

The Relationship between Students' Attitude toward Business Ethics and Academic Misbehaviors

Abstract

This paper attempts to expand the current research area which has explored the association between students' academic dishonesty (i.e., exam cheating or plagiarism/fabrication) and attitude toward business ethics, by empirically testing the relationships between students' undesirable academic behaviors (i.e., disrespectful behaviors or slacker behaviors) and their perception of business ethics. The results based on 133 surveys from the students enrolled in the business program at a northwestern regional comprehensive university, show that there are positive relationships between the focal constructs. Specifically, this study reveals that students who have reported higher frequencies of engaging in exam cheating, disrespectful behavior, or slacker behaviors have perceived the given questionable, unethical employee practices as more acceptable conducts than the students have reported lower frequencies. This study reconfirms that that students who have reported higher frequencies of engaging in plagiarism/fabrication are more accepting of questionable, unethical business operations and questionable, unethical employee practices. In the additional analysis, gender, age and cumulative GPA have been explored as meaningful individual factors, and found to have relationships with students' attitude toward business ethics. Implications and recommendations are illustrated for instructors and administrators in business programs along with the limitation of the study and future research opportunity in the area.

Keyword

Business Ethics, Academic Misbehaviors, Cheating, Plagiarism, Fabrication, Disrespectful Behaviors, Slacker Behaviors

