# **Academic Fraud by University Students in Colombia:** How Chronic is the Illness?

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## Abstract

This study inquires into the frequency of committing academic fraud among university students, the main types of fraud, and the reasons given by the students for engaging in this conduct. The data are obtained from direct surveys carried out at different times between the years 2003 and 2013 to more than 3.300 students from four Colombian universities of high academic ranking. These universities, out of which three are private, and one is public are in the three main cities of Colombia. The study shows that over 90% of the students surveyed admitted having committed some type of fraud during their university years and that the percentage of students who admitted having committed fraud has not had a significant change in the decade covered by the study. We also found that having copied during a test, to include someone in a group without having worked, borrow a paper, having lots of work, that the evaluation only tests memorization, and help a classmate are the reasons most commonly cited by the students to commit fraud.

## Keywords

*Academic Fraud – Colombian Universities – Dishonesty –Educational System – Evaluation.*

## Introduction

The evaluation mechanisms to assess students' progress have been the topic of many debates; what triggers these discussions is the perversion of the chosen measures for evaluation. Since Campbell (1979) the recurring thought among academics has been of the indicators and mechanisms used for assessing, given the fact that these same mechanisms are prone to distortions and may come to corrupt the processes intended for monitoring. The distortions in evaluation processes are diverse and, at a great extent, largely determined by the incentives of the actors involved. If the incentives or the punishments side with the teachers (salary appraisal, job security, etc.), the indicator will be subject to corruption by the teachers themselves through test inflation or by creating very simple tests so that the students reach the standards. Backoff and Contreras (2014) show an example of this type of corruption with regards to Mexico.

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When the indicator is subject to corruption from the students, the practice is widely known as academic fraud, conduct reprimanded or punished in some occasions. Academic fraud in higher education is an issue that has not been extensively investigated in Latin America; highlighted studies are those of Ayala and Quintanilla (2014) and Mejía and Ordóñez (2004). Most of the literature about this phenomenon is referenced in United States and Canada. For contributing to this discussion and provide empirical results about the frequency and its possible causes, this research was developed on academic fraud in higher education in Colombia. The study uses data from four highly ranked universities of the country. Through direct student surveys conducted at different intervals —between 2003 and 2013—, we have inquired into the frequency of committing fraud and the reasons incurred in this practice. This exploration aims to investigate the incidence of academic fraud commission among university students, the primary types of hoaxes and the reasons there are to engage in this behavior.

The text begins by presenting a review of the literature on academic fraud in higher education, its frequency, reasons and the benefits obtained by students incurring in this conduct. Consecutively, the data, the methodology, and the results of the research are presented. It finalizes reflecting on the educational system, the evaluation mechanisms and the incentives generated by the system on the students. With this results, we hope to help the debate over the structural causes that lead to the great commission of fraud and to rethink the mechanisms applied by universities to battle them.

## Literature Review

Fraud is a construct that includes a group of misconducts committed by students, and its definition contains several meanings. For example, Sierra and Hyman (2008) consider fraud as the conscious action to apply aids or information prohibited during a test or written paper; Mullens (2000) and Eshet and others (2014), define academic dishonesty as any action that gives an unearned or undeserved advantage to a student over another. Meanwhile, Genereaux and McLeod (1995) define fraud as the intent or execution of actions conducted by students for the attainment of academic results from using illegal or unauthorized means. For these authors, there are two types of dishonesty, active and passive, both intend to deceive; active dishonesty includes actions to increase one's grades, while passive involves collaboration to improve another student's grade. For Christensen and McCabe (2006) the definition of fraud includes illegal actions taken during tests or papers, using phrases or sections without citation or borrowing a written work to present it as their own.

While there are common elements in the submitted definitions, the fact is that there is not a universally accepted definition (KIBLER, 1993) and what is considered an academic fraud may vary per context. In this article, academic fraud is regarded as a set of inappropriate or unhallowed conducts incurred by a student regarding assignments, tests, appointed examinations or requirements ought to meet in academia. A feature found while describing types of behaviors considered as fraudulent, is that the range of conducts considered as frauds has expanded with the advances in information and communication technologies over time. Thus, leading us to believe that the introduction of new technological changes will expand or

redefine what is considered academic fraud, indicating that despite the introduction of new technologies, there has not been a change in evaluation.

The available literature on fraud in higher education allows some trends. The first and probably most alarming is how often university students admit to committing fraud. When students are asked if they have committed any fraud, more than two-thirds admit to having committed at least one fraudulent conduct throughout their studies. Davis and others (1992), with a sample of 6.000 students from 35 American universities, found that between 51% and 83% of students admitted having committed fraud in high school. Davis and Luvidsong (1995) study with 2.153 students from 71 in the United States, found that 95% of students who reported fraud in college, had done earlier in school. Likewise, McCabe, Butterfield and Trevino (2006), with a sample of 5.000 graduate students of business programs and of other fields in 54 universities in the United States and Canada, state that on average, the business students self-report greater involvement in fraudulent activities (56%) than the students who are not part of the business field (47%). Meanwhile, it was found that 53% of the business students acknowledged having made plagiarism in written works versus 43% recognition by students from other areas.

The literature, besides establishing the average frequency of committing fraud focuses on creating the most frequent types of academic dishonesty among students. For example, Christensen and McCabe (2006) found that 53% of undergraduates and 35% of graduate students in Canadian universities acknowledged having committed fraud in written papers. In this same study, they found that the five most common fraudulent behaviors of the 13.644 undergraduate students surveyed were: working with others on a single assignment (45%), having questions answered by someone who has already taken the exam (38%), copying phrases/documents without citation (37%), copying quotes from the Internet without citing the sources (35%), and inventing laboratory data (25%). For the 1.318 graduate students, the most frequent behaviors were: working with others on an individual exercise (29%), having questions answered by someone who has already taken the exam (16%), copying phrases/documents without citation (24%), copying quotes from the Internet without citing the sources (22%), and finally, receive unauthorized help during an activity (10%).

Other findings in the literature indicate that there is a significant disparity between the perceptions of students and teachers versus frequency of committing fraud and severity of certain behaviors. Hard, Conway, and Moran (2006) surveyed 421 students of an average university in the northeast of the United States and found that 90.1% admitted to having been involved in at least one of sixteen behaviors listed as fraudulent. While teachers felt that most of these sixteen behaviors presented only sporadically, data reflected a different reality, since many occurred one to two times per student. Among the most common fraudulent practices are: copying phrases for papers or the usage of the Internet without citing the sources and not giving them the due credit.

In general, studies show that the assessment made by teachers about behaviors that are considered as frauds by students and the severity of each of them is an estimation that is well above the reported students (CHRISTENSEN; MCCABE, 2006; KIRKLAND, 2009). For example, in Perry's investigation (2010), only 23% of first-year students considered

that using ideas or copying segments from Internet sources onto their paperwork without citing as plagiarism.

Arnette and others (2002) found that tolerant attitudes towards academic fraud from students are negatively correlated with the level of self-control they have. Additionally, in this study, which involved 490 high school and college students, they found that students evaluate the seriousness of the fraud committed by others based on reasons that lead to fraudulent behavior rather than the type of fraud.

## Generating Factors

Perry (2010) found that among the most common justifications for committing fraud were not understanding the subject, the need to maintain a good relationship with peers, and lack of time to fulfill academic activities. To McCabe and Trevino (2002), one of the factors leading students to be involved in fraudulent behavior is perceiving the workload as unreasonable. Similarly, Brimble and Stevenson-Clark (2005), set out that to help a friend (43%), the difficulty of the examination (37%) and the lack of time (36%) are the most common reasons for fraud among Australian students.

Factors that generate or explain academic fraud can divide into internal, associated with the person, and external, related to the environment (MCCABE; TREVINO, 1993). The internal factors are related to gender, academic achievement, level of maturity, self-esteem and moral development. For example, Anderman, Griesinger, and Westerfield (1998) found that men tend to commit more fraud than women and lower grades students cheat more than students in advanced grades. Bunn, Caudill and Gropper (1992) found that students with higher grade point averages (*Grade Point Average* - GPA) are less likely to behave dishonestly in an academic space. Regarding external factors of the individual, institutional aspects can be considered, such as the control systems, the existence, and enforcement of *codes of honor*, the Cultural environment, and social stigma. The probability of any student committing fraud is influenced by the frequency of fraudulent activities in student and social environments in which they are located. For example, Gaitán Ayala and Quintanilla Domínguez (2014), found that the probability of any student cheating increases 14% for every 10% increase in the number of friends who regularly copy. Being in a medium in which most students commit fraud, and cheating is accepted socially, makes the social stigma against these behaviors not high enough and they end up happening more often (MCCABE; TREVINO; BUTTERFIELD, 1999; MCCABE; TREVINO, 2002; KIRKLAND, 2009).

## Cost-benefit Analysis

One reason for which the students commit fraud is that they perceive a low probability of being detected by the teachers. Additionally, when detected, the likelihood of imposing a heavy exemplifying punishment is also small (MONTGOMERIE; BIRKHEAD, 2005; WILLIAMS; HOSEK, 2003; OLAFSON; SCHRAW; KEHRWALD, 2014). These low costs, high contrast with the short-term benefits that many students perceive they acquire when committing fraud. The low probability of being detected is evident in the study of Mejía and Ordóñez (2004), where the students believe that at least 40% of their peers

have committed fraud, while the teachers think that only 12% of students do. Haines and others (1986), in a survey of 380 American college students, identified that most respondents had cheated on a test and only 1% was detected.

Similar results are reported by Jendrek (1989), where over 337 surveys to teachers at a public university in the United States found that 60% of them had detected fraud in students. Of this group, 60% punished the conduct and only 20% filed the formal report of the incident to the directors of the University, as stated per the established procedure. Pavela (1993), in a survey of 802 professors from sixteen universities evidence that teachers take little effort in reporting fraudulent situations. Christensen and McCabe (2006) found that 46% of the professors and 38% of the academic monitors have ignored admitting incidents of fraud for reasons, such as lack of substantial evidence, lack of support from the administration, ignorance of the procedure, lack of time for tracking suspected cases, and the discomfort caused when confronting a student.

## Methodology

The survey used for the present study is developed by a Colombian non-governmental organization seeking to establish the factors which motivate individuals to commit fraud in the academic environment. The aim of the study is to know the established habits, practices, beliefs and social norms within the university community. The research covers three topics: culture of illegality, styles and emphasis of teaching, and academic and civic life. This article focuses on the component of the culture of lawlessness, understood as a set of practices, behaviors, and values per which, under certain circumstances, violating a rule is socially accepted (GARCIA, 2009). In this case, the rules broken are the standards set by the universities associated with the behavior expected from the students.

The used information comes from four Colombian universities participating in the project at different intervals, using the same methodology and questionnaires. Research is conducted at various times because each university chose the point at which they wanted to participate in the study. Not all educational institutions decided to participate simultaneously. The authors are directly involved in the survey at each university. Data from other schools have been published and used in this analysis.

The survey is applied to professors and students with representative samples for all faculties of the universities where the study is undertaken. This article uses only the information from the inquiry of students with the purpose of protecting the students' identity and conducting an anonymous survey (which creates the conditions for students to be honest with their answers) the survey was self-administered and did not inquire about the socioeconomic or academic conditions of the students. The instrument applied examines fourteen behaviors considered as a fraud:

1. Copying responses from a partner on a test.
2. Allowing for a classmate to copy the answers on a test.
3. Borrowing a classmate's paper.
4. Lending a paperwork to be copied.
5. Downloading a paper from the Internet and present it as their own.

6. Using author's ideas without due citation.
7. Copying or paraphrasing excerpts from other papers without due citation.
8. Filing a false medical certificate.
9. Using unauthorized tools during a test.
10. Signing an attendance sheet on behalf of a classmate.
11. Including someone in a group without having collaborated in the work.
12. Appearing as a member of a group without having cooperated in the work.
13. Copying and pasting segments from the Internet without due citation.
14. Impersonating during a test.

Similarly, the survey probes for the gravity of each of these conducts. The students were asked to value each behavior included in the questionnaire on a scale of 0 (minimum grade of severity) to 5 (maximum grade of severity).

The four universities that participated in the study characterized by being part of the group of institutions of higher education with greater academic prestige in the Country and by being one of the best in different quality indicators such as standardized test scores. The universities are in the main cities of Colombia and are part of both the public and the private sectors. The first school to participate in this study did so in 2003. Other universities joined[3] the study in 2007, 2011 and finally in 20133. Table 1 shows the years and the number of students in each school. Initially, we show statistics for the four universities, and then we focus on two schools to analyze academic fraud and its associated factors in dept. To maintain the confidentiality of the data, we report the results denominating the universities as A, B, C, and D in the order in which they participated in the study.

**Table 1 -** Year and number of students per university

| University | Year | Number of students |
|---|---|---|
| University A | 2003 | 1100 |
| University B | 2007 | 628 |
| University C | 2011 | 706 |
| University D | 2013 | 956 |

Source: authors' calculations.

It is important to emphasize that the data are not representative of the Country and therefore cannot generalize the results to the entire higher education system in Colombia. As previously mentioned, the study is conducted in different years in each participating university, but the methodology proposed, sample and instruments are equal for the four universities allowing us to make valid comparisons. This analysis' contribution is that it

**3-** Two of the four universities have made public the results of the study. View Garcia (2009), Mejía and Ordóñez (2004). The data presented in this analysis come from these publications. In the other two universities, access to study data on the condition of anonymity were reported.

identifies a trend in higher education academic fraud, in four universities of very high ranking which is a relatively unexplored subject in the region.

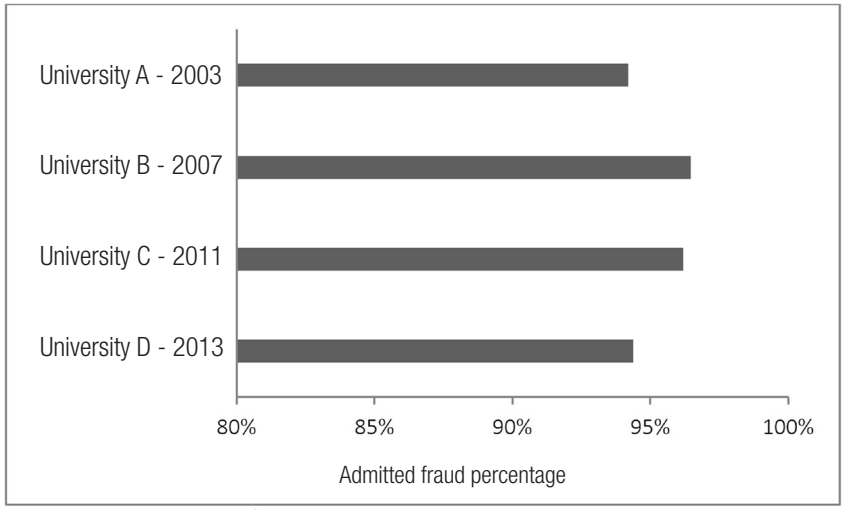
Most of the results presented in this article are descriptive in nature. Using simple relationships, it realizes the frequency of committing fraud and the types of fraud in which students incur the most. Later, it answers the question about the factors associated with academic fraud. For this, we followed the methodology proposed in Mejía and Ordóñez (2004), which mostly apply multiple successive regression models using the admitted frequency to committing fraud as the dependent variable. The results presented in Mejía and Ordóñez' study (results from college in 2003), are contrasted with data from the University D, that joined the studio in 2013 with the aim of establishing whether the dishonest behavior within the academy have had changed during this period.

## Results

### Admitted frequency of academic fraud and common types of fraud

One of the most relevant results of this analysis refers to the high level of admission of fraud by the students. Chart 1 shows the percentage of students that admitted having committed any fraud during their time as university students. In the four universities, more than 94% of the surveyed students admitted having committed one of the fourteen practices. More worrying is that, in average, students admit to having committed at least five behaviors considered as fraud. Neither of these trends show changes during 2003 and 2013; this may imply that dishonest practices among the student body are generalized conducts, which have remained in time and show no significant variations between the public and the private universities.

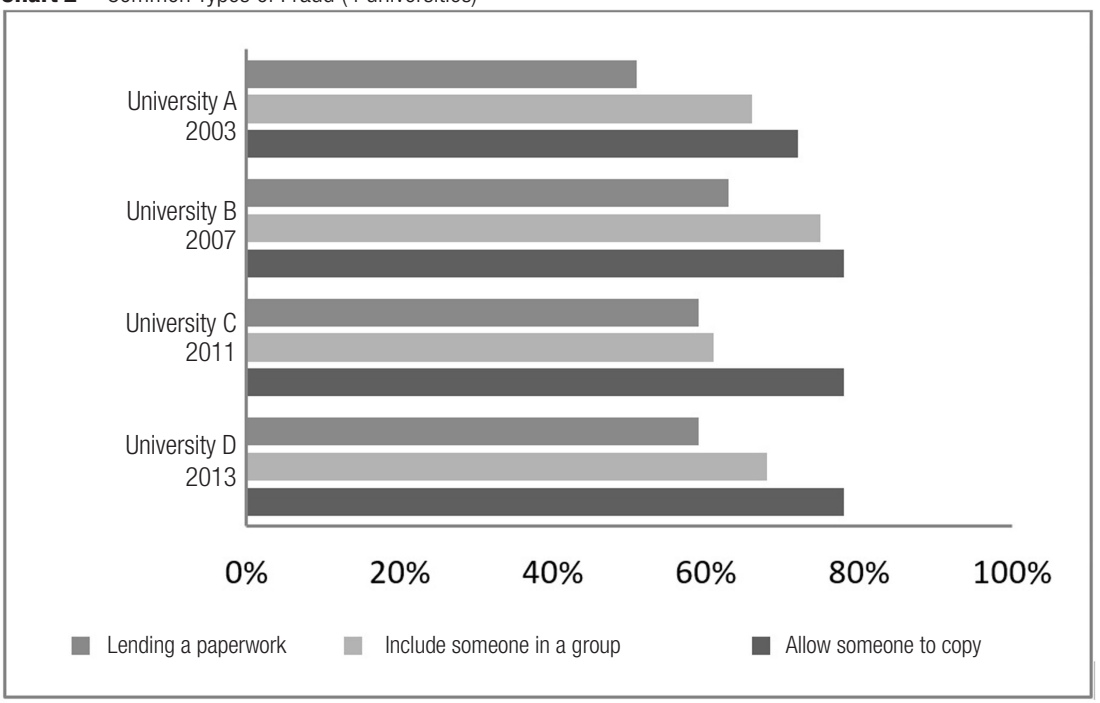
**Chart 1 -** Percentage of Students Who at least once Admitted Having Committed Fraud in University (4 universities)




Source: authors' calculations.

As for the types of fraud in which more students incur, there are not great differences among the four universities object of study (see Chart 2). The most common type of fraud among respondents is to allow others to copy during a test with more than 70% commission in all cases. To include someone in a group (without having done the work), it is a practice that oscillates between the 61% and the 75%. Lending a paperwork is the third most common practice among students with a frequency of admission between 51% and 63%. Regarding the reasons why students commit fraud, it highlights that the *professor did not teach well*, *the evaluation is misunderstood*, *not wanting to lower the GPA* and that *the examination only tests memory*. These trends are quite similar in all universities. It is noteworthy that the most common practices of fraud, as well as the reasons why students feel motivated to engage in these behaviors, have remained virtually unchanged over the last ten years; and although the study was conducted in different cities and universities, the practices of fraudulent behavior among students do not change significantly. Thus, suggesting that the dishonest behavior in academia have no prevalence in specific contexts, but on the contrary, are a common practice and has remained over time despite the efforts made in universities to generate an awareness of honesty among the student body.

**Chart 2 -** Common Types of Fraud (4 universities)




Source: authors' calculations.

## Differences Between Faculties

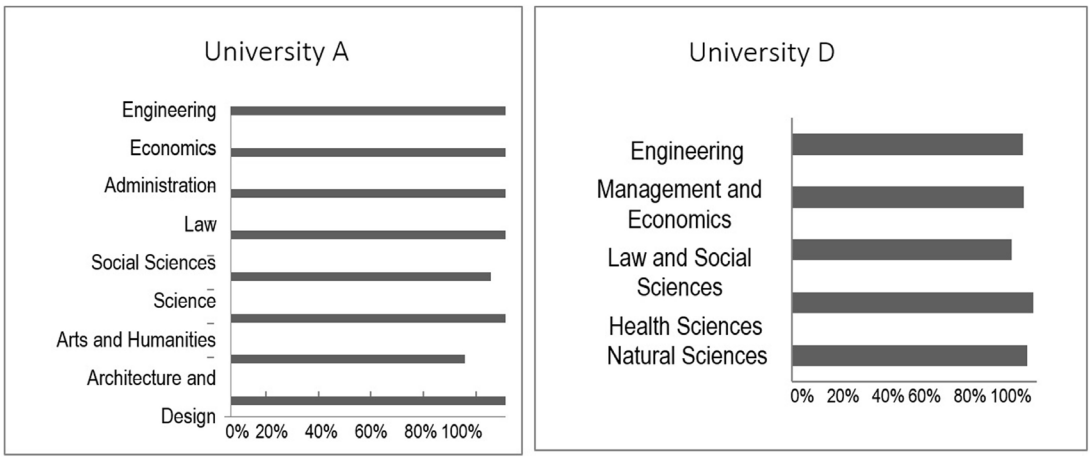
In this section, we make a comparative analysis between two universities (A and D), which participated in the study in 2003[4] and 2013 respectively. The aim is to establish whether there are differences in the average frequency of fraud commission between universities and faculties. As shown in Chart 3, there are no significant differences between the percentage of students who admitted having committed any fraud during their time as university students. In both universities, the percentage of students who admit having committed any fraud is above 90%. Only in the University A, the students of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities report having committed fraudulent practice in a lower percentage.

As shown in Chart 2, the most common types of fraud are lending a paperwork, include someone in a group and allow someone to copy. Other practices occur less frequently like Impersonating during a test, download a paper from the Internet and present it as their own, sign an attendance sheet on behalf of a classmate, and use unauthorized tools during a test. Overall, tendencies are very similar between the two universities, but it draws attention that the participating students of the study in the University A, claim to have filed a fake medical certificate to justify an absence by about 60%, while in University D this practice was only reported in 5% of the responses.

On average, students acknowledge having committed five types of fraud (from a list of fourteen). Regarding the differences between faculties and universities, we note that in general students from the University A admit, in some of the faculties, to higher averages of commission (see Chart 4). For example, in the School of Management students accept

**4-** The data used college who participated in the 2003 study are taken from Mejía and Ordóñez (2004).

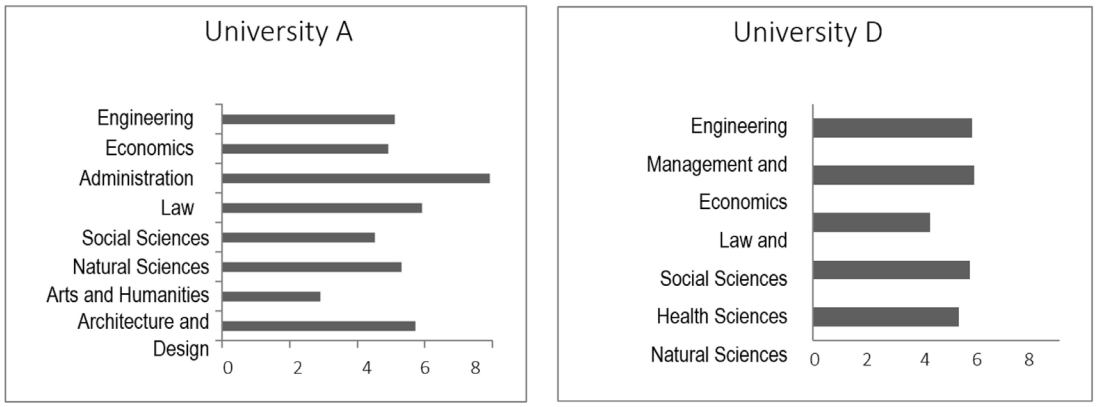
**Chart 3 -** Percentage of Individuals by Faculty Who Admitted any Fraud (2 universities)




Source: authors' calculations.

having committed seven types of fraud while in the University C, students admit having committed five practices. Students who on average have agreed to incur fewer types of fraud are students of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities from both universities.

**Chart 4 -** Average Type of Fraud Supported by Faculty (2 Universities)




Source: authors' calculations.

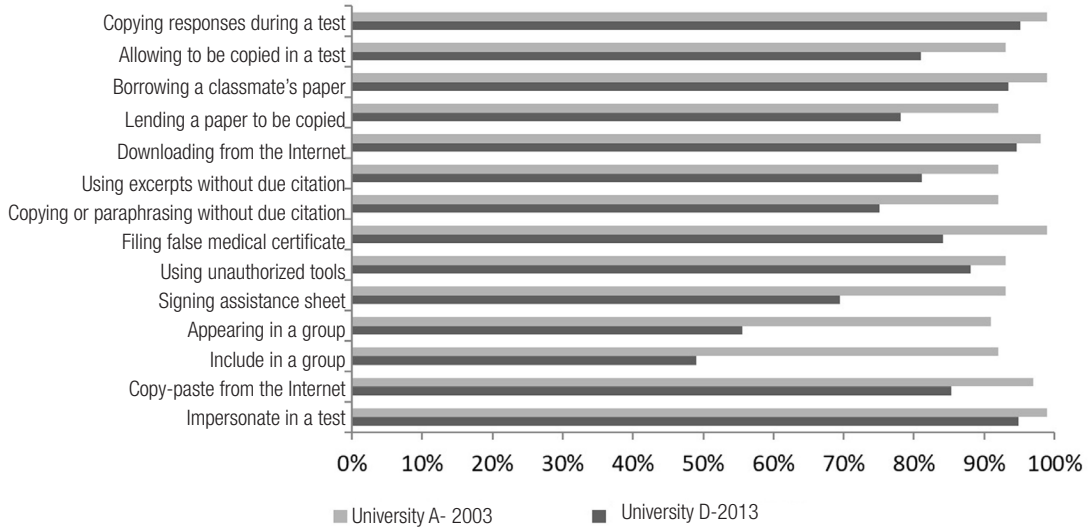
## What is Considered Fraud, its Severity and Associated Factors

One of the aspects sought to be established by the study is the students' perception regarding the severity for each type of fraud. In Chart 5, which shows the fourteen behaviors considered as fraud in universities, it is noteworthy that for all the cases, the students surveyed in 2013 perceived what is considered fraud proportionally less; for example, to Include someone in a group without having collaborated in the work is considered fraud by 92% of the students surveyed in 2003, but this percentage drops to 49% in the surveys conducted in 2013. Appearing as a member of a group without having cooperated in the work drops from 91% in 2003 to 56% in 2013; while signing an attendance sheet on behalf of a classmate has a reduction of twenty percentage points during this period. These marked differences deserve more attention because they could insinuate that over time, young people are becoming laxer when it comes to inappropriate conducts in the academic environment.

Chart 6 shows the results of the severity assigned by the students to each conduct (using a scale of 0-5, where 5 represents maximum severity and 0 no severity). Impersonating during a test and downloading a paper from the Internet without due citation are the conducts perceived as more severe by the students whereas including someone in a group without having collaborating in the work, appearing as a member of a group without having cooperated in the work, or copying responses during a test, are considered of lesser gravity. It is worth noting that in general there are no major differences among the universities concerning the gravity perceived by the students.

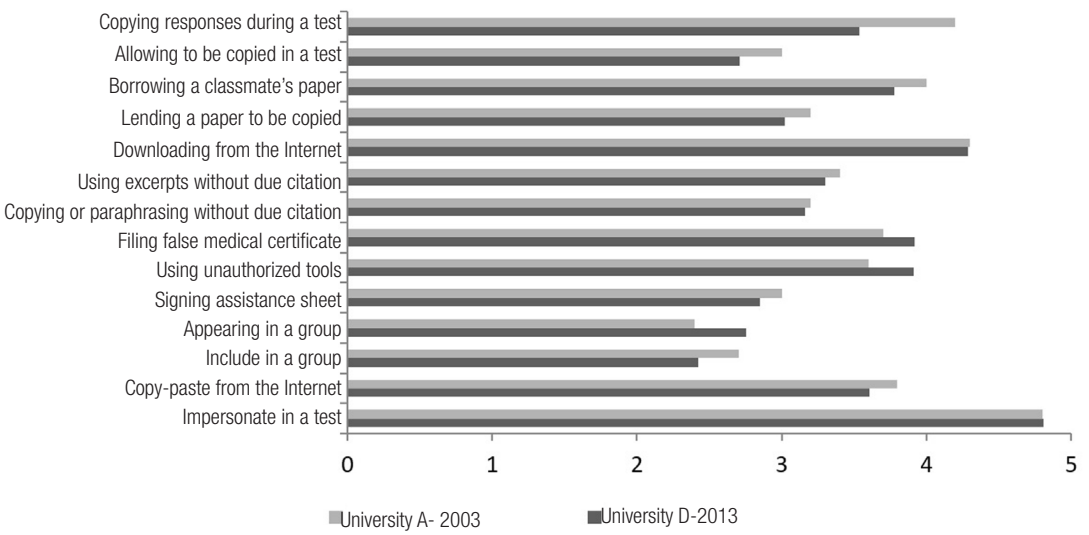
One of the aspects discussed in the research are the reasons which motivate students to commit fraud. The students analyzed sixteen reasons and weighed them on a scale of 0-5 (0 being the lowest) whether the reason would or not be a motivation for

**Chart 5 -** Percentage of Students Who Consider each Practice as Fraud




Source: authors' calculations.

**Chart 6** - Average Gravity Rating for each Conduct

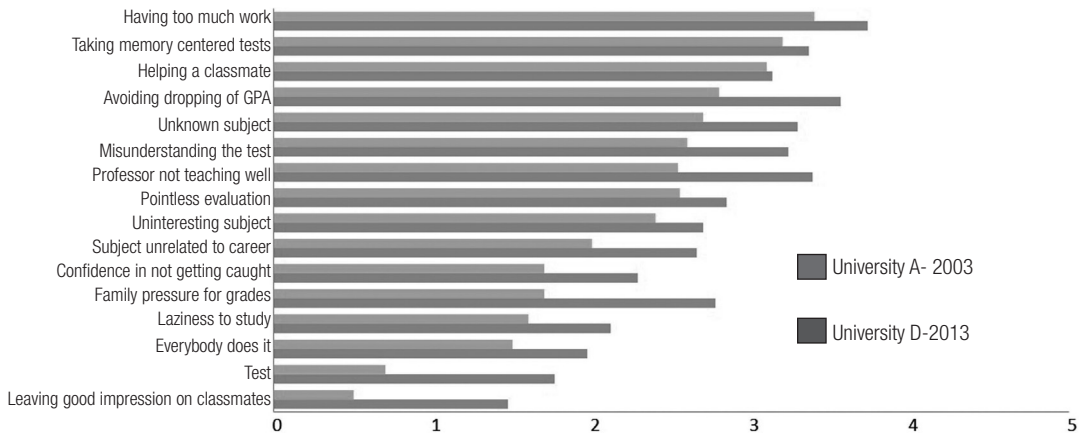



Source: authors' calculations.

them to commit fraud. The reasons most commonly cited by the students to commit fraud are having lots of academic load, taking tests that only evaluate memory, and helping a classmate. The reasons the students identify as nonstimulant to commit fraud are: being a widespread practice, type of evaluation and gaining acceptance from their

peers. Overall, we found very similar patterns in the two universities (see Chart 7), however, reasons such as being pressured by the family to get good grades or getting along with peers, appear much more predominantly in the research in 2013.

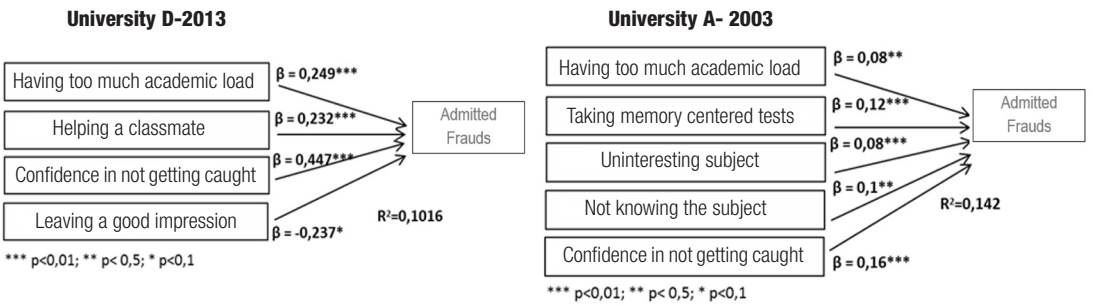
**Chart 7 –** What motivates the Commission of Fraud




Source: authors' calculations.

With the intention to establish the factors associated with the perpetrating of fraud, a multiple regression analysis was performed, following the methodology of Mejía and Ordóñez (2004), with the aim of making comparisons between universities and knowing what factors influence the decision of students to commit fraud (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1 -** Factors associated with the commission of fraud




Source: authors' calculations.

As seen in Figure 1, for both universities the fact that having much academic load and having confidence in not getting caught increases the number of frauds admitted by the students. Meanwhile, in the case of University D, one can observe that the only factor associated with a lower level of fraud is leaving a good impression on classmates, even though this coefficient is not significant at conventional levels. When comparing these results with Chart 7, which does not necessarily identify the factors that students

considered more likely for committing fraud, it explains the admission of fraud; this happens in cases in which the evaluations are memory centered. Similarly, it is found that factors, such as the student wanting to learn, considering fraud as doing something dishonest or feeling guilt, decreases the likelihood that a student incurs fraud.

## Discussion and Conclusions

The objective of this research is to contribute to the discussion of academic fraud in higher education in Latin America, particularly in Colombia. As shown in the review of the literature, most studies on this subject concentrate in the United States and in Canada, and little is known about such an important phenomenon in the region. This research aims at investigating the frequency in the commission of academic fraud among university students, the primary types of fraud and the reasons for engaging in this behavior. To answer these questions, we use data from direct students' surveys in four Colombian universities in the public and private sectors. Surveys were conducted at four different intervals between 2003 and 2013, with responses from more than 3.300 students about their perceptions of fraud, commission rate and factors associated with this conduct. Although investigations were carried out at different intervals, methodology, sample, and questionnaires are the same, allowing comparisons. The data cannot be generalized to all universities in the country, and the analysis is only descriptive.

One of the most startling results of this study was that more than 94% of the students surveyed admitted having committed some fraud during their university life. Following the typology proposed by Genereaux and McLeod (1995), we found that the students surveyed admitted committing more often passive fraud than active fraud. It also shows that the most common types of fraud among the surveyed students are, allowing others to copy during a test, including someone in a group without having worked, and lending a paperwork; which are considered passive fraud. While active actions such as impersonating during a test, downloading papers from the Internet without due citation or using unauthorized tools during exams, are reported less frequently. On average, we find that students admit having committed at least five types of fraud (out of fourteen options) during their academic life.

We found no significant differences in three dimensions analyzed: the university sector (public-private), the region where the university is located or the year in which the study is carried out. Thus, showing us that it is quite likely that higher education academic fraud is a widespread behavior in the country and has remained so over time. Even more worrying is the finding that between 2003 and 2013, students perceive lesser gravity for dishonest behavior in academia. In 2003, 92% of the students felt that including someone in a group was dishonest, while in 2013, that perception dropped to 49%. Significant reductions in time were also observed in conducts like appearing in a group without having worked or signing the assistance sheet on behalf of a classmate.

Possible explanations for these high percentages of acceptance of dishonest behavior by students are associated with legal, cultural and moral factors (Mockus, 2004). The legal factor refers to the type of sanction and the probability of being punished. In many

cases, universities have established their strict penalties/regulations, but in practice, rarely applied. The professors have difficulty and/or little interest in controlling fraud, and when detected, it is hard to report formally. In the few cases that are reported, the students involved have much scope for *negotiation* and to appeal against the sanctions imposed on them, so one ends up not generating a significant exemplifying effect.

The second factor is cultural. In accordance with Garcia (2009), since the time of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in Latin America, a propensity for breaching of rules has been nurtured, which is manifest in expressions used colloquially as *rules are meant to be broken*, or *every law has a loophole*. The culture of illegality understood as a set of practices, behaviors, and values that justify and accept the violation of the rules, facilitates the realization of fraud. The admiration for he who cheats and is not discovered, one who manages to subvert the norm and obtain advantage where others cannot, inspires little or no shame on he who cheats during a test or asks to be included as part of a project. The *clever fox* is a character that enjoys greater social acceptance level compared to him who acts per the rule, *the toad*.

The third and final factor is about morality, which refers to the sense of inner guilt that a student may have after having committed fraud. In accordance with Mockus (2004), guilt is associated with our ideals and the lessons taught by our parents and teachers. The student who facilitates the copying often justifies himself with the importance imprinted on a misunderstood solidarity with his study partner, which reduces or eliminates the remorse resulting from the breaching of the rule.

In short, the low probability of being punished, the shamelessness in the face of peers and the scarce feeling of guilt generated in committing fraud are possible explanations that should guide the development of strategies and actions from which its effectiveness could be investigated. The students who participated in this research belong to the four universities with very high academic ranking that are akin to a quarry for formation of business and social leaders. Whether these students during their academic life participated and/or accepted fraudulent behavior in these environments, it is possible that all through their professional lives they will repeat those behaviors that feed the already high levels of corruption.

## Types of Evaluation and Fraud

An interesting path for future researchers is the relationship between the type of assessments and fraudulent behavior of students. The assessment, understood as any activity or occasion for which the teacher becomes aware of the students' progress in achieving learning objectives, goes far beyond the tests, in so far as it is engaged in the same activity teaching (SHEPPARD, 2000). As laid down by Sacristán (1998), evaluation plays an educational and social function. In the first, the assessment is a mediator of the teaching-learning process based on the level of fulfillment of objectives and expected due to the cognitive benefit and development of the learner. In the second, the evaluation is intended to represent the academic performance and certification and recognition in society. Some teachers and educational institutions, limit the use of the assessment only

to the second function when evaluating their students because they must report it more than for any other pedagogical reason.

To Olafson, Schraw and Kehrwald (2014) changes in the type of evaluations conducted, could significantly reduce the levels of fraud among students. As suggested by Ordóñez, Mejía, and Castellanos (2006), committing fraud should be the nonlearning path rather than a means of overcoming an obstacle called evaluation.

If one of the purposes of the assessment is to serve as a mediating element in the process of teaching and learning, when a professor exempts his best students from taking a test, he sends very wrong signals to the extent that he places the evaluation on the same footing as that of a *punishment* from which good students can be excepted. If the assessment is the equivalent of a *staging* to measure levels of progress evaluated per some objectives, this could be the equivalent of an audition made by an apprentice of a musical instrument, which seeks anything but being released from this performance. Hunt explains the relationship between fraud and the education system in reflexions as:

> If I wanted to learn how to play the guitar or improve in golf or learn how to swim, fraud would be the last thing I would think of. It would be totally irrelevant to this situation; however, if I say that I can do something (without thinking about getting to the activity as such), I would consider fraud. This is the situation we have built for our students: a system in which the only incentive or goal that matters is a brand, credit and certificates (2003, p. 3).

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