The Effect of Personality Traits on Cheating Behavior with the Mediating Role of Goal Orientation (Case Study: Azad University Students, North Tehran Branch)

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	*ABSTRACT*
	Background and Aim: This research was conducted with the aim of investigating the effect of personality traits on cheating behavior with the mediating role of goal orientation. **Methods:** The research method was descriptive-correlational in terms of the applied purpose, and quantitative in terms of data type. The statistical population of the research was the psychology students of the Islamic Azad University, North Tehran branch, and 217 people were selected as the sample size by using the calculation of the sample size in structural equations and the quota non-random sampling method. In order to collect data, the standard questionnaires of Wendy Will and McGregor's goal orientation (2001), Hexaco's personality dimensions questionnaire (2004) and Yazdani's academic cheating questionnaire (2016) were used. In this research, in order to calculate validity, content and construct validity were used, and in order to calculate reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and composite reliability coefficient were used, and the results indicated the validity and reliability of the research questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out in two sections of descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, etc.) and inferential (structural equation modeling) through Spss-21 and LISREL-v8.80 software. **Results:** The findings showed that personality traits include honesty-humility (0.66), excitability (0.60), extroversion (0.51), agreeableness (0.46), conscientiousness (0.42) and openness to experience (0.63) on goal orientation; Personality traits include honesty-humility (0.58), excitability (0.66), extroversion (0.63), pleasantness (0.55), conscientiousness (0.66) and openness to experience (49. 0) has an effect on cheating behavior and goal orientation (0.50) on cheating behavior; Also, the influence of personality traits including honesty-humility, excitability, extroversion, pleasantness, conscientiousness and openness to experience on cheating behavior through goal orientation, respectively 0.91, 0.96, 0.88, 0.78, 0.87 and 0.80. **Conclusion:** Finally, the findings showed that the research model has a good fit.

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Introduction

Since the students of the leading class, scouts, elites and energetic members of the society, therefore, they have a significant impact on building the future and drawing the public movement. Since they are the pillars of academic institutions, it is very important to pay attention to this group and their issues and problems, and the issues related to the educational system of this group should be considered because they play a decisive role in the future and destiny of the country. Academic cheating is a common and alarming problem in educational environments. Unethical methods such as cheating have become one of the common habits of students in most universities in the world, which has caused more concern in the academic and career process. Today's students grow up in a society with weak moral values and this factor has increased the occurrence of behaviors such as cheating. Research has shown that there is a direct relationship between student cheating in university and unethical behavior in the workplace. Between 82 and 93 percent of cheating students later have no career advancement in the workplace or are even fired (Ghanbari & Azizi, 2022).

It should also be noted that with the spread of cheating among students, the atmosphere of social security among educated social strata is greatly endangered. This issue is itself affected by important social phenomena such as social trust, social participation and people's lifestyle, which will increase the risk of erosion of social capital due to this issue (Mustafa Sarbaz et al., 2014). The erosive and negative effect of scientific fraud, when attributed to the educated stratum of society, will cause the collapse of the moral foundations of society in wider fields (Zhaker Salehi, 2010). The double importance of scientific fraud comes from the fact that a person who cheats in one environment is likely to cheat in another (Feli et al., 2014).

The findings of Lim and Si (2001) show that people who cheat during their studies also do the same in their professional career and daily life. Also, psychologically, cheating can result in people feeling fear, humiliation, and secrecy (Pourseyed & Khormaei, 2019). There are different types of educational cheating. In a general category, cheating can be classified as cheating in tests and cheating in assignments. Cheating in tests includes copying from another sheet with or without their permission, and cheating in written work includes taking from a source without mentioning its source (Farid, 2016).

There are different views on why students cheat and what personal and personality factors can lead to its occurrence and spread. The findings have shown that many factors affect cheating behavior, among which we can mention: (Ajei et al., 2011; Antonio et al., 2014; Farnes et al., 2015; Henning, 2013) personality traits; Goal orientation (Mohebbi & Jokar, 2019; Farid, 2016; Abedini, 2015; Cook et al., 2015; Makfaleh, 2015; Furlong, 2014; Yung, 2010).

As mentioned, one of the factors affecting cheating behavior is personality traits. In general, since humans grow in a social environment from birth. This environment is as effective in a person as the natural and physical environment plays a role in the transformation and change of the existential structure. What can limit a person's choices or expand them in this social environment and prevent a person from sharing certain experiences with others or enable him to have the most of these experiences is personality. Personality can bind and limit some people and expose others to new experiences. The person's personality determines the number and variety of social situations in which people participate or interact with others. The differences exist in how a person perceives or interprets people, objects and situations in the environment, which depends on the cognitive style of people (Ghezalseflo & Rostami, 2015; Antoni et al., 2014).

In general, personality traits are the characteristics, characteristics and personality traits of people in a spiritual, psychological and behavioral context that form a person's personality and cause the formation of a person's behavior. According to Hexaco's theory, these traits include honesty-humility, excitability, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience (Farrens, 2011).

On the other hand, another factor affecting cheating behavior is target orientation. One of the important topics in the field of motivation and learning is the role of goal orientation or progress goals. Goal orientation is one of the most effective approaches in motivation and has important motivational implications in learning and performance. Goal orientation is the

unconscious way of dealing with a learning task. Goal orientation directs academic behavior and is able to explain the relationship between student beliefs about academic success and engaging and persisting in a learning task (Ashton & Lee, 2009).

Goal orientation includes a part of knowledge, attitude and skills that help people in meeting their needs effectively. In fact, goal orientation expresses a consistent pattern of a person's beliefs, which causes a person to be oriented to situations in different ways and to act in that field and finally provide an answer.

Therefore, it is important to deal with academic cheating because according to the research literature, people who commit it often transfer this inappropriate behavior to their work environments after graduation. On the other hand, although in many countries, individual and situational motivational factors related to fraud have been the attention of researchers, but not much research has been done in this field in Iran. More studies have been done on high school students and few studies have been done on college students. It is also worth noting that the characteristics of self-efficacy and ambiguity tolerance have been discussed in the studies (Khamesan & Amiri, 2011). The importance of knowing the influencing factors and ways to prevent the spread of cheating has intensified a wave of scientific research focusing on the literature related to students' perceptions of the costs and benefits of cheating. Considering the lack of sociological research on cheating and the descriptive nature of most of the studies, the purpose of this research is to determine the effect of personality traits on students' cheating behavior with the mediating role of goal orientation.

Method

The current research is practical according to its purpose; according to the time of the research, cross-sectional; According to the type of data, quantitative; According to the method of data collection or the nature and method of the research, it was descriptive-correlation. The statistical population of this research was all male and female students who entered in 2016 at Tehran Azad University North of the Faculty of Psychology, whose number was equal to 500 people. The non-random sampling method was a quota type. Structural equation modeling determines the sample size between 5 and 15 observations for each measured variable. In this research, the sample size for each question was 5 subjects and 217 people in general. Library and field sources (questionnaires) were used to collect information.

Materials

1. Will and McGregor goal orientation questionnaire. The items of the goal orientation questionnaire were adapted from Wendy Weil and McGregor (2001). This questionnaire has 20 items that evaluates four factors - learning orientation, performance-orientation, performance-avoidance and uncertainty in goal orientation. Learning orientation is defined as a tendency for self-development by acquiring new skills, mastering new situations, and improving individual competencies (items 2, 3, 7, 12, 19); Tendency performance orientation emphasizes gaining competence and approval from others (items 6, 14, 17, 20, 1); Obtaining the favorable judgment of others towards a person is the important basis of this type of orientation, and the orientation of performance avoidance emphasizes seeking distance and avoiding inadequacy in the eyes of others (items 4, 10, 11, 13, 15); People with this orientation avoid the unfavorable judgment of others. Uncertainty in goal orientation refers to learners' doubts, ambiguities and hesitancies regarding the value of activities and assignments in educational situations (items 5, 8, 9, 16, 18). The scoring of the questionnaire is in the form of Likert scale and from 0 to 4 points. To determine the construct validity of this tool, factor analysis using the principal components method with varimax rotation was used. In the data analysis of the goal orientation questionnaire in this study, the value of the KMO coefficient (sampling adequacy index) and the Bartlett sphericity test show that there is sufficient evidence to implement the factor analysis method. In Moradinia and Asaadian's (2006) research, the validity and reliability of the goal orientation questionnaire among the students of Azad University, Hamedan branch was investigated. The results indicated 0.75 for the construct validity and 0.82 for the reliability of this questionnaire by the two-month retest method. Also, the validity and reliability of this questionnaire were reported as 0.76 and 0.83 respectively in Morgan's research (2003). Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of this questionnaire.

The results were 0.70, 0.70, 0.70, and 0.80 for learning orientation, tendency, avoidance, and indecisiveness, respectively, and for the whole scale, it was 0.70, which was considered satisfactory. The reliability coefficient of this questionnaire using a one-month retest in the present study was equal to 0.85.

2. Academic cheating questionnaire. The educational cheating questionnaire has 40 questions and its purpose is to investigate academic cheating. To get the academic cheating score, the scores for each of its questions are added together. Higher scores in each dimension will indicate a tendency to cheat academically from the point of view of the respondent and vice versa. Of course, questions 7, 8, 14, 31, 32, 34 and 37 are scored in reverse, where the points include strongly agree=5, agree=4, neither disagree nor agree=3, disagree=2, strongly disagree=1 To get the academic cheating score, the scores for each of its questions are added together. Higher scores in each dimension will indicate a tendency to cheat academically from the point of view of the respondent and vice versa. Of course, questions 7, 8, 14, 31, 32, 34 and 37 are scored in reverse. The questionnaire was compiled by Yazdani (2016) to investigate the cheating process of a series of students with behavioral problems in the university. Before the final implementation, this questionnaire was implemented on 100 students of Islamic Azad University of Sanandaj. The content validity of this questionnaire was 0.76 and its reliability was 0.84 with the two-month retest method. Also, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this questionnaire was 0.83. This questionnaire is made by combining the questions and items of other questionnaires.

3. Hexaco personality dimensions questionnaire. The Hexaco personality questionnaire is a model of the factor dimensions of personality that has 60 questions and includes six broad dimensions: honesty-humility, excitability, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. The scoring of this questionnaire is on a Likert scale with a range of scores between 1 and 5. Score 1 is assigned to "completely disagree", score 2 to "disagree", score 3 to "neither disagree nor agree", score 4 to "agree", and score 5 to "completely agree". In Ashton and Lee's (2004) study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.92 for humility, 0.90 for excitability, 0.92 for extraversion, 0.89 for agreeableness, 0.89 for conscientiousness, and 0.90 for openness to experience. The alpha obtained in Iranian society is 0.80, 0.74 excitability, 0.81 extroversion, 0.73 agreeableness, 0.71 conscientiousness and 0.76 openness to experience. (Abassi et al., 2015).

Implementation
To analyze the research data in the descriptive part of mean, standard deviation, tables and in the inferential part of Pearson correlation, group t-test using Spss-21 software and structural equation modeling using LISREL-v8.80 software were used.

Results
In terms of demographic characteristics, the highest percentage of people studied are girls (63 percent); The field of most participants is clinical psychology (45 percent); The most age group was 26-30 years old (66%). The mean and standard deviation of all components were given; Also, the findings from the previous table showed that the coefficient of elongation in all components is between -5 and 5; Which means that the data distribution is normal in this aspect and the shape of the distribution is not very flat or high; Similarly, the skewness statistic in all components is between -3, -3 and even between -2, -2, which means that the data distribution is normal in this aspect and it can be said that the shape of the distribution does not have positive or negative skewness. Finally, it can be concluded that the data distribution for all components is normal, and parametric tests such as Pearson's correlation, one-sample t-test, etc. can be used to check the hypotheses.

Considering that the data distribution was normal and the scale was interval, a one-sample t-test was used to check the status of the variables. Pearson's correlation test was used to check the relationships between the variables. The following table shows the current status of the variables and the correlation between them.

Table 1. Current status of variables and correlation between them												
Row	Component	Sig	Mean diff	Condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	honesty-humility	0/001	64/0	Slightly	--	0/51	0/47	0/52	0/54	0/48	0/58	0/66

				above average								
2	Excitability	0/001	29/0	Slightly above average	0/51	--	0/53	0/58	0/54	0/49	0/66	0/60
3	extroversion	0/001	45/0	Slightly above average	0/47	0/53	--	0/51	0/47	0/56	0/63	0/51
4	to be pleasant	0/001	51/0	Slightly above average	0/52	0/58	0/51	--	0/52	0/41	0/55	0/46
5	Conscientiousness	0/001	74/0	Slightly above average	0/54	0/54	0/47	0/52	--	0/51	0/66	0/42
6	Openness to experience	0/001	89/0	Slightly above average	0/48	0/49	0/56	0/41	0/51	--	0/49	0/63
7	Cheating behavior	0/001	72/0	Slightly above average	0/58	0/66	0/63	0/55	0/66	0/49	--	0/50
8	Goal orientation	0/001	51/0	Slightly above average	0/66	0/60	0/51	0/46	0/42	0/63	0/50	--

As can be seen in the above table, the results of correlation analysis showed that all three variables have a positive and significant relationship with each other (P < 0.01). On the other hand, the results of the table showed that all three dimensions are in a good condition.

In the following figure, the research model is given in the form of standard coefficients in order to influence personality traits on cheating behavior with the mediating role of goal orientation:
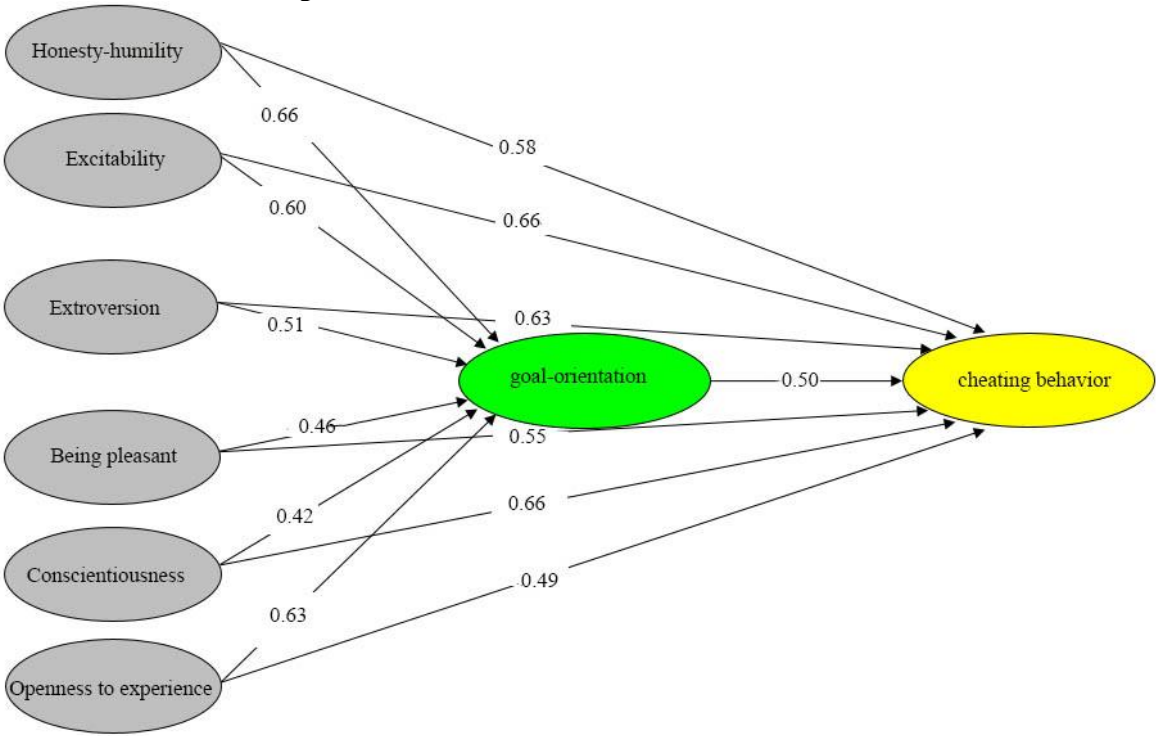
Figure 1. The structural model of the research in the standard coefficient estimation mode

In the figure below, the research model is presented in the mode of significant coefficients, where all the obtained coefficients are significant; because the significance test value of each path is greater than 2.58 and smaller than -2.58.
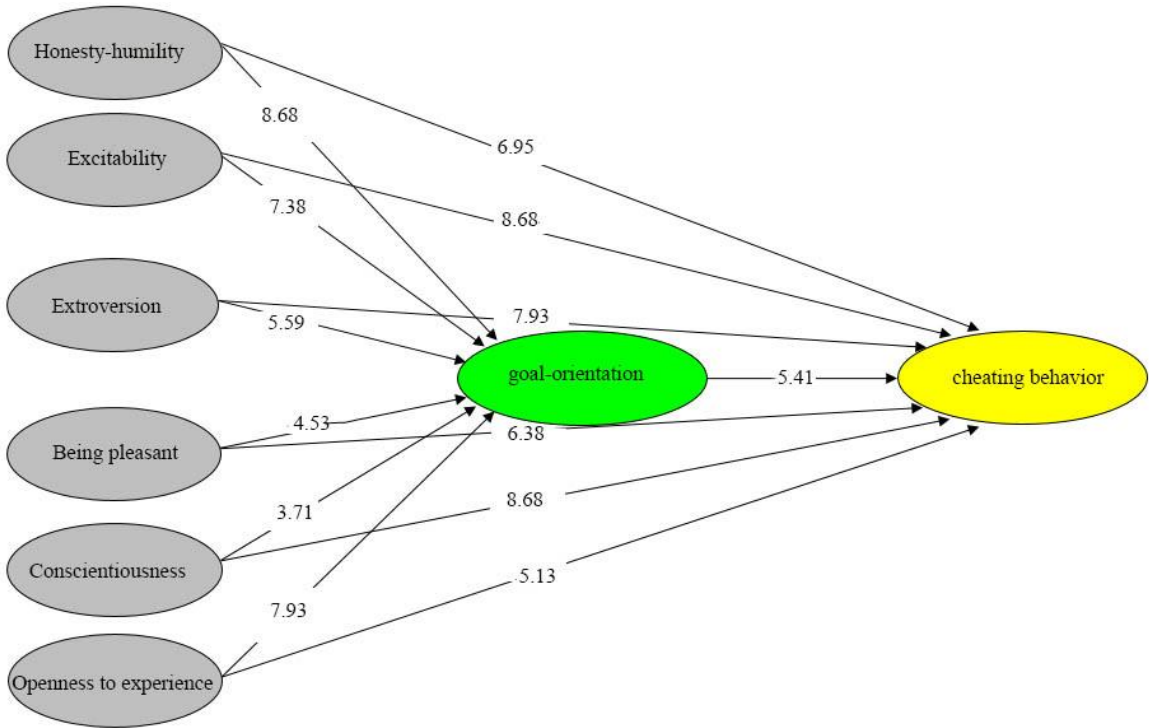

Figure 2. The structural model of the research in the significance mode of the coefficients

According to the values obtained in Figure 2, we will examine the hypotheses of the research. The results of the model test can be seen in the table below.

	Table 2. Test results of the research model			
	Path	Standardized coefficient	t-value	Result
1	The effect of honesty-humility on cheating behavior	0/58	6/95	Approved
2	The effect of irritability on cheating behavior	0/66	8/68	Approved
3	The effect of extraversion on cheating behavior	0/63	7/93	Approved
	The effect of agreeableness on cheating behavior	0/55	6/38	Approved
	The effect of conscientiousness on cheating behavior	0/66	8/68	Approved
	The effect of openness to experience on cheating behavior	0/49	5/13	Approved
	The effect of honesty-humility on goal orientation	0/66	8/68	Approved
	The effect of excitability on goal orientation	0/60	7/38	Approved
	The effect of extroversion on goal orientation	0/51	5/59	Approved
	The effect of pleasantness on goal orientation	0/46	4/53	Approved
	The effect of conscientiousness on goal orientation	0/42	3/71	Approved
	The effect of openness to experience on goal orientation	0/63	7/93	Approved
	The effect of goal orientation on cheating behavior	0/50	5/41	Approved

Based on the table above, it is possible to see the type and extent of the effect of each of the research variables in all male and female students entering the year 2016 at Azad University of Tehran North, Faculty of Psychology, and based on this, all research hypotheses are significant at the 99% confidence level.

In order to check the direct and indirect effect of independent variables on the dependent variable, it is necessary to present the total, direct and indirect effects for the endogenous variable of the model, which can be seen in the following table:

Row	Predictive variable	Criterion variable	Effect		
			Direct	Indirect	Total
1	honesty-humility	Cheating behavior	0/58	0/66*0/50=0/33	0/91
2	honesty-humility	Goal orientation	0/66	---	0/66
3	Excitability	Cheating behavior	0/66	0/60*0/50=0/3	0/96
4	Excitability	Goal orientation	0/60	---	0/60
5	extroversion	Cheating behavior	0/63	0/51*0/50=0/25	0/88
6	extroversion	Goal orientation	0/51	---	0/51
7	to be pleasant	Cheating behavior	0/55	0/46*0/50=0/23	0/78
8	to be pleasant	Goal orientation	0/46	---	0/46
9	Conscientiousness	Cheating behavior	0/66	0/42*0/50=0/21	0/87
10	Conscientiousness	Goal orientation	0/42	---	0/42
11	Openness to experience	Goal orientation	0/63	---	0/63
12	Goal orientation	Cheating behavior	0/50	---	0/50
13	Openness to experience	Cheating behavior	0/49	0/63*0/50=0/31	0/80

Table 3. Separation of direct, indirect and total effects in the research model

As can be seen in Table 3: The effect of honesty-humility, excitability, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience on cheating behavior through goal orientation is 0.91, 0.96, 0.88, 0.78, 0.87 and 0.80, respectively.

Table 4. The results of the structural equation modeling test to fit the conceptual model of the research

Index	Value	Cut-off point
x^2	220/64	-
CFI	0/97	> 0.90
GFI	0/84	> 0.90
IFI	0/95	> 0.90
RMSEA	0/069	< 0.08
CMIN/df	2/88	1 < x < 5
AGFI	.85	> 0.80
NFI	.96	> 0.90

Based on the above table, what can be concluded from the calculations is that although the compiled model has caused it to deviate to a large extent from the Chi-square value of the independence model. However, due to the significance of the Chi-square value of the model (P = 0.000), it can be concluded that the model is acceptable. Now that the indices show a good fit from the data to the model, it is time to measure the partial fit indices. The difference between the fit indices and the triple general fit indices is that the general fit indices judge the suitability of the whole model and not its components, and the partial indices judge the partial relationships of the model. Partial fit indices (critical ratios and their significance levels) show that all factor loadings are meaningful.

Conclusion

The current research was trying to investigate personality traits on cheating behavior with the mediating role of goal orientation in order to be

able to respond to the problems resulting from this norm. In the following, according to the results of the research, the explanation and interpretation of the research hypotheses will be discussed.

Regarding the effect of personality traits on cheating behavior, the results of the data analysis of this research showed that these characteristics, which include honesty-humility, excitability, extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, have a significant effect on students' cheating behavior. This means that by changing and improving cognitive characteristics, we will change the behavior of cheating among students. The results are consistent with the studies of Collins et al. (2008), Narhat et al. (2015) and Kohlarson (2013). Also, because personality traits play an important role in goal orientation because they are related to each other and have a similar structure. It can also be stated that personality factors are integrated with each other and finally different orientations of people towards the goal, prediction of their performance in different conditions are known through these characteristics, so the findings show the relationship between these two structures. The results are consistent with the studies of Cook et al. (2014), Elliot & McGregor (2001).

Also, fitting the structural model of personality traits and cheating behavior with the mediating role of goal orientation in students was done. The model fitting results show that the model fits well. Therefore, the values in the designed model are acceptable and the structural model of personality traits and cheating behavior with the mediating role of goal orientation in students has a favorable fit.

It also showed the results of the data analysis of this research in relation to the goal orientation on cheating behavior. It has a significant effect. Goal orientation is one of the most effective approaches in motivation and has important motivational implications in learning and performance. Goal orientation is the unconscious way of dealing with a learning task. In fact, goal orientation directs academic behavior and is able to explain the relationship between student's beliefs about academic success and involvement and persistence in doing a learning task.

Research shows that goal orientation is associated with behavioral, cognitive and emotional results and consequences, one of which is academic cheating. For example, the goal orientation of performance orientation, that is, learning not for the sake of learning itself, but for the sake of better performance compared to others, has a significant positive relationship with students' academic cheating. In fact, when learners do not enjoy their learning activities and their goal in a negative academic competitive environment is to try to be superior and superior to others, they may refrain from unethical actions such as cheating and academic dishonesty and engage in these actions. Tyler considers goal orientation as a part of knowledge, attitude and skills that help people to meet their needs effectively. In fact, goal orientation expresses a consistent pattern of a person's beliefs, which causes a person to be oriented to situations in different ways and to act in that field and finally provide an answer. The results are consistent with the studies of Forsati and Hendrick (2015), Hall and Watson (2017) and Farid (2015).

Among the limitations of the current research, we can mention the use of a questionnaire as a measurement tool. The participants may not follow the principle of honesty in completing the questionnaire, or may make mistakes in completing it, which will eventually make it difficult to generalize the findings. Finally, it is suggested to the future researchers that the issue of academic cheating of students in higher education centers should be given more attention to the authorities. It should be mentioned that the counselors in the university should investigate the problems of cheating students in the academic field and help them to reduce academic cheating.

Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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