

## Short Communication

# Raising Students' Awareness on Negative Impact of Cheating and Its' Minimization at School of Agriculture, Madda walabu University

Mekuanint Gashaw\*, Mihret Yirgu and Aynalem Teshome

\*DebreTabor university, school of Agriculture, department of Animal Science, P.Box, 272, Debre Tabor, Ethiopia  
Madda Walabu University, School of Agriculture,. P.O.X, 247, Bale, Robe, Ethiopia.

Corresponding Author's Email: miky.gashew@gmail.com

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This study was conducted at Maddawalabu University school of Agriculture entitled by Raising Students' Awareness on Negative Impact of Cheating and Its' Minimization at School of Agriculture, Madda walabu University. The target population was all batch school of agriculture students and teachers. We selected randomly five students from each batch and department and two teachers from each department. Total sample size was 55 students, eight teachers, totally 63 samples were taken. There are different methods of cheating used in agriculture students. As the response indicated that all batch of the agriculture students used similar method of cheating. However the easiest method of cheating and the feasible one are using short note (*aterera*), copying from the nearest student and writing on the wall, chair and clothe. There are different cheating minimization methods; advice students, design appropriate studding style, monitor students before and during the exam, through appropriate sitting arrangement. After all, we suggest that it is very crucial to think over holistic approaches that will enable the university to overcome cheating case and produce self-confident and competent professionals on open academic markets under real working environment.

**Keywords:** student, cheating

## INTRODUCTION

Cheating is gaining an unfair advantage or breaking rules in assessment and it is an institutional and societal problem. Academic dishonesty is more detrimental to the educational community than stakeholders realize because it affects faculty, students, and administration. Academic dishonesty costs institutions administrative time, loss of integrity within the school, and student lack of respect for ethics and values. Faculty members point to a failure of institutional leadership to establish integrity standards and practices across campus (Boehm, et al., 2009).

Understanding student cheating is particularly important given trends that show cheating is widespread and on the rise. In 1964, Bowers published the first large-scale study of cheating in institutions of higher learning. Many researches revealed that factors

such as gender, grade point average (GPA), work ethic, competitive achievement striving, and self-esteem can significantly influence the prevalence of cheating (Ward and Beck, 1990). The research of McCabe *et al.* (1999) also suggests that cheating behavior can be effectively managed in the classroom. Insights from this qualitative study suggest that faculty members can pursue numerous strategies, including clearly communicating expectations regarding cheating behavior, establishing policies regarding appropriate conduct, and encouraging students to abide by those policies.

Passow *et al.* (2006) argue, "Acts of academic dishonesty undermine the validity of measures of student learning". If teachers do not know that there is something the students do not understand (if they cheat it may seem that they understand) then it is

impossible for them to know whether to accelerate or slow down, on what to focus, or how to re-design their lectures next year in the long term, cheating hurts the students. It also prevents teachers from providing students with relevant feedback. Students' cheating behavior can have important consequences in the process of human capital accumulation and for the functioning of the labor market. For example, cheating can interfere with the evaluators ability to assess students' performance and can decrease the external validity of grades (Anderman and Murdock, 2007). 'Cheating bias' may contaminate the information used in many educational decisions, such as: promoting students from one grade to the next, or awarding a diploma without the required knowledge.

Cheating during in class examinations is mediated by certain variables which are part of the student's decision to cheat as well as the overall negotiation and management of the cheating strategies and processes themselves. Cheating in the exam and out of the exam is common throughout the world. In genuine, in colleges and universities there is high rate of cheating. Indeed students know the impact of cheating on their academic, at long on their life. Recently because of cheating, it is difficult to produce competitive students from institutions. Therefore this article revealed that raising their awareness on negative impact of cheating and intervened the method of cheating minimization at school of agriculture students.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample Size and Sampling Technique

At school of Agriculture, there are four departments; Animal and range science, Plant science, Rural development and Agricultural extension and Agro-Economics. Only Agro-economics department has two batches where as the rest department have three batches. Our target population was all batch school of agriculture students and teachers. We selected randomly five students from each batch and department and two teachers from each department. Total sample size was 55 students, eight teachers, totally 63 samples were taken. We prepared structured questionnaire in English language and distribute to the respondents and we implemented group discussion in volunteer ten students had sex inclusion criteria.

### Sources of Data

Primary and secondary data showed raising student's awareness of negative impact of cheating and its minimization were collected. Quantitative data was a

number of meetings arranged by course team with students whereas qualitative data student cheating methods using scale and status level. Student interviews, open discussions with student, key informant interviews and direct observation methods were major data sources. Finally, we analyzed the collected data through descriptive statics; mean and percentage.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Method of cheating and its minimization

There are different methods of cheating used in agriculture students. As the response indicated that all batch of the agriculture students used similar method of cheating. However the easiest method of cheating and the feasible one are using short note (*aterera*), copying from the nearest student and writing on the wall, chair and clothe. Study by McCabe and Trevino (1997) observed only a modest increase in overall cheating, significant increases were found in the most explicit forms of test or exam cheating.

In some case, students write the answer on the soft and then send to his/her friend. Most of the time students cheat for the sake of grade. Among the total sample, 75% of the respondents said sitting arrangement has its own value to reduce cheating during the exam. As they said, if there is huge gap between students and if students sit back to back during the exam, we can minimize the rate of cheating. 25% of the respondent said sitting arrangement didn't has value to reduce cheating because they can use other method of cheating which didn't require sitting arrangement like sending answer through mobile, writing note on their chair and cloth. In order to get relevant data we undergone group discussion with staff teachers and 98% of the respondent agreed on the response of students.

More than 95% of the respondent replied, by advising students, raising their awareness on negative impact of cheating and strengthening their 1 to 5 arrangement, we can minimize cheating during the exam. Some of the respondent said also, if the problem did not solved by the above-mentioned methods, it is better to take measurement on the students. Finally, we gave advice to the students on the negative impact of cheating and its minimization. We gave advice cheating not only affect their academic but also affect their life totally and most of the students strongly agreed. In addition we gave advice how they can minimize cheating during the exam by designing their studying style, enhancing 1 to 5 arrangement. Moreover, we had discussion with teachers how they can minimize cheating through sitting arrangement,

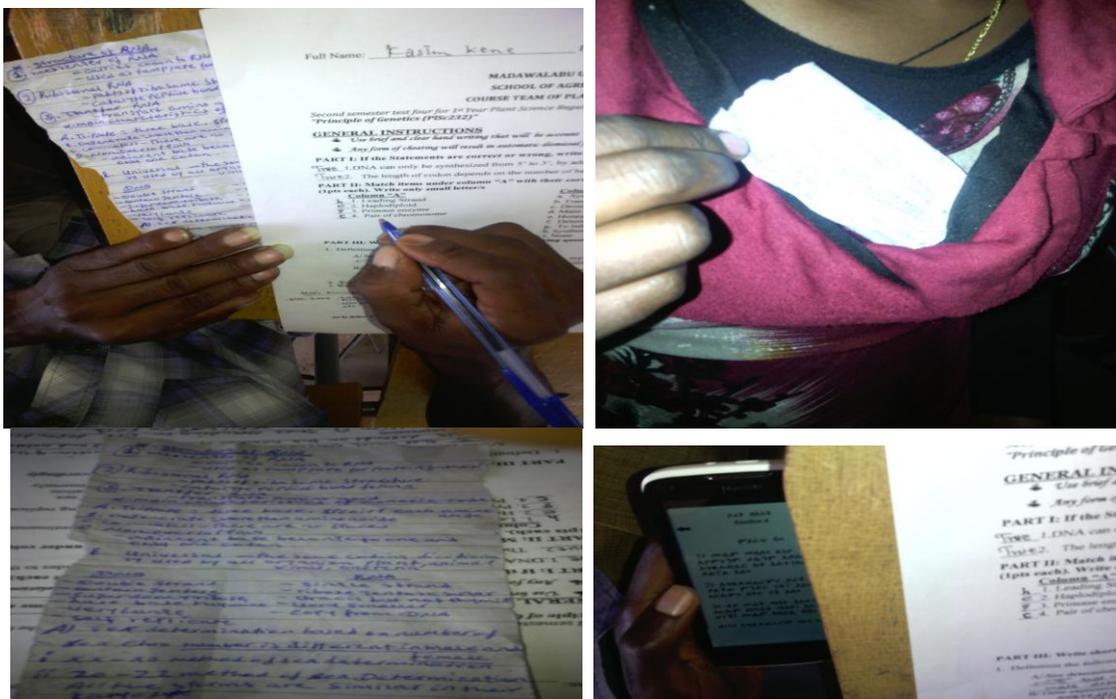
take measurement and consult students how they can study and the effect of cheating for their life.

### Status of Cheating Method

A well and disciplined environment ensures fairness to everyone and provides comfort by assuring students that their academic achievements are being fairly measured. Our team tries to identify the status of cheating method and the way how to become aware of cheating from the reflection of most respondents (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Cheating method and its status at school of agriculture

No	Cheating Method	Method of Control	Status	Minimization Method
1	Write on body: written on body part, perhaps covered by long cloth	Watch for secretive movements	High	Check and Walking continually
2	Using <i>aterera</i> (jot on paper) below question test	Observe student hand movements	High	Walk repeatedly
3	Using <i>aterera</i> under sit chair	watch for students looking down and observe student leg movements	High	Walk repeatedly
4	Sign language: use hand sign (especially fingers for numbers) to communicate with others	Watch for movement of hands	Medium	Walk continually
5	Write on desk and wall: especially when written in pen for easy to observe	Watch student eyes and hands	Medium	Examine desks before test
6	Misdirection: one person distracts while others cheat	sensitive watchfulness when a distraction occurs	Medium	sensitive attention when a distraction occurs
7	Take photo of handout or <i>aterera</i>	Watch for cell phone usage of any kind	Medium	Switch of cell phones in exam class
8	Calculator- type formulas or cheats into calculator before test begins	Watch for sharing of calculators	Medium	Watch for sharing of calculators
9	low voice: asking for and giving answers verbally	Listen at all times for student soft voice	Low	walk continually; stand close to anyone low voice
10	looking over the shoulder of someone or to the side	looking out of corner of eyes	Low	walk repeatedly
11	Type out a text message to someone else in exam class and get silent text reply	Watch for cell phone usage of any kind	Low	Switch of cell phones in exam class
12	voice: use coughing or sneezing a set number of times to communicate an answer	Listen for musical and repetitious noise, coughing	Low	go closer when students cough



Picture 1: Using aterera (jot on paper) and Mobile



Picture 2: Write on Hand, Desk and Wall

**Possible way of diverting the negative impact of cheating on students academic life**

Possible ways, focus on learning not on grades, encourage the development of good quality, clearly communicate prospects (e.g., regarding behavior that constitutes appropriate code of conduct and behavior that constitutes cheating), establish commitment on cheating minimizing policies and encourage students to abide by those policies, be supportive when dealing with students; this promotes respect, which students will respond by not cheating, be fair develop and

consistent grading policies and procedures and Remove opportunities to cheat.

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Cheating is common and there are many type of cheating methods practice at school of agriculture in all batches. The common cheating methods are writing short note on piece of paper, writing note on their arm, clothe, wall and chair. Most of the students overlook the negative impact of cheating on them and we gave advice on this point. There are different cheating minimization methods; advice students, design appropriate studding style, monitor students before and

during the exam, through appropriate sitting arrangement. As grasped from this study, it seems better if the university takes corrective measures on convincing students on bad aftermath of cheating in student's academic life in particular and societies at large with strong emphasis. To this effect, Madda walabu University must design appropriate strategies comprehend to hold students accountable for any cheating case in which they might engage. After all, we suggest that it is very crucial to think over holistic approaches that will enable the university to overcome cheating case and produce self confident and competent professionals on open academic markets under real working environment.

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