

Reexamine Schoolchildren's Cheating Behavior: the Goal Orientation Approach

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Cheating on examination was and still is a serious issue in education. Despite the fact that most educators consider cheating an ethical issue, the author in this paper strongly argues that cheating is more than an ethical issue, and it is more complex than we used to think of. In essence, cheating involves how students set up their goals for learning. To explain the complexity of cheating, the author uses Carol Dweck's Goal Orientation Theory to analyze the data provided by Taiwan Educational Panel Survey (TEPS). What the author has found out is that Dweck's "implicit theory-goal orientation-response pattern" model can fully support her hypothesis in this paper, because students' schooling experiences and their cheatings are highly correlated. In other words, the author contends that cheating cannot be regarded exclusively as an ethical issue, and we may not simple-mindedly call any one who does cheat a vicious person. More importantly, the author further suggests that whenever parents and teachers are practicing character education, they need to put more emphasis upon children's belief system. In practice, both parents and teachers shall not merely give children the so-called moral persuasion. Instead, they should understand more about the reasons "why" children want to commit cheating (i.e., their goal orientation does matter!).

Keywords: character education, cheating in examination, goal orientation theory, learning goals, performance goals, Taiwan Educational Panel Survey (TEPS)

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