CHAPTER-I

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Cheating is not a novel word for anybody. People betray, lie, deceive, defraud, swindle, fleece and use tricks to be benefited or to get their tasks done, attain their goals or for fulfillment of their vested interests by evolving innumerable ways across the world. There are reasons to believe that cheating is not instinctive, that individuals are not born with the intrinsic traits of cheating; rather, some of them acquire it with the passage of time as part of their socialization by getting affected from the surroundings through observation and imitation. Cheating is visible in simple actions among children when they try to hide the things that are forbidden for them or among young boys and girls lying for absenting from schools or among adolescents as well as grown up people when they use unfair means to overcome difficulties in life.

In fact cheating is neither age specific nor field specific rather it is widely spread across the sphere in different shapes and known by different names or terms and apparently once sacrosanct world of education has also not remained untouched by its grip. Since time immemorial, discussions have been heard about academic cheating hollowing the very base of education. It affects the evaluation system adversely. Conclusion of proposal by Educational Testing services has been cited by Newberger et al. (2003) by mentioning that “Cheating undermines integrity and fairness at all levels. It leads to weak life performance and corrodes the merit basis of our society.” Since it is such an important issue, cheating in academic institutions can not be ignored or left unattended.
One of the major problems in discussing academic dishonesty lies in the lack of a clear definition of the kind of behaviours that are associated with academic dishonesty (Nuss, 1984). Extensive paper work has been done to understand the meaning of academic cheating, a term which has diverse meanings for different persons. Broadly speaking, any deliberate fraudulent action or attempt to use unauthorized or unacceptable means in any academic work is considered as academic cheating or academic dishonesty. Cheating or dishonesty may have different shades of meaning, but for the purpose of the present study both the terms are interchangeable. The incidents of cheating in educational institutions have such a wide range that they may vary from person to person. Sometimes the matter even becomes debatable whether a particular incident can be termed as cheating or not. So it is difficult to delimit the definition of academic cheating in a few lines. For the purpose of identifying academic cheating, certain norms have been set by the institutions which are to be followed strictly. Kibler (1993) contended that “one of the significant problems that a review of the literature on academic dishonesty reveals is the
absence of a generally accepted definition”. The academic literature till date offers no universal consensus on definition of cheating. However; the Oxford English Reference Dictionary (Pearsall and Trumble, 1996, page 249) defines cheating as “to deceive or trick, deprive of, or to gain unfair advantage by deception or breaking rules, especially in a game or examination.” Academic cheating may be defined in numerous ways. According to some of the definitions, academic cheating includes the intentions of the person engaged in the dishonest behaviour (Tibbetts, 1998, 1999). Von Dran, Callahan and Taylor (2001) termed it as “intentionally unethical behaviour”. McCabe & Bowers (1994) and McCabe & Trevino (1993) based the definition of academic dishonesty upon particular violation of normative behaviour, such as cheating on a test or plagiarism. Weaver, Davis, Cook, Buzzanga and Neal (1991) presented a behaviour based definition that academic dishonesty is “a violation of an institution’s policy on honesty.” In an attempt to define academic cheating, Lambert et al. (2003) enlists a number of acts like willful perversion of truth, or stealing, cheating or defrauding, copying the work of another without attribution, willfully allowing another to copy their work, falsify information, submitting the work of another as though it were their own. Brown (1993) defines cheating as getting unauthorized aid, plagiarizing or relying on any other form of assistance that is not allowed under the Honor Code. In the Under Graduate Catalog of Missouri State’s University (2011), academic dishonesty has been described by defining some of its constituents such as cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating academic dishonesty. Roosevelt University published certain standards of conduct for students in the Student Handbook (2011) explaining various forms of academic dishonesty as “any act that enhances a student’s grade unethically and unfairly… may be done by submitting someone else’s work as one’s own, in whole or in part, by failing to acknowledge assistance received, or by using unauthorized assistance in exams including notes or unauthorized advance knowledge of the test.” There are various forms of malpractices such as leakage of information or papers, impersonation, external assistance, smuggling of foreign materials, copying, collusion and intimidation, substitution of scripts, improper assignment, ghost centers, and marker malpractices (World Bank, 2001).
Section 684 of the Campus Administrative Manual (CAM, 2011) defines cheating as “obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work, or any improvement of evaluation of performance, by any dishonest or deceptive means”. In an attempt to identify the vast terrain of cheating, it is further stated in CAM that “cheating includes, but is not limited to: lying, copying from another’s test, unless such discussion is specifically authorized by the instructor; taking or receiving copies of an exam without the permission of the instructor, using or displaying notes, cheat sheets, or other information devices inappropriate to the prescribed test conditions, and allowing someone other than the officially enrolled students to represent some.”

Every time some attempt is made at enlisting the cheating practices and barring such applications by devising appropriate rules and regulations against such performances and performers, innovative methods start emerging for facilitating those who indulge in such deviant practices and these obviously mount challenges for those who are considered responsible to stop such malpractices and nab the practitioners. Cheaters and powers that be seem to be playing ‘Tom and Jerry’ game; perceptibly struggling to nab the opponent but once at the threshold leave the challenger to start another game. Scanning of empirical literature on academic cheating reveals its nature and areas in which students are found to be involved. Cited in Lambert et al. (2003), Pavela (1978) delineates four general areas that comprise academic dishonesty: 1) cheating by using unauthorized materials on any academic activity, such as an assignment, test etc. 2) fabrication of information, references, or results; 3) plagiarism; and 4) helping other students engage in academic dishonesty (i.e. facilitating) such as allowing other students to copy their work, maintaining test banks, memorizing questions on a quiz etc. Some studies asserts that cheating on paper is more common than cheating in exams (Eissens and Stanislaus, 1999).

1.2. **SOME DISCERNIBLE TRENDS IN ACADEMIC CHEATING**

The most common reported responses at University of North Carolina (UNC) about the popular forms of academic dishonesty were: copying someone else’s paper, plagiarizing parts or all of a paper, using unauthorized information sources on a take-home exam, and getting an answer from someone else’s paper during a test. Kirandeep,
Sahu and Kalia (2008) have given the following list of some discernible trends in cheating especially in Indian context:

- Use of crib notes in the examination.
- Copying from the answer sheets of other students during examination.
- Use of handkerchiefs/clothes etc. for writing hints of the questions.
- Writing answers on the table or walls before the commencement of examination.
- Taking help from the invigilators in the form of hints in the examination hall.
- Asking or telling other fellow students the answers through gestures or code language.
- Exchanging answer sheets with other fellow students.
- Taking the help of low paid staff on duty by bribing them to bring answers to the questions from outside.
- Use of cell phones, pagers, iPods or other such hi-tech mediums to receive the messages/answers to the questions.
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- Use of calculators or other electronic devices for calculation work even though its use is prohibited.
- Changing seat in the examination room to sit near window or near to a fellow with the intention of cheating.
- Bribing concerned persons to get the question paper well in advance before the commencement of examination.
- Attempting the same question twice with the intention of duping the evaluator.
- Attaching currency notes in the answer sheets to bribe evaluators to give extra marks.
➢ Using wrong means to obtain information about exams/marks in advance of its declaration officially.

➢ Putting one’s name on another student’s exam or assignment.

➢ Giving false excuses to extend the time prescribed to appear in an exam or submitting assignment.

➢ Impersonation i.e. appearing in exam for someone else or allowing someone else to appear in one’s exam.

➢ Tracking the answer sheets to approach the evaluator to give more marks.

➢ Getting fake degrees or detailed marks card (DMC).

➢ Changing marks in detail marks card (DMC).

➢ Changing original data in research work for obtaining pre-requisite results.

➢ Tearing or damaging pages from Library books so that other students cannot get the required material.

➢ Proxy attendance to fulfill the requirement of compulsory number of attendance in the class.

➢ Secretly altering previously evaluated work with the intention of getting higher grades.

➢ Collaborating with others on an assignment even when doing so is prohibited.

➢ Copying from the writings or works of others into ones academic assignment without proper attribution, or submitting such work as if it were one’s own.

➢ Paraphrasing the characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other creative, artistic or literary device of another without proper attribution.

➢ Using the views or insights of another without proper attribution.

➢ Fabricating references or a bibliography.
1.3 Pervasiveness of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is a universal phenomenon which has increased drastically over time and is still growing (McCabe & Trevino, 1996; Schab, 1991). Cheating is prevalent to such an extent that “cheating on important exams occurs in every country of the world” (Noah & Eckstein, 2001). Available evidences suggest that rise in academic dishonesty begin some time ago and appears to be continuing (Kisamore, Stone & Jawahar, 2008).

It is prevalent at such a large scale in the educational institutions that majority of the students have been found experiencing it to some degree at least at one or the other point of their academic careers (Baird, 1980; Davis, Grover, Becker & McGregor, 1992; Eskridge & Ames, 1993). Researchers overall perceive that cheating has become a problem of almost chronic levels (Harding et al. 2001). Croucher (1997) goes to the extent of calling it an ‘epidemic’ and postulated that cheating has become so rife within universities that efforts to stem its practice are beyond their capacity to deal with it, and in some areas, the very credibility of many universities was in doubt because of this practice. Fawkner & Keremidchieva (2004) has cited a US survey conducted on 3000 college aspirants in 1998 which revealed that:

- 50 percent of the country’s best students cheated to get to the tops of their classes;
- More than half the students surveyed said that they did not think that cheating was a big deal;
- 95 percent of cheaters said they were not caught;
- 40 percent cheated on a quiz or a test;
- 67 percent copied someone else’s homework.

Attitude regarding cheating has changed so much that it is no more considered a taboo. Baird (1980) found that the majority of students (85%) feel that cheating is a part and parcel of their life. In an effort to understand student perception of the students about cheating, Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University conducted four focus group discussions during which students did not show any hesitation in discussing the
topic of cheating, and they talked freely about their personal experiences as well as those of their peers, and almost all of them admitted to have engaged in some type of cheating at some point of time during studentship (McCabe, 1999). Godfrey and Waugh (1998) have reported that “the literature on academic dishonesty indicates that cheating is practiced by most students at all levels of schooling.” Some other studies found that two-third of college students reported having cheated at some point of time during their schooling (Stern and Havlicek, 1986). Students have been found reporting lifetime cheating rates as high as 80% (Robinson, Amburgey, Swank & Faulker, 2004). 86% of the participants in a study admitted to have engaged in cheating at least once within the past years (Gallagher, 2010). Some more studies indicated the incidents of cheating in schools move upward from 40% in the upper primary years of schooling to nearly 80% in the latter years of secondary school, falling in tertiary institutions to the level of primary school (Godfrey, 2002). The percentage of cheating is higher than what is reported because cheating behaviours are often under reported by students (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964; Paulhus, 2002)

Surprisingly, as many as 80% of the students are reported to believe that cheating is a problem (Evans, Craig & Mietzel, 1993) and still the cheating rate is very high. The results of a research conducted under Educational Testing Service (ETS) in 1999 were compelling which are as follows:

- The general perception is that cheating is widespread. Students believe that cheating is prevalent in every facet of life and is accepted today.
- 35% of educators and 41% of the public, students and parents agree that there is a problem with cheating on tests.
- 73% of all test takers agree that most students do cheat at some point.
- As compared to younger test takers, high school students are less likely to report cheaters because it would be “ratting out a friend”
- Many of those who have engaged in cheating call it a victimless crime and find it O.K. if they do not get caught.
Karlin, Michaels & Podlogar (1988) suggested that the results regarding prevalence of academic cheating are influenced by the measurement method used by the researchers because students have tendency to report only higher levels of cheating. Depending on the difference in operationalization of misconduct as well as differences in methods used to detect and document academic misconduct and also the type of survey used, the reported percentage of undergraduate and graduate students who have involved in cheating ranges from 9% to 91% (Davis et al. 1992; Sims, 1995; Mecum, 2006; McCabe & Trevino, 1996; Tibbetts, 1998, 1999; Smith, 2005). The variation in the total number of students who admit to have involved in cheating (Lambert et al. 2003) is largely due to three factors: (1) While measuring the overall rate of academic dishonesty, time frame during which cheating is to be reported have its impact on the rate. Some studies only ask about behaviour during the prior six months (e.g. LaBeff et al. 1990), while others ask if the student had ever cheated while in college (e.g. Coston & Jenks, 1998). (2) Studies have defined and measured academic dishonesty differently. Some studies asked students about a very limited range of academic dishonesty, such as cheating on a test or plagiarism. Other studies asked students about a much wider range of academic dishonest behaviours, such as altering test results, cheating on homework assignments, buying papers, and so forth. Since a common base was not used, it is not surprising that varying results were observed. (3) Institutions differ in their rates of academic dishonesty because no two institutions are same in terms of their student bodies and their campus environment.

Gallant (2008) tracked the evolution of academic dishonesty in American higher education. It was found that cheating behaviours such as using crib notes arose out of the adversarial relationship between students and their educators. Thus, the first college honor code was developed which described misconduct only as “telling a lie or doing anything contrary to good manners”. During this period, research became an essential function for faculty and students and this brought about change in the manner of instruction and testing which resulted in greater opportunities for cheating. Students were known to share exam questions, obtain advanced copies of exams, pre write essay answer in exam booklets, and share information related to course content, homework, and papers.
Thus, educators took steps beyond creating codes of conduct. After World War II, there was an increase in both the number and the diversity of students in an institution. Thus funding for higher education was started which resulted in rapid expansion of postsecondary education, and its direct outcome was academic misconduct. From 1964 to 1975, there were several highly publicized cheating scandals, reported in America, one of which was a “term paper industry.” These scandals affected the young minds. Through the seventies and early nineties, known as period of ‘commercialization of postsecondary education’, students developed and employed overtly independent acts of cheating like stealing library books, removing pertinent pages from books, and changing variables during practical exams, hiring test takers or individuals to write counterfeit letters of recommendation. Through 1990’s and into the twenty first century, general access to technology introduced a vast array of cheating opportunities to students.

1.4 CAUSES OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

A recently released popular movie “Three Idiots” (2009) picturised the protagonist, Amir Khan, who refutes the Director’s traditional way of teaching which emphasise on bookish knowledge rather than practical approach. Later, when the protagonist comes to know that the Director has set very difficult paper with malafide intentions, he tries to steal the question paper so as to help his needy friend. His successful effort of getting the paper is justified and approved by the applauding viewers. Similarly, in real life situations sometimes students justify their cheating behaviour by giving reasons like- lessons were not properly taught or were very difficult, or others also cheat etc. For their part, students have readily offered a variety of rationalizations for academic dishonesty (Evans & Craig, 1990, McCabe, 1992). High school students in particular conveniently place the blame on others such as the school, teachers, parents or society (Aderman, Griesinger & Westerfield, 1998). A number of personal characteristics, demographics and contextual or situational factors have been found correlated with academic cheating (Harding et al. 2001). Several studies have suggested a variety of causes of academic dishonesty.

- Academic dishonesty arises from a deterioration of moral values as documented over the past decade by the Josephson Institute (Kolanko et al. 2006). Increasing
levels of student dishonesty may be reflective of the value system which is being internalized by today’s young people who are exposed to media almost daily reporting about fraud, bribery, insider trading and other forms of unethical behaviour in the ‘real world’ (Lawson and Grimes, 2004).

- Cheating is prevalent among students who perceive that their peers cheat and are not penalized (Bowers, 1964; McCabe & Trevino, 1993, 1997).

- With the increasing competition for the most desired positions in the job market and for few coveted places available at the nation’s leading business, law, and medical schools, today’s undergraduates experience considerable pressure to achieve higher grades in order to secure well paid employment which leads to decisions to engage in various forms of academic dishonesty (Bowers, 1964, McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, 1999). Pressure more than ever before has arguably made cheating a normative behaviour for today’s students (Lawson and Grimes, 2004). Students are under pressure, especially by parents, to succeed and when they find themselves unable to meet the expectations, they turn towards cheating.

- Education for knowledge sake is considered an old fashioned phrase. It is argued that universities are now regarded by students more as credentialing institution than as educational institution, allowing students to more easily rationalize cheating (Nonis & Swift, 2001). Therefore, in present times, emphasis on learning has been shifted on getting higher and higher grades. Students are not bothered about knowledge, their main attention is to get high grades (The Science Daily, 2010). For example, most middle and high schools are dominated by the grading system. There are schools that do not give numerical or letter grades for achievement until the sixth or seventh grade. Hence prevalence of cheating is first noticed in middle schools and the phenomenon intensifies in high schools (Newberger, 2003).

- Societal and school norms, as well as the attitudes of teachers and, most importantly, friends have clearly influenced the decisions about academic
dishonesty (McCabe & Trevino, 1993, 1997). Unfortunately, these influences are not always positive. Students now consider it a big deal if they do not cheat which hints towards the fact that cheating does not weigh heavily on the conscience of high school students and the decision to cheat seems to be based on pragmatic considerations i.e. to pass a test or to get a better grade in a competitive situation (McCabe, 1999).

- As school assessments moved from the external to the internal mode, the incidence of dishonest assessment practices by students increased as internal assessment procedures can make it easier for students to be dishonest. It includes copying from books and assignments set in previous years, unwarranted collusion amongst students in preparing assignments, gaining assistance from relatives, using illegal notes, copying in tests in relaxed classroom settings, feigning illness during class assessment sessions and appealing against on assessment without justification (Godfrey, 2002).

- In today’s collegiate world, there are a multitude of avenues for cheating when students are given take-home tests. Some student’s organizations keep files on previously given exams and online services (Pierce and Allshouse, 1999). No doubt, with the explosive advancement of technology, an array of information is available on the internet just at the ease of a click. Vast information accessible through world wide web provide unlimited data which cannot be accessed without making a copy adds to the temptation to cheat or plagiarise (Fawkner & Keremidchieva, 2004). In a short period of time, internet has become the most preferred source of communication and information. Even technologically inept students have access to vast information resources (Ryan, 1998). Not only the Internet, but also the other electronic appliances are misused. A leading newspaper in America, The Straight Times (2003) reported that students had sent question to friends waiting outside their school by email, SMS etc. and received answer the same way through hidden earpieces.

- Sometimes adopting ideas from other’s work and moulding them in one’s own words is very tedious and time consuming effort. And this additional effort far out
weighs the requirement to remain upright and truthful (Fawkner and Keremidchieva, 2004) and thus students choose an easy way out of cut and paste technique. Sometimes cut and paste technique is used because an individual has low confidence in writing skills or has careless attitude towards note making.

- Some students view any course which is not directly related to their future credential and consider it as a waste of their time and energy. They believe that if the course is not in their major, it’s not important, and try to economize in major classes. Students accomplish this by buying, stealing or copying papers when they perceive themselves overburdened. (Harris, 2001).

- Sometimes children are forced by their parents to take up some subjects (keeping in view the demands of higher salary or better prospects) even if they are not of their interest and aptitude (Harding et al. 2001). When their children fail to deal with such subjects, they also help them to use unfair means to complete their courses.

- When faculty members have a lenient attitude towards cheaters, students are liable to take advantage of the situation. Sometimes cheating cases are not even being reported so as to avoid further paper work on the part of invigilators. Once a Professor in University of Massachusetts Boston told J. Stone Laraway, “Three things you never do at U Mass Boston : Accuse a woman, a minority, or an international student of cheating… because there would be too much paper work, the student could sue the university, and the student could threaten” (Laraway, 2003).

- Cheating graph goes up when the instructor either trust students to be honest or is reluctant to perform his/her duty with utmost attention. When students do not perceive a strong threat of being caught and punished, they get more inclined to cheat. Some researchers believe that the climate at most institutions has eroded to the point that cheaters face trivial penalties, if any, and faculty members pay little attention to academic dishonesty thus students consider it foolish not to cheat (McCabe & Drinan, 1999). When students see cheaters go unreported or
unpunished, non-cheaters too begin cheating to “level the playing field” (McCabe, Trevino, Butterfield, 2001).

- Some students have been reported to place the blame for cheating on faculty for Irrelevant course material, poor instructional quality and a lack of connection between assignments and course material (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, 1999), then they ease off the pressure of morality for not involving in malpractices and thus find a reason to convince them to use unfair means in completing their task. The external work commitments and heavy course loads also force students to indulge in cheating (Hall and Kuh, 1997, McCabe and Drinan, 1999 and Meade, 1992).

- Publicised scandals in both organizational and academic realms have also enhanced the decision to cheat (Kisamore, Stone & Jawahar, 2008).

- Students consider examinations as the ultimate aim of their future. They put their best efforts to pass their examinations, even if using unfair means. Examinations have been given so much importance that it seems as if schools, colleges, and universities have been established for the purpose of preparing students for examinations (Khan, 2004).

1.5 FACTORS AFFECTING ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHEATING

Cheating has become a common trait in the character prevailing from the roots to the shoots of education system i.e. from students to the educators themselves. Some of the factors affecting attitude towards cheating behaviour as given by Kirandeep, Sahu & Kalia (2008) are as follows:

- Psychological factors have been reported by many researchers to be the single most important factor in student cheating. Roth and McCabe (1995) have found a strong correlation between student values congruence and cheating.

- Some of the findings indicate that male students are more likely to cheat than female students (Kalial, 2006) may be because men are more disruptive in behaviour (Kalial, 2006) and possess lower level of self-control making them to indulge in cheating and women have higher level of anticipated shame, making
them less likely to commit academic dishonesty. (Tibbetts, 1999. Reported by Rabi, Patton, Fjortoft, Zgarrick, 2006).

- The grade point average is also correlated with academic dishonesty. Some students having high GPA cheat in order to remain academically competitive (McCabe & Trevino, 1996) while some studies indicate that students with low grade point average are more likely to cheat (Stephens, 2004).

- Individual traits also play a great role in affecting the students’ indulgence in cheating. Some students tend to be competitive, achievement oriented and are anxious to get high grades. When such students fail to attain the desired grade, they are more prone to involve in cheating in comparison to the students who remain relaxed and less competitive.

- If a person has high opinion about himself or herself as a good person or has high level of self-esteem then he is pulled from indulging in cheating.

- Locus of control is another factor which seems to be related with cheating. Students who believe that they control their own destiny are more likely to cheat than those who are controlled by external forces. Though some studies could not establish any correlation among self-esteem, locus of control and cheating, but it needs some more investigation.

- High Strung, “Type A” personalities cheat more than calmer, differently motivated individuals” (Moeck, 2002).

- “Procrastinators cheat more often than those who can manage time effectively” (Bricault; 1998)”.

- Younger students, traditional college students, business majors, students engaged in social activities and undergraduates in general are more likely to cheat, (Gerdeman, 2000).

- Students who are bold and seek pleasure in going against the authority indulge in cheating more than those who fear breaking the rules set in an institution.
Situational factors also play a great role in increasing the graph of cheaters. Students are more likely to cheat when they see others doing so and not being punished adequately.

Subcultures such as fraternities, sororities and athletic teams also influence attitude towards cheating. Several researchers have found that students involved in these organizations are more likely to cheat than their peers, (Reported by Harding et al. 2001).

Students appear to cheat more frequently as they matriculate from freshman to seniors, (Moffatt, 1990), however, older non-traditional students cheat less often than their younger peers.

Demographic factors do not in general appear to play as significant a role in determining whether a student can be expected to cheat. There seems to be very little correlation between ethnicity and cheating, (Harding et al. 2001). But in larger campuses when there are too many subjects to prepare and too many examinations to prepare, cheating in more prevalent.

1.6 ACADEMIC CHEATING AND PERSONALITY

A number of demographic and personal variables are related to academic dishonesty. Specifically, men, younger students, students with lower grades and ability, and students who live in residences are more likely to engage in dishonest academic behaviour than women, older students, students with better grades and ability, and students who do not live in residences (Bolin, 2004; Dawkins, 2004; Jensen, Arnett, Feldman & Cauffman, 2002; Pino & Smith, 2003). Peer approval of dishonesty and peer cheating are also positively related to academic dishonesty (McCabe & Trevino, 1997; McCabe et al 2001).

Personality variables implicated as determinants of cheating range from irresponsibility, lack of dependability, and disregard for rules and social norms (Collions & Schmidt, 1993) to extraversion, neuroticism, and conscientiousness (Bushway & Nash, 1977). After examining the relationship between personality and cheating, Hetherington
and Feldman (1964) described the personality of student cheaters as dependent on four
different types of cheating behaviour.

1. Individualistic opportunistic: Cheating by impulsive and unplanned people.

2. Individualistic planned: Cheating is preconceived.

3. Social-active: When more than two people cooperate to cheat and both parties
actively investigate the cheating possibilities.

4. Social passive: Cheating occurs when the individual’s role is passive.

Several personality traits have been explored having their impact on academic
shed light on the relationship between personality and academic dishonesty. Deviant
behaviour is the result of lack of self-control (a manifestation of low conscientiousness;
Bruin & Rudnick, 2007), perceived opportunity for deviant behaviour, and the interaction

Procrastination, an indicator of low conscientiousness (Bruin & Rudnick, 2007)
include poorly prepared for tests, increased test anxiety, failure to meet deadlines for
assignments, poor writing skills, and lower grades (Ferrari & Beck, 1998; Fritzscche,
Young & Hickson, 2003, Jonson & Bloom, 1995; Roig & De Tomasso, 1995) is a
common precursor to academic dishonesty.

Among members of the Dark Triad (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and sub
clinical psychopathy), sub-clinical psychopathy (Poor scholastic competence) emerged as
the best personality predictors of cheating (Nathanson et al. 2006).

Among big five model of personality: conscientiousness, extraversion (sensation
seeking), neuroticism (impulsivity), agreeableness and openness to experience have been
found correlated with academic cheating (McCrae and Costa, 1985). Excitement seeking
has positive relationship with academic cheating. Excitement seeking is a facet of the
broader extraversion trait (Costa et al. 2002) and is characterized by a need for thrills,
risk taking and strong stimulation (Piedmont, 1998) and closely related to Zuckerman’s
(1994) trait of sensation seeking, which has been linked to legal, social, financial, and recreational risk taking behaviour (Horvath & Zuckerman, 1993, Roberti, 2004).

In comparison with their non-cheating counterparts, cheaters are more likely to be less intelligent, to be higher on extraversion and neuroticism, to be less self-sufficient, to be involved in those studies which are perceived to be meaningless and more likely to be males than females (Bushway and Nash, 1977). High impulsivity and sensation seeking also predict cheating (Anderman, Cupp and Lane, 2006). High impulsive females are more likely to cheat than low impulsive females (Kelly and Worrell, 1978). High neuroticism and psychoticism have also predicted cheating (Jackson et al. 2002).

1.7 ACADEMIC CHEATING AND STUDY INVOLVEMENT

Students may take their studies lightly without taking it into consideration that it in their every day schedule after school hours and may decide to take the easy way out by cheating on certain assignments or tests within the class (Teaching Guide for G.S.I’s, 2010).

Lack of preparation (Whitley, 1998) tempts students to indulge in dishonest behaviour during examination. On one hand, students generally experience examination fever and additionally they are not prepared well to compete in studies. At that time, fear of failing in exams or fear of perceived embarrassing position at home or in society may dominate their moral thinking and thus they may get tempted towards cheating. The decision to cheat seems to be based on pragmatic consideration e.g. to pass a test or to get better grades in a competitive situation (McCabe, 1999). Sometimes when students are not in a position to devote sufficient time in studies due to various reasons, their parents are likely to threaten them with dire consequences without actually understanding the cause of their being inattentive or devoting ample time in academic pursuits. Such parental pressure is likely to prompt the student to indulge in cheating practices in order to avoid failing in exams and subsequent punishment.

Sometimes assignments demand knowledge from previous lessons taught in class as many a lesson have chain effects. If a student could not pay attention previously, he is likely to plagiaries or copy the assigned homework from someone else. “One of the most
common causes of academic misconduct is ineffective or inadequate study habits. Some students do not realize that they need to enlarge their repertoire of academic strategies to cope with their courses’ intellectual demands. If students are not familiar with effective and legitimate strategies, they may be tempted to try dishonest ones” (Teaching Guide for G.S.I’s, 2010). Students who spend time in extracurricular activities have been reported taking short cuts in studies to stay up to date and remain competitive in their course work (McCabe and Treivno, 1997) The number of work hours has been found negatively correlated to cheating (Diekhoff et al. 1996). Study involvement seems to be a strong correlate of academic cheating. In a study, majority of the students identified that laziness; lack of motivation to work hard and poor time management were the major reasons leading them to plagiaries (Alam, 2004).

1.8 ACADEMIC CHEATING AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Daily media reporting involvement of big guns in various scams create the impression that socio-economic status may be correlated with academic cheating. The popular proverb ‘Money begets money’ seems to be prevailing in the society. It is apprehended that people from high income group or family status keep their eye on higher status jobs for which they need higher degrees by all means. Students who have access to money and power may take the liberty of using unfair means to get higher grades because of two possible reasons. Firstly they have means to lure people around them to help them in malpractices. Secondly, they apprehend that they have better chances of escaping punishments even after being caught red handed in malpractices.

On the contrary, there is another conception that students from higher SES can afford to get education from best institutions, from best tutors. As a result, students are more likely to be engaged in studies if they attend schools with high average socio-economic status (Williams, 2003). Thus, their achievement level may be higher than other students. Consequently, they may not indulge in cheating practice. Socio-economic status and academic achievements have shown positive correlation though it is not very strong. Higher socio-economic status students have been reported higher in academic achievement (White, 1982).
Low SES students who get education from aided schools have to pass the examination to continue to receive scholarships for them. Even school personnel may help them in cheating because good results of students will fetch them grants for their institutions. Sometimes teachers want to improve their result records in order to check dropout percentage in their class which especially occur among low SES students. Thus, teachers may help these students in cheating in examination or may give them higher grades for their low performance in home assignments.

It is assumed that Low SES students do not have easy access to World Wide Web or other hi-tech facilities and thus have less chances of plagiarizing through internet or other hi-tech equipments.

The picture about correlation between academic cheating and socio and economic status is not clear as very limited number of studies could be traced on it. Some more studies conducted in this direction may help to draw out conclusion whether there is any correlation between academic cheating and socio-economic status of the students.

1.9 NEED OF THE STUDY

Undoubtedly, cheating is occurring at alarming rates (Harding et al. 2001). The real problem arises when it is found that cheating prevailing in educational institution is not an end in itself. It is a symptom of a larger problem (Lovett-Hooper, Kormanaja et al. 2007). From the seemingly small beginnings of such cheating ultimately grow the white collar criminals of the future as well as the dishonest behaviour regarding money and wealth (Tamari, 2004). The study by Nonis and Swift (2001) has shown a strong positive correlation between academic dishonesty and work place dishonesty. These correlations suggest that dishonesty is a relatively stable characteristic that manifests in behaviour of an individual.

Moreover, cheating is profoundly unfair to the majority of test takers who behave honourably and play by the rules (Fremer and Mulkey, 2008). They work and study hard to learn the skills and content covered by important tests. Cheaters may then earn high scores without actually acquiring the knowledge and skills measured by the test. Cheating also substantially undermines the value of a test as a protection for the public against
unqualified practitioner in various fields such as physicians or engineering or finance. Cheating threatens the viability of testing programs thus putting our life or property in danger. Studies report that cheating is spreading in all directions. From primary level to post graduate, in all times and at all places. It has deteriorated educational system. To revive the value of education it is necessary to nip the evil in the bud, for which it is necessary to find answers to certain questions such as: What is academic cheating? What are its areas? Who cheats? Why and to what extent cheating occurs?

The present study focuses on: Who cheats?

Cheating behaviour needs to be explored more so that a deep analysis could be done to understand the complex human mind more. Further investigation focused on the relations of various psychological and social motivational factors will strengthen the missing or weak links between individual’s decisions to indulge in academic cheating.

Nevertheless, studies of the relatives between neuroticism, extraversion, study involvement and socio-economic status with academic cheating are largely absent from the academic cheating literature. However, not a single extensive study was found till date in Indian context. Thus it was a compelling need of the hour to study cheating behaviour among adolescents dwelling from Indian culture. Though human mind is basically similar everywhere still there are cultural differences which have ample impact on the individual’s decision to cheat. Therefore, the present research work was taken up to investigate academic cheating in relation to independent variables chosen from individualistic and social difference domain i.e. personality, study involvement and socio-economic status of an adolescents.

The proposed study is needed by all those who want to curb cheating from our education system. Instead of controlling cheating at the time of occurrence, the root causes of its occurrence are needed to be checked.

The study will provide guidelines to educational administrators and planners whom to focus specially. While framing policies and programmes to control cheating, personality, study involvement and socio-economic status of the cheaters will be considered.
In schools, teachers will devise new methods and teaching techniques to tackle cheating behaviour among adolescents. School administration will be able to implement constructive measure to combat cheating among adolescents.

Parents will be benefited by the proposed study to provide conducive environment to their children so that they do not resolve to cheat. The study will be helpful to them to identify risk of cheating among their children, and thus they will be able to take preventive measures well in times, before the problem arises.

In general, society will also get an insight into the complexities associated with cheating. Society will be alarmed about this social evil and thus will be able to find effective tools to minimize cheating among adolescents.

1.10 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Personality of an individual play a key role in decision making in stressful situation, differentiating between right or wrong, moral or immoral etc. Since all these components are directly or indirectly associated with cheating, Personality is taken as one of the variables in the study. However, personality of an individual can only be described after assessing a number of traits. More frequently examined personality traits linked with academic cheating are locus of control, self-efficacy, Dark Triad and Big Five personality traits. Impulsivity (categorized as neuroticism) and sensation seeking (categorized as extraversion) represent two constructs prevalent in the personality psychology literature that maybe related to academic cheating (Miller et al. 2007).

Neuroticism is a fundamental personality trait that has enduring tendency to experience negative emotional states. Individuals who score high on neuroticism are more likely to experience such feelings as anxiety and depressed mood. They respond more poorly to environmental stress, and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening. They consider minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. They may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2011). Thus neuroticism seems to be a risk factor for academic cheating. On the opposite end of the spectrum, individuals who score low on neuroticism are more emotionally stable and less reactive to stress. They tend to be clam and even tempered, and less likely to feel
tense or rattled. Although they are low in negative emotions, they are not necessarily high on positive emotions (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2011). Being high on positive emotions is an element of the independent trait of personality i.e. Extraversion.

Extrovert individuals have a high need for sensation and novel exciting experiences. Tendencies toward either high need for sensation or impulsivity have been found to be related to adolescent’s engagement in risky behaviour (Baer, 2002; Donohew, Zimmerman, Noval, Feist Price & Cupp, 2000). Extrovert’s need for sensation probably has evolutionary roots in that humans needed to be able to react successfully to novel stimuli in order to survive (Zuckerman, 1994). Individual’s high on extraversion may be more likely to cheat because of the risky nature of cheating. Such individuals may experience reinforcement from the “rush” associated with getting away with cheating on an academic examination or assignment. The study of sensation seeking and impulsivity as they relate to academic cheating represents a board arena for future research (Miller et al. 2007).

Study involvement seems to be directly related to academic cheating. An individual, who has regular study habits, manages his time well and is deeply involved in studies, will be well prepared for home assignments or for exam. If an individual is involved in studies, he will have no time to get involve in destructive activities. Rather he will utilize his time in extra readings. On the other hand, low study involved adolescents have ample time at their disposal and “an empty mind in a devils’ workshop”, therefore, such individuals have been found more involved in destructive and immoral activities in schools. During examinations, they have no other option than using unfair means to get into the next higher class.

Socioeconomic status of an individual may have its impact on his behaviour in school. High socioeconomic status adolescents have been seen moulding the situation in their favour. On the other hand, underprivileged have less opportunities but high aspirations for their future. As parental education play an important role in child education, students coming from such families are likely to get timely guidance from their elders at home and may not resolve to cheat. Parental involvement in children’s learning at home and at school is strongly influenced by family’s socio-economic status.
(Boethel, 2003)). Parents in families with lower SES often have fewer years of education, possibly more negative school experiences and may feel unprepared to help their children in studies. (Berthelsen and Walker, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate, and pursue the study of academic cheating in relation to the socio-economic status of adolescents. Moreover, there is a dearth of academic cheating literature in this direction.

The study on academic cheating in relation to personality, study involvement and socio-economic status of adolescents will present a comprehensive and viable explanation towards understanding of cheating behaviour.

1.11 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“A Study of Academic Cheating among Adolescents in relation to their Personality, Study Involvement and Socio-economic Status.”

1.12. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

1.12.1 Academic Cheating:

The definition given by Finn and Frone (2004) has been adopted as an operational definition of the term cheating which states, “Cheating represents the extent to which students engaged in academic dishonesty during the past years.” (cited by Kalia, 2006).

1.12.2 Personality:

The definition given by Eysenck and Eysenck (1975) has been adopted as the operational definition of the term personality which states, “Personality is more or less stable and enduring organization of person’s character, temperament, intellect and physique which determine his unique adjustment to the environment”

1.12.3 Study Involvement:

The concept and definition of Study Involvement has been adopted from Bhatnagar (1982) in which the concept of involvement has been defined, “as identification with the task to be accomplished” and the degree of which is “determined by the (i) number of needs satisfied, and (ii) the extent of their satisfaction through the performance of the task”. In short, the Study Involvement is “intrinsic motivation of students in their scholastic pursuits”.

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1.12.4 Socio-economic Status:

The definition given by Kalia and Sahu (in press) has been adopted as an operational definition which states Socio-Economic status of an individual is the “status of his/her family in relation to their level of socio-cultural participation, ability to influence mass, level of education, kind of occupation, financial position, health-wellbeing, lifestyle, level of aspiration, kind of gadgets, services and leisure facilities that the family enjoys.”

1.12.5 Adolescents:

Encyclopedic Dictionary of Education (2010) defines adolescents as “the chronological years of individual growth and development beginning with the onset of puberty (about 11 years old) and lasting more or less until maturity (about 17 years old).

The adolescent is past childhood and not yet an adult so that the physical and psychological process of development may be erratic or confusing and lead to difficulty in adjustment or adolescent crisis.”

1.13 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study aims at achieving the following objectives:

\( O_0 \) To Construct and Standardize a Scale to Assess Academic Cheating among Adolescents.

\( O_1 \) Objectives Related to Personality

\( O_1 \) (a) To compare Neurotic and Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

\( O_1 \) (b) To compare Extrovert and Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

\( O_1 \) (c) To compare Urban Neurotic and Urban Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

\( O_1 \) (d) To compare Urban Extrovert and Urban Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

\( O_1 \) (e) To compare Rural Neurotic and Rural Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

\( O_1 \) (f) To compare Rural Extrovert and Rural Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.
O1 (g) To compare Male Neurotic and Male Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

O1 (h) To compare Male Extrovert and Male Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

O1 (i) To compare Female Neurotic and Female Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

O1 (j) To compare Female Extrovert and Female Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

O2 Objectives Related to Study Involvement

O2 (a) To compare High Study Involved, Average Study Involved and Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

O2 (b) To compare Urban High Study Involved, Urban Average Study Involved and Urban Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

O2 (c) To compare Rural High Study Involved, Rural Average Study Involved and Rural Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

O2 (d) To compare Male High Study Involved, Male Average Study Involved and Male Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

O2 (e) To compare Female High Study Involved, Female Average Study Involved and Female Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

O3 Objectives Related to Socio-Economic Status

O3 (a) To compare High Socio-economic status, Middle Socio-economic status and Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

O3 (b) To compare Urban High Socio-economic status, Urban Middle Socio-economic status and Urban Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

O3 (c) To compare Rural High Socio-economic status, Rural Middle Socio-economic status and Rural Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

O3 (d) To compare Male High Socio-economic status, Male Middle Socio-economic status and Male Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.
O₃(e) To compare Female High Socio-economic status, Female Middle Socio-economic status and Female Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

O₄ Objectives Related to Correlation Between Academic Cheating And Personality, Study Involvement and Socio-Economic Status

O₄(a) To find correlation between Academic Cheating and Neuroticism.

O₄(b) To find correlation between Academic Cheating and Extraversion.

O₄(c) To find correlation between Academic Cheating and Study Involvement.

O₄(d) To find correlation between Academic Cheating and Socio-economic Status.

1.14 Hypotheses of the Study

Though scanning of literature formed a hazy picture in the mind but the investigator wanted to be free from all prejudices about the influence of independent variables on academic cheating. To form fresh opinion in this regard, the following null hypotheses have been framed and explored with respect to academic cheating.

H₁. Hypotheses with respect to Personality

H₁(a) There is no significant difference among Neurotic and Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

H₁(b) There is no significant difference among Extrovert and Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

H₁(c) There is no significant difference among Urban Neurotic and Urban Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

H₁(d) There is no significant difference among Urban Extrovert and Urban Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

H₁(e) There is no significant difference among Rural Neurotic and Rural Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

H₁(f) There is no significant difference among Rural Extrovert and Rural Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.
\( H_1(g) \) There is no significant difference among Male Neurotic and Male Stable adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_1(h) \) There is no significant difference among Male Extrovert and Male Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_1(i) \) There is no significant difference among Female Neurotic and Female Stable adolescents or academic cheating.

\( H_1(j) \) There is no significant difference among Female Extrovert and Female Introvert adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_2 \) \textbf{Hypotheses with respect to Study Involvement}

\( H_2(a) \) There is no significant difference among High Study Involved, Average Study Involved and Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_2(b) \) There is no significant difference among Urban High Study Involved, Urban Average Study Involved and Urban Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_2(c) \) There is no significant difference among Rural High Study Involved, Rural Average Study Involved and Rural Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_2(d) \) There is no significant difference among Male High Study Involved, Male Average Study Involved and Male Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_2(e) \) There is no significant difference among Female High Study Involved, Female Average Study Involved and Female Low Study Involved adolescents on academic cheating.

\( H_3 \) \textbf{Hypotheses with respect to Socio-Economic Status (SES)}

\( H_3(a) \) There is no significant difference among High Socio-economic status, Middle Socio-economic status and Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.
H₃(b) There is no significant difference among Urban High Socio-economic status, Urban Middle Socio-economic status and Urban Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

H₃(c) There is no significant difference among Rural High Socio-economic status, Rural Middle Socio-economic status and Rural Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

H₃(d) There is no significant difference among Male High Socio-economic status, Male Middle Socio-economic status and Male Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

H₃(e) There is no significant difference among Female High Socio-economic status, Female Middle Socio-economic status and Female Low Socio-economic status adolescents on academic cheating.

H₄. **Hypotheses with respect to Correlation Between Academic Cheating And Personality, Study Involvement and Socio-Economic Status.**

H₄(a) There is no significant correlation between Academic Cheating and Neuroticism.

H₄(b) There is no significant correlation between Academic Cheating and Extraversion.

H₄(c) There is no significant correlation between Academic Cheating and Study Involvement.

H₄(d) There is no significant correlation between Academic Cheating and Socio-economic status.

1.15 **DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The present study deals with personality, study involvement and socio-economic status and its relationship with academic cheating among adolescents. While it may not be quite possible to incorporate all the relevant issues in the present study as such an attempt would render it unmanageable. Therefore, this study will also have its limitations just as almost all the research works in social sciences have in consideration with maintaining the manageability of the study, such as:
1. The measuring tools and instruments are partially reliable and valid.

2. If the scope of study is made too wide, the depth is reduced.

3. More accurate results can be procured from the whole of the population rather than from its sample unless the sample is a true representative of the population, which is quite difficult to achieve.

   Due to these limitations, along with the limitations of time and resources on the part of investigator, a sincere attempt has been made to delimit the study in terms of sample and method of the study and the measuring tools used in the study.

(A) **Delimitations in Sampling**

1. The study was delimited to 400 students (200 Urban =100 Male + 100 Female; and 200 Rural =100 Male +100 Female) of senior secondary level only.

2. The study was confined to 10 schools (One Urban + One Rural from each of the five districts selected randomly) of Haryana state only.

(B) **Delimitations in Methods**

   The study adopted the psychological and sociological techniques of research and, therefore, may contain some such infirmities which such techniques are normally infested with.