Navigating Authorship Issues

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Objectives!

- To gain an awareness of:
  - the types of power dynamics in professional relationships
  - the benefits of using authorship contracts
  - how disciplines outside of my own may determine authorship order
  - how multicultural components such as gender and cultural beliefs may impact authorship position and participation in negotiations
Case Study: Christian

Christian is a research team member who participated in data collection, analysis, and wrote the methods, discussion, and conclusion section of the manuscript submitted for publication. After finishing his components, Christian sent his pieces of the manuscript to the PI of the project. He heard nothing back from his PI for 4-5 months, after repeated attempts to contact her. Christian then received a congratulatory email from his academic advisor on his recent publication. Confused, Christian looked up the principle investigator’s name and found that the manuscript is published in *Ethics and Behavior*. He was listed as fourth author.
What is Authorship?

“Authorship and publication credit is the currency system of the research and academic community, with both positive and negative implications” (Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011, p. 1)
Authorship and the Code

Principle A: Beneficence and Nonmaleficence
- Psychologists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm. In their professional actions, psychologists seek to safeguard the welfare and rights of those with whom they interact professionally and other affected persons, and the welfare of animal subjects of research.

Principle C: Integrity
- ...promote accuracy, honesty and truthfulness in the science, teaching and practice of psychology. In these activities psychologists do not steal, cheat or engage in fraud, subterfuge or intentional misrepresentation of fact...

Principle D: Justice
- Psychologists recognize that fairness and justice entitle all persons to access to and benefit from the contributions of psychology and to equal quality in the processes, procedures, and services being conducted by psychologists.

(APA, 2002)
Authorship and the Code

3.08 Exploitative Relationships
Psychologists do not exploit persons over whom they have...

8.12 Publication Credit
(a) Psychologists take responsibility and credit, including
authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed or to
which they have substantially contributed.
(b) Principal authorship and other publication credits accurately
reflect the relative scientific or professional contributions of the
individuals involved, regardless of their relative status. Mere
possession of an institutional position, such as department chair,
does not justify authorship credit. Minor contributions to the
research or to the writing for publications are acknowledged
appropriately, such as in footnotes or in an introductory statement.
(c) Except under exceptional circumstances, a student is listed as
principal author on any multiple-authored article that is
substantially based on the student's doctoral dissertation. Faculty
advisors discuss publication credit with students as early as feasible
and throughout the research and publication process as
appropriate.

(APA, 2002)
Significance and Prevalence of Authorship Issues

- Lack of information/knowledge and use of guidelines specifically in Psychology (Bartle, Fink, & Hayes, 2000)

- 10-89% of subjects reported that adding undeserving authors AND/OR excluding deserving authors happened in practice (across 16 studies)

- 1.5-71% of subjects reported that they personally experienced problems and/or misuse of authorship (across 14 studies)

- According to Koocher and Keith-Spiegel (1998), disputes about authorship credit “are among the most common complaints to ethics committees that arise from the academic scientific sector of psychology” (p. 406)

(Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011)
Relevant Terms

- **Guest authors**: an undeserving author who is placed on the author list, despite minimal contribution, to enhance the author list.

- **Gift authors**: an undeserving author who is placed on the author list, despite minimal contribution, for mutual resume augmentation.

- **Ghost Authors**: an individual who is omitted from the author list, despite fulfilling the criteria and qualifications to be listed as an author.

- **Coercion Authorship**: giving an individual authorship because he/she asserts that his/her position or actions demand authorship.

Wager, 2013
Why do Authorship Ethical Violations Occur?

- Feelings of obligation
- Crediting and preserving past and future relationships
- Feeling a sense of team responsibility
- Power relations

(Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011)
Power
**Power:** The ability to influence or control the behavior of people.

- Power is relative

(French & Raven, 1959)
Types of Power

- **Legitimate**: believed that this person has the right to make demands and to expect others to follow.
- **Reward**: ability to compensate someone for compliance.
- **Expert**: possession of superior skills and knowledge.
- **Referent**: perceived attractiveness, worthiness, and right to respect (charisma).
- **Coercive**: perception of ability to punish someone for noncompliance.

(French & Raven, 1959)
Have you ever felt manipulated or coerced into doing something you didn't want to do?
If so, you may have experienced a negative use of power. Learn how to use power positively in this infographic.

**FORMS OF POWER**

1. **Legitimate**
   Comes from a belief that a person has the formal right to make demands and expects complete compliance from others.

2. **Reward**
   Results from one person's ability to compensate another for compliance.

3. **Expert**
   Based on a person's high levels of skill and knowledge.

4. **Referent**
   Result of a person's perceived attractiveness, worthiness, and right to respect from others.

5. **Coercive**
   Comes from the belief that a person can punish others for non-compliance.

The powers that the BEST LEADERS use are mainly

- **Expert & Referent**

  If you improve your skills in these areas, you can have a positive influence upon your organisation as a whole.

When you're aware of these sources of power, you can...

1. Better understand why you're influenced and whether you want to accept the base of power.
2. Recognise your own sources of power.
3. Build your leadership skills by developing your own, positive sources of power.

Share this infographic with others and read our article to develop expert and referent power.

Visit [www.mindtools.com/power](http://www.mindtools.com/power) to find out more.
Power in Authorship

- Authors who perceive having more power relative to coauthors are more satisfied with the authorship decision-making.
- Those with less power more likely to report cases of unwarranted authorship.
- Tenured faculty report having more power relative to coauthors.
- Grad students perceive less power determining author order.
- In one study, 27% of coauthors perceived impropriety in determining authorship.
  - Most cited reason: “too much authorship credit given”

(Geelhoed et al., 2007; Sandler & Russell, 2005)
Negotiating Power

- Scholarship is high-stakes
  - Internship, academia, tenure

- To negotiate the power differentials at play, sources of empowerment and legitimization/support can be established through the use of authorship contracts
Authorship Contract
Activity
Reactions and Discussion

- Overall reactions?
- What might be some drawbacks from a point system?
  - May not apply to all situations
  - Ability and competence of contributors
  - Variation in tasks across projects
Interdisciplinary Collaboration
Increased Collaboration with other Professionals and Disciplines

- Importance of working across disciplines and interconnectedness
- Increased attempts to collaborate over the last two decades
- Ex: Biology and Career Psychology

Fields, 2014
What’s the problem?!

Newman, 2004
Collaboration and Authorship

- Different disciplines have different authorship cultures
  - i.e., new record set on PubMed for Energy Physics article: **2080 authors**!

- What would be a single contribution that would qualify for authorship?
  - Psychologists: choice of statistical method/data analysis
  - Nursing: manuscript drafting
  - Medical school: statistical advice
  - Postdoc fellows across disciplines: design of study
  - Business: Data interpretation or doing 20-50% of work

(Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011)
Authorship Across Disciplines

- Authorship Order
  - Most disciplines agree that the amount of work should determine order...HOWEVER
  - Biomedical Research: Seniority and Prestige in last author position
  - Medicine: Trend of equal authorship of first 2 authors
  - Management Research: Alphabetical Ordering
  - Economic Research: Alphabetical Ordering

(Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011)
But, What’s wrong with alphabetical ordering!?

- Alphabetical Ordering is emerging more in social science journals
  - prevalence of 9.9% → 18.6% from 1974–1999 (Einav & Yariv, 2006)

- Each letter closer to “A”:
  - Increases probability to be tenured
  - Increases probability of hiring in prestigious departments
  - Increases probability of receiving professional recognition
  - Increases estimated salary return

(Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011)
Recommendations for Authorship in Interdisciplinary Research

- Start discussions early to align expectations
  - Prevalence of undeserving authors is reduced by 24% (Slone, 1996)
- Use authorship contract
- Gain awareness and understanding of
  - Differences in Authorship Order
  - Differences in Policies
  - Differences in methodological procedures and research practices
  - Overall Culture

(Marusić, Bosnjak, & Jerončić, 2011)
Negotiating Authorship in Clinical Settings

Conflicts that arise in collaboration of academic researchers and practicing clinicians
Potential problems during collaboration

- Empirical Imperialism
  - Who decides what we (as a field) need to study? How should we study it?

- Publish or perish mentality in academia

- Shared Ownership?

- Possible differences in expertise and limitations (focus on clinical work v. focus on research methodology)
  - Differences in areas of competence—ensuring justice

- Others?
Authorship Credit Policy Model

- Are there policies on authorship credit related to professional collaborations in literature and practice?
- Organizations and agencies can modify their own authorship policies to incorporate ethical standards across different professions.
- Weighted point system
  - Potential authors with more competence must make larger contributions for the same authorship position.
- Example from the Center for Evidence-Based Practice at Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital

Fine & Kurdek, 1993; Washburn, 2008
Project Leaders in Clinical Settings

- Assigning point person who facilitates the authorship credit process
- Potential abuse of power
- Challenging unfair practices
- Guarantors
  - Someone assigned by the team to be responsible for the ethical integrity of the project from start to finish

Fine & Kurdek, 1993; Washburn, 2008
Recommendations for Collaboration in Clinical Settings

- Encourage adoption and implementation of authorship policy with agency leaders

- Consider designating a guarantor in addition to the project leader to ensure ethical integrity throughout authorship process

- Initiate conversations with contributors about criteria for determination of authorship and examples of contributions that do not alone meet criteria for authorship

- Use authorship contract to guide process

Fine & Kurdek, 1993; Washburn, 2008
Case Study

Shanda (LCSW) and Ahbik (LCPC), two mental health professionals from separate agencies, collaborate on a study involving therapeutic outcomes resulting from a cognitive intervention. Shanda is close friends with a prestigious researcher, Dr. Somebody, at the University of Wisconsin and suggests that they include Dr. Somebody as an author on the manuscript. Shanda insists that having Dr. Somebody as a third author will increase their chances of getting published. Ahbik is not comfortable with this situation, but he does not want to disturb what was a pleasant collaboration. He chooses not to say anything.

Adapted from a case study in Washburn, 2008
Multicultural Considerations

- Gender Differences
- Collectivistic Cultures vs. Individualist Cultures
  - Individualism and collectivism are broadly cultural syndromes that encompass a number of elements, including values, norms, goals, and behaviors
- Why are multicultural considerations important?

Triandis (1995)
Voices Unheard: Gender & Authorship

- Gender: Women and Authorship
  - Those with less power, such as women and untenured faculty, are more likely to report cases of unwarranted authorship

- Gender: Harassment
  - Women may experience challenges to diversity as it pertains to sexism, differential treatment, and harassment
Authorship literature notes “gaps” in authorship between men and women.

Participation of women in the medical profession has increased, however, authorship issues remain.

Researchers Zuckerman and Cole, suggested that women in science have a “triple penalty” (Zuckerman & Cole 1975).

In medical research women author original papers less often than men.

Global Health Research (GHR) studies have shown that women in this field may be less likely to be named authors in a research publication when compared to their male counterpart. This is even the case when a woman made the same contributions to the same project.

In a 2004 study, researchers Shefer, Shabalala, and Townsend demonstrated that Black women in South Africa were marginalized and rarely given first author positions in collaborative publications (Shefer, Shabalala, & Townsend, 2004).
Multicultural Considerations: Why is this important?

- Impacts both Individualistic and Collectivistic Cultures:
  - “Out-group Members” compared to “In-group Members”
  - Potentially impacting involvement, engagement, & authorship (WISELI, 2010)
- Awareness
- Social Justice!
- Advocacy
Case Example

- A foreign-born psychology student, Fatima, is reluctant to question her adviser about the authorship order of their research manuscript. Throughout the research team meetings and discussions, Fatima was reluctant to provide input. The adviser tries to draw out Fatima through persistent questioning, which the student finds humiliating. As a result, the adviser thinks she lacks knowledge about the project and placed her last in authorship order, even though she contributed half of the manuscript writing.

- As a team member on that research project, what would you do?
Questions?
References


References


References


