

Can spiritual power reduce online cheating behavior among university students? The fraud triangle theory perspective

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Abstract	<p>PurposeAlthough the academic literature provides extensive insight into the motivations for the unethical use of information technology in online classes, little is known about how perceived justice, the opportunity to cheat and spiritual legitimacy mitigate unethical behavior among young academics. The purposes of this study are two folds: first, to determine how perceived lecturers' justice and opportunity to cheat may mitigate academic misconduct in online classes, and second, to evaluate the moderating effect of spiritual power on the relationship between perceived lecturers' justice and opportunity to cheat and academic misconduct.Design/methodology/approachThis research was conducted at universities in three Southeast Asia countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, with a total of 339 respondents. The research questionnaire was distributed using Google Forms. The analytical method used to test the research hypothesis is moderated regression analysis (MRA).FindingsThe findings of this study reveal that spirituality moderates the relationship between lecturer justice and the opportunity to cheat online. Even though the justice level of the lecturer is low, individuals with relatively high spirituality will show much less cheating behavior than when there is a low level of lecturer justice and a low level of student spirituality, and vice versa.Research limitations/implicationsCheating occurs when students develop an intention to cheat, which leads to actual involvement in cheating, meaning that theoretically, the findings extend the fraud triangle theory. In addition, the practical implications of this research are that lecturers need to conduct fair teaching, such as transparency of exam conditions, assessment, the right to an opinion and supervision during exams, consequently, the students cannot cheat. Spirituality is also an essential factor that can reduce online cheating, so instilling spirituality in specific courses is a fruitful solution.Originality/valueThe contributions of this study are twofold. First, this study gives testable theories on how spiritual help works. Second, this study offers tailored and more humanistic assistance, such as a mechanism that adjusts to the academic world's usage of more positive technologies. This study contributes to the literature on online cheating in higher education across three Southeast Asian nations (Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand).</p>
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