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**EVOLIUCINĖ MEDICINA:
ŽMOGAUS RAIDOS PERSPEKTYVOS IR SVEIKATA
BESIKEIČIANČIOJE APLINKOJE**

**EVOLUTIONARY MEDICINE:
PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH
CONSEQUENCES IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

Rengėjas:

Vilniaus universiteto Medicinos ir sveikatos mokslų
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AUTHORSHIP AND AUTHORITY: POWER RELATIONS IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

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Authorship is usually understood as a public signal of contribution, responsibility, and expertise. In practice, it supports trust. Hierarchical research environments create a particular challenge. Institutional authority can shape how credit is allocated and responsibility perceived, even without financial conflicts. Leaders may influence authorship decisions through expected roles, dependence, and control over resources or opportunities. Leadership-related authorship is not necessarily inappropriate. However, recurring authority-related patterns may indicate questionable authorship practices and suggest the need for greater transparency. They can make authorship less interpretable, making credit and accountability harder to trace.

We argue that institutional authority should be understood as a built-in, non-monetary interest that can shape authorship patterns and affect trust in science. Although often treated as a feature of hierarchy, authority-related influence is rarely recognised as a conflict of interest. COI discussions focused mainly on financial ties may therefore overlook an important source of distortion in credit and responsibility.

We suggest using bibliometric authorship patterns as a diagnostic tool in contexts where authorship order may be a weaker indicator of contribution and accountability. Relevant signals include irregular or changing first, middle, or last authors' positions, team size, and concentration of publications among researchers. These patterns can describe recurring authorship profiles across publication contexts, while avoiding direct conclusions about individual cases. To support clearer interpretation in hierarchical settings, we distinguish three contribution profiles: primary contributor, team contributor, and supervisory/coordinating contributor. The aim is not to label individuals, but to clarify expectations and indicate when stronger transparency is ethically warranted. Authorship patterns cannot prove whether the criteria were met in specific publications. However, they can show when the author list becomes a weaker signal of warranted trust. Where authority may shape credit and responsibility, keeping authorship interpretable should be treated as a basic condition of trustworthy science.

Keywords: authorship, bibliometrics, conflict of interest, institutional authority, research integrity