EGO DEPLETION AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY IN STUDENTS COLLEGE DURING PANDEMI COVID-19

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Abstract. *The COVID-19 pandemic is still being felt until September 2021 in several countries around the world. We examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially on unethical behavior during online learning—other phenomena such as ego depletion trigger academic dishonesty behavior that occurs. A total of 92 students participated in this research. The measurement tool uses the ego depletion scale and the academic dishonesty scale. The results show that ego depletion is a significant predictor of academic dishonesty. The contribution of ego depletion to academic dishonesty is 16.3%. Ego fatigue makes students choose an easier academic path, which they feel has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. So that the behavior of academic dishonesty increases. The implications and research suggestions are discussed in detail.*
Keywords: *ego depletion, academic dishonesty, pandemic COVID-19, online learning, students college, cheating, plagiarism.*

Introduction

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic until September 2021 in several countries still has a significant impact on human behavior. The results of many studies report that the COVID-19 pandemic has a lot of effect on mental health (Chaturvedi et al., 2021; Drissi et al., 2020; Herdian & Chen, 2021; Kaparounaki et al., 2020). In particular, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was more significant on students than on workers, and women were more affected than men (Marelli et al., 2021). So this can cause changes in the daily activities of people around the world. We conducted a particular study of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student activities. This is important to study because the COVID-19 pandemic has an impact on school closures around the world. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many studies reported that there was an increase in academic stress (Herdian & Mildaeni, 2021), increased anxiety (Wang & Zhao, 2020), sleep quality (Marelli et al., 2021), to an increase in unethical behavior. On student academics (Herdian et al., 2021). Referring to this impact, we conducted a follow-up study on unethical behavior such as academic dishonesty among college students. This is important to study because we think that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic must be prevented as early as possible so that students can behave professionally in their academics.

Academic dishonesty behavior is a common thing in the academic environment. This refers to the number of studies on academic dishonesty in various countries in the world (Charubusp, 2015; Do Ba et al., 2017; Hendy & Montargot, 2019; Herdian et al., 2021; Ismail & Yussof, 2016; Lahur, 2004; Rawwas et al., 2004; Ruipérez & García-Cabrero, 2016; Shalevska, n.d.) this happened not only during the COVID-19 pandemic but also before. Referring to the definition of academic dishonesty behavior, Kibler (1993) defines it as a form of academic cheating and plagiarism that involves students in giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in academic training or receiving money for work that is not done by themselves (Kibler, 1993). Typical forms of dishonesty are using inappropriate information during tests,

cheating assignments, and submitting false information (including plagiarism) (Oran et al., 2015).

The factor of academic dishonesty has been widely studied, which is considered a factor of dishonesty during the COVID-19 pandemic is ego depletion. Ego depletion is critical to study as a predictor of academic dishonesty because the phenomenon is that students experience many significant changes in activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students must adopt online learning, which so far there has never been any prior training. In addition, the many tasks and academic burdens make students vulnerable to stress. So that, at the same time, will trigger the emergence of ego depletion. Ego depletion is a condition in which a person experiences a reduced desire or willingness to engage in action but is only temporary (Baumeister et al., 1998). For example, Lack of self-control, a result of ego depletion, reduces people's capacity to resist these self-serving temptations and consequently increases dishonesty (Gino et al., 2011). The results of a review of 48 recent studies on ego depletion in college students stated that undergraduate students were susceptible to the effects of ego depletion (92% significant), and that included various cognitive and emotional variables such as self-control, prospective memory, and anxiety (Gissubel et al., 2018). Students have many demands that require optimal self-control, such as completing lecture assignments, academic demands, adaptation to new environments, financial management, interpersonal conflicts, etc. Students who experience ego depletion in an experimental study conducted by Price & Yates (2010) prefer to work on more straightforward questions. It can be concluded that ego depletion can affect the Lack of effort made on academic tasks. So that, in turn, will have an impact on unethical behavior. This research was conducted with a quantitative approach to examine the effect of ego depletion on academic dishonesty in college students.

Theory

Academic fraud is a fundamental problem for academic integrity in higher education (Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005). Academic dishonesty is a violation of unethical behavior in the performance of academic assignments, which includes cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating others to take actions in academic cheating (Pavela, 1997). Academic dishonesty is an act of fraud or cheating intended to obtain more than desired results on exams, papers, homework assignments, or other learning assignments (Miller et al., 2017). Academic dishonesty is motivated by many factors, including motivation (Siaputra, 2013; Thomas, 2017), religiosity (Khan et al., 2019), closer friendship, in students who have low grades (Griebeler, 2017), personal characteristics (Ruffle & Tobol, 2017), Self-efficacy (Javed, 2020; Onu et al., 2019) parents' pressure (Punjab et al., 2017). Until now, research on academic dishonesty is still often investigated to see how this behavior occurs and understand it comprehensively. The aspect of academic dishonesty refers to forms of academic dishonesty that have been previously studied by McCabe & Trevino (1993) and Stone et al. (2010), including cheating, collaboration, and plagiarism. Cheating is rule-breaking behavior related to the intention to gain an unfair advantage over a party or parties with whom the fraudster has a norm-regulated relationship (Green, 2004).

One of the predictors of academic dishonesty is ego depletion. Referring to the definition, Ego depletion is a condition when people have psychological and physical exhaustion, limited energy that affects cognitive problems, passive tasks become suboptimal and cause negative reactions and attitude problems (Undarwati et al., 2017). Ego depletion is theorized as a loss of self-control after being exercised over a period of time, leading to a loss of conscious regulation of behavior (Oehring, 2020). Ego depletion occurs when the power in self-control is depleted. Ego depletion is defined as a temporary state in which previous self-control reduces the individual's self-control resources (Hurley, 2019). that ego depletion is a consequence of

exerting self-control on activities previously carried out, resulting in impaired self-control performance (Dang, 2018). Many factors that influence ego depletion include situational (Banker et al., 2017), cyberbullying(Zhang et al., 2021), personal demands, social demands, low self-control, task demands or too much burden, family problems, and conflicts with others. Others (Undarwati et al., 2017). Ego depletion can result in passive behavior such as Lack of initiative and impulsive behavior, such as decreasing mental control over behavioral responses (Vonasch et al., 2017), increasing students' deceptive behavior (Keller et al., 2020), and being a predictor of future anxiety (AlHarbi et al., 2021). In addition, the emergence of ego depletion can impact decreasing academic performance, concentration, leaving responsibility for tasks, and unethical behavior.

Methodology

A total of ninety-two students of the faculty of Islamic religion participated in this study. Based on demographic data, the female gender is 57 (62%), and male is 35 (38%). Students consist of semester 2 (6.5%), semester 4 (38%) semester 6 (38%) semester 8 (17.4%). Based on GPA, participants who have GPA 2.00–2.74 are 4.3%, GPA 2.76–3.50 are 46.7%, GPA 3.51-4.00 are 48.9%. demographic information is shown in table 1.

*Table 1 **Demographics of Participants***

	Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
sex	male	35	38.0 %	38.0 %
	female	57	62.0 %	100.0 %
semesters	2	6	6.5 %	6.5 %
	4	35	38.0 %	44.6 %
	6	35	38.0 %	82.6 %
	8	16	17.4 %	100.0 %
GPA	2,00-2,75	4	4.3 %	4.3 %
	2,76-3,50	43	46.7 %	51.1 %
	3,51-4,00	45	48.9 %	100.0 %

measurement
Academic Dishonesty

The scale developed by Ampuni et al. (2019) was compiled based on aspects of Academic Dishonesty according to McCabe & Trevino (1993) and Stone et al. (2010), namely Cheating Collaboration and Plagiarism. Items totaled 11 favorable statements, using a Likert scale scoring 5 (often) to 1 (never). Example of a cheating statement item "Cheating on the test in any way", example of an item for collaboration "Allowing friends to copy my answers during the test". An example of an item for plagiarism is "Plagiarism partially or completely using the internet". The academic dishonesty scale shows high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.87$).

Ego Depletion
The scale was developed by Undarwati et al. (2017), which is based on aspects of ego depletion, including psychological fatigue, physical exhaustion, helplessness, drained energy, cognitive impairment, passiveness, suboptimal, negative reactions, and behavioral disturbances. There are two types of statements used in this scale, namely Favorable and Unfavorable. The number of items on the ego-depletion scale is 30. The Likert scale is 5 (very true of me) to 1 (very untrue of me). Examples of items used in this study include: "Give up to do anything, Tired of the situation, Tired with existing activities, Difficult to hold desire, Chest

feels tight, Body feels weak, Head feels dizzy." The ego-depletion scale showed high internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.743$).

Data Analysis
We used correlation analysis to see the relationship between demographic variables with academic dishonesty and ego depletion variables. At the same time, the main analysis uses a simple linear analysis to see the effect of ego depletion as a predictor of academic dishonesty.

Result and Discussion

We conducted a correlation test to see the relationship between each variable and demographic data. The results are shown in Table 2. that sex correlates with academic dishonesty with a value of $r = -0.364$, $p < .001$. In addition, there is a significant positive correlation between ego depletion and academic dishonesty with a value of $r = 0.403$, $p < .001$. This can be interpreted that the higher the ego depletion, the higher the academic dishonesty.

*Table 2 **Intercorrelation Among Demographic And Variables***

	Sex	Semesters	GPA	Academic Dishonesty	Ego Depletion
sex	—				
	—				
Semesters	0.21 *	—			
	0.044	—			
GPA	0.333 **	0.07	—		
	0.001	0.51	—		
Academic Dishonesty	-0.364 ***	-0.058	-0.074	—	
	< .001	0.582	0.486	—	
Ego Depletion	0.029	0.07	-0.014	0.403 ***	—
	0.787	0.505	0.892	< .001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

In table 3, the results of the statistical analysis of ego depletion regression on academic dishonesty show that ego depletion has a significant effect on academic dishonesty with a value of $F = 17.5$, $< .001$. The value of R square shows that ego depletion contributes 0.163 or 16.3% to academic dishonesty. Meaning that ego depletion is a significant predictor of academic dishonesty. The line of regression equation for this research model is $y = 12,461 + (0.252) x$. So it can be interpreted that academic dishonesty will increase by 0.252 for every change in ego depletion.

*Table 3 **Linear Regression Result***

Model	R	R²	Adjusted R²	Overall Model Test			
				F	Estimate	B	p
Ego depletion to academic dishonesty	0.403	0.163	0.153	17.5	0.252	12.461	< .001

Our results confirm that ego depletion is a predictor of academic dishonesty behavior. This is following the research conducted by Keller et al. (2020) that ego depletion causes

deceptive behavior in students. Ego depletion occurs because a lack of self-control, for example, reduces people's capacity to resist these self-beneficial temptations and consequently increases dishonesty (Gino et al., 2011). During the COVID-19 pandemic, students adapted to the online learning system. all devices must be provided to support the effectiveness of techniques in the implementation of online learning. Another impact arises when online learning is carried out. Students are required to have quite a lot of tasks and take up much time. Students have many demands that require optimal self-control, such as completing lecture assignments, academic demands, adapting to new environments.

The implication of this research is the policy of lecturers and campuses in providing various forms of academic assignments. Fatigue occurs when students experience many demands during online learning, on the other hand, students must adapt to the new system. In addition, this research contributes to the welfare of students during online learning, which needs to be considered. Because many policymakers or faculty staff may focus only on learning techniques because they need to adapt to online learning, this study has limitations that can be used as a basis for future research development. The many and diverse participants from all faculties may be considered so that the research results are more comprehensive.

Conclusion

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is still being felt by students. Along with the impact felt by students, online learning also impacts students' psychological power, so that ego depletion behavior appears, which in fact can increase students' academic dishonesty behavior. The results of our study contribute to the unethical behavior of students during online learning. Ego depletion proved to be a significant predictor of students' academic dishonesty. We hope that the student ego gets serious attention in online learning to handle the emergence of ego depletion behavior properly.

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