

EXAMINING ACADEMIC FRAUD IN ECONOMICS COURSES: INSIGHTS FROM THE FRAUD PENTAGON AT MUHAMMADIYAH 5 GATAK HIGH SCHOOL

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Keyword

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to describe academic fraud in the economics subject at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School and to identify the factors causing academic fraud in the economics subject at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School through the dimensions of the fraud pentagon. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study research design. The subjects of this research are two economics teachers and five eleventh-grade social science students. Data collection was carried out through interviews and documentation. The data analysis techniques used in this study are data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results of this research indicate that (1) The forms of academic fraud commonly committed by eleventh-grade social science students in the economics subject include cheating, and collaborating on assignments or exams. (2) The reasons students commit academic fraud in the economics subject include difficulty in understanding the material and laziness to study, pressure on students to achieve high grades, unpreparedness in completing assignments/exams, opportunities to commit academic fraud in the economics subject due to the difficult-to-understand material and lack of supervision, and the low academic abilities of students leading them to commit fraud

INTRODUCTION

Education is the human effort to nurture and develop the potential of each child in a manner that aligns with the values of their society and culture. Essentially, children need education to develop their interests and talents. Education can be provided in both formal and non-formal institutions. Education is a means to improve the quality of human resources, making it a very important component of life. The learning process expected in education can change the behavior of the individuals who learn. Article 14 of the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System states that formal education levels consist of Primary Education, Secondary Education, and Higher Education. Additionally, Article 18 Paragraph 3 states that High School is one form of secondary education.

In education, there are various activities that students must undertake during their educational journey, such as completing assignments and participating in learning inside and outside the classroom. Students are expected to adhere to the rules in carrying out academic activities; however, in reality, some students do not follow these rules and commit academic fraud. Currently, academic fraud is not a new problem in education in Indonesia. Academic fraud is an unethical act, yet many people continue to engage in such behavior.

Academic fraud refers to intentional actions taken dishonestly and in violation of academic regulations by students (Wardani & Meiningtiyas, 2023). Several reasons for academic fraud include pressure, opportunity, and rationalization, often referred to as the fraud triangle (Wandayu et al., 2019). Data indicates that dishonest behavior truly occurs among students at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels. A survey by the Research and Development Group, Pudjiastuti (2012), shows that the majority of students, both in schools and universities, engage in academic fraud in the form of cheating.

There are factors that underlie the occurrence of academic fraud. According to Albrecht (in Muliani et al., 2022), the three factors of fraud, namely pressure, opportunity, and rationalization, are often referred to as the fraud triangle. According to Wolfe & Hermanson (2004), a fourth factor, capability, is needed in addition to pressure, opportunity, and rationalization, known as the fraud diamond. Then, Crowe Howarth added another factor, arrogance, which is known as the fraud pentagon (Bawekes et al., 2018). The demand for exam scores to meet the Minimum Competency Criteria (KKM) leads some students to engage in inappropriate actions. Academic fraud is also committed to achieve maximum scores, increasing their chances of securing their dream jobs (Högberg, 2011). Yulianto et al. (2020) explored the phenomenon of academic fraud in depth, relating it to the fraud pentagon theory in social science students at SMA Negeri 8 Semarang. The results showed that academic pressure, opportunity, rationalization, individual capability to commit fraud, arrogance, and academic procrastination simultaneously affect academic fraud.

According to Sagoro (2013), academic fraud can be addressed if there is synergy between students, teachers, and institutions. Teachers with leadership skills, teamwork, and a strong work ethic have been shown to have lower levels of academic fraud among their students (Ramberg & Modin, 2019). However, in reality, some students still commit academic fraud. This research is a continuation of the study by Yulianto et al. (2020), which used the fraud pentagon dimension incorporating the variables of personal ethics and adding the variable of academic procrastination to examine the causes of academic fraud in Semarang State High Schools.

With this research, it is hoped that teachers and students at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School can improve their behavior to eliminate academic fraud such as cheating, collaborating during exams, falsifying, and plagiarism. Additionally, this research can serve as a literature study for the school to understand the forms of academic fraud and the factors contributing to academic fraud. Therefore, if academic fraud occurs at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School, the factors causing it are already known, and solutions can be sought in advance.

Based on initial interviews regarding academic fraud behavior, some students still engage in fraud. The objective of this research is to gain an in-depth understanding of the academic fraud issues occurring at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School, identify the factors influencing academic fraud behavior, and explore preventive and corrective measures that can be implemented by teachers and educational institutions. This will enhance educational integrity and create a more ethical learning environment at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School, which may also serve as a reference for other schools facing similar issues. This motivates the researchers to delve deeper into academic fraud in economics subjects through the fraud pentagon dimension and the factors causing academic fraud.

METHOD

The research design used in this study is a case study with a qualitative research approach. A case study is a research strategy for thoroughly investigating a matter by collecting complete information using various data collection procedures (Creswell, 2014). This in-depth case study research allows for a comprehensive investigation of academic fraud behavior in the economics subject at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School. The data for this study were obtained through interviews and document analysis related to academic fraud. The research was conducted in May 2024.

The research subjects consisted of 2 economics teachers who are informants knowledgeable about students' academic fraud and 5 eleventh-grade social science students. The information obtained from teachers and students includes academic fraud behavior and the factors causing fraud in the economics subject through the fraud pentagon dimension. Data collection in this study used interviews and documentation.

In this research, the scope of the interview questions includes the description of academic fraud behavior in the economics subject, the pressure factor in committing academic fraud, the opportunity factor for committing academic fraud, the rationalization factor for students' academic fraud behavior, the ability factor for students to commit academic fraud, and the arrogance factor for students in committing academic fraud. Documentation in this study includes assignment/exam questions, documents/files of students' work sheets, students' grades that indicate academic fraud, documentation of economics learning, and documentation of evidence of academic fraud. This study uses source triangulation to test the credibility of the data through interviews and documentation.

Source triangulation is used by researchers to obtain accurate information by comparing interview results from one informant with another. The qualitative data analysis used in this study is the interactive analysis of Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation is obtained after the researcher conducts interviews and collects written data in the field, then the interview transcripts are sorted to obtain the needed research data. Data presentation in this qualitative research is presented in the form of brief descriptions, relationships between categories, and most commonly, narrative texts. Conclusion drawing/verification is done by making initial conclusions based on interview results and document analysis, although these are still temporary and may change if other strong supporting evidence is found in the subsequent data collection stage. However, if the initial conclusions are supported by valid and consistent evidence when the researcher returns to the field to collect data, then the initial conclusions presented are credible conclusions.

RESULTS

1. Academic Fraud Behavior of Eleventh-Grade Social Science Students at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School in the Economics Subject

Academic fraud is dishonest and deceitful behavior deliberately committed by students when completing assignments and exams. Many students desire high grades, leading to a significant number of students committing academic fraud to achieve those grades. The majority of eleventh-grade social science students at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School engage in academic fraud in the economics subject. This is in line with the results of interviews with informants, such as the following from NF:

"In my opinion, there is academic fraud in the economics subject, and there is certainly academic fraud in other subjects as well."

Additionally, a similar sentiment was expressed by DPR as follows:

"There are still students who commit academic fraud in the economics subject."

This is also supported by a statement from TCM as follows:

"Yes, there is academic fraud behavior in the economics subject."

A similar statement was also made by SSH as follows:

"Yes, in my opinion, there are students who commit academic fraud in this school, and certainly, there are in other schools as well."

Furthermore, a corresponding statement was made by HDA as follows:

"Academic fraud behavior often occurs in this school, not only in the economics subject."

A similar statement was also made by DN as follows:

"I have seen friends committing academic fraud in the economics subject."

RDU also added a similar statement as follows:

"Yes, I often see friends committing academic fraud."

Additionally, common forms of fraud committed by eleventh-grade social science students at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School in the economics subject include copying friends' answers, collaborating on assignments, and copying friends' work. This is consistent with the results of interviews with informant NF as follows:

"In my opinion, the most common forms of academic fraud are copying friends' answers and copying friends' work."

Furthermore, this statement is also supported by RDU as follows:

"I have seen friends completing assignments by copying other friends' answers."

2. Factors Causing Academic Fraud in the Economics Subject at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School Viewed from the Fraud Pentagon Dimension

Several factors cause academic fraud behavior among students, both from within the students and external factors, namely: (1) Laziness in studying; (2) Difficulty understanding the material; (3) Limited time to complete assignments; (4) Peer groups; (5) Family pressure to achieve good grades. Based on the students' reasons, several aspects need attention in teaching the economics subject. Teachers should explain the material until the students can understand it, and students should not be allowed to use their phones during lessons.

Based on interview results, the factors causing academic fraud consist of pressure, opportunity, rationalization, and students' ability. Fraud occurs due to pressure that drives academic fraud behavior. Students are often pressured by their surroundings, both at school and home, to achieve high grades. This is supported by interview results with NF as follows:

"In my opinion, difficulty understanding the material and wanting to get good grades."

Additionally, a similar statement was made by DPR as follows:

"Yes, in my opinion, wanting to get high grades."

The opportunity to commit academic fraud arises due to the lack of strict control and supervision from teachers. Each teacher or school has established rules about sanctions for fraudulent behavior, but in reality, these rules are not obeyed and enforced. This is also supported by the interview results with NF as follows:

"In my opinion, there are many opportunities, especially if I do not understand the material provided."

Additionally, a similar statement was made by DPR as follows:

"There are many opportunities because the material is difficult to understand."

This is also supported by a statement from RDU as follows:

"Yes, there are many opportunities to commit academic fraud."

Rationalization occurs when someone commits an act and rationalizes it because the student believes that academic fraud is not only done by themselves but also by their friends, making it seem acceptable to commit fraud. This is also supported by the interview results with DPR as follows:

"In my opinion, yes, it can be understood."

Additionally, a similar statement was supported by TCM as follows:

"In my opinion, academic fraud in the economics subject can be understood."

This is also supported by a statement from HDA as follows:

"In my opinion, it can be understood, but academic fraud behavior should be minimized as much as possible."

The low academic ability of students causes them to commit academic fraud, but not all students who commit academic fraud have low academic abilities. This is supported by the interview results with NF as follows:

"Yes, in my opinion, I commit academic fraud because my academic ability is low."

Additionally, a corresponding statement was made by TCM as follows:

"In my opinion, I have academic ability, but I commit academic fraud when I am lazy to study."

DISCUSSION

1. Academic Fraud Behavior of Eleventh-Grade Social Science Students at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School in the Economics Subject

Based on the research results presented previously, academic fraud is defined as dishonest and deceitful behavior in completing assignments or exams. According to Mushthofa et al. (2021), academic fraud is an unjustified act to improve academic performance. Additionally, Mulyana (2021) states that the phenomenon of academic fraud in the academic environment has become a significant and quite common problem today. The importance of teacher supervision and instilling honesty values in students can minimize academic fraud behavior.

Academic fraud behavior at SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak includes cheating, copying answers from friends, and collaborating in answering exam questions or assignments. This aligns with Hendricks' (2004) view, which mentions several forms of academic fraud, including using notes during exams, copying answers from others during exams, using dishonest methods to find out what will be tested, copying exam answers from others without their knowledge, helping others to cheat, cheating in various ways, copying others' scholarly work and claiming it as one's own, falsifying bibliographies, collaborating with instructors to complete individual assignments, copying several sentences without citing them in the bibliography, buying scholarly work from others, and using false excuses to extend assignment deadlines.

This research supports the findings of Jatmika et al. (2022) that the dominant forms of academic fraud behavior in student learning include cheating during exams and completing assignments, as well as collaborating during exams or working on individual assignments together. According to Permatasari et al. (2021), students consider cheating and collaborating on assignments or exams as normal due to specific motives or reasons.

2. Factors Causing Academic Fraud in the Economics Subject at Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak High School Viewed from the Fraud Pentagon Dimension

The research results viewed from the pentagon fraud dimension indicate the factors driving academic fraud behavior at SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak. First, there is pressure within students who desire good grades. Miller et al. (2007) examined the psychological and social factors influencing academic fraud and found that pressure to achieve high performance and a lack of understanding of academic ethics often drive cheating behavior. At SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak, academic pressure and social norms that support cheating likely play a significant role in student behavior. Furthermore, a study by Parkhi et al. (2022) also found that pressure from parents and teachers to achieve high grades often drives students to cheat. This aligns with findings at SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak, where academic pressure may contribute to cheating and collaboration during exams.

Second, rationalization with reasons such as being unprepared for sudden quizzes/exams, laziness, and difficulty understanding the material. Rettinger & Kramer (2009) investigated the motivations behind academic fraud and found that factors such as academic inability and dissatisfaction with the learning process drive students to cheat. This is consistent with findings at SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak, where dishonest collaboration on assignments and exams reflects incorrect motivations and may be due to an inability to independently tackle the subject matter.

Third, the opportunity for students to commit academic fraud due to a lack of supervision from teachers, which allows students to ask friends for answers and copy answers for assignments and exams. According to Oktarina (2021), when students complete tasks or exams in class, there is an opportunity for them to cheat during tasks or exams when the supervisor does not pay attention. Additionally, Warni & Margunani (2022) found that easy access to technology has increased opportunities for academic fraud, with students in the digital era being more likely to cheat through electronic devices or the internet. These findings are relevant to the behavior of students at SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak, who may use technology to copy answers from friends or collaborate dishonestly.

Fourth, the academic ability of students, according to most informants, students who commit academic fraud usually have low academic performance. This is consistent with findings by Rettinger & Kramer (2009), who found that one of the drivers for students to cheat is academic inability in learning.

CONCLUSION

Academic fraud is defined as dishonest and deceitful behavior in completing assignments or exams. Academic fraud behaviors include cheating, copying answers from peers, and relying on one friend when working on group tasks. The factors driving academic fraud among students at SMA Muhammadiyah 5 Gatak are pressure, rationalization, opportunity, and ability. The pressure within students who desire high grades and the difficulty in understanding the provided material lead students to engage in academic fraud. Rationalization occurs with reasons such as being unprepared for sudden quizzes. The opportunity for academic fraud is caused by a lack of supervision and strict sanctions. Low academic ability leads students to commit academic fraud.

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