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ULRS1032 – INTEGRITY AND ANTI-CORRUPTION COURSE

SECTION 11

CASE STUDY ON INTEGRITY AND CORRUPTION

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TOPIC: STOLEN IDENTITY IN CHINA EDUCATION SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

(i)BACKGROUND OF THE CURRENT ISSUE

The issue was about a woman's identity that was stolen by the others due to exam frauds. This incident happened in China. In 2004, Chen Chunxiu, a farmer's daughter sat for the high school exam named Gaokao. Gaokao is a college entrance exam which determines China students' entire future.

For Chen Chunxiu, this Gaokao was the only chance for her to get into university to get higher education because her family was poor. However, she failed the exam. Therefore, she had to work for her living. She took up various jobs such as factory worker, waitress and finally become a kindergarten teacher.

After 16 years, Chen Chunxiu accidentally found that she actually got the offer from Shandong University of Technology and enrolled there. In fact, her score in Gaokao and her identity was stolen by a girl called Chen Yanping with the help of her uncle.

(ii)CHRONOLOGY OF THE ISSUE

The Gaokao started in 1952 but was canceled in 1966 due to the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. During the revolution, high schools and middle schools' students were sent to labor in rural communes to answer the Chairman Mao Zedong's call for revolution. Until 1977, the Gaokao finally reinstated after Mao Zedong's death. The students tried their best to score in the Gaokao so that they can study in university and get better work opportunities after graduation to change their life.

Chen Chunxiu took the Gaokao in 2004, then she was waited to receive offer letter from China universities because accepting letter from universities was the only way to know whether she got into a university. Until September 2004, Chen Chunxiu did not accept any letters from universities, and she decided to work in the city.

Then in May 2020, she decided to enroll in a course for adults. When she entered her personal details on the official government website, she found that she had entered Shandong University of Technology in 2004 and graduated in 2007. However, the picture shown was not her. Now she realized that her identity was stolen by the others.

According to the state news outlet Xinhua, the imposter's uncle who was a local official, is accused of accepting help from the local admissions director who was able to access Chen Chunxiu's exam information. Then, the imposter's father allegedly intercepted Chen Chunxiu's admission letter at the country post office before it was posted. After that, with the help of Chen Chunxiu's high school principal, they made a brand new faked high school transcript containing the imposter's details. Also, it was alleged that the imposter's relatives who worked with a police director and staff of Shandong University of Technology to ensure the admission process went smoothly, but they turned a blind eye.

After this incident was reported, the imposter's degree was revoked, and she was also sacked from her job.

(iii) CRITICAL INCIDENT- EXPLANATION OF THE ROOT OF THE ISSUE

One of the reasons that caused this incident to happen is the pressure to succeed in Gaokao. Gaokao is the most important examination in China students' life because it determines whether the students can get into a university. Therefore, in such a situation, some individuals might do some inappropriate actions to make sure that they can get into a university.

Other than that, corruption will be the second reason that causes this incident. The people in charge of the admission process did not do their responsibility to ensure the admission is fair and smooth but taking advantages from the admission process.

Moreover, insufficient verification of students' identity is also a cause for this incident. The university's officer did not check the students' identity properly and this creates an opportunity for identity theft to occur.

Therefore, pressure to succeed in Gaokao, corruption and insufficient verification of students' identity are the main causes for this incident.

(iv) OBJECTIVE OF THE CASE STUDY

The objective of this case study is to highlight academic frauds and to raise awareness about integrity challenges in the education system. This case study will attract people's attention to identity theft, thus showing academic fraud to the public. Also, this case study will also alert the universities that they need to make some changes to prevent this incident from happening again.

LITERATURE REVIEW

(i)CONCEPT OF INTEGRITY AND CORRUPTION

Integrity and Corruption are two contrasting concepts to ethics and behavior, often seen in various aspects of human life, including individuals, organizations and governments.

Integrity refers to the quality of being honest, ethical, and having strong moral principles. It involves adhering to a set of values and principles, even when faced with challenges or temptations to compromise them. People with integrity are generally seen as trustworthy, reliable and transparent in their actions and decisions. The aspect of integrity includes honesty because it is closely linked to truthfulness and sincerity. Other than that, transparency is also one of the aspects of integrity because it involves being open in one's action and motives.

Corruption, on the other hand, is the misuse of power or authority for personal gain, often involving dishonest or unethical behavior. It includes a wide range of activities from bribery and embezzlement to favoritism and other forms of unethical conduct. Corruption can be damaging to individuals, organizations and societies, as it erodes trust, prevents economic development and undermines the rule of law.

In summary, Integrity and Corruption represent opposite ends of the ethical spectrum. Integrity involves acting in an honest, ethical and principled manner, while corruption involves dishonesty, the misuse of power and unethical behavior for personal gain. Promoting integrity and combatting corruption are important for the well-being and progress of individuals and societies.

(ii)COMPARISON OF INTEGRITY AND CORRUPTION ISSUE IN MALAYSIA AND INTERNATIONALLY

What is integrity as a student? Academic integrity means acting in a way that is honest, fair, respectful and responsible in your studies and academic work. In this case, we are comparing student integrity problems between Malaysia and China.

There are several examples of integrity and corruption issue in Malaysia and internationally. Firstly, stolen identity. In Malaysia there is no such case, but China does. For example, Ms. Chen took the Gaokao in 2004. So, after waiting until the university term usually begins, Ms. Chen accepted no letter coming. Three years later, Ms. Chen found out that another person had stolen her identity by deciding to enroll herself on a course for adults and entering her details in an official government website. According to state news outlet Xinhua, the imposter's uncle, who was a local official, is accused of getting help from a local admissions director, who was able to access Ms. Chen's exam information. From this case, we can learn that having the nature of integrity is really important so that we become more responsible and not selfish. Also, from this case, we can see that corruption issue brings negative impact to other people and ourselves.

Secondly, the comparison of student integrity problem between Malaysia and internationally is contract cheating or mostly known as bribe. Contract cheating is where students pay others to complete their assignment. This case is growing concern in Malaysia, facilitated by online platforms. This issue is increasing, especially for the wealthy people among university students. Contract cheating can be tricky to detect, but there are consequences of this which may include failing class and having to resit or even expulsion from school or university once it's detected and it also leaves students less prepared for the future career. But, for wealthy students, they can easily bribe the university to escape from the punishment. For internationally, in China, can take various form, including paper writing presentation creation or coding, to fulfil specific academic requirements. For example, In September 2018, Professor Su of the School of Humanities at the University of the Chinese Academy of Science found out that 22 students copied much material

from websites to complete their final coursework but did not cite the sources correctly. This behavior is described as contract cheating by students outsourcing their coursework to a third party online. The laws state that the cheaters in national exam (Gaokao) in China would be sentenced up to three years in prison, held custody or fined. From this case, we now know that corruption reduces student's respect for laws and regulations because if they run into trouble with the school and university, they can often bribe their way out. A similar, vicious cycle of law breaking, and bribery might lead to social disorder or even chaos.

METHODOLOGY

In a case study, the methodology is a systematic and detailed plan of how the research will be conducted. It contains the overall approach, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, and the rationale behind these choices. The methodology is crucial for ensuring the reliability and validity of the case study findings. Here are key elements typically included in the methodology section of a case study:

Case Selection:

The main topic is about integrity and corruption, therefore we choose "Stolen Identity in China Education System" as our case study.

Data Collection Methods:

To gather information about the case, we searched for plenty of references such as news and online articles to validate our findings. At the same time, we also conducted a survey via Google form to collect responses from the others about the case study. In the Google form, we obtained 30 respondents' opinions on causes of the incident and impact to the victim in that incident.

Data Analysis:

After we obtained the responses from multiple respondents through Google form, we turned the results into pie chart and bar graph to summarize and visualize the result in a simpler form so that we can see the result clearly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will explain the analysis and interpretation of data and discuss the study based on the findings obtained through a survey about respondents' opinions on corruption. A total of 30 respondents have provided their opinions in this study.
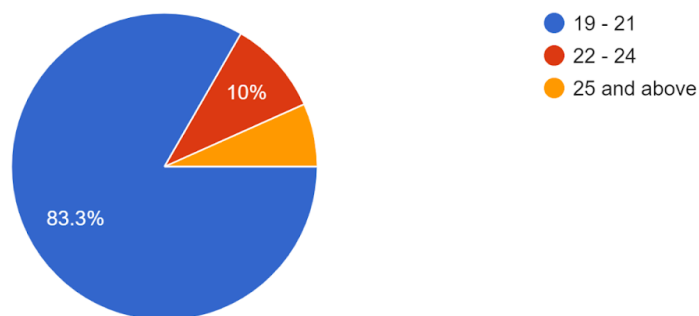
Demographic Background of Respondents

There is a total of 30 respondents, representing various ages, genders, and ethnicities. The following will display the outcomes of the respondents' demographic characteristics.

Respondents Followed by Age

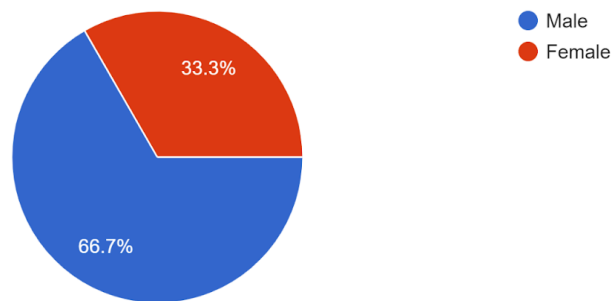| Age	Frequency
19 - 21	25
22 - 24	3
25 and above	2

Age
30 responses

According to the chart, the largest group of respondents falls within the 19 to 21 age range, comprising 25 individuals, which accounts for 83.3% of the total 30 respondents. In the 22 to 24 age categories, there are 3 individuals, making up 10.0% of the respondents. Lastly, in the 25 and above age group, there are 2 respondents out of 30, representing 6.7%.

Respondents Followed by Gender

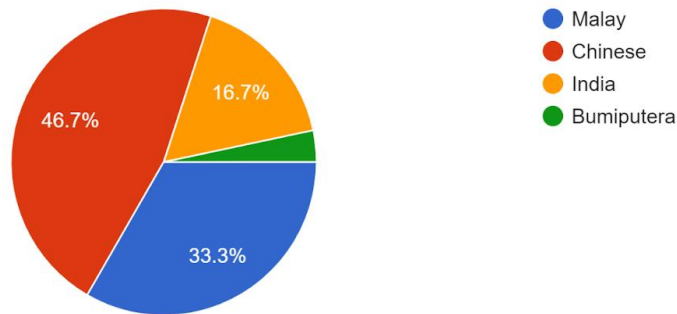| Gender	Frequency
Male	20
Female	10

Gender
30 responses

The chart displays data for a total of 30 individuals, with 10 of them being female, accounting for 33.3%, and the remaining 20 being male, constituting 66.7% of the sample.

Respondents Followed by Race

Race	Frequency
Chinese	14
Malay	10
India	5
Bumiputera	1

Race

30 responses


● Malay
● Chinese
● India
● Bumiputera

Based on the chart, out of the total 30 individuals, 14 are Chinese, representing 46.7% of the sample. There are 10 Malays, making up 33.3%, while 5 are of Indian ethnicity, accounting for 16.7%. Lastly, there is 1 individual classified as Bumiputera, constituting 3.3% of the group.

Why Students Have to Face Such Difficulties Pursuing Studies

Reasons \ Frequency	1	2	3	4	5
Competitions	1	0	11	4	14
Lack Of Oversight	2	4	9	10	5
Profit Motive	2	1	8	9	10
Cultural Pressure	1	4	9	7	9
Lack Of Ethics Education	1	4	11	7	7

Why students have to face such difficulties pursuing studies?
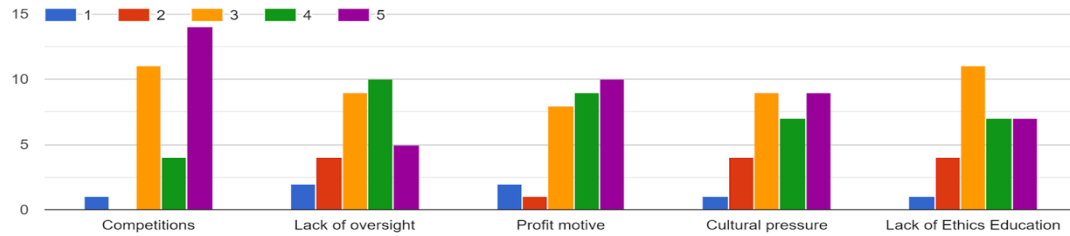
In a survey of 30 people, the majority expressed strong agreement with the idea of competitions, with 14 participants (or 46.67%) strongly agreeing and none disagreeing. The concept of lack of oversight saw 10 participants (or 33.33%) agreeing, while 2 (or 6.67%) strongly disagreed. The profit motive was strongly agreed upon by 10 participants (or 33.33%), with only 1 (or 3.33%) expressing disagreement. Cultural pressure had a mixed response, with 9 participants (or 30%) strongly agreeing, 9 (or 30%) remaining neutral, and 1 (or 3.33%) strongly disagreeing. Lastly, the topic of lack of ethics education saw 11 participants (or 36.67%) remaining neutral and 1 (or 3.33%) strongly disagreeing.

Impact On the Student

Impact \ Frequency	1	2	3	4	5
Emotional Distress	1	1	6	4	18
Delayed career Progression	1	2	10	5	12
Loss Of Self-Esteem	1	1	8	9	11
Distrust In the Education System	2	2	9	3	14

	1	2	3	4	5
Advocate For Change of Education System	1	2	11	7	9

If you were in this situation, how would it affect you as a student?
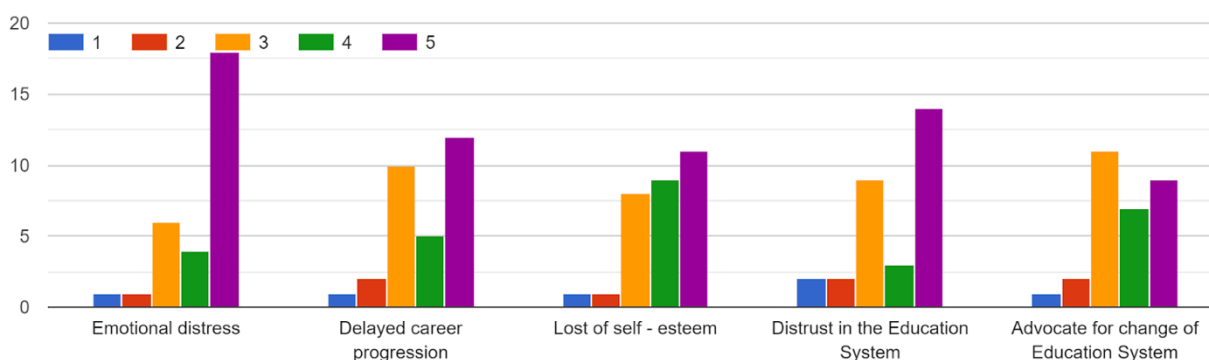
In a hypothetical situation presented to 30 respondents regarding the potential effects on them as students, the majority expressed strong agreement with several negative impacts. A significant 18 respondents (or 60%) strongly agreed that they would experience emotional distress, while 1 respondent (or 3.33%) disagreed and strongly disagreed. Twelve respondents (or 40%) strongly agreed that their career progression would be delayed, while 1 respondent (or 3.33%) strongly disagreed. Additionally, 11 respondents (or 36.67%) strongly agreed that they would suffer a loss of self-esteem, while 1 respondent (or 3.33%) disagreed and strongly disagreed. The education system itself was not spared from criticism, with 14 respondents (or 46.67%) strongly agreeing that they would develop a distrust in it, while 2 respondents (or 6.67%) disagreed and strongly disagreed. Eleven respondents (or 36.67%) strongly agreed that they would advocate for its change, while 1 respondent (or 3.33%) strongly disagreed. However, there were a few dissenting voices, with some respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with these potential impacts.

SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

Ways to curb academic corruption and fraud is an issue that has been persistently discussed by the public. It is quite a tough task because the capacity to regulate and control corruption and fraud is always limited. However, the effort to get rid of the corruption has never faded away.

According to IIEP-UNESCO, effective actions to prevent corruption and enhance integrity in higher education were recently outlined by the Advisory Statement published by IIEP and CHEA. It includes, but is not limited to, imposing sanctions on government officials and HEI staff who present phony qualifications, putting appeals processes in place for academic and administrative decisions and developing international security standards for documents relating to higher education credentials. Testimonies from countries such as Morocco, Lithuania, or the UK that have tested some of these approaches are featured on IIEP's ETICO Platform of resources. To move ahead, further reflection and exchange is needed on how integrity indicators can be included in traditional diagnoses of the higher education sector and on how to encourage stronger public access to information. This is a must to enable the entire higher education community to take further action.

Secondly, take control of the test situation to reduce academic fraud. According to McBurney, D. (1996, January 1), arrange the classroom situation to suit the nature of the test. You may want students to sit in every other seat, take assigned seats to break up groups of would-be cheaters, or leave the front row open for latecomers. Some instructors number all tests and have students leave completed tests face down on the desk. Then they may be picked up in order, and papers of suspected cheaters can be compared for similarities.

Thirdly, creatively remind students of academic integrity policies. Based in Budhai, S. S., PhD. (2020, May 5), create and post a video explaining the guidelines for the exam and review the institution's academic integrity policy and consequences that are listed in the course syllabus. There may be some psychological impact on students after seeing and hearing their instructor discuss academic integrity right before an exam begins, which may deter students who were thinking about cheating.

Last but not least, identity verification is also an important highlight in preventing academic fraud. Based on Tran, A., & Tran, A. (2023, July 24), secure authentication systems such as multi-factor authentication and biometric scans can be used to personalize the tests and guarantee that the right student is the one doing the test. Utilizing biometric scans like facial recognition and fingerprints will ensure test-takers cannot get away with trying to deceive the system.

In conclusion, academic corruption and fraud should be emphasized and concerned by our society. This is pivotal to create a fair and healthy competitive environment in order to exploit and develop one's talent. In the result, the most significant difficulty pursing studies faced by students is competition while the most prominence impact on these students is emotional distress. Through this, all the public have to cooperate to work out strategy to reduce the corruption. As a result, all teenagers have the opportunity to save the day by their hard work and aptitude to make contributions to society.

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