

Dilemma and Governance of Peer Review in Humanities and Social Sciences Research

Chunlin Jiang

(WISE Lab & Science of Science and Management of Technology Research Institute, Dalian University of Technology, Dalian 116024)

Abstract: Peer review is an important action of scientific community, which exist in all sorts of research assessment. At the age of little science, scientists were engaged in science study due to their curiosity mostly, science had hardly relation with fame and money. With the shift from little science to big science, the social function of science is making more and more extensive, science was given more profit. At present, “publish or perish” as a main principle are make popular in modern academy system, so peer review appears especially important. In natural science fields, because of its objectivity, uniqueness and repeat, peer review, a significant quality control mechanics, is almost acknowledged. But in humanities and social sciences fields, its research outcome show some characteristics of subjectivity and social construction, which are very largely different from natural science. The rule of “old good boy” and reviewers’ integrity lead to more challenges than before, which hinder new idea and fresh researchers to science community. Inner challenges of science community and external demands of government are forcing rule of peer review to innovate. This article explored some faults and limits of peer review in humanities and social sciences, and provided feasible solution ways from the aspect of scientometrics-embedded peer review and the theory of public governance.

Key words: humanities and social sciences; peer review; scientific governance.