

Self Efficacy and Academic Anxiety as Predictors of Cheating Behavior among Madrasah Aliyah Students

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ABSTRACT : Education in Indonesia still faces various challenges, one of which is cheating behavior that reflects low levels of students' academic integrity. In the learning of Islamic Cultural History (SKI), this behavior frequently occurs because the material is perceived as difficult and less engaging. In addition, low self-efficacy leads to a lack of students' confidence in completing tasks, while high academic anxiety encourages the emergence of cheating behavior as an instant solution. The purpose of this study is to address the following questions: (1) whether self-efficacy affects cheating behavior, (2) whether academic anxiety affects cheating behavior, and (3) to what extent both variables simultaneously influence cheating behavior. This study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational design, using questionnaires as the data collection technique and linear regression analysis (both partial and simultaneous) for data analysis. The research subjects are eleventh-grade students at MAN 2 Blitar. The results indicate that self-efficacy has a negative and significant effect on cheating behavior, while academic anxiety has a positive and significant effect. Simultaneously, both variables contribute 59% to cheating behavior. It is concluded that strengthening self-efficacy and managing academic anxiety are important in reducing students' cheating behavior.

Keywords : *Self Efficacy*, Academic Anxiety, and Cheating Behavior

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping both the quality of human resources and the character of students. However, various challenges persist in the field of education, one of which is the low level of academic integrity, as reflected in cheating behavior (Meydiansyah, 2021). His behavior not only contradicts the value of honesty but also hinders the development of true academic competence. In recent years, academic integrity has become a global concern, particularly due to the increasing prevalence of dishonest practices in various educational contexts (Amzalag et al., 2022)

The phenomenon of cheating occurs widely, both at national and international levels. Various studies indicate that most students have engaged in academic dishonesty, which is often driven by academic pressure, fear of failure, and a lack of learning preparedness (Ampuni et al., 2020). Empirical evidence suggests that psychological factors play an important role in influencing student engagement in

academic cheating (Błachnio et al., 2022). This shows that cheating behavior is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by many factors, especially psychological factors.

Cheating behavior among Madrasah Aliyah students often occurs in subjects perceived as difficult, such as Islamic Cultural History (SKI). Low learning interest, limited variation in teaching methods, and students' difficulties in understanding the material contribute to the emergence of academic dishonesty as an instant alternative to achieve learning outcomes (Ariyanti & Anggerawati, 2024). Recent studies show that students who experience high levels of academic stress tend to show negative impacts on learning behavior and academic outcomes (Pascoe et al., 2020). This condition highlights the importance of examining students' internal factors as the main predictor in explaining the tendency to cheating behavior.

One of the influential psychological factors is self-efficacy. According to Bandura, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions required to achieve specific goals (Albert, 1997). Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to demonstrate persistence, confidence, and the ability to overcome difficulties, whereas those with low self-efficacy are more likely to feel incapable and tend to take shortcuts, including cheating (Ghufron & Suminta, 2010). A number of empirical studies show that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of academic cheating behavior, where individuals with low levels of self-efficacy tend to be more prone to dishonest actions in academic situations (Peasah et al., 2024). Low self-efficacy is related to the increasing tendency of academic dishonesty, especially in students who feel unable to meet the academic demands faced (Ancheta et al., 2024).

Academic anxiety also plays a significant role. Academic anxiety is an emotional condition characterized by feelings of worry, fear, and tension in facing academic demands, which can disrupt concentration and cognitive processes (Susanto, 2018). Students with high levels of anxiety tend to experience difficulties in understanding the material and are more prone to engaging in cheating behavior as a coping mechanism for academic pressure.

Previous studies have shown that self-efficacy has a negative relationship with cheating behavior (Achmad Istikhory Yahya, 2020), while academic anxiety has a simultaneous relationship with such behavior (Triwulandari, 2025). Students with high self-efficacy tend to be more confident and less dependent on dishonest practices, whereas those with high academic anxiety are more vulnerable to cheating due to pressure and fear of failure. However, studies examining both variables simultaneously as predictors remain limited, particularly at the Madrasah Aliyah level. However, most

previous studies have tended to examine these variables separately and in different educational contexts. There is still limited research that integrates self-efficacy and academic anxiety simultaneously as predictors of cheating behavior, especially in the context of Madrasah Aliyah students and in certain fields of study such as Islamic Cultural History (SKI).

Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach by examining self-efficacy and academic anxiety simultaneously in the context of specific religion-based education. This study offers a more comprehensive perspective on explaining cheating behavior by combining two key psychological variables that were rarely analyzed simultaneously in previous studies.

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to analyze the role of self-efficacy and academic anxiety as predictors of cheating behavior among Madrasah Aliyah students. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) examine the effect of self-efficacy on cheating behavior, (2) examine the effect of academic anxiety on cheating behavior, and (3) determine the simultaneous contribution of both variables.

This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the field of educational psychology, particularly regarding factors influencing cheating behavior. Practically, the findings of this study may serve as a basis for teachers and schools in designing more effective learning strategies and fostering a culture of academic honesty within the Madrasah Aliyah environment.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationship and influence between self-efficacy, academic anxiety, and academic cheating behavior. The research was carried out at MAN 2 Blitar with a population of 383 students in grade XI. The sample was determined using the Slovin formula with an error rate of 10%, so that 80 respondents were selected through a simple random sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2019).

The characteristics of the respondents in this study showed variations that included aspects of age, gender, major, and skill background. This diversity indicates that the research sample is heterogeneous and not concentrated on one particular group.

Table 1. Samle

No	Sampel	Quantity	Presentase	
1	Age	15	1,3%	
		16	20	25,0%
		17	55	68,8%
		18	2	2,5%
		19	2	2,5%
2	Gender	Male	31	38,8%
		Female	49	61,3%
3	Majors	Natural Sciences Major	29	36,3%
		Social Sciences Major	30	37,5%
		Majoring in Religion	21	26,3%
4	Skills	Multimedia	19	23,8%
		Cullinary Art	10	12,5%
		Fashion Design	20	25,0%
5	Academic	Academic	31	38,8%

The diversity of respondents' characteristics gives an idea that the data obtained comes from diverse backgrounds, so as to increase the representation of the research population. Thus, the results of the study have a better level of external validity and have the potential to be generalized in relevant contexts.

The research instrument is in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire which is compiled based on the theoretical indicators of each variable, namely self-efficacy, academic anxiety, and academic cheating behavior (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The validity test was conducted using Pearson Product Moment correlation, while reliability was measured by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with all items declared valid and reliable ($\alpha > 0.70$) (Hair et al., 2019).

Before hypothesis testing, an analysis prerequisite test was carried out which included normality, linearity, and homogeneity tests, which showed that the data met the assumptions of parametric analysis. Hypothesis testing was carried out through Pearson correlation tests, simple linear regression, and multiple linear regression. The use of multiple linear regression is based on the aim of analyzing the simultaneous

influence of more than one independent variable on a single dependent variable, thus allowing a comprehensive estimation of the relative contribution of each variable (Ghozali, 2021). The t-test is used to test for partial influence, the F test for simultaneous influence, and the determination coefficient to measure the magnitude of the contribution of independent variables to dependent variables (Andy, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Effect of Self-Efficacy on Cheating Behavior

The results of the t-test indicate that self-efficacy has a significant effect on cheating behavior. The analysis results are presented in Table 1.

Table 2. Results of the t-test of Self-Efficacy on Cheating Behavior

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	58,404	3,538		16,509	0,000
Self Efficacy	-0,511	0,090	-0,539	-5,647	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Cheating Behavior

Based on Table 1, the t-test results show a calculated t-value of -5.647 with a significance level of 0.000. Meanwhile, the t-table value is 1.990 at a significance level of 0.05 with 78 degrees of freedom (df). Since the calculated t-value is greater than the t-table value and the significance level is below 0.05, H_{a1} is accepted and H_{01} is rejected. These findings indicate that self-efficacy has a significant effect on cheating behavior in the subject of Islamic Cultural History (SKI).

Substantively, these results confirm that cheating behavior is not only influenced by external factors but also by internal factors, particularly students' beliefs in their academic abilities. Self-efficacy functions as a self-regulatory mechanism that encourages students to rely on their own abilities in completing tasks. Therefore, students with high levels of self-efficacy tend to demonstrate effort-oriented behavior, persistence, and the ability to avoid dishonest practices.

Conversely, low self-efficacy reflects doubt in one's own abilities, which may lead students to choose instant solutions, such as cheating. From the perspective of social cognitive theory, this condition indicates that perceived incompetence can shift students' learning orientation from process-oriented to result-oriented (Albert, 1997). Students with low self-efficacy also tend to experience avoidance behavior and rely on external assistance, which increases the likelihood of engaging in dishonest academic practices when facing difficult tasks (Ancheta et al., 2024).

Self-efficacy plays a protective factor that suppresses the tendency to cheating behavior, where increased confidence in one's ability correlates with a decrease in academic dishonesty practices. contributed 25%, while the remaining 75% was influenced by factors outside the research model (Widyasari, 2023). This further supports the notion that increased self-efficacy is associated with a decreased tendency to engage in academic dishonesty.

Conceptually, self-efficacy is understood as an individual's belief in their capacity to complete tasks or face certain situations. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to possess greater confidence, persistence, and emotional regulation, whereas those with low self-efficacy are more likely to experience self-doubt, higher anxiety, and less optimal academic performance (Albert, 1997). Therefore, improving self-efficacy not only enhances academic achievement but also serves as a protective factor in reducing academic cheating behavior.

B. The Effect of Academic Anxiety on Cheating Behavior

The results of the t-test indicate that academic anxiety has a significant effect on cheating behavior. The analysis results are presented in Table 2.

Table 3. Results of the t-test of Academic Anxiety on Cheating Behavior

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	23,585	1,647		14,323	0,000
Kecemasan Akademik	0,605	0,066	0,719	9,138	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Cheating Behavior

Based on Table 2, the t-test results show a calculated t-value of 9.138 with a significance level of 0.000, while the t-table value is 1.990 at a significance level of 0.05 with 78 degrees of freedom (df). Since the calculated t-value exceeds the t-table value and the significance level is below 0.05, H_{a2} is accepted and H_{02} is rejected.

These findings indicate that academic anxiety has a significant effect on cheating behavior.

Interpretatively, these findings suggest that emotional pressure in the academic context has a direct contribution to students' behavior. High levels of academic anxiety can disrupt cognitive processes, such as decreased concentration, reduced ability to understand material, and impaired memory, leading students to experience difficulties in completing tasks optimally. Under such conditions, students tend to be unable to manage academic demands effectively.

This condition allows cheating to emerge as a short-term coping strategy to reduce fear of failure and uncertainty experienced by students. Thus, cheating behavior is not always driven by the intention to act dishonestly, but also as a response to poorly managed academic pressure. Psychological studies highlight that students under high academic pressure are more likely to engage in dishonest behavior as a coping mechanism to deal with fear of failure and performance demands (Błachnio et al., 2022).

Academic anxiety reflects an emotional response to perceived threats in an academic context, which can come from internal as well as external factors (Milawati, 2024). This condition is characterized by feelings of fear and worry that can interfere with cognitive processes, physiological responses, and students' behavior in facing various academic demands.

Academic anxiety is also influenced by its underlying components as explained in the theory of the Center for Learning and Teaching cited in Susanto, which include worry, emotionality, task-generated interference, and study skills deficits. The worry component relates to negative thoughts and concerns about failure, while emotionality reflects physiological reactions such as tension and restlessness. Task-generated interference refers to disruptions in task completion due to irrelevant thoughts, and study skills deficits are associated with students' lack of effective study skills. These four components interact in shaping the level of academic anxiety, which ultimately affects learning processes and students' behavior in dealing with academic demands (Susanto, 2018).

Academic anxiety showed a positive association with cheating behavior, which was reflected in a correlation value of 0.541, indicating the strength of the relationship in the moderate category among college students (Triwulandari, 2025). This indicates that an increase in anxiety levels is directly proportional to the increased tendency to engage in academic dishonesty. Therefore, these findings provide important implications that efforts to prevent academic cheating must

consider students' emotional aspects, where managing academic anxiety becomes an integral part of creating a healthy and integrity-based learning environment.

C. The Simultaneous Effect of Self-Efficacy and Academic Anxiety on Cheating Behavior

The results of the multiple linear regression test and the coefficient of determination are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 4. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	36,998	3,932		9,41	0
Self Efficacy	-0,28	0,076	-0,296	-3,702	0
Kecemasan Akademik	0,504	0,067	0,599	7,504	0

a. Dependent Variable: Cheating Behavior

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis produced the equation $Y = 36.998 - 0.280X_1 + 0.504X_2$, indicating that self-efficacy has a negative effect, while academic anxiety has a positive effect on cheating behavior. These findings suggest that an increase in self-efficacy tends to be followed by a decrease in cheating behavior, whereas an increase in academic anxiety is associated with a higher tendency to engage in dishonest practices. In the context of Islamic Cultural History (SKI) learning, students who lack confidence in their ability to understand Islamic historical material and experience anxiety during evaluations are more likely to resort to dishonest methods to obtain answers.

Empirical findings show that high self-efficacy and good learning discipline contribute significantly to suppressing cheating behavior through strengthening learning readiness and encouragement to rely on one's own abilities in completing academic tasks (Sekarsari, 2023). This reinforces the notion that students' internal factors play an important role in shaping academic behavior. In SKI learning, this condition is reflected in students' preparedness in understanding the material prior to evaluation, where students with high self-efficacy tend not to rely on cheating practices.

The perspective put forward by Satria Efandi explained that cheating behavior is influenced by various factors that interact with each other in the learning

environment (Efandi et al., 2025). These factors include academic pressure, opportunities to cheat due to weak supervision, permissive social norms, as well as psychological factors such as anxiety and low self-confidence. In addition, external motivation, self-control, and the learning environment also contribute to the emergence of such behavior.

Based on this framework, self-efficacy and academic anxiety are important determinants because they are directly related to students' psychological conditions in dealing with academic demands. Therefore, these two variables not only affect learning outcomes but also contribute to the tendency of cheating behavior.

Table 5. Results of the F-test and Coefficient of Determination

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	397,671	2	198,836	55,409	.000 ^b
	Residual	276,316	77	3,589		
	Total	673,988	79			

a. Dependent Variable: Cheating Behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Anxiety, Self Efficacy

The results of the F-test show an F-value of 55.409 with a significance level of 0.000, while the F-table value is 3.11 at a significance level of 0.05. Since the significance value is less than 0.05 and the calculated F-value exceeds the F-table value, H_{a3} is accepted and H_{o3} is rejected. These findings indicate that self-efficacy and academic anxiety simultaneously have a significant effect on cheating behavior. The magnitude of the contribution of these two variables is indicated by an Adjusted R Square value of 0.590, meaning that 59.0% of the variance in cheating behavior can be explained by these variables, while the remaining portion is influenced by other factors outside the scope of this study.

These results confirm that internal psychological factors play a crucial role in shaping students' academic behavior, particularly in evaluative situations such as exams or the completion of SKI assignments that require conceptual understanding and learning readiness. Enhancing self-efficacy and effectively managing academic anxiety are therefore strategic aspects in efforts to reduce the tendency of cheating behavior in educational settings.

Self-efficacy and peer attachment simultaneously exert a significant influence on cheating behavior, as shown by an F value of 3.576 (Achmad Istikhory Yahya, 2020). These findings confirm that the interaction between internal and social factors

plays an important role in shaping dishonest behavior tendencies in academic contexts. In SKI learning, this condition may arise when students have low confidence in understanding the material and are easily influenced by peer environments, especially during examinations.

Conceptually, self-efficacy relates to an individual's belief in their ability to complete tasks, face difficulties, and understand learning materials. Students with low self-efficacy tend to experience self-doubt, lack of confidence, and difficulty in coping with academic demands. This condition can trigger academic anxiety, which is characterized by worry about learning outcomes, tension during the learning process, and disturbances in concentration and memory during examinations.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that self-efficacy and academic anxiety are significant predictors of cheating behavior among Madrasah Aliyah students. Self-efficacy plays a protective factor that suppresses cheating tendencies, while academic anxiety plays a role as a risk factor that increases this tendency. Simultaneously, both variables contributed 59% to the variation in cheating behavior. The practical implications of these findings emphasize the importance of strengthening self-efficacy through learning strategies that encourage student independence, confidence, and perseverance, as well as the management of academic anxiety through supportive pedagogical approaches, such as providing constructive feedback and creating a conducive learning environment with integrity. Further research is recommended to examine other variables such as self-control, learning motivation, and the influence of the social environment, and to use a wider sample coverage and diverse methodological designs to improve generalization and depth of analysis.

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