Behavioral Implications of Evaluating Determinants of Academic Fraud Risk Factors

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Abstract

In this study, we report how 740 business students rated the relative importance of 35 academic fraud risk factors (red flags) identified in a newly designed academic fraud triangle. We conceptually demonstrate the hierarchy of the relative importance of the academic fraud risk factors using the Analytic Hierarchy Process. A factor analysis was conducted using maximum likelihood estimation with a Varimax rotation solution. One-way ANOVA models resulted in F-tests for differences among the mean factor scores for different groups of students. Pressure was ranked as the most important red flag element, identified by 70 percent of students as the most important element. This was followed by Opportunity (20 percent), while Rationalization was only chosen by about 10 percent of students as the most influential of the three elements. The mean factor scores by gender and domestic and international status of students were not significantly different. However, significant differences existed among respondents by class standing. Specifically, financial, job and social pressures were ranked of differing importance by students across undergraduate and graduate levels.

Keywords: Academic fraud, plagiarism, cheating, academic dishonesty and fraud triangle.

Data availability: Data used in this study are available upon request.

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