

Young Economists' Cognition of Integrity Environment in Academic Innovation: an Investigation Based on Self-plagiarism

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Abstract—In the context that the people pay more and more attention to the problem of self-plagiarism, how economists avoid academic dishonesty in the process of receiving higher education, especially the much-criticized conduct of self-plagiarism, is bound to become an unavoidable issue in school education. In this paper, the author conducted a questionnaire survey to investigate whether Chinese young economist in the graduate school of the Chinese academy of social sciences plagiarize themselves. The research results show that economists' understanding of self-plagiarism is not accurate completely, so it is necessary to take measures to help economists to eliminate the problem of self-plagiarism. Therefore, the research report puts forward five specific suggestions based on the questionnaire survey analysis, hoping to help the school solve the problem of economists' self-plagiarism.

Keywords—self-plagiarism; academic dishonesty; cheating; intentional plagiarism; unintentional plagiarism; Chinese young economists; questionnaire survey

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, academic plagiarism has aroused wide concern in the scientific research education in Chinese colleges and universities. In the process of daily scientific research and study, economists simply process and reuse academic papers without any innovation, so as to cope with the study or scientific research tasks in a hurry. The appearance of this inefficient and repetitive academic phenomenon has become a controversial core issue in the academic circle. Therefore, whether economists can effectively regulate and restrain self-plagiarism in the process of writing scientific research papers is bound to become a very important aspect to test whether economists are academically honest or not. At present, the academic circle has different understanding of plagiarism, and different experts have different criteria for plagiarism. Generally speaking, self-plagiarism and plagiarism are both academic dishonesty. For these two kinds of behaviors, the academic circle has not formed a relatively authoritative and complete definition, and economists' cognition of them is also different. For Plagiarism, as Rosamond (2002) points out, "Plagiarism

is usually defined as using the work of others as if it were one's own, which is considered to be typical academic fraud". But the definition of self-plagiarism is completely different. "Self-plagiarism, also known as recycling fraud, occurs when an author reuses text in subsequent writings without attributing the previous publication" (Dellavalle, 2007). At present, people seem to be more tolerant of self-plagiarism, and they don't know whether it is academic fraud or not. Therefore, it has aroused widespread debate in academic circles. Therefore, in the background of the academic plagiarism has under the premise of accurate judgment, the economists should not only to put an end to ordinary plagiarism, and more attention to self-plagiarism. Whether intentional plagiarism or unintentional plagiarism should be paid enough attention to, and take the initiative to refuse and stay away, to build a plagiarism firewall, hold academic integrity of the bottom line. Because the conduct of self-plagiarism seems to be more hidden, it is easy to find reasons for academic fraud for the author. It is mistaken that self-plagiarism does not belong to academic fraud, and it is not found that it is indeed a wrong act. Over time, economists are prone to lax thinking, unable to recognize the nature of the real mistake. For example, economists repackage and change the rhetoric content of the paper which they have written before and then publish it again as part or all of the content of the new paper without notes, which leads to serious academic fraud, and finally leads to serious consequences and destroys their academic integrity and academic career. There have been many such examples, and in the end it can only be remorse. Therefore, based on the correct understanding of the phenomenon of self-plagiarism as a starting point, the research puts forward some warnings for this serious academic misconduct, to avoid the conduct of self-plagiarism which should not exist, in the hope of further purifying the academic environment of scientific research in universities and providing economists with correct academic guidance.

To sum up, it must be zero tolerance on academic fraud, as a doctoral student, they should actively recognize the fundamental error of self-plagiarism, no matter intentional plagiarism or unintentional plagiarism. Only by recognizing

the causes of self-plagiarism, analyzing the basic ways and main manifestations of self-plagiarism, and distinguishing the boundaries of academic plagiarism, can they thoroughly and consciously resist academic misconduct and know exactly how to conduct normative and serious scientific research. They should find their own correct direction of academic research, and establish an honest academic morality for the future academic life, and grasp the basic standard of doing academic work, so as to continuously inject positive energy into a good academic atmosphere.

II. QUESTION SETTING

At present, it has been universally rejected that economists plagiarize others' scientific research papers in their thesis writing, which has been recognized as the most shameful, the most direct and the worst behavior of academic dishonesty. However, unlike ordinary plagiarism, the judgment of self-plagiarism seems to be in limbo. So are economists accurate in their current understanding of self-plagiarism and the nature of its mistakes? How can they put an end to self-plagiarism? Some people think that self-plagiarism is not academic misconduct. The main reason is that self-plagiarism is the act of copying one's own existing scientific research achievements, which is just a repeated reference of one's own scientific research achievements. And the property right of the original scientific research achievements belongs to him. Therefore, it seems that the author cannot be criticized, without scruple to carry out their own research results of academic plagiarism, it seems natural that this behavior should be understood. So is self-plagiarism academic dishonesty? It is necessary to have a more in-depth discussion on this issue, and help economists correctly treat and recognize the nature of the self-plagiarism. The accurate analysis on this issue is particularly crucial for our doctoral student, it may affect the doctoral research integrity behavior of the life, and hope to the economists to write academic papers and scientific research to provide long-term guidance, from the true sense to eliminate intentional plagiarism or unintentional plagiarism, and fundamentally help economists to correct themselves put an end to fraud. It also illustrates the theme of this study is of great significance.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As for the research on the issue of self-plagiarism, many scholars have conducted in-depth research on this issue in the academic circle, and many valuable insights have been formed, which provide a very important reference for them to fully understand the concept and connotation of self-plagiarism. Predecessors have made fruitful literature accumulation for the study of self-plagiarism, which has laid a solid material foundation for the in-depth study of this paper. Dellavalle, Banks, and Ellis (2007) made an in-depth analysis of the definition, acceptability, copyright, and legal issues of self-plagiarism. Dellavalle et al. (2007) suggested that "Self-plagiarism occurs when an author reuses text in subsequent writings without attributing the previous publication". "Self-plagiarism is not acceptable in academic writing because academic writing is grounded by its references, and authors are expected to cite their closely

related previous writing"(Dellavalle et al, 2007)."Authors of technical articles are often asked to assign copyright to a journal's owner or publisher as a condition for publication, So self-plagiarism may involve copyright infringement" (Dellavalle et al, 2007)."Authors will be legally sanctioned for violating copyright on their own words, because the courts have generally recognized that authors have special rights to their words not withstanding copyright" (Dellavalle et al, 2007). Bouville (2008) defined "self-plagiarism on the basis of an analysis of the definition of plagiarism". "Plagiarism is generally taken to mean the appropriation of the words and ideas of others" (Bouville, 2008). "Duplicate publication, or self-plagiarism, occurs when an author reuses substantial parts of their own published work without providing the appropriate references" (Bouville, 2008). Bouville (2008) distinguishes between Copying Words and Copying Ideas, and points out that the purpose of teaching economists to write is not to avoid plagiarism, but to teach them how to innovate. Bird (2002) argues that "self-plagiarism is a misnomer, Self-plagiarism does not involve copyright issues, as authors frequently assign their copyright to publishers, who often grant authors the right to use, free of charge, all or part of their articles in other publications with proper attribution". Bird (2002) also notes that "in the educational setting self-plagiarism refers to the practice of submitting the same essay for credit in two different courses". Samuelson (1994) argued that "identifying self-plagiarism is often difficult because limited reuse of material is accepted both legally (as fair use) and ethically". Samuelson (1994) describes misrepresentation as the basis of self-plagiarism. She states "Although it seems not to have been raised in any of the self-plagiarism cases, copyrights law's fair use defense would likely provide a shield against many potential publisher claims of copyright infringement against authors who reused portions of their previous works" (Samuelson, 1994) .Samuelson (1994) refers to her own practice of converting "a technical article into a law review article with relatively few changes—adding footnotes and one substantive section" for a different audience. Samuelson (1994) also listed several motivations for self-plagiarism, such as "one might assert that the previous work needs to be restated in order to lay the groundwork for the new contribution in the second work; or that portions of the previous work must be repeated in order to deal with new evidence or arguments; or that the audience for each work is so different that publishing the same work in different places was necessary to allow the message to get out; or that it is an accepted practice in a field to do particular kinds of republications; or that an author will sometimes say things in much the same way without realizing it because that is how the author thinks about the issue; and that the author thinks he or she said it so well the first time that it makes no sense to say it differently a second time". Newton (2015) used a questionnaire-based methodology to study the confidence and understanding in economists at the start of their higher education. Newton (2015) proposed to establish a positive, proactive approach to issues such as plagiarism requires that economists are equipped with the skills and experience to act with integrity and those educators are fully aware of the

attitudes and ability of economists, particularly when they start university.

IV. DESIGN AND MEASUREMENTS USED

The purpose of this study was to obtain a large amount of relatively accurate information about doctoral economists' views on issues related to self-plagiarism through questionnaires. A total of 26 questions were designed in this questionnaire, and the questionnaire was measured by four types of questions, including single-choice questions, multiple-choice questions, scale questions and fill-in-the-blank questions. The subjects of the questionnaire are Chinese young economist from the graduate school of the Chinese academy of social sciences. The questionnaire is divided into five parts. The first part is a total of five questions from questions 1 to 5, which are mainly used to collect basic information of respondents' gender, occupation, age, educational background and other aspects. The second part is a total of six questions from questions 6 to 11, which is mainly used to collect the respondents' understanding of self-plagiarism. The third part is a total of five questions from questions 12 to 16, which is mainly used to understand the interviewees' influence on the harm of self-plagiarism, the scope of implementation and the motivation of implementation. The fourth part is a total of 7 questions from questions 17 to 23, which is mainly used to understand the attitudes and tendencies of interviewees towards self-plagiarism. The fifth part is questions 24 to 26, a total of three questions, mainly used to understand the respondents on how to prevent and correct treatment of self-plagiarism basic views.

V. SURVEY RESULTS

The questionnaire survey was conducted in the form of online questionnaire survey, and a total of 21 questionnaires were collected from the survey. The survey results show that, first of all, the respondents' understanding of self-plagiarism is not optimistic. Only 14 percent of economists accurately understood the concept of self-plagiarism, the degree score of identification which economists agree with self-plagiarism is misconduct is 2.14 (total score is 5 points). The study found that respondents with different educational experiences and different occupations showed significant differences in understanding the definition of self-plagiarism. Among them, only 33.3 doctors can accurately determine the definition of self-plagiarism, 80 percent of respondents of academic masters can accurately determine the definition of self-plagiarism, and 75 percent of respondents of professional masters can accurately determine the definition of self-plagiarism. In addition, 67 percent of full-time economists, 47 percent of teachers, 100 percent of researchers and 50 percent of civil servants were able to accurately determine the definition of self-plagiarism. Secondly, interviewees do not have a clear understanding of its social harm and causes of self-plagiarism. Only 61.9 percent of respondents of the respondents were fully aware of the social harm caused by self-plagiarism. Only 19 percent of respondents could fully identify the motivation for the conduction of self-plagiarism. Thirdly, the attitude and

tendency of the interviewees to self-plagiarism are worrying. 33.3 percent of respondents did not know whether they would plagiarize themselves in writing under normal pressure of scientific research. Finally, the right measures which respondents took to prevent self-plagiarism were unclear. 57 percent of respondents did not know exactly how to prevent self-plagiarism, and 86 percent of respondents agree that the most urgent measure to prevent self-plagiarism was to reduce the pressure of scientific research as much as possible.

VI. SUMMARY

Both the economists' concept of self-plagiarism and their understanding of the nature of its mistake are not completely accurate, and the economists have a certain degree of deviation in understanding. Only 66 percent of economists said they had a basic understanding of self-plagiarism, but only 52 percent of economists actually understood the definition of self-plagiarism, and only 33 percent who could accurately judge the circumstances of self-plagiarism. And 76 percent of the economists could not tell whether self-plagiarism was intentional plagiarism or unintentional plagiarism. In addition, there are many economists do not know how to put an end to self-plagiarism, so it is urgent to strengthen the education to avoid self-plagiarism. According to the results of the questionnaire survey, only 33% of the economists know exactly how to avoid self-plagiarism, and 86% of them think that reducing the pressure of scientific research and reducing the burden is the most urgent measure to eliminate self-plagiarism.

VII. DISCUSSION

Although this research has been successfully completed, there are still some limitations in the research. Due to the limitation of the time and scope of the investigation, the sample size of this questionnaire survey is relatively small. This may lead to a lack of representativeness of the questionnaire survey, which cannot fully reflect economists' views on self-plagiarism problem. The insufficient number of samples will even make the data of questionnaire statistical results not accurate enough. In the future, similar studies can make efforts in terms of sample size to improve the reliability of the study. In addition, Due to the limited topics of the questionnaire, the investigation of the causes of self-plagiarism is not in-depth enough. Therefore, they can dig deeper into the motivation of self-plagiarism to find more in-depth information about self-plagiarism in the future.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the design of the special investigation on self-plagiarism, the basic goal of the special research is preliminarily achieved. However, looking back at the whole process of the research, there are still some areas for further improvement. For example, on the one hand, the sample number of the survey can be further increased in the survey and more reliable data can be obtained to ensure that the entire questionnaire is more representative, so that the obtained survey results are more convincing. On the other

hand, the content of the questionnaire can be optimized to ensure that the questionnaire structure is more in line with the respondents' psychological expectations, and making the questionnaire more professional, so as to ensure a deeper understanding of economists' views on self-plagiarism. In addition, for the problems found in this survey, the school can be solved from the following measures in the future: first, it is suggested to strengthen the education of economists about self-plagiarism, so as to help economists accurately understand the concept of self-plagiarism. Second, it is suggested that schools should further strengthen economists' education in personal morality and academic accomplishment, and enhance their self-discipline in academic research. Third, it is suggested that schools should guide economists to deal with the pressure of scientific research correctly, help economists to make reasonable academic research plans, and effectively relieve the pressure of scientific research. Fourthly, it is suggested to carry out some special academic education activities to let economists know how to quote relevant references in a standard way so as to avoid economists' self-plagiarism. Fifth, it is suggested to initiate anti-self-plagiarism activities, widely publicize the social harm caused by self-plagiarism, and eliminate self-plagiarism to the greatest extent.

IX. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, so far, economists' understanding of self-plagiarism is not accurate enough. And more measures should be taken to solve the internal and external causes of self-plagiarism, so as to put an end to self-plagiarism fundamentally.

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