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LETTER

Research Ethics Promotion in Higher Education Institutes

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In his valuable paper entitled "Fake Graduates", Sorooshian (2016) clarified the deleterious effects of students' theses which have been prepared and presented by paper-seller agencies on industry and economy. He recommended that professors and academic institutes should increase their supervision of the related research to avoid such misconducts. Confirming Sorooshian's idea, it seems that the suggested solution is not enough and can only be considered as a method to improve the scientific value of academic writings. Indeed, there are some other steps which should be passed before those mentioned in the letter of Sorooshian.

First of all, students need to be trained in all aspects of their research projects and be guided toward preparing all parts of their theses particularly knowing how to write a scientific paper. Some such students do not have sufficient information about what is really called plagiarism and they should be well trained for the required rules of writing such as using their own words, putting their borrowed words in quotation marks, and how to cite resources and references. Actually, there is sometimes no intention to plagiarize but unfamiliarity with the issue causes such mistakes and they can be accidentally trapped into plagiarism. This kind of writing can be considered as the case which defined the difference between misconducts and

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unethical conducts and also can be amended by educating university students and young researchers in the arts and conventions of scientific writing.

Second, the inappropriate assessment system for both professors and students in some universities should be corrected. These days, faculty members need many papers to advance their academic position in some universities. Therefore, they push their students to complete their projects as soon as possible. On the other hand, students need research papers to complete the process of graduating (Ghazinoory et al. 2011). In some cases, such distresses can be considered as one of the main causes of buying fake or worthless research and paper-sellers will remain as the only option for these students. Hence, the goal of publishing more papers should be replaced by conducting high-quality research projects.

More importantly, creating the ethical co-authorship codes and introducing them to the researchers is recommended to promote the quality of research in academic institutes. In the light of these codes, the related standards will be disclosed and ethical research will be possible. These ethical norms can help researchers to achieve their scientific careers fairly (Bahadori et al. 2012). It seems that it is necessary for universities to develop their ethical codes, train their students to apply them appropriately and then consider ethical evaluations of the research projects and theses. Moreover, based on cultural, religious and local issues, ethical codes need revision.

In conclusion, although we appreciate Sorooshian's suggestion, considering some other important interventions including promoting research education, revising professors' and students' evaluation system, and the enhanced introduction of ethical codes in research are necessary for universities. Faculty members and higher education institutes should be careful about everything which can cause unethical research.

References

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