

Ph.D. students to be declared "bandhua mazdoor" (bonded labour)

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A Ph.D. degree is considered difficult to get, you have to do a lot of hard work and give up certain things such as social life, friends, health, fun time, and many others. At first, it is quite difficult to get admission in fine universities for a Ph.D. and then after getting one, it is more difficult to survive. Although the Ph.D. degree is awarded for research when you contribute something novel in your field. But the system has made it quite difficult by implicating various criteria such as the number of papers to be at least published and authorship.

The students have got caught in this whole system which has become debt bondage to them. They are not entitled to think anything else but research project. They have to work all day and most of the times all night and under a lot of pressure, which is most of the times a reason their work goes unrecognizable or less recognized by the research community. There are some invisible chains for Ph.D. students and this is not a lie. There have been many such cases. In the last three to four years, a large number of research papers have been rejected or retracted due to data manipulation or duplication [1].

Recently, there have been many suggestions for the betterment of research such as no preference to the order of the authors in a paper and no requirements to the number of papers for a Ph.D. These are the major issues to be considered. Further, there are some questions to be asked: Do we need to change our system? Will it be helpful if we recall some of the requirements for the Ph.D.? Instead of forcing Ph.D. students to publish, would it be better to ask them to focus on the statement of the problem and find a better solution, thereby, contributing significantly to the research?

References

1. <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/127-papers-from-india-retracted-for-image-duplication-manipulation/article28422333.ece>

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