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## RESEARCH ETHICS

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### Keywords

Ethics,  
Data collection,  
Research Design, Analysis,  
Objectivity,  
Reliability.

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### Abstract

*Research ethics are values, norms, and institutional arrangements that help to implement scientific morality in practice. Guidelines for research ethics specify the basic norms and values of the research community. The objective of the research ethics is to protect human participants, to ensure that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of individuals, groups and/or society as a whole and take care of issues such as the management of risk, protection of confidentiality and the process of informed consent. In a country like India with socio culturally diverse population complex ethical issues need to be carefully observed.*

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Research is a systemized careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge. Criteria of good research irrespective of the branch of study is the scientific method employed and is expected to satisfy a certain basic requirement:

- The purpose of the research should be clearly defined.
- The research procedure used should be described in sufficient detail to permit another researcher to repeat the research for further advancement, keeping the continuity of what has already been attained.
- The Research design should be carefully planned to yield results that are as objective as possible.
- Flaws if any in research design and their effects upon the findings should be report with complete frankness.
- The analysis of data should be sufficiently adequate to reveal its significance and the methods of analysis used should be appropriate.
- The validity and reliability of the data should be checked carefully.
- Conclusions should be confined to those justified by the data of the research and limited to those for which the data provide an adequate basis.

Research ethics are values, norms, and institutional arrangements that help to implement scientific morality in practice. Guidelines for research ethics specify the basic norms and values of the research community. They are based on general ethics of science, just as general ethics is based on the morality of society at large. It is primary responsibility of the researcher to maintain ethics of research during his research work, research should be primarily based on the consent of the subjects under study for data collection. While on one hand, research involving human participants must not violate any universally applicable ethical standards, on the other hand, a researcher needs to consider local cultural values when it comes to the application of the ethical principles to individual autonomy and informed consent. However, research involving human subjects categorized in special categories such as minors, juvenile, pregnant women, differently abled, prisoners, etc become ethically more sensitive. Ethics are extremely

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important for setting boundaries in research. All research projects have to be weighed ethically in order to be checked for safety and approved for continuation. Important ethical issues include voluntary participation and informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality; and accountability in terms of the accuracy of research design, analysis and reporting.

The objective of the research ethics is to protect human participants, to ensure that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of individuals, groups and/or society as a whole and take care of issues such as the management of risk, protection of confidentiality and the process of informed consent. Some ethical principles are to be followed to meet the such objectives:

- Researcher would honestly report data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status. Do not fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data.
- Strive to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, where objectivity is expected.
- Strive for consistency of thought and action.
- Keep good records of research activities, such as data collection, research design.
- Eager to share data, results, ideas, tools, resources for criticism.
- Respect for Intellectual Property like Honor patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. Avoid plagiarism.
- Strive to promote social good and prevent or mitigate social harms through research, public education, and advocacy.
- Avoid discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors that are not related to their scientific competence and integrity.
- Obey relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies.
- Avoid misconducts like publishing the same paper in two different journals without telling the editors or submitting the same paper to different journals without telling the editors

To avoid Disagreements on the issue of credit of authorship, such issues should be discussed at

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the beginning of a working relationship. APA's Ethics Code specifies that researcher should take credit only for work they have actually performed or to which they have substantially contributed and that publication credit should accurately reflect the relative contributions: "Mere possession of an institutional position, such as department chair, does not justify authorship credit," says the code. "Minor contributions to the research or to the writing for publications are acknowledged appropriately, such as in footnotes or in an introductory statement. "The same rules apply to students.

APA's Ethics Code says psychologists should be conscious of multiple roles that could reasonably impair their professional performance or could exploit or harm others. That's why experts also recommend that supervisors set up timely and specific methods to give students feedback and keep a record of the supervision, including meeting times, issues discussed and duties assigned.

APA's Ethics Code mandates that psychologists who conduct research should inform participants about:

- The purpose of the research, expected duration and procedures.
- Participants' rights to decline to participate and to withdraw from the research once it has started, as well as the anticipated consequences of doing so.
- Reasonably foreseeable factors that may influence their willingness to participate, such as potential risks, discomfort or adverse effects.
- Any prospective research benefits.
- Limits of confidentiality, such as data coding, disposal, sharing and archiving, and when confidentiality must be broken.
- Incentives for participation.
- Who participants can contact with questions.

APA guidelines suggest that a signed consent form doesn't mean the informing process can be glossed over, say ethics experts. In fact, the APA Ethics Code says psychologists can skip

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informed consent in two instances only: When permitted by law or federal or institutional regulations, or when the research would not reasonably be expected to distress or harm participants. **With evolving internet technology, a researcher need to be** cautious when exchanging confidential information electronically. If you're not a Internet whiz, get the help of someone who is. Otherwise, it may be possible for others to tap into data that you thought was properly protected. To avoid any dilemma regarding ethical issues, researcher must acquaint himself with the basic research and professional ethics before the research project begins.

According to APA Ethical Guidelines for Research and Publication when institutional approval is required, researchers must provide accurate information about their research proposals and obtain approval prior to conducting the research. They conduct the research in accordance with the approved research protocol. An Institutional Review Board is a group of organizational and community representatives required by federal law to review the ethical issues in all proposed research that is federally funded, involves human subjects, or has any potential for harm to subjects. To address such needs most institutions and organizations have formulated an Institutional Review Board (IRB), a panel of persons who reviews grant proposals with respect to ethical implications and decides whether additional actions need to be taken to assure the safety and rights of participants. By reviewing proposals for research, IRBs also help to protect both the organization and the researcher against potential legal implications of neglecting to address important ethical issues of participants.

The relevance of practicing ethical norms is increasing day by day in the field of social research, particularly in India, a country with more than 1.2 billion populations; 70% of them living in 638,000 villages. To add to it, India is a religiously, culturally diverse multi.lingual society; more than 18 major languages combined with some 1652 languages and dialects are being spoken in India. At the same time, the literacy rate is low. As per Census 2011, literacy rate is around 74%; even lesser among female. 65% than male.82%.

With such a socio.culturally diverse population, designing a uniformly acceptable ethically robust research with human subjects is a challenge in

India. There are numerous concerns for social science researchers when conducting research

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such as lack of

experience in dealing with bureaucratized ethics procedures, the need for cultural sensitivity, security concerns and the consequences of administrative and political practices, Therefore complex ethical issues need to be carefully observed and justified by researchers in fast growing professional world of research.

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