Investigation of medical students’ opinions on cheating and its frequency

Nozare Nakhaee MD, MPH*. Assistant Professor of Community Medicine Department

Seyyed Vahid Seyyed Hosseinee MD. General Practitioner

**Background:** Cheating among university students is highly common so that some experts have described it as “epidemic”.

**Objective:** To determine the opinion of medical students in one of medical universities towards cheating and to estimate its frequency.

**Methods:** A self-administered questionnaire, content valid and reliable, was distributed among medical students (between years 1 to 6) at the end of lectures. They were asked to estimate the frequency of cheating among their classmates, and to show whether or not they approve the cheating behavior types on a likert scale.

**Results:** Of three hundred and two students participated in the study, all replied. 68% of respondents were female and the rest were male. The range of the students in each level was 31 persons (level three) to 85 ones (the sixth level). According to the findings, “attendance of another person in the exam session” was the most rejected cheating type ($X=4.13$) and the most approved type of cheating was “not informing the teacher about the wrong higher score” ($X=2.63$). A considerable rate of students (about 50%) approved some types of cheating. The relative frequency of some types of cheating has been estimated to about 50%. Comparing the students opinions showed no significant difference in terms of sex.

**Conclusion:** Paying attention to cheating among students is necessary.

**Key words:** opinion, medical student, cheating, ethics

* Correspondence

* Email: nakheen@yahoo.com