

# Academic dishonesty based on religiosity among Muslim students in Indonesia

## Deshonestidad académica basada en la religiosidad entre los estudiantes musulmanes en Indonesia

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Unethical behavior in higher education is often found in the form of academic dishonesty. We conducted a study of academic dishonesty by involving the religiosity variable which characterizes Indonesia as a country with the largest Muslim population in the world. **Methodology:** The study participants were 142 Muslim students from various faculties. Data collection tools using The Centrality of Religiosity Scale-CRS15 and the scale of academic dishonesty from Ampuni (2019). **Results and discussion:** Showed that there was a significant effect of religiosity on academic dishonesty with a  $R^2$  value of 0.099, meaning that the religiosity variable could affect the academic dishonesty variable by 9.9% (0.099). **Conclusions:** We also present a discussion of the religiosity that affects unethical behavior and discuss the theoretical and practical implications of this finding.

**Keyword:** Religiosity; academic dishonesty; Muslim student

### Resumen

**Introducción:** El comportamiento poco ético en la educación superior a menudo se manifiesta en forma de deshonestidad académica. Se realiza un estudio de la deshonestidad académica al involucrar la variable religiosidad que caracteriza a Indonesia como un país con la mayor población musulmana del mundo. **Metodología:** Los participantes del estudio fueron 142 estudiantes musulmanes de diversas facultades. Se usaron herramientas de recopilación de datos utilizando la Escala de Centralidad de la Religiosidad-CRS15 y la escala de deshonestidad académica de Ampuni (2019). **Resultados y discusión:** Los Resultados mostraron que hubo un efecto significativo de la religiosidad sobre la deshonestidad académica con un valor de  $R^2$  de 0.099, lo que significa que la variable religiosidad podría afectar la variable de deshonestidad académica en un 9.9% (0.099). **Conclusiones:** El texto presenta una discusión sobre la religiosidad que afecta el comportamiento no ético y se analizan las implicaciones teóricas y prácticas de este hallazgo.

**Palabra clave:** Religiosidad; deshonestidad académica; estudiante musulmán

## INTRODUCTION

*Academic dishonesty*

Academic dishonesty is a persistent and pervasive problem on campuses (Bolin, 2004). Many studies conducted at the tertiary level report how this unusual behavior occurs, as in previous research conducted on teacher training and education science students in Indonesia, which said that academic dishonesty occurs in academic assignments, midterm exams, and final semester exams (Herdian & Lestari, 2018).

Regarding the behavior that is considered unethical, Bettawinda & Nurmina (2019) defines academic dishonesty as morally wrong behavior in an academic environment. Meanwhile, according to Utami & Agustina (2019), academic dishonesty is the act of manipulating or violating the rules made in carrying out the exam or assignment given either intentionally or unintentionally. Bowers (1964) describe the form of behavior academic dishonesty as “students engage in dishonest behavior not limited to activities such as plagiarism and cheating”. This deviant behavior falls into three categories: 1) “giving, receiving, or receiving information,” 2), “using prohibited materials,” and 3) “taking advantage of weaknesses in people, procedures, or processes for-profit” academic (Cizek, 2003). Academic dishonesty is a serious act that affects not only the people who commit it but also the institutions to which it is a part and those close to the situation. This leads to professional incompetence, a degradation of ethical standards, and a person’s distrust (Daumiller & Janke, 2019).

The behavior of academic dishonesty is caused by many factors, Huang, Yang y Chen (2015) classified it into three major categories, namely internal factors such as personality traits, external factors such as pressure from teachers, and contextual situations such as peer atmosphere and school policies. Besides, many studies conducted by previous research have described the factors that influence academic dishonesty including anxiety (Pantu, Karmiyati & Winarsunu, 2020), loyalty (Ampuni, 2019), self-perception (Fitria, 2019), religiosity (Rahmawati & Susilawati, 2019), peer pressure (Pantu et al., 2020), authoritarian parenting / parental pressure (Muflihah & Widiana, 2019), and digital technology (Oran, Can, Senol & Hadımlı, 2016).

*Academic dishonesty and Religiosity*

Academic dishonesty is motivated by religiosity. Religiosity as understanding, commitment, and following a set of religious doctrines or principles (Bloodgood, Turnley & Mudrack, 2008). Religiosity is the understanding to practice and follow religious principles. For example in Islam, a Muslim is ordered to obey religious orders both in terms of attitudes, words, and actions (Ancok & Anshori, 2015). When a person applies religious dimensions in his life, individual experiences experienced will influence him to guard his words and behavior and prevent actions that violate religious principles (Kusdiana, Djalali & Farid, 2018).

Previous results reported that the behavior of students in the five daily prayer activities tends to be positive and ethical because of the awareness of right and wrong in every field of work, including academic activities (Khan, Khalid, Hasnain, Ullah & Ali, 2019).

Next, the results of research by Naufal & Aisyah (2017) on 137 students said that religiosity has a negative effect on academic dishonesty, meaning that the stronger the religiosity, the weaker the behavior of academic dishonesty.

Jalaluddin (cited by Herdian & Mildaeni, 2021) explains that someone who is believed to be obedient and has the correct understanding of religion will always implement the correct behavior in his daily life. Students who apply the values of religiosity know which limits are good, permissible, and rewarding, know that they are always under God's supervision, while students who do not have religious values will not feel afraid to sin or fear being seen by God (Kusdiana et al., 2018). The more often students engage in religious activities and apply religious values, the less likely they are to engage in unethical behavior (Bloodgood et al., 2008; Storch & Storch, 2001). Based on the above background, the purpose of this study is to examine how religiosity affects academic dishonesty.

## METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative approach, the number of participants in this study was 142 students at a private university in Central Java, Indonesia. The demographics of the study participants are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1.  
*demography participant*

		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	41	28.873
	Female	101	71.127
Faculty	Islamic studies	9	6.338
	Economics and business	34	23.944
	Pharmacy	13	9.155
	Law	8	5.634
	Health science	25	17.606
	Teacher training and education	25	17.606
	Agriculture	6	4.225
	Psychology	13	9.155
	Literature	1	0.704
	Engineering & science	8	5.634
GPA	3.51 -- 4.00	92	64.789
	2.76 – 3.50	49	34.507
	2.01 – 2.75	0	0.00
	< 2.00	1	0.704
	Missing	0	0.000
	Total	142	100.000

Source: Authors.

In [Table 1](#) it can be obtained information that the frequency based on gender, female participants numbered 101 more than males with a total of 41. Participants by faculty, participants from Economics and business totaled 34 students, was the largest participant. Meanwhile, there is at least one participant who comes from faculty literature. Based on the GPA value, this study was dominated by participants who had GPA values of 3.51 - 4.00.

#### *Academic dishonesty scale*

Data collection tools use an academic dishonesty scale that is built based on academic dishonesty measurements developed by [McCabe & Trevino \(1993\)](#) and [Stone, Jawahar, & Kisamore \(2010\)](#) and has been adapted in Indonesia by [Ampuni \(2019\)](#). The academic dishonesty scale is based on three forms of academic dishonesty namely cheating, illegal collaboration, and plagiarism with a number of 14. Participants are asked to respond to statements such as: —Using tools that are not allowed to complete assignments— using a scale of 0-4 that has an explanation of 0 (never) up to 4 (very often). The academic dishonesty scale has a reliability of 0.860.

#### *Religiosity scale*

The tool for collecting religiosity data uses The Centrality of Religiosity Scale-CRS15 ([Huber & Huber, 2012](#)) which is arranged based on 5 dimensions, namely Intellect, Ideology, Public practice, Private practice, and Experience. The CRS-15 has three items per dimension. The scale was first adapted into the Indonesian version with a reliability value of 0.828.

#### *Data analysis*

This research examines the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the academic dishonesty variable as the dependent variable, and the religiosity variable as the independent variable. So that the data analysis used is simple linear regression analysis.

## RESULTS

Based on the results of the regression test to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, we conducted an analysis using JASP software. The results of our analysis are as follows ([Table 2](#)):

**TABLE 2.**  
*Coefficient of Determination Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	RMSE
H <sub>0</sub>	0.000	0.000	0.000	6.805
H <sub>1</sub>	0.315	0.099	0.093	6.481

Source: Authors.

Based on [Table 2](#) the  $R^2$  value is 0.099, meaning that the religiosity variable can affect the academic dishonesty variable by 9.9% (0.099). While the remaining 90.1 or 0.901 is influenced by other variables outside the research.

**TABLE 3.**  
*Simultaneous Test (F Test)*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
H <sub>0</sub>	Regression	648.673	1	648.673	15.443	< .001
H <sub>1</sub>	Residual	5.880.489	140	42.003		
	Total	6.529.162	141			

Note. The intercept model is omitted, as no meaningful information can be shown. Source: Authors.

Based on [Table 3](#) it can be seen that the calculated F value is 15 443 with a significance P-value < .001, meaning that it can be said that the regression model can be used to predict academic dishonesty or it can be interpreted that religiosity affects academic dishonesty.

**TABLE 4.**  
*Partial Test Results of Significance (t-Test)*

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p
H <sub>0</sub>	(Intercept)	24.289	0.571		42.533	< .001
H <sub>1</sub>	(Intercept)	54.758	7.772		7.045	< .001
	Religiosity	-0.450	0.114	-0.315	-3.930	< .001

Source: Authors.

Based on [Table 4](#) that the Religiosity variable has a count of -3.930 and a significant value of .000 ( $\leq 0.05$ ), the conclusion is that the accepted hypothesis is that religiosity affects academic dishonesty.

## DISCUSSION

Academic dishonesty is not a new issue in the world of education. Even academic dishonesty behavior is rife in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic ([Amzalag, Shapira & Dolev, 2021](#); [Herdian, Mildaeni & Wahidah, 2021](#); [Herdian & Wahidah, 2021](#); [Nguyen, Keuseman & Humston, 2020](#); [Wahyuni & Fontanella, 2021](#)). One of the studies that explain students' strategies in committing academic dishonesty during the implementation of online learning includes using services (paid) to do their assignments, using social media groups to share answers, downloading friends' answers, and copying them ([Herdian et al., 2021](#)).

This unethical behavior is not only motivated by situations and conditions (Herdian, Wulandari & Istianah, 2019), which in the end, the students decide to cheat. Religiosity is one of the internal factors that influence academic dishonesty. The results of this study indicate a significant influence of religiosity on academic dishonesty. Even though our subject shows a small influence, religiosity can be said to be a variable that needs attention to deal with academic dishonesty.

In Indonesia, in particular, religion plays an important role. Since the beginning of Indonesia's independence, Indonesia has believed in God's intervention in life. So that religion becomes essential to be studied in a religious country like Indonesia. Religion is not only related to religiosity but also daily behavior. Because the rules and norms that exist in religion are quite influential on the order of life, both for personal and social life. The research results of (Al-Ebel, Baatwah & Al-Musali, 2020) examined the influence of religiosity and accounting expertise on audit report lag. The results showed that religious leaders with accounting expertise avoided audit report lag.

Religion still plays an important role in people's lives in Indonesia (Azizah, 2006). Morally, cheating is unacceptable behavior in any society (Dodeen, 2012). On the teachings of Islam, "Dishonest" behavior is unacceptable, and it is condemned by Islamic teachings (Mustapha, Hussin, Siraj & Darusalam, 2016) and is very contrary to fundamental Islamic teachings, which guide its followers to be honest in their lives (Aldulaimi, 2016).

This study is not the first to examine how religiosity influenced this unethical behavior. This study has the same implications as previous research, which states that religiosity is related to academic dishonesty. This is in line with the results of previous research conducted by Ridwan & Diantimala (2021), which show that religious knowledge is a significant predictor of dealing with academic dishonesty and the basis for the character building of students. Other studies also say that religiosity affects academic integrity, so that the higher the level of student religiosity, the higher the level of academic integrity (Saadah, Lisnawati & Kartika, 2020).

## CONCLUSIONS

This study examines how the influence of religiosity on unethical behavior in the world of education, in particular the behavior of academic dishonesty. We use three forms of academic dishonesty built by the previous theory, namely cheating, plagiarism, and collaboration, to measure unethical behavior. Our research results state a significant influence of the religiosity variable on academic dishonesty. So it can be concluded that religiosity is quite important in playing a role in the academic world, especially in overcoming this unethical behavior. The results of our study provide suggestions for universities, which have religious academics to be able to involve religious activities in the academic environment to increase religiosity, which can reduce academic dishonesty behavior.

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