

RUSSIAN AND U.S. BUSINESS STUDENTS' ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS, AND TENDENCIES TOWARD ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

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ABSTRACT

U.S. educators teaching abroad and hosting foreign students locally need to understand the nuances and attitudes of different student populations and the association with classroom management. The better understanding we have of if, and how, international students' attitudes, perceptions, and tendencies toward academic dishonesty differ from American students, the greater the American instructors' ability to communicate with the non-American students and take actions to prevent cheating. This study is the first cross-national study that compares U.S. business college students with Russian business college students on attitudes, perceptions and tendencies toward cheating. Gender differences were also examined.

METHOD

Sample

The American undergraduate sample was collected from Colorado State University and the Russian undergraduate sample was collected from Novgorod State University and the Norman School College. Both Novgorod State University and the Norman School College are located in Novgorod, Russia. A total of 443 usable surveys were collected in the U.S. and 174 in Russia. Nearly 50% of the American students and 64% of the Russian students were male.

The Survey Instrument

Self-report questionnaires were used to collect the data in both countries. To evaluate the attitudes, perceptions, and tendencies towards academic cheating, a 29-question survey instrument was developed consisting of a series of dichotomous (yes/no) and scalar questions, as well as a question that asked students to assess what percent of their peers they believe cheat.

RESULTS

Russian and American Business Students' Positions on Cheating Behaviors

American and Russian business students had significantly different positions on their self-reported

cheating behaviors, on the degree to which they knew or saw others cheat, and on their perception of whether or not cheating had occurred in two case scenarios. There were no significant differences on gender.

A larger share of the Russian students reported cheating at some point. While about 55% of the American students reported they had cheated at some point during college, nearly 64% of the Russian students reported having cheated. Russian students were also much more likely to report cheating in the class in which the data was collected. Additionally, Russian students were more likely to have reported that they knew or had seen a student that had cheated. The percent of students that had given or received information about an exam that had been administered in an earlier section was higher with Russian students. American students, however, reported a greater incident of using examinations from a prior term to study for current exams.

Russian and American Business Students' Differences in Beliefs About Cheating

The Russian students were more likely than the American students to report higher cheating among peers, believe that most students cheat on exams, believe that cheating on one exam is not so bad, and that it is OK to tell someone in a later section about an exam just completed. Students were asked to assess what percent of their peers they believed to cheat. Russian students felt that about 69% of their colleagues cheat on exams, while American students stated that they felt only about 24% of their fellow students cheat. The Russian students seem to have a different position on what is or is not cheating. The American students did not believe that giving someone past exams or using exams for a prior semester was cheating, while the Russian students were more neutral.

Finally, the Russian students were less likely than the American students to feel that the instructor does not play a role in preventing cheating, and were less likely to think merely discussing cheating related issues would reduce cheating.