaining academic cheating. The findings also confirm the previous studies e.g., (Simkin & McLeod, 2009) where students

of educational institutions were found involved in academic cheating because the relative benefit is greater than the cost. This also shows that many students could be involved in academic cheating simply because the severity of sanctions is low compared to the benefit that could be gained. Sattler et al. (2013) also found that when the benefit of dishonest academic practices exceeds the sanctions, the practices continue.

Methodology

Quantitative research design approaches social phenomenon through quantifiable evidence and relies on a statistical analysis of many cases to create valid and reliable general claims. In this research, quantitative research technique was used. A designed self-reported, close-ended questionnaire consisting of 52 items was used for this study. Using construct reliability that is >.70 (Cronbach, 1951) as used to evaluate the internal reliability of the measures. Out of all 4 constructs, 2 were found to possess an excellent CR value. The remaining 2 were found fulfilling the average CR values. See Table 4.2 for the specific items, and reliability measures (Cronbach's α). Before collecting the large-scale data, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 20 respondents from Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) at Quetta. The excessive 4 items were removed, while some vague words were replaced by simple and easy ones in the questionnaire. Questions were formulated according to requirements and relevance to the research objectives.

The responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1= Strongly disagree to 5= Strongly agree). After reading the consent form, respondents were asked to click up to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements. Participants then completed the constructs. The total sample size was 250 respondents, who were selected randomly. Initially, 300 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 275 were received. After data cleaning, 250 respondents' data was entered into SPSS for further processing. Data was collected from two universities and two colleges of the capital city Quetta namely the University of Balochistan (UoB), Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS), Balochistan Agriculture College, and University Law College.

Using excel, the average of all 4 variables, i.e., institutional factors (IF), situational factors (SF), personal factors (PF), and controlling factors (CF) were calculated separately, and then a combined average was calculated. The combined

average (3.5886) was considered a mid-point. The values above the mid-point were assigned value 2 and below as value 1. This resulted in a dependent variable, academic cheating (AC). Correlation and logistic regression were used for the statistical analysis of the data.

Results

Table 4.1

Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Category	Frequency (f)	Mean	Percentage (%)
Age (In completeyears)			
17-20	84		33.6%
21-24	142	21.48	26.4%
25-33	25		64.4%
Gender			
Male	180		72.0%
Female	70	1.28	28.0%
Respondents Father`s Education			
Illiterate	49		19.6%
Primary	14		5.6%
Matriculation	35		14.5%
Intermediate	31	11.30	12.4%
Graduation	32		12.8%
Master	89		35.6%
Monthly family income			
10000-50000	140		56%
50001-100000	85	62436.00	34%
100001-250000	25		10%

f=number of students, %= percentage

Table 4.1 reveals the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Out of the total, the majority of the respondents (64.4%) were from the age group category 25-33. All of the respondents of the data were above 17 years of age and below 33 years. The participation of male respondents was higher (72.0%) than female respondents. Data further explains that almost one-third (33%) of the respondent's monthly family income was within the category between ten thousand

and two hundred fifty thousand PKR (10000–250000 PKR), which represents lower-middle-income families.

Table 4.2

Correlation Metrix

Variable(s)	IF	SF	PF	CF
IF	--			
SF	0.486**	--		
PF	0.311**	0.520**	--	
CF	0.489**	0.507**	0.361**	--
No. of Observations.	250	250	250	250

Note: *** indicates significant correlation at 0.01 level.*

The data in the above table shows that there is a significant correlation between situational factors and institutional factors. It indicates that an increase in institutional factors is positively associated with situational factors, hence, they have a positive correlation with a coefficient of 0.486. Furthermore, the correlation between personal factors and institutional factors is 0.311, while the correlation between controlling factors and institutional factors is 0.489. Similarly, the results further reveal that all four variables of the study have a significant positive correlation with each other.

Table 4.2

Reliability Test

Scale Name	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha α
Institutional Factors	8	.711
Situational Factors	10	.644
Personal Factors	6	.745
Controlling Factors	7	.691

Table 4.3

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**	**Statistic**	**df**	**Sig.**
IF	.102	250	.000	.956	250	.000
SF	.079	250	.001	.970	250	.000
PF	.090	250	.000	.976	250	.000
CF	.119	250	.000	.959	250	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

H_0: Data is normal

H_1: Data is not normal

If the P score is less than or equal to 0.05, we reject H_o.

Statistics is 0.102, and the corresponding p-value is (0.000), hence the value of probability is less than 0.05. Therefore, we reject Ho, and conclude data is not normal. So, linear regression analysis cannot be used. Since the dependent variables are categorical, so applying linear or other forms of regression analysis may mislead, therefore, applying logistic regression is the right choice.

Table 4.3

Logistic Regression

Variables in the Equation		Coefficient	Standard Errors	Wald statistics	P-values	Exp(B)
	IF	2.585	.543	22.680	.000	13.259
	SF	2.979	.606	24.171	.000	19.661
Step 1a	PF	2.126	.392	29.419	.000	8.384
	CF	0.979	.423	5.348	.021	2.661
	Constant	-32.795	4.722	48.229	0.000	.000

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: IF, SF, PF, CF.

Discussion

The results of logistic linear regression analysis in this study reported a statistically significant relationship between academic cheating and institutional factors. Data reveals that institutional factors contribute about 2.585 units in academic cheating. These factors include poor academic policies and practices at

educational institutions such as untimely completion of courses, overburdening the students, and irresponsibility of teachers, who do not teach efficiently to the students. Teachers' weak performance in class was also found as a contributing factor to academic cheating. Furthermore, students also claimed that cheating affects the faculty's reputation, and sometimes faculty members are also found involved in assisting students in academic cheating. This disrupts the mission of quality education by educational institutions altogether.

Moreover, situational factors contribute about 2.979 units in academic cheating. The result shows that the probability of cheating is higher in large and crowded examination halls. On the other hand, cheating is lower in small size exam halls and institutions where academic honesty has great value. Further results suggest that students with religious backgrounds and students of educated parents cheat less in exams. On the other hand, teachers occasionally use different kinds of measures to deal with cheating methods invented by students. The result reveals that the poor management strategy of the examiner also motivates students to cheat in exams. Orosz et al. (2013)M = 264, F = 356in their study found that the struggle for good grades and external inspiration in Hungarian schools are not positively correlated. However, this study found that students cheat for higher grades in exams in Balochistan. The justification is that cheating will be considered favorable and probably be powerful until grades decide how good a student is and predicts the future success of a student (Bouville, 2009). Results have found some other factors that can influence cheating behavior. These factors include time pressure and technological tools that have enhanced the cheating ratio in exams.

Personal factors contribute 2.126 units in academic cheating. The study reveals that slow learner students and students with low GPAs cheat more frequently in exams. Roig (2017) in his study also found that students of undergraduate degree level with low GPAs cheat more frequently as compared to their peers with higher GPAs. Several other studies have also found cheating behavior positively correlated with low GPA (Jackson et al., 2002). The desire to outshine was also found one of the contributing factors to academic cheating. Whitley (1998) also found the desire to maintain a high GPA as a significant factor in academic cheating. On the other hand, young students, with the habit of last night preparation for exams were found more motivated to academic cheating as compared to adults.

Furthermore, controlling factors contribute a little less than one (0.979) unit in academic cheating. The result shows that an appropriate exam hall setting, effective monitoring, and a strong student code of conduct can decrease cheating. The researchers have also found that students cheat more when they see their peers cheating and not getting punished. On the other hand, compared to this, cheating is less in those educational institutions where there are strong honor codes for academic cheating. The research has suggested that strong honor codes have a positive role in controlling academic cheating, and through honor codes, academic cheating can be decreased (McCabe et al., 2010). The present study also found that concept-oriented tests and exams can decrease academic cheating. Also see (Kerkvliet & Sigmund, 1999). Further findings suggest that a participatory learning environment in the class and the promotion of anti-cheating attitudes and awareness may also decrease academic cheating in exams.

Limitations

This study has some limitations, including generalizability; in addition, there was a gender imbalance in the samples as the number of male respondents was higher than the number of female participants in the study. Similarly, the majority of respondents were from the same age group which may have affected the results. The data were collected from two universities and two colleges in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, unequally, which may also have affected the study. Though respondents were recruited through random sampling, students had to divulge their opinion about academic cheating which is a personal and sensitive aspect of the study and may have influenced the study.

Conclusion

To conclude, this study examined the contributing factors of cheating in examinations in Balochistan. The factors that contribute to cheating were divided into four categories. i.e., institutional factors, personal factors, situational factors, and controlling factors. Results reveal a statistically significant relationship between academic cheating, institutional factors, personal factors, situational factors, and controlling factors. These factors include poor academic policies and practices at educational institutions such as untimely completion of courses, overburdening the students, teachers' weak performance in class, and irresponsibility of teachers in the shape of inefficient teaching.

Situational factors that contribute to academic cheating include large and crowded examination halls, poor management strategy, and less value for academic honesty. Further results suggest that students with religious backgrounds and students of educated parents cheat less in exams. The study reveals that personal factors such as slow learner students and students with low GPAs cheat more frequently in exams. Furthermore, the desire to outshine, time pressure, and the habit of last night's preparation for exams were also found contributing factors in academic cheating.

In addition, controlling factors that can help in minimizing academic cheating include appropriate exam hall settings, effective monitoring, and a strong code of conduct. The research has suggested that strong honor codes have a positive role in controlling academic cheating, and through honor codes, academic cheating can be decreased Also see (McCabe et al., 2010). The present study also found that concept-oriented tests and exams can decrease academic cheating. Further findings suggest that a participatory learning environment in the class and the promotion of anti-cheating attitudes and awareness may also decrease academic cheating in exams.

Recommendations

This research stresses the importance of policies on academic misconduct or honor codes for every educational institution. Based on the findings of this study and an extensive literature review, the following are some of the suggestions to curb academic cheating in exams:

1. Literature highlights that not only should there be focus on students who indulge in academic cheating, but attention should be directed toward knowing the reasons behind the decision to cheat. We should help students to do their work within the given framework of learning. We need to teach students that by passing through cheating and plagiarism they are decreasing the opportunities for their progress (Hurst et al., 2017). We need to focus on changing the values and attitudes of students so that they refrain from cheating. If the above-recommended actions are not taken, cheating will be considered favorable and probably be powerful until grades decide how good a student is and predict the future success of a student (Raman & Ramlogan, 2020).

2. Educational institutions should introduce strict administrative policies regarding academic cheating because the problem can be better managed through the formation of clear guidelines about academic cheating. Literature indicates that a large number of educational institutions have introduced honor codes to deal with the problem of academic cheating which has played a significant role in controlling academic cheating. However, all educational institutions need to focus on the matter, to cope with the issue of academic cheating (McCabe et al., 2010).

3. Only warnings, the threat of failing the exam, and routine punishments may not help in hindering academic cheating. There is a need to set high penalties for those caught cheating in exams. i.e., failing the exam. When those students who work hard and do their work honestly see this phenomenon that cheaters are not punished, so somehow, they also convince themselves to take advantage of the opportunity and cheat in exams. Nazir and Aslam (2010) in their study also found that the practice of less severe punishment and no punishment in educational institutions is one of the many factors that motivate students towards academic cheating in exams.

4. It is also very important to ensure the presence and performance of teachers in class. If teachers are missing in most of the classes and they don't complete teaching the courses on time, then their students will exploit and find excuses for cheating.

5. Examiners should set the exam/test avoiding the same style of tests and repeating questions every semester. The instructor should change at least 80% of previous exam questions.

6. Furthermore, introducing conceptual tests can also decrease cheating. Randomly presenting multiple choice questions so that every student gets a different answer sequence may also help in reducing academic cheating in exam hall (Harper et al., 2020).

7. In addition to the aforementioned suggestions, confident faculty supervision, monitoring along with awareness strategies could also help in reducing academic cheating.

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