

## PAPER DETAILS

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AUTHORS: Aysegül ISAL ARSLAN

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## AUTOPSY AND PATHOLOGIST

**\*<sup>1</sup>Ayşegül İSAL ARSLAN**

<sup>\*1</sup>Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Tekirdağ Namık Kemal University, Tekirdağ, Turkey

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Review

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\*Corresponding author: [aiarslan@nku.edu.tr](mailto:aiarslan@nku.edu.tr)

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### Abstract

The aim of this study is to show the interest of pathologists to autopsy and their share in specialty training. It is a process that requires multilateral disciplined work. In the current pathology specialist list, we questioned that pathologists did not gain experience and focused on the reasons for avoiding autopsy. This review is organized with the guideline of the Pathology Working Group of the Federation of Pathology Associations and literature. Education is a dynamic and demanding process by its nature. Pathology specialist training content also evaluates pathology specialists who can fulfill their responsibilities due to their legal assignments. The data obtained with the autopsy series provide valuable contributions to the science of medicine and the etiology of diseases. Keep in mind the existing requirements. It is expected that specialist pathologists who have computing and experienced postmortem histopathology are trained and supported.

**Key Words:** Autopsy, Education, Pathologist.

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### Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı patoloğların otopsiye ilgisini ve uzmanlık eğitimindeki yerini göstermektir. Otopsi işlemleri adli tıp ve patoloji uzmanlarının yer aldığı hukuksal zeminde ilerleyen multidisipliner çalışma gerektiren süreçtir. Mevcut patoloji uzmanlık sürecinde patoloğların deneyim kazanım kazanmadıklarını sorguladık ve otopside kaçınma nedenleri üzerinde durduk. Bu derleme, Patoloji

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Dernekleri Federasyonu Patoloji Çalışma Grubu ve literatür taraması ile düzenlenmiştir. Eğitim doğası gereği dinamik ve değişim isteyen bir süreçtir. patoloji uzmanlık eğitim içeriği yasal görevlendirilmelerinden kaynaklanan sorumluluklarını yerine getirebilecek patoloji uzmanlarını destekler nitelikte olmalıdır. Otopsi serileri ile elde edilen veriler tıp bilimine, hastalıkların etyolojisine değerli katkılar sunmaktadır. Mevcut gereklilikler göz önünde tutulduğunda bu bilinci taşıyan, postmortem histopatolojiyi deneyimlemiş uzman patoloğların yetiştirilmesi, desteklenmesi beklenir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Otopsi, Eğitim, Patolog.

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## 1. Introduction

In our country, the authorized person to perform an autopsy is determined by the Code of Criminal Procedure (<https://www.tb.org.tr/eweb/adli/3.html>). Autopsy is to be carried out by two physicians, a forensic medicine specialist accompanied by a pathologist or a specialist from another branch, or two physicians one of whom may be a practitioner, in the presence of a Public Prosecutor. A physician assigned by the defendant or their representative may also be present during the autopsy. Where required, the autopsy procedure may be carried out by a single physician, which needs to be clearly indicated in the autopsy report (Ceza Muhakemeleri Usulü Kanunu, 2004). Autopsy requires opening the head, thorax and abdomen as long as the condition of the body allows this intervention (Charlton, 1994). The physician in charge of treating the deceased immediately prior to death cannot be assigned for the autopsy procedure. However, the physician in question may be requested to be present during the autopsy and provide information concerning the disease prognosis (Wilson, 2014). A buried body may be removed from the grave for investigation or autopsy. The decision in this regard is to be concluded by the Public Prosecutor during the interrogation process and by the Court during the proceedings. A relative of the deceased should be immediately informed of the decision on disinterment unless such notification is expected to jeopardize the aim of the investigation and contacting the person in question proves to be difficult (Richard, 2018). While performing the procedures mentioned in the above clauses, images of the body are to be recorded (Türk Ceza Muhakemeleri Kanunu, 2004).

In our country, specialty training in medicine is 4 years for pathology. This duration does not include rotation training for forensic medicine or other branches. Currently, the pathology departments at Istanbul University Cerrahpaşa Faculty of Medicine and Trakya University Faculty of Medicine readily perform forensic autopsy for adult cases (Ersoy et al., 2013). However, this

procedure is not performed at other educational institutions. Therefore, gaining experience/competency in forensic autopsy stages proves to be impossible through the pathology training practice with the relevant legislation and the associated criminal liability. Pathologists may work at state hospitals, training and research hospitals and forensic medicine institutions (Demirhan, 2008). Pathologists who work at hospital setting are reluctant/reserved towards autopsy procedures owing to the intensity of their routine workload and the deficiencies in relevant training. The reason for the reluctance of pathologists is that they are far from legal terminology, and autopsy creates emotional burden on them. During the National Pathology Congress in 2011, a survey consisting of 15 questions was conducted with the participants. This survey revealed that pathologists are aware of their responsibilities under applicable laws but are reluctant to perform an autopsy (Ersoy et al., 2013).

## **2. Materials and Methods**

This review is organized with the guideline of the Pathology Working Group of the Federation of Pathology Associations and literature.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

A regulation encompassing periodic training at forensic medicine institutions during the specialty training in medicine for pathology in a manner coinciding with the legal legislation and the real-world requirements in daily practice of our country, or a discipline that may be planned as a sub-specialty under the name of forensic pathology is required in this regard (Hébert et al., 2014). Ensuring competency of forensic medicine specialists in postmortem pathology practice may be considered as another solution option.

It is noteworthy that when the current literature published in forensic medicine is followed, histopathological data obtained by autopsy provide valuable data about the place of involvement in the occurrence of many diseases such as coronary artery disease in elucidating the etiology of diseases (Talmon, 2010).

The autopsy processes should be carried out with the holistic approach of law and medical scientists as a team. Pathologists should continue their existence as an integral part of this process and make their efforts to forensic pathology in their specialist training and routine practices.

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