

To Cheat or Not to Cheat: Academic Integrity across Cultures

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Abstract

Researchers have recently been interested in investigating academic dishonesty in higher education. There is however a dearth of research on academic dishonesty among gifted and talented undergraduates. In particular, academic dishonesty of talented undergraduates across-cultures, has been overlooked. This article reports an unintended finding of academic dishonesty in a study across academically talented undergraduate students in New Zealand and Bahrain. Participants were identified as those attaining an A average in their courses, in each location. Fourteen undergraduates, seven from each country, took part in phenomenological semi-structured interviews to determine their experiences as talented undergraduate students. Students' perceptions of academic dishonesty are compared across cultures through the lens of motivation theories. Findings show that culture has a strong impact on the degree to which such behaviour is accepted. This finding has implications in higher education institutions internationally.

Keywords: Academic dishonesty; Academic Talents; Undergraduates; Cross-cultural; New Zealand; Bahrain

Research on academic dishonesty among university students has shown that academic misconduct is prevalent and has been increasing (McCabe 1999). Academic dishonesty is a critical issue as it affects the learning process, thereby causing students to become less prepared to advance in education or in the workplace (Lupton, Chapman, & Weiss, 2000). Limited research connecting academic dishonesty with academically talented students has been found; in addressing dishonesty, gifted students have been mostly ignored (Abilock, 2009) because higher academic achievement is usually related to lower levels of academic dishonesty (McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Whitley, 1998). However, Geddes (2011) found that gifted students are motivated to cheat by grade point average pressure, peer pressure, and the demands of school workload.

While the majority of studies on academic dishonesty among undergraduates have focused on North American students (Christensen-Hughes & McCabe, 2006), limited research has examined cross-cultural differences in academic misconduct, especially between Middle East and Oceania. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to explore the relationship between culture and academic dishonesty among academically talented undergraduates in New Zealand and Bahrain through looking into achievement motivation theories and Hofstede's cultural dimensions model.

Reflecting the literature and the participants' usage, in this article the terms 'academic dishonesty' and 'cheating' are used interchangeably.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty was defined by Nuss (1984) as the behaviour that results in students giving or receiving unauthorized support in any academic exercise or obtaining credit for work which is not their own. Gehring and Pavela (1994) described academic dishonesty as an intentional act in which:

A student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercise... [or] forgery of academic documents, intentionally impeding or damaging the academic work of others, or assisting other students in acts of dishonesty. (pp. 5-6)

Moreover, academic dishonesty was explained as any deviant behaviour that violates the rules and guidelines of learning institutions (De Lambert, Ellen, & Taylor, 2003) and affecting the quality

and the reliability of assessments (Graves, 2008). Many students believe that cheating is not a problem if it is not affecting others (LaBeff, Clark, Haines, & Diekhoff, 1990). Others claim that academic dishonesty is a high-risk behaviour for undergraduates because when caught they could be suspended or dismissed from university (Rinn, Boazman, Jackson, & Barrio, 2014).

Research shows a significant negative relationship between grade point average (GPA) and academic dishonesty (Antion & Michael, 1983; Crown & Spiller, 1998). Research on college students shows that more capable students are less likely to cheat than less capable students (Newstead, Franklyn-Stokes, & Armstead, 1996). However, since vast numbers of undergraduate students admit behaviours of academic dishonesty, it is likely that some high ability students are also engaging in academic dishonesty especially given the importance of academic performance within that population (Abilock, 2009). According to Geddes (2011), academically talented students were pressured to cheat by grades, GPA, peer pressure, and heavy workload and not due to their lack of academic abilities.

Gifted and talented undergraduates

Research on gifted and talented university students is important not only to the field of gifted education but also to the field of higher education. Noting that there is no typical gifted undergraduate as there is no typical gifted child, prevalent literature has provided a broad view of what it means to be a gifted and a talented undergraduate. Tolan (1999) stated that gifted adults hold cognitive, emotional, and social characteristics similar to gifted children and different from the general university population.

Motivation

Researchers argue that motivation or drive is at the centre of eminent levels of achievement (Duckworth, Kirby, Tsukayama, Berstein, & Ericsson, 2011; Gagné, 2010; Matthews & Foster, 2009). They credited motivation with determining an individual's ability to respond to talent-development opportunities. Motivation can be referred to as persistence, task commitment, desire to learn, or drive to succeed. Regardless of the approach taken to define it, motivation plays an essential role in helping to understand the difference between potential and performance (McNabb, 2003). Ochse (1990) stated:

“it is consistently recognized that the creator's most salient characteristic is persistent motivation” (p. 133).

Achievement motivation

As they explain how gifted students' goal orientations are developed, goal theories are important in understanding the achievement motivation of gifted students as suggested by Dai, Moon, and Feldhusen (1998). They also provide a holistic view of gifted students' desire to perform using both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Neumeister, 2004b). Three types of achievement goals were proposed by Elliot and his colleagues: mastery, performance-avoidance, and performance-approach goals (Elliot & Church, 1997; Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996).

Elliot (1999) defines mastery goals as those focusing on developing competence that orient individuals toward success. Mastery goals appear to be negatively associated with academic dishonesty (Rettinger, Jordan, & Peschiera, 2004; Stephens, Romakin, & Yukhymenko, 2010), as students seeking to master any competency would be less likely to exhibit behaviours of academic dishonesty because it would weaken the desired goal of acquiring new knowledge.

Performance-avoidance goals focus on avoiding the feeling of incompetency relative to peers, and are driven by a fear of failure. Performance-approach goals, however, are defined as focusing on achieving competence, and are not driven by a single achievement motive (Elliot, 1999). Research on achievement goal orientations and gifted individuals is limited, and the findings are mixed. Ainley (1993) reported that gifted students had higher scores on both performance and mastery goal measures than other students.

Socio-cultural perspective

Many studies have discussed academic dishonesty among different countries with limited studies comparing Middle Eastern to Western countries. Culture, however, does have a strong impact on individual ethical attitudes and behavioural intentions (Christie, Kwon, Stoeberl, & Baumhart, 2003; Swaidan, Rawwas, & Al-Khatib, 2004).

As suggested by Magnus, Polterovich, Danilov, and Savvateev (2002), students in collectivist cultures are tolerant toward cheating because helping other students to cheat during exams is accepted and possibly encouraged. McCabe, Feghali, and Abdallah (2008) reported that Lebanese students had significantly higher levels of academic dishonesty than American students, arguing that Lebanese students behaved how they were raised to behave, working together to navigate difficult tasks. Similarly, Williams, Tanner, Beard and Chacko (2014) found that culture influences business student perceptions of academic misconduct, as students from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were significantly more likely to report engaging in academic misconduct than students from the United States (US.).

Hofstede's cultural dimensions

Hofstede's (1980; 2001) cultural dimensions provide the fundamental lens for understanding cultural differences and obtaining deeper understanding of cross-cultural research. Hofstede (2001) argued that important cultural differences can be captured by observing the extent to which each culture differs with respect to three dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism-collectivism.

Power distance (PDI). Power distance is defined as the degree to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 2001). The issue at hand is how should a society control inequalities among its people. Hofstede claimed that people in high power-distance-societies accept an unjustifiable hierarchical order. In societies with low power distance, people strive to equalise the distribution of power and demand justifications for any inequalities.

Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI). Uncertainty avoidance is defined as the extent to which members of a certain culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations, thereby creating certain beliefs systems to help avoiding these situations (Hofstede, 2001). According to Hofstede, countries with high uncertainty avoidance maintain rigid systems of belief and behaviour, and are intolerant of unusual behaviour and ideas. Lower uncertainty avoidance countries, however, have a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles.

Individualism/ Collectivism (IDV). The strength of the relationship between the individual and the group is reflected by individualism or collectivism. This describes the degree to which the individual's interest and identity overcome the group's (Hofstede, 2001). In collectivistic cultures, individuals act and identify themselves primarily as members of a group (i.e., they tend to think in terms of 'we' instead of 'I') whereas in individualistic cultures, these ties are looser.

Table 1 shows the differences between students from New Zealand and Bahrain measured on the four dimensions. It is worth noting that Bahrain is not represented in Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov's (2010) countries scores. The scores for Bahrain that are outlined in the table below regarding Hofstede's dimensions were based on the scores for Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates, to reflect Bahrain's possible scores. These countries, along with Bahrain, Qatar and Oman are all members in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in which they share historical and religious backgrounds that created mutual visions (Gulf Cooperation Council, n.d.). Scores reported by Hofstede et al. (2010) were identical for Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates on *Uncertainty Avoidance* and *Individualism/Collectivism*. However, for Power Distance, the scores varied slightly across the three countries, and therefore the three scores were averaged to represent Bahrain's on these dimensions. The numbers in brackets are the country's index scores. It is therefore

hypothesised that due to cultural differences in three of the four dimensions (i.e., PDI, UAI, and IDV), New Zealand and Bahrain are likely to have differences in term of academic dishonesty.

Table 1: New Zealand and Bahrain scores on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions.

Cultural Dimensions	New Zealand	Bahrain
Power Distance (PDI)	Low (22)	High (92)*
Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)	Low to Medium (49)	High (80)
Individualism/Collectivism (IDV)	High (79)	Low (25)

Note: This table was adapted from Hofstede et al. (2010)

* PDI Mean reported: Kuwait and United Arab Emirates =90, Saudi Arabia=95.

Method

This study adapts a qualitative method approach in order to provide in-depth understanding of academically talented undergraduates' talent development. Semi-structured interviews are often preferred over structured interviews, as rigidity might cause discomfort and formality between the interviewee and the researcher (Punch, 2009). Although interviews in this study were semi-structured, a standard interview schedule was developed to provide consistency between interviews held at different times and in different locations, as well as to reduce the likelihood of interviewer bias (Powney & Watts, 1987).

Nevertheless, an unintended finding was introduced by the first participant in Bahrain regarding academic dishonesty. This was a new aspect to the research which the researcher wanted to explore more between both samples. An additional question was added to the schedule for the participants still to be interviewed. The participants who had already been interviewed in New Zealand were emailed the additional question, with all replying in detail.

It could be argued that because phenomenology brings forth people's lived experience, each would do this according to their standpoint, from where they perceive the phenomenon (Sadala & Adorno, 2002). The authors also noted phenomenon as something that shows and hides itself. It is the researcher's role to realise and make sense of the meaning units, which in this case was academic dishonesty in Bahrain. The question was also emailed retrospectively to each participant in the New Zealand sample. Guidance was sought from senior advisors at the university in New Zealand and who deemed that as ethical permission had been obtained to ask questions relating to talent development, then a relevant issue raised by a participant could be included in the study. The audio files were transcribed and verified by the researcher. Participants were given the opportunity to check their transcripts for accuracy. All participants have been given pseudonyms.

Participants in this study were seven undergraduate students from a university in New Zealand and seven from a university in Bahrain, making up a total of 14 participants (9 females). All students had an A grade average, majoring in Art, Engineering, Science, Law, and Business, and were in the age range of 19-23 years old. Participants from New Zealand were enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering (3 students) and the Faculty of Arts (3 students), with one student doing conjoint Arts and Engineering. Students were given the following pseudonyms: Jamie, Jason, Peter, Christine, Joana, Sally, and Melissa. Participants identified themselves as NZ European/Pakeha, with one identified as NZ European and Māori. In Bahrain, four students attended the Faculty of Engineering, two the Faculty of Arts, and one the Faculty of Business Administration. The participants were given the following pseudonyms: Abdulla, Ahmed, Fatima, Rana, Reem, Noof, and Noora.

In New Zealand, an administrator at the faculty of Art and Engineering emailed eligible students the research advertisement and provided them with the researcher's contact information. No data about the eligible students was revealed to the researcher. Another method for locating potential participants was an advertisement posted around the campus on each faculty's advertisement board,

and on the university's social media website (namely Facebook). The final selection of seven students occurred based on their age, gender, major of study, and GPA, to allow for maximum variability. In Bahrain, due to time constraints, the researcher was not able to gain the Faculty Deans' consents to approach the targeted students via e-Mail as was the procedure in New Zealand. Students were therefore approached through social network outlets. Although the participation was open to students from all faculties, those enrolled in the Arts or Engineering Faculty were targeted to increase comparability between the New Zealand and Bahrain samples.

Individual in-depth interviews were carried out at the campus of the university in New Zealand, and in a public location that afforded the interviews an environment of confidentiality in Bahrain. The interviews were carried out in English and were audio recorded.

Findings

Analysis of semi-structured interviews revealed main themes related to motivation and academic dishonesty. However, as mentioned earlier, aspects of academic dishonesty were identified as an unintended finding.

Motivation

Participants' high self-expectations, interests in learning, and personal goals fostered their achievements and motivated them to attain excellence. In New Zealand, Peter had personal expectations that helped in developing his abilities: "keeping up what I've already achieved. You know there is a little bit of expectation, but it is not external". Melissa also asserted: "I'm often kind of wondering what it is that pushes me to work so hard and to get good grades, and I think a lot of it is just personal satisfaction".

Jason however, regarded education and high academic abilities as reflecting maturity; "I want to be an adult and to grow up, and part of being adult is being educated, I think".

In Bahrain, four participants argued that having personal goals makes them focused to achieve. Fatima expressed: "the more goals I set for myself the more motivated I get, and I always try to put my goals in front of my eyes". Noof, however, reported having high academic standards for herself, reflected by external awards: "I can't really wait to hear them saying at the graduation ceremony: Noof with first class honours".

Academic dishonesty

Cheating was raised as an issue by the first interviewee in Bahrain; it was then added as a question to the remaining participants in Bahrain. The word 'cheating' was used, as that was the term used by the first student in Bahrain to describe the practices, which elsewhere in this study will also come under the umbrella of academic dishonesty and academic integrity.

In New Zealand, all participants reported being against cheating. Sally believed that "cheating in academics degrades the work others have done". Peter and Joana viewed it as negatively impacting learning in the long term: "inadvertently giving someone a quick answer will actually hinder them in the long term," Peter said. Joana similarly added: "Imagine if engineers started building bridges and risking people's lives because they don't understand the basics because they have just copied answers from their friends".

Two participants reported on the risks of cheating; and Jason commented: The risk outweighs the benefit quite heavily. Being caught cheating would mean a blemish on my academic record for the rest of my life and probably expulsion from the course, academic suspension, etc. This seems like much more trouble than simply studying hard and getting the grade I deserve.

All the New Zealand participants acknowledged that group work in assignments and sharing

ideas are acceptable. Joana reported:

If you work together on an assignment and you could honestly redo the questions by yourself the next time, this would be akin to going to ask your professor for help.

Sally and Christine, who agreed on the benefits that group-work brings, had difficulty in defining cheating in assignments. Christine noted:

I'm not sure whether this constitutes cheating - we all worked in a big group with each person contributing in order to find the best way to answer the questions, and this included swapping answers and reasoning for them.

Those students reported not allowing others to 'copy' their work, instead they 'helped' them by giving guidelines or explaining the context. Jamie reported:

I have neither copied off anyone nor have I let anyone copy me. I have given assistance to other students who were having trouble with specific parts of assignments, but never let them copy my work verbatim.

Jason was the only New Zealand participant who reported a cheating incident in exams during high school: "I hid notes in my pencil case. I believe I did this because I was quite young at the time ... I was interested in obtaining a good mark so I could pass the class". He however argued that this has differed at university because his motivation has changed:

I wanted to perform well in order to avoid reprimand from teachers and parents. In my university studies my motivation comes from my own expectations and the knowledge that if I perform poorly the person most let down will be myself.

In Bahrain, only one student stated he was against cheating. Two students allowed others to cheat from them at school, and one of them continued the practice at university. Four other students cheated at school, and two still do at university. Abdulla, who was the only one against cheating stressed:

I hate it. I think that you just do what you can do, cheating! Why would I put myself in a situation where I might get caught for something that is not worth it? ... I used to tell my friends I'm not going to help you in the exam.

Ahmed, and Reem reported only allowing others to cheat from them at school and at university, as they described it as 'helping others'. Ahmed was the first student who mentioned cheating in the interviews:

I know many students of high GPA who cheat in exams... I think that exams don't reflect the real talent or abilities as opposed to assignments and projects. There aren't equal opportunities; many would say 'we'll sit next to him and copy the exam'... helping people, when I feel that they need it, I'd do so.

Reem added:

I don't like to cheat from others, but I like to help. At university I don't do it; it is more restricted. But at school I used to help them as much as I could, I see it from the sense of helping others, not cheating.

Four participants—Rana, Noora, Fatima, and Noof—reported cheating at school and allowing other to cheat from them. Rana reported:

I was a teenager and had other things to do other than studying. Sometimes I cheated; I tried not to, but when there was an opportunity I did ... I would allow others to cheat from me to help them ... I'm not doing this anymore because we are grown up for such things, and we must study alone and get high marks by our own hard work.

Noora mentioned that she cheated at school only with her friend: "She was very good academically but during exams she got nervous and couldn't remember anything. I used to show her my paper, and at the same time I'm not good at memorising maps so she helped me back". Noora also asserted that at university she has no time for cheating in exams, and her perception of cheating has also changed: "I feel that I studied enough and I'm going to do my best, and even if I didn't get a good grade this is my work and this is what I deserve".

Fatima and Noof were the only participants who reported cheating at university. Fatima admitted: "I cheat when I need to, this is maybe every cheater's philosophy, but now I know this is unethical and I'm being honest with you". However, she mentioned that cheating now it is less frequent "at university on a scale of 10, I would say it is 3".

Noof considered her cheating as ethical because she only checked exam answers: I don't really cheat, not like those who depend on cheating. My close friend is superior academically too and we sit next to each other in the exam. Each one writes her own answers of course, but before we hand in the paper we just check if our answers are correct.

A disparity, therefore, was found between students from the two countries regarding cheating. Six Bahrainis declared they had cheated in the past and still do by either allowing others to copy their work or themselves copying from others. Students who allowed cheating considered it as 'helping' their friends.

In New Zealand, however, students were against cheating and found it degraded others' work and was not beneficial for long-term learning. However, New Zealand participants admitted uncertainty about defining cheating in collaborative work as all work submitted in individual assignments at their university is required to be the student's own work.

Discussion

Motivation

Participants in this study reported being motivated by personal goals and expectations whether these goals arose from interest and passion in knowledge or from external purposes. Gagné (2010) focused on the importance of motivation within the *Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT)* in developing one's talents. New Zealand participants reported having more intrinsic motivation behind their effort than their Bahraini colleagues, such as fulfilling potential and feeding curiosity. Bahraini participants appeared to have more extrinsic motivation, specifically introjected and integrated regulation motivation, shown in their aim for pride and thinking of achievement as representing one's values.

To explain the differences between the two cultures, a socio-cultural perspective that focuses on motivation as a socially developed construct, instead of being solely located within the individual (Rueda & Moll, 1994), can help. New Zealand participants were motivated by personal goals of fulfilling potential and by having pleasure in satisfying their needs of knowledge. Triandis (1995) noted that in individualist cultures individuals are encouraged to be motivated towards mastery aims, and this was found among New Zealanders in this study. In contrast, Bahraini participants' motivation towards pride can be explained by the collectivist nature of culture. Because in collectivist cultures individual success is usually transmitted to group's success. As success by an individual is not the prime aim, an individual can identify with success by the achievements of the group. The group's pride in their collective success is a means of maintaining their sense of belonging to that group. This finding also parallels Engin and McKeown's (2012) conclusion about Emirati undergraduates having extrinsic motivation as a stronger motivator than intrinsic motivation due to the Emirati collectivist culture.

Academic dishonesty

Six Bahrainis reported cheating in exams, with some continuing the practice at university, whereas none of the New Zealand university participants reported the practice. New Zealanders, however, reported collaboration in assignments, and whether such collaboration is permitted under that university's guidelines for academic integrity is debateable. Among participants from both countries, students knew cheating was dishonest, but they nevertheless reacted differently.

Student cheating might be linked to students' view of their abilities and gifts. One Bahraini participant, who reported cheating at university, stated the difficulty of acknowledging her academic

gifts. It is suggested that it might be problematic for those who cheat to acknowledge that their grades put them in the gifted category when they realise that some of their grades were gained by copying from someone else's exam script. Studies that examined the relationship between self-concept or self-esteem and dishonesty found these two variables to be negatively associated: the lower the self-concept or the self-esteem, the more likely that the individual engages in dishonest behaviours or academic dishonesty (Błachnio & Weremko, 2011; Dai, Nolan, & White, 2002; Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008). However, no study examining the impact of dishonest behaviours on self-concept was found. In addition, as the above studies were cross sectional, causal or directional associations conclusions cannot be made.

Hofstede's (1980, 2001) dimension of individualism/collectivism could also explain the cross-cultural variations in academic dishonesty. New Zealand's participants believed that learning is one's own responsibility, and cheating does not help in self-development. These beliefs are embedded in individualistic cultures where people are autonomous and prioritise their own goals and interests over others' (Triandis, 1995). On the other hand, that Bahraini participants come from a collectivist culture that emphasises cooperation might explain why the majority reported cheating only with friends. In collectivist cultures, feelings of commitment and responsibility to others reduce one's autonomy (Triandis, 1995). Bahraini interviewees also argued that they 'helped' their friends as opposed to having 'cheated'. This notion of permitting academic dishonesty to help others in collectivist cultures is supported by Chapman and Lupton (2004).

Another Hofstede (1980, 2001) dimension that explains differences in academic dishonesty in the two countries is uncertainty avoidance. For example, Cohen, Pant, and Sharp (1993) found that individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures (such as New Zealand) apply a wider ethical framework in their decision-making. In this study, New Zealand participants viewed cheating as unethical, degrading one's work, and resulting in non-honest grades. These participants also reported the risks of academic dishonesty and suggested the risk of being caught would discourage any attempts to cheat. This view differed from the Bahraini participants, who were not discouraged to cheat and who sought justifications for their unethical actions. This aligns with Diekhoff, LaBeff, Shinohara, and Yasukawa's (1999) findings when they compared Japanese (high uncertainty) and American (low uncertainty) students and found that Japanese were more likely to justify their cheating behaviour and were less discouraged by shame or punishment. As Hofstede reported, Japan is seen as a country with high risk avoidance. This is also supported by Salter, Guffey, and McMillan (2001), who stated that individuals from a more uncertainty avoidant culture (such as Bahrain) are more likely to engage in academic dishonest behaviours.

Additionally, because students in New Zealand believed that those who engage in academic dishonesty do not acquire sufficient knowledge in their specialist subjects, it is suggested that academic dishonesty is related to goal theories. Previous research found that mastery orientation goals are negatively associated with academic dishonesty (Jordan, 2001; Murdock, Hale, & Weber, 2001; Rettinger, Jordan, & Peschiera, 2004), while performance goal orientations are often positively associated with academic dishonesty (Anderman & Midgley, 2004; Jordan, 2001; Murdock, Miller, & Kohlhardt, 2004).

Cross-cultural differences in goal orientation have been addressed in many studies (Brandt, 2003; Gano-Overway & Duda, 2001; Isogai, Brewer, Cornelius, Etnier, & Tokunaga, 2003; Lee, 2000) and suggest that individuals within individualist cultures exhibit mastery goals as opposed to collectivist cultures where individuals hold performance orientation goals. New Zealand participants worked toward increasing their own competence even if it was accompanied with making errors along the way, which suggests they had mastery goals (Brandt, 2003). Bahraini participants were concerned with attaining positive judgment of their ability (e.g., from their parents) and they avoided negative ones, which places them in the performance orientation goal category. Bahrainis' goals are believed to have increased their possibilities of academic dishonesty. This observed difference would not be surprising if we highlight the fact that education in Bahrain is seen more as a means to future financial success than a journey of insight and understanding. In other collectivist cultures, such as Iran, the

education system is similar to the Bahraini's where grades are seen as a major and only criterion for academic success (Marzooghi, Sheikholeslami & Shamshiri, 2009); gifted students sought to exhibit high ability and avoided a lack of ability rather than development of competence through task mastery. Marzooghi et al. (2009) suggested that students' desire to perform well and achieve high grade point and class rank would prevent them from learning for the sake of learning.

In New Zealand, as stated earlier, students who collaborated in assignments reported that they don't allow others to copy their work; rather, they helped students in understanding the techniques. Students, however, showed a thought-provoking dilemma about whether their collaboration with fellow students is considered cheating or not. Students were confused where to draw the line: When is collaboration permitted or encouraged and when is it deemed to be 'cheating'? J. Stephens (personal communication, February 23, 2013) surveyed 800 Arts and Science students at a university in New Zealand in 2012. He reported that unpermitted collaboration on assignments was reported by 62.8% of students. Meaning two out of every three students admitted a practice that is defined as academically dishonest by the university. This university introduced an Academic Integrity module. On its website, the university outlined that although discussing assignments with others may be helpful, students need to be aware of the limits of receiving and giving help. These 'limits' are unspecified resulting in students' confusion about whether their collaboration is permitted or not. There are strong sanctions against 'cheating' at the university in New Zealand, and students appear unclear whether they are risking their academic futures or not by collaborating on assignments.

Conclusion

Academic dishonesty was an unintended finding, and it appeared that although culture did play a part in moral thinking and actions, so did other catalysts. Students' own definitions of academic dishonesty were crucial when deciding whether to engage in cheating or not. If students do not define an act as cheating, as some labelled it 'helping others', they are more likely to engage in that behaviour. In Arab collectivist cultures, cheating in order to help a friend is a risk you may have to take. In New Zealand, participants faced academic dishonesty as a result of the procedures and guidance set in place by the university, especially those related to permissible and impermissible collaboration in assignments. The university in New Zealand is encouraged to clearly state the limits of collaboration allowable in assignments, as currently the students are in a grey area. They do not want to cheat, and at the same time they do not know whether their current collaborative practices in assignments are permitted or not. In Bahrain, the university could have a clear policy on academic integrity, and have stricter rules against cheating in order to minimise the cheating phenomenon.

If we understand that students in collectivistic cultures are more likely to collaborate on assignments, tests that rely on memorisation might be avoided and instead develop tests which are more challenging and of greater learning value, that acknowledges collaborative work and at the same time recognizes individuals' abilities. As it appears from the study, differences in attitudes of what constitutes cheating and how often it occurs do exist between cultures. Educators in different cultures should realise such differences and understand it in order to prevent cheating. If we miss the fact that each culture is different, we might collide, resulting in enormous moral, economical, and social costs as cheating does not usually end at graduation.

The fact that the sampling frame consisted of undergraduates in one university in New Zealand and one in Bahrain may indicate a limitation to the study, and the results may not be generalizable. As the study followed a qualitative approach, future research is encouraged to examine national samples in both countries both quantitatively and qualitatively.

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