

A Sociological Analysis of Rule-Evasion Tendencies Among Students: Evidence from the University of Guilan

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Original Article

Abstract

Background and Aim: Universities, while foundational in cultivating civic responsibility and normative behaviors, increasingly face structural challenges due to students' growing tendency to evade institutional rules. This phenomenon highlights the necessity for sociological investigation into the drivers behind norm-defying conduct within higher education settings. The present study aims to examine the factors contributing to such behavior among university students, particularly in institutional environments.

Data and Method: A quantitative research design was employed to investigate the proposed theoretical framework. Data were collected from a systematic random sample of 360 students enrolled at the University of Guilan. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was utilized to assess the influence of religious beliefs, ethical values, sense of personal responsibility, mass media exposure, and demographic characteristics (gender, age, and marital status)—on students' rule-evasive behaviors.

Findings: The structural model demonstrated robust fit, with the variables accounting for 65% of the variance in students' rule-evading behavior. The results revealed that normative social engagement significantly reduces the likelihood of rule evasion more effectively than top-down formal control mechanisms. Strong religious beliefs, ethical convictions, and a sense of personal responsibility exhibited significant negative associations with noncompliant behavior. Conversely, higher exposure to mass media was positively correlated with rule-evasive tendencies.

Conclusion: The study underscores the importance of fostering participatory and engagement-based institutional structures over punitive approaches in promoting rule adherence. These findings provide insights into student behavior and offer practical guidance for formulating more effective institutional policies in higher education settings.

Keywords: Rule-evasion, Normative engagement, Social responsibility, Ethical values, University students.

Key Message: Enhancing students' normative social engagement through participatory and inclusive institutional practices is more effective in deterring rule evasion than relying solely on top-down enforcement. The findings emphasize the need for university policies that prioritize moral development and social integration to ensure structural alignment between institutional norms and student behavior.

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Introduction

Adherence to legal and social norms constitutes a foundational element of societal stability. The sustainability of any society depends on a collective commitment to its regulatory structures. Without widespread internalization of and respect for established norms, social order cannot be maintained. These norms function as behavioral anchors—fostering cohesion when observed and triggering disorder, distrust, and systemic instability when neglected. To counteract such risks, societies implement mechanisms of social control that reinforce normative compliance ([Navabakhsh & Karimi, 2018](#)). Nevertheless, beneath surface-level cohesion, underlying normative erosion often generates substantial institutional, economic, and cultural costs.

Rule evasion—defined as the deliberate circumvention of formal legal obligations—raises particular concern when left unaddressed, as it undermines the social contract and weakens the legitimacy of legal systems. Once legal frameworks are broadly disregarded, they lose both their symbolic authority and practical efficacy. This progressive disintegration is increasingly evident across contemporary societies, where disengagement from legal norms poses a growing threat to collective stability ([Sarafraz et al., 2023](#); [Fathi et al., 2022](#)). The repercussions of such violations—manifesting politically, economically, and psychologically—substantially erode the foundations of social trust ([Mirfardi & Faraji, 2016](#); [Gholami, 2012](#)). In modern societies, the law serves not only as a regulatory framework but also as a moral axis that enables institutional reliability and social coexistence. However, widespread disregard for legal norms often signals deeper structural issues, such as ineffective socialization or the insufficient internalization of legal values, rather than isolated instances of willful disobedience. Within this broader context, institutional settings such as universities serve as formative arenas where normative behavior is cultivated and future civic engagement is shaped. University students, navigating a transitional phase marked by identity formation and increasing autonomy, often exhibit heightened sensitivity toward institutional authority.

This dynamic frequently fosters tension between institutional regulatory frameworks and students' behavioral independence ([Sedighian Bidgoli, 2022](#)). Such tension should not be interpreted solely as a reflection of individual deviance; rather, it stems from a complex interplay of social, environmental, and psychological influences. From this perspective, the rule-evading student reflects systemic dysfunction rather than personal moral failure. Consistent with [Ferri's \(1917\)](#) sociological approach to crime, offending is understood as the product of interacting social, psychological, and individual factors, supporting preventive and rehabilitative responses rather than purely punitive measures. Legal socialization begins in early childhood and is continually shaped by primary and secondary agents, including the family, educational institutions, peer networks, and mass media ([Saadati & Bagheri, 2026](#)).

Among these, the family serves as the primary engine of normative orientation, where parenting styles, disciplinary strategies, and behavioral reinforcement collectively establish foundational attitudes toward lawful conduct ([Rabiei et al., 2026](#)). In Iran, national studies reveal alarmingly high rates of rule evasion among younger demographics ([Sohanian Haghighi et al., 2019](#)).

The university, as one of the most significant institutions of secondary socialization, plays a pivotal role in transmitting social values, norms, and behavioral standards ([Bagi et al., 2026](#)). However, the academic environment in Iran, especially in recent years, has experienced significant cultural transformations, the rapid expansion of digital mass media, and evolving patterns of student social action. These socio-cultural shifts profoundly influence student attitudes and behaviors toward the law and public order. Despite the critical importance of this phenomenon, the sociological study of student rule-evading behavior within localized academic contexts has received limited empirical attention, with most studies focusing on general and decontextualized analyses.

Against this backdrop, the University of Guilan presents a compelling case study for examining rule evasion, situated at the intersection of regional socio-cultural diversity and changing youth attitudes toward legal authority. This study investigates the complex interplay among religious convictions, ethical frameworks, personal responsibility, and mass media exposure in shaping students' tendencies toward rule evasion, thereby shedding light on both individual behavioral determinants and institutional vulnerabilities.

Accordingly, the central research question guiding the present study is: What social and cultural factors, operating through which theoretical mechanisms, influence the tendency toward rule evasion among students at the University of Guilan? Specifically, this study aims to evaluate the explanatory roles of mass media exposure, religious values, social ethics, and personal responsibility in accounting for rule-evading behaviors, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of rule-evading within the Iranian higher education context.

Literature Review

A comprehensive review of the empirical literature reveals diverse theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding norm adherence and rule evasion across both domestic and international contexts. While individual studies offer distinct insights, several recurring themes inform the present study.

[Sedighian Bidgoli \(2022\)](#), examining students in Tehran, reported a modest inverse relationship between religiosity and rule evasion, highlighting the relevance of religious

values in shaping normative compliance. Notably, only the individual-level dimension of relative deprivation demonstrated a significant positive association with rule evasion, whereas perceptions of structural inequality showed no statistically significant effect.

[Heydari et al. \(2022\)](#), employing institutional disintegration theory, identified materialistic values—particularly money fetishism—and individualism as significant predictors of noncompliance among students at Shahid Chamran University. Although socioeconomic status was not directly linked to rule evasion, it exhibited a weak correlation with perceptions of institutional deterioration, suggesting a contextual overlap with ethical variables.

[Firouzjaian & Tavakoli \(2016\)](#), applying procedural justice theory, argued that perceived injustice in law enforcement undermines trust in legal institutions and fosters behavioral noncompliance. This association between perceptions of legal legitimacy and rule evasion closely aligns with the current study's analytical focus on ethical interpretation and institutional trust.

[Kabiri & Rostamzadeh \(2017\)](#) conducted a sociological analysis of university students in Urmia, identifying strong associations between law-abiding behavior and key variables, including satisfaction with governmental performance, distrust in legislation, religiosity, collective utilitarianism, legal awareness, and perceived social adherence to the law. Their findings underscore the multilayered interplay between individual values and institutional perceptions in shaping compliance.

[Vahedi et al. \(2009\)](#) conducted a broader societal study in West Azerbaijan, identifying religious belief, legal universalism, trust in governmental authority, and deterrent fear as significant positive predictors of law-abiding behavior. These findings further affirm the salient influence of affective and religious dimensions on normative alignment.

Despite the relative abundance of domestic research, a critical examination of these studies reveals that a significant portion focuses primarily on reporting statistical associations between variables, devoting less attention to in-depth analyses of the theoretical mechanisms driving rule evasion. For instance, while studies such as [Sedighian Bidgoli \(2022\)](#) and [Kabiri & Rostamzadeh \(2017\)](#) highlight the role of religiosity in reducing rule evasion and enhancing law-abiding behavior, they do not systematically elucidate the theoretical rationale through which various dimensions of religiosity influence students' normative behaviors, relying instead on statistical correlations. Conversely, studies such as [Heydari et al. \(2022\)](#) focus predominantly on structural and institutional variables, examining individualism, money fetishism, and institutional disintegration as explanatory factors for noncompliance. However, these studies pay insufficient attention to how such structural determinants interact with

cultural and value-oriented variables, including social ethics and personal responsibility. Comprehensive, integrative approaches are therefore essential for offering a holistic understanding of rule evasion, particularly within academic environments.

Internationally, [Wang & Lui \(2010\)](#) reported that negative legal experiences reduced compliance, whereas perceptions of procedural fairness, awareness of legal sanctions, and prior exposure to equitable enforcement foster adherence. These results underscore the psychological foundations of normative behavior and reinforce the present study's analytical emphasis on perceived consequences.

[Lou \(2008\)](#) emphasized the regulatory role of religious belief, arguing that internalized doctrines and rituals guide behavior and deter deviance. The study concluded that increased religiosity strongly predicts legal conformity, aligning closely with the conceptualization of religion as a moral framework in this research.

In a cross-national comparative study, [Huberts et al. \(2006\)](#) demonstrated that institutional norm violations extend beyond political elites to permeate all levels of governance. Although not focused on student populations, this systemic perspective provides valuable contextual depth for understanding broader declines in institutional trust.

International studies, including those by [Wang & Lui \(2010\)](#) and [Gao and Zhao \(2018\)](#), were conducted in cultural and institutional contexts that differ substantially from Iranian society. While these studies emphasize the importance of legal legitimacy, equitable enforcement, and religiosity in promoting law-abiding behavior, directly generalizing their findings to the Iranian academic context without accounting for unique socio-cultural and institutional settings presents limitations. Moreover, a critical review of the literature shows that many studies either focus on the macro-societal level (e.g., general civic compliance) or examine a constrained set of isolated variables. Consequently, the simultaneous role of mass media exposure, religious values, social ethics, and personal responsibility within a coherent analytical model, particularly among university students—remains notably underresearched.

In conclusion, while previous studies have addressed rule-evading and law-abiding behaviors from various perspectives, emphasizing individual, cultural, institutional, and structural factors—a significant research gap remains in the integrative analysis of these factors within the specific academic context of the University of Guilan. To address this theoretical and empirical gap, the present study adopts a comprehensive framework that systematically examines the combined influence of mass media, religious values, social ethics, and personal responsibility.

Collectively, these studies affirm that rule evasion is a multifaceted social phenomenon shaped by complex interactions among psychological, ethical, cultural, and institutional variables. Although prior research has examined these factors through various theoretical lenses, no study has specifically explored rule evasion among students at the University of Guilan. By investigating the joint effects of media exposure, religious belief, ethical orientation, and personal responsibility, this study addresses this empirical gap and offers a context-sensitive perspective on student noncompliance.

Theoretical Considerations

In sociological literature, concepts such as law, social norms, deviance, lawbreaking, and rule evasion are often used interchangeably; however, they remain analytically distinct. Norms encompass sets of formal and informal behavioral rules and expectations that guide social behavior. The law represents a formal, institutionalized, and obligatory subset of these norms, accompanied by specific mechanisms of state enforcement. Social deviance refers broadly to any behavior or attitude that diverges from the dominant norms and expectations of a given society, ranging from minor deviations from social norms to explicit violations of formal laws. In this framework, lawbreaking is a specific form of social deviance characterized by the conscious and deliberate violation of formal legal statutes.

Rule evasion, by contrast, represents a broader conceptual category than lawbreaking. It encompasses not only the intentional disregard of formal laws but also the neglect of informal norms and rules governing social order. In other words, every instance of lawbreaking is a form of rule-evading; however, rule-evading is not necessarily limited to direct legal violations and can manifest at the level of social attitudes and actions. In the present study, rule evasion is operationalized as the tendency and behavior of university students to undermine or disregard formal laws and social norms within the academic setting. The explanation of this phenomenon is grounded in the theoretical frameworks of anomie, social control, conflict, and social disorganization.

Sociologists have developed a range of interpretive frameworks to explain deviant and noncompliant behavior, including rule-evasion. These theories conceptualize norm violations through structural and cultural lenses.

Émile Durkheim viewed social disorder as the outcome of weakened traditional norms and diminished group cohesion in modernizing societies. While asserting that complete normlessness (anomie) is practically unattainable, Durkheim maintained that in complex modern societies with eroding social bonds, anomie intensifies. As shared norms lose their binding force, individuals experience reduced normative pressure, which increases the

likelihood of deviance, including rule evasion. Anomie, as defined by Durkheim, refers to a structural condition wherein the weakening of regulatory norms leads to behavioral instability ([Durkheim, 2018](#)). This framework informs the present analysis by linking declining social ethics to student rule-evasion.

Building upon Durkheim's foundation, Robert Merton reconceptualized anomie as a disjunction between culturally endorsed goals and the legitimate means to achieve them. When normative pathways to success are obstructed, individuals adopt alternative—often deviant—strategies. From Merton's perspective, rule-evasion arises from the structural strain produced by conflicting between personal aspirations and institutional constraints ([Moidfar, 2000, p. 216](#)). This perspective supports the current study's investigation into the tension between students' perceived goals and institutional realities.

Social control theory, particularly as articulated by Hirschi, reframes the central question from why deviance occurs to why conformity endures. Hirschi argued that strong social bonds—formed through attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief—discourage deviant behavior. Weak or absent ties to family, peer networks, and institutional norms increase vulnerability to rule violations ([Salimi & Davari, 2007](#)). This model directly guides the present study's emphasis on social responsibility as a protective buffer against student noncompliance.

In contrast, conflict theory interprets legal adherence through the lens of power dynamics and structural inequality. Legal frameworks, according to this view, are often tools of dominance rather than instruments of justice. Scholars such as Harvey, Gaglir, Tittle, and Miller (as cited in [Afrough, 1998](#)) link deviance to systemic deprivation, resource inequality, and class-based marginalization. Others, including Forrest and Paul, highlight the role of spatial and economic disparities—such as low income and limited access to services—in eroding legal compliance ([Afrough, 1998](#); [Mohseni, 1999](#)). This approach contextualizes rule-evasion as a behavioral response to perceived structural or institutional injustice.

Social disorganization theory attributes deviance to structural instability resulting from rapid social change. Processes like industrialization, urbanization, and migration disrupt community cohesion and weaken shared norms, leading to a breakdown in behavioral regulation. In disorganized environments, normative clarity diminishes, increasing the risk of rule violations. This framework guides the present investigation into how contextual instability may influence students' disengagement from institutional norms.

From an action-theoretical standpoint, religious values are embedded within social conduct, functioning as internal motivators for lawful behavior. Max Weber emphasized the formative

role of religious worldviews in shaping both ethical systems and individual orientation. However, he warned that modern bureaucratization risks displacing these moral anchors, resulting in spiritual disaffection. For Weber, religious belief provided not only an ethical structure but also a motivational framework for normative behavior ([Kalantari et al., 2005](#)). This view supports the inclusion of religiosity as a key factor in predicting compliance.

Collectively, these theoretical perspectives demonstrate that rule-evasion is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon conditioned by ecological, structural, and cultural conditions. Subcultural theories, for instance, emphasize how particular group norms may diverge from mainstream legal and institutional expectations. Across these models, normative adherence is most stable when supported by effective socialization processes and robust institutional systems of social control.

Accordingly, the present study adopts the premise that students are more likely to engage in rule-evasion when internalized value systems—shaped by religion, ethical orientation, personal responsibility, and media exposure—are weak or in conflict with institutional norms. This theoretical foundation enables a more nuanced examination of the individual and contextual variables influencing student noncompliance.

The conceptual framework derived from these synthesized theoretical models identifies both individual-level (cultural and behavioral) and background (demographic) variables as predictors of student rule-evasion (Figure 1).

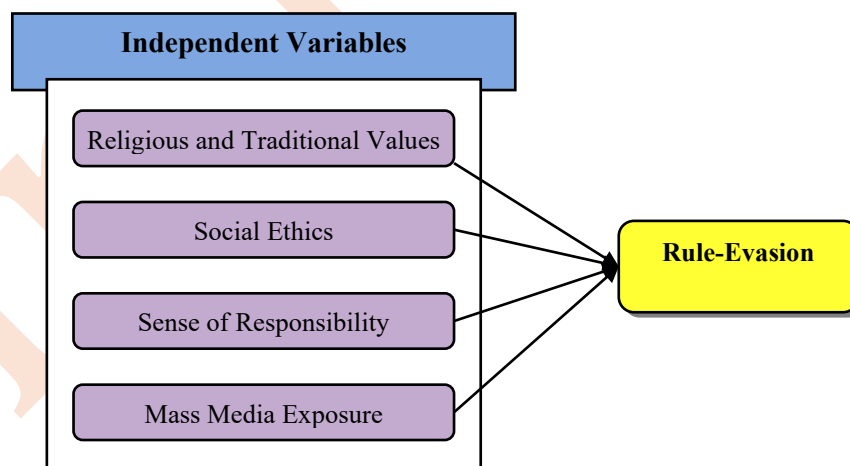


Figure 1- *Conceptual Model of the Study*

Methods and Data

This study employed a quantitative research design utilizing a survey approach, with a structured questionnaire serving as the primary instrument for data collection. The target population comprised undergraduate students from the Faculty of Literature and Humanities and the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Guilan. Based on a total enrollment of 5,759 students, a sample size of 360 participants was determined using Cochran's formula.

Participants were selected through systematic random sampling. Following data collection, the responses were coded, screened, and processed using SPSS and PLS software. Data cleaning procedures were performed, and composite indices were constructed prior to conducting descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

To evaluate the reliability of the measurement constructs, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each variable. As shown in Table 1, all constructs exhibited acceptable to high internal consistency, with alpha values ranging from 0.776 to 0.926.

Table 1- *Reliability Assessment of Research Variables*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Media Exposure	0.839
Personal Responsibility	0.914
Religious & Traditional Values	0.776
Rule-Evasion	0.926
Social Ethics	0.901

This study operationalized key theoretical constructs into measurable variables using a structured survey instrument. Primary variables were measured using standard multi-item scales anchored on a five-point Likert response format (ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"), while continuous behavioral metrics were used for media consumption.

The primary construct of this study, rule-evasion, refers to a behavioral orientation in which individuals, under specific social or institutional conditions, justify or normalize the disregard of formal legal norms ([Firouzjaeian & Tavakoli, 2016](#)). This orientation often represents a strategic adaptation to perceived inefficiencies or inconsistencies in the enforcement of rules. Operationally, this variable was measured using a 12-item Likert scale capturing respondents' attitudes and justifications regarding noncompliance. Representative items measuring this construct include "It is acceptable to ignore traffic laws under certain circumstances," "Administrative problems can often be resolved through financial

compensation or personal connections," "Bribery can be an effective means of avoiding legal penalties," and "Lawbreakers often achieve greater success in life."

Religious and traditional values refer to internalized moral and cultural frameworks that are derived from religious doctrine and customary norms. These values influence behavior by providing ethical guidance and defining social obligations (Weber, as cited in [Momtaz, 2002](#)). Operationally, this construct was evaluated using a 3-item Likert scale measuring core dimensions of religious commitment, including "I adhere to religious dress codes while on campus," "My religious convictions are strong," and "I actively promote religious values and the principle of enjoining good and forbidding wrong."

Social ethics encompass an individual's sense of fairness, reciprocity, and responsibility within interpersonal contexts. Grounded in Hirschi's social bond theory, this construct reflects trust, mutual obligation, and moral accountability in everyday interactions ([Salimi & Davari, 2007](#); [Momtaz, 2002](#)). Operationally, social ethics was measured using an 8-item Likert scale assessing interpersonal reciprocity, with sample items such as "I willingly assist classmates who have treated me well," "If a classmate lends me money, I feel compelled to return more than I borrowed," and "I believe mutual respect strengthens interpersonal relationships."

Responsibility refers to an internalized commitment to legal and civic duties, including adherence to laws, accountability in social contexts, and personal integrity. It encompasses both moral obligation and willingness to align with collective norms ([Alikhah, 1999](#)). Operationally, responsibility was measured through a 5-item Likert scale evaluating civic and moral commitments, featuring items such as "I consider legal obedience a personal responsibility," "I feel both morally and legally obligated to respond to wrongdoing," and "I view tax payment as a civic duty."

Finally, mass media usage was operationalized as the total volume of daily exposure to various communication channels, measured as a continuous metric in daily hours across 5 indicators, including "Time spent daily watching domestic (Iranian) television," "Time spent daily watching foreign television," "Time spent daily on social media," and "Time spent daily browsing the internet."

Univariate normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis coefficients. In accordance with established statistical criteria, variables exhibiting skewness and kurtosis values within the range of -2 to +2 were considered to exhibit an acceptable approximation of a normal distribution. All variables in this study fell within this acceptable range, indicating that the data satisfied the assumption of a normal statistical distribution.

For each construct, the corresponding numerical values and measurement validity indicators were assessed. Factor loadings exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 demonstrated strong item reliability and supported high composite reliability across constructs. Furthermore, internal consistency and reliability were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). As shown in Table 2, Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.776 to 0.926, and Composite Reliability values consistently exceeded the standard 0.70 benchmark (ranging from 0.870 to 0.936), indicating a high level of internal consistency across all latent constructs.

Convergent validity was evaluated using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All constructs demonstrated AVE values exceeding the 0.50 threshold (ranging from 0.550 to 0.691). Moreover, the composite reliability values for all constructs consistently exceeded their corresponding AVE values. Taken together, these metrics confirm the acceptable reliability and convergent validity of the measurement model.

Table 2. *Constructs Reliability and Convergent Validity Metrics*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Media Exposure	0.839	0.886	0.608
Personal Responsibility	0.914	0.928	0.563
Religious & Traditional Values	0.776	0.870	0.691
Rule-Evasion	0.926	0.936	0.550
Social Ethics	0.901	0.920	0.591

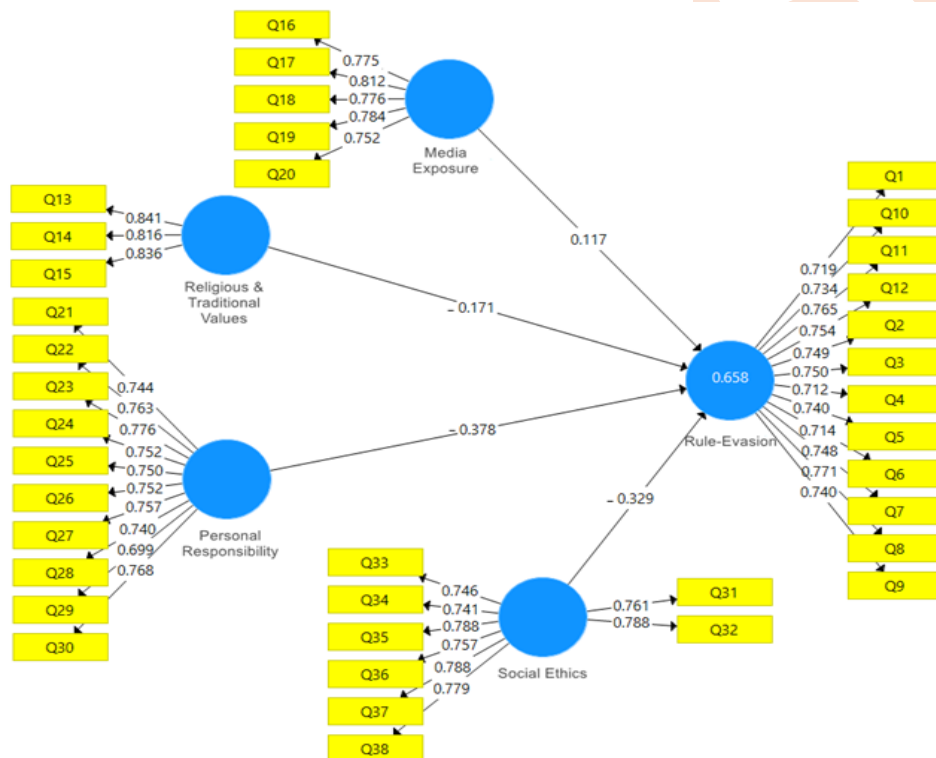
Findings

The coefficient of determination (R^2) connects the measurement model to the structural component in structural equation modeling (SEM), indicating the proportion of variance in an endogenous variable explained by exogenous constructs. In SEM reporting, R^2 is evaluated exclusively for endogenous latent variables and equals zero for exogenous ones. Higher R^2 values reflect stronger explanatory power and better structural fit. As shown in Figure 2 and Table 2, the R^2 value for the main dependent variable, Rule-Evasion, is 0.658, indicating that 65.8% of its variance is explained by the independent constructs in the model.

Table 3- Coefficient of Determination (R^2) Values

Variable	R Square
Rule-Evasion	0.658

The results demonstrate a statistically significant relationships between all independent constructs and student rule-evasion. As shown in Figure 2, the negative path coefficient ($\beta = -0.171$) indicates that greater adherence to religious and traditional values is associated with reduced rule-evasive behavior. As shown in Figure 3, the corresponding t -value ($t = 5.472$) significantly exceeds the standard 1.96 threshold ($p < 0.001$).

**Figure 2- Standardized Path Coefficients of the Hypothesis Tests**

Personal responsibility exhibits the strongest negative effect on rule-evasion ($\beta = -0.378$, $t = 6.688$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that greater personal obligation corresponds directly with reduced noncompliant behavior. Similarly, social ethics demonstrates a significant inverse relationship with rule-evasion ($\beta = -0.329$, $t = 6.572$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that stronger interpersonal moral commitments lower the tendency toward rule evasion.

In contrast, media exposure exhibits a statistically significant positive relationship with rule-evasion ($\beta = 0.117$, $t = 2.783$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that increased overall media exposure modestly increases rule-evasive tendencies.

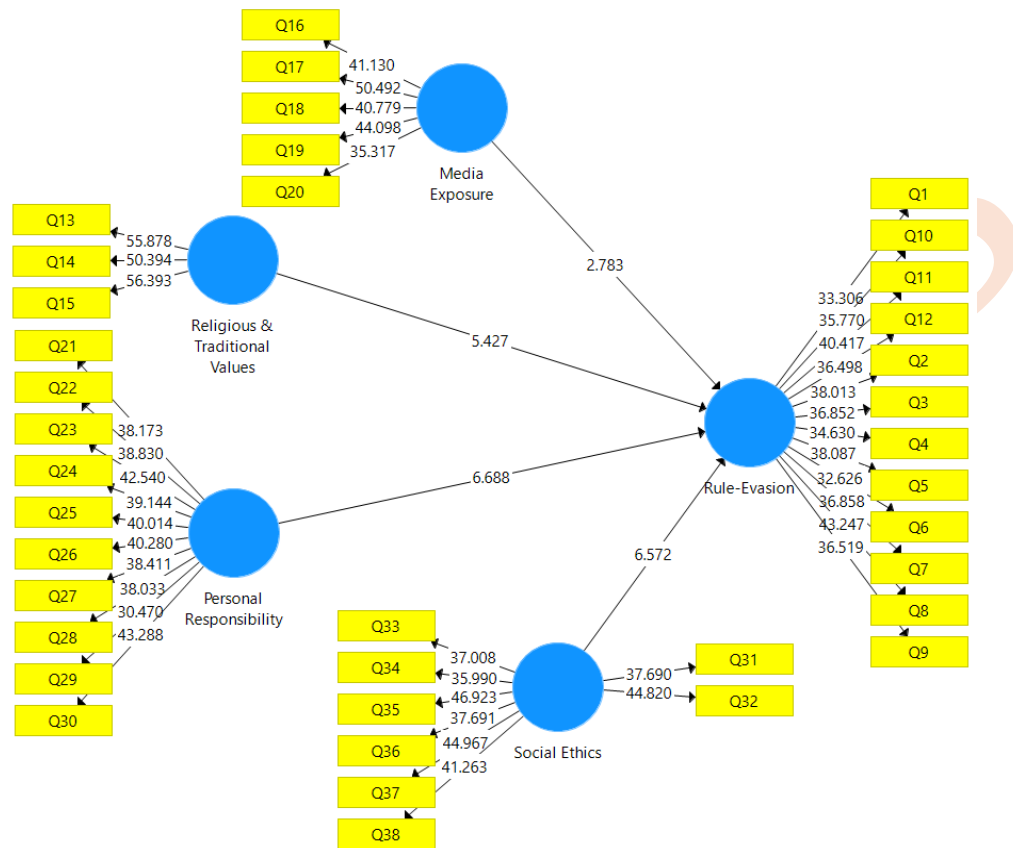


Figure 3- Significance Values of Hypothesis Testing

Table 3. Community R^2 , and Goodness of Fit (GOF) Metrics Across Constructs

Variable	Community	R^2	AVG. Community	AVG. R^2	Goodness of Fit (GOF)
Social Ethics	0.416	—	0.492	0.658	0.569
Religious & Traditional Values	0.547	—			
Media Exposure	0.458	—			
Rule-Evasion	0.539	0.658			
Personal Responsibility	0.502	—			

Based on Table 3, which displays the average commonalities and R^2 values, the Goodness of Fit (GOF) metric was calculated 0.569. Given that values exceeding 0.36 indicate high model fit, this result confirms a robust overall structural fit. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 3, all corresponding test statistics (t -values) exceed the critical threshold of 1.96, demonstrating that the relationships between the independent variables (Social Ethics, Religious & Traditional Values, Personal Responsibility, and Media Exposure) and the dependent variable (Rule-Evasion) are statistically significant. Consequently, all underlying research hypotheses are empirically supported.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined the sociological determinants of rule-evasion among students at the University of Guilan by investigating the effects of personal responsibility, social ethics, religious and traditional values, and media exposure. Overall, the findings support a multidimensional explanation of legal noncompliance, demonstrating that both individual moral characteristics and socio-cultural influences play significant roles in shaping students' tendencies toward rule-evasive behavior. The structural model exhibited substantial explanatory power, accounting for 65.8% of the variance in rule-evasion, thereby confirming the relevance of the proposed sociological framework.

Among the examined variables, personal responsibility emerged as the strongest predictor of rule-evasion, exhibiting the largest negative effect. This finding suggests that students who demonstrate a stronger sense of personal obligation and accountability are considerably less likely to violate legal and institutional rules. The result is consistent with Hirschi's social bond theory, which emphasizes that individuals possessing stronger commitments and moral beliefs are less inclined to engage in deviant behavior ([Salimi & Davari, 2007](#)). From this perspective, personal responsibility functions as an internal mechanism of social control that promotes voluntary compliance with legal norms rather than obedience based solely on external sanctions.

The findings also revealed a significant inverse relationship between social ethics and rule-evasion. Students with stronger ethical commitments toward others and greater adherence to shared moral principles exhibited lower tendencies toward legal noncompliance. This finding reinforces sociological perspectives emphasizing that ethical norms constitute an essential component of social cohesion and contribute to maintaining lawful behavior. The result further suggests that strengthening ethical responsibility within educational environments may represent an effective strategy for reducing rule-evasive behavior among university students.

In addition, religious and traditional values were found to have a significant negative association with rule-evasion. Although the magnitude of this relationship was smaller than those of personal responsibility and social ethics, the findings indicate that stronger adherence to religious beliefs and traditional cultural values contributes to greater respect for legal and institutional norms. This result is consistent with previous research emphasizing the role of cultural and moral value systems in reinforcing normative commitment and reducing deviant behavior.

Conversely, media exposure demonstrated a statistically significant positive relationship with rule-evasion. This finding indicates that greater exposure to media content is associated with a modest increase in students' tendency toward rule-evasive behavior. The result suggests that media may influence legal attitudes by shaping perceptions of social norms and acceptable behavior. Nevertheless, media influence should not be interpreted as deterministic, since individuals actively interpret media messages through existing cultural values and moral frameworks. Accordingly, enhancing students' critical media literacy remains essential for minimizing potentially adverse influences while promoting responsible and lawful behavior.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional research design limits causal inference and precludes examination of changes in rule-evasive behavior over time. Second, because the sample was limited to students at the University of Guilan, caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings to other universities or social contexts. Third, the use of self-reported questionnaires, particularly for measuring sensitive behaviors such as rule-evasion, may have introduced social desirability bias despite assurances of confidentiality. Finally, several potentially influential variables—including economic stress ([Kalantari et al., 2005](#)), peer-group influence, and broader institutional factors—were not incorporated into the structural model and should be considered in future research to provide a more comprehensive explanation of legal noncompliance.

From a practical perspective, the findings indicate that reducing rule-evasion among university students requires interventions that extend beyond formal legal enforcement. Educational institutions should prioritize programs that strengthen personal responsibility, cultivate social ethics, and reinforce constructive moral and cultural values through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Given the positive association between media exposure and rule-evasion, universities should also invest in comprehensive media literacy education that equips students with critical evaluation skills and promotes responsible engagement with media content. Collectively, these educational and cultural strategies are likely to foster stronger normative commitment and produce more sustainable compliance with legal and institutional rules than approaches relying primarily on punitive or control-oriented measures.

Ethical Considerations

Compliance with Ethical Guidelines

All ethical considerations, including confidentiality, trustworthiness, citation accuracy, respect for contributors, adherence to ethical data collection standards, and participant privacy have been taken into account by the researchers. All study participants were assured of the confidentiality of the research findings, and their involvement was fully voluntary.

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Authors' Contributions

Rasoul Ghadimi-Azad Khasmakhi contributed to the conceptualization of the study, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and drafting of the manuscript. Mohammad Reza Gholami Shekarsaraie supervised the research, contributed to the study design, methodology, interpretation of the results, critical revision of the manuscript, and final approval of the version to be published. Nader Ofoqi contributed to the development of the research design, interpretation of the findings, and critical revision of the manuscript. Hadi Noori contributed to the methodological framework, interpretation of the results, and critical revision of the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

There are no financial or personal conflicts of interest regarding this article. This manuscript has not been submitted to any other journal for publication.

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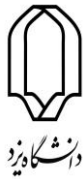
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تحلیل جامعه‌شناختی گرایش به قانون‌گریزی در میان دانشجویان: مطالعه‌ای در دانشگاه گیلان

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مقاله پژوهشی

چکیده

زمینه و هدف: دانشگاه‌ها، به‌عنوان یکی از مهم‌ترین نهادهای اجتماعی در پرورش مسئولیت‌پذیری مدنی و درونی‌سازی هنجارهای اجتماعی، امروزه با چالش‌های ناشی از افزایش گرایش دانشجویان به قانون‌گریزی و عدول از مقررات نهادی مواجه‌اند. این پدیده، ضرورت واکاوی جامعه‌شناختی عوامل مؤثر بر رفتارهای هنجارشکنانه در محیط‌های آموزش عالی را برجسته می‌سازد. پژوهش حاضر با هدف بررسی نقش عوامل اجتماعی - فرهنگی، اخلاقی و جمعیت‌شناختی در تبیین گرایش دانشجویان به قانون‌گریزی، به‌ویژه در بسترهای نهادی که میان انتظارات سازمانی و کنش‌های دانشجویان نوعی ناهماهنگی ساختاری وجود دارد، انجام شده است.

روش و داده‌ها: این پژوهش با رویکرد کمی و در چارچوب یک مدل نظری تدوین و اجرا شد. داده‌ها از طریق نمونه‌گیری از ۳۶۰ نفر از دانشجویان دانشگاه گیلان گردآوری شد. برای آزمون روابط میان متغیرها از مدل‌سازی معادلات ساختاری مبتنی بر حداقل مربعات جزئی (PLS-SEM) استفاده شد. در این مدل، تأثیر متغیرهای مستقلی همچون باورهای دینی، ارزش‌های اخلاقی، احساس مسئولیت فردی، میزان مواجهه با رسانه‌های جمعی و ویژگی‌های جمعیت‌شناختی (جنسیت، سن و وضعیت تأهل) بر رفتارهای قانون‌گریزانه دانشجویان مورد بررسی قرار گرفت.

یافته‌ها: نتایج مدل ساختاری از برازش مطلوب برخوردار بود و متغیرها توانستند ۶۵ درصد از واریانس رفتارهای قانون‌گریزانه دانشجویان را تبیین کنند. یافته‌ها نشان داد که مشارکت هنجاری در تعاملات اجتماعی در مقایسه با سازوکارهای رسمی و کنترل‌های سلسله‌مراتبی، نقش مؤثرتری در کاهش گرایش به قانون‌گریزی ایفا می‌کند. همچنین، باورهای دینی قوی، ارزش‌های اخلاقی و احساس مسئولیت فردی، رابطه‌ای منفی و معنادار با رفتارهای قانون‌گریزانه داشتند. در مقابل، افزایش میزان مواجهه با رسانه‌های جمعی با تقویت گرایش به قانون‌گریزی رابطه مثبت و معناداری نشان داد.

بحث و نتیجه‌گیری: یافته‌ها بر اهمیت توسعه ساختارهای نهادی مشارکت‌محور و تعامل‌گرا، به‌جای اتکای صرف به رویکردهای تنبیهی و کنترل‌محور، در تقویت قانون‌مداری تأکید می‌کند. نتایج، بینش‌های تازه‌ای درباره رفتار دانشجویان ارائه می‌دهد و می‌تواند مبنایی کاربردی برای طراحی سیاست‌های اثربخش‌تر در نظام آموزش عالی، با هدف ارتقای همسویی میان هنجارهای نهادی و رفتار دانشجویان، فراهم آورد.

واژگان کلیدی: قانون‌گریزی، مشارکت هنجاری، مسئولیت اجتماعی، ارزش‌های اخلاقی، دانشجویان دانشگاه.

پیام اصلی: تقویت مشارکت هنجاری دانشجویان از طریق ایجاد سازوکارهای نهادی مشارکتی، فراگیر و تعاملی، در مقایسه با اتکای صرف به شیوه‌های رسمی و کنترل از بالا به پایین، اثربخشی بیشتری در کاهش رفتارهای قانون‌گریزانه دارد. افزون بر این، ارزش‌های اخلاقی، باورهای دینی و احساس مسئولیت فردی نقش بازدارنده و معناداری در کاهش رفتارهای مغایر با هنجارها ایفا می‌کنند، در حالی که افزایش مواجهه با رسانه‌های جمعی با گرایش بیشتر به قانون‌گریزی همراه است. این یافته‌ها، ضرورت تدوین سیاست‌هایی مبتنی بر تقویت رشد اخلاقی، مسئولیت‌پذیری اجتماعی و انسجام اجتماعی را برای تحقق همسویی میان هنجارهای نهادی و رفتار دانشجویان برجسته می‌سازد.

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