

SALAMI PUBLICATIONS, PREDATORY JOURNALS, AND OTHER VICES AGAINST THE ACADEMIC CURRICULUM.

Publicaciones fragmentadas, revistas depredadoras y otros vicios contra el plan de estudios académico.

Antonieta Pérez-Flores.¹

AFFILIATIONS:

¹Departamento de Pediatría Bucal, Facultad de Odontología, Universidad de Concepción, Concepción. Chile.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Antonieta Pérez-Flores.

Departamento de Pediatría Bucal, Facultad de Odontología, Universidad de Concepción, Concepción. Chile. **Phone:** (56-41) 2204232. **E-mail:**mperezf@udec.cl

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The search for knowledge should be a constant in university work and in a certain way it is, but the paradigm of research for curricular purposes has allowed the appearance of practices that, for different reasons, distort and muddy this path.

The pressure to publish or disappear seems more a question of numbers than of creating and sharing the knowledge of researchers.

In past centuries 2 or more researchers on different continents could carry out their research in parallel without necessarily being collaborations. For example, in the history of cephalometry; in 1922 the first cephalometric analysis appeared, developed by Dreyfus (Switzerland), Spencer Atkinsons, and Carrea (Argentina). And so innumerable examples throughout history.¹

With the advancement of communications, globalization and democratization of information, these situations seem impossible today. A researcher at the University of Concepción in southern Chile can perfectly work synchronously with her peer in Alaska and, in turn, with her Ph.D. professor in Australia. The advantages are innumerable, as it was possible to demonstrate during the search and the continuous understanding of the evolution of the pathology of SARS-CoV-2,² impossible to achieve without collaboration, impossible to reach successful results, and without communication fast and efficient.

This same globalization can be a double-edged sword for some researchers, exerting strong pressure to remain in the research environment, at the cost of fictitious or often flawed productivity, due to ethically questionable practices.

Scientific journal editors are constantly confronted with publication practices that amplify scientific misconduct. Fabrication, forgery, duplication, ghost authoring, gift authoring, lack of ethical approval, non-disclosure, posting 'salami', conflicts of interest, self-citation, a duplicate submission, duplicate posting, and plagiarism are some of the most

common problems.³ It seems necessary to delve into these ethical issues in research, since many times, even without bad faith, practices are incurred that may seem harmless, but in the short and long term, they do great harm to the scientific community.

The ethics policies adopted by some journals have improved in recent years, although only about half of biomedical journals, mainly those with high-impact factors, have explicit misconduct and complaint-handling policies.⁴

The publication and dissemination of knowledge, whether in conferences, scientific articles or even in more modern sites such as social networks, is essential for the evolution of modern science and professional development. However, all authors must know Good Publication Practices. It is not just about bioethical standards in medical research, such as patient consent or committees that regulate good research, but rather ethical standards regarding how and what is being disclosed.

Good science can flourish only when research is conducted and documented honestly and ethically. Different authors have established that there is a real need to raise awareness among young researchers or postgraduate students to curb scientific misconduct.⁵

Authorship Credits

The Vancouver group has set out three conditions on which authorship credit must be based. These criteria are:

- 1) substantial contributions to the conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;
- 2) writing the article or critically reviewing it for important intellectual content; and
- 3) final approval of the version to be published.³

Many authors are unaware of them or prefer to use their criteria to decide authorship: inclusion of authors who did not contribute substantially to the study (gift authorship) and exclusion of authors who did contribute significantly to the study (phantom authorship).³

In the area of medical sciences, there is some confusion in this regard, since it is presumed that a

clinician can be the author of a scientific publication; although attending to the medical care of a patient is not attributable to the elaboration of a manuscript, nor is ink, owner of the art of a writer's letters.

In short, only those who have contributed substantially to their creation should be authors of articles. It seems obvious, but in today's world, ethical principles seem to be increasingly at odds with practice.⁶

Overlay Publications

Overlapping posts include

1. Duplicate submission,
2. Duplicate Publication,
3. Sister Publications.^{3,7}

Simultaneous submission of manuscripts to more than one journal is unethical, conflicts with the right of publication, and the possibility of unnecessary duplication of peer review and editing.³

Likewise, a redundant publication wastes the time of reviewers and editors, consuming journal resources and increasing the work of indexing and abstracting services, inflating the scientific literature, and distorting, for example, systematic reviews; all for no other benefit than that of the author.³ Duplicate publication (redundant or dual publication) involves reporting identical or very similar data in several documents.

Sister publications or "*salami*" occur when two identical or very similar articles are published, derived from the same project, with unnecessary fragmentation into smaller publishable units. Another very common example with similar consequences occurs in the report of the same clinical case in different congresses with disguised approaches or titles.^{8,9}

Predatory Magazines

Predatory journals are known as those that do not have the quality standards that characterize academic journals, above all, the lack of peer review is an evident sign of the low rigor with which they act. Articles published in predatory journals lack scholarly validity. They should not be cited, nor used for any

kind of merit that can support an academic career.^{10,11} Additionally, these journals usually require a payment that can confuse with open-access journals.¹⁰

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the partial or total reproduction of knowledge from other authors, attributing it as their own, is one of the most common forms of serious misconduct. It is not always deliberate although it can be avoided. This practice has been declining in recent years with the advent of anti-plagiarism software.

Plagiarism can take different forms, ranging from literal copying, word for word, without permission or acknowledgment of the source; a substantial copy, that is, the appropriation of the fundamentals of the work of another, without permission or recognition; paraphrasing: that is, reproducing the essential meaning by modifying some words, the form and/or the progression of another person's ideas without permission and without the recognition that ethics requires.¹²

Conclusion

With or without the intent to produce specific harm, all of these practices drive and perpetuate the academic reward system by emphasizing quantity over quality of the publication, promoting unfair competition. They also overburden journal editors, peer reviewers, readers of scientific literature, and research funding agencies. This constitutes an undoubted breach of ethics whose sole objective is the curricular benefit of the researcher, without contributing new knowledge to his research area.

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