

***The Ubiquitous Phenomenon of Cheating in the
Light of the Holy Qurn and Hadith***

Dr. Jehangir Shahⁱ Aman Ullahⁱⁱ

Abstract

The purpose of the study is to unfold the causes, effect and remedies of Cheating in Schools as a prevalent phenomenon and the perception of the Holy Quran and Hadith towards it. For this purpose secondary data was collected from the Holy Quran and Hadith while primary data from the respondents. Sample size of 300 (100 teachers, 100 parents and 100 students) respondents were selected by convenience sampling. From the findings it has been declared that all the respondents were highly sensitive towards such unsocial and unethical behaviour of cheating. Significant association was found among teachers, parents, students' attitude and the Holy Quran. All of the respondents were of the view that cheating is prevalent due to parents' pressure achieving good grades and admission to the next higher class. Its impact is very serious and encourages individuals for further cheating. Honest, dedicated and skillful Supervisory staff can play a vital role in its mitigation.

Key words: Cheating, Honesty, Holy Quran, Hadith, Vital role

Introduction

Background of the Study

Cheating is the acquiring of reward for talent by deceitful way or finding a simple way out of a distasteful state of affairs. It is by and large used for the breach of policy to get unjust benefit in competitive circumstances. This broad definition will necessarily include acts of bribery, cronyism, unpleasantness, favoritism and any state where one is given predilection by means of improper criteria. Retrieved 20-09-2014¹.

In the Holy Quran, Allah has condemned cheating and the people who do it, and has warned them of dreadful penalty.

i Islamia collegiate School, Islamia College Peshawar

ii Ph.D Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar

This may be explicit from the words (elucidation of the meaning):

“Woe to Al-Mutaffifoon (those who give less in measure and weight, decrease the right of others). Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, demand full measure, And when they have to give by measure or weight to (other) men, give less than due” [Al-Mutaffifeen 83:1-3]
2

It is a cruel caution to those who deceive in weights and measures, and then what about those who steal, misappropriate and hold back from the people the possessions that are their owing? Such individuals are more justified of the warning than those who swindle in weights and measures.

The Holy prophet (SAW) warned his people against reducing the value of people’s possessions and cheating in weights and measures, as Allah has narrated us in the Holy Qur’an. Likewise the Prophet (SAW) cautioned us against cheating and issued a warning to the one who does this.

The Prophet (SAW) passed by a pile of food and put his hand into it and his fingers and felt dampness. He said, “What is this, O seller of the food?” The person replied, “It was made wet by rain, O Messenger of Allah.” The holy Prophet (SAW) asked, “Why did you not put the wet part on top of the heap so that the people could see it? The person who cheats does not belong to me.” In another place, “He who cheats us is not one of us,” or, “He is not one of us who deceives us.” (Fataawa al Lajnah al Daa’imah 12/ 2000 www.islam.qa.com) (Muslim)³

Al-Nawawi,⁴

“he is not one of us”, is adequate warning against devious and enough prevention against indulging in this monstrous offense.

It is the dire need of the time to stir in our mind that Allah is omnipresent and watching us everywhere and there is no need for other external supervisor

The Meaning of Cheating By Some Great People

“Cheating is that which mixes vice and virtues”. Al-Mannaawi⁵

The forbidden type of cheating is when the owner of the goods knows something which, if the would-be purchaser knew about it, he would not pay that amount of money for it”. IbnHajar al-Haythami⁶

Al-Kafawi narrates;⁷

cheating causes blackness of the heart and frowning on the face” an Arabic word (*ghashha* = cheating or deceit) means hatred or enmity.

If we are a bit conscious we can say that, in this world, ever body is engaged in one or another kind of cheating

The fruit-sellers are cheating the simple seller by selling debase kinds of fruits, mixing of cooking oil in perfume, light wrapper are packed in thick for adding more weight to the products.

Colored lightening are deceiving the customers, jewelers and goldsmith are mixing low quality metal in gold and sell it on the price of gold, second-hand gold ornaments are polished and are sold on the price of first hand, then they offer it for sale at the price of new without telling the purchaser that it is second-hand jewelry, to show little mileage some car dealers turn back the odometer, for the increase of price some of the friends of the dealers agree with the price. This was strictly forbidden by the Prophet (SAW) of Allah. For showing their animal fat some of the owners of the animals feed salt to their animal so that they drink more water and look fat. Apart from it in real life situation hundreds of example can be narrated.

Similarly in the case of marriage which is a sacred relation the father of the girl hands over a substitute daughter (older or divorced) instead of virgin ad the previously selected one. Then there is no way out for the parents of the boy but to accept. In so many cases the beautiful has been substituted with the ugly one. Some of the parents of the girls are concealing the facts like illness etc from the suitor. In many cases the parents are showing themselves well off to appear himself the man of status

Deceiving Someone While Giving Advice

The follower is the mirror of his brother, thus if he sees some mistake in him he should correct it. Honesty refers to abstaining from harming the Muslims, educating them regarding matters of their faith of which they are ignorant, and assisting them to stick to it in word and in action, hiding their mistakes, shunning off damage from them, bringing things that will profit them, advising what is good upon them and

threatening what is wicked in, a kind and honest comportment, showing care towards them, regarding their elders, being compassionate towards their juvenile, giving them good counsel, friendly for them what one loves for oneself of decency and hating for them what one hates for oneself of detested things.

Once Ma'qalibnYassar al-Muzani narrated during his last illness:

“I heard the Messenger of Allah (SAWS) ‘There is no person whom Allah has put in a position of authority and he dies on the day he dies cheating those under his authority, but Allah will forbid Paradise for him.’” Al-Bukhari and Muslim; this report was stated by Muslim.⁸

“There is no Muslim whom Allah places in a position of authority over people and he is not sincere towards them, but he will not smell the fragrance of Paradise.”(Al-Bukhaari 6731, Muslim 142)⁹

Over here we can say that ever body is responsible for his position, both the employee and the employer, students and the teacher, father towards his children and not ignoring their upbringing without cheating, he should fulfill his duties to save himself and his children from the hell which fuel is men and stones above which are prearranged angels severe and strict

“O you who believe! Ward off from yourself and your families a fire (hell) whose fuel is men and stones over which are appointed angels stern and severe, who disobey not from executing the command they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded”(Al-Tahreem 66:6)¹⁰

“How many people have caused misery to their own children, the apples of their eyes, in this world and in the Hereafter, by neglecting them, not disciplining them, encouraging them to follow their whims and desires, thinking that they were honouring them when they were in fact humiliating them, that they were being merciful to them when in fact they were wronging them. They have not benefited from having a child, and they have made the child lose his share in this world and in the Hereafter. If you think about the corruption of children you will see that in most cases it is because of the parents.” (Ibnal-Qayyim:,*Tuhfat al-Mawlood*, p. 146)¹¹

The triumph or collapse of the Muslim in the look after of his kids depends on a diversity of factors, which

unquestionably includes the situation in which they live, which performs a key function in the victory or collapse of that education.

The parents have to recognize that Allah has given them job over their kids, and they have to accomplish the expectation as Allah has enjoined in the Quran. The Sunnah also confirms this authority in many saheehAhaadeeth. The Revelation also awakens the one who does not care for his group honestly and who overlooks the faith with which Allah has entrusted him.

Causes of Cheating In Exam

1. The causes of academic cheating are multifarious. Sometimes it external demands from the parents, friends and from the whole of the society in general.
2. Laziness on the part of the students is another main cause for academic corruption. Students do not working hard and so fall prey to cheating. They do not pass in the exam and find cheating the easiest way for getting through the examination.
3. Students remain absent from schools and miss the portion of the lesson being taught in the classroom. Therefore it is essential to attend the classes regularly and study well in time for their examination to get rid of cheating.
4. Students are in constant fear of being ridiculed by the class fellow in case of failure or getting low grades than their expectations.
5. Students have the fear of admission in to next higher class in case of low grade.
6. Students adopt dishonesty to lessen the load of home assignment that often consumes much time.
7. Sometimes students are not being given the required punishment necessary for cheating.
8. Low moral students are inclined to cheating.
9. Faulty methods of teaching used by the incompetent teachers.
10. Students often cheat on exams because they suffer hackneyed and overextended, without enough time to get ready (Earl, K. 2002) ¹²

Statement of the Problem

Education is the basic feature of humanity and Islam particularly lays great emphasis on acquiring knowledge. It is basically education which changes the attitude and behavior of the human being towards modernization and life-style. Moreover, Education plays an important role in shaping the personality of individuals, an essential component for the development of any nation. Unfortunately, one of the most discouraging aspects of education system is the academic dishonesty in which a modest increase in overall cheating, significant increases were found in the most explicit forms of test or exam cheating. As disclosed by Bowers (1964)³⁰ that three fourth of the respondents had engaged in one or more incidents of academic dishonesty in United States. It is also affirmed from different research studies that multiple factor are reasonable for enhancing academic dishonesty. These include the fear of admission in to next higher class in case of low grade, cheating is the easiest way for getting through the examination; low moral students are inclined to cheating. Sometimes it is the external demands from parents, friends and from the whole of the society in general. It is also evident from different studies that both students and faculty, in all over the world, are willing to devote time and effort addressing it on their campuses. The present study would try to explore the circumstances responsible for the emergence of such attitude with some workable remedial measures. The study would adopt the following objectives:

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the causes and effect of the cheating on the students
2. To highlight the perception of Holy Quran and Hadith on cheating
3. To suggest some workable plane to minimize this unsocial dishonesty

Material and Methods

The present study was carried out in District Peshawar to find out causes and effect of the cheating on the students as

well as to highlight the perception of Holy Quran and Hadith on cheating. The main reason for selecting district Peshawar was the availability of big chunk of Secondary Schools. The population for the study was composed of teachers, students and parents. A sample size of 300 respondents were selected through convenience sampling method, A comprehensive interview schedule on Likert scale was designed while keeping into considerations objective of the study. Collected data was converted on to SPSS 20 version. The data was interpreted into frequency and percentages. For getting solid results, the researcher made three categories, i.e. Principals, Teachers and students. The tabulation of the data was also categorized according to the category of the questionnaire

Data Tabulation and Analysis Table

Table.1.Causes of Cheating In the Opinion of Teachers, Parents and Students

| S # | Statements | Yes | % | No | % |
|------------|---|------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Cheating in examinations is known as academic dishonesty, | 267 | 89 | 33 | 11 |
| 2 | Cheating is rampant, especially in examinations at SSC/HSSC levels. | 284 | 95 | 16 | 05 |
| 3 | The focus mainly remains on achieving higher grades or marks. | 238 | 80 | 62 | 20 |
| 4 | Tremendous parents pressure to do well in examinations compel students for cheating. | 292 | 98 | 08 | 2 |
| 5 | Peer pressure is felt for fear of being ridiculed in case of failure or low grades | 198 | 66 | 102 | 34 |
| 6 | Fear of failing to get admissions in colleges or universities | 270 | 90 | 30 | 10 |
| 7 | Students will turn to cheating to lighten the burden of homework which often takes as many hours to complete as a full-time job | 245 | 82 | 55 | 18 |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|
| 8 | The punishment is often not enough to discourage others from cheating | 275 | 92 | 25 | 08 |
| 9 | Students with low self-esteem cheat on the tests whenever possible | 185 | 62 | 115 | 38 |
| 10 | Faulty methods of teaching used by the incompetent teachers | 284 | 95 | 16 | 05 |

Table.2.2.Effect of Cheating

| S # | Statements | Yes | % | No | % |
|------------|---|------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| 12 | Losing creativity is main effect of cheating | 285 | 95 | 15 | 05 |
| 13 | It makes the students to lose their responsibility for their own works | 284 | 95 | 16 | 05 |
| 14 | Cheaters feel that they do not need to do anything to pass their exams | 171 | 57 | 129 | 43 |
| 15 | students fail because the teacher catches you, or because the person you copied off didn't study either | 239 | 80 | 61 | 20 |
| 16 | It will encourage you for further cheating | 268 | 90 | 32 | 10 |
| 17 | Hardworking students get discourage | 297 | 99 | 03 | 01 |

Table.3.3.Workable Plan against Cheating

| S # | Statements | Yes | % | No | % |
|------------|--|------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| 18 | Deploy honest and dutiful supervisory staff | 282 | 94 | 18 | 06 |
| 19 | Watch the students carefully during testing | 277 | 93 | 23 | 07 |
| 20 | Do not leave the classroom during test administration | 295 | 99 | 05 | 01 |
| 21 | Forbade children to bring cheating materials, cell phones, Bluetooth etc on test days. | 288 | 96 | 12 | 04 |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|-----|----|----|----|
| 22 | Understand the methods which children use to cheat | 294 | 99 | 06 | 01 |
| 23 | Oral and written instructions should be given for allowed and not allowed material in the examination. | 278 | 93 | 22 | 07 |
| 24 | Academic Integrity statement should be put on syllabus, and discuss it on the first day of class. | 267 | 89 | 33 | 11 |
| 25 | Use multiple versions of tests (especially multiple-choice) Using the same questions in different order will provide equity. | 276 | 92 | 24 | 08 |
| 26 | Do not allow students to leave the room during an exam. | 255 | 85 | 45 | 15 |
| 27 | Tell students to cover their work. | 285 | 95 | 15 | 05 |
| 28 | Handsome remuneration be paid to the supervisory staff | 277 | 93 | 23 | 07 |
| 29 | Time for examination may be strictly observed | 265 | 89 | 35 | 11 |
| 30 | Not more than 24 students be supervised by a single supervisor | 275 | 92 | 25 | 08 |

From the analysis of the data it is very clear that most of the respondents (95%) admit that cheating is rampant in the high stake examination and 98% respondents hold parents' pressure, fear of failing in exam and admission to the next higher class are responsible as the main causes for cheating in the examination. Similarly majority (95%) of the respondents consider faulty method of teaching taught by incompetent teachers another main cause for cheating.

The analysis of the data highlights that 99% of the respondents are viewing cheating discouraging for the brilliant students. Students lose the power of creativity, responsibility and get encouragement for further cheating.

Majority of the respondents argue that the supervisory staff should Understand the methods which children use to cheat, Forbade children to bring cheating materials, cell phones,

Bluetooth etc on test days, Deploy honest and dutiful supervisory staff, should not leave the classroom during test administration, Oral and written instructions should be given for allowed and not allowed material in the examination. Handsome remuneration should be paid to the supervisory staff. Academic Integrity statement should be put on syllabus, and discuss it on the first day of class. Time for examination may be strictly observed. Use **multiple versions of tests** (especially multiple-choice) using the same questions in different order will provide equity. Not more than 24 students be supervised by a single supervisor.

Conclusion

On the basis of the of the analysis of the collected data it has been concluded that the main reasons for cheating in the examination is the tremendous parents' pressure to do well in exams, peer pressure to be ridiculed on achieving low grade or failure in the examination, fear of admission to the college or university, burden of over work to be completed in comparatively less time and no sufficient punishment encourages further cheating. Faulty methods of teaching by incompetent teachers also compel students for cheating.

Cheating discourages the hardworking students and the cheaters usurp their right. The employment, after the completion of education through, is forbidden in our religion. Cheating encourages further cheating. Students lose their creativity and consider cheating an easy way for acquiring their aims.

Discussion

Cheating is rampant, the researcher idea was supported by Baird, (1980)¹³ says that cheating is usual part of life. Cheating is like an epidemic disease (Davis and Ludvigson 1995, Davis et al. 1992).¹⁴The same idea was given by majority of the respondents by saying that cheating encourages further cheating. The findings of the researcher have close association with the literature cited above as majority of the respondents consider parents, peer and the pressure of getting low grade, failing to get admission the main reason for cheating. The idea

of the researcher that proper punishment will be given to the cheater is greatly associated with the sayings of Davis, Grover, Becker & McGregor, (1992, p. 17)¹⁵ who is of the view that if cheating was not punished it will be motivated. The finding of the researcher that cheating is taking place on account of fear of low is strongly associated with the Anderman, Griesinger, and Westerfield 1998)¹⁶. Workload, time shortage and pressure for getting high grade is the main reason for compelling student for academic dishonesty (Singhal 1982, Lipson & MacGavern, 1993, Davis et al 1992)¹⁷ the same idea was concluded by the researcher as well. Showing good result also forcing students for cheating (Newstead, Franklyn-Stokes, and Armstead 1995),¹⁸ most of the respondents have shown the same view point. Majority of the researchers are of the opinion that Academic Integrity Statement may be written on the syllabus and we should be explained to the students from the very first day. The same idea was also presented by Franklyn-Stokes and Newstead (1995)¹⁹ that for controlling cheating honesty may be injected in to the mind of the students. Prof Dr Dost Muhammahs speaks volumes against cheating. He suggests that the course should comprise such verse and hadith which motivate the young generation towards honest earning.

The Detrimental Effects Of Cheating Comprise

“Every traitor will have a banner on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said: This is the betrayer of so-and-so.” “God said: There are three whom I will oppose on the Day of Resurrection: a man who gave his word and then betrayed it; a man who sold a free man into slavery and kept the money; and a man who hired someone, benefited from his labor, then did not pay his wages.” (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)²⁰

“There are four characteristics, whoever has all of them is a true hypocrite, and whoever has one of them has one of the qualities of a hypocrite until he gives it up: when he is trusted, he betrays; when he speaks, he lies; when he makes a promise, he breaks it; and when he disputes, he resorts to slander.” (Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim)²¹

An individual who gets an employment that need a proper degree or certificate that he has got by cheating should discern that the wealth he gets is forbidden (Haram). That

person may be from those who have been described in the preceding verse:

“Think not that those who rejoice in what they have been done, and love to be praised for what they have not done, think not that they are in rescued from the torment and for them is a painful torment..” (Al `Imran: 3: 188) ²²

- 1- Cheating is a way that leads to Hell.
- 2- It is indicative of the mean and evil nature of a person. No one does this except one who is ignoble and does not care about his soul, so he causes it to indulge in that which will cause its doom and destruction.
- 3- It alienates the individual from Almighty Allah and from other people.
- 4- The prayers of such a person are not accepted.
- 5- Such a person is being deprived by Allah from His blessing of life and wealth
- 6- It is the symbol of lacking on faith.
- 7- Cheating leads an individual to be dominated by non believers.

“Because of these evil actions – i.e., cheating – that are committed by traders, workers and craftsmen, Allah caused the oppressors to gain power over them and take their wealth and violate the sanctity of their women. Indeed, He enabled the kuffaar to gain power over them, so they took them prisoner and enslaved them, and made them taste all kinds of torment and humiliation. IbnHajar al-Haythami²³

Cheating in Exams

Students are cheating in various ways. Actually they have been kept very far from the teaching of their religion. That is why they are little attentive to the fact that they are always under the strict observation of Allah

According to Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘AzeezibnBaaz the prophet (SAW) of Allah narrated;

“Whoever bears arms against us is not one of us, and whoever cheats us is not one of us.” (Saheeh Muslim) ²⁴

Cheating in the examination is forbidden. It is not permissible for students to cheat in exams in any subject, because of the universal meaning of this Hadith and other alike reports.

“So that those who were to be destroyed (for their rejecting the Faith) might be destroyed after a clear evidence, and those who were to live (i.e. believers) might live after a clear evidence” [Al-An’aam 8:42 –]”²⁵

All those who are involved in one or another form of cheating must remember as they are watched by Allah Almighty everywhere.

“Verily, your Lord is ever Watchful (over them)”[al-Fajr 89:14]”²⁶

Allah says: *“And let those (executors and guardians) have the same fear in their minds as they would have for their own, if they had left weak offspring behind. So let them fear Allah and speak right words”[al-Nisa’ 4:9]”²⁷*

It may be noted that cheating is very fatal and must be avoided According to JamiaFarooqia Karachi, if a person gets a job on the basis of cheating in the examination and he is not capable of that particular profession the earning he is getting from that job is forbidden (*haram*)²⁸

Suggestions

The following recommendations are given in the light of the researcher’s findings.

1. To get rid of such unsocial activities Academic Integrity Statement should be put on syllabus, and discuss it on the first day of class.
2. Honest and dutiful supervisory staff can stop cheating who know the way the students cheat; they may be given handsome remuneration.
3. Not more than 24 students should be supervised by one supervisor.
4. The supervisory staff may do their duty vigilantly and do not leave the exam room before exam.
5. The supervisor may not leave the classroom during test administration.
6. Oral and written instructions should be given for allowed and not allowed material in the examination, and the cheater may be given proper punishment to discourage further cheating.
7. Time may be strictly observed and none of the student be allowed to leave the room during examination

8. Inclusion of such hadith and Ayaath in the school course which speaks volumes in favor of honest earning

References

- 1 "California State University, East Bay" *csuh.iii.com* Retrieved 15-10-2014
<http://peacepropagation.com/stop-cheating-islam-strictly-prohibits-it/ByIslamReligion.com> Published on 15 May 2006 - Last modified on 04 Oct 2009
- 2 Al Quran Al-Mutaffifeen surah# 83:1,2,3
- 3 Fataawa al Lajnah al Daa' imah 12/ 2000, *www islam.qa.com (Muslim)*
- 4 Al-Nawawi
- 5 Al-Mannaawi
- 6 IbnHajar al-Haythami.
- 7 Al-Kafawi
- 8 Saheeh Muslim Ma`qalibn Yassaar al-Muzani
- 9 Al-Bukhaari 6731, Muslim 142)
- 10 (Al-Tahreem 66:6)
- 11 Ibnal-Qayyim., *Tuhfat al-Mawlood*, p. 146)
- 12 Earl, K. (2002, 10 25). *The really big list of education quotes & links.* Retrieved from:
<http://drwilliammartin.tripod.com/bigedlist.htm>
- 13 Houston, (1976)
- 14 Baird, J.S. Jr. (1980). *Current trends in college cheating, Psychology in the Schools*, 17, s. 515-552.
- 15 Davis, S.F. & Ludvigson, H.W. (1995) *Additional data on academic dishonesty and a Proposal for remediation Teaching of Psychology*, 22, 2, s. 119-121.
- 16 Davis, S.F., Grover, C.A., Becker, A.H. & McGregor, L.N. (1992) *Academic dishonesty: prevalence, determinants, techniques, and punishments. Teaching of Psychology*, 19, 1, s.16-20.
- 17 Anderman, E, Griesinger, T, & Westinger, G. (1998) *Motivation and cheating during early adolescence. Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90, 1, 84-93.
- 18 Singhal, A.C. (1982). *Factors in students' dishonesty. Psychological Reports*, 51, s.775-780
- 19 Newstead, S.E., Franklyn-Stokes, A. & Armstead, P. (1995, in press) *Individual differences in student cheating. Journal of Educational Psychology.*
- 20 Saheeh Al-Bukhari
- 21 Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim) <http://drwilliammartin.tripod.com/bigedlist.htm>
- 22 Al Quran Al `Imran: 3: 188
- 23 IbnHajar al-Haythami. <http://islamqa.info/en/22845>

Tahdhīb al Afkār The Ubiquitous Phenomenon of Jan-June, 2015

24Saheeh Muslim Cheating and Deception last modified 04 Oct 2009,
Published on 15 May

2006 By IslamReligion.com <http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/346/>

25Al Quran, Al-An'aam 8:42

26Al Quran, Al-Fajr 89:14

27Al Quran, Al-Nisa' 4:9

28JamiaFarooqia Karachi DarulAftaainfo@farooqia.com

29 "The Inclusion of Remedies of Using Unfair means in Course
Books." Mashriq

[peshawar] 26 Oct. 2014, sec. 3:10. Print.

30 Bowers, W. J. (1964). Student dishonesty and its control in college. New
York: Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University.