



---

## Academic Exploitation - The Hideous Hidden Truth

**Corresponding Author:**

Dr. Thirunavukkarasu Arun babu,  
Assistant Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Sri Lakshmi Narayana Institute of Medical Sciences, Puducherry,  
India. , Plot number 17, 3rd Cross, Sri Moogambigai Nagar, Reddiyarpalayam, 605010 - India

**Submitting Author:**

Dr. Thirunavukkarasu Arun babu,  
Assistant Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Sri Lakshmi Narayana Institute of Medical Sciences, Puducherry,  
India. , Plot number 17, 3rd Cross, Sri Moogambigai Nagar, Reddiyarpalayam, 605010 - India

**Article ID:** WMC00511

**Article Type:** My opinion

**Submitted on:**04-Sep-2010, 02:41:57 AM GMT **Published on:** 04-Sep-2010, 10:40:24 AM GMT

**Article URL:** [http://www.webmedcentral.com/article\\_view/511](http://www.webmedcentral.com/article_view/511)

**Subject Categories:**MISCELLANEOUS

**Keywords:**Academic Exploitation, Forced Plagiarism

**How to cite the article:**Arun babu T . Academic Exploitation - The Hideous Hidden Truth . WebmedCentral  
MISCELLANEOUS 2010;1(9):WMC00511

**Source(s) of Funding:**

none

**Competing Interests:**

none

# Academic Exploitation - The Hideous Hidden Truth

**Author(s):** Arun babu T

## My opinion

---

Credit for doing a work is important to anybody, Medical professionals are no exception. Publications in journals and textbooks are highly preferred form of academic credits in medical field. It serves as a form of reputation for obtaining jobs, promotions, grants and prestige. (1) The term 'academic exploitation' includes taking credit for the academic work done by another person. This also amounts to a variant of plagiarism where there is forced stealing of one's ideas and effort with their consent using power. This is a common hidden menace in medical education where juniors are exploited by senior faculty members. The exploiter's power, authority and seniority are used in setting up and preserving the undue distribution of credit.

Though academic exploitation is a commonplace in medical fraternity, little has been documented in the literature. This article is intended to throw light upon this darker issue.

Here are some real life experiences. To maintain the anonymity of involved, names and other details have been avoided. A famous para-clinical professor who has written a couple of Text books and numerous publications uses his residents and junior faculty members to do most of his academic work. Work includes spending extra time beyond working hours in doing his research work, drafting manuscript etc. The most disturbing aspect is that he never gives them credit in publications. He also insists on including his name in all research publications coming out of his department irrespective of his involvement. The victims can never complain due to the fear of an implicit or explicit threat of vendetta acts, such as a bad reference letter, failing in examinations, preventing job opportunities etc. Such acts cannot be generalized as it is not always true. It is worth mentioning about my personal experience. I had written a chapter under the guidance of my professor for his Text book during my 1st year of post graduation. When the book was published next year, I had a pleasant surprise in finding me as a co-author for that chapter. I would have been happy even if he had just acknowledged my effort. I have always admired that honesty and humility and wished I could emulate him. Physician teachers are required to be respectful role models of professionalism and interpersonal ethics. (2)

## Conclusion

---

It is almost impossible to eradicate academic exploitation because of its cryptic nature. Proving its presence can be tough because it is subjective. The ultimate responsibility is upon the individual person to self check his professionalism and ethical standards. Self-realization on the part of senior faculty can decrease these happenings.

## Reference(s)

---

1. Martin B. Intellectual suppression. In: Brian Martin, Ann Baker CM, Manwell C, Pugh C, editors. *Intellectual Suppression: Australian Case Histories, Analysis and Responses*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson; 1986, p. 59-62.
2. Larkin GL, Mello MJ. Commentary: doctors without boundaries: the ethics of teacher-student relationships in academic medicine. *Acad Med* 2010; 85(5): 752-5.

## Disclaimer

This article has been downloaded from WebmedCentral. With our unique author driven post publication peer review, contents posted on this web portal do not undergo any prepublication peer or editorial review. It is completely the responsibility of the authors to ensure not only scientific and ethical standards of the manuscript but also its grammatical accuracy. Authors must ensure that they obtain all the necessary permissions before submitting any information that requires obtaining a consent or approval from a third party. Authors should also ensure not to submit any information which they do not have the copyright of or of which they have transferred the copyrights to a third party.

Contents on WebmedCentral are purely for biomedical researchers and scientists. They are not meant to cater to the needs of an individual patient. The web portal or any content(s) therein is neither designed to support, nor replace, the relationship that exists between a patient/site visitor and his/her physician. Your use of the WebmedCentral site and its contents is entirely at your own risk. We do not take any responsibility for any harm that you may suffer or inflict on a third person by following the contents of this website.