



Epidemiology and pathology of plagiarism (2)

Reza Vazirinejad¹

1- Professor in Epidemiology, Social Determinants of Health Research Center, Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences, Rafsanjan, Iran. Email: rvazirinejad@yahoo.co.uk

 <p>CrossMark</p>	<p>Citation: Vazirinejad R. Epidemiology and pathology of plagiarism (2). JOHE. 2018; 7(3):130-1.</p> <p> 10.29252/johe.7.3.130</p>
--	---

Introduction

No doubt that the bright future of higher education systems is being threatened worldwide by the growing trend of research misconduct (RM) and its faith depends on our act against it. RM as a pandemic scientific damage has turned to a complicated phenomenon and its remedy needs global determination. As I have mentioned before (1), as long as the main target of publication, at least for many academic people, is producing a paper, as it has been claimed (2), so many deviations could easily happen by those academic people who do not have any fidelity to ethics considerations. These people are not the right people to work in the academic places, and in particular, in the educational ones. But, the question remains: how could it have been possible for such people to be recruited in the academic organizations in the first place. This situation gets even worse, when their position is upgraded as a result of their illegal behavior. In turn this also increases their chances to become leaders of different sectors. These sectors (such as the Research Centre or a Medical School) become the arena for piracy of plagiarism and this nasty cycle of deficiency continues to spread. Now imagine, we are faced with an infected university or a bigger academic organization, which is not even after a cure. After a while there will be a disastrous situation.

However, in industry or other fields that people could sell what they make based on the results of their research called a "product", it is not easy to create products based on fake results! But we are concerned about the fake results in the medical

universities, which most of them at last often are converted to papers.

Notwithstanding, it seems like in some academic organizations, there must be a sort of mechanism which may not be able to control all the process of recruiting faculty members. In some countries (in particular, developed countries), people who want to work in universities should be qualified enough, in terms of the ethics as well as scientific knowledge and experience in order to land the job. Whereas, in some developing countries, it's not that rigid for the applicants to have a permanent academic job. The situation gets even worse when we know most often it's not easy to let off such people, afterward!! It is a sad reality and ridiculous.

Now what should the countries facing these situations do with such people after they root? Although, at the beginning they only consist of a very small proportion of the academic staff, but their disorder can be very contagious! My experience shows that these people have a severe tendency to generously share their fake "works" with others!! They readily add your name to the list of the fake paper authors! (They bite you!, it reminds me of scary Zombies (3), "Academic Zombies"!) Unfortunately, they have few wrongful objectives.

For instance, after a while, many academic staff become 'abettor' and so it is not possible to comply even if they witness an ethical problem. This process, unfortunately, continues until most academic staff fall into the trap and after a while most colleagues are infected, even those who are in charge and, incidentally, do not have enough time to do research and being a part of other's research would be very tempting!! Now, dishonest people can

continue for many years in a safe margin. THIS MEANS “DISASTER”.

In such an educational academic place, what should happen to young university students? They are at the beginning of a long way and have less knowledge about research ethics (4) and this could cause deviations from the right path. What are they supposed to do?! Even if they condemn this behavior, they would be just silent and it is not fair to expect them to complain. However, they are truly right to follow their leaders (supervisors)! This means that the new generation is also exposed to this infection after a short duration. This progressive epidemy has been a matter of concern in recent years (5). We need to do something urgently, otherwise, how could we compensate this tremendous damage? WOW!!

References

1. Vazirinejad R. Pathology and epidemiology of plagiarism (1). *Journal of Occupational Health and Epidemiology* 2018; 7(1):1-2
2. Masic I. Plagiarism in scientific publishing. *Acta Inform Med* 2012; 20(4):208-13.
3. *Paffenroth Kim. Gospel of the living dead: george romero's visions of hell on earth. 1st ed.* Waco, Texas, United States: Baylor University Press; 2006.
4. Juyal D, Thawani V, Thaledi S. Rise of academic plagiarism in India: Reasons, solutions and resolution. *Lung India* 2015; 32(5):542-3.
5. Park Ch. In other (people's) words: plagiarism by university students--literature and lessons. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 2003; 28(5):471-88.