

ISSUES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND ETHICAL VALUES-AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Social science research has long been concerned with ethical issues, but agencies that review and fund research are increasingly attentive to assuring that ethical considerations are being fully addressed. Research is a systematic, socially organized quest for new and better insight. 'Research ethics' refers to a complex set of values, standards and institutional schemes that help constitute and regulate scientific activity. Ethical issues are becoming a crucial element in social research. It is compulsory for a social researcher conducting research involving humans to apply for ethical clearance. The aims of this study were to Ethical Issues in Social Science Research in Developing Countries discussed in the literature. This review used 20 various research efforts from 1982 to 2014, using key words research, ethics, social sciences, developing countries. 60% of them mostly concerned of research ethics and ethical issues of social science research. First, significant issues regarding of research ethics were identified. Then, as a result of a literature review and case studies, it was also found that ethical issues are mostly occurred in the countries which are still developing. The research findings indicated that Complex ethical issues in such countries need careful justification by social science researchers.

Keywords: *Plagiarism, Ethics, Issues, Social Science, Research.*

Introduction

Ethics is rooted in the ancient Greek philosophical inquiry of moral life. It refers to a system of principles which can critically change previous considerations about choices and actions. It is said that ethics is the branch of philosophy which deals with the dynamics of decision making concerning what is right and wrong. Scientific research work, as all human activities, is governed by individual, community and social values. As a concept, 'research ethics' refers to a complex set of values, standards and institutional schemes that help constitute and regulate scientific activity. Ultimately, research ethics is a codification of ethics of science in practice. In other words, it is based on general ethics of science, just as general ethics is based on

commonsense morality. Research is often intertwined with other specialist activities. Research ethics involve requirements on daily work, the protection of dignity of subjects and the publication of the information in the research. Social science research has long been concerned with ethical issues. Social science investigates complex issues which involve cultural, legal, economic, and political phenomena (Freed-Taylor, 1994). This complexity means that social science research must concern itself with "moral integrity" to ensure that research process and findings are "trustworthy" and valid (Biber, 2005). Research involving human subjects (or 'participants', in the current terminology) is required to show respect for ethical issues by obtaining approval from the institution's

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) prior to commencement. University policies on research ethics state that all research involving human subjects must comply with the 2007 National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. This policy applies to all researchers, including international PhD students enrolled at universities in developed countries but doing research in developing countries (often their own country of origin). The purpose of the present research paper is to provide an overview of the types of ethical issues that confront the different methods used in social research. The overview is intended to be more than a checklist, ticking of the problems that arise with each research method.

Ethics when applied to social research is concerned with the creation of a trusting relationship between those who are researched and the researcher. To ensure that trust is established it is essential that communication is carefully planned and managed, that risks are minimized and benefits are maximized. In developing a trusting relationship, researchers adhere to a number of ethical principles which they apply to their work - namely beneficence; autonomy; non-maleficence; justice; veracity; and privacy.

Objectives of the Study

1. Recent trends in the research source they declined the quality.
2. Ethical issues and morality as lack of moderation.
3. Significant approaches towards the fact finding and reality has been stereo type (plagiarism issues).
4. Methodology followed in the recent research is lagging in the right direction where the research needs too.
5. Contemporary research as no practical applications in solving in any social and economic in the society.

Research Methodology: There is consensus among social science research that use of proper methodology and research techniques plays a crucial role. Such techniques when guided by the objectives of the study yield accurate results. As explains in research the choice of an appropriate techniques must be dictated by the objectives if the study under consideration.

Source of Data Collection

Secondary sources of data were also used. They include annual reports, Citations,

files, brochures and other published and unpublished material as well as books, and UGC, ICSSR reports and internet materials were used.

Historical overview- Ethical codes:

Ethical codes Human experimentation has been conducted even before 18th century. However, the ethical attitudes of researchers drawn the interest of society only after 1940's because of human exploitation in several cases. Professional codes and laws were introduced since then in order to prevent scientific abuses of human lives. The Nazi experiments led to the Nuremberg Code (1947) which was the leading code for all subsequent codes made to protect human rights in research. This code focuses on voluntary informed consent, liberty of withdrawal from research, protection from physical and mental harm, or suffering and death. It also emphasizes the risk- benefit balance. The only weak point of this code was the self regulation of researchers which can be abused in some research studies.

Concept of Ethics

The ethics is closely related with moral and value, it teaches the society what is wrong and what is right? The most of social scientists are defining "ethics": norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior in research. Most person learn ethical norms at home (from parents), at school, in church, or in other soc Although most people acquire their sense of right and wrong during childhood, moral development occurs throughout life and human beings pass through different stages of growth as they mature. Ethical norms are so universal that one might be tempted to regard them as simple commonsense. On the other hand, if morality were nothing more than commonsense, then why are there so many ethical disputes and issues in our society? As researchers we are unable to conduct our research successfully if researcher does not receive the help of other related experts in the area and respondents, because different people have different information and have unique style of reasoning, if we expect them to give up their valuable time to help in our research work. Many people are willing to disclose a lot of personal information during research so it is needed to maintain the secrecy of identity of respondent and to make sure that we treat both the participants and the information they

provide with honesty and respect. This is called research ethics.

Ethical Issues in Research

Research that involves human subjects or participants or even animal subject raises unique and complex ethical, legal, social and political issues. Research ethics is specifically interested in the analysis of ethical issues that are raised when people are involved as participants in research. There are three objectives in research ethics: to protect living participants; to ensure that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of individuals, groups and/or society as a whole; to examine specific research activities and projects for their ethical soundness, looking at issues such as the management of risk, protection of confidentiality and the process of informed consent. In humanities and social science research, different kinds of ethical issues arise. New and emerging methods of conducting research, such as auto-ethnography and participatory action research raise important but markedly different ethical issues and obligations for researchers. Research involving vulnerable persons, which may include children, persons with developmental or cognitive disabilities, persons who are institutionalized, the homeless or those without legal status, also raises unique issues in any research context.

Major Ethical Issues in Social Sciences

The major ethical issues in Social sciences related with the research process, data collection, interpretation of data, report writing, publication of paper, confidentiality, obfuscation and plagiarism.

Issues related to Participant: The researchers should know that when they are conducting research; it is going to interfere on the respondent's life and work. The benefit of research process directly reached to researcher in form of getting research degree, completing research project or writing research paper etc., those respondents who have been participating in the research process are not getting any type of direct or indirect benefit from the research work until and unless government is going to accept the result and recommendations of any research work. There are two types of respondents, first those who cooperate to the researcher and another who did not care about research work and researcher. Some of the respondents who take part in your research may be vulnerable because of their age, social

status or position of powerlessness and belong to rural and urban slums. If participants are young, researcher need to make sure a parent or guardian is present. If participants are ill or reaching old age researcher might need to use a proxy and care should be taken to make sure that you do not affect the relationship between the proxy and the participant. If participants are physically handicapped than researcher has to adopt special technique to collect information so that participant should not feel scratchy. Some people may find participation a rewarding process, whereas others will not. The research should not give rise to false hopes or cause unnecessary anxiety. The researcher must try to minimize the disruption to people's lives and if someone has found it an upsetting experience researcher should find out why and try to ensure that the same situation does not occur again. Sometimes researcher will encounter awkward situations in the field area, but good preparation and self-awareness will help to reduce these. A researcher should conduct a pilot study to get the possible cross questions and doubts of the participants. If they do happen, researcher should not dwell too long on the negative side – reflect, analyses learn by mistakes and move on. Researcher must do his best to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

Issues of Authorship: The issue of authorship is another area of concern in the social sciences research. Who should get the first authorship? In this regard the policies of most social sciences journals is that a person should be listed as the author of a person made a direct a substantial intellectual contribution of the design of the research the interpretation of data or the drafting of paper. The acknowledgement section should be used to thank those who indirectly contributed to the work. Most of cases in the social science research supervisor or mentor always gets listed as first author without significant contribution to the research paper. This is the author principal responsibility to ensure the work is new and original research. The main author should inform to all contributors about the submission of research paper so that multiple submission and publication of paper avoided.

Respect for anonymity and confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality and anonymity is closely connected with the rights of beneficence, respect for the dignity and

fidelity. ANA suggests anonymity is protected when the subject's identity cannot be linked with personal responses. If the researcher is not able to promise anonymity he has to address confidentiality, which is the management of private information by the researcher in order to protect the subject's identity. Levine advocates that confidentiality means that individuals are free to give and withhold as much information as they wish to the person they choose. The researcher is responsible to "maintain confidentiality that goes beyond ordinary loyalty". Clarke addresses the ethical dilemma of the researcher when confidentiality must be broken because of the moral duty to protect society. According to the utilitarian theory, which focuses on the best interest of all involved, the happiness of society is of greater importance. On the other hand, the deontological theory which ignores the result implies that the moral duty is what really matters. If a researcher, though, acts deontological he may feel that he has not protected society. Another issue is that the researcher may have to report confidential information to courts which can also cause moral dilemmas. In those cases it can be argued that the moral duty and personal ethos can be stronger than legal requirements. Even if there are no duty conflicts, the researcher faces several problems with respect to maintaining confidentiality especially in qualitative research where conduct is personal, the sample is smaller and the reports display quotations of interviews. Ford and Reutter suggest using pseudonyms and distorting identifying details of interviews when transcribing the tapes used.

Right to comment: some of the issues in the social science research need to be consulted with the respondents throughout the research process and if someone is unhappy with the emerging results, findings, conclusion and policy recommendation; they also have the right to comment, provide suggestions to make necessary changes in the reports or cross check the entire process of analysis and interpretation. But it is totally depending on the researcher preference and principles. If researchers do not want to discuss finding and result of the research with the respondents, it should be made clear to the participants in the beginning of the research process.

The final report: the final report should be written without any biasness by the

researcher. It is useful for the respondents to know what will happen with final report. Are they receiving copy of the report? Will it be available online on the organization website so that anyone can download it? If sharing of entire report is not possible than major finding of research should be shared with the interested respondents.

High Profile case of Plagiarism in India

The publications are research output carried out by the faculty in the university to set tones exploring new possibilities about human and societal issues. The non-academic and unacceptable practices against academic leaders in Indian universities. There are few cases where people those who are holding big positions in the academic face allegations for research misconduct. Allegation of plagiarism in a few research papers against present Vice Chancellor (VC) of University of Hyderabad (The DNA, April 7, 2016). The MHRD has requested the President of India to sack the incumbent VC of Pondicherry University. The fact-finding committee constituted by the government has found that some of the academic records claimed by the VC were not found to be authentic including research plagiarism. (The Indian Express, June 18, 2016). The Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, New Delhi has been jailed for some time to have plagiarized major section of his book. The vice chancellor of Mysore University was accused of plagiarism an Osmania University research paper published in an Indian Journal in Oct. 2009 and getting the same published in an International Science Journal latter. Despite laws, cells and the prerogative to not cheat lie with the individual. "The highest price must be attached to the loss of reputation". Once lost, it is impossible to earn back.

Things to be avoided in the Social Sciences research:

1. The paper that routine extension of previous reports and that do not substantial advance fundamental understanding or knowledge in the area to the readers.
2. The research finding should not be reported fragmentary.
3. The violation of ethical guidelines, including plagiarism of any time and questionable research practices.
4. Simultaneous submission of duplicate articles to numerous journals by the same authors.
5. Discussing with your

- colleague's confidential data from a paper/thesis that you are reviewing.
5. Being selective in research design and sampling. vii. Not reporting survey significant response/participation rate.
 6. Deliberately biasing the data collection instruments for i.e. asking leading questions in surveys.
 7. Using false data or Making up data in the close room. x. Falsifying result: to make them fit to your conclusion.
 8. Trimming: removing data that do not fit in with your analysis, this may be a legitimate thing to do, but you must make it clear what has been done and why?
 9. Biased or inappropriate analysis of primary and secondary data and information.
 10. Using an inappropriate statistical technique in order to enhance the significance of your research.
 11. Overworking or exploiting researcher scholars for our personal work.
 12. Promising a student, a better grade for sexual favors. Ethical concerns to take into consideration when performing research on human a researcher should never breach a research subject's privacy; misrepresentation: researchers should not hide potential conflicts of interest, or mislead, subjects as to the nature of the research; researchers should not harm or distress (physically or psychologically) their research, throughout their research process they must take all steps necessary to ensure, their personal biases or preconceptions to not influence the conduct or findings of the research; researchers should never ever put their subjects in a compromising position where there is a potential for danger. The mutual Cooperation and coordination among many different people in different disciplines and institutions, ethical standards promote the values that are essential to collaborative work. Trust, accountability, mutual respect and fairness, guidelines for authorship, copyright and patenting policies, data sharing policies and confidentiality rules in peer review may help improve the standard and quality of research in social sciences in India.

Conclusion

This article provides an insight into

the debate concerning ethical issues in social science research. Debate within social science relating to issues such as covert research, regulation, vulnerable group, letter of consent has become important. There are numerous concerns for social science researchers when conducting fieldwork in developing countries. These include the lack of experience in dealing with bureaucratized ethics procedures, the need for cultural sensitivity, security concerns and the consequences of administrative and political practices in developing countries. Therefore, careful consideration is needed in the application of ethical approval which often cannot be applied universally in developing countries. Complex ethical issues in such countries need careful justification by social scienceresearchers.

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