

STUDY OF THE USE OF CHAT GPT TO COMPLETE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENTS



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Abstract

This research investigates how students at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Jenderal Soedirman University, utilize Chat GPT to complete academic tasks and how this affects academic ethics. It is driven by the rising use of artificial intelligence—particularly Chat GPT—which is reshaping students' learning patterns and assignment completion strategies. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were gathered through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings suggest that a desire for time efficiency, limited access to academic supervisors, and academic pressure drive the use of ChatGPT. Students use Chat GPT to generate ideas, draft task structures, and develop thesis outlines. However, most students still revise the output to avoid plagiarism. The study reveals that uncritical use of ChatGPT can lead to academic ethical violations. Based on Robert K. Merton's theory of anomie, such deviations arise from systemic pressures that emphasize academic success while overlooking individual capacities and talents. Thus, there is an urgent need for clear academic ethical guidelines in the use of artificial intelligence within higher education. This study extends Merton's anomie theory by demonstrating how students adapt innovatively—utilizing artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT—when academic goals conflict with limited resources. Universities should establish clear guidelines for ethics and digital literacy to ensure the responsible use of artificial intelligence in learning.

Keywords: Chat GPT, Artificial Intelligence, Anomie, Students.

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of education in Indonesian universities are indeed diverse, but almost all students have one common goal: to obtain a degree. This aligns with Siregar's (2023) view, which states that a person's success in Indonesia is often measured by their level of education. In this context, education is often reduced to the mere process of completing academic tasks to obtain a degree, without considering readiness, ability, or the learning process itself. Hisyam et al. (2023) explain that, according to Merton, culture is a collection of orderly, normative values that guide collective behavior, while social structure is a network of social relationships that regulate the distribution of opportunities. When there is a mismatch between cultural values (demands for obtaining a degree) and the reality of the social structure (limited access to legitimate learning resources), anomie conditions arise. This inequality then creates pressure for students to continue achieving academic success, even though they may have to resort to deviant methods. Hisyam et al. (2025) emphasize that this tension is now increasingly apparent, marked by the increasing tendency of students to take shortcuts to meet academic demands. In this situation, students often put aside academic ethics, and limited resources are one of the driving forces behind them taking illegal paths. According to Merton, it is a concrete form of innovative adaptation — accepting cultural goals (degrees) but pursuing them in unconventional ways

Some of the academic tasks they must complete include writing papers, reading, preparing for exams, attending lectures, and performing administrative work, all of which will ultimately impact their overall academic performance (Chotimah et al., 2020). The large workload creates pressure to achieve the best results, so students are encouraged to seek quick ways to achieve maximum results. On the other hand, there is a shift in learning patterns, from focusing on the process to being oriented towards values. The Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Guide to Learning in Higher Education (2024) indicates that current learning practices still primarily focus on academic outputs, such as assignments, rather than on deepening the learning process. This shift is further strengthened by technological advances such as AI, which promise high efficiency. The presence of Chat GPT marks a significant shift from traditional learning models, such as reading books or attending in-depth lectures, to patterns of consuming information quickly and instantly. Instead of engaging in deep and reflective learning, many students

now rely on instant answers and simplified explanations, reducing critical engagement with learning materials.

Chat GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) has become one of the popular tools in the academic realm. With an NLP (Natural Language Processing) architecture, ChatGPT can generate text automatically based on context. Farikasari et al. (2024) found that 69% of Indonesian students utilize Chat GPT to complete their assignments. According to Fuchs (2023), Chat GPT can transform learning to be more personal and flexible because it can adjust responses in real-time according to user needs. Chat GPT not only helps with writing papers and organizing ideas, but also answers academic questions quickly and efficiently. However, despite its convenience, ChatGPT has limitations. It does not list valid data sources, its answers are often inaccurate, and approximately 35 out of 50 data points it produces come from journals that have not undergone peer review (ImCrompton, 2024). Kusumaningrum (2023) found that lecturers viewed Chat GPT negatively due to concerns about plagiarism (65.5%), academic cheating (55.2%), the risk of spreading misinformation (55.2%), and the potential for a decline in critical thinking skills (55.2%). Marlin et al. (2023) noted concerns about student data privacy. Harsya et al. (2024) even revealed that 60.9% of students did not understand the ethical implications of using ChatGPT. Although various studies on the use of Chat GPT have been explored, especially in the field of education, there are still few studies that examine this phenomenon from the perspective of Robert K. Merton's theory in explaining academic pressure on students.

To overcome these negative impacts, digital literacy skills are essential. Digital literacy encompasses not only technical skills in operating technology, but also the ability to think critically, understand the ethics of use, and evaluate and verify information. Without good digital literacy, students are at risk of being exploited by fraudulent practices or falling victim to technological misinformation. Students who lack critical digital literacy tend to use technology more defiantly.

This article adopts a sociological perspective by drawing on Robert K. Merton's anomie theory, particularly in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Jenderal Soedirman University. According to a survey conducted, 91% of social and political science students use ChatGPT for their academic practices. The characteristics of assignments in FISIP are argumentative and theoretical, requiring students to seek multiple references and develop strong arguments. In this context, this study aims to explore these dynamics through the lens of anomie theory. Researchers aim to investigate

how FISIP students respond to academic pressure and how they incorporate the use of ChatGPT into their academic practices.

METHODS

The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach. The descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it enables a detailed description of the subjective experiences of students in using ChatGPT amidst academic pressure and ethical dilemmas. The research location is at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Jenderal Soedirman University, North Purwokerto District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java Province. The technique used in this study is *a purposive sampling technique*. Thus, the artificial intelligence research subjects in this study are administratively and academically active students at FISIP Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, class of 2021, who have used ChatGPT to do their college assignments. The class of 2021 is special in this study because, at the time the research was conducted, only this class was simultaneously undertaking a thesis and college assignments. The data collection method in this study involves observation and in-depth interviews to gather information related to artificial intelligence and the topic of this study. It is supplemented with triangulation to verify data validity through consultation with the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. In this study, primary data are collected through in-depth interviews and observations of informants. In contrast, secondary data comprises student data obtained by researchers from the Education Research and Development Agency (BAPENDIK) at FISIP Universitas Jenderal Soedirman. Other sources are obtained through journals and other supporting data that serve as references for researchers to conduct their studies. The data analysis method employed in this study is Miles and Huberman's interactive data analysis, which is based on data collection, data reduction, and the presentation of conclusions (Sugiyono, 2023). All informants agreed to participate voluntarily after being informed of the research's purpose and process. The ethical principles of social research fully guarantee the confidentiality of their identities. Based on research ethics to maintain the confidentiality of informants, the following are the identities of informants who meet the research criteria and have been anonymized:

Major	Pseudonym	Gender	Age (Years)
Sociology	N	Woman	22

Public administration	S	Man	21
Communication Studies	L	Woman	21
Political science	T	Woman	21
International Relations	Y	Woman	21
Political Science	E	Man	21
Sociology	R	Man	22

Table 1. Informant Data

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Academic Pressure

The results of this study's observations indicate that academic pressure on students is generally attributed to external factors. Especially in a friendship environment, students face academic pressure from their peers. Students tend to feel pressured because not understanding the learning material can create a negative self-perception. The competitive environment at the college level is based on the benchmark of student success, measured by academic achievement or grades.

Supported by the results of the interview with T, he felt he had a different answer, which gave rise to feelings of inferiority:

"Before there was Chat GPT, I always did my assignments by myself, that is usually how it was, and my friends' answers were similar, but my answer was different, so it made me feel like 'am I wrong? Are my thoughts weird?'"

Differences in understanding the material can occur due to obstacles within the individual or from outside sources. A knowledge gap can be caused by this and lead to feelings of stress. In line with the results of the interview that was conducted with N,

"I often lose focus in class so I don't pay too much attention because I don't understand the material, while most of the assignments are group assignments. So I feel embarrassed if I can't do it well. Finally, with that, I use Chat GPT to learn the terms in the course so I don't look too stupid. Then I often work close to the deadline, so the instinct to use Chat GPT is even more driven to be fast but not look stupid."

Researchers found that students who struggle to absorb learning materials in class often feel ashamed in front of their friends when they have difficulty with assignments. The imbalance between academic demands and students' abilities requires them to

understand the learning materials. The inability of students to understand the material is what causes anomie conditions. The inability of students to meet learning demands leads them to individually seek shortcuts to achieve their goals, even though they must take paths outside the existing social structure standards.

Use of Chat GPT by Students

3.1. Lecture Assignments

Using Chat GPT to help with academic assignments is a form of adapting technology to the academic environment. Apart from that, the use of Chat GPT in academic assignments also reflects the digitalization of learning patterns among students at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences.

Student Activities	Academic	Ethics	Etiquette
Searching for data		Honesty, research originality, and academic integrity	List data sources, select valid data, do not manipulate data
Looking for ideas		Academic honesty and integrity	Do not plagiarize ideas raw
Calculating taxes		Perform calculation validation	Double check the calculation process
Understanding difficult learning materials		Responsible, open to other views	Understand the concept of the material and conduct academic discussions with lecturers and fellow students.
Looking for references for reading materials		Respect the written work of others, be critical, and	Look for verified sources, avoid less valid references
Putting together a presentation		Honesty, critical, responsible	Adding personal preferences, citing original data, and sources

Table 2 [Ethics and Etiquette for Using Chat GPT in College Assignments]

Based on the description in the table above, it can be seen that the use of ChatGPT in college assignments has a general pattern as a tool to organize and understand material independently. This activity is a response to the academic pressure of adapting to digital technology, and it equips students with an understanding of etiquette that encourages the continuation of academic activities responsibly and professionally. Then, ethics in these activities require students to maintain integrity and honesty.

3.2 Thesis

This technology can help students design writing structures, develop ideas, and present information more systematically. Thus, the use of ChatGPT in the thesis writing process is one form of student adaptation to technological developments in the academic world. Referring to primary data, namely the results of interviews that have been conducted with L, who uses Chat GPT at the beginning of each thesis assignment.

“Meanwhile, it can happen several times in the thesis, especially in starting work on a new chapter in the thesis.”

Then supported by the results of the interview with N

“...the use of Chat GPT in my own thesis is like a questionnartificial intelligencere because there are no clues to create the questions.”

Then reinforced with the results of the interview with R

"Because sometimes when working on a thesis, especially the background part, I am very confused, confused about how to start the background, how to make the first sentence, how to make the order and flow between paragraphs ? I use this Chat GPT to help me answer all those problems."

Student Academic Activities	Ethics	Etiquette
Setting up the background	Honesty and commitment to the originality of writing	Reprocess and adapt the results of Chat GPT to the research context.

Compiling a questionnaire artificial intelligence	Academic integrity, no bias, and no bias towards potential informants or respondents	Review and match the artificial intelligence results from the questionnaire with the research variables and objectives.
<i>Br</i> artificial intelligence storming at the beginning of the chapter	Use Chat GPT only as a companion tool, critically and responsibly.	Make the results of Chat GPT thinking a personal reflection and supporting reference.

According to Table 3, the use of Chat GPT in writing a thesis reveals a general pattern of utilizing Chat GPT as an artificial intelligence tool primarily at the beginning of the writing process. The active role of Chat GPT is indeed only carried out at the beginning; after that, students actively make adjustments to the thesis concept based on the information presented by Chat GPT. In the context of a thesis, students must explore the limits of use and a sense of dependence on Chat GPT in order to assess the originality of their writing. The ethics and etiquette of using ChatGPT demonstrate students' sense of responsibility in navigating academic pressure during the final semester.

Discussion

Merton's theory identifies five types of adaptation: conformity, innovation, ritualism, withdrawal, and rebellion. In this study, the innovation type is the one that is most suitable for the situation experienced by students. Hisyam et al. (2023) explain that the form of innovation in Merton's anomie theory refers to a condition where social goals are still valued and used as a reference, but the methods for achieving them change. In other words, individuals still accept the idealized final goal, but reject conventional methods and choose alternative paths, including illegal ones, to achieve their goals.

In today's modern era, technology is no longer a foreign concept; it has been widely adopted and integrated into various contexts, including higher education, as exemplified by the case of ChatGPT. The pattern of innovation is becoming increasingly prominent in the academic environment, driven by the need for adaptation and growth. Students utilise sophisticated technology as a new medium to meet academic demands, no longer relying on conventional channels such as visiting the library or purchasing books at a

bookstore. This adaptation suggests that academic pressures stemming from social structures prompt individuals to seek more efficient shortcuts to meet existing standards. Theoretically, this study expands and contextualizes the anomie theory about the contemporary phenomenon of higher education in Indonesia, particularly in light of the emergence of artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT. The adaptation of artificial intelligence ChatGPT technology is an alternative way for students to achieve their goals, namely, obtaining a degree. Anomie in the context of education in the digital era is not a crime or social deviation, but rather a form of productivity shortcut within the education system. This study contributes new validation to Merton's anomie theory by demonstrating that the use of Chat GPT as a learning tool is not merely a pragmatic choice, but also a response to the imbalance between academic goals and the means available to achieve them. Therefore, when considering technological developments, we should not only use moral lenses but also view them as a form of adaptation to existing structures, especially within the framework of anomie. In this context, the use of Chat GPT by students cannot be seen solely as a technological adaptation, but also as a response to the academic structure that contributes to academic burden. In line with Selwyn's theory, as quoted in Ummu et al. (2022), a perspective that ignores the historical and political dimensions of technological innovation masks the fact that technology is often used not to liberate, but to adapt individuals to the demands of the existing system. Academic pressures, such as the need to graduate on time, demand that one complete assignments perfectly. Moreover, the requirement to publish to support academic needs can create unequal social conditions with inadequate structures. This aligns with Merton's observation that when an individual lacks sufficient means to achieve a goal, they will seek alternative ways to accomplish it. In such conditions, the use of ChatGPT becomes a form of subtle resistance to a rigid system. Student behavior using Chat GPT as a learning artificial intelligence can be seen as an adaptive strategy in responding to academic pressure. Students as subjects still accept the cultural goal of achieving an academic degree by modifying conventional methods. Therefore, the use of ChatGPT can be seen as a functional innovation, a form of adaptation to social change that does not abandon the core values of the education system. Students adapt their learning methods by utilizing technology, but still respect the importance of the learning process. This provides an important conceptual contribution to anomie theory, as it demonstrates that innovation, in the form of structural deviation, is not always destructive but can be constructive in certain contexts, such as education.

The form of ethical adaptation needs to be considered because there are still challenges in utilizing Chat GPT, namely ethical challenges, so that the use of artificial intelligence technology within the framework of academic ethics is not misused. Regulations in the field of education are needed that regulate the use of artificial intelligence technology (Liliana et al., 2023). Ethics can serve as a guide for students in making decisions or doing something good or bad (Sagala, 2022). Ethics in the use of technology are not only related to the issue of right or wrong, but also include a person's ability to sort, assess, and make decisions responsibly amidst the ease of obtaining information. In the context of anomie, two different types of individuals adapt to technology: first, those who choose innovation by holding onto ethical principles, and second, individuals who utilise it without considering ethical principles (no social control is perceived as real). Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of how ethical values can be part of the mechanism of adaptation to real social structures.

According to the book *"Guide to Using Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in Learning in Higher Education"* (2024), universities must establish academic policies regarding the responsible use of artificial intelligence in learning. Thus, each university needs to create regulations that govern the use of artificial intelligence under its specific conditions. The absence of standard regulations on the limits of use at the ministry level causes a void in the structure. This leads to individual interpretations varying in their use of technology. This gap can be understood as a 'strain' in Merton's terms—the tension between the demands of cultural norms for academic success and the limited or suboptimal structural means available. Therefore, this phenomenon should be viewed as an opportunity to expand the application of anomie theory. In the context of educational technology, adaptive innovation carried out by students is a response to the mismatch between academic norms and the readiness of institutional structures that are still unable to keep pace with change.

To verify and determine the regulatory situation regarding the use of Chat GPT at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Jenderal Soedirman University, the researcher interviewed Prof. Dr. Slamet Rosyadi, the dean, who serves as the policy holder for academic artificial intelligence at the faculty level. Based on the results of an interview with the Deputy Dean for Academic Affairs of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Jenderal Soedirman University, Prof. Dr. Slamet Rosyadi, M.Si, expressed the statement that:

"At the university level, there are no written rules regarding the use of artificial

intelligence Chat GPT, so the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences has not been able to create written regulations regarding the ethics of using artificial intelligence."

From the statement, it can be inferred that there is a vacuum of institutional norms that causes diverse student views on using technology, especially GPT chat, for academic assignments. From the perspective of anomie theory, the absence of regulations in the structure can direct individual actions toward innovative adaptations. In its use, the existence of GPT chat serves as a tool to facilitate academic tasks. Supported by a situation without clear regulations, the use of GPT chat can be explored by students, and give rise to adaptive behavior that can increase learning productivity or create new problems for the adaptations made.

Due to the absence of regulations that clearly define academic ethics at Jenderal Soedirman University, the enforcement of academic ethics is left to the discretion of each individual involved. To address the absence of written regulations that govern the use of ChatGPT, students must consider the proper steps for utilizing this tool effectively. Therefore, it is essential for students to understand the limitations of using ChatGPT and to ensure that this technology is utilized as a tool for developing critical thinking, rather than as a means to replace independent academic efforts. This situation illustrates that the effects of structural pressures, coupled with the absence of regulation, will result in student responses that adapt to technological literacy. In this context, this study makes a significant contribution by demonstrating that anomie theory is not only relevant for explaining standard social deviations but can also be used to understand "self-adaptation" behavior in a technology-based academic environment. The depiction of self-adaptation also needs to be accompanied by the sensitivity of students or individuals to maintain moral integrity in achieving their goals.

In contrast to the findings of Harsya et al. (2024), who revealed that only 63% of respondents stated that morals and ethics were important in using artificial intelligence ChatGPT, this study found that all informants agreed and had implemented the use of ChatGPT in academic ethics. The results of this study confirm that, in addition to pressure from social structures, subjective aspects are also fundamental, namely, how students ethically interpret the use of technology. The behavior of the informants indicates that they play an active role in managing the information provided and continue to follow the value standards in completing assignments, rather than passively receiving information presented by GPT chat. This illustrates a more complex form of adaptation than just functional innovation, where students continue to behave according to the ethical norms

that they have consciously internalized. From the perspective of anomie theory, this finding enriches the understanding that deviation can be relative and even have a positive impact, depending on the context and values adopted by the individual.

Based on the results of interviews conducted with students, they expressed various perspectives regarding the ethical use of Chat GPT:

Y expressed his views as a student who uses Chat GPT for his academic activities:

"I think that what is in accordance with academic ethics is that we just ask what we want to know, but we don't swallow it raw. We have to triangulate with other data because Chat GPT sometimes takes less reliable data from the web, so the right thing is not to just copy-paste it."

R supports the argument expressed by Y about paraphrasing:

"Do not directly plagiarize or copy and paste content from Chat GPT. We use Chat GPT for a small amount of help when we are confused. Furthermore, the points we have obtained from this artificial intelligence are published in journals and other scientific works to prevent academic fraud."

According to the statements of Y and R, it is evident that the use of technology cannot be separated from the cognitive and ethical practices of students. The strategies they make show a form of innovation by selecting the information obtained. The utilization they have demonstrated also shows that technology is used to enhance thinking, not to replace student intellect. The same pattern can be observed in both informants, namely, academic pressure encourages students to devise strategies to maintain intellectual integrity. This aligns with Merton's opinion that individuals reject formal means, yet they still recognize the ultimate goal of the system.

In contrast to the previous student's argument, N artificial intelligence:

"... but we need to verify whether it is appropriate or not; the source is real or just a shadow. I have also looked at Google and YouTube, asking myself whether this question is suitable or not."

E has other thoughts about utilizing Chat GPT in accordance:

" This Chat GPT is used as a reference source, reading source, or, for example, when there is a *deadlock* because our capacity may or may not be up to what the lecturer wants, so that we can use Chat GPT"

T has a different opinion from E about utilizing Chat GPT by academic ethics:

" Using Chat GPT not as our artificial intelligence, but as a tool to help us think."

Then the understanding of L is also similar to T:

"The use of artificial intelligence in academic ethics utilizes it as a tool, not as a replacement."

Then S expressed his views on the form of use of Chat GPT in the educational field:

"In my opinion, the proper utilization of Chat GPT, by academic ethics, refers to its use in a manner that adheres to educational standards, namely, not harming oneself or others in the realm of education, thereby enriching knowledge."

Copying answers from Chat GPT without attempting to understand the concepts makes learning ineffective in the long term. ChatGPT should be a tool, not the only source of information, to continue developing critical and analytical thinking skills. Students cannot use Chat GPT to take or claim as their own other people's work without permission. As expressed by student R about plagiarism:

"What I know for sure is that if we use Chat GPT or any artificial intelligence but don't directly *copy-paste* the results, in my opinion it does not violate academic ethics, because we don't *copy-paste* and plagiarize. Still, we look for references, but not from scientific sources that have been determined by the campus, such as journals, articles, and books."

Based on interviews with informants from FISIP Jenderal Soedirman University about their views on using Chat GPT by academic ethics, it appears that the use of Chat GPT can be justified by academic ethics if there is awareness of use and understanding that Chat GPT is used as an assistant, not as a substitute for doing academic tasks. The use of artificial intelligence in academic ethics necessitates clear regulations, moral awareness among students, and critical thinking skills in evaluating information. This study validates that, theoretically, the theory of anomie can be viewed more broadly. This finding also provides insight into the understanding that innovation can be viewed as a form of adaptation that develops amidst the ambiguity experienced by society, such as in the realm of higher education. It is also evident that this study reveals that the use of technology to complete assignments is not necessarily viewed as a deviation, but rather as an adaptive response that arises due to structural inequality between academic demands and the unpreparedness of institutions in developing policies. This also broadens the scope of Merton's theory in the scope of education, which has not been widely studied in the classical sociology space. If used wisely, ChatGPT can be a tool that supports the learning process, helps students with research, and contributes to the development of science without compromising academic integrity. Therefore, the realm of higher education institutions needs to support innovation adaptation without neglecting the

aspects of academic ethics. Suppose there is no response from the regulatory structure. In that case, it can leave students in a confusing position, as they balance high expectations for pursuing goals against existing structural limitations. This phenomenon is the reason why the anomie theory perspective is relevant to see the reality that occurs. This study also provides empirical evidence of its relevance to the reality of the field, as it unfolds in the lives of undergraduate students.

Responding to the absence regulation outlined in the Faculty of Social and Science at the General University of Politics Soedirman, institutions must be aware of their active role in forming inclusive academic practices that advance technology while upholding ethics. A new ethical space needs to be created to maintain stability between human and artificial intelligence, utilizing adaptation technology that is difficult to prevent from developing. Institutions can integrate eye-tracking with awareness ethics, develop artificial intelligence for lecturers, design a repeatable method of learning, and create formal regulations. With the existence of empirical data in research, the results of this writing can inform recommendations for policy development. Therefore, the main contribution of this study is not only in mapping the use of ChatGPT, but also in reinterpreting the theory of anomie in the context of educational technology. This is a new form of validation that strengthens the relevance of Merton's classic theory in today's digital era.

CONCLUSION

The use of ChatGPT by students of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at Jenderal Soedirman University is based on complex academic needs and diverse individual situations. However, the use of ChatGPT also presents opportunities for violating scholarly ethics if not used wisely. Students often use ChatGPT without validating or paraphrasing the answers it provides from artificial intelligence. While working on their thesis, students tend to be more careful, paraphrasing and verifying information, due to concerns about plagiarism. Based on Robert K. Merton's anomie theory, this phenomenon indicates a condition of disharmony between cultural goals, such as graduating on time and achieving high grades, and legally artificial means, such as independent learning and lecturer consultations. Researchers provide recommendations to related institutions to create usage guidelines and socialize the use of ChatGPT as a learning artificial intelligence. It is then necessary to integrate digital ethics through specific courses in artificial intelligence. This study has limitations, as it is carried out in

only one faculty environment. Therefore, it is recommended that further research involve more informants from various existing faculties.

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