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What Makes a Business Person a Criminal: An Examination Through Academic Dishonesty

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What Makes a Business Person a Criminal:
An Examination Through Academic Dishonesty

by

Dakota Lee Fraley

A thesis submitted to the College of Psychology and Liberal Arts at
Florida Institute of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Industrial Organizational Psychology
in
Psychology

Melbourne, Florida
May, 2017

We the undersigned committee hereby approve the attached thesis, “What Makes a Business Person a Criminal: An Examination Through Academic Dishonesty” by Dakota Lee Fraley.

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Abstract

Title: What Makes a Business Person a Criminal: An Examination Through Academic Dishonesty

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The present study examined the interaction between environmental and individual difference characteristics in predicting perceptions of white-collar crime and likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty. It adopted a cross discipline approach that pulls literature from criminology, industrial organizational psychology and academic dishonesty to create the theoretical framework for what causes a person to deviate. General strain theory, rational choice theory and social exchange theory were employed to explain how integrity, perceived stress and perceived injustice could predict likelihood to commit academic dishonesty and perceptions of white-collar crime. Additional analyses looked at how self-control might moderate the relationships between perceived stress and injustice on the outcome variables. Overall, only integrity significantly predicted likelihood to commit academic dishonesty and perceptions of white-collar crime. It was also found that females perceive academic dishonesty as more severe, but are also more likely to endorse committing academic dishonesty than males. Implications for the white-collar crime literature and future directions are discussed.

Keywords: white-collar crime, academic dishonesty, workplace deviance, integrity, general strain theory, rational choice theory

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What Makes a Business Person a Criminal: An Examination Through Academic
Dishonesty

When people think of criminals they may picture low-class individuals with nothing to lose, who are willing to damage others for self-preservation. In fact, the original theories about crime were based around these mental images of inadequacies in life, focusing on poverty and lack of resources (Agnew, 1992). Offenders were described as typically low class individuals; those under pressure because they could not obtain something they valued. Theorists at the time were concerned with crimes like drug abuse, larceny, assault, and violence, with offenders characterized as people who did not have something, and because they were trapped by their surroundings, they were unable to obtain it (Bucy, Formby, Raspanti, & Rooney, 2008). In the case of drug abuse and theft, committing these acts was an escape from the individual's current situation: Drugs as an escape from reality, and theft as an escape from poverty. These initial theories of crime developed a strong foundation for understanding crime at the time, and were fundamental in understanding what are thought of as typical offenders.

Historical Perspective

There is a great contrast in the picture of criminals, when trying to describe the typical white collar offender: Educated, successful, business people who have typically played 'by the rules.' In 1949, Edwin Sutherland brought forth an idea that challenged the traditional perceptions of crimes and of criminal motivations, when he coined the term *white collar crime*. This first definition referred to an offender with a high social standing, committing crimes inside of businesses or organizations. These new 'business offenders' were committing crimes for an entirely different purpose and in a whole new manner. As business and industry was on the rise, so too was the need to understand the rising crime rates inside of them. However, with the newness of the concept and the inability of current theories to characterize white collar criminals, a new perspective in analyzing these types of crimes was needed.

With this newly defined concept of "white collar crime" (WCC), Sutherland was one of the first researchers to begin arguing that this type of upper-level crime occurred, and he proposed some of the first characteristics possibly linked to it (Wilcox & Cullen, 2010). Since Sutherland's initial definition of WCC there has been much debate over its functionality, because the initial definition did not yield much benefit in predicting white-collar offenses, but only created a profile of the types of criminals that are found at high levels of organizations. His initial

definition was targeted at C-Suite level executive type crimes, or similar, that occurred at high levels within an organization. As a sociologist, Sutherland's initial explanation did not yield enough power to inform government and legislators on WCC in a way that it would allow for it to be legally defined and prosecuted. The simple awareness of the abuse and mishaps that occur in business, did not make them 'criminal' acts in the view of the government (Wilcox & Cullen, 2010).

Many disciplines contributed to differing definitions of WCC, hoping to overcome the weaknesses in Sutherland's initial definition. Sociologists focused on tying explanations of WCC to defining the criminal elite, or C-Suite offenders (Coleman, 1987). Criminology took a different direction and started looking at the nature of the crime, interested in characterizing *why* white collar offenders committed crimes (Eaton & Korach, 2016). Unfortunately, each definition catered to its own field's specific interest, but lacked a formal, legal framework for white collar crime (Green, 2006). It was not until 1970, that Edelhertz gave a more definitive legal definition of white-collar crime:

An illegal act or series of illegal acts committed by nonphysical means and by concealment or guile, to obtain money or property, to avoid the payment or loss of money or property, or to obtain business or personal advantage (Edelhertz, 1970, np)

This definition set a standard for future legal discussions of WCC, including the definition that would be used to convict white collar criminals. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) now defines white collar crimes in the following manner:

These (White Collar Crimes) are characterized by deceit, concealment, or violation of trust and are not dependent on the application or threat of physical force or violence. The motivation behind these crimes is financial – to obtain or avoid losing money, property, or services or to secure a personal or business advantage (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1989, np).

The new emphasis for WCC was now placed on the way in which the crime is committed, as well as its motivations (Green, 2004). The complex origin of WCC has held the construct in its youth, in terms of empirical studies (Cliff & Desilets, 2014). While the crimes are now well-recognized and have often made headlines (e.g., Enron, Bernie Madoff, etc.), the motivations of these criminals remains clouded in the literature. Crime theories have historically been limited in their application to white collar crime, but some current theories have been adapted to address white collar offenders (Agnew, 2009).

General Theories of White-Collar Crime

Two theories stand out for having consistent theoretical and logical support in the WCC literature. Each explains a slightly different type of white collar offender and the justifications behind that offense. First is the principle theory of all crime, general strain theory (GST), which proposes that the inability to accomplish

goals, or stress caused by certain stimuli, leads to deviance (Agnew, 1992).

Rational choice theory (RCT) is the other prominent approach to WCC, and it proposes that crime is committed as a conscious decision of weighing pros vs. cons (Lovegrove, 1998). There are some other theories of crime that add incremental explanations of WCC that will be discussed, but for the purposes of this research GST and RCT will be the main focus.

General Strain Theory. General strain theory proposes that an inability to reach a desired goal, or the blockage of said goal, builds frustration in an individual, which may then elicit criminal behavior (Agnew, 1992). The strain breaks down into three primary stressors: the inability to reach desired goals, the removal of something considered positive, and the introduction of a negative stimulus. According to the theory, once enough stress has been built up in an individual it creates an imbalance, or a perception of unfairness, in the person. This imbalance is used to justify lashing out, possibly by committing a crime. While the theory is often used to explain violent outbursts in low class individuals due to goal blockage, the fundamentals of the theory work very well in a WCC context, if framed slightly differently (Langton & Piquero, 2007).

The concept of goal blockage, in particular, is well-suited to the business world. One can imagine that, as people acquire jobs, or move through organizations, they have a particular mind set of what they should be offered for their services. As promotions are denied, bonuses not awarded, or personal need

increases, the perception of the position a person was once in, changes. This lack of expected follow through from the organization creates a strenuous environment for its employee's (Agnew, 2009). An additional strain may occur in an organization with introduction of a negative stimulus and the removal of a positive stimulus. When organizations are acquired or go through crises, many things about the organization may change, often leading to layoffs, change of management, or financial troubles. These are just a few examples of how an individual's expectation of rewards can become challenged, leading to a strenuous environment that promotes employee backlash (Langton & Piquero, 2007). Typically, GST is used to explain lower level types of WCC, such as fraud or embezzlement. In other words, things that occur at an individual level due to a person perceiving stress caused by the organization.

Rational Choice Theory. Rational choice theory suggests crime occurs because a person weighs the benefits of the crime and the benefits outweigh the costs, leading to an action that person believes is rational (Coleman & Fararo, 1992). RCT incorporates three parts: the immediate environment where the act can occur (e.g., a corporation), the reason for the act, and the chance of getting away with the act (Wilcox & Cullen, 2010). The higher forms of WCC, such as ones that occur at a company level, or are for the benefit of the company, are more easily explained through RCT than GST. Many organizations are result-driven, where process is often not as important as product. This nature feeds into the idea that getting the result desired is more important than how they get there, encouraging

corporate crime, particularly when it relates to the organization as a whole. This approach causes problems in white collar crime detection, since many higher forms of white collar crime are actually 'beneficial' to the company, or give the illusion of success, often slipping through problem detection (Paternoster & Simpson, 1996). The corporate, result-driven climate sets the stage for all three components of RCT: an environment where it can occur; giving employee's incentive for results rather than process; and focusing more on reviewing errors than investigating successes, making it difficult to get caught. Altogether, corporations create a strong, motivating environment for driven employees to use crime to achieve the goals emphasized by the organization.

Control Balance Theory. Beyond RCT and GST control-balance theory and moral theory offer additional explanations to caveats of WCC. Control-balance theory states that actions occur in a balance of perceived control vs. actual control (Piquero & Piquero, 2006). When there is an imbalance in perceived control by a person vs. actual control, that person has to act to regain that balance. When a person is given more power than they feel should be lauded, they may use the surplus to begin exploring options, particularly in the form of exploitation. This may help explain the often-difficult notion of executive crimes. Why would people with such power and prestige, feel the need to commit a crime? Control balance theory would suggest that it is this power and prestige that leads to the behavior; the person has an excess of control and, in turn, exploits the position.

Moral Theory. Moral Theory, similar to RCT, taps into how one perceives actions, and how those perceptions shape the individual's behaviors (Green, 2006). In an organization, some immoral behaviors may be tolerated, while others may be perceived negatively. For example, petty crimes that may hurt profits, such as embezzlement, may quickly get someone fired and the organization would clearly consider the behavior wrong or immoral. While more strategic crimes such as tax fraud, may actually benefit the organization and thus are perceived as "moral", or at least tolerable (Henning, 2009). Moral theory explains how entire organizations can become corrupt without anyone noticing.

While crime theories create a strong backbone for understanding white collar crime, they are not particularly helpful in the creation of measures to tap into the underlying constructs that lead to white collar crimes. What is required is a more direct, empirically rigorous approach in order to truly understand white-collar offenders.

Workplace Deviance

The field of Industrial Organizational (I/O) Psychology provides empirical emphasis to be able to practically study white-collar offenders. While the field itself is often not directly interested in the area of WCC, it studies a closely related proxy variable to WCC: workplace deviance. Workplace deviance as the name entails captures minor forms of deviance in the workplace, such as absenteeism, showing up late, or petty theft (Robinson & Benett, 1995). Unlike WCC, vast

amounts of the research in I/O psychology has studied this idea of what makes a person deviate in the workplace.

Social Exchange Theory

In recent years, there has been a major rise in the I/O literature revolving around behaviors in the workplace that are damaging to either the organization or the people within it, and how these behaviors may arise. A major theory that has been used to contribute to the present understanding of workplace deviance is social exchange theory (SET; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Social exchange theory looks at the way interactions between people build expectations of future interactions. Paralleling closely to how people think of monetary exchange (i.e., money is given with the expectation of a service, or product), social exchange theory applies this same principle to people: People have interactions with others, which have an underlying expectancy of 'returns' from the other person. These expectancies are characterized by things like trust, relationships and commitment (Blau, 1964). Once these expectations are formed, people use them to guide their behavior as a heuristic. Like how people expect friends and family to treat them differently than strangers. Much like the relationship with friends, people who create a positive expectation with those they work around do not feel the need to deviate. While people who work in a hostile environment may develop negative expectations of those around them, and may not feel a responsibility to their co-workers or their organizations. This has been used in the WPD literature as an

explanation of the process through which people deviate. If people feel that their environment is hostile or negative towards they are more likely to act out (Guay, Choi, Oh, Mitchell, Mount, & Shin, 2016).

Social exchange theory has been fundamental in the workplace deviance literature and accurately depicts the way in which someone could choose to deviate. While SET explains deviance at a more direct interactional level, coupling SET with the theories of crime (GST and RCT) provides a broader picture of WCC. The theories of crime give insights into why people in the organization may be displaced to act against the organization, and SET extends on this by giving a more directional, measurable way of seeing when this change occurs in a person.

Antecedents of Workplace Deviance

Injustice. Most people are not naturally deviant, yet in the same scope, deviance does not occur in a vacuum. Some combination of who the person is and the situation they are in can serve to create an opportunity for deviance, even for the most typical employee. One of the biggest predictors of this deviance is injustice in the workplace (Dalal, 2005). Injustice however is not a unidimensional antecedent; there are different types of injustice that can occur: injustice that happens between people; injustice that happens because of flaws in the system, or oversights in the application of rules; and injustice that occurs because the people applying the rules apply them unfairly. People's perception of injustice tends to be self-serving, focusing on outcomes that do not favor them, and tending to perceive

injustices that occur in the workplace as directly related to them, or an attack, even if it was simply an oversight (Cropanzano & Moliner, 2013).

The WPD literature breaks down injustice into four primary branches (Hershcovis et al., 2007): procedural, distributive, interpersonal and informational. Procedural injustice relates to rules and policies and unfairness in their application or conception. For example, promotions based solely on charisma in a job that requires an advanced degree would be an unfair procedure and could generate feelings of procedural injustice. Distributive injustice is similar in that it focuses on the organizations' policies, but distributive injustice relates to how those policies are enacted. The policy may be written in such a way that is fair, but the implementation of that policy produces an unfair result. Interpersonal injustice is injustice that occurs between people, like employee mistreatment. Lastly informational injustice is how well the person feels they understand the information behind why something happened.

Perceiving injustice typically leads to one of two responses: hostile attribution or negative affect (Dalal, 2005; Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Hershcovis et al., 2007). Hostile attribution is viewing something as dangerous to the individual, creating an inherent negative view of the person or procedure. Once a negative view is established it is difficult to heal that perception (Cropanzano & Moliner, 2013). Negative affect taps into the characterization of the emotions of the individual; how much negativity one feels. Injustice in a person with a negative

disposition is more likely to affect him or her to the point of reaction (Hoobler, 2013).

Stress and Strain. Stress, similar to injustice in work, creates a difficult environment, which in turn can lead to WPD (Mathew, 2014). In the WPD literature there are two primary types of stressors: organizational stressors and personal stressors. Organizational stressors are things that occur because of organizational interactions, such as low pay, excessive travel, etc. These are things that the organization does, or has control over, that can cause a person to perceive stress. Whereas personal stressors are based on interactions, for example, having a difficult boss, or unruly subordinates – things that occur at the individual level in the organization (Henle & Gross, 2013).

Stressors alone do not immediately elicit negative behaviors - people are able to experience considerable stressors without necessarily reacting negatively. Self-control is one of the well-established moderators of stressors, acting as a buffer and reducing the likelihood of engaging in reactive behaviors that could be perceived negatively (Bordia, Restubog, & Tang, 2008). Those high in self-control are less likely to act out when placed in stressful situations. Bordia et al. (2008), in a 3-study design, examined the moderating effect that self-control has between contract breaches and incidents of workplace deviance. The first two studies established that contract breach predicts WPD and found mediators in the form of revenge cognition and feelings of personal violation. Revenge cognition is the

cognitive process of thinking about or planning revenge towards another individual or an organization, much like hostile attribution. Personal violation is the degree to which the individual feels personally attacked by the actions (i.e., the breach of contract). The final study used a sample of 204 employees examining contract breach, feelings of violation, revenge cognition, self-control and history of WPD. Their study supported the hypothesis of self-control as a moderator: those high in self-control were less likely to deviate after a contract breach than those low. Their study also supported the hypothesis that self-control is used as a buffer against negative workplace triggers, which, absent self-control, would lead to workplace deviance.

The workplace deviance literature focuses a great deal on understanding the kinds of environmental factors that can lead to deviance. Deviance does not happen simply because of a negative environment, though; it takes the right kind of person in that environment in order to act out. That is where the research on personality comes into play: Given the right environment, what kind of person will deviate?

Personality

The study of personality's relationship to white collar crime is still in its infancy. Most studies are limited in their ability to access meaningful populations for analysis (Cliff & Desilets, 2014). Despite this, personality still plays a fundamental roll in understanding what makes a white-collar offender. It is not enough to simply have the means; a person must also have the motivation to commit. Some research in the area has been able to identify meaningful research

that looks directly at WCC, however the majority of research has been theoretically linked through other proxy variables such as WPD and academic dishonesty. In addition, much of the attention to WCC has been focused on creating preventative systems, or focused on identification and punishment of offenders, rather than who the offenders are (Braithwaite, 1985). These limitations make direct links to WCC and personality difficult, but not impossible.

Self-Control

Despite the aforementioned drawbacks, some recent literature has been able to evaluate how some batteries of personality relate to WCC. Self-control, being one of the foremost constructs studied in the WCC field, refers to the degree to which a person is able to regulate their own behaviors (Blickle, Schlegel, Fassbender, & Klein, 2006). In other words, a person's ability to defy reflexive action and think through responses for more favorable outcomes (Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone, 2004). Impulsivity – generally characterized as the opposite of self-control – has similar relevance to WCC. It is one's lack of ability to control their reactivity to situations, leading to behavior ignorant of its consequences (Magid & Colder, 2007). These two constructs, while appearing as two ends of one continuum, are typically measured and examined as separate constructs. Self-control has been discussed much in the industrial organizational psychology literature, since, as mentioned in the previous section, it is also a strong predictor of

favorable workplace outcomes and moderator of negative ones (de Boer, van Hooft, & Bakker, 2015).

De Boer et al. (2015) conducted a two-part study that first examined the relationship of self-control to contextual forms of performance: organizational citizenship behavior, proactive coping, initiative and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is characterized by engaging in non-job related tasks that act to benefit the organization, such as assisting a coworker, or cleaning the common space, etc. Proactive coping is how an individual is able to predict negative outcomes and act accordingly to avoid their occurrence, or to make them less impactful (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997). In their sample of 296 respondents de Boer et al. (2015) found that self-control was strongly predictive of all measured forms of contextual performance. In a follow-up study, that included CWBs, self-control was a significant negative predictor of CWBs. Self-control also stands as one of the strongest deterrents of most facets of workplace deviance, including aggression in addition to CWBs (de Boer et al., 2015; Douglas & Martinko, 2001). Self-control has been primarily studied as a moderator in its relationship to workplace deviance, with those high in self-control less likely to engage in deviance when a situation triggers them, while those that are more impulsive are more likely to engage in deviance when instigated (Bordia et al., 2008)

Blickle et al. (2006) conducted one of the most recent studies examining the personality of white collar criminals compared to non-offending managers. They

sampled 150 managers and 76 white collar offenders who had held similar positions. They found that white collar criminals were higher in hedonism, narcissism, and conscientiousness. They were also lower in behavioral self-control. This further supports the notion that self-control is not only meaningful for minor forms of deviance, but also for major forms, like WCC. Since their study, there have been some theoretical contributions in the WCC literature regarding self-control, particularly as it relates to lower levels of white collar crime (e.g., petty fraud, embezzlement; Eaton & Korach, 2016). While self-control is at the forefront logically and research-wise, it is not the only construct of interest when trying to understand WCC offending.

Integrity

Integrity is commonly characterized as the extent to which people follow and abide by moral principles (Gomez Rodriguez, 2014). In the workplace, integrity resembles moral obligation, with a combination of understanding and abiding by expected rules. It has some construct overlap with conscientiousness in that both integrity and conscientiousness tap into one's dedication and effort (Murphy & Lee, 1994). Integrity however has some construct distinctiveness in that it also deals with one's moral obligation in work, including how one perceives deviance, such as theft or CWBs, and one's willingness to engage in such behaviors. It represents the moral side of an individual, although those who score

high on one of the two constructs (integrity and conscientiousness), are likely to score high on the other (Ones, Viswesvaran, & Schmidt, 1993).

Because of this close relationship, some researchers in I/O argue that integrity is an underlying form of conscientiousness, and that conscientiousness alone is able to measure anything integrity could. However, this is often due to a lack of difference in integrity measures compared to conscientiousness measures in I/O psychology, whereas other fields have a much different approach (Becker, 1998). Some researchers argue that integrity has little to do with one's dedication or effort, and instead only addresses how moral, trustworthy, or tended towards illegal/illicit behaviors a person is (Murphy & Lee, 1994). One thing that research in the area seems to agree on is that integrity does not hold one unified definition (Ones et al., 1993). Despite this confusion integrity has still been commonly used in understanding the nature of workplace deviance, and as might be expected, those who are moral (or feel obliged to follow a moral code) are less likely to engage in deviant behaviors (Fine, Horowitz, Weigler, & Basis, 2010), such as WCC or academic dishonesty.

Integrity is actually among the few predictive factors studied directly in populations of white collar criminals. Collins and Schmidt (1993) conducted one of the first studies that examined the part integrity plays in white collar crime, looking at the personality differences of 365 white collar offenders and 344 offenders who committed other types of offenses. They found that the largest difference between

the two types of offenders was an underlying construct of what they termed *social conscientiousness*, which was a measure of conscientious work attitudes and behaviors. In other words, how one acts in the workplace to the benefit of others, and how considerate people are of these actions. The researchers reported that the best way to capture social conscientiousness was through an integrity measure, supporting the notion that integrity represents a distinct, separate form of conscientiousness, one that is tied specifically to social responsibility, and expectations. The researchers proposed that this social form of conscientiousness (integrity) is better suited for identifying white collar offenders, than are the typical conscientiousness measures.

Academic Dishonesty

Often academic dishonesty is characterized as a lesser form of white collar crime (i.e., intellectual property theft) or workplace deviance (Martin, Rao, & Sloan, 2009). Lucas and Friedrich (2005) conducted a meta-analysis that examined the role of integrity on academic dishonesty and CWBs. They found that despite issues with other personality variables predicting academic dishonesty, integrity holds as a strong predictor. In their study, Lucas and Friedrich examined the hypothetical overlap between CWBs and academic dishonesty and proposed deviance as an individual difference, where people who are deviant simply are 'made' that way, and that this tendency affects their behavior regardless of the setting (business or academic). They suggest that research that looks at workplace

deviance is often tapping into this deviant characteristic in a person, the same way academic dishonesty research does. This notion supports the idea that whether it be academic dishonesty, WPD, or WCC the same type of person is going to show up in them all.

Martin and colleagues (2009) conducted a similar study that empirically examined the role of integrity as predicting plagiarism, as well as how academic dishonesty relates to future white collar criminal behaviors. They sampled 159 graduate and undergraduate students in business courses. They found that integrity was a significant predictor of plagiarism and that plagiarism, as well as a measure of workplace deviance, was directly related to likelihood to engage in future white collar crimes. Using academic dishonesty as a proxy for WCC, the current research seeks to assess the personality variables predictive of WCC perceptions, and add to the literature attempting to address and explain what makes an individual commit a white-collar crime.

Current Study

Following the Dorminey, Fleming, Kranacher and Riley (2012) framework there are three steps that occur in committing a white-collar crime. First, there must be an antecedent that prompts a person into an imbalanced situation (pressure). Then an opening occurs that would allow the individual to engage in a type of crime (opportunity). Finally, the person must justify the commission of the crime (rationalization). Borrowing from this framework, this study outlines a model in

which the antecedents for crime are the environmental factors that push people into imbalanced situations, namely stress and injustice. After an opportunity, has presented itself, personality then takes a hold, allowing for rationalization or justification of a criminal act. The current study seeks to clarify the direct and moderating effects that personality characteristics have on the relationship between environmental predictors of WCC and the perceptions of deviance. The study uses academic dishonesty as a proximal variable to assess likelihood of engaging in white-collar crime and the perceived wrongfulness of it. Along with these outcomes perceptions of different types of white-collar crime are also included.

As mentioned previously, workplace deviance is related to (and perhaps a more minor form of) WCC, and one of the principle antecedents to workplace deviance is stress (Mathew, 2014). It makes sense that those stressed by their work would be more likely to lash out. General strain theory (GST) further supports this finding (Agnew, 1992).

Hypothesis 1: Stress will positively predict perceptions of deviance

(Academic Dishonesty, Perceptions of WCC, Wrongfulness), such that with higher stress, perceived justification will be higher.

The current literature in workplace deviance has also established injustice as a predictor (Dalal, 2005). In the GST framework, injustice acts as simply another form of strain: people who are treated unfairly in the workplace, are much more

likely to engage in deviant behaviors towards their organization, so perceived injustice should motivate white collar crime as well.

Hypothesis 2: All forms of Injustice will positively predict perceptions of deviance, such that those who experience an injustice will show higher ratings of justification for deviance.

The last portion of Dorminey et al. (2012) framework is the rationalization phase. People have to be able to explain why they are willing to engage in a crime and justify that it is worth. A person's moral fiber may not only act as a buffer against engaging the crime, but stop a person from even thinking about engaging in the crime in the first place. Despite its difficult measurement, the present study seeks to clarify how integrity is meaningful in predicting who will see white collar crime as more acceptable.

Hypothesis 3: Integrity will be negatively related to perceptions of deviance, with those low in integrity more likely to justify deviance.

Criminal behavior in the Dorminey et al. (2012) framework can be prompted by outside factors but engaging in those behaviors is still the individual's choice. Based on the rational choice framework there are many considerations that go through a person's mind before choosing to offend (Wilcox & Cullen, 2010), including the negative perceptions of criminals in society, as well as the potential physical consequences of the crimes (e.g., jail, fines, community service). But there are also the potential monetary rewards or accolades of success from criminal

behavior in the business world. Rational choice theory would predict that in order

to offend, the potential benefits need to outweigh the costs (Lovegrove, 1998).

However, not all actions are committed in a logical fashion; in times of high strain

and immediate stakes, there may not be the opportunity to evaluate all potential

options, and emotion may win out. When a person is forced into making a more

sudden and reactive decision, self-control comes into play (Magid & Colder, 2007).

Those high in self-control may be better able to evaluate decisions in high stakes

situations, while those low in self-control are more reactive when under strain

(Eaton & Korach, 2016). Those who are more reactive weigh their decisions less,

so their decisions become riskier (Magid & Colder, 2007).

Hypothesis 4a: Self-control will moderate the effects between stress and perceptions of deviance, such that those high in self-control will be less likely to justify deviance.

Hypothesis 4b: Self-control will moderate the effects between injustice and perceptions of perceptions of deviance, such that those high in self-control will be less likely to justify deviance.

Pilot Study - Methods

Given the difficult nature of studying WCC – specifically, the difficulty in gaining access to a population of white collar criminals – I felt that testing a framework of WCC in a student population was a logical first step. Previous research has demonstrated the relationship between academic dishonesty and WCC

(Lucas & Friedrich, 2005), and because of this, academic dishonesty will be used as a proxy for studying WCC. This survey was conducted with undergraduate students and examined WCC using student-relevant examples of WCC (e.g., academic dishonesty, a form of intellectual property theft). The goal was to establish a framework that showed meaningful relationships between personality dimensions related to WCC and academic dishonesty, in a student population. The pilot study was constructed as part of a research team and includes some additional variables that are not relevant to the goals of this proposal.

Participants

The study was completed on undergraduate students at a private university in the southeastern United States. Data collection was completed from August-December 2016. There were 181 total participants; 44% male and 56% female. With regards to ethnicity, 50% ($N = 91$) of sample participants indicated “White”, 17% ($N = 31$) “Asian”, 14% ($N = 25$) “Black or African American”, 11% ($N = 20$) “Hispanic”, 5% ($N = 8$) “Other”, and 3% ($N = 6$) “Middle eastern”. All students were enrolled in an undergraduate class and took the study for class credit. The age of participants ranged from 17-66, with a $M = 26.87$ and $SD = 13.77$.

Procedure and Materials

This study was housed in an online survey program, Qualtrics. The first page of the survey contained the informed consent statement (see Appendix A). Following this, participants were presented with a vignette depicting one of four

scenarios: academic violation with an identifiable victim, an academic violation with no victim, a petty theft with an identifiable victim, and a petty theft with no victim (Appendix B).

White Collar Crime Battery. Following the vignette, participants are asked to rate the behavior depicted in the vignette on seven constructs, measured by pre-established scales, using a 5-point Likert scale that varied for each measure: Moral (Absolutely Immoral-Absolutely Moral), Serious (Not at all-Extremely), Harmful to self/others (Not at all-Very Highly), Ethical (Extremely un-Extremely), Wrong (Extremely Wrong-Extremely Right) and Illegal (Completely -Completely legal). (Appendix C; Rosenmerkel, 2001). Participants were then asked how likely they would be to engage in the same or a similar behavior depicted in the vignette, on a 5-point Likert scale from Extremely Unlikely to Extremely Likely and if they can ever see a situation in which they would act the same as the individual in the scenario (Yes or No). Participants who indicated “Yes” to this item were then asked to describe the situation.

Perceptions of General WCC. Next participants were asked to fill out a 6-item questionnaire that was adapted from the Perceptions of WCC Scale (Appendix C; Cao, Zhao, Ren, & Zhao, 2010), changed to represent an academic incident. They were asked to rate the justification of each form of academic dishonesty/WCC from never justified to always justified on a 5-item scale.

Psychopathy*: Participants were then asked to complete the 26-item Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale (LSRP; Levenson, Kiehl, & Fitzpatrick,

1995). The LSRP is a short form psychopathy scale that tests for the two-factor

model of psychopathy, antisocial behavior and psychopathic personality.

Narcissism and Self-Esteem*¹. They were then asked to complete a 9-item self-esteem evaluation using a 1-5 Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. After the self-esteem test they were given the NPI 16 item narcissism test which is measured using dichotomous items. Given two opposite examples of a situation, participants choose the option that better fits them.

Demographics. Participants were asked basic demographic questions, including gender, GPA, SES, ethnicity, religiosity and political affiliation (Appendix D).

Results and Discussion

The objective of the pilot study was to test a framework for studying white collar crime using a student sample. In order to evaluate this framework a multiple linear regression was conducted. Model 1 included all of the demographic variables, to account for any extraneous variance. Model 1 was not significant [$R^2 = .03$, $F(8,148) = .62$, $p = .76$ (ns)]. Meaning that demographics were not accounting for meaningful variability in likelihood to commit. Additionally, no individual demographic variables had significant beta weights. Model 2 included all the individual perception of crime variables which was significant ($R^2 \Delta = .44$, $F(15,148) = 8.13$, $p < .001$). The perceptions of crime accounted for 44% more of the variance

* These personality test were used for outside research questions, not related to this proposal, and their results are not discussed here.

in likelihood to commit than the demographics alone. Among them, both legality ($b = .18, p < .05$) and ethicality ($b = .46, p < .001$) significantly predicted likelihood to commit.

Additional analysis examined the differences between conditions, victim and type of crime. A two-way ANOVA (Crime: blue-collar vs. white-collar; Victim: identified victim vs. victimless) was conducted with likelihood to commit as the dependent variable. There were no significant main effects or interactions (all $F_s < 1.32$).

Overall this analysis provided preliminary evidence that the pilot study's methodology could be used as a viable proxy for studying likelihood to commit. Because the findings were consistent with previous literature on likelihood to commit in WCC. The idea behind utilizing the pilot study for the present study was to make sure that the vignette style approach would be an effective method.

Study 1 - Methods

Participants

The participants for this research were drawn from an undergraduate population in a private school in the southeastern United States. Data collection was completed between January-April of 2017. The final sample consisted of 86 participants: 56% Male, 42% Female and 2% indicated that they preferred not to identify. The ethnic diversity of the sample is as follows: 51% ($N = 44$) "White", 16% ($N = 14$) "Hispanic", 8% ($N = 7$) "Asian", 7% ($N = 6$) "Middle Eastern, 6% ($N = 5$) "Other".

= 5) “Black or African American”, and 11% ($N=10$) indicated “Other”. All

students were enrolled in an undergraduate psychology course, with range in age from 18-24, with a $M = 19.60$ and $SD = 1.43$.

Procedure

The study is housed in the same online survey platform as the pilot: Qualtrics. The first page of the survey contains the informed consent statement (see Appendix A). The participants were then shown one of 4 possible vignettes in a 2 (Stressful vs. No stress) x 2 (Injustice vs. No injustice) design (Appendix E). Stress was manipulated by placing time constraints on the action depicted in the vignette, the stressful conditions the depicted person had only a day to decide. While in the non-stressful condition the depicted person had two weeks. Injustice was manipulated similarly, in the injustice condition the scenario depicted an action where the teacher had behaved unfairly towards the described person, while in the non-injustice condition they did not (Appendix E). All vignettes include an identifiable victim, in order to make the stimulus stronger (Corcoran, Pettinicchio, & Robbins, 2012). Participants were then asked to rate their likelihood to engage in a similar act of academic dishonesty, given the situation depicted, on a 5-point Likert scale from Extremely Unlikely to Extremely Likely. Next participants were asked if there is *ever* a situation in which they would engage in the depicted behavior, if they answered “Yes” they were then asked to describe the situation. Participants are then directed to the rest of the measures: Wrongfulness, General

Control. The last page of the study collects demographic information (Appendix D).

Measures

Wrongfulness. The Wrongfulness scale assessed six values, asking participants how ethical, illegal, moral, serious, harmful to self, and harmful to others (all rated on a 5-point Likert scale from Not at All to Extremely; Appendix C) the behavior depicted in the vignette was. The total scale was broken into two factors, moral severity (Ethical, Moral, Legality; Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$) and damaging severity (Harmful to self/others, Serious; Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$), based on the measures it was drawn from and showed good reliability at those sub dimensions (Rosenmerkel, 2001).

General White-Collar Crime Perceptions. Participants were presented with six behavioral items that depicted violations ranging from cheating on a test to stealing, and were asked to indicate how likely they felt the depicted incident could be justified, on a 5-point Likert scale from Never Justified to Always Justified (Appendix C). Since the measures was based on variation of perceptions of standard crime there was no previously established Cronbach's α . The overall measured showed good overall reliability at Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$.

Perceived Stress. Given that it is a student sample, a workplace stress scale was not relevant to the research question. Instead participants were asked to

complete the Academic Subscale of the College Stress Inventory (CSI; Appendix F; Solberg, Hale, Villarreal, & Kavanagh, 1993). This is a 7-item scale, rated on a 5-point Likert scale from Never to Very Often, measuring how stressful the participants perceive their academics. Only the academic sub-scale was used among three types of sub-scales (Financial, Academic, Social) because it was the most directly related to the research question. An example item asks participants how often they feel, "Difficulty fulfilling obligations at home and school". The measures showed good reliability with Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$, only marginally lower than the previously published reliability of Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$ (Solberg et al., 1993).

Perceived Injustice. A 12-item adapted injustice scale measured the four types of injustice: procedural, distributive, informational and interpersonal. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale from A Small Extent to A Large Extent. The scale is based on the Perceived Injustice Questionnaire Revised (PIQ-R) (Appendix G; Ezenwa, Molokie, Wilkie, Suarez, & Yao, 2015), but with more student-relevant language. An example item is, "Do your current grades/GPA reflect the effort you have put into your work". The overall measures showed very strong reliability as a total measure (Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$); the original sub-scales published reliability ranged from Cronbach's $\alpha = .87-.93$ (Ezenwa et al., 2015).

Integrity. The 16-item integrity scale was based on two separate scales of integrity (Appendix H). All items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from Strongly

Disagree to Strongly Agree. The first six items depict general trustworthiness and values based on the Mayer and Davis (1999) scale. An example item is, "I have strong values". The subsequent 10 items depicted behavioral examples of integrity and were based on the Ashton and Lee (2004) HEXACO Honesty Humility Factor (2004). With both measures of integrity included there was an adequate level of reliability, Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$. The highest Cronbach's α with item deletion only moved it .01 of a point at Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$, so no alterations were made. The previously published reliabilities were Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$ for trust (Mayer & Davis, 1999), and Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$ for behavioral integrity (Ashton & Lee, 2004).

Self-Control. In order to assess self-control, the Alvarez-Rivera and Fox (2010) scale was used (Appendix I). This is a 31-item scale rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. An example item is, "I sometimes talk without thinking". The reliability of this scale was actually found to be higher (Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$) than the previously published reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .68$; Alvarez-Rivera & Fox, 2010). The highest reliability change if an item were deleted moved it only .01 points, so no items were removed.

Demographics. Participants were asked at the end of the study to fill out a basic demographic questionnaire (Appendix I) asking for participants' gender, GPA, age, and ethnicity. Additionally, to standard demographic variables

religiosity and political stance were included as they were in the pilot study based on Corcoran et al. (2012).

Results

Data Cleaning

Before conducting any data analysis, the sample was examined visually for incomplete data, or other sampling issues. Upon looking over the data 20 cases were removed from the original $N = 108$ for incomplete data – the individuals had been assigned to a condition, but neglected to answer any questions. A Time to Completion variable was created to track how long each participant took to complete the study. Two participants had significantly low time intervals of 89 seconds and 116 seconds, respectively. Upon further review, these two individuals had given the same answer for every question – they selected the midpoint on all scales – and were removed from the sample. This brought the final N size used for analysis to 86. Before running any data analysis zero-order correlations were determined between all of the variables, see Table 1.

Zero-Order Correlations for All Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Gender	1.4	0.55									
2. Age	19.6	1.43	-0.12								
3.Injustice	3.44	0.64	0.14	-0.14							
4.Stress	3.05	0.69	0.01	0.07	-0.16						
5.Self-Control	2.99	0.39	0.08	-0.07	0.21*	0.15					
6.Integrity	3.71	0.47	0.00	0.05	0.23*	-0.15	0.04				
7.PWCC	1.61	0.71	0.06	0.08	-0.06	0.13	0.09	0.45**			
8.Moral	1.98	1.17	0.42**	0.1	0.25*	0.18	0.06	0.31**	0.32**		
9.Damaging	3.84	1.01	0.02	-0.07	-0.02	0.15	-0.12	0.38**	0.24*	-0.21	
10.Likelihood	1.8	1.07	0.23*	0.105	-0.08	0.22*	0.27*	0.40**	0.45**	0.57**	0.40*

Note: PWCC stand for perceptions of white collar crime, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Stress and Injustice on Likelihood to Commit

A 2 (Stress, No stress) x 2 (Injustice, No injustice) between-groups Analysis of Variance was conducted to explore the impact of the independent variables on perceptions of academic dishonesty as measured by likelihood to engage in the same/similar behavior as that depicted in the vignette. There was no main effect from stress $F(1, 81) = 1.06, p = .31$, or injustice $F(1, 81) = 2.64, p = .11$. In addition, there was no significant interaction between stress and injustice $F(1, 81) = 1.06, p = .31$. It was concluded that this may have been due to a floor effect, because none of

the group means were above 2.00 on the 5-point scale. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported. See Table 2 for group means.

Table 2

Likelihood to Engage in Academic Dishonesty by Condition

	Injustice			No Injustice		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Stress	1.86	1.13	22	2.00	1.17	20
No Stress	1.39	0.72	23	2.00	1.17	20

Note. Likelihood to commit was measured on a 1-5 scale with higher scores indicating increased likelihood to engage in a similar act of academic dishonesty.

Personality Variables as Predictors

Likelihood to Commit. The next step in data analysis used a Hierarchical Linear Multiple Regression to test the hypotheses regarding environmental and personality factors as predictors of likelihood to commit. Model 1 included the demographic variables of Age, Gender and Ethnicity as controls. The demographics predicted 8% of the variance in likelihood to commit, but the model was not significant, $F(3, 79) = 2.35, p = .08$. After adding Perceived Injustice and Perceived Stress into the model (Model 2) it explained 5% additional variance over the demographics but still did not reach significance $F(5, 77) = 2.41, p < .05$. The final model (Model 3) included integrity, and the model explained an additional 12% of the variance and was significant, $F(6, 76) = 4.36, p < .001$. The final model explained a total 26% of the variance in likelihood to commit. In the final model,

only gender ($B=-.23$, $p < .05$) and integrity ($B=-.41$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors. Hypothesis 1 was supported in Model 2, but once all variables had been added in (Model 3), the effect was no longer significant. Hypothesis 2 was not supported in any of the models. However, in Model 3 integrity was a significant predictor of likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty supporting Hypothesis 3. See Table 3.

Predictors of Likelihood to Engage in Academic Dishonesty

Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	R ²	R ² Δ
Model 1				2.35	0.08	0.08	
Gender	-0.22	-2.06	0.04				
Ethnicity	0.02	1.43	0.16				
Age	0.08	0.7	0.49				
Model 2				2.41*	0.04	0.14	0.05
Gender	-0.22	-2.12	0.04				
Ethnicity	0.16	1.57	0.12				
Age	0.06	0.55	0.58				
Perceived Stress	0.23	2.14	0.03				
Perceived Injustice	0.00	-0.02	0.98				
Model 3				4.36***	0.00	0.26	0.12
Gender	0.22**	-2.28	0.02				
Ethnicity	-0.02	-0.22	0.82				
Age	0.10	0.98	0.33				
Perceived Stress	0.17	1.68	0.10				
Perceived Injustice	0.09	0.86	0.39				
Integrity	0.41***	-3.51	<0.001				

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Perceptions of White-Collar Crime. The same Hierarchical Linear

Regression was run with General Perceptions of White-Collar Crime as the dependent variable. Model 1 included Age, Gender and Ethnicity as controls and predicted 6% of the variance in the battery but was not significant, $F(3, 80) = 1.80$, $p = .15$. Adding perceived stress and perceived injustice to the model explained 2% additional variance, but was not significant $F(5, 78) = 1.40$, $p = .23$. The final model included integrity as a predictor of WCC and explained an additional 15% of the variance in perceptions of WCC and was significant $F(6, 77) = 3.94$, $p < .001$. The final model predicted 24% of the variance in perceptions of WCC. Only integrity ($B = -.46$, $p < .001$) was a significant predictor. Hypothesis 1 and 2 were not supported in Model 2. As integrity made the overall model significant and was a significant predictor itself this provided further support for Hypothesis 3. See Table 4.

Predictors of Perceptions of White-Collar Crime

Predictor	<i>B</i>	t	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	R ²	R ² Δ
Model 1				1.80	0.15	0.06	
Gender	0.07	0.6	0.55				
Ethnicity	0.23*	2.08	0.04				
Age	0.1	0.87	0.39				
Model 2				1.40	0.23	0.08	0.02
Gender	0.07	0.61	0.55				
Ethnicity	0.23*	2.14	0.04				
Age	0.08	0.74	0.47				
Perceived Stress	0.13	1.16	0.25				
Perceived Injustice	-0.03	-0.34	0.74				
Model 3				3.90***	<0.001	0.24	0.15
Gender	0.07	0.66	0.51				
Ethnicity	0.02	0.14	0.89				
Age	0.13	1.23	0.22				
Perceived Stress	0.06	0.60	0.55				
Perceived Injustice	0.07	0.63	0.53				
Integrity	0.46***	-3.91	<0.001				

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Wrongfulness. The last regression analysis ran used linear regression to examine integrity, injustice and stress in predicting perceptions of wrongfulness. Wrongfulness was examined through its moral severity and damaging severity factors so required two separate analysis. The model for damaging severity predicted 20% of variance in how damaging the participants felt the vignette was, the overall model was significant $F(3, 82) = 6.68, p < .01$. With perceived stress ($B = .20, p < .05$), integrity ($B = .43, p < .05$) and gender ($B = -.40, p < .01$) significantly predicting moral severity. The second analysis used moral severity, the model predicted 15% of the variance in how moral the participants felt the depicted academic dishonesty was and it was significant $F(3, 82) = 4.62, p < .01$. With integrity ($B = -.25, p < .05$) significantly predicting how damaging participants felt the act was. These findings provide further support for Hypothesis 1 and 3, but do not support Hypothesis 2. See Table 5.

Predictors of Perceptions of Wrongfulness

Outcome	Predictor	<i>B</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²
Moral			4.63**	0.01	0.15
	Injustice	-0.12			
	Stress	0.13			
	Integrity	0.26**			
Damaging	Gender	-0.40**			
			6.68***	<0.001	0.2
	Injustice	-0.09			
	Stress	0.20			
	Integrity	0.43**			
	Gender	0.03			

** *p* < .01, *** *p* < .001

Moderation Analysis. The last phase of data analysis was examining the conditional effects of self-control between injustice and stress, on likelihood to engage in academic dishonest. This model was tested using Process Macro. The first analysis included self-control as a moderator between stress and likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty. The overall model was significant $F(3, 80) = 3.36$, $p < .05$. However, none of the individual effects were. Since it was not found that the interaction between perceived stress and self-control was significant this did not support Hypothesis 4a. The analysis was run again this time using total injustice

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instead of stress. The overall model was once again significant $F(3, 80) = 2.91, p <$

.05, but none of the individual effects were. Since the interaction term was not significant, this did not support Hypothesis 4b. Unfortunately, self-control did not significantly moderate any of the relationships. This may have been because the direct effects of stress and injustice were not significantly predictive of perceptions of academic dishonesty.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to look at how environmental factors and personality factors could be used to assess likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty – a proxy to measure perceptions of white-collar crime. In general, the findings from this study do not support the notion that environmental factors have a large influence on likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty, or perceptions of white-collar crime. Both stress and injustice were manipulated to measure their effect on likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty, but these hypotheses were not supported. In the regression analyses, stress and injustice played a small role, until personality factors were introduced.

While the current research findings themselves did not support the notion that environmental factors have a large effect, they do support the converse approach that the people are more important than the situation. Still, a person cannot act simply out of their own characteristics, but must be in a situation where a) the action can occur, and b) they have the desire, or need to make it occur

(Coleman & Fararo, 1992). The current findings do not offer much support for the situational component, but the lack of a finding does not mean the finding does not exist. One of the major limitations of this study was that many of the environmental measures had very little variance, with low mean scores across the board. It may not have been that stress and injustice do not predict likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty, but simply that the manipulations were not strong enough to put a person in a situation where these environments would elicit that type of behavior. Additionally, the sample size was limited for such robust analysis and could lead to lower power in being able to find significant results.

While environment was not a significant predictor an interesting variable was: gender. Through running the analyses, gender was included as a control variable, but was consistently found as a predictor. Female students felt that academic dishonesty was more damaging, but *male students* indicated they were less likely to engage in it. It seems counterintuitive that the person who perceives it as more damaging is more likely to engage in it. There is some previous research that finds that women are more likely to engage in academic dishonesty as a whole (Becker & Ulstad, 2007), though the research did not offer a definitive reason as to why this might be the case. Women may rate the act more negatively because they may use more impression management techniques, and thus, respond in a more socially desirable manner to questions about wrongfulness (Becker & Ulstad, 2007), but their actual likelihood to commit may not reflect this. In fact, more

(Steffensmeier, 2015).

The current findings offer strong support for the idea that a person's individual disposition is integral in further understanding how people perceive both white-collar crime and academic dishonesty. While there is strong support for the notion that self-control should moderate the effects of environmental factors on likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty, this study was not able to find this. As mentioned, this may be in due in part to the fact that none of the environmental variables (Stress, Injustice, Perceived Stress) had consistent, or strong effects on predicting likelihood to engage in academic dishonesty, perceptions of white-collar crime, or wrongfulness of academic dishonesty. If a person is never put into a situation where they would have to stop themselves, or think twice about what they are doing, then self-control does not come into play. That may be what is happening here. While there were some minor effects from stress, they were sparse and completely over-shadowed when individual differences were added into the analyses. Both integrity and gender meaningfully predicted how likely someone was to engage in academic dishonesty and how wrong they perceived it. Additionally, integrity predicted general perceptions of white-collar crime.

It is not surprising that integrity was meaningful in predicting how people perceive crime and academic dishonesty. As one could imagine, a person who has a strong moral compass is going to be more averse to dishonest or criminal behavior.

This is supported in research in much crime, academic dishonesty and WPD, that a person's individual integrity should act as a buffer against any kind of wrong doing (Martin et al., 2009). As Lucas and Friedrich (2015) hypothesized, the characteristics of a person who is willing to cheat are the same characteristics of a person who is willing to steal from a company. The current findings support this idea, in that integrity was not only meaningful in predicting if a person would be likely to engage in cheating behavior (academic dishonesty), but also that they perceive both it and white-collar crime as more severe forms of behavior.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The largest contribution that this study makes to future research is in the consistent findings that surround integrity. People who are high in integrity care more about general deviance; integrity does not only matter for crime, WPD, or academic dishonesty. This notion further supports the idea that deviance may not be context specific, but person specific. Further research would be required to expound upon this idea.

Practically, these findings support the common notion in I/O psychology research to, "hire better". It is largely not the organization, or the things that surround the person that make up a bad person, it is the person themselves. Particularly, hire a person of integrity. While it was not directly linked to WPD in this study, the findings support the idea that people who are low in integrity are more likely to deviate or see such behavior as acceptable. Universities could also

employ this approach: Select students who are high in integrity, or be more wary of those who are low in it.

Limitations

With the current study, there come many limitations to the research that may negatively affect the results and generalizability. The most dominant of these comes from the limitations with the sample. Since the main target of interest is WCC there are severe limitations in using a student population, even though WCC has been linked to student-relevant offenses and these offenses have demonstrated predictability of future WCC (Lucas & Friedrich, 2005). While having more student-relevant vignettes does help the experimental realism, there are still major limitations in a typical student's ability to identify with the crimes. This may have been showcased in the lack of environmental effects in the results. While stress and injustice were manipulated they may not have been strong enough, or proximal enough, to actually get the participant to use them as a reference in evaluating their likelihood to offend. Stemming off of this the effects of the study may have been limited due to lack of ability to evaluate the manipulation. There were no variables included in the study to be able to see if the manipulation had a significant factor on participants.

In addition, committing a WCC is an extremely rare outcome even in a relevant sample. Even if the effect was representative, it would remain extremely small. Additionally, a measure of likelihood to offend and an actual offense are not

synonymous. While we may find that people are more likely to commit, this does not mean they *would* commit in a real situation.

There are also limitations on the measures being used. Since the measures are adapted from I/O literature and Criminology, they were not originally intended to be used in a student population. Even with the minor changes to make them more student-relevant, there is still no definitive proof it is measuring the same construct. Similarly, the main outcome variable (likelihood to commit) is measured using an entirely new approach. While it was piloted tested, there remain some restraints on how accurate it may be.

Other minor limitations that may act on the study come from the limitations in control in an online survey procedure. There is no way to control for test takers affect, or environment while taking the test. There may also be some limitations in sample size given the smaller student population at the university.

This student population tapped here is diverse, given the normal profile of white collar offenders. While diversity is normally hailed in studies for generalization, in this case it may negatively affect the results. Since the majority of white collar offenders are middle-aged, White men, polling a diverse population may limit the findings even further, potentially leading to reduced effect sizes.

The results of this study can inform on future research, and with its limitations comes the potential for refining empirical approaches to the construct. As this study only looks at a very limited portion of environmental triggers and personality, these could be expanded upon in future studies. Studies could include more diverse personality batteries that tap into some of the other possible predictors of WCC (e.g., Machiavellianism, or psychopathy). They could also add other environmental triggers that have been theorized, such as high personal needs, or organizational needs. Additionally, with environmental triggers research could look at how people react when giving extreme environmental stimuli, beyond just being stressed. Extreme environments tend to circumvent people's personal dispositions and this could be examined in how it may further explain deviant behaviors.

Future studies could also examine personality as it predicts real outcomes of WCC by testing personality in selection and then using that information to predict future offenders. This study is only able to look cross-sectional at a portrait of what offenders may look like. Additional areas of research include how to alleviate potential offenders, if there are interventions, or ways to reduce identified populations likelihood of offending. Future studies could also use a non-predictive sample instead of a retrospective one. For example, testing offenders already convicted for white collar offenses, and evaluating their personalities.

Lastly the gender difference provides an interesting opportunity for future research. Why did women perceive academic dishonesty as more severe, yet indicate a higher likelihood to commit the offense, compared to men? Future research could look at the mechanisms through which this gender difference may occur.

At its end, the current research was able to support the idea that integrity remains an important construct in understanding the nature of not only academic dishonesty, but also white-collar crime. This research also adds to the literature attempting to study deviance as a more global phenomenon, rather than isolating the construct to a specific field.

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Informed Consent

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to see how one's personality can affect their perceptions of different kinds of crime.

Procedures: Upon agreeing to the informed consent below, you will be taken through a survey that asks about your personality, non-identifying information about yourself and how you feel about a situation that will be provided inside of the survey. The survey should take 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks involved with participating in this study.

Confidentiality: All information in this study is anonymous. The only person who will be able to access your responses to the survey will be the principal investigator. There will be no information tying you to a survey, upon completion of the survey.

Contact Info: If you have any further questions regarding the study itself, please feel free to contact the principal investigator at the information provided below

Dakota L. Fraley
Email: DFraley2013@my.fit.edu

IRB Contact Info: If you have any concerns or questions regarding your rights as a human subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at Florida Tech and the contact information provided below, or at their website <http://www.fit.edu/research/committees/irb/>.

Dr. Lisa Steelman, Chair
Psychology
Email: LSteelma@fit.edu

Voluntary Participation: Participation is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time during your completion of the study. Please note that failure to complete the survey will exempt you from receiving the monetary compensation for completion of the study.

Appendix B

Pilot Vignettes

Please read the following scenario and answer the questions below based on it.

The day before a term paper is due in a class, a colleague of yours ask if you can review their own term paper for another section of the same course, with a different professor. After seeing his paper, you realize that multiple key elements in your own paper are missing and you don't have enough time to make accurate corrections. You need an A on this term paper in order to obtain a passing grade in the class. In order to secure your A on the paper you submit his paper as your own. You know your professor is old fashioned and hand grades most his papers so the paper shouldn't be cross referenced with papers in other sections, but if it is, both you and your colleague would be at fault.

The day before the term paper is due in a class you come across an online blog of a person discussing the same topic that you picked for your paper. You read over the blog and realize it has very good content. You need an A on this paper in order to obtain a passing grade in the class. You copy the blog over and format it according to the papers specifications and submit the paper as your own. You know your professor is old fashioned and hand grades all his papers so the paper shouldn't be cross referenced with online sources.

You have noticed that when the receptionist leaves for lunch in the afternoon other office members sometimes leave small amounts of registration money on her desk. One day, you walk into the registrar's office during lunch hour and see an envelope on the desk with \$50 written on it. The envelope was unattended and had no name written on it. There are no cameras in the room, no record of the money and no one else is around to see you. You have recently gotten a \$40 parking ticket and could really use the money to pay for it. You decide to take the envelope and walk out of the office.

You have noticed that each time students pay for their parking decal right before lunch time the receptionist at the front desk leaves the envelope with the \$50 in it unattended while she takes her lunch hour. You walk into the office during lunch hour and see a student's envelope on the desk unattended. There are no cameras in the room and no one else is around to see you. You know that if you take the student's envelope the student will likely not receive credit for their payment. You have recently gotten a \$40 parking ticket and could really use the money to pay for it. You decide to take the envelope and walk out of the office.

Wrongfulness Scales

Do you believe the actions depicted in the scenario you read are:

- Ethical
- Illegal
- Moral
- Serious
- Harmful to Self
- Harmful to others

Rated on a 5-point likert scale from Extremely Not to Extremely

General Crime Perceptions

Please rate the following statements whether you think they can be justified

- Cheating on test
- Claiming scholarship money not earned
- Accepting a bribe to give favoritism
- Lying on tax forms
- Stealing from a club or organization
- Driving away after hitting a car in a parking lot

Rater on 5-point Likert scale from Never Justified to Always Justified

Demographics

What is your Gender

- a) Male
- b) Female
- c) Prefer not to Answer

What is your current GPA _____

What is your current Age _____

What is your ethnicity

- a) White
- b) Black or African American
- c) Asian
- d) Native Hawaiian
- e) Middle Eastern
- f) Hispanic
- g) Other

Do you consider yourself religious?

- a) Definitely yes
- b) Probably yes
- c) Might or might not
- d) Probably not
- e) Definitely not

How do you consider yourself on social issues?

- a) Very liberal
- b) Liberal
- c) Centrist
- d) Conservative
- e) Extremely Conservative

How do you consider yourself on economic issues?

- a) Very Liberal
- b) Liberal
- c) Centrist
- d) Conservative
- e) Extremely Conservative

Father education level

- a) Less than high school
- b) High school graduate
- c) Some College

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- d) 2 year degree
- e) 4 year degree
- f) Doctorate

Study vignettes

Please read the following scenario and answer how likely you'd be to engage in the same or a similar behavior. (5-point likert 1=Extremely unlikely, 5=Extremely likely)

VIGNETTE 1: No Stress, No Injustice

Two weeks before a paper is due, a colleague of yours ask if you can review his term paper for another section of the same course, with a different professor. You know there is still some time before it's due but after seeing his paper, you realize that multiple key elements in your own paper are missing. You need an 'A' on this term paper in order to obtain a passing grade in the class. In order to secure your 'A' on the paper you submit his paper as your own. You also know your professor is old fashioned and hand grades most of his papers so it is unlikely that the paper will be cross referenced with papers in other sections, but if it is, both you and your colleague would be at fault.

VIGNETTE 2: Stress, No Injustice

The day before a term paper is due in a class, a colleague of yours ask if you can review his term paper for another section of the same course, with a different professor. After seeing his paper, you become very stressed because you realize that multiple key elements in your own paper are missing and you don't have enough time to make accurate corrections. You need an 'A' on this term paper in order to obtain a passing grade in the class. In order to secure your 'A' on the paper you submit his paper as your own. You also know your professor is old fashioned and hand grades most of his papers so it is unlikely that the paper will be cross referenced with papers in other sections, but if it is, both you and your colleague would be at fault.

VIGNETTE 3: No Stress, Injustice

Two weeks before a paper is due, a colleague of yours ask if you can review his term paper for another section of the same course, with a different professor. After seeing his paper, you realize that multiple key elements in your own paper are missing. You need an 'A' on this term paper in order to obtain a passing grade in the class. In order to secure your 'A' on the paper you submit his paper as your own. You know your professor is biased. You've submitted assignments to him previously that had nearly the same answers as a colleague, but he gave you a 'C' and your colleague an 'A' without justifying the difference. You also know your professor is old fashioned and hand grades most of his papers so it is unlikely that the paper will be cross referenced with papers in other sections, but if it is, both you and your colleague would be at fault.

VIGNETTE 4: Stress, Injustice

The day before a term paper is due in a class, a colleague of yours ask if you can review his term paper for another section of the same course, with a different professor. After seeing his paper, you become very stressed because you realize

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that multiple key elements in your own paper are missing and you don't have enough time to make accurate corrections. You need an 'A' on this term paper in order to obtain a passing grade in the class. In order to secure your 'A' on the paper you submit his paper as your own. You know your professor is biased. You've submitted assignments to him previously that had nearly the same answers as a colleague, but he gave you a 'C' and your colleague an 'A' without justifying the difference. You also know your professor is old fashioned and hand grades most of his papers so it is unlikely that the paper will be cross referenced with papers in other sections, but if it is, both you and your colleague would be at fault.

Stress

Measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1= Never to 5 = Very Often

Academic Sub-Scale

1. Difficulty trying to fulfill responsibilities at home and at school.
3. Difficulty taking exams.
5. A fear of failing to meet family expectations.
9. Difficulty handling your academic workload.
11. Difficulty writing papers.
18. Difficulty meeting deadlines for course requirements.
19. Difficulty because of feeling a need to perform well in school.

Injustice

Rated on a 5-point Likert scale from not well at all to extremely well

The following items refer to your current grades/GPA. To what extent:

1. Do your current grades/GPA reflect the effort you have put into your work
2. Do your current grades/GPA reflect what you have contributed in your classes?
3. Are your current grades/GPA justified, given your performance?

The following items refer to the procedures used to arrive at your current grades/GPA. To what extent

1. Have those procedures been applied consistently?
2. Have those procedures been based on accurate information?
3. Have you been able to question the grades arrived at by those procedures?

The following items refer to your professors/instructors. To what extent:

1. Have they treated you in a polite manner?
2. Have they treated you with respect?
3. Have they refrained from improper remarks or comments?

The following items refer to professors/instructors. To what extent:

1. Have they explained the course grading policies thoroughly?
2. Were their explanations regarding the policies reasonable?
3. Have they seemed to tailor their policies to individuals' specific needs?

Integrity

Ranked on a 5-point likert response scale from 1= strongly disagree-5 strongly agree

1. I have a strong sense of justice
2. I always stick to my word
3. I try hard to be fair in dealing with others
4. My actions and behaviors are very consistent
5. I have strong values
6. Sound principles seem to guide my behavior

7. I wouldn't use flattery to get a raise or promotion at work, even if I thought it would succeed
8. If I knew that I could never get caught, I would be willing to steal a million dollars
9. Having a lot of money is not especially important to me
10. I think that I am entitled to more respect than the average person is
11. If I want something from someone, I will laugh at that person's worst jokes.
12. I would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large
13. I would get a lot of pleasure from owning expensive luxury goods
14. I want people to know that I am an important person of high status
15. I wouldn't pretend to like someone just to get that person to do favors for me
16. I'd be tempted to use counterfeit money, if I were sure I could get away with it

Self-Control

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Rated on a 5-point Likert scale

- (1) I sometimes talk without thinking
- (2) I usually act without thinking
- (3) I try to avoid complicated tasks
- (4) I enjoy doing things that may get me in trouble
- (5) I prefer thinking to being on the move
- (6) I like doing things to upset other people
- (7) I get upset easily
- (8) It is wrong to smoke
- (9) It is wrong to drink underage
- (10) It is wrong to use drugs
- (11) It is wrong to drink and drive
- (12) It is very wrong to have five or more drinks at a time
- (13) It is ok not to wear your seatbelt
- (14) It is dangerous to have unprotected sex
- (15) It is ok to have unprotected sex with a person you barely know
- (16) The law should be followed even if I don't agree with it
- (17) When situations become scary or complicated, I quit
- (18) I prefer to hit people than to talk to them when I am angry
- (19) Everybody should own a gun
- (20) It is ok to own a gun even if it is not registered
- (21) It is ok to own a gun even if I don't know how to use it properly
- (22) Sometimes I like to take risks for the fun of it
- (23) I always do what is best for me no matter what
- (24) I prefer engaging in physical over mental activities
- (25) I prefer pleasure now, even if it jeopardizes my future goals
- (26) It is very wrong to go through someone else's things
- (27) It is wrong to borrow something without permission
- (28) It is wrong to leave an establishment without paying
- (29) It is wrong to shoplift
- (30) Cheating is wrong
- (31) Reproducing copyrighted material (such as movies or records) is wrong