

Contradictions of Freedom in Student Cheating Behaviour (A Reflection on Eric Fromm's Theory): Qualitative-Descriptive Study

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Doi: 10.31316/g-couns.v10i02.6967

Abstrack

This study analyzes student cheating from the perspective of Eric Fromm's theory of freedom, focusing on the contradictions inherent in such behavior. Using a qualitative-descriptive approach, data were collected from 13 university students via purposive sampling, semi-structured questionnaires, interviews, and exam observations. Analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model. The results indicate that cheating arises from Fromm's "contradiction of freedom," in which the need for social attachment and the fear of alienation conflict with internal moral values such as honesty. Students choose cheating as an authoritarian escape mechanism, sacrificing autonomy to meet external expectations, which in turn triggers inner turmoil, including guilt and anxiety. The study recommends that universities establish counseling services to help students navigate these conflicts and develop a more authentic, responsible form of freedom.

Keywords: contradiction of freedom, cheating, freedom according to eric fromm, attachment and isolation

Abstrak

Studi ini menganalisis kecurangan siswa dari perspektif teori kebebasan Eric Fromm, dengan fokus pada kontradiksi yang melekat dalam perilaku tersebut. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif, data dikumpulkan dari 13 mahasiswa melalui purposive sampling, kuesioner semi-terstruktur, wawancara, dan observasi ujian. Analisis mengikuti model Miles dan Huberman. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa kecurangan muncul dari "kontradiksi kebebasan" Fromm, di mana kebutuhan akan keterikatan sosial dan ketakutan akan keterasingan bertentangan dengan nilai-nilai moral internal seperti kejujuran. Siswa memilih kecurangan sebagai mekanisme pelarian otoriter, mengorbankan otonomi untuk memenuhi harapan eksternal, yang pada gilirannya memicu kekacauan batin, termasuk rasa bersalah dan kecemasan. Studi ini merekomendasikan agar universitas membangun layanan konseling untuk membantu siswa menavigasi konflik ini dan mengembangkan bentuk kebebasan yang lebih otentik dan bertanggung jawab.

Keywords: menyontek sebagai keputusan bebas, kebebasan menurut eric fromm, kontradiksi kebebasan

Article info

Received September 2024, Revised May 2025, Accepted June 2025, Published January 2026



INTRODUCTION

Cheating is a common phenomenon in education that not only directly affects grades but also individual morale (Noer, 2022; Theobold et al., 2024). For example, the erosion of the value of honesty undermines individual self-confidence (Aprina et al., 2023). Many cheaters go undetected, so the behavior recurs when the situation permits (Chirumamilla et al., 2020; Prahesti et al., 2022). Cheating behavior is a crime that exists in educational institutions. If this is left unchecked, the campus creates a new generation that readily cheats to obtain what they want (Firman et al., 2021). This contradicts the six basic values of academic integrity according to the International Center Academic Integrity (ICAI), namely: honesty, trust, justice, respect, responsibility and courage (Ahsan et al., 2022) and contradicts the purpose and function of education in Indonesia according to Indonesian Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System article 3, which is to develop the ability and shape the character of individual so that he/she is noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and responsible (Habe & Ahiruddin, 2017). When cheating behavior is allowed, individual morals are questioned. Wiyono (2022) emphasizes one of the moral aspects, namely deep responsibility, in which individuals learn to the utmost and accept all the consequences.

Cizek formulated cheating in the form of three behaviors, namely 1) giving, taking, or receiving information; 2) using materials that are not permitted in the exam; 3) taking advantage of individual weaknesses, procedures, or processes of conducting the exam (Bamba et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Septiana (2022) identified cheating across four aspects: behavioral, target, situational, and temporal (Najib & Wiranti, 2024).

Cheating behavior has been the subject of numerous studies. Each researcher emphasizes certain aspects e.g. 1) Work ethic and motivation. An individual who cheats lacks self-confidence, is dishonest, has low fighting spirit, lacks self-discipline, and is irresponsible in learning. Motivation and learning style are two factors that enhance an individual's fighting spirit (Siringo-ringo & Alfaqih, 2024; Dari et al., 2025). 2) Class size. Small class sizes and close seating distances provide high opportunities for cheating (Sari & Sari, 2022). 3) Gender and age. Males cheat more often than females, juniors have a greater tendency to cheat than mediors (Nafis et al., 2024). 4) Self-esteem and self-control. Low self-control allows individuals to cheat. Self-esteem is associated with belief in one's abilities and a sense of value (Perianto, 2021). 5) Environment. An unsupportive environment prevents individuals from learning well. People feel safe to cheat when he/she is among their peers (Amigud & Lancaster, 2019) (Awdry & Ives, 2021; Salehi & Gholampour, 2021; Harahap et al., 2022). 6) Ways of cheating. Traditional methods of cheating include making notes on small pieces of paper and keeping them in a pencil box, taking notes on the palm, and leaving the room to read them. In the age of technology, individuals use social media to cheat by contacting others to obtain answers or by searching for answers in the media (Noorbehbahani et al., 2022; Newton & Essex, 2024). 7) Religiosity. How deeply individual religious values live, which affects the decision to cheat (Nafis et al., 2024; Luthfiana et al., 2022). 8) Self-efficacy is an interesting topic for research, which is related to cheating behavior on exams (Nurjayanti et al., 2023), (Fajrianti, 2022), (Agustin et al., 2023).

Cheating behavior can be said to be an act born of a free choice. Jean Paul Sartre emphasizes that humans are free agents responsible for their own choices (Ogbah, 2024; Pane & Adisaputera, 2023; Adewumi et al., 2022). However, this free choice does not demonstrate individual responsibility, as the decision is byinfluenced on external pressures. Some of the pressures that lead students to cheat include difficult material and



exams, excessive homework, anxiety about not getting good grades, and lack of confidence in answering exam questions due to insufficient preparation (Aristin et al., 2023; Efendri & Harahap, 2024). It was found that limited abilities prevented the individual from understanding much of the material, so the examiner decided to cheat. Difficult tasks often trigger anxiety in individuals about their ability to solve the problem, so in the end, cheating becomes a solution. Fear of getting low grades, demands for high grades, fear of failure, lack of time, laziness, and uninteresting topics (Wenzel & Reinhard, 2020; Salehi & Gholampour, 2021; Muqorobin & Kartin, 2022), are pressures commonly experienced by students who cheat because academic results are a measure of one's success. Good academic results affect social esteem. In addition, peer influence is a factor that supports individuals' engagement in cheating behavior (Rahma et al., 2023).

Eric Fromm calls the phenomenon of free decisions that actually make an individual unfree a contradiction of freedom. Eric Fromm, a psychoanalyst, social theorist, and philosopher, formulates human freedom as an absolute for every individual and as something that must be fought for (Apriantika, 2021). When people exercise their free will, they fall into greed (Labudo, 2022), become alienated (Tolibdjanovna, 2022), (Peters, 2022), doubt themselves and life becomes meaningless (Rahim Moosavinia & Tavasoli, 2020). A human being recognizes that they are a separate, independent person, yet they also realize that their happiness depends on their relationships with others (Mustopa & Khair, 2022).

Fromm emphasized that humans fight for their freedom because of their need to relate to and draw strength from others (Zaini & Nisak, 2021; Asril et al., 2023). Related needs are divided into 2 groups: First, the need to belong to something and be autonomous; attachment and freedom. There are five forms of freedom and attachment needs: relatedness, rootedness, transcendence, unity, and identity. Second, the need to understand the world and do activities, which are divided into 4 kinds of needs to understand and do activities, namely: frame of orientation, frame of devotion, excitation, and effectiveness (effectivity) (Sholihah & Indarti, 2021). Freedom, though it has brought someone independence and rationality, has made him isolated and, thereby, anxious and powerless (Peters, 2022; Bethari, 2024).

The contradiction of freedom builds up escape mechanisms formulated by Fromm in three forms: 1) authoritarianism, which is detaching and integrating with things outside the self; 2) destructiveness, which is destroying other forces that threaten itself. Destructiveness is rooted in feelings of loneliness, isolation, and helplessness. Individuals who use this mechanism seek strength not through building relationships but through trying to damage the strength of others, and 3) conformity, which is accepting and allowing oneself to follow the rules that exist outside oneself (Sholihah & Indarti, 2021). The act of cheating is a form of escape mechanism, namely authoritarianism, where a person actually gives up his/her freedom and integrates with the expectations and demands of other parties outside themselves/, such as family expectations for the person to be the best academically and the demands of the world of work that require graduates with good grades.

According to Fromm, there are two dimensions of human freedom. 1) Freedom makes the person a self-determiner or holder of the right to decide something. In this context, cheating is done by an individual based on free decisions. A person uses his/her rights as a decision maker on what actions to take when facing exams. Every decision certainly has a basis. A person bases his/her decisions by looking at the reality or state of oneself who is not ready for the exam, realizing his/her ability to understand a lot of



material. 2) Freedom brings people to alienation. Cheating hurts a person because it contradicts the moral value of honesty. When dishonesty is committed, it can cause conflict within the individual, which is expressed as fear, anxiety, etc. In addition, it provokes disputes between a person and other parties, such as lecturers who emphasize dishonesty, as well as friends who feel unhappy when they observe their actions. These factors contribute to the experience of alienation in a person.

The study examines cheating behavior from the perspective of freedom, as articulated by Eric Fromm, with an emphasis on the contradictions of freedom that arise when individuals cheat on exams and on the impact of such cheating on individual personalities. The difference between this research and other studies is that it focuses on the impact of the contradiction between freedom and individual personality. When an individual decides to cheat, the act contravenes the moral principles (honesty, responsibility, justice) that already exist within the individual. A further impact is the split within the individual, as there is a clash between moral values and the pressure to achieve good grades. By understanding the contradictions and divisions within individuals, counselors can help students, through personal and group guidance, to understand the true meaning of freedom: not merely doing what one wants, but choosing, wisely and responsibly, the actions to be taken so that they do not conflict with moral values. In addition, institutions need to establish rules that help students develop the values of honesty, responsibility, and justice to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

METHOD

The research method used is descriptive, qualitative, and a literature study. Descriptive qualitative research is used to understand and find events, phenomena, and problems faced by humans. What is meant by "events, phenomena, and problems faced by humans" is the decision by students to cheat during exams, which is reflected in freedom, according to Eric Fromm. While the literature study method in this research is used to collect Erich Fromm's thoughts on freedom from various literature as a basis for reflecting on the phenomenon of cheating behavior by students during exams.

Table 1.
Research Stages

Time	Type of activity	Description
2-5 Dec 2023	Distribution and filling of questionnaires by 13 respondents. The researcher sent a google form link containing semi-structured questions to be filled in by the respondents.	Data collection tools through questionnaires are semi-structured questions that explore respondents' experiences related to cheating behavior. The questions asked relate to what they understand related to cheating behavior, whether there are personal experiences related to cheating, feelings when cheating or when seeing friends cheat, what they think about cheating.
6-7 Dec 2023	Collection of questionnaire results. Researchers took the results of filling out the questionnaire from Google Form and summarized them.	There are data that can be seen in the reduction section



11-19 Dec 2023	Observation of exam implementation. This was done by the researcher while guarding the exam.	In the exam room. Observations are made before the exam, during the exam and after the exam..
	Face-to-face and telephone interviews with respondents	Questions used in semi-structured interviews, following and deepening the answers given by respondents to previous questions.. The time and place of the interview was agreed with the respondent: home and campus.

Table 2.
Data Collection Process

Data collection process	Questionnaire submission via google form	Collecting answers from the questionnaire	Coding the data with phrases such as: "feelings," "opinions," "ways," "why," "reasons," "consequences," "intentions"
	Conduct interviews according to agreed time and place	Interview results (table 4)	
Observation process	Observations were made before, during and after the exam	Before the exam: Ensure the exam room is clean and the desks for the participants are free from graffiti	Give examinees the opportunity to collect cell phones, notes, books, clean up scribbles on the palm of the hand
	Submission of rules for exams and consequences if caught cheating	Observation during the exam: The researcher looked at each examinee as they worked on the questions.	Participants who showed signs of cheating and/or helping friends were approached by the researcher.
	Observation after the exam: The researcher observes participants collecting results and leaving the room.	Meeting participants who are caught cheating and or helping friends cheat for interviews	
Interview questions	How did you feel when you were asked to fill out a questionnaire with the theme of cheating?	What do you think about the phenomenon of cheating?	How do students usually cheat? How to help a friend cheat?



	Why do people decide to cheat during exams? Why decide to help a friend cheat?	What consequences will be faced when their actions are discovered (both those who helped and those who cheated)?	How do you feel after cheating or after helping a friend cheat?
	How do you feel when you are caught cheating or helping a friend cheat?	What intention do you set to improve yourself?	
Interview duration and venue	Interviews for examinees caught cheating or helping friends during the exam are conducted in the researcher's room for a duration of 15-30 minutes.	Place of interview for respondents who filled out the questionnaire: agreed upon with the respondent: some at home, some at the campus.	Duration of interviews at home and on campus: 30-1 hour

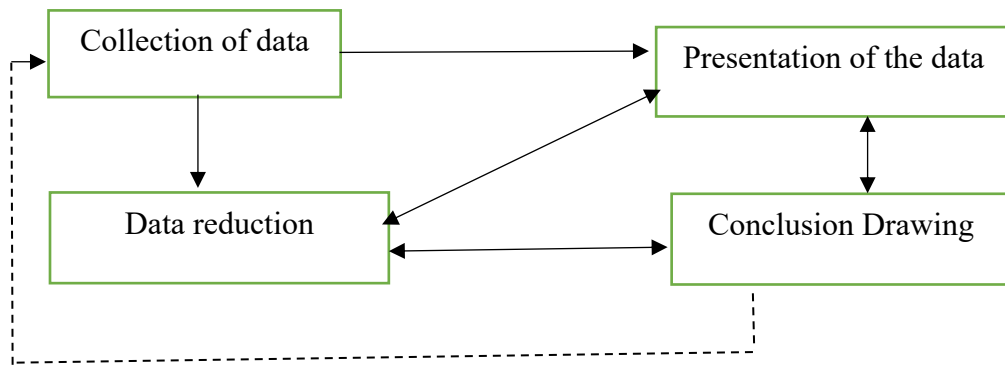
The data collection instruments for descriptive qualitative methods include interviews with respondents and classroom observations during the exam. Data collection tools for questionnaires and interviews include semi-structured questions. Respondents were students from three universities and 3 study programs, selected through purposive sampling. We contacted them personally, explaining the purpose and process we and they would undertake for data collection. Once they had consented, we sent them the questionnaire. To ensure confidentiality, we allowed them to write their own names or use pseudonyms. We also did not disclose their identities in this article, by mutual agreement. The criteria for selecting respondents were that they were active university students, understood the topic, were willing to participate in the research, and were open to answering the questions. The researcher guarantees the confidentiality of respondents' identities. In addition, there is no coercion of respondents who are unwilling to provide the required information, and respect for respondents' personhood is maintained (Nur & Utami, 2022). Research time December 2023 - January 2024.

Of the 25 respondents requested, 13 were willing to complete the Google Form sent by the researcher. Respondents who did not fill in gave reasons due to unsupportive networks, while other respondents did not give reasons. Triangulation used in this research is the triangulation of data sources, namely respondents from 3 universities and from 3 different faculties/programs. In addition, there is a triangulation of methods, namely filling out a questionnaire with semi-structured questions that refer to the topic of cheating and feelings that arise after cheating through Google Form, interviews with semi-structured questions to explore the results of the questionnaire, field observations to test the validity of the data from the questionnaire and interviews, and sources from the literature. The data validation process used information from the questionnaire to develop semi-structured interview questions. The interview results were aligned with the observational findings and the literature on the topic. The results show that questionnaire data obtained through interviews are consistent with field observations and literature. Data from these various sources helped the researcher in drawing conclusions.



Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model (Rijali, 2019), which went through several stages: 1) The process of collecting data through interviews, observations, and documentation recorded in the text, 2) Data reduction is the simplification of data as needed. Data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation are reduced by summarizing, selecting, and grouping them according to essential, less critical, and unimportant measures. 3) Presentation of data after it has been summarized. Data are presented as Interview Notes (CW), Field Notes (CL), and Documentation Notes (CD), facilitating rapid, straightforward analysis. Each data point that has been coded, analyzed in the form of reflection, and presented in text form, and 4) Conclusion. Based on the reduced and presented data, researchers draw conclusions supported by substantial evidence at the data collection stage. The conclusion answers the questions formulated by the researcher from the outset. The conclusion relates to the formulated hypothesis.

Diagram 1.
 Research Paradigm



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the data reduction results, four main categories underlie cheating behavior: reason, opportunity, method, and pressure. Substantively, the reasons for cheating are driven by the desire to obtain a high GPA, to meet external expectations, and by limited mastery of the exam material. Opportunities for cheating arise from weak supervision, peer tolerance, and online exam formats that permit unauthorized access. In terms of methods, this behavior is typically carried out with the help of friends, by making small notes, or by opening reference materials in an unauthorized manner. Meanwhile, the pressure felt by students varies from fear of punishment and failure to feelings of guilt and shame.

Table 4.
 Results of Data Reduction

Reasons for cheating	Opportunities to cheat	Ways of cheating	Pressure Forms
Individual desire to get a good Grade Point Average (GPA)	Weak supervision during the exam	Getting help from friends	Fear of being punished
Insecure if GPA is low	Friends tolerate dishonest behavior	Taking notes on a small piece of paper	Fear of failure



Expectations of parents, institutions for individuals to get a good GPA	Online exam form	Opening a reference book	Worried about getting caught
Job demands - Good GPA	Helped by friends to cheat	Cheating on friends' work	Feeling guilty
There is too much exam material			Embarrassed if you get a bad grade
Test questions are difficult			Do not want to disappoint parents
Cheating because there is an opportunity			

Based on the interview results presented in Table 5, various reasons were identified that encouraged students to cheat, as well as the feelings that followed. On the one hand, many reasons for cheating are related to a lack of academic preparation, such as poor time management, difficulty understanding material, as well as a rushed learning system and external pressures such as parental expectations, job demands, and peer influence. On the other hand, after cheating, college students experience a variety of negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, guilt, shame, and regret, especially if they are first-time perpetrators. However, there is also a sense of relief and even happiness when their actions go unnoticed or when they achieve goals, such as obtaining a high GPA. This pattern of emotional response shows the inner conflict experienced by students, where the act of cheating is not only triggered by situational factors but also leaves complex psychological scars.

Table 5.
Interview Results

Reasons for cheating	Feelings after cheating
A lot of time is used to watch videos, tiktok, play games so that there is less time to study or even not because they are bored with difficult material and a lot of material.	Anxiety, restlessness, fear because: Their actions are known to the lecturer Being sanctioned according to campus rules such as being suspended and not getting grades
he material is too much so it cannot be mastered	Guilt or the feeling of being chased for committing a dishonorable act. This feeling arises in those who are first-time cheaters.
Give up quickly when there are difficulties in learning the material	A feeling of regret for making the decision to cheat. For those who are first time offenders
Overnight rush system, no preparation to master the material. A lot of material cannot be mastered in just one night	Embarrassed with friends who saw her cheating and with friends who helped her cheat.
Very rarely repeats lecture material. Not even involved in working on group assignments given by the lecturer	Relieved that friends who saw their actions kept their mouths shut and did not report their actions to the lecturer.



Bullied by being compared to other friends	It is quiet and safe when their actions go unnoticed. This is usually an incentive for them to do it again next time
Feeling embarrassed when friends know their GPA is low	Happy to get a good GPA even if it was obtained through bad means. This happens to those who want to get a gift from their parents or get the job they want
Parents give certain value targets that must be achieved	
Want to make parents proud with good grades	
There is an agreement with parents to be given a reward if the GPA is good	
Cheating friends get good grades	
Friends who cheat don't get caught and don't get punished	
Get a job offer with good GPA requirements	
The exam supervisor was busy with work and did not pay attention to the exam participants.	
Friends help provide correct answers	
Friends protect by keeping his cheating a secret	
Online exam form where there is an opportunity to view notes	

Based on the observations in Table 6 below, strict supervision and examination procedures have successfully reduced, although not eliminated, cheating attempts during the exam. On December 11 and 13, the exam environment was safe, with participants adhering to instructions to clear their records and hand over prohibited items. However, on December 15 and 18, there were still attempts to cheat by sharing answers, which were promptly addressed by supervisors with reprimands and warnings. This pattern indicates that, although awareness of the rules has been socialized, some participants still attempt to exploit loopholes to cheat, underscoring the importance of active and consistent supervision to uphold academic integrity.

Table 6.
 Observation Results

Date	Incident
11 Dec	The examinees were asked to clean the notes made on their palms, collect books, notes, mobile phones, and throw away small pieces of paper containing notes, before the exam took place. Some participants immediately went out of the room to wash their hands and throw away small pieces of paper in the trash. This shows that there were notes made on their palms and notes on small pieces of paper..
	Researchers conveyed the exam requirements and consequences if participants were caught cheating
	The atmosphere during the exam was safe because the supervisors (researchers) carried out their supervisory duties well.



13 Dec	<p>Exam participants were asked to clear the notes made on their palms, put away their notebooks, cell phones, and throw away small pieces of paper containing notes, before the exam begins</p> <hr/> <p>Researchers conveyed the exam requirements and consequences if participants were caught cheating</p> <hr/> <p>The atmosphere during the exam was safe because the supervisors (researchers) carried out their supervisory duties well</p>
15 Dec	<p>Exam participants were asked to clear the notes made on their palms, put away their notebooks, cell phones, and throw away small pieces of paper containing notes, before the exam begins</p> <hr/> <p>Researchers conveyed the exam requirements and consequences if participants were caught cheating</p> <hr/> <p>There was an exam participant who intentionally placed the answer sheet that allowed a friend beside him to cheat. The researcher reprimanded the person concerned so that the activity of helping friends cheat was stopped</p>
18 Dec	<p>Exam participants were asked to clear the notes made on their palms, put away their notebooks, cell phones, and throw away small pieces of paper containing notes, before the exam begins</p> <hr/> <p>Researchers conveyed the exam requirements and consequences if participants were caught cheating</p> <hr/> <p>There are exam participants who have finished working on the questions, collected the exam papers and when they are about to leave, give the exam papers with the answers written on them to friends who want help.</p> <hr/> <p>The researcher stopped the act and called the two perpetrators to give a stern warning. The act of helping a friend cheat was successfully thwarted</p>

In addition, some opportunities make it easier for individuals to cheat. These opportunities are: 1) supervisors do not carry out their supervisory duties properly. 2) Friends help individuals cheat by providing answers. 3) Friends help by keeping quiet about cheating behavior carried out by the individual. 4) The online exam model opens up opportunities for individuals to cheat.

These reasons include: First, cheating behavior is carried out because there is an individual need that must be fulfilled, for example, to make parents proud, get what parents promised, and to get a job according to their wishes. Second, cheating behavior is undertaken to meet the expectations of others, such as parents and institutions. Third, cheating behavior is motivated by the desire to increase self-confidence; individuals who are embarrassed by low GPAs, who fear being known by friends, and who are afraid of being bullied because of poor results.

Various emotions arise after cheating behavior is committed. These feelings include anxiety, fear, and restlessness if the despicable act is discovered by the institution and the individual is subject to academic sanctions under applicable regulations. Feelings of shame and regret arise because the individual recognizes that the act was dishonest. The individual also feels ashamed upon realizing that his action is known to other friends, even though the friend has not disclosed it to others. These feelings arise specifically in



an individual who first commits cheating. A sense of calm arises when the individual is certain that his actions are unknown to the school and that he himself will not receive academic sanctions.

Discussion

Based on the study results, several challenges were identified that individuals experience. 1) The struggle between the values that are lived, namely, honesty and the desire to get good grades, to get gifts from parents, or to make parents and educational institutions proud. A person recognizes that cheating is not the appropriate means of achieving goals. However, the reality is that a person who is not prepared for the exam and who feels pressured to escape alienation or feelings of isolation is more likely to cheat. Pressures as reported in the interviews include: family expectations, institutional pressures to achieve good academic performance, work-related demands, and peer bullying when individuals receive poor grades. If the person do not meet what others expect or want, he will be isolated. Fromm explains this relationship in the context of needs and emphasizes that there are other needs related to the need for relatedness, namely the need to submit to others or certain groups.

According to Fromm, humans have five needs: relatedness, rootedness, transcendence, identity, and a frame of orientation. One need closely related to an individual's decision to cheat is the need for relatedness, namely, that what the individual achieves is related to other parties (Saumantri & Sanusi, 2022). As social beings, humans do not live alone; they live with others. It is emphasized that a person's behavior in society and in relationships with others is directly related to their freedom. Humans are aware that when their bond with nature is broken, they will be isolated. Therefore, humans need to establish new bonds with people or groups (Sholihah & Indarti, 2021; Saumantri, 2022; Nugroho, 2023). An individual's decision to cheat on an exam is also based on the need to maintain relationships with individuals or groups outside themselves, such as family, peers, and institutions.

The decision to cheat to fulfill the need to relate shows that there is an attachment to parties outside of themselves. 2) The struggle between the desire to get good results and weak efforts to get the expected results. In the interview results, it was found that there was almost no time to repeat the lecture material for various reasons, such as a lot of material, cramming all night, a lot of time spent on pleasure, namely watching videos, etc. 3) The struggle is related to feelings. From the data obtained, it is known that after cheating, various negative feelings such as anxiety, restlessness, fear, regret, guilt and shame. For example, an individual is embarrassed by a friend who has helped him cheat. Hartono characterizes his friend's actions as socially passive, allowing others to see the answers (Harahap et al., 2022). According to Gehring and Pavela, this kind of assistance is referred to as facilitating academic dishonesty (Buana & Soetjningsih, 2020). 4) The struggle between increasing self-confidence by accepting failure with sportsmanship and committing mischief in order to avoid failure and achieve the goal of getting good grades. 5) The struggle between using the opportunity to cheat, for example, the supervisor is busy with his business, or a friend offers an answer to be copied, and living by the value of honesty. 6) The struggle between accepting the consequences, namely the sanctions for cheating, and keeping quiet about the act because of fear. Feelings of anxiety, fear, regret and shame usually arise when individuals are faced with the failure to live the value of honesty that has been instilled in them.



Observing the results obtained from this study, it can be said that 1), when faced with the need for attachment to others and alienation from oneself, person tend to prioritize the need for attachment over alienation. Why does this person prefer to prioritize attachment over alienation? The choice to meet others' expectations by earning good grades and ignoring the moral values that must be lived out socially reveals the individual's dependence on others. Individuals need support, appreciation, and recognition from others; however, dependence can diminish independence and self-confidence (Theobold et al., 2024). 2) To avoid alienation from others, a person chooses to cheat so that attachments to others (getting good grades to please family, institutions, not being bullied by friends) can be strengthened so that the individual does not feel alienated from the world outside. In other words, cheating is an individual's attempt to fulfill the need for attachment to others and avoid alienation from others. On the other hand, cheating makes individuals experience estrangement and alienation from themselves, which is apparent in feelings of fear, anxiety, and restlessness. This is the contradiction of freedom that results in the struggle or division experienced by an individual when a person decide to cheat

These struggles are, according to Fromm, a contradiction of freedom: in freedom, the individual actually has a hidden desire to abandon it. The further consequence is that the individual experiences alienation which leads him to escape. There are three types of escape according to Fromm, namely authoritarianism, destruction and adjustment. Authoritarianism, where the individual surrenders personal independence and combines with someone or something outside himself to obtain power that he does not have. This is evident from experiences related to cheating methods. The individual relinquishes personal independence and allows himself to see the work of friends who are deliberately placed to be seen, or to obtain sheets containing answers. Individuals feel safe cheating because of peer support (Zhang & Yin, 2020). In addition, individuals relinquish personal independence and allow themselves to be controlled by the allure of social media, which leads them to set aside their primary task of studying and to be influenced by peer bullying. Individuals lack the strength to resist external forces that are detrimental.

Destruction, namely escaping from loneliness by seeking strength not through building relationships or relationships but through efforts to destroy the strength of others. In the context of cheating, when an individual cheats and receives a good grade, a friend who works honestly becomes angry and disappointed. When an individual succeeds in destroying the power of an honest friend by giving rise to negative feelings such as anger and disappointment, at the same time, the individual feels strong because he experiences happiness, satisfaction, and peace because he gets a good grade. Such positive feelings become his strength to keep going.

Adjustment is an escape from loneliness through surrender and the adoption of others' expectations. Individuals become robots that follow others' wishes. Based on the interview results, the decision to cheat is driven by the urge to obtain good grades to fulfill the wishes of the family and the institution. Individuals adjust to meet others' expectations. Individuals are alienated from themselves all there is is automatism, conformity, submission, and destructiveness (Alexander, 2021)

Fromm emphasized that humans are flexible, ready-to-be-formed creatures because of their perfect human abilities, namely the ability to achieve their goals (Nurjati et al., 2022). Humans must do something to achieve optimal development (Yogiswari, 2021). The campus environment is a place that offers opportunities for individuals to be formed and to shape themselves into good people. Students are the young generation who



are in a period of development. They require personal assistance or Guidance and Counseling to overcome personal struggles and determine the most appropriate choices to achieve their learning goals. Through personal assistance in Guidance and Counseling, individuals are expected to live by moral principles that prioritize honesty in acting, speaking, and behaving; mutual respect; helping; responsibility for tasks; sportsmanship in accepting the results of struggle or effort; and openness in acknowledging mistakes.

In addition, the campus should cultivate scientific responsibility, where students are trained to think truthfully, rationally, objectively, and critically. So there needs to be clarity about the rules and standards, there needs to be socialization of ethics related to values, norms, and morals (Rachman et al., 2022). Buana & Soetjningsih (2020) emphasized again the need for a standardized system of rules that includes strict sanctions for perpetrators of academic fraud and rigorous supervision. For students, it is necessary to improve moral reasoning, namely, thinking about what individuals do in their interactions with others (Maeda, 2021). The campus needs a BK bureau that fulfills its role in providing personal and group assistance to help individuals who experience difficulties when considering cheating. In addition, the theme or topic of honesty in taking exams is one of the topics in personal and group assistance

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the contradiction of freedom is explained by cheating behavior as follows: individuals cheat so that the need for attachment to others is fulfilled, but at the same time become unfree with themselves because they violate the moral values that exist within them. Cheating is an individual's attempt to satisfy the need for attachment to others and to avoid alienation, while, in relation to oneself, the individual experiences a lack of freedom due to the shackles of anxiety, fear, restlessness, and a lack of independence, which contribute to low self-confidence. Counselors should help individuals develop self-confidence and internalize positive values, such as honesty, justice, mutual respect, and responsibility, by employing person-centered techniques in the counseling process. This study has several limitations. First, the number of respondents is small, so the results do not necessarily reflect the campus environment as a whole. So other studies can examine the same topic with a larger number of respondents.

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