

# Moral Dimensions of Research Ethics: Ethical Dilemmas and Challenges in Human Participants' Research among Different Settings

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**Abstract** The range of research has augmented significantly through the last five to six decades and ethics has turned out to be central issue in different disciplines. Ethics supported on elementary human values for the involvement of human participants in the research. However, rising difficulty of different research and ethical codes are incompatible at certain points; the basic principles and codes need to be adjusted. This article illustrates some of the ethical dilemmas and challenges that have been addressed primarily in the research including human participants in different settings. This article chiefly highlighted the lively of gaining interviewees' faith in a community, snags of ethical principles and concludes with some ethical dilemmas and challenges experienced by the researcher. Prediction of ethical challenges and dilemmas are not always possible. Therefore, the researcher must be persistently alert of the continuing impact that the research might have on those involved, while concurrently being ethically responsive and morally capable.

**Keywords:** ethics, dilemmas, research, challenges, moral

## 1. Discussion

Ethics in public health or biomedicine research has couple main gears that are research ethics and the researcher's ethics. Ethics has been defined by several ways and systematic dialogue necessitates a modern instead of still frequently appearing definitions of ethics as "being derived from Greek 'ethos' meaning the good life". Ethics also includes a responsibility for the natural balance of the world. Justice, truth, equality, freedom, professionalism and responsibility are most common ingredients. These values might be differing between countries and cultures [1]. These values are also fundamental for human rights too. Based on different guidelines, nearly fifty years onwards the Declaration of Helsinki is the back bone of ethical standards for public health and biomedical research involving human participants. Basic principles, codes of ethics of research afford direction. Albeit, previous literature revealed that the 30-70 percent of the respondents had experienced unsuitable behavior in the research [2]. It is sufficient and fact that the continuing interest is required to research behavior.

Despite the different laws, guidelines and conventions have been published, it is still very central among other. However, the number and the variety of ethical codes from different convention increasing amount of dilemmas need some explanation. Basically no one code is competent of covering all ethical aspects. Scientific communities have to discuss and necessary ranked

existing codes for multidisciplinary research. Research culture among public health and biomedicine is in increasing trends and the scope is becoming wide day-by-day. Most of the biomedical and public health researchers are based on the human participation. Ethics is based on essential human values even in the program planning and management. Even though, changed and increased numbers of codes have many complexities for research in human participation. Some time declared ethical codes are even mismatched at definite points. Hence, researchers from different sectors need to adjust their research ethical policies and implementation in agreement with the various codes, with special focus on consent, benefit, avoiding harm. The term ethical dilemma has a very precise meaning for theorists as a situation requiring a choice between what seems to be equally desirable or undesirable alternatives, each of which seems to be justified by a moral rule or principle [3].

During the research time in field there are several ethical challenges in developing countries as well as in developed world. These arise primarily from the embryonic and volatile nature of the methodology involved. Informed consent procedures, relationship between the researcher and respondents or participant, risk and benefit ratio, confidentiality are the common ethical challenges in any research. Important and most common issue was informed consent that rose during observational research. During observational data collection, to develop the informed consent form, it is difficult to choose the ideal participants. It was especially where various peoples work together during research process. In this situation outlined consent did not work. Researchers concluded that

the verbal consent was most appropriate for collecting observational data [4,5]. Others reported that there was no need to seek any consent [6,7]. It suggested that somewhat bothersome might occur to them. It was hard to explain and assess the risk and benefits among collaborative participants. It might be better to consider employer and individual's perceptions and sought it with unvarying cooperation. It was better to take written informed consent from employer and verbally informed to collaborative participants. It was needed to collaborative roles among employer and participants as well. Previous research revealed that the information sheets and posters were useful solution [6,8]. It was very difficult to assure right to withdraw from study at any time to participants. It was hard to count that someone withdraws from study and when to withdraw were voluntary and in which situation it might be unethical. Researcher assured all the participants about right to withdraw during research process or observation. It was difficult to mention that the risk and benefit have been considered to participants or others because there were difficulties to see they are feeling psychologically uneasy or not. Researchers always take accountability towards respect to the participants and think about maximum benefit of participants not for researcher himself [9].

It was very difficult to conduct research during the conflict or war. It was very difficult to balance or keep impartial ethical principles and kept completely ethical researcher. When the researcher was not represented from the community of research area and took help with the other representative personnel. It was for gaining their trust, obtaining correct information. However, in the same time situation was irresponsible and morally in the wrong for the researcher remain disconnected and kept unvoiced observer. Shahidinian underlined that the challenges of collecting information, dynamics of gaining trust and getting information during conquered movement [10]. It was challenges to take informed consent, respect to human dignity and maintain confidentiality, privacy and right to withdraw. This might be difficult situation and arise numerous ethical dilemmas. Literature revealed that personal relationship raises significant ethical issues and the way the relationship affects the participants psychologically, emotionally and personally [11] and margins of the relationship can lead to ethical concerns [8]. There were very difficulties to manage the adverse or relationship affects the participants' emotional, psychological and personal privacy. Obtaining verbal consent was useful in this situation and all the participants were not interested to give written consent. In this situation researcher had difficulties on assure right to withdraw from the study. There was dilemmas whether their dignity were maintained or not and study should be stopped or not. In this situation researcher had tried to maintain the ethical implications with the relationships through taking information himself little away from him/her and kept separately collected forms.

However, literature revealed that reference to the principles of autonomy, beneficence and justice can help to lighten possible ethical issues that might arise [12]. In the other hand agitating group needed to make clear themselves whether the information is offense with them or not. It was very difficult situation to keep privacy of collected data and needs to take informed consents from

them prior to conduct research and assured them that was only for research purposes not any others. In other words, the researcher must be mindful of the ethical implications when managing research process [10].

Another dilemma arose in conducting in-depth-interview. Participants were interested to listen with their views after record the interview. It was very difficult to maintain ethical concerns after they feel embarrassed, when participants listen to their records. There was difficult to make limitations for personal details of participants. It was very hard to fix up to which level of personal details could be taken during in-depth-interview. In this situation researcher must counsel them regarding confidentiality and privacy of their details but it could be unethical when they feel psychologically embarrassed. However, participants might have option for withdraw from study if they had difficulties. Whether there is dilemma in research process or challenges, all the research must have balance indication of approval and indulgent [13].

## 2. Conclusion

In conclusion there is no foolproof plan to avoid ethical dilemmas in any research but there is necessitate to skilled judgments [14]. Researchers must assess or do preliminary study related to lapse borders; long term consequences; ethical difficulties and selecting ethical codes during the planning phase of research. The public should confident that researcher will present only those offers that will advancement the health of the public, that dealings are merely onerous, determined that lower scale of the problem and the resulting benefits defend superseding contradictory ethical claims.

## Competing Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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