

Is There a Relationship between Grade Average Point and Students' Perceptions with Regard to Cheating Factors?

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Abstract: This study examined the relations between the grade point average, being a cheater or non cheater and the determined cheating factor scores. In total, 493 students participated in the study. The data were collected by using questionnaires. The factor analysis, Pearson correlation test and “t” test were used to analyze student–opinion data. First, the nine factors were determined to represent 34 variables, and then nine factors were rotated to factors scores. Later the relations were examined. The significant relation couldn't be found between grade point averages and factor scores. A significant relation was found between being a cheater or non cheater and certain factors.

Key Words: Cheating, cheating factors, education, student.

Introduction

Cheating is a word commonly used in daily life. It is defined in dictionaries as “to behave in a dishonest way in order to get what you want”. In the scope of this definition, cheating in academic setting was defined as “obtaining and using information from illicit sources and use it for improving one's (exam) grade” by Eisenberg (2004: 164) and as *students' attempt to present others' academic work as their own* by (Jensen et al. 2002).

The cheating behavior is one of the most discussed topics in academic life, for the cheating phenomenon is prevailing at the every level of the academic life (McCabe et al. 2001). Steinberg (1996) reported that two-thirds of the adolescents in his study cheated on tests in the past years. McLaughling and Ross (1989) found out in their study that 50% high school students admitted to frequent cheating.

Furthermore, Schab (1991) reported that there was an increase in the prevalence of cheating over the past 20 years and decrease in the perceived seriousness of dishonest behavior. Even more recently, researchers have

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reported that cheating rates among college students were as high as 90% (Graham et al. 1994).

Academic cheating behavior can be seen at the every level of academic life. It has been seen as one of the most serious academic problems, therefore many studies were carried out to understand the reasons of student cheating behavior in exams. It is possible to classify these studies under three groups. One of these studies examined the effects of situational variables such as intelligence and sex on cheating. Research findings indicated that students of lower intelligence, having more to gain with regard to grades, would cheat more compared to more intelligent students (Johnson et al. 1972, Vitro 1971, Kelly et al. 1978). The results of the research that examined the relationship between sex and cheating behavior indicated inconsistent results. At one hand, some studies found that female students were involved in more academic dishonesty than male students (Graham et al. 1994, Jacobson et al. 1970). On the other hand, some studies found that male students cheated more than female students (Baird 1980, Cochran et al. 1998, Davis et al. 1992, Kelly et al. 1978, Roth et al. 1995, Newstead et al. 1996). Besides, some studies indicated that there was no sex related difference (Vitro et al. 1972, Houston 1977, Karabenick et al. 1978, Tibbetts et al. 1999, Ward et al. 1990). Further, studies that examined cheating rates in relation to age are similarly inconsistent. Some researchers reported that younger students cheated more than did older students (Baird 1980, Cochran et al. 1998, Haines et al. 1986, Newstead et al. 1996), but at least one study reported higher rates of cheating for older students (Tang et al. 1997).

The second group of studies examined the effects of the performance goal on cheating behaviours. They suggested that there was a relationship between the pressures of performance, fear of failure, the goal of getting better grades and cheating behaviour (Calabrese et al. 1990, Michales et al. 1989, Ames et al. 1988, Newstead et al. 1996). The third group of studies focused on the relationship between social factors and cheating behaviour. They found positive relationship between students self reported cheating, dislike of school and views of teachers and schools as unfair in samples student. It means that social factors had relationship with cheating behavior (Juvonen et al. 1996, Goodenow 1993, Midgley et al. 1996). Finally, a few studies were conducted in literature to understand the relationship between cheating behaviour and reported high grade point average. Findings have shown that students who report comparatively high levels of cheating have lower grade point averages (GPAs) (Baird 1980, Graham et al. 1994). There are no sufficient studies over the relationship between cheating behaviour

and reported grade point in literature. The reason for this may be due to the perception of being a successful student, because successful students usually are thought that they have high grade point average and they don't need cheating. At this stage, it should be examined whether the grade point average has an effect over cheating behavior. The present study aimed to examine the effect of high grade point average over the cheating behavior and the cheating perception of cheater students to help researchers, educators and university's managements to meaning accurately the cheating behavior.

Method

Participants

In total, 493 students participated in this study from Department of The Faculty of Commerce and Tourism at Gazi University, located in the capital city of Turkey, and has second high student population in Turkey. Data were collected in the autumn of 2007. All students at the tourism department participated in this study. The questionnaires were prepared in two parts. One part of the questionnaires was related to the demographic information of the students and the other part was related to the cheating perception of students. A questionnaire was comprised of 37 questions. The demographic features of the participants and their academic terms are exhibited below.

Table 1: Demographic Information About The Participants

Characteristics	N	%
Gender		
Female	225	45,9
Male	265	54,1
Total	490	100,0
Ages		
17 and below	4	,8
18-19	51	10,5
20-21	213	43,7
22-23	182	37,4
24 and more	37	7,6
Total	487	100,0
The terms		
Term II	106	21,6
Term IV	136	27,7
Term VI	135	27,5
Term VIII	114	23,2
Total	491	100,0

Information Gathering and Analysis

The data reported in this study is based on students' self-reported survey data. All questionnaires were filled during the courses by students, under the supervision of the faculty members and research assistants. First of all, students were informed about questionnaire and instructed to respond to all using a items a 5- point Likert –type scale ranging from 1 = disagree to 5= full agree. In order to reduce data and to classify variables, factor analysis was applied. The main applications of factor analysis techniques are: (1) to *reduce* the number of variables and (2) to *detect structure* in the relationships between variables, that is to *classify variables*. Before factor analysis, the adequacy of data for factor analyze should be examined. For this purpose, Kaiser-Meyer-Okin (KMO) and Bartlett test was conducted.

KMO value is calculated as 0,808 for adequate of sample. The KMO value shows that data are suitable of factor analysis. According to the results of Bartlett test, Approx. Chi-Square was calculated as 4717, 37 and significant level was $p=000$. The results show that sample and data are adequate for factor analysis.

As a result of the factor analysis, the nine factors were determined. The nine factors and their variances were given in the table 2. According to the table 2, the nine factors explained the 60,7% of the total variance. It means the nine factors can represent 34 variables.

Table.2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5,015	14,327	14,327	5,015	14,327	14,327	4,415	12,615	12,615
2	4,570	13,057	27,384	4,570	13,057	27,384	3,292	9,406	22,021
3	3,203	9,152	36,537	3,203	9,152	36,537	2,559	7,312	29,333
4	1,919	5,483	42,020	1,919	5,483	42,020	2,496	7,132	36,465
5	1,901	5,432	47,452	1,901	5,432	47,452	2,215	6,328	42,793
6	1,252	3,577	51,029	1,252	3,577	51,029	2,030	5,800	48,593
7	1,235	3,527	54,557	1,235	3,527	54,557	1,670	4,771	53,364
8	1,125	3,213	57,770	1,125	3,213	57,770	1,334	3,812	57,176
9	1,041	2,974	60,744	1,041	2,974	60,744	1,249	3,568	60,744

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

To describe the relationship between factors and 34 variables, Principal Components Analysis was conducted. As a result of the component analysis, rotated component matrix table was formed. Table 3 shows the variables and their related factor.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix

	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A student can look at the other student's paper in examination	,676	,039	-,056	-,042	,007	-,143	,025	,194	-,074
A student can change whose examination paper with other students	,783	-,053	-,130	-,064	,073	,002	,171	-,076	,117
A student can have an exam in place of the other student	,734	-,175	-,122	-,047	,033	,131	,185	-,219	,151
A student can give other student's homework study for himself	,833	,034	-,033	,004	,070	,063	-,021	-,120	-,095
A student can look at his lessons notes without any permission	,811	-,039	,033	-,096	-,004	,024	,080	-,018	,015
A student can give the out-of-date homework studies as the new studies	,741	,098	,045	-,029	,091	,028	-,129	,004	-,091
A student can give whose study to other student to use	,636	,202	-,049	,023	,071	,058	-,198	,219	-,059
I think that cheating is an offence	-,045	-,049	,133	,829	-,001	,132	,008	,020	-,045
I think that cheating is not ethic	-,091	-,022	,064	,879	,015	,127	,020	,055	-,020
I think that cheating is a debility	-,077	,087	,133	,787	,086	,037	,037	-,019	,006
I think supervisors are tolerant against cheater s	,082	,008	,150	,089	,502	,315	-,120	,100	-,331
Who gets the high grade in examination can achieve it by cheating	,217	,002	-,049	-,065	,269	,536	,023	,115	-,105
A student who doesn't cheat is teased by other students	,105	-,164	-,134	,101	,215	,627	-,026	,137	,228
I think that cheating students act unjustly to non copier student	-,115	,139	,224	,326	,035	,626	-,025	-,119	-,136
Cheating students regard their behaviors as a talent	-,053	,073	,216	,146	,029	,703	,048	-,050	-,030
The cheating is a disrespect towards the academic staff	-,249	,038	,284	,371	-,035	,306	,171	-,253	,201
I think that supervisors and teachers treat unfairly in cheating situations	,128	,110	-,019	,026	,769	,052	-,015	,206	,068
I think that school management treats unfairly in the determination of a penalty in cheating situations	,111	,052	-,017	,067	,831	,120	,090	,060	,008
Cheating is becoming an important problem in the school	,080	-,098	,130	-,029	,609	,098	,089	-,282	,117
Strongly punishing the cheaters can prevent cheating	-,102	-,168	,607	,091	,119	,087	,177	-,006	,008
Administering exams in less crowded classrooms can prevent cheating	-,086	,144	,780	,124	,046	-,001	,016	-,024	,058
Administering exams with more supervisors can prevent cheating	-,093	,107	,809	,106	-,025	,076	-,016	,046	,063
Changing the question format can prevent the cheating	-,072	,164	,267	-,093	,107	-,096	-,057	-,033	,733
Asking questions by different groups can prevent cheating	-,021	,004	,545	,100	-,060	,127	,036	,144	,501

The attitude of academic staff in the lesson can be a reason of the cheating	-,081	,547	-,087	,134	,048	,102	,227	,318	,312
The attitudes and behavior of supervisors in the exams can be a reason for the cheating	-,102	,367	,224	,087	,086	,123	,300	,444	,027
The difficulty of the course can be a reason for cheating	,035	,784	,079	-,039	,012	,015	,026	,219	,122
Asking difficult questions can be a reason for cheating	,112	,786	,001	-,011	-,010	,008	,090	-,070	,066
The tolerance of the management against cheating can be a reason for cheating	,038	,043	,215	-,060	,243	,166	,388	,480	-,019
The fear of not passing examination can be a reason for cheating	,004	,778	,075	-,043	-,004	,011	,125	-,012	-,060
Believing that it is impossible to pass the examination by studying much can be a reason for cheating	-,039	,351	,140	-,059	-,125	,176	,546	,226	,036
Memorization-based questions can be a reason for cheating	,024	,731	-,031	,063	,057	-,056	,081	-,118	-,085
The part time works of students can be a reason for cheating	,062	,235	-,068	,082	,008	,008	,673	-,011	,010
The willing of being respected as a successful student by the others	,045	,204	,298	,058	,188	-,166	,603	-,016	-,067

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Quartimax with Kaiser Normalization. A Rotation Converged in 6 Iterations.

Nine factors were defined according to their relationship with variables which are; Factor 1: The point of view of the students about cheating, Factor 2: The lesson based reasons for cheating, Factor 3: How can be prevented the cheating?, Factor 4: The ethic and offence aspects of the cheating, Factor 5: The attitudes of the management of the school and teachers against cheating, Factor 6: The opinions about the cheater, Factor 7: The student-based reasons that cause cheating, Factor 8: The management and supervisor-based reasons that cause the cheating, Factor 9: The role of the questions format to prevent the cheating. The factors and their explained variables are given end of the paper.

Results and Discussion

To examine the relationship between the grade point average and factors, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used. According to the result of the test displayed in table 4, all Pearson correlation coefficient are close to zero ($p > ,05$), therefore no relationship between average grade and factor scores was found at the level of 5 % significance ($\alpha = 0,05$). The cheating perception of the students doesn't change in terms of their grade point average. In other words, average grade is not a determinant factor to evaluate students' cheating behavior. A student who has high grade point average can tend to cheat more than those with low grade point average.

Table 4: Correlation Between Average Grade and Factors

		Average Grade	REGR factor score 1	REGR factor score 2	REGR factor score 3	REGR factor score 4	REGR factor score 5	REGR factor score 6	REGR factor score 7	REGR factor score 8	REGR factor score 9
Average Grade	Pearson Correlation	1									
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.									
	N	344									
REGR factor score 1	Pearson Correlation	-,014	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,811	.								
	N	278	384								
REGR factor score 2	Pearson Correlation	-,102	,000	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,089	1,000	.							
	N	278	384	384							
REGR factor score 3	Pearson Correlation	,093	,000	,000	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,120	1,000	1,000	.						
	N	278	384	384	384						
REGR factor score 4	Pearson Correlation	,034	,000	,000	,000	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,578	1,000	1,000	1,000	.					
	N	278	384	384	384	384					
REGR factor score 5	Pearson Correlation	-,088	,000	,000	,000	,000	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,142	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	.				
	N	278	384	384	384	384	384				
REGR factor score 6	Pearson Correlation	-,073	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,226	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	.			
	N	278	384	384	384	384	384	384			
REGR factor score 7	Pearson Correlation	,037	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,543	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	.		
	N	278	384	384	384	384	384	384	384		
REGR factor score 8	Pearson Correlation	,084	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,162	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	.	
	N	278	384	384	384	384	384	384	384	384	
REGR factor score 9	Pearson Correlation	,028	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,637	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	.
	N	278	384	384	384	384	384	384	384	384	384

The cheating perceptions of cheated and not cheated students were examined by using “t” test. According to the table 5 and 6, there is a significant relationship between factors 1, 3, 4 and whether they cheated or not at the level of the 5% significance ($p < 0,05$). Students’ cheating perception differs in terms of factor 1. Student who cheated before agree more strongly on variables of factor 1 than not cheated students. The result is reasonable, for all of the variables indicate possible behavior of a cheated. It was expected that cheated must agree on them. Also, cheated students disagree with not cheated students on factors 3 and 4. Cheated students don’t see cheating behavior as an offence, debility and unethical behavior

contrary to not cheated students. Further, they have different opinions to prevent cheating, for example; they are strongly opposed to punishing cheating, administering exams in less crowd classrooms and with more supervisors.

Table 5: *Group Statistics*

	I cheated in some case	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
REGR factor score 1	Yes	177	,23	1,05	,079
	No	200	-,20	,90	,064
REGR factor score 2	Yes	177	-,00	1,02	,076
	No	200	-,015	,98	,070
REGR factor score 3	Yes	177	-,12	,96	,072
	No	200	,10	1,02	,072
REGR factor score 4	Yes	177	-,11	,96	,072
	No	200	,09	1,03	,073
REGR factor score 5	Yes	177	,03	,96	,072
	No	200	-,03	1,03	,072
REGR factor score 6	Yes	177	-,09	1,05	,079
	No	200	,08	,94	,066
REGR factor score 7	Yes	177	-,04	1,01	,076
	No	200	,04	,98	,069
REGR factor score 8	Yes	177	,06	,96	,072
	No	200	-,05	1,02	,072
REGR factor score 9	Yes	177	-,04	,99	,074
	No	200	,06	,99	,070

There is no significant relationship between factors 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and whether cheated or not at the 5% level of significance ($p > 0,05$). These results show that cheated and not cheated have the same cheating perception about the lesson based reasons for cheating, the attitudes of the management of the school and academic staff against cheating, the opinions about the cheated student, the student-based reasons that cause cheating, the management and supervisor-based reasons that cause cheating and the role of the questions format to prevent cheating. The factors and their explained variables were exhibited below.

Table 6: *Independent Samples Test*

t-test for Equality of Means			
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
REGR factor score 1	4,352	375	,000
REGR factor score 2	,142	375	,887
REGR factor score 3	-2,208	375	,028
REGR factor score 4	-2,102	375	,036
REGR factor score 5	,653	375	,514
REGR factor score 6	-1,777	375	,076
REGR factor score 7	-,912	375	,362
REGR factor score 8	1,230	375	,219
REGR factor score 9	-1,031	375	,303

Group Statistics

Moreover, the relationship was searched between grades point average and cheated and not cheated. There is a significant relationship between grade point average and cheated and not cheated at the %5 level of significance ($p < 0,05$). Pearson Correlation was calculated as 0,148. The relationship found is strong and positive. It means that the average grade point and being cheated effect each others.

Several conclusions can be drawn from these analyses. First, it is already mentioned that grade point average is not a determinant in cheating. Students with higher grade point average can tend to cheat more than those with lower grade point average. Therefore, grade point average is not a factor to mean the cheating perception of student. Second, cheating students took to the cheating behavior positively and were opposed to being punished due to cheating behaviors. The most important point is that cheater students don't see their behavior as offence, unethical and debility. They don't have any moral barriers against cheating. Consequently, they are always inclined to cheat. The school management and academic staff should emphasize the moral aspects of the cheating. If students judge their cheating behavior in their conscience, they could be successful to find a way to change their cheating behavior positively. Third, all participant students (cheated and not cheated) had the same ideas about lesson based reasons of cheating, the attitudes of the management of school and academic staff against cheating, the opinions about the cheated student, the student based reasons that cause cheating, the management and supervisor based reasons that cause cheating and the role of the questions type to prevent the cheating. The school management and academic staff must take those ideas into consideration to prevent cheating. The self- reporting of the students is very important to understand of the cheating perception of students and evaluate the roots of cheating. As mentioned before many studies were conducted to examine the different reasons and aspects of the cheating behavior. This study can be useful to support them and bring a different point of view.

The Factors and Their Explained Variables;

Factor 1: The point of view of the students about cheating

A student can look at the other student's paper in examination

A student can change whose examination paper with other students

A student can have an exam in place of the other student

A student can give other student's homework study for himself

A student can look at his lessons notes without any permission

A student can give the out of date homework studies as the new studies

A student can give whose study to other student to use

Factor 2: The lesson based reasons of the cheating

The attitude of academic staff in the lesson can be a reason of the cheating
The fear of not passing examination can be a reason for cheating
Memorization-based questions can be a reason for cheating
The difficulty of the lesson can be a reason of the cheating
To asking difficult question can be a reason of the cheating

Factor 3: How can be prevented the cheating

To strongly punished the cheating can prevent cheating
Administering exams in less crowded classrooms can prevent cheating
Administering exams with more supervisors can prevent cheating

Factor 4: The ethic and offence aspects of the cheating

I think that cheating is an offence
I think that cheating is not ethic
I think that cheating is debility
The cheating is disrespect against the teacher

Factor 5: The attitudes of the management of the school and academic staff against cheating

I think supervisors are tolerant against cheaters
I think that supervisors and teachers treat unfairly in cheating situations
I think that school management treats unfairly in the determination of a penalty in cheating situations
Cheating is becoming an important problem in the school

Factor 6: The opinions about the cheated student

Who gets the high grade in examination can achieve it by cheating
A student who doesn't cheat is teased by other students
I think that cheated students act unjustly to not cheated student
The cheated students think that their behaviors as a talent

Factor 7: The student based reasons that cause the cheating

Believing that it is impossible to pass the examination by studying much can be a reason for cheating
The part time working of the students can be a reason of the cheating
The sitting position of the students in the classroom can be a reason of the cheating
The willing of being respected as a successful student by the others

Factor 8: The management and supervision based reasons that cause the cheating

The attitudes and behaviors of supervisor in the examination can be a reason of the cheating

The tolerance of the management against cheating can be a reason of the cheating

Factor 9: The role of the questions format to prevent the cheating

Changing the question format can prevent the cheating

Asking questions by different groups can prevent cheating

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Öğrencilerin Kopya Faktörlerine Bakış Açıları ile Akademik Başarıları Arasında Bir İlişki Var mı?

Ahmet Tayfun*

Özet: Bu çalışma, akademik başarı ortalaması, kopya davranışında bulunmuş olma veya olmama ile belirlenen kopya davranış faktörleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Çalışmaya toplam 493 öğrenci katılmıştır. Veriler anket yardımı ile toplanmıştır. Öğrencilerin görüşlerine ilişkin veriler “t” testi, Pearson korelasyonu ve faktör analizleri kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Öncelikle 34 değişkeni temsil eden 9 faktör tespit edilmiştir. Daha sonra bu 9 faktör faktör skoruna dönüştürülmüştür. En son olarak ilişkiler incelenmiştir. Başarı ortalaması ile faktörler arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmaz iken kopya davranışı göstermiş olma ile bazı faktörler arasında anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kopya, kopya faktörleri, eğitim, öğrenci.

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Существует ли зависимость между успехами в учёбе и восприятием студентами касательно шпаргалки?

Ахмет Тайфун*

Резюме: Эта работа исследует зависимость между успехами в учёбе и вероятностью факта использования или неиспользования шпаргалок. В исследовании участвовали всего 493 студента. Данные были собраны с помощью анкетных опросов. Для анализа данных о мнениях студентов были использованы следующие тесты: тест «Т», корреляция Пирсона и фактор-анализ. Сначала были определены девять факторов, представляющих 34 переменные. Затем девять факторов были определены как фактор. Позже была исследована зависимость. Результаты показали, что нет существенной зависимости между средними показателями академической успеваемости и факторами, также была установлена значительная зависимость между некоторыми факторами и использованием шпаргалки.

Ключевые Слова: Шпаргалка, факторы шпаргалки, образование, студент.

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