

Iranian TEFL Students' Perception of Plagiarism

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Abstract

Plagiarism is considered to be a very serious offence in most academic communities, particularly among Western academia. There has been much discussion regarding the influential factors which result in plagiarism, such as ignorance and cultural attitudes. In the case of EFL/ESL students, it has been suggested that acts of plagiarism are often committed because students lack the proficiency to produce the academic discourse necessary to clearly express themselves. The current study was conducted to investigate what Iranian TEFL students consider as plagiarism. To do so, a survey was conducted among fourth-year undergraduate and first-year graduate students of TEFL. The results of the survey suggest that Iranian TEFL students believe direct copying of material to be an academic transgression but tolerate closely paraphrased texts. The study offers the conclusion that although plagiarism occurs frequently in the material submitted by TEFL students mainly in the form of closely paraphrased texts, it is probably due to a lack of understanding of the principles of plagiarism, rather than a deliberate act of deception.

Keywords: plagiarism, TEFL, patchwriting, perception of plagiarism

Introduction

Most Iranian TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) students seem to have difficulty in incorporating borrowed words and ideas in academic writing. At the same time, foreign language writers are at a disadvantage when competing with native language writers. Therefore, the added task of learning to properly give credit to outside sources makes academic writing even more of a challenge for EFL/ESL students.

In most academic settings, acknowledging where the borrowed words and ideas are from is very important. Failure to give credit appropriately to the copied or paraphrased material might be construed as 'plagiarism'. In

most universities, especially in North America, students who include plagiarized material in their writing could face serious punishment, including expulsion. The significance of this issue has given rise to a series of discussions focusing on the complex nature of plagiarism in different cultural settings (Angéilil-Carter, 2000; Buranen, 1999; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Gu & Brooks, 2008; Price, 2002; Sutherland-Smith, 2008; Wheeler, 2009). In Iran however, discussion regarding plagiarism is limited, and mostly treated in the field of medicine (Afifi, 2007; Farrokhi, 2009; Habibzadeh, 2008, 2009; Habibzadeh & Winker, 2009).

The motivation behind plagiarism is a complex and controversial issue. Some scholars suggest that students cannot accurately define plagiarism (Dant, 1986; Kroll, 1988) and due to ignorance of academic citation practices, commit acts of unintentional plagiarism (Carroll, 2002; Howard, 1995; Leatherman, 1999). A study by Maxwell, Curtis, and Vardanega (2008) proposes that both Asians and Australians seem to understand the seriousness of plagiarism, but self-reports suggest instances of plagiarism because the students have difficulty understanding the construct of plagiarism. Yeo (2007) submits that although most students can give an accurate account of what plagiarism constitutes, they regard some forms of it less serious than others.

There is also some dispute regarding students' beliefs and attitudes towards plagiarism and their cultural background (e.g., Bloch, 2001; Deckert, 1993; Dryden, 1999; Gilmore, Strickland, Timmerman, Maher, & Feldon, 2010; Pennycook, 1996; Sherman, 1992; Shi, 2010; Yazici, Yazici, & Erdem, 2011). For example, Bloch (2001) suggests that Chinese writers use classic texts to validate their arguments, but providing the citation of a classic text, which is assumed to be known by everyone, can be considered redundant, condescending, or even insulting. Dryden (1999) suggests that in Japan, ideas and expressions are considered to be developed collaboratively, therefore, using them is not considered to be plagiarism.

In the EFL/ESL context, plagiarism might be the result of the students' inability to write academically (Counsell, 2004; Marshall & Garry, 2006). A study by Galloway and Sevier (2003) not only supports this claim, but also asserts that some international students believe that by copying, their work seem to resemble that of an educated person. Campbell (1990) suggests that students copy as part of their learning process in academic development. In her study, beginner writers used direct copying of the text. However, as they became more proficient, they used summarization and paraphrasing techniques. In any case, the proposition that EFL/ESL students copy text as means of developing their academic writing skills is supported by many

studies (such as Angéil-Carter, 2000; Bloch, 2001; Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Larkham & Manns, 2002; Marsden, Carroll, & Neill, 2005; Pennycook, 1996; Wheeler, 2009).

At present, most Iranian universities show more leniency toward plagiarism than western universities. In fact, most universities do not have a student's guide that properly defines plagiarism. As a result, there are many instances of unintentional plagiarism as well as intentional ones. For example, many term projects I have read include what Howard (1999) calls "patchwriting", which involves "copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures or plugging in one-for-one synonym-substitutes" (p. xvii). She argues that while direct copying of text is involved, patchwriting cannot be labeled as plagiarism because it is textual strategy used in the process of learning academic writing. She also maintains that "for our undergraduate students, nearly every class is an encounter with whole new fields of discourse. Little wonder that they might struggle for ways to insert themselves into that discourse, searching for language other than that of the text" (p. 2). Therefore, in her opinion, not having the ability to correctly express themselves using the appropriate academic discourse, students should not be punished for copying bits and pieces from other scholars.

Iran does not observe international copyright law and copying other authors' work has become common practice even in universities. For example, I have seen many instances where university professors and lecturers take reading passages from the Internet and include them in their final exams without giving credit to or citing the author. This practice is not limited to universities, considering that national university entrance exams are known to have used direct copying from newspaper articles (see Holt, 1995; Hui, 2006, articles used in 1390 university entrance exam) without mentioning the source or the author.

In the universities where I have though, plagiarism is quite widespread. Many of my colleagues complain that most of what students submit as their own work is copied, usually from an Internet source. In the field of TEFL, students are required to produce academic discourse in a foreign language with limited resources. The question that arises here is that in such difficult circumstances, should students who plagiarize always be labeled as dishonest and deceitful? It may well be the case that students believe that copying and patchwriting are part of academic development. They may even expect their professors to be more tolerant of plagiarism in their assignments. The purpose of this study was to investigate TEFL students' attitudes towards

plagiarism. The study examined the reaction of TEFL students concerning direct copying and paraphrasing.

Method

The research method in this study was adopted from the investigation conducted by Wheeler (2009). A survey was conducted during the second semester of the 2010-2011 (1389-90) academic year.

Participants

The participants consisted of 82 fourth-year undergraduate and 38 first-year graduate students of TEFL from three Islamic Azad University branches. The undergraduate students took the survey as part of the Language Testing course they were taking. The graduate students were asked to participate on a voluntary basis.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of three paragraphs. The topics of all three paragraphs were persuading students to continue their education. All three paragraphs were written by the researcher. The students were told that the first paragraph (see Appendix A), had been submitted as a homework assignment by a (fictional) student given the pseudonym Maryam Maleki.

The second paragraph (Appendix B) was fabricated as if it was taken from a newspaper article. The (fictional) author was 'John Smith' and the article was dated about a year before Maryam Maleki's homework assignment. This paragraph was very similar to Maryam's paragraph, both in content and wording as direct copying of text was involved (a total of 27/137 words were altered or deleted, mostly conjunctions from the beginning of sentences)

The third paragraph (Appendix C) was the submission of Ali Salehi, another "student". As with Maryam's piece, the content was identical to that of Smith's composition. In fact, the paragraph outline and most of the wording remained the same. However, unlike Maryam's paragraph, Ali used

synonyms, and restatements of Smith's ideas as to reduce similarity between his text and Smith's composition.

The paragraphs were kept small so as not to take a lot of class time and avoid confusion (Maryam = 137 words; John = 133 words; Ali = 161 words). The texts were not particularly difficult and were designed so that students would not require a dictionary to understand them.

Procedure

The students were instructed to read the paragraphs during the class time. As this study was conducted to investigate student's perception of plagiarism, and since this perception could have been affected by their educational and cultural backgrounds, the researcher did not discuss plagiarism with the participants. After reading the first paragraph (Maryam's work), students were asked to evaluate the writing style and give it a score from one to twenty (this is the standard scoring scale in Iran). Maryam's work was evaluated first because it was almost identical to Smith's piece. Therefore, when they read Smith's piece the perception of plagiarism would probably have been instantaneous.

When the task of reading and scoring the first paragraph was complete, the students read the second paragraph (Smith's piece). Next, they were invited to re-evaluate and score Maryam's work (the first paragraph). Finally, it was requested that the students read and evaluate Ali's (third) paragraph and score it from a scale of one to twenty. The students were encouraged to provide an explanation for the reasoning behind their scores during each evaluation. The plagiarism conducted by Ali was more difficult to recognize than Maryam's work because of the synonyms and the restatements that Ali used. Therefore Ali's work was evaluated only once and after the second evaluation of Maryam's work, when the student's probably realized that they are to evaluate Ali's text considering plagiarism.

The students did not use dictionaries during the task, but they were permitted to use them if required. They were given 20 minutes to complete the task for every paragraph, but given that they were TEFL students, most completed the task in less than that time. Overall, no more than 50 minutes was required for the completion of all three tasks for the undergraduate students, and about 40 minutes for graduate students.

The instructions for the tasks were in English. Furthermore, the students were asked to provide their justifications in English. Discussing matters related to evaluation and scoring was prohibited. The students were asked to direct their questions only to the professor.

The data analysis of this study included three non-parametric tests. The reason why non-parametric statistical analysis was used is stated in the results section. To examine whether the students scored the texts differently, thus providing insight into student's perception of plagiarism both at the graduate and undergraduate level, first the Kruskal-Wallis test was computed. Then, two Friedman tests were performed to investigate whether the three ratings were different within each level. Finally, a post hoc-test in the form of a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was performed to compare Maryam's first and second and Ali's evaluation. Also, the scores given to Ali's paragraph were compared with Maryam's scores, both before and after the students read Smith's piece. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test statistical analysis was done separately for the undergraduate and graduate students.

Results

Descriptive statistics for the first and second evaluation of Maryam's text and the evaluation of Ali's work, classified by academic level is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics for the first and second paragraph evaluations

		N	Mean	SD	Skewness Ratio
Undergraduate	Maryam's First evaluation	82	18.29	1.61	-3.02
	Maryam's Second evaluation	82	11.21	2.80	-.101
	Ali's evaluation	82	15.75	3.11	-2.08
Graduate	Maryam's First evaluation	38	16.28	2.34	-.215
	Maryam's Second evaluation	38	8.50	2.06	.240
	Ali's evaluation	38	14.68	2.26	-.041

Based on the data in Table 1, with the exception of Maryam's second evaluation at the undergraduate level and Ali's evaluation at the graduate level, all skewness ratios were outside the acceptable range of a normal

distribution (± 1.96). Therefore a Kruskal-Wallis test, the nonparametric equivalent of a one-way ANOVA, was used. The results are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Results of Kruskal-Wallis for the evaluations

	df	Chi-square	Asymp. Sig.
Undergraduate-Graduate	1	16.63	.000

The results of Table 2 indicate that there is a significant difference between the graduate and the undergraduate scores for both Maryam’s evaluation ($\chi^2 = 16.63$, $p = 0.0005 < 0.05$) with the mean rank of 147.76 for the graduate scores, and 195.67 for the undergraduate scores. In other words, it seems that the undergraduate and the graduate students have different perceptions regarding plagiarized material with the undergraduate students being less sensitive to plagiarism.

Two Friedman tests were used to test whether the graduates and the undergraduates rated the texts differently within groups. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 – Results of the Friedman tests

	df	Chi-square	Asymp. Sig.
Undergraduate	2	111.42	.000
Graduate	2	63.22	.000

The results of Table 3 indicate that there was a significant difference between the three ratings at the undergraduate level ($\chi^2 = 111.42$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.0005$). Moreover, there was a significant difference between the three scores provided by the graduate students ($\chi^2 = 63.22$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.0005$).

In order to reveal where the difference in evaluation of graduates and undergraduates lay, post hoc test was implemented. The results of the post hoc test (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test) are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4 – Results of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test

	Pair	Z	Sig
Undergraduate	Maryam first evaluation – Maryam second evaluation	-7.72	.000
	Maryam first evaluation – Ali evaluation	-5.87	.000
	Maryam second evaluation – Ali evaluation	-7.15	.000
Graduate	Maryam first evaluation – Maryam second evaluation	-5.38	.000
	Maryam first evaluation – Ali evaluation	-4.30	.000
	Maryam second evaluation – Ali evaluation	-5.37	.000

Table 4 shows that the results of all Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were significant. In other words, there was a significant difference between Maryam’s first and second evaluation, and Maryam’s second evaluation and Ali’s evaluation. Based on the mean scores of the evaluations presented in Table 1, it can be tentatively concluded that the students realized that Maryam’s writing was in fact plagiarized material, and that is why the mean score of the second evaluation is much lower than the mean score of the first evaluation in both academic levels when students were exposed to the original Smith’s writing and could compare Maryam’s with it. Although there is a significant difference between Maryam’s second evaluation and Ali’s evaluation, the mean scores are closer to each other than Maryam’s first and second evaluations. This increase in proximity might be an indication that some of the students at both academic levels did not immediately realize that Ali’s work was also plagiarized, because Ali did not use the exact words that Smith used.

Maryam’s First Evaluation

The data indicates that the majority of the students had high regards for Maryam’s paragraph. Fifty one of the undergraduate students (62%) gave a score ranging from 18 to a perfect score of 20. The graduate students also believed Maryam’s work to be of high quality, with 19 (50%) high scores above 18.

The students’ comments on Maryam’s piece were generally very positive. Many students praised the cohesion in her paragraph. “All the words and sentences are supporting the topic in a good way”, an undergraduate student justified her score of 19. Another wrote, “She is able to use academic words, but she is not very wordy; also I did not notice any spelling mistakes”. A graduate student commented, “The positive point [of the paragraph] is that

the writer knows the structure of a paragraph, and how to provide and support the main idea". Overall, there were many similar sentiments such as the ones mentioned by both graduate and undergraduate students.

None of the students gave Maryam's paragraph a failing score (any score below 10 is a failing score). However, there were students who gave her a borderline pass/fail mark. Among these students, some believed that, "The text has minor grammatical mistakes". Others added that the language in the text was influenced by the L1. "It is a writing that clearly shows that it is written by a Persian [speaker]", a student wrote to justify a score of 14. Three undergraduate students made reference to the lack of persuasive power of the paragraph. One commented that, "The reader should understand that the reason of continuing education is a need and not option, but the paragraph is unclear about this". Notwithstanding the criticism, based on the scores, most students agreed that Maryam's paragraph was better than average.

Maryam's Second Evaluation

After the students read Smith's article, there was a substantial shift in judgment towards Maryam's paragraph. Table 1 provides data on the scores, which shows an obvious decline in scores.

In the reevaluation, 29 of the undergraduate students (35%) gave a failing score to Maryam. Four students gave her zeros. About 13% of the undergraduate respondents gave her the lowest passing grade (10), and four students did not change their scores, which were considerably high (three 18s, and one 19). The graduate students were much less lenient. Twenty eight of them (73%) failed Maryam. From those who gave her a passing score, none gave a score higher than 11. Every graduate student changed their score; all considerably lower than their original scores.

In both the graduate and undergraduate levels, plagiarism was cited as the main reason for the decline in scores. Some of the comments they made are as follows:

- This paragraph is a copy of the original. In fact, the writer has kept the structure of the sentences and changed some words. She didn't even paraphrase it. (Original score: 17, reevaluated score: 8)

- The paragraph is exactly the same as the authentic text by John Smith. As a matter of fact, this paragraph is not qualified for a score. We should give her another topic to write about. (18,0)
- Most of the sentences are copies for the Mr. Smith's paragraph. I cannot give it a good mark. (17,6)
- Text is a copy, but not exact. (15,5)
- This writing uses all parts of the professional writing [Smith's article]. (19,10)
- Of course, it is a copy of the professional text. She reworded very carefully, but there is no creativity in this writing. (16,0)
- The problem with this paragraph is that it is [a] copy from the authentic one. It is copying and pasting. (18,9)
- I will give her one point for handing in her assignment and for finding an authentic text and copying it. (17,1)

Furthermore, the comments of two of the students who did not change their score indicated that they did not understand the instructions. Despite being allowed to ask questions at any time during the task, they evaluated Smith's article rather than reevaluating Maryam's paragraph. One wrote, "Why should I score a paragraph taken from a magazine where it has already been proofread by a native editor?" The other two students acknowledged that Maryam has "copied parts" but they felt that sufficient changes were made in the text, which would abolish any plagiarism. One commented, "The two paragraphs are similar, but not the same. Some parts are changed so it is not all copied. I think the copied parts make Maryam's paragraph, good writing".

Ali's Evaluation

Table 5 provides descriptive statistics for the scores given to Ali's paragraph. The results indicate that the scores range between the two scores given to Maryam's writing.

Table 5 – Descriptive statistics for Ali’s paragraph evaluation

	N	Mean	Sd
Undergraduate	82	15.58	2.37
Graduate	38	13.92	3.04

The results indicate that the scores given to Ali’s paragraph were generally lower than Maryam’s first evaluation, but higher than Maryam’s second evaluation. Only four undergraduate students and six graduate students gave Ali a failing grade.

Most students acknowledged the similarities between Maryam’s and Smith’s paragraphs with that of Ali’s. However, most did not believe that Ali deserved to fail. The following is a sample of the comments provided by the students including the three scores they gave in parentheses.

- He is trying to convey the ideas from John Smith but with different words. (First evaluation = 15, Second evaluation = 5, Score given to Ali’s paragraph = 13)
- He has put complex ideas into his own words. He has Iranianized the writing. (18,10,17)
- It seems that the writer picked the sentences up from Smith’s text to make this paragraph. (17,8,12)
- I think he should have quoted from Smith. The words are different, but the ideas are the same. (19, 11,12)
- For creativity in restating sentences for an authentic text, I give him four. (17,3,4)
- I think he has paraphrased word by word from the authentic text, the words are his, but the ideas are not. (17, 5, 13)
- The writer copied from the text and he tried to paraphrase it, but the result wasn’t good. (16, 0, 0)
- The writing is a writing that uses all parts of Smith’s writing. (18, 8, 10)

Interestingly, none of the graduate students failed Ali. Most cited that the ability to paraphrase is a skill that needs to be rewarded. One graduate student wrote, “This was a homework assignment, not an exam. I will reduce

scores for originality because the ideas are not his, but the vocabulary and grammar are his. So, I must give him the marks for them". Another student wrote, "All writers get their ideas from somewhere. I think he chose suitable vocabulary to express his ideas".

Only four of the 82 undergraduates gave Ali's paragraph a failing score. All four commented that Ali simply copied Smith's paragraph. One of them stated, "He tried to deceive the teacher by plagiarism". Another student remarked that, "He did a vocabulary exercise, not writing. He only found some synonyms".

Although most undergraduate students criticized Ali's writing, they did not give him a failing score. The overall consensus was that Ali took someone else's ideas and made it his own. A student commented, "He organized the ideas in a good way, and changed some words so that it is not a copy". Another student remarked, "He used the ideas of the professional author for cohesion and coherence, but there is Persian influence in his writing, so it shows that it is not a copy and it is his own work".

Discussion and Conclusion

The result of the Kruscal-Wallis test indicated that the undergraduates and the graduates perceived plagiarism differently. Table 1 shows that the mean scores of all three ratings given by the graduate students are lower than those given by undergraduate student. Therefore, it can be cautiously concluded that the graduate level students have more awareness regarding plagiarized material and seem to have a stricter policy for plagiarism than undergraduate students.

Additionally, based on the results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test computed for the scores given to Maryam's paragraph, it appears that Iranian TEFL students, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels, seem to grasp the basic principle of plagiarism. Based on their comments, we can assume that they realize that direct copying of material without citing the source is wrong, as was the case in Maryam's second evaluation, when student realized the Maryam's work is actually direct copying. Therefore, it seems that some western standards regarding plagiarism have been integrated with the Iranian student's beliefs on what constitutes as academic integrity.

The student's remarks and scores given to Ali's paragraph were interesting. On the one hand, most scores were lower than Maryam's first evaluation, but higher than the second evaluation. As mentioned before, this was probably because Ali did not use the exact wording from Smith's article, using synonyms and paraphrase instead. Furthermore, most students criticized Ali, for not using his own ideas. However, the majority did not fail Ali, citing that originality is part of a total score for a text. In fact, most believed that if a student has not used original ideas, he or she should not receive the points for originality, but should receive point for the other aspects important in assessing writing.

Although some of the arguments regarding originality of ideas in writing offered by the TEFL students were plausible, plagiarism is defined as "An object which has been taken from a particular source by an agent without acknowledgement and with or without intention to deceive" (Pecorari, 2002, p. 60). With regards to what can be classified as objects, Pecorari mentions that different universities have different policies. Some regard ideas as objects, while others limit the definition to word, language, or texts. Therefore, in some academic settings, what Ali has done is clearly plagiarism. It seems that for the Iranian student, borrowing ideas is frowned upon, but it is not truly considered as plagiarism.

It is difficult to say whether students who borrow ideas are truly trying to deceive. For the cases such as Ali who engaged in patchwriting but did not cite the sources, research conducted by Pecorari (2003) suggests that deceptive plagiarism is not involved. She suggests that given time (see Pittam, Elander, Lusher, Fox, & Payne, 2009) and sufficient practice (see Storch, 2009), "today's patchwriter is tomorrow's competent academic writer" (p. 338).

A limitation of this research was the matter of the extent of exposure the TEFL students had with the concept and principles of plagiarism before participating in this study. As mentioned before, the participants were fourth year undergraduates and first year graduate students. They had probably submitted many homework assignments, and had most likely been warned about the penalties of plagiarism. However, they had been taught by many different instructors, each with their own rules of what is considered as plagiarism. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the students had different beliefs regarding what is and is not plagiarism.

The fact that TEFL students consider presenting direct copying without proper citation, deceitful, immoral, and wrong is truly quite remarkable. These students live in an environment where newspapers translate material from

other newspapers or websites without providing the source. Photocopying copyrighted books is not considered wrong. I have personally witnessed some university professors taking material from books and journals without mentioning the source. Surely, in such a setting one would actually expect students to plagiarize material (which in many instances they do). However, the result of this study suggests that the students know that some forms of plagiarism (such as direct copying) is indisputably wrong, while they are tolerant of other types (such as patchwriting).

One must remember that in the field of TEFL, courses are taught using academic discourse often alien to EFL students. Most universities in Iran do not offer a broad array of books and academic journals to their students, yet expect them to present their assignments in high standard academic text. Under these circumstances, there is bound to be some plagiarism.

Although some leniency is often shown towards students' plagiarism, members of the academic community must advocate that plagiarism is wrong. Also, Iranian universities could provide guidelines that clearly define what would constitute plagiarism and set the penalties associated with this act. By enforcing the rules hopefully plagiarism will decrease. Failure to do so, would most likely promote the belief that plagiarism is tolerated in our field. Such an act would ultimately result in the reputation that in Iran, TEFL students and academics alike do not comprehend the basic properties of plagiarism. This would be unfortunate, because based on the finding of the current study, an undesirable outcome such as this, would have little factual basis.

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Appendix A

Why Higher Education is Important

Date: 1386/2/18 (May 2007)

Nowadays, continuing education has become a need, and not an option. From an employer's viewpoint, having a graduate or post-graduate degree says a lot about your personal character. Such a degree will surely impress your employer, and will give you an advantage for getting a job. Continuing your education also increases your financial value. Many people with higher education degrees get higher salaries. Also, studies have shown that people with graduate and post graduate degrees are happier with their jobs. This is because they have higher chances of finding a satisfying job or getting a promotion because they have experience and expertise. Finally, those who have higher education degrees have more respect. As a result, they usually lead more rewarding and filling lives. These are just a few reasons why continuing education is now more important than ever.

Maryam Maleki

Appendix B

Reasons Why You Should Continue Your Education

Financial Times, June 2006

By John Smith

In today's competitive job market, continuing education has become more of a necessity, rather than an option. From an employer's perspective, having a graduate or post-graduate degree speaks positively about your personal character. Such a degree will surely impress your employer, and will give you an advantage over those who have not set time aside to continue their education. Continuing your education also increases your financial

value. Many people with higher education degrees enjoy higher salaries. Furthermore, studies have shown that people with graduate and post graduate degrees have higher job satisfaction. This is most often because they have higher chances of finding a rewarding job or getting a promotion because they will have an edge over others both in experience and expertise. Finally, those who have higher education degrees have more

prestige and respect. As a result, they usually lead more gratifying and filling lives. These are just a few reasons why

continuing education is now more important than ever.

Appendix C

Continuing to Higher Education

Date: 1390/01/29 (April 2007)

In the current economy, it has become increasingly important to have graduate and post-graduate degrees. Those who do have such degrees produce a positive image of themselves, which a prospective employer is surely to like. University degrees almost always provide better chances of getting a job than those who do not have them. Continuing to higher education increases the value of your services. Thus, there is a better probability of getting a higher than average salary. Moreover, those who have graduate and post-graduate degrees often enjoy job satisfaction. They are more likely to get a promotion because of their expertise. The general public also shows more respect to master's and PhD holders. Therefore, these people appreciate a more satisfying life. In sum, it seems to be a good idea to continue your education.