

Students' Practices with Examinations Cheating: Perspective of Students in Arsi University, Ethiopia

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Abstract The main objective of the study was to assess the perception of instructors and students on the nature, practices, types and causes of examination malpractice. The study was basically employs cross-sectional survey research design using quantitative approach. The subjects were 60 instructors and 300 students who were selected randomly from four colleges. As self-developed questionnaire, which adapted from previously used to investigate practices, and methods of cheating examinations were used. The data was analyzed using statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. Results indicated that poor study habits, laziness, lack of self-confidence, the difficulty of the tests, lack of facilities, stiff competition and inadequate coverage of the course and the need of having extra points to raise their grades were as the cause of examination malpractice. Methods of cheating include bringing prepared answers to examination halls, writing on body parts and copying from someone else during a test are the top unethical behaviors. The respondents raised the following suggestions on how cheating may be curbed: strict supervision of examination, assisting learners to develop self confidence through delivering question based practical lesson, applying the rules and regulations strictly. Attention, therefore, needs to be given to strengthening and restoring a culture of integrity by heightening public awareness of the effects of fraud and corruption. The study recommended that there is need for thorough guidance and counselling and adequate preparation of students for examinations.

Keywords: *Academic, cheating, examination, Ethiopia, higher education, students.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the key to solve multi dimensional problems of a society through knowledge, attitude and skills developed. Thus, many countries of the world engaged in ensuring the access of education to their citizens. Researchers of education underscore the students' assessment strategies as a core part in insuring quality of education. In reality, student assessment should be regarded as a complex, multidimensional activity that requires alignment, balance and rigor in order to assure quality outcomes (Starovoytova & Namango, 2016). To ensure rigorous assessment, academic cheating must be minimized. If there are unethical practices, like cheating in the process of administering such kind of tools, the quality of education will be questioned as well.

Further, the success of teaching and learning depends upon the effectiveness of its examination system as it is a fundamental component in quality of education. Examinations are arranged to evaluate the academic performance of students and to know whether they have achieved a standard of academic learning and knowledge. Examinations are considered

the basis for promotion to higher classes; a source of motivation for learners for better studies; a basis for prediction about students' future education and job aptitudes. Furthermore, examination serves as a source for the assessment of students' achievement level and assists the teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and learning methods for future improvement (Shahid, 2007). Examination is the most practical and useful way to determine the extent to which the students have achieved the instructional objectives in particular course of study as planned. Examination will be valid, trustworthy and free of examinations malpractices that will assess the academic achievement of students in an excellent and effective way. According to Adams and Esther (2013), it is regrettable that in most countries of the world, the examination system is infected with examination misconducts or wrongdoing. Examination serves as an instrument for decision-making and it always create apprehension, uneasiness and anxiety in the heart of students and some other stakeholders. Concurrent to authors (Starovoytova & Namango, 2016) participants say "students' engagement in academic cheating has been increasing with its complex techniques, and virtually all students at any grade level either directly or indirectly engage in deceptive behaviors.

Most examinations are marked by complaints of various forms of malpractice, and in most of these examinations, cheating is a recurrent event (Danielsen, Simon & Pavlick, 2006; Petters & Okon, 2014). Examination-cheating is an unethical practice that some university-students often opt to, when they face a dilemma of failing an examination. Failing an exam is an awful-experience that frightens university-students, because of the severe-effects of the failure. Cheating in examinations is a worldwide phenomenon (Emaikwu, 2012; Nyamwange, Ondima & Onderi, 2013). Isangedighi (2007) also observed that the rising wave of examination malpractice amongst today's youths poses a big challenge to contemporary society. Nearly 21% of students who say cheating is bad still engage in the behavior (Kiogotho, 2009). Cheating in examinations is on the increase among students in secondary schools, preparatory schools, colleges and universities. Adams and Esther (2013) lamented that it is regrettable, that in most countries of the world, the examination system is infected with examination misconduct or wrongdoing or malpractices.

According to Shahid (2007), examinations are designed to evaluate the academic achievement of students and to ascertain whether they have achieved a standard of academic learning and knowledge. Examinations are considered the basis for promotion to higher classes, a source of motivation for learners to advance to additional studies, and a basis for prediction about students' future education and job aptitudes. Nyamwange et al. (2013) opined that school examinations are a tool for measuring learners' mastery of content and instructors' effectiveness in delivering the content at different levels of schooling in education systems all over the world. Research in undergraduate-student-cheating revealed several common findings Newstead cited in Adams and Esther (2013): (1) Cheating is a widespread-serious-problem in schools and universities; (2) The percentage of students, who admitted to having cheated, in their exams at university, ranges from 40% up to 80%; (3) cheating is more-common in colleges; (4) male-students cheat more than females; (5) students of lower academic achievement cheat more that students of higher-academic-achievement; (6) cheating incidences increase in large and crowded classrooms; (7) younger-students cheat

more than older ones; (8) very-few-students are caught cheating and very-little has been done, by universities and individual lecturers, to prevent cheating; (9) stress, desire for good-grades, and time-pressure are the main-reasons, reported by students to justify cheating.

Academic cheating comprises of plagiarism, stealing tests, fabricating academic documents, purchasing term papers, or copying from someone's exams, and thus, most likely happen when students reproduce and submit the work of their peers, or allow other students to duplicate from their work during examination and homework settings (Hamani, Chalghaf, Maaloul & Azaiez, 2013; Ahmadi, 2012; Anderman & Murdock, 2007; Awanbor, 2004). Some studies identify causes such as the following, that contribute to cheating: poor teaching, poor learning environment and lack of facilities (Ajayi, 2009), an education system that is concerned about performance, poor time management (Blachnio & Weremko, 2011), lack of effective study habits (Badejo & Gandonu, 2010). However, there is no readily available information on causes that contribute to cheating in higher education institutions. The purpose of this study was to investigate causes that contribute to cheating in examinations, methods used in cheating and reasons for students to cheat; and the main aim was to devise and recommend strategies that can be applied to curb cheating in examinations in technical institutions in Arsi University, Ethiopia. In spite of the tough measures meted out on examination cheats which include cancellation of results and suspension from sitting for the examinations again, examination cheating seems to persist not only in the current study area but also in many parts of Ethiopia, and hence the essence of this study.

Examinations should be reliable and consistent as means of measuring students' achievement (Wilayat, 2009), however, when irregularities or examination malpractice occurs, then the validity and resulting outcomes become questionable (Badia, Cladellas & Clariana, 2013). Cheating in higher education is growing globally in an alarming and at an exponential rate. There is also a great difference in students' perceptions and the reality of their own ethical behavior which may nowadays highly obscure within their personality development. To this end, Fasasi (2006) concluded that examination cheating practices is an unethical act because it encourages mediocrity in the sense that students who succeed through such unorthodox methods may be rated equal to those who struggle on their own to excel.

Asante-Kyei and Nduro (2014) listed a number of causes/factors that lead to examination cheating, including cultural practices, school programs, teaching or learning environment, and characteristics of teachers and students. They noted that cheating has become an indicator of a serious breakdown in the cultural structure as a result of the confusion between cultural norms and goals and the capacities of members to act in accordance with it. According to Anzene (2014), the root causes of examination malpractice include the following: an emphasis on paper qualifications or certificates, inadequate teaching and learning facilities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, high student/teacher ratios which in turn affect teaching and learning, poor moral upbringing of some of the youths by parents, and students' vices such as cultism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, and truancy.

In a study by Maheka (2015) factors that contribute to examination cheating at the secondary

school level were also identified. The study found the following as factors that contribute to examination malpractice: corruption, poor implementation of examination rules, poor invigilation, students and parental threats, lack of fear of punishment, inadequate preparation for examinations, and collusion. Other factors included disloyalty of examination bodies, fear of failure, poor morale, and economic depression of supervisory staff. Further, Hughes, Butler, Kritsonis and Herrington (2007) investigated undergraduates' perceptions of factors responsible for examination malpractice. Their findings revealed poor study habits, poor concentration during lectures, and peer influence.

Examination malpractice has many negative impacts. According to Akaranga and Ongong (2013), examination malpractice often leads to expulsion of students from academic institutions. According to Adelakum and Lawal (2008), the effects of examination malpractice are erosion of confidence in the education system and loss of credibility in the education assessment, loss of confidence in examination agencies, which leads to loss of confidence in the certificates that are issued by the agencies, and rising cost of conducting examinations, especially in areas where leakage has been documented.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The occurrence of examination cheating practices at any level of education system possesses the greatest threat to the validity and reliability of examination system. Studies indicated that there is a general trend in our society towards exam cheating and this is encouraged and supported by almost all members of the society. Exam cheating brings great destruction to the social, economic and political lives of a nation. According to Maheka (2015), the impacts of examination cheating practices in the society are destructive as it affects the whole society, the individual, education system, government, organization and community negatively. Therefore it is imperative to eradicate the curse of examinations' cheating practices otherwise the entire system of the nation will be collapsed and demolished.

Examination cheating practices, which compromises the quality of education, is becoming the concern of most of the academic institutions in Ethiopia. Examination cheating practices a vice that has bedeviled the Ethiopian education system for many years. This examination cheating practices not only occurs in secondary school, but also colleges and universities examinations. Hence, education in Ethiopia suffered many challenges regarding the quality of human power production for employment. Cases of examination cheating have been reported in many higher education institutes in Ethiopia in general and in a number of departments in Arsi University in particular. The researcher experience indicates that Arsi University also shares the concern as a number of instructors and students are complaining about the growing practice of cheating and plagiarism on exams and written works. Therefore, it is ideal to investigate the causes, the trends of the examination cheating practices and the perceptions of stakeholders before these acts impede the overall quality of education.

The question that arises is why examination cheating practices are still rampant in spite of the tough measures taken to deal with examination cheats. In fact, examination cheating practices constitute the most serious problem facing nation's education system in general and higher education in particular. Therefore, there is need to wash the nation's education system by eradicating examination cheating practices and requires a multidimensional approach to its solution. This cancer of society can be cured through collaborative efforts of all the stakeholders which include higher education authorities, instructors and examination authorities. Hence, examination cheating practices was further communicated as best crosscut tactic to success. Examinations play a crucial role not only in a higher education system but also in the overall development of any society. This is because the advancement of any society directly depends on the quality of its manpower which is produced from the education system. The quality of training of any society's manpower is measured by its school examinations. Thus the integrity of any county's examinations should be jealously safeguarded in order to accurately gauge the standard of training produced by its education system. A study intended to establish the causes of cheating in examinations with a view to recommending measures to rid society of this vice is therefore significant, hence the need for this study. The main objectives of the study under investigation were to explore the different forms of examination cheating practices and the causes/factors that contribute examination cheating practices at higher education. The findings will not only depict the factors that contribute examination cheating practices but will also suggest some remedies or permanent solutions to eradicate the curse of malpractices by devising solid preventive measures. It is also expected that the study will assist higher education administrators, instructors and guidance counselors to reduce or control cheating behavior of the students in higher education institutes.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How do instructors and third year students' perceived causes/factors of examination cheating practices in Arsi University?
2. What methods/forms of examination cheating are used among third year students identify as the most serious in Arsi University?
3. What intervention measures have been instituted to minimize the hazard of examination cheating among third year students in Arsi University?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the causes/forms, methods/mechanisms and effects of examination cheating practices among third year students in Arsi University, Ethiopia. More specifically, the study intends to:-

- examine the perception of instructors and students towards the causes/factors of examination cheating practices in Arsi University;
- identify the most frequently occurring methods/forms of examination cheating practices used among third year students in the university;
- explore the common intervention measures have been familiarized to minimize with examination cheating practices.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of the study will give insight to the instructors and students about the influence of examination cheating on the risk of academic performance, which in turn may affect their psychosocial wellbeing. The trend of examination cheating is harmful not only to moral development but also to the intellectual development of the students. If the trend is not controlled, not only will the programs' graduates lack the moral discipline but they will also lack the knowledge, skills and competence necessary to exploit the resources at their disposal. The results from this study may serve to shed light on the underlying causes of examination cheating. The methods used to cheat have also been determined and ways of avoiding examination cheating recommended. The results may also be useful to instructors in making them aware of the amount of preparation they have to subject students to in order for them to avoid cheating in examinations. Instructor counselors may also utilize the results of the study to understand the part they should play in preparing students for examinations by counseling them on study skills and instilling a sense of confidence and self-esteem in them in order to reduce anxiety during exams. The Ethiopian National Examinations Council may also utilize the results of the study in ensuring that the loopholes in examination administration are sealed so as to minimize chances of examination cheating. The Ministry of Education should also utilize the results of the study in coming up with policies to improve the quality of teaching and early syllabus coverage to ensure that students are adequately prepared so as to reduce the temptations of cheating in exams. In the end the integrity of the examinations will be safeguarded and the products of the education system held in high esteem, which will in turn be charged with the responsibility of holding key positions and contribute to the development of society.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

This study was conducted in Asella town, among Arsi university students and instructors, particularly among 3rd year students. Since third year students are assumed to have a lot of accomplishments during their graduate years of study, they are more likely to experience in examination cheating. Along with this, they may have some sort of experiences towards the practices of examination cheating during their stay in the campus. So, they were selected to be the focus of this study. This study also is delimited to four colleges namely Education and Behavioral Science, Business and Economics, Agriculture and the Institute of Law. The variables under this study is restricted to examination cheating practices, its causes, methods and psychosocial effects of examination cheating practices on the third year students. This may involve on the psychosocial aspects of examination cheating in the actual settings of sample colleges of Arsi University.

1.6 Limitation of the study

Research undertakings in the country were scarce where very few literatures used as sources. Moreover, the researcher was too tight when conducting this research that calls for others intervention. Therefore, researcher of this study calls for interested researchers collect data from large number of respondents and across universities in the country. Better result may be secured if more study will be conducted on all higher institutions since the challenge of

examination cheating become erudite and widespread in all levels of educational system, through countries and globally.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employs cross-sectional survey research design using quantitative research approach. The reason to select this research approach was that, the nature of the basic research questions were in need of some statistical procedures, there are psychological variables/constructs that should be measured quantitatively in order to report them meaningfully, that may not be obtained by other approaches, the nature of the data that were collected, were also quantifiable, which was helpful to identify and report statistical significance of findings. There exist a lot of comprehensive findings in other studies, using this approach.

2.2 Subjects and Sampling Techniques

The sample was randomly drawn from 3rd year students and instructors attending their education in the selected eight departments of four colleges (education and behavioral science, business and economics, agriculture and the institute of law) of Arsi University. These were selected randomly out of six colleges in the university. The respondents were 60 instructors and 300 third year student who were selected randomly.

2.3 Instruments

Questionnaire was the main data collection instrument in this study. A self-administered structured questionnaire was employed to collect quantitative data from the participants of the study. The questionnaire was prepared in English and was translated to national language-Amharic and again back to English with the help of two expert instructors in the university to check the consistency of the original meaning. The questionnaire had four parts. The first part was about causes/factors contributing to cheating in examinations consists of 25 questions, the second part consists 10 questions to get information about the methods/forms of examination cheating. The third part contains 8 questions seeking answers about the measures instituted by instructors to deal with examination cheating. Pilot test was conducted in 46 students and 20 instructors of the sample size in college of humanity and social science, who were not part of the main study, in order to check its understandability, clarity and completeness, and then the necessary corrections were made before the use of the questionnaire in the actual study area. The researcher personally visited the sample colleges in Arsi University and distributed the questionnaires among instructors and third year student respondents. Difficult terms were first explained and then the respondents were asked to give appropriate and exact response without any hesitation and free of bias. A total of 360 questionnaires were distributed and 360 i.e., 100% responses were received. In this way data was collected from the both student and instructor respondents.

2.4 Procedures of Collecting Data

Before starting data collection, the researcher got permission from the study area. There were two data collectors who were contacted through the department and the necessary training

was given for those instructors for one day. Next, the questionnaire was distributed to the selected instructors from their department and students in their classroom and the filled questionnaires were collected immediately, with the supervision of the researcher.

2.5 Methods of data analysis

After the completion of data collection: editing, coding, data entry, cleaning, organized, tabulated, analyzed, interpreted and recoding, the cleaned data was exported to SPSS-Version20 for statistical analysis. The data from both instructor and student respondents was analyzed through quantitative approach which employs frequency and percentage tabulation. On the other hand, interview data was purely qualitative and it was analyzed textually by setting themes.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data obtained from the questionnaires were systematically analyzed and presented as follows:

Research Question 1: *What are the causes/factors influencing examination cheating among third year students in Arsi University?* The student and instructor respondents mentioned the cause as lack of instructors' follow up and the administrators' reluctance or unjustifiable attention of promotion, loose monitoring and evaluation of the students. The study results showed that, 83.3% and 68.3% of the student and instructor respondents respectively perceived that poor preparation for examinations was the main cause of examination cheating. This result is similar to the findings of Jekayinta (2006) showed that when the students are not well prepared, they are interested to cheat. Study by Saraj (2006) also established that inadequate preparation was a major cause of examination cheating among students. From the studies, it was found that third year students in Arsi University are not adequately prepared for examinations. Students were found to spend more time doing non-academic tasks like plugging face book and domestic chores than studying. Interview results also displayed that many students do not take their studies seriously and quite a number of them absent themselves from class which means that the courses would not be covered adequately. This state of affairs led to greater temptations to cheat in examinations.

The second cause of cheating was pressure to produce good grades (79.7%) and (80%) of student and instructor respondents respectively because students have to pass before they can proceed to the next semester of academic year. Similar studies by Berhan and Desalegn (2014) found that middle level scholars cheat when there are high stakes in examinations. The study established that students face a lot of pressure to pass from parents, teachers, peers and society in general. This pressure forces a number of them to cheat so as to be seen to be working hard. Parents want their children to score high marks and join prestigious colleges. Instructors want excellence in their courses so as to get as many awards as possible during prize giving. Society expects a student to do well regardless of the methods they employ.

The third cause of cheating was found to be unbendable competition for better grades (65.7%) and (65%) of student and instructor respondents respectively which will enable one to be admitted to the next semester of academic year. A study by Njeru (2008) also found

stiff competition to be the main cause of cheating. Studies by Okoh (2014) also supported stiff competition as a cause of examination cheating. It was established that in Arsi University, students compete to get high marks in order to join the next semester of academic year because failure to score good marks will lead to repetition of courses. This in turn leads to cheating in examinations.

Poor invigilation of examinations (63%) and (61.7%) of student and instructor respondents respectively were also found to be a leading factor in examination cheating. A study by Chaminuka and Ndudzo (2014) and Njeru(2008) found that teachers do not invigilate examinations well but rather spend time marking papers, or reading newspapers or novels. This provides a fertile ground for students to cheat. The study established that there was poor invigilation of examinations in Arsi University as some instructors invigilate from outside examination rooms while others copy each other in class during the examination period. This gives students the freedom to cheat in the examinations.

Table 1: Causes/Factors Contributing to Cheating in Examinations

No.	Items	Student Respondents				Instructor Respondents			
		Yes		NO		Yes		NO	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Inadequate preparation	250	83.3	50	16.7	41	68.3%	19	31.7
2	Performance pressure	239	79.7	61	20.3	48	80	12	20
3	Unbendable competition	197	65.7	103	33.3	39	65	21	35
4	Poor invigilation	189	63	111	37	37	61.7	23	38.3
5	Lack of facilities	214	71.3	86	28.7	36	60	24	40
6	Desire to pass at all cost	218	72.7	82	27.3	42	70	18	30
7	Fear of failure	209	69.7	91	30.3	41	68.3%	19	31.7
8	Competition with class fellows	187	62.3	113	37.7	36	60	24	40
9	Parental pressure for securing high marks	239	79.7	61	20.3	48	80	12	20
10	Test is too hard or there's too much work	199	66.3	101	33.7	40	66.7	20	33.3
11	Not have enough time to read/prepared	179	59.7	121	40.3	38	63.3	22	36.7

The fifth cause of examination cheating was found to be lack of facilities (71.3%) and (60%) of student and instructor respondents respectively. These findings concur with Onuka and Durowoju (2013) study which found that in schools where physical facilities were few, students cheated in examinations. The study attributed the lack of facilities to haphazard establishment of clan based colleges in Arsi University. This means that students do not have enough reference books and adequate exposure to practicality, hence ill-preparedness for examinations and therefore increase in the tendency to cheat in examinations. Another key factor that is responsible for examination cheating is desire to pass at all cost (72.7%) and (70%), fear of failure (69.7%) and (68.3%), and competition with class fellows (62.3%) and (60%) of student and instructor respondents respectively. Other important factors are parental pressure for securing high marks (79.7%) and (80%) of student and instructor respondents respectively. Table1 also demonstrates the reasons that force students to participate in academic cheating. Among the causes which are confirmed by most of the students were indicated in bold numbers in the table. Accordingly, (66.3%) and (66.7%) of student and

instructor respondents respectively were disclosed that the level of difficulty of the test enforce them to be engaged in such activities. It also, (59.7%) and (63.3%) of student and instructor respondents respectively were stated time scarcity as a reason. Most exam cheaters try to take or copy one or two answers from the one who sits beside them without identifying that whether the answer is correct or not. The extent of cheating during examination is heightened nowadays since it preoccupied psychological makeup of students. The one who acquainted to cheating may score more result that made others who didn't practice it to involve in such a thing to get more result. Because of this, one of the respondent said the "examination cheating is a contagious one". Many innocent students involved in cheating because of its contagiousness that really become uncontrollable ethical depreciation of this generation. Associating to this view, interview results of of the respondents underlined that the students do not want to waste their time, energy, material, effort, etc. since cheating is the easiest apparatus to get academic success. Therefore, some invigilators get stressed on the problem created on them by gangsters or boyfriend of certain cheating girl students if they strictly watch them during exam.

The findings of the study reveal that there are a number of factors/causes that contribute cheating practices in examinations. Corruption is one of the main factors that contribute to examination cheating practices. The students know that if they offer bribe to supervisory staff, they will be permitted to cheat in examination hall. So, it is right to say that these factors develop the culture of cheating practices in examinations. Another important factor is the misuse of computer and mobile device by students. They watch obnoxious and objectionable movies through mobile and computer which adversely affect their academic progress. Some of students consider cheating as the right of the students. They make approaches to the supervisory staff at any cost. For this purpose, they offer gifts and take so much care of supervisory staff. In some cases, they threat supervisory staff in order to permit their students for cheating in examination.

Table 2: Miscellaneous causes/factors contributing to examination cheating practices

No.	Items	Student Respondents				Instructor respondents			
		Yes		No		Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	No fear of punishment	272	90.7	28	18.3	47	78.3	13	21.7
2	Poor implementation of examination rules	270	90	30	10	45	75	15	25
3	Favoritism in the allotment of examination duties	265	88.3	35	11.7	41	68.3	19	31.7
4	Disloyalty of government in eradicating cheating	257	85.7	43	14.3	39	65	21	35
5	Department pressure for good results	261	87.1	39	12.9	43	71.7	17	28.3
6	Poor teaching and learning process	239	79.8	61	20.2	37	62.7	23	37.3
7	Lack of teaching staff	236	78.7	64	21.3	39	65	21	35
8	Course material is irrelevant /unimportant to the test	209	69.7	91	30.3	38	63.3	22	36.7
9	Pressure to get good grades	269	89.7	31	10.3	41	68.3	19	31.7
10	Needed extra points to raise grade average	241	80.3	59	19.7	42	70	18	30

Table 2 above depicts the cumulative responses of the respondents about miscellaneous' related factors that contribute to examination cheating practices. Student and instructor

respondents respectively replied that no fear of punishment (90.7%) and (78.3%); poor implementation of examination rules (90.0%) and (75%); favouritism in the allotment of examination duties (88.3%) and (68.3%); disloyalty of government in eradicating cheating practices (85.7%) and (65%); department pressure for good results (87.1%) and (71.7%); poor performance of board authorities (79.8%) and (62.7%); poor teaching and learning process (79.8%) and (62.7%); and lack of teaching staff (78.7%) and (65%) are the factors that contribute to examination cheating practices. Course material irrelevance (69.7%) and (63.3%) and pressure to get good grades (89.7%) and (68.3%) of the student and instructor respondents respectively agreed. Most (80.3%) and (70%) student and instructor respondents respectively proved that their reasons are need of having extra points to raise their grades. Cheating in the exam is done by the students, primarily, to get good grades (Fass, 2004).

Interview was administered to four deans and vice deans in sample colleges. Concerning the causes for examination cheating practices, the respondents commonly reflected the following views. The major ones are lack of confidence in their own work, lack of enough preparation, poor background knowledge, weak controlling mechanisms, invigilator's carelessness, classroom size and having no motivation to refer different resources. Specifically, according to the interviews, graduate students often engage in such activities as they don't have good reading and writing skills in the language of instruction (English).

The results of the study also showed that some college instructors are involved in supporting examination cheating practices. College authorities are not serious in eradicating the curse of cheating. Duties of supervisory staff are allotted on the basis of favoritism and against the merit. Examination rules are not implemented practically and effectively by the college authorities. There is poor secrecy of examinations papers. There is no system of reward and punishment. No fear of punishment by supervisory staff develops the culture of unfair means during examination. The results support the findings of Adeyemi (2010) who established that non-implementation of the examination cheating practices act by university is one of the main causes of examination cheating practices. He further explained that in the past, no offender was punished and hence many students continued to get involved in examination cheating practices. He further added that since no culprit was given punishment and therefore examination cheating practices among the students remained in the colleges uncontrolled. The study also revealed that department pressure for good results is another important factor contributing to examination cheating practices. They use all possible means and sources to improve their results. They make use of unfair means to improve their results. Even they trained their students in using unfair means before the commencement of examination. Omemu, (2015) found that teachers assist students to engage in examination cheating practices. For this purpose, students are trained by coaching before the commencement of examination.

The findings of the study showed that there are other factors that encourage cheating practices in examinations. Instructors support students during examinations in order to show good results in their courses. They often fail to cover their course syllabus in due time and

hence students feel difficulty in attempting papers as the papers are prepared in whole course. That is why they are compelled to use other unfair means to attempt their papers. Hence, it promotes the culture of cheating practices in examination. The study also revealed that students get involved in cheating practices due the fear of failure. They try their best to pass themselves at any cost in examination and that's why they use unfair means. The findings support the results of Onyechere (2006) who found that there are some factors that contribute examination cheating practices such as, fear of failure, excessive emphasis on paper qualification and lack of resources for teaching. In the same way, Ruto, Kipkoech & Rambaei (2011) noted that students can cope better with anxiety than with fear of failure. He further says that students can develop fear for examinations. Due to this fear, students are compelled to continue examination cheating practices.

Another cause of examination cheating practices is inadequate preparation for examination. In a number of colleges there is lack of teaching staff and the students are not prepared adequately for examinations. Most of the students have no time for their studies. They spend their time in attending parties and joining companies who involve in annoying and distressing activities. Thus they are not in the position to pass the examination. The findings support the results of Owuamanam (2005) and Adeyemi (2010). They concluded that students were not well prepared and groomed for examination and they would want to pass the examinations by all means.

Further, the findings support the results of Abiodun(2011) who established that the followings are examination cheating practices: time-pressure; hard-courses; laziness; competition with others; coping with stress; difficult-exams; chances of getting caught are minimal; punishment is not serious; improving one's grades; peer-pressure; fear of failure; "everybody does it"; course was useless; parents' pressure; taking a chance; lecturer does not care; instructor-vigilance is low; high-course-load; and not understanding questions among others. Some-studies identify factors that contribute to cheating, as follows: students learning from a dishonest-society (Onuka & Durowoju, 2013), poor-teaching, poor-learning-environment and lack of facilities (Starovoytova, Namango & Katana, 2016a), an education-system that is concerned only about-performance; poor time management (Macdonald & Carrol, 2006), lack of effective study-habits (Chinamase et al., 2011)

Research Question 2: *Which methods/forms are used to cheat in examinations in Arsi University?* Those cheaters try their best to achieve the desired goal. Among the methods employed: hiding necessary materials they prepared in their pocket, beneath the table, put inside the question paper, between their thighs, put notes between them [the examinee], by receiving answer paper from their neighbor and so forth. In accordance to the study result, Whitley (2009) indicated that *methods of secretly signaling the right answer to friends are quite varied, ranging from coded sneezes or pencil tapping to high-pitched noises beyond the hearing range of most teachers.* As mentioned above clever students write answers on a piece of paper and toss it directly to the one they need to help by put out of the site of the invigilator using hand, elastics or throwing. The results of the study indicate that different methods/forms of cheating practices are practiced during examinations (Table 3). Majority of

the student and instructor respondents respectively (91.3%) and (65%) replied that students bring unauthorized materials i.e. pocket guides, electronics devices etc. to examination hall which is a common form. Almost all the students exercise this practice without any hesitation and fear. Cheating directly from textbooks is commonly observed (84%) and (68.3%) by student and instructor respondents respectively. Questions are leaked out at the start of paper (76.3%) and (70%) by student and instructor respondents respectively. Papers leakage is also a form of cheating practices (77.3%) and (63.3%) by student and instructor respondents respectively. Cheating from one another is commonly observed cheating practices during examination (68.5%) and (61.7%) by student and instructor respondents respectively. Student and instructor (65%) and (58.3%) respondents respectively claimed that in some cases papers are attempted outside of examination hall. Student and instructor (79.7%) and (66.7%) respondents respectively replied that during examination, students change their scripts with one another. Teachers give illegal marks to students during marking on the basis of favoritism and bribe (71%) and (61.7%) student and instructor respondents agreed. The findings support the results of Starovoytova and Namango (2016) who identified different forms of examination cheating practices as; collusion, impersonation, smuggling of answer samples and examination leakage. They further found that mass cheating, ill-treatment with examination officials, irregular activities inside and outside examination hall. Ugwu (2008) also identified some forms of examination cheating practices. He claimed that hiring other people to write for candidates, leakage of answers and impersonation are the forms of examination malpractice. Likewise Nnam and Inah (2015) and Bandele (2005) noted that teachers send prepared answers to their students during examinations.

Table 3: Methods/forms used by Students to Cheat in Examinations

No.	Methods/forms of Examination Cheating	Student Respondents				Instructor Respondents			
		Yes		No		Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Bringing of unauthorized materials	274	91.3	26	8.7	39	65	21	35
2	Cheating directly from textbooks	252	84	48	16	41	68.3	19	31.7
3	Leakage of Questions	229	76.3	71	23.7	42	70	18	30
4	Papers Leakage	232	77.3	68	22.7	38	63.3	22	36.7
5	Cheating from one another	205	68.5	95	31.7	37	61.7	23	38.3
6	Attempting papers outside the examination halls	195	65	105	35	35	58.3	25	41.7
7	Script changing	239	79.7	61	20.3	40	66.7	20	33.3
8	Marking malpractice by teachers	213	71	87	29	37	61.7	23	38.3

The college deans/vice deans were also interviewed about trends and practices of taking measures for such kind of examination cheating practices. Specifically, the types of measures taken were listed by them. These are signing on exam papers for further decision by the department or instructor, taking the cases to the department and giving zero on the exam at hand. But, most commonly observed ones are changing places of students who shoot troubles in exam rooms or leaving without any measure. The atmosphere of the school, societal norms, classroom teachers, classroom sizes, peer and family factors, counselors, administration and others can either facilitate or prevent academic cheating (Wangaard &

Stephens, 2011). Participants of this study identified teachers, students, school management, and parents as causative factors for students’ engagement in academic cheating.

Research Question 3: *What interventional measures have been instituted to deal with examination cheating among third year students in Arsi University?* From Table 4, it is clear that the measures instituted by instructors to deal with examination cheating. Majority of student and instructor respondents, (68.3%) and (70%) respectively reported that when a student is caught cheating, instructor’s cancellation of examination results and others give the student an ‘F’ grade. This means that the student’s result is not graded. Student and instructor respondents respectively agreed that suspension of cheating students (78.1%) and (68.9%) was another form of punishment used to discourage students from cheating in examinations. On reporting the student is informed of the nature of cheating and some punishment is given which is normally caning and sitting for another examination.

Table 4: Measures Instituted by Instructors to Deal with Examination Cheating

No.	Items	Student Respondents				Instructor Respondents			
		Yes		No					
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Punishment-cancellation of examination results	205	68.3	95	31.7	42	70	18	30
2	Suspension of cheating students	234	78	66	22	41	68.9	19	30.1
3	Educational Counseling-Teaching examination taking skills	189	63	111	37	40	67	20	33
4	Imparting reading culture	208	69.3	92	30.7	45	75	15	25
5	Boosting students’ self confidence	214	71.3	86	28.7	43	71.7	17	28.3
6	Campaign against cheating in examinations	200	67.7	100	32.3	39	65	21	35
7	Encouraging students to work hard	212	70.7	88	29.3	44	73.3	16	26.7

Another measure under educational guidance that was found in curbing examination cheating was teaching examination taking skills (63% and 59.9%). In Arsi University students are taught how to read and revise thoroughly for examinations. Sometimes national examiners are invited to give examination tips to students. This helps to lower examination anxiety and instill a sense of confidence in them. The results in Table 4 showed that for measures established by instructors to deal with examination cheating, overall, educational counseling-teaching examination taking skills 63% of students and 67% of instructors agreed. A study by Bruno and Obidigbo(2012) also found counselling to be a useful method of curbing cheating. In Arsi university students are counselled on how to avoid wasting time by indulging in activities that divert their attention from their studies. Instead, they are encouraged to concentrate on their studies in order to avoid the temptation of examination cheating.

A third method of shortening cheating under educational counselling is imparting a reading culture (69.3% and 75%) among student and instructor respondents respectively. Omemu (2015) found that cheating can be reduced by creating a culture of reading and learning in the classroom. Students are trained to study daily in the mornings so as to develop their confidence. Boosting of students confidence (71.3% student and 71.7% instructor respondents) was another method employed to deal with exam cheating. In Arsi University,

instructors talk to students, encourage them and give them hope. They also reinforce their efforts whenever they make attempts in completing assignments in time. This enhances their self-confidence and can therefore avoid cheating in examinations. The other method of curbing cheating under educational guidance is campaigning against cheating (67.7% of students and 65% of instructors). Studies by Teixeira and Rocha (2010) found that campaign against cheating can go a long way in curbing examination cheating. In Arsi University, students are warned at assemblies on the consequences of cheating in examinations. Also at chapel services the preachers emphasize on the need for honesty as a moral principle.

The seventh method used to discourage cheating under educational guidance was encouraging students to work hard (70.7% students and 73.3% instructors). Practical-recommendations made by Kisamore et al., (2007), to minimize cheating in examinations are: (1) to provide large-examination rooms, (2) students should sign attendance- registers, whenever they attended lectures; and (3) that invigilators should be in the examination-rooms all the time, (4) searching students before start of examination, (5) spacing students far apart in the examination- room, (6) severe punishment to those caught cheating, expelling those who cheat, and (7) students avoiding overdrinking. Study by Jekayinfa (2006) found that exam cheating can be reduced by encouraging students to work hard and by giving them positive remarks for their efforts. The other potential-solution to minimize cheating - is lecturers' vigilance during the whole-period of the exam.

In Arsi University, students who work hard and score high grade are rewarded. This will make them work hard and avoid cheating in examinations. Finally, the deans/vice deans were asked to suggest measures which should be take to minimize the extent of examination cheating practices. Accordingly, they have suggested different opinions, but the most common ones are assisting to develop self confidence, delivering question based practical lesson; applying the rules and regulations strictly; developing and revising the existing rules and regulation in line with the sophistication of recent cheating strategies; improving the quality of teachers in the university; and designing technology based mechanisms.

4. Conclusions

Poor invigilation of examinations by instructors and the generally congested examination rooms also lead to an increased tendency to cheating in examinations. Besides, it was found that many colleges in Arsi University lacked facilities for learning such as reference books and study place which led to a state of ill preparedness on the part of students and hence the tendency to cheat in examinations. It was also established that students have examination phobia and this coupled with the stigma associated with failure in examinations also contributed to examination cheating.

The study established that students in Arsi University employed a number of methods to cheat in examinations. The first method involved smuggling written documents into examination rooms. These included note books and notes written on small pieces of paper. The second method was collusion in which students copied from each other. Falsification was also a common method of cheating whereby students forged report forms and even changed

marks on some courses in report forms. Impersonation was also found to be common as a method of cheating among students. This involved cases of one student sitting examinations for another student. A number of measures were found to have been put in place to curb the vice. Behavior modification is one of those measures where students are encouraged to strengthen their ego, build their self-esteem and boost their self-confidence. They were also encouraged to obey examination regulations because cheating in examination would lead to cancellation of examination results. Teachers were also encouraged to complete the course in time and coach students on examination taking skills.

The study revealed that there are different causes/forms of cheating practices which are practiced during examination. These are; bringing of unauthorized materials to examination hall; sending of prepared answers to students; impersonation; conniving of examiners to assist the students; questions and papers leakages; cheating from one another; cheating directly from lecture note; attempting of papers outside the examination halls and scripts changing. The results of study explored that there are various factors that contribute to examination cheating practices i.e., corruption, students threats to supervisory staff, parental pressure for securing high marks, poor implementation of examinations rules, pressure for good results, no fear of punishment, inadequate preparation for examination, misuse of computer and mobile devices by students, poor invigilation, disloyalty of examination bodies, allotment of examination duties against merit, gifts culture and so much care of supervisory staff, fear of failure, poor teaching and learning process, lack of teaching staff and overscheduled involvement in different activities. Further, examination cheating is a reality in different departments in Arsi University students, instructors, college administrations and society in general all contribute in varying degrees to examination cheating; a variety of methods are used by students to cheat in examinations and they are becoming more and more innovative in the use of different methods to cheat and a number of intervention measures have been put in place to curb cheating but the vice is still rampant among students.

5. Recommendations

It is obvious that the prevalence of examination cheating practices extremely hurts the quality of education. And, researchers stated that if academic cheating in individual level is not controlled timely, it would proceed to institutional level soon. For examination cheating to be considerably reduced or wiped out all together, it requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders in the education sector. In the light findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

- Examination's law and rules should be implemented effectively. Offender students should be given severe punishment according to examination's law so that it may render a lesson to others. Likewise, instructors and other examination bodies who were found get involved in examination cheating practices should be subjected to exemplary punishment according to the examination act and law.
- College deans and department heads may be provided full proof security and other facilities so that they may perform their duties effectively. They should be given handsome daily and traveling allowances as well.

- The number of invigilators and supervisors should be increased in the examination halls. Surprising visits of honest and dedicated inspectors should be ensured. Drastic action should be taken against those who were found guilty.
- Corruption should be discouraged during examination as it is the main factor that contributes to examination cheating practices. Offenders should be subjected under severe punishment as mentioned in examination laws.
- The students should be thoroughly body searched before entering the examination hall. Finger prints system should be introduced for identification of the students to avoid impersonation.
- The pattern of the papers should be reviewed and made it subjective rather than objective because such type of examinations are not easier to copy.
- Invigilators/Supervision of students during examination should be enhanced and made effective by the collaborative efforts of all the stakeholders and examinations bodies.

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