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Research Article

Fraud Hexagon and Intellectual Intelligence on Academic Fraud: The Moderating Role of Student Behavior

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Abstract: This study analyzes the factors leading to academic fraud among accounting students, focusing on the predictive power of the Fraud Hexagon Theory and intellectual intelligence. It also investigates the role of student ethical behavior as a moderating variable. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected from 111 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The data was subsequently analyzed using SPSS version 25. The findings revealed that the Fraud Hexagon model was only partially validated. Three of its six dimensions emerged as significant predictors of academic fraud: rationalization, capability, and opportunity. Conversely, pressure, ego, and collusion showed no significant influence. The study also found no statistical relationship between a student's intellectual intelligence and their tendency to commit fraud. Furthermore, student ethical behavior did not effectively moderate the influence of the significant Fraud Hexagon factors. The study concludes that academic fraud is a complex phenomenon primarily triggered by internal justification, individual capabilities, and external opportunities. The lack of correlation with intellectual intelligence suggests that cognitive ability is not an inherent barrier to dishonest acts. These findings underscore that a strong ethical character is the most powerful safeguard against fraud, highlighting the irreplaceable role of ethics education in fostering academic integrity.

Keywords: Academic Fraud; Ethical Behavior; Fraud Hexagon; Intellectual Intelligence; Moderating Effect

1. Introduction

The credibility of academic qualifications represents one of the most important foundations of higher education, as it reflects the trust society places in universities. Unfortunately, this credibility is increasingly challenged by the growing phenomenon of academic misconduct. Acts such as cheating during examinations, plagiarism, falsifying data, or engaging in unauthorized collaboration have become more diverse and sophisticated, especially with the support of digital technologies. These dishonest practices not only undermine the reputation of academic institutions but also endanger the ethical formation of students who are expected to become future professionals (McCabe, D. L., Butterfield, K. D., & Treviño, 2020). Within the Indonesian context, the issue of academic dishonesty has become particularly alarming. Several studies have shown that fraudulent academic practices are becoming common among students (Moorcy et al., 2024). This is further reinforced by evidence from the Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi/KPK) through the 2024 Education Integrity Assessment Survey (Survei Penilaian Integritas/SPI). The survey revealed shocking results: 98% of students admitted to engaging in cheating while 43% openly acknowledged acts of plagiarism (KPK, 2025). Such statistics demonstrate how dishonest behavior has become normalized and, in some cases, even tolerated within the academic environment.

The consequences of this misconduct extend well beyond the university setting. A number of studies have established that academic dishonesty is strongly associated with the tendency to behave unethically in professional and organizational life (Nurdiansyah et al., 2023; Sihombing & Budiartha, 2020). In other words, students who habitually cheat or

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plagiarize are more likely to replicate such behavior in their careers, thereby jeopardizing professional standards. This reality highlights the urgent need for a deeper understanding of the various factors that trigger academic fraud and for universities to design systematic preventive measures.

One conceptual framework often used to analyze fraudulent actions is the Fraud Hexagon Theory (Vousinas, 2019). This model extends the earlier Fraud Triangle and Fraud Diamond by incorporating six components: pressure, opportunity, rationalization, capability, arrogance, and collusion. These six dimensions are believed to form the basis for explaining fraudulent behavior in different settings, including educational institutions. However, empirical studies applying this theory have reported mixed findings. For instance, research by Nurdiansyah et al. (2023) found pressure and capability to be significant predictors of cheating among accounting students, while rationalization and opportunity were not. On the other hand, Sabriana & Hudaya (2024) reported that rationalization was the only factor with a significant effect in their study at the University of Mataram. Similarly, Moorcy et al. (2024) identified rationalization and capability as dominant influences, with the other elements showing weaker effects. These differences indicate that the Fraud Hexagon's explanatory power may depend on cultural and institutional contexts, thus requiring further investigation in other settings.

Apart from situational aspects, individual differences also need to be considered when analyzing fraudulent behavior. Intellectual intelligence (IQ) is frequently assumed to reduce the likelihood of dishonesty, as students with higher cognitive ability are expected to possess stronger problem-solving skills, the ability to anticipate long-term consequences, and more advanced moral reasoning (Achmawati et al., 2022; Krou et al., 2021). Conversely, students with lower cognitive ability may perceive dishonest practices as an easier path to achieve success. Another important aspect is ethical student behavior, which reflects values such as honesty, integrity, and responsibility. This factor has the potential to moderate the relationship between situational drivers of fraud and academic misconduct, either by reducing or strengthening their effects (Hidayati et al., 2021). Although research on academic fraud has expanded, few studies have attempted to integrate situational, cognitive, and behavioral perspectives into a single model. The majority of prior research has focused separately on either fraud theories or cognitive abilities such as intelligence. Only limited studies have examined the interaction of these factors, particularly in the Indonesian higher education context where the problem of academic dishonesty is both severe and underexplored. This gap highlights the importance of comprehensive research that incorporates these three perspectives simultaneously.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of the Fraud Hexagon and intellectual intelligence on academic fraud, while analyzing the moderating effect of student behavior. By developing an integrative model, this study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical standpoint, it enriches the literature by bridging situational and individual approaches in the analysis of academic misconduct. From a practical perspective, the findings may guide higher education institutions in Indonesia to design policies and interventions that reduce opportunities for academic fraud, strengthen integrity, and foster ethical student behavior.

2. Literature Review

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory explains how individuals interpret the causes of behavior, whether they arise from internal factors (e.g., ability, effort, motivation) or external ones (e.g., circumstances, pressure, social norms). The foundation was laid by Heider (1958), further developed by Kelley (1967) through the covariation model, and extended by Weiner (1979) with three causal dimensions: locus (internal–external), stability (stable–unstable), and controllability (controllable–uncontrollable). Within the academic setting, students often justify cheating either by attributing it to internal factors such as poor preparation and lack of self-regulation or to external factors such as exam pressure, peer influence, or inadequate supervision.

Academic Fraud

Academic fraud, often referred to as academic dishonesty, encompasses practices such as cheating, plagiarism, data falsification, and collusion. Integrity within the educational system remains a significant concern in Indonesia. The 2024 Educational Integrity Assessment (SPI) by the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) reported an

integrity index score of 69.50 (categorized as "corrective"), signaling the need for stronger integrity values and stricter oversight mechanisms. These findings emphasize that both situational and systemic factors play a crucial role in fostering fraudulent practices in academic environments (KPK, 2024).

Fraud Hexagon

The Fraud Hexagon extends the well-known Fraud Triangle and Fraud Pentagon by adding six determinants of fraud: pressure, opportunity, rationalization, capability, arrogance, and collusion (Vousinas, 2019). While initially conceptualized in the context of financial fraud, these dimensions are highly relevant in academia. For example, students may face performance pressure, exploit opportunities to cheat, rationalize their actions, possess the technical ability to commit fraud, demonstrate arrogance toward institutional rules, or collaborate with peers to engage in dishonest behavior. Empirical studies in Indonesia have shown mixed results: some find that pressure, capability, and collusion are significant predictors, while others highlight the role of rationalization, arrogance, and capability. These inconsistencies are often influenced by sample characteristics, institutional context, and measurement approaches (Prastiwi et al., 2025; Sutarto et al., 2024)

Intellectual Intelligence

From a theoretical perspective, higher intellectual ability is expected to reduce cheating because it enhances critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-regulation. However, empirical evidence is inconsistent. Recent meta-analyses reveal that regulatory and motivational factors (e.g., mastery goals, self-efficacy, internal locus of control) are more consistently associated with lower levels of academic dishonesty than IQ itself. This suggests that the role of IQ is likely indirect, operating through motivational mechanisms and self-regulatory processes (Zhao et al., 2024)

Student Behavior

Ethical student behavior including honesty, responsibility, and compliance can weaken the influence of fraud drivers on academic dishonesty. Even in the presence of pressure, opportunity, or rationalization, students with strong ethical standards are less likely to engage in misconduct. Attribution theory supports this perspective, noting that individuals with an internal–controllable attribution style are better equipped to regulate their actions and avoid justifying unethical behavior. Consequently, student behavior is positioned as a moderating variable that shapes the strength of the relationship between the Fraud Hexagon, IQ, and academic fraud (Weiner, 1979).

Hypothesis Development

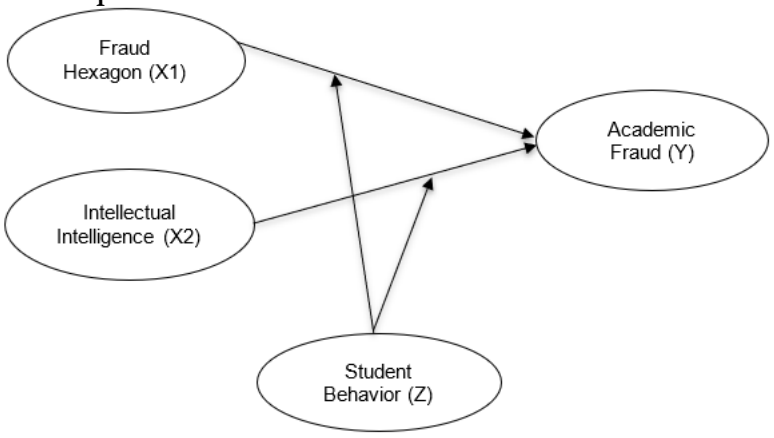

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework from the Research
Source: Data Research, 2025

H1: The Dimensions of the Fraud Hexagon Significantly Influence Academic Fraud

According to the Fraud Hexagon, pressure, opportunity, rationalization, capability, arrogance, and collusion create conditions that foster fraud (Vousinas, 2019). In academia, students who experience academic pressure, perceive opportunities to cheat, or collaborate with peers are more prone to dishonest practices. This aligns with attribution theory, where students may attribute failure to external causes and thus rationalize misconduct (Sutarto et al., 2024; Weiner, 1979)

H2: Intellectual Intelligence (IQ) Significantly Influences Academic Fraud

Students with higher IQ are assumed to be less likely to cheat due to stronger analytical and self-regulatory skills. Nonetheless, other studies suggest IQ can also facilitate dishonest behavior if students use their cognitive ability to devise strategies for cheating, especially when

combined with maladaptive goal orientations (Zhao et al., 2024). Attribution theory explains this duality by noting that academic outcomes can be interpreted as resulting from internal or *external factors, influencing whether students justify cheating.*

H3: Student Behavior Moderates the Effect of the Fraud Hexagon on Academic Fraud

Ethical conduct reduces the strength of fraud drivers. Even when students are exposed to pressure or opportunities, strong ethical behavior can inhibit fraudulent actions. This is consistent with attribution theory's controllability dimension, which emphasizes the role of self-control in guiding behavior (Dewa & Maulana, 2024; Weiner, 1979)

3. Research Method

This study adopted a quantitative research design with a causal-associative approach, aimed at testing the relationships between independent, dependent, and moderating variables. The population of this study consisted of 584 enrolled of all active undergraduate students enrolled in the Accounting Study Program at Universitas Dian Nuswantoro. From this population, a total of 111 students were selected as respondents through a purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria required that respondents were active students who had completed or were currently enrolled in the Professional Ethics course, as this ensured adequate exposure to ethical concepts relevant to the study.

The research relied on primary data, which was collected using an online survey distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire was structured with closed-ended questions and employed a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement of variables was adapted from previous studies to ensure validity. Academic Fraud (Y) was measured based on indicators developed by Murni & Pratiwi (2020). Fraud Hexagon (X1) was operationalized using six dimensions pressure, opportunity, rationalization, capability, arrogance, and collusion adapted from Moorcy, Sarwani, Suhaili, and Rasidah (2024). Intellectual Intelligence (X2) was measured using a perception-based scale from Wulandari and Santoso (2021). Meanwhile, Student Behavior (Z) was assessed using ethical and behavioral indicators adopted from Hidayati et al. (2021).

To ensure the robustness of the analysis, data processing was conducted using SPSS version 25. Several stages were performed, including descriptive statistical analysis, data quality tests (validity and reliability), and classical assumption testing such as normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. After meeting the required assumptions, hypothesis testing was carried out using multiple linear regression analysis to examine the direct effects of the Fraud Hexagon and intellectual intelligence on academic fraud. Additionally, Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was employed to test whether student behavior functioned as a moderating variable in the proposed model.

4. Results and Discussion

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Academic Fraud	21.09	7.061	111
Fraud Hexagon	43.86	12.237	111
Intellectual Intelligence	18.57	4.709	111
Student Behavior	38.36	5.757	111

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

Academic Fraud (Y) had an average score of 21.09 with a standard deviation of 7.061. This means that, on average, students showed a moderate tendency to commit academic dishonesty. The fairly large spread of data shows that some students rarely engaged in fraud, but others admitted to doing it more often. This indicates that not all students behave the same way there are groups with higher risks.

Fraud Hexagon (X1) scored an average of 43.86 with a standard deviation of 12.237. The result shows that many students felt there were factors that could push or allow them to cheat, such as opportunity or rationalization. The wide variation means that while some students did not strongly feel these factors, others experienced them much more. This suggests that academic fraud is often supported by the situation or environment rather than personal traits.

Intellectual Intelligence (X2) had an average of 18.57 with a standard deviation of 4.709. The score is relatively consistent among students, meaning most respondents saw themselves

as having similar levels of intelligence. This also shows that differences in academic fraud are not explained by intelligence alone.

Student Behavior (Z) had an average score of 38.36 with a standard deviation of 5.757. This indicates that in general, students showed good ethical behavior. However, because the scores still varied, some students reported weaker ethical attitudes compared to others. This means that not all students apply ethical values consistently in academic life.

Data Quality Test

Validity Test

Table 2. Validity Test

Variable	Item	Sig. *(2-Tailed)*	Description
Academic Fraud	Y1	0.000	Valid
	Y2	0.000	Valid
	Y3	0.000	Valid
	Y4	0.012	Valid
	Y5	0.015	Valid
	Y6	0.000	Valid
	Y7	0.000	Valid
	Y8	0.000	Valid
	Y9	0.000	Valid
Fraud Hexagon	X1.1	0.000	Valid
	X1.2	0.021	Valid
	X1.3	0.001	Valid
	X1.4	0.000	Valid
	X1.5	0.000	Valid
	X1.6	0.000	Valid
	X1.7	0.049	Valid
	X1.8	0.040	Valid
	X1.9	0.000	Valid
	X1.10	0.000	Valid
	X1.11	0.000	Valid
	X1.12	0.001	Valid
	X1.13	0.022	Valid
	X1.14	0.000	Valid
	X1.15	0.000	Valid
	X1.16	0.000	Valid
	X1.17	0.000	Valid
	X1.18	0.000	Valid
Intellectual Intelligence	X2.1	0.000	Valid
	X2.2	0.000	Valid
	X2.3	0.000	Valid
	X2.4	0.000	Valid
	X2.5	0.000	Valid
	X2.6	0.000	Valid
Student Behavior	Z1	0.000	Valid
	Z2	0.000	Valid
	Z3	0.000	Valid
	Z4	0.000	Valid
	Z5	0.000	Valid
	Z6	0.000	Valid
	Z7	0.000	Valid
	Z8	0.000	Valid
	Z9	0.000	Valid

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that all question items in the questionnaire are valid. It can be seen from each question item that the Sig. (2-tailed)

Reliability Test

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Y	0.856	Reliabel
X1	0.896	Reliabel
X2	0.889	Reliabel
Z	0.923	Reliabel

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

The results of the reliability test show that all research variables Academic Fraud (Y), Fraud Hexagon (X1), Intellectual Intelligence (X2), and Student Behavior (Z) have Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.85, which indicates high to excellent reliability. This means that the questionnaire items are consistent in measuring each construct, respondents' answers are stable and not random, the measurement tools used in this study are statistically proven to be reliable and trustworthy.

Classical Assumption Test Results

Normality Test

Table 4. Normality Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		111
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	4.52890836
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.037
	Positive	.037
	Negative	-.032
Test Statistic		.037
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)		.200[c,d]

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test produced a significance value of 0.200, which is greater than the threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the data are normally distributed, thereby satisfying the normality assumption required for multiple regression analysis

Multicollinearity Test

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test

Coefficients[a]			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Fraud Hexagon	.906	1.103
	Intellectual Intelligence	.922	1.084
	Student Behavior	.859	1.165
a. Dependent Variable: Academic Fraud			

The multicollinearity test is conducted to determine whether there is a high correlation among the independent variables in the regression model. A regression model is considered free from multicollinearity if the Tolerance value is greater than 0.10 and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value is less than 10. The results indicate that no multicollinearity exists among the independent variables. This means that Fraud Hexagon, Intellectual Intelligence, and Student Behavior are independent of each other and do not show problematic overlap.

Heterokedasticity Test (Glejser Test)

Table 6. Heterokedasticity Test

Coefficients[a]										
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	
1(Constant)	2.178	2.283		.954	.342					
Fraud Hexagon	.017	.022	.079	.778	.438	.063	.075	.075	.906	1.103
Intellectual Intelligence	-.010	.057	-.018	-.183	.855	.000	-.018	-.018	.922	1.084
Student Behavior	.024	.048	.052	.495	.621	.026	.048	.048	.859	1.165

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

The analysis reveals that the Fraud Hexagon (X1) variable has a coefficient of 0.017 and a significance value (Sig.) of 0.438, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the Fraud Hexagon does not have a significant effect on the residual variance, meaning there is no issue of heteroskedasticity arising from this variable. Similarly, Intellectual Intelligence (X2) shows a coefficient of -0.010 with a significance value of 0.855, which is also greater than 0.05. The very high significance level confirms that Intellectual Intelligence is not related to residual variance, thus ruling out any heteroskedasticity problem. In addition, the Student Behavior (Z) variable has a coefficient of 0.024 and a significance value of 0.621, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that Student Behavior does not significantly affect the residuals and therefore does not contribute to heteroskedasticity. Since all independent variables Fraud Hexagon, Intellectual Intelligence, and Student Behavior have significance values above 0.05, it can be concluded that the regression model is free from heteroskedasticity.

Auto Correlation

Table 7. Auto Correlation

Model Summary[b]										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin Watson
1	.774[a]	.600	.588	4.531	.600	53.398	3	107	.000	2.072

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

The processed data obtained with N = 111, k = 3, resulted in d = 2.072, which means the independent variables (Fraud Hexagon, Intellectual Intelligence, and Student Behavior) do not cause autocorrelation in the regression model.

t-Test

Table 8. t-Test

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardize Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	7.627	3.894		1.981	.050
Fraud Hexagon	.425	.037	.736	11.454	.000
Intellectual Intelligence	.007	.096	.005	.073	.942
Student Behavior	-.138	.081	-.113	-1.705	.091

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

A significance value (Sig.) of 0.942 (> 0.05) in the regression results indicates that there is no meaningful relationship between the Intellectual Intelligence variable and Academic Fraud. With a significance value of 0.091 (> 0.05), the Student Behavior variable likewise has no discernible partial impact on Academic Fraud. On the other hand, with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05), the Fraud Hexagon variable was revealed to have a substantial impact on Academic Fraud. Therefore, in this study, the only variable that significantly influenced academic fraud was the Fraud Hexagon variable.

The hypothesis testing results show that H1 is supported, where the Fraud Hexagon has a significant and positive effect on Academic Fraud. This confirms that the six elements of the Fraud Hexagon play a major role in increasing academic dishonesty among students. On the other hand, H2 is not supported, as Intellectual Intelligence shows no significant effect,

indicating that cognitive ability does not determine whether students engage in fraud. Meanwhile, H3 is not fully supported, since Student Behavior has a negative but statistically insignificant effect at the 5% level (p = 0.091), although it indicates a partial tendency at the 10% level.

F Test

Table 9. F Test

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	3288.541	3	1096.180	53.398	.000[b]
	Residual	2196.559	107	20.529		
	Total	5485.099	110			

Source: Output SPSS vers.25 (2025)

The results of the F-test show that the regression model is statistically significant (F = 53.398, Sig. = 0.000), indicating that Fraud Hexagon, Intellectual Intelligence, and Student Behavior jointly influence Academic Fraud. This means that, when considered together, these three predictors explain a significant portion of the variance in academic dishonesty among students

Discussion

Model Fit and Assumptions

The regression model demonstrated good explanatory power, with R = 0.774 and R^2 = 0.600 (Adjusted R^2 = 0.588). This indicates that approximately 60% of the variation in students' academic fraud can be explained by the independent variables. The F-test result (F = 53.398; p < 0.001) confirmed that the model is statistically significant overall. Diagnostic checks also suggested that the assumptions were met: the Durbin–Watson statistic (2.072) indicated no autocorrelation, tolerance values were above 0.1 and VIFs below 1.2 suggesting no multicollinearity, and both the normality (Kolmogorov–Smirnov p = 0.200) and heteroscedasticity (Glejser test, all p > 0.05) results supported validity. Reliability was high (Cronbach's alpha > 0.85), and all items passed validity checks. Therefore, the regression coefficients can be interpreted with confidence.

The Dimensions of the Fraud Hexagon Significantly Influence Academic Fraud (H1 Supported)

The findings reveal that the Fraud Hexagon has a significant positive effect on academic fraud (B = 0.425, β = 0.736, t = 11.454, p < 0.001). This implies that when the composite score of the Fraud Hexagon rises by one unit, the level of academic dishonesty increases by an average of 0.425 units, holding other factors constant. The relatively high standardized beta indicates that it is the most influential predictor in the model.

This outcome supports the framework proposed by Vousinas (2019), who emphasized that fraud is driven by six interrelated elements: pressure, opportunity, rationalization, capability, arrogance, and collusion. In this study, opportunity, rationalization, and capability emerged as the strongest drivers. These results mirror prior research in Indonesia, which found that certain dimensions of the Fraud Hexagon, particularly rationalization and capability, are consistently associated with fraudulent practices in academic settings (Sutarto et al., 2024).

The findings also align with Attribution Theory, which suggests that students often attribute academic failure to external factors and subsequently rationalize dishonest behavior (Weiner, 1979). Practically, this means that reducing opportunities to cheat (e.g., improving exam proctoring, randomizing test items, strengthening plagiarism detection), minimizing rationalizations through ethics education, and redirecting student capability toward constructive academic skills may significantly curb misconduct.

While the Fraud Hexagon overall was significant, three dimensions pressure, arrogance, and collusion did not show a meaningful effect. Several explanations for this are possible. First, regarding pressure, although factors such as academic workload, family demands, and grade expectations are often assumed to drive cheating, in this sample, pressure may have been a common experience across students, failing to differentiate between those who cheat and those who do not. This finding aligns with prior research, which suggests that pressure is not always a reliable predictor across different contexts (Nurdiansyah et al., 2023).

Second, for arrogance (ego), students' sense of superiority over institutional rules may not have been particularly salient in this cohort. The limited variance in responses related to arrogance may have reduced the statistical power to detect a significant effect. Lastly, in the case of collusion, self-reported surveys often underestimate the extent of collusion due to

social desirability bias. Additionally, the academic tasks in this program may have been predominantly individual, limiting opportunities for collaboration in cheating. Similar findings have been noted in other Indonesian studies, where collusion showed inconsistent predictive strength (Sabriana & Hudaya, 2024). Therefore, the lack of significance does not suggest that these dimensions are unimportant in practice, but rather that in this specific context, they were less pronounced.

Intellectual intelligence (IQ) significantly influences academic fraud (H2 Not Supported)

Contrary to expectations, IQ was not significantly related to academic fraud (B = 0.007, β = 0.005, t = 0.073, p = 0.942). This indicates that cognitive ability, at least as measured in this study, did not differentiate students who engaged in academic dishonesty from those who did not.

There are several reasons for this outcome. First, IQ was measured through self-perception, which is prone to bias and may not reflect actual intellectual capacity. Second, previous research suggests that the role of intelligence is often indirect. Meta-analytic studies show that regulatory and motivational factors such as self-efficacy, intrinsic goals, and self-control mediate the link between intelligence and dishonesty. In fact, some evidence suggests that students with high IQ may use their abilities to devise more sophisticated strategies to cheat, leading to mixed results. This implies that interventions should not rely solely on enhancing intellectual ability, but also focus on motivational and ethical factors.

Student Behavior as Moderator (H3 and H4 Not Fully Supported)

The analysis shows that student behavior, while negatively associated with academic fraud (B = −0.138, t = −1.705, p = 0.091), was not significant at the 5% level (though marginal at the 10% level). Furthermore, no significant moderating effect was detected between student behavior and either Fraud Hexagon or IQ.Several factors may explain this. First, the relatively small sample size (n = 111) reduced the statistical power to detect interaction effects, which generally require larger datasets. Second, the distribution of ethical behavior scores was narrow, limiting variability. Third, the self-report nature of the measurement likely introduced social desirability bias, inflating responses and dampening true effects.

Although moderation was not supported, the negative trend suggests that strengthening ethical conduct still holds potential for mitigating academic dishonesty. This resonates with Weiner's (1985) controllability dimension, where students with stronger self-control are better able to resist external pressures to engage in misconduct.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of the Fraud Hexagon and intellectual intelligence (IQ) on academic fraud, with student behavior considered as a potential moderator. The findings indicate that the Fraud Hexagon is a strong and significant predictor of academic dishonesty, particularly through the dimensions of opportunity, rationalization, and capability. In contrast, pressure, arrogance, and collusion were not statistically significant in this context. Intellectual intelligence was found to have no direct effect on academic fraud, suggesting that cognitive ability alone does not determine dishonest behavior. Furthermore, student behavior did not significantly moderate the relationship between the independent variables and academic fraud, although a negative tendency was observed, indicating that ethical conduct remains important.

Overall, the results confirm the relevance of Attribution Theory and the Fraud Hexagon framework in understanding academic fraud, while also highlighting the limited role of IQ when examined in isolation. The study contributes to the literature by showing that the drivers of fraudulent behavior in academia are strongly contextual, with opportunity and rationalization being particularly decisive.

Practically, universities should strengthen academic integrity systems by reducing opportunities to cheat, addressing students' rationalizations through ethics education, and guiding student capabilities toward constructive learning strategies. Although intelligence alone does not predict dishonesty, its interaction with ethical orientation deserves further investigation. Future research should employ larger and more diverse samples, objective measures of intelligence, and longitudinal designs to better capture the dynamics of academic fraud and the mechanisms through which individual and situational factors interact.

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