

# **Chapter 4**

# **ETHICS AND RESEARCH**

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Spring 2010

# ETHICS AND RESEARCH

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- Some examples of unethical practice
  - A statement of ethical principles
  - Protecting participants from harm
  - Ensuring confidentiality of research data
- Should subjects be deceived
  - Examples on ethical concerns
  - Research with children
  - Regulation of research

## **A RESEARCHER**

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- Asks first graders sensitive questions without obtaining the consent of their parents
- Deletes data that does not support his hypothesis
- Involves a group of eight graders in a research that might harm them psychologically without informing them of this fact...
- **ARE THESE ETHICAL?**

## **Consider the situation below:**

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- A professor makes it mandatory for his students participate in his projects if they want to pass. Students question his demand and ask the question, “Is that ethical?”
- The question is: “Is it ethical and legitimate for professors to ask their students to participate in projects if they want to pass?”

## What is ethics?

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- Refers to questions of “right” or “wrong”.
- The first question a researcher should ask: “Will any physical or psychological harm come to anyone as a result of my research?”

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## **Statement of ethical principals (01)**

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- **Ethical behavior is confirming to the conduct of a given profession or group**
- **The researcher is to carry out research with respect and concern for the dignity and welfare of the people; therefore,**

## **Statement of ethical principals (02)**

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- **should evaluate any ethical concerns**
- **should consider whether the participant will be “a subject at risk” or a “subject at minimal risk”**
- **should treat participants ethically**
- **should establish a fair and clear agreement with participants and clarify obligations and responsibilities of each**
- ....

## **Statement of ethical principals (03)**

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- **should answer all questions posed by the participants honestly**
- **should make full disclosure prior to obtaining informed consent forms**
- **should be careful when working with children and the impaired to avoid miscommunication**



## **Statement of ethical principals (04)**

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- **If the study demands concealment or 'deception': The researcher**
  - **should justify it scientifically**
  - **should determine if alternative procedures do not use concealment or 'deception'**
  - **should provide the participants with the explanations right away**

## Statement of ethical principals (05)

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- The researcher should **respect** the right to refuse or withdraw from the study, however the researcher may be in a position of authority to influence
- After data collection is over, **the participants should be notified and clarify any misconceptions**
- Information obtained about a participant should remain strictly **confidential**, however, with informed consent, information can be disclosed
- ...

## **EVERY RESEARCHER SHOULD**

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- PROTECT THE PARTICIPANTS FROM HARM
- ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESEARCH DATA
- THE QUESTION OF DECEPTION OF SUBJECTS

## **Example of a consent form**

### ***Consent to serve as a subject in research***

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**I consent to serve as a subject in the research investigation entitled..... .**

**The nature and general purpose of the research procedure and the known risks involved have been explained to me by.....**

**The investigator is authorized to proceed on the understanding that I may terminate my service at any time I so desire.**

**I understand the known risks are....**

**I understand it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, but I believe reasonable safeguards have been taken.**

**Witness \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed (subject) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**(To be retained by the principle investigator )**

# **ENSURING CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESEARCH DATA**

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- **ENSURE THAT NOONE ELSE BUT YOU AS THE RESEARCHER WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE DATA COLLECTED**
- **NAMES OF SUBJECTS SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM DATA COLLECTION FORMS**
- **NAMES OF SUBJECTS SHOULD NOT BE REVEALED IN ANY PUBLICATION OF THE RESEARCH**

# SHOULD SUBJECTS BE DECEIVED?

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- Current professional guidelines:
  - Use methods that do not require deception
  - In cases where there is no alternative, deception should be justified by its educational, scientific or applied value
  - If deception occurs, participants should be notified soon with explanations
- **Considering the harm deceiving will bring to the reputation of researchers as scholars running after factual information, it should be avoided...**

# EXAMPLES INVOLVING ETHICAL CONCERNS (01)

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- STUDY 1: OBSERVE STUDENTS TO  
LOOK FOR RELATIONSHIPS  
BETWEEN THE BEHAVIOR OF  
STUDENTS AND CERTAIN TEACHER  
BEHAVIOR PATTERNS
  - Possible harm to participants?
  - Confidentiality of the research data?
  - Deception?

## **EXAMPLES INVOLVING ETHICAL CONCERNS (02)**

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- **STUDY 2: THE RESEARCHER WANTS TO STUDY THE EFFECTS OF “FAILURE” VERSUS SUCCESS” BY TEACHING JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS A SKILL THROUGH A SERIES OF SIX TEN-MINUTE INSTRUCTIONAL PERIODS**
- Possibility of harm to the participants?
- Confidentiality of the research data?
- Deception?



# **RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN**

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- **VULNERABLE IN SOME RESPECTS**
- **HAVE FEWER LEGAL RIGHTS**
- **MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE OF INFORMED CONSENT**  
**(parent's or guardian's consent need to be taken in such cases)**

# REGULATION OF RESEARCH

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- **Before research can be conducted, approval of the institutional review board must be obtained**
  - The board has the right to determine whether consent forms have been completed
  - Whether plans have been made to debrief the participants
  - Regulations do not change frequently but bodies in charge may change from institution to institution

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR PATIENCE!**

