ETHICS IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH PROJECT WORK AT PRESENT ERA : A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

Human-beings face many challenges especially when they are expected to make certain ethical decisions in life. Sometimes, it is difficult to classify the difference between ethics and morality. Ethics or moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct. The field of ethics, along with aesthetics, concerns matters of value, and thus comprises the branch of philosophy called axiology. Ethics seeks to resolve questions of human morality by defining concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime. As a field of intellectual inquiry, moral philosophy also is related to the fields of moral psychology, descriptive ethics, and value theory. By considering above said theory of ethics now we are trying to understand importance, issues and challenges of ethics in research or research project work or social science research in present era. The research design undertaken for the study was descriptive research in nature. Only literature survey method used to analyse theoretical studied data and results of the study shows that ethical research project work has both positive-negative impact on our daily life and society.

Keywords: *Research, Code of Ethics and Philosophy, Ethics in Research or Project work, Issues and Challenges in Ethical Research.*

PREAMBLE

Keeping in mind the above statement of Albert Einstien, I can ask you that, 'What is '***Good***' or Good thing or Good boy/girl in our environment-society?' I think audiences have not any specific answer. But if I ask, 'What is '***Bad***' or Bad thing or Bad boy/girl in our environment-society?' now, audiences have had many answers. I think, ethics also follow that's the way. We can feel-see ethics in everywhere more specifically personal and professional life of human-beings. However, ethical considerations in
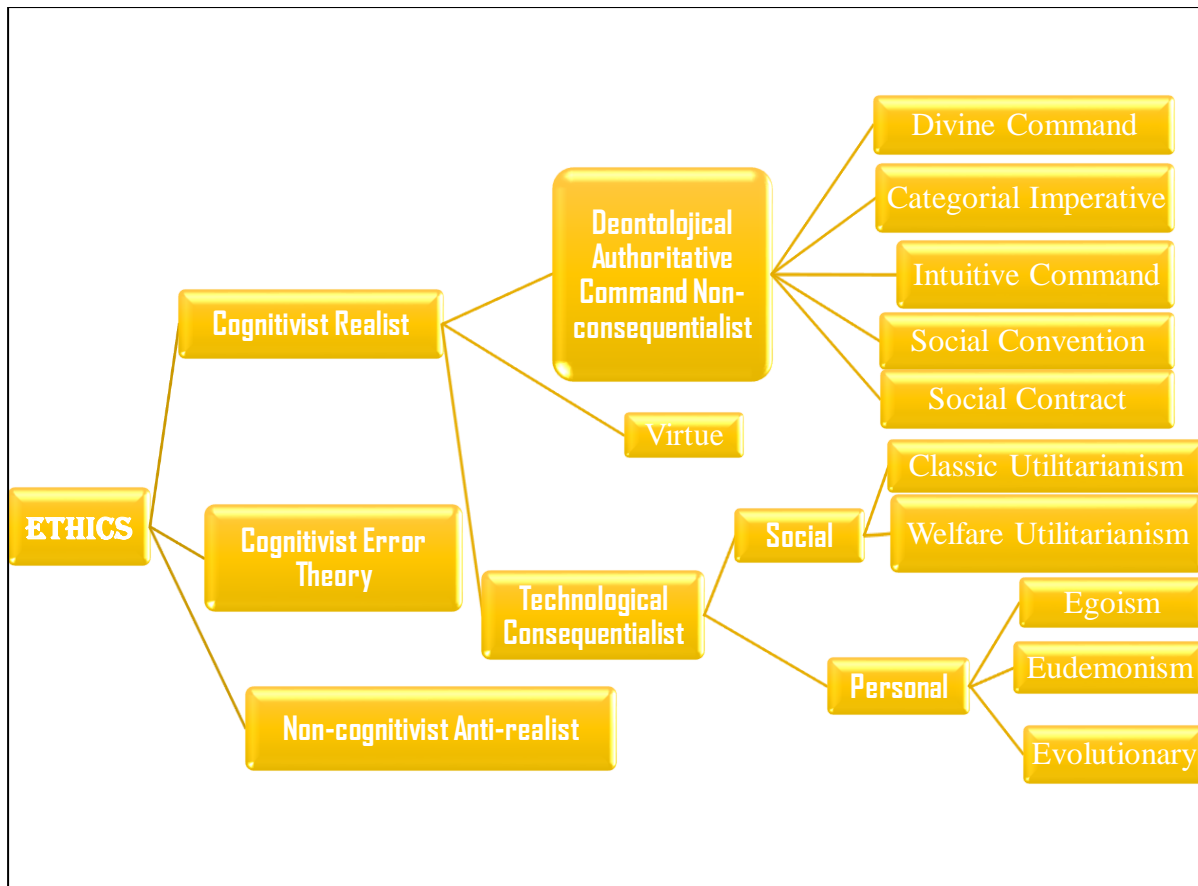
educational research may be found as a dream unless the researcher is aware of ethics and academic honesty. A lot of people learn ethical norms informally - at home, school, religious place or in a good social environment. Although most people acquire their sense of right and wrong during childhood, moral development occurs throughout the life span consequently, human beings pass through different stages of growth as they mature. Similar tendencies may enter into one's professional career, and an academician may not find it wrong if researcher does something un-ethical. More precisely, a researcher may copy something from other sources, but the researcher may not realize that he/she has done something wrong or un-ethical. Doing ethical research is a fundamentally important part of educational academic practice. It refers to a system of principles which can critically change previous considerations about choices and actions which deals with the dynamics of decision making concerning what is right or wrong. Research ethics involve requirements on daily work, the protection of dignity of subjects and the publication of the information in the research. Ethics is an intangible asset for human-beings so, I think ethics is like the reputation or good-will of business for researchers, if researcher lost or losing his/her ethics then it is too much difficult to get-back or recover ethics in their personal-professional life like a business.

Education is not an occupation rather a noble profession. One of the characteristics of profession is commitment. Education is not only a subject of study for earning bread and butter, but a means and betterment of human life. If, ethics is not considered important in this field, the whole social system will be adversely affected; eventually perhaps the value system will collapse. Morality and ethics are quite closely related to each other, and these are integral parts of Education. Teachers are the agent that brings about desired changes in the society. Teachers are the role models, and teaching is the foundation of human development. Therefore, teachers need to be ethical in a real sense while teaching or conducting researches. However, research is an academic activity. It enables people to find answer to various questions raised. It helps to solve problem confronted by individuals in their day-to-day life. Many people pursue research for the purpose of fulfilling the thirst for knowledge. Knowledge can be gained through different ways such as method of tenacity method of authority and method of intuition. All these methods are unscientific and research is the only scientific method of gaining knowledge.

? **Ethics**

The English word '*ethics*' is derived from the Ancient Greek word '*ethikos*' meaning '*relating to one's character*', which itself comes from the root word 'ethos' meaning 'character, moral nature'. This word was transferred into Latin as 'ethica' and then into French as 'ethique', from which it was transferred into English.
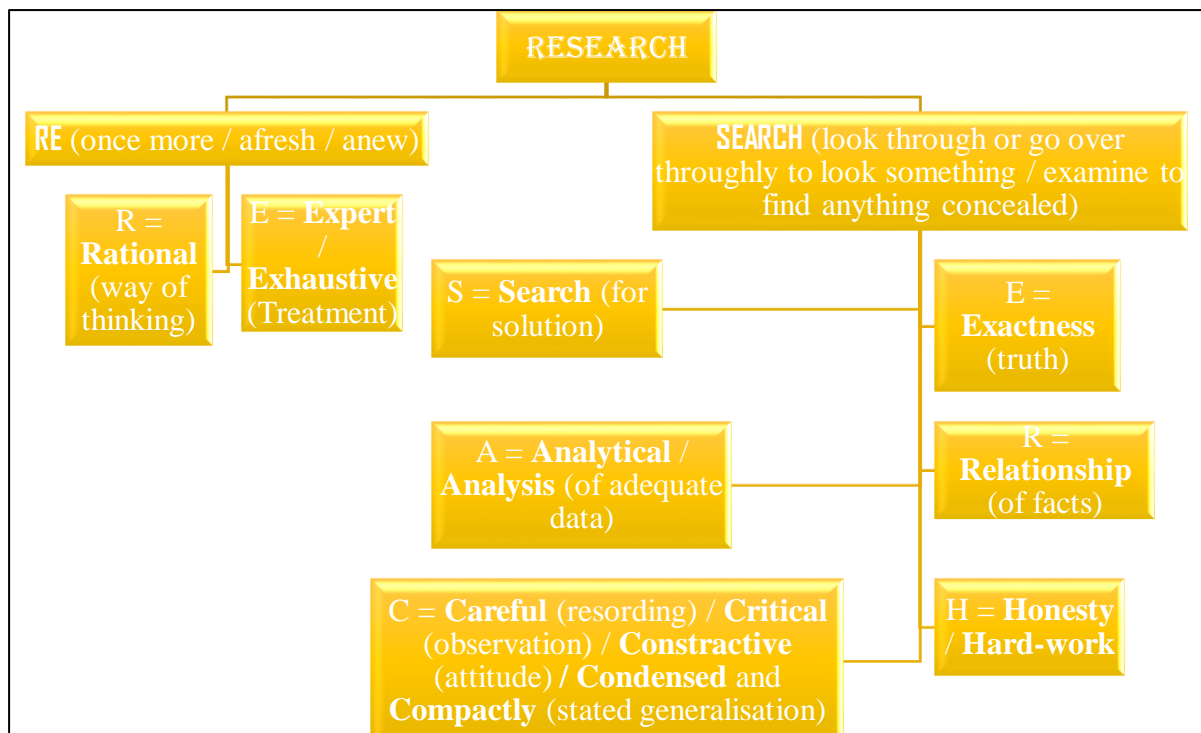
Source: *www.google.com*

✎ Project

The word '*project*' stands for a planned piece of work that is designed to produce something new, or to improve something. In the architectural field it describes a proposal, scheme, or design, but it keeps a broader sense. A project is the idea put forward, but also the plan proposed in order to carry out this idea. The verb, 'to project', means to throw or direct something forwards, with force (from latin, proiectum, something thrown forth). In that sense, the verb 'to project' reveals a much more active posture, suggesting violence, passion and intensity.

✎ Research

The word '*research*' stands for a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding. It comes from French, 'rechercher', which means to seek out, to search closely. It therefore presupposes a perspicacious and meticulous posture. It implies patience, quietness and distance. Research has been defined in a number of different ways, and while there are similarities, there does not appear to be a single, all-encompassing definition that is embraced by all who engage in it.

Full form of the word 'RESEARCH' is "Renewable Energy Society for Education, Awareness, Research & Community Help" and the word 'Researched' means "researching restless extravagant sophisticated encouraging average rebellious confident honorable ethical discriminating".
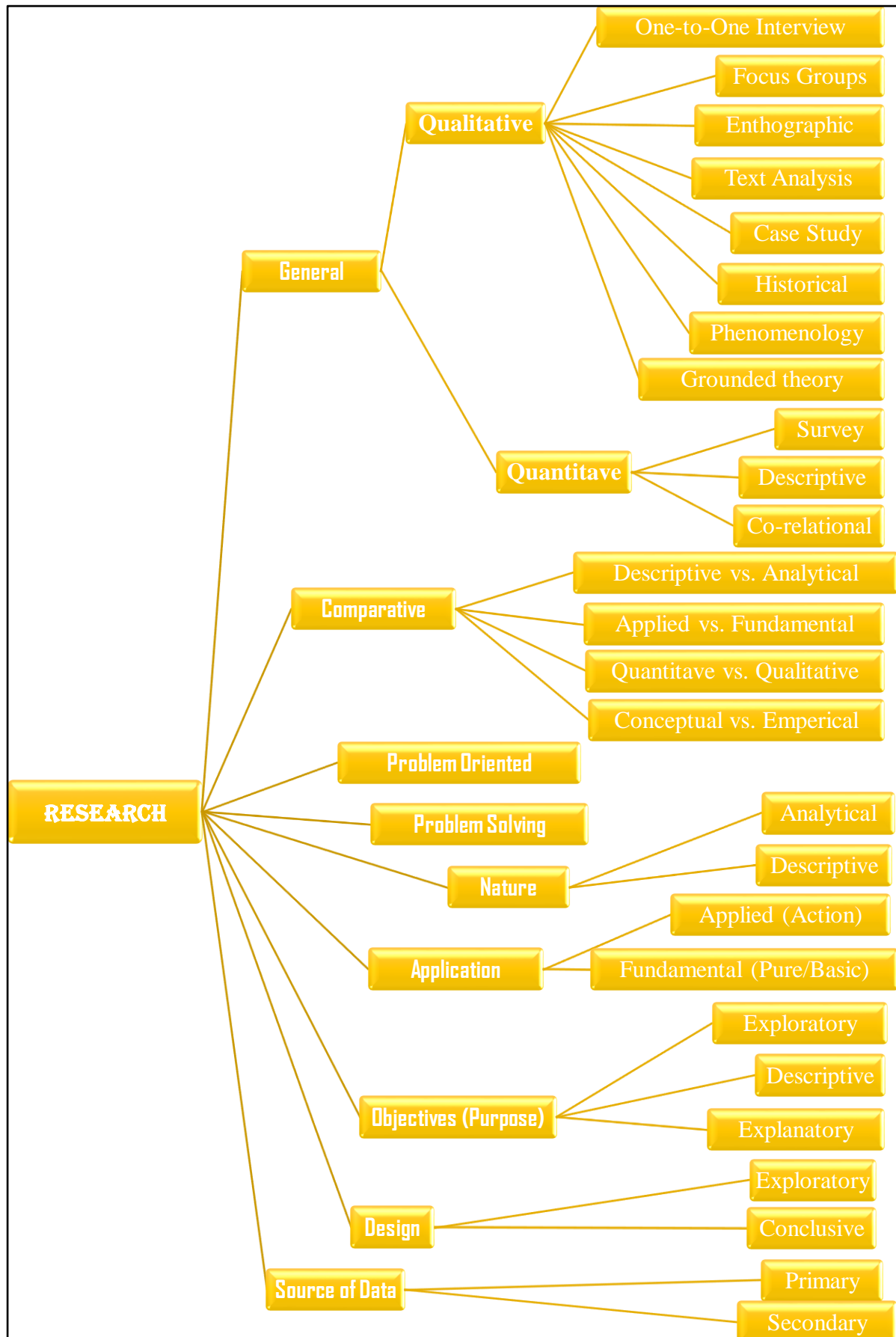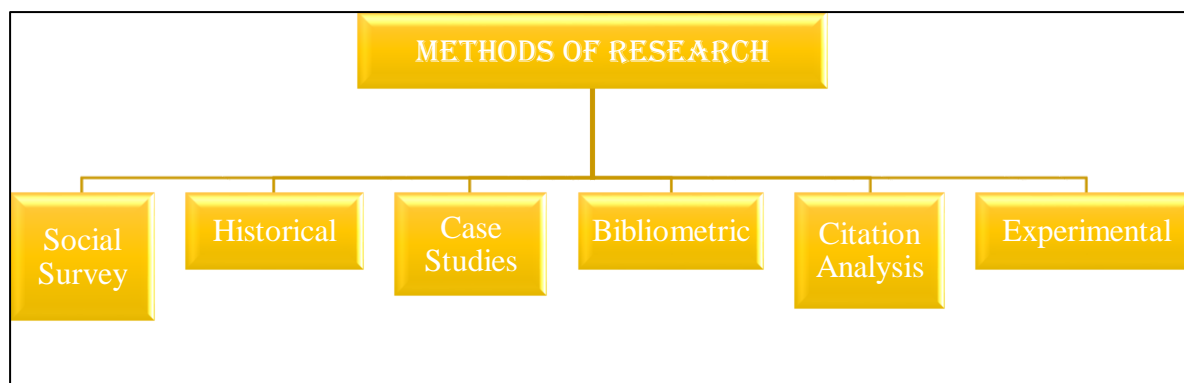
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According to **OECD** (OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms - Research and development UNESCO Definition. stats.oecd.org. Archived from the original on 19th February, 2007. Retrieved 20th May, 2018), "Any creative systematic activity undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this knowledge to devise new applications."

According to **John W. Creswell** (2008, Educational Research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson.), "research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue". It consists of three steps like - pose a question, collect data to answer the question, and present an answer to the question.

The primary purposes of basic research (as opposed to applied research) are documentation, discovery, interpretation, or the research and development (R&D) of methods and systems for the advancement of human knowledge. Approaches to research depend on epistemologies, which vary considerably both within and between humanities and sciences. There are several forms of research like - scientific, humanities, artistic, economic, social, business, marketing, practitioner research, life, technological, etc…

Source: *www.google.com*

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OBJECTIVES

The central objective of my research study is to understand conceptually about research and ethical-research. The objectives are –

☞ To study about research, project and ethics;

☞ To understand classification of research and ethics;

☞ To aware different ethical issues;

☞ To understand importance of ethics in research work; and

☞ To know about code of ethics.

SIGNIFICANCE OR NEED

There is always a need to ensure that the process of educational research is genuinely based on ethical standards, principles and guidelines. Some ethical principles are inevitable to conclude that the research process and findings are authentic. With the constant increase in the quantity of educational research the concern grows among the critics and educationists that the current research approaches are not free from unethical elements. This paper aims to explore, analyze and criticize the importance of ethics in educational research. In addition, it also takes into account what, why and how the researchers plagiarize. It will enable the educationists, pedagogues, researchers and research guides to take the facts into account while engaging them-selves in the process of research of any type in the field of education.

SCOPE

The main scope of this paper is to shed light on some crucial ethical issues as perceived by the researcher on the basis of his experience and secondary data. The discussion is expected to evolve some compatible strategies in the future to check the elements of plagiarism.
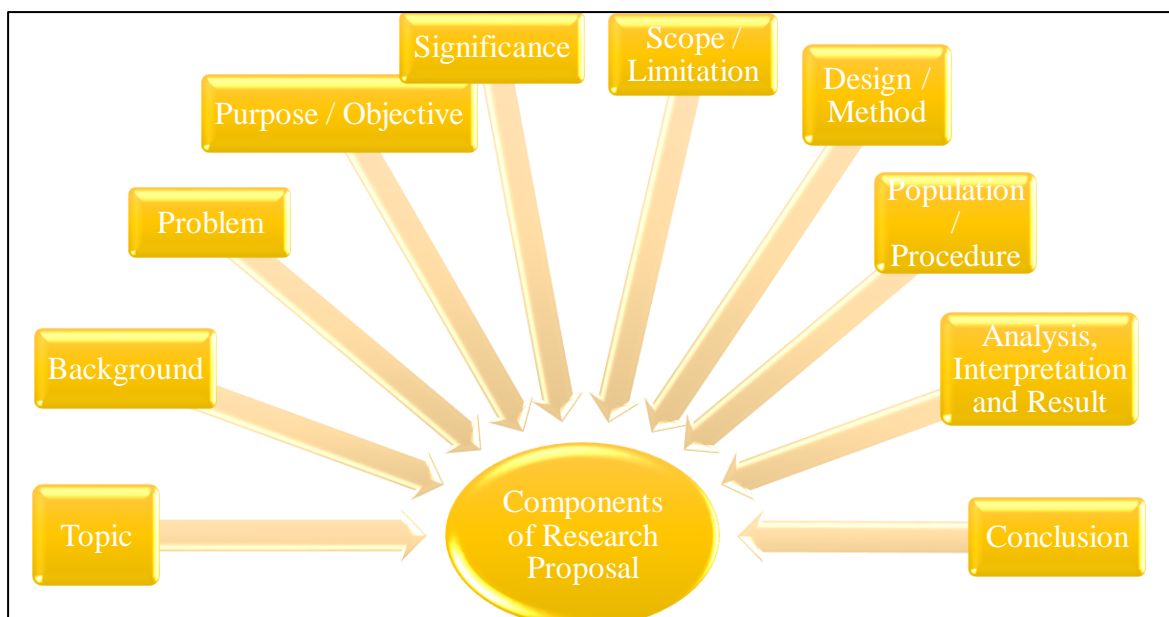
LIMITATION

During the study time was the major constraint faced by the researcher, due short time period researcher cover the behaviors of the people at a particular time. There is a lot of scope for further researches on this issue by considering other factors which I have not considered in my present empirical, comparative study, it would have been more. However, all possible effort has been made to make the study successful.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

According to **Dr. B. R. Ambedker**, "*They cannot make history; who forget history*".

The literature review process was conducted in four steps those are determine the topic of interest; define inclusion and exclusion criteria; compile the literature; and evaluate the literature to determine 'relevant hits' by relevance of the identified literature to the topic of interest.

Source: www.google.com

BACKGROUND

Most societies have legal rules and civil codes that check the behavior of the people of those societies and even others. But, ethical norms appear to be more important. One may define 'ethics' that broadly studies code of conduct, and value systems. It has a deep connection with other disciplines like anthropology, philosophy, theology, law, psychology, sociology and humanities. Professional ethics of education may differ from professional ethics in health sciences or business. However, the root is the same. Teaching and medical professions are considered as the noblest professions simply because of the fact that these fields are related to social service in which 'dedication' is a must. Similarly, ethical norms are very important in the area of educational research that sometimes modifies the principles and practices of education and elevates the standards.

RESEARCH ETHICS IN INDIA

Mostly matters of research ethics differ from method to method. Most importantly, ethics also vary from place to place. We can to give an example from PK movies where we saw the main character-actor Amir Khan who known as PK in the cinema, he is very much confused about white dress when a Christian-lady in white that indicates a bride, while a hindu-lady in white that indicates a widow. In most of the cases, cultures in India vary from state to state, and even from city to city. So, researchers should have a depth knowledge of cultures and other-things of the place, they are working in.

☞ During the study, Indian researchers should give utmost importance to the cultural diversity and religiosity of the country.

☞ They must work within a framework suitable for all the customs, traditions, languages, castes, creed, colours, classes, regions etc…

☞ They must work for the promotions of all the cultures, religions etc..., not the other way round.

☞ During the research, the researchers must keep in mind the wide economical, knowledge and technological gap between the people of India.

ETHICS IN RESEARCH OR PROJECT WORK

✍ **Ethical issues**

Norms enhance the purpose of research which includes the dissemination of knowledge, reporting or saying the truth and finally the need to counteract errors. Various steps that are vital in research

begin with research proposal writing and approval leading to the actual research study. A researcher must select the appropriate methodology to employ, relevant ways of collecting data, present the research findings and interpret them accordingly leading to presentation of information in a logical sequence. The data is then analyzed and reported well in form of an article, project report, thesis or a book. It is vital that a researcher must observe appropriate values at all these stages while conducting research. If this is not observed, it could result into research misconduct. And, it is within this framework that we discuss ethical issues related to research emphasizing on those related to the research itself, research subjects and the research process. A researcher must be cautious in revealing his or her research findings if they may impede the good working relations of his/her sponsor. This is evident if the information focuses on the policies of the organization and could reveal sensitive matters of the people or organization. This calls for the need to collaborate well with other researchers and yet uphold the intellectual rights of the researchers. If this is not well adhered to, it could lead to rebellion or even protests.

✍ Features
☞ Should be systematic in nature;
☞ Should be logical;
☞ Should be empirical and replicable in nature;
☞ Should be according to plans;
☞ Should be according to the rules and the assumptions should not be based on the false bases or judgments;
☞ Should be relevant to what is required;
☞ Procedure should be reproducible in nature; and
☞ Controlled movement of the research procedure.

✍ Characteristics
☞ Research is based on the scientific method;

☞ Helps in answering various pertinent questions;
☞ It is an organized, planned and patient investigation or a critical enquiry; and
☞ It has logical roots, helping to establish facts or principles.

✍ Limitations
☞ Problems of collection of data and conceptualization may occur;
☞ Repetition problems;
☞ Outdated and insufficient information system may cause problems;
☞ Sometimes lack of resources becomes an obstacle;
☞ Non-availability of trained researchers; and
☞ Absence of code of conduct.

✍ Code of Ethics
A code of ethics is a guide of principles designed to help professionals conduct business honestly and with integrity. A code of ethics document may outline the mission and values of the business or organization, how professionals are supposed to approach problems, the ethical principles based on the organization's core values and the standards to which the professional is held. A code of ethics also referred to as an "ethical code," may encompass areas such as business ethics, a code of professional practice and an employee code of conduct. Ethical codes are often adopted by management, not to promote a particular moral theory, but rather because they are seen as pragmatic necessities for running an organization in a complex society in which moral concepts play an important part. Followings are code of ethics,-

☞ **Honesty:** Strive for honesty in all scientific communications. Honestly report data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status. Do not fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data. Do not deceive colleagues, research sponsors, or the public.

☞ **Objectivity:** Strive to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing,

expert testimony, and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required. Avoid or minimize bias or self-deception. Disclose personal or financial interests that may affect research.

☞ **Integrity:** Keep your promises and agreements; act with sincerity; strive for consistency of thought and action.

☞ **Carefulness:** Avoid careless errors and negligence; carefully and critically examine your own work and the work of your peers. Keep good records of research activities, such as data collection, research design, and correspondence with agencies or journals.

☞ **Openness:** Share data, results, ideas, tools, resources. Be open to criticism and new ideas.

☞ **Respect for Intellectual Property:** Honor patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. Do not use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission. Give proper acknowledgement or credit for all contributions to research. Never plagiarize.

☞ **Confidentiality:** Protect confidential communications, such as papers or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, trade or military secrets, and patient records.

☞ **Responsible Publication:** Publish in order to advance research and scholarship, not to advance just your own career. Avoid wasteful and duplicative publication.

☞ **Responsible Mentoring:** Help to educate, mentor, and advise students. Promote their welfare and allow them to make their own decisions.

☞ **Respect for colleagues:** Respect your colleagues and treat them fairly.

☞ **Social Responsibility:** Strive to promote social good and prevent or mitigate social harms through research, public education, and advocacy.

☞ **Non-Discrimination:** Avoid discrimination against colleagues or students on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors not related to scientific competence and integrity.

☞ **Competence:** Maintain and improve your own professional competence and expertise through lifelong education and learning; take steps to promote competence in science as a whole.

☞ **Legality:** Know and obey relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies.

☞ **Animal Care:** Show proper respect and care for animals when using them in research. Do not conduct unnecessary or poorly designed animal experiments.

☞ **Human Subjects Protection:** When conducting research on human subjects, minimize harms and risks and maximize benefits; respect human dignity, privacy, and autonomy; take special precautions with vulnerable populations; and strive to distribute the benefits and burdens of research fairly.

PLAGIARISM IN RESEARCH OR PROJECT WORK

Plagiarism is the act of passing off somebody else's ideas, thoughts, pictures, theories, words, or stories as your own. If a researcher plagiarizes the work of others, they are bringing into question the integrity, ethics, and trustworthiness of the sum total of his/her research. In addition, plagiarism is both an illegal act and punishable, considered to be on the same level as stealing from the author that which he/she originally created. Plagiarism takes many forms. On one end of the spectrum are people who intentionally take a passage word-for-word, put it in their own work, and do not properly credit the original author. The other end consists of unintentional (or simply lazy) paraphrased and fragmented texts the author has pieced together from several works without properly citing the original sources. No part of the spectrum of potential plagiaristic acts are tolerated by the scientific community, and research manuscripts will be rejected by publishers

if they contain any form of plagiarism –   including unintentional plagiarism.

RELATIONS AMONG RESEARCH, SOCIETY AND ETHICS

Norms and values of research	**Researchers are obliged to comply with recognised norms of research ethics.** Research is a quest for new and improved or deeper insight. It is a systematic and socially organised activity governed by various specific and values. The most fundamental obligation of science is the pursuit for truth. At the same time, research can never fully achieve this goal. Most conclusions are contingent and limited. Nevertheless, the norms of science have a value in themselves as guidelines and regulatory principles for the research community's collective pursuit for truth. In the humanities and social sciences, involvement and interpretation are often integral parts of the research process. Different academic approaches and theoretical positions may also allow for different but nonetheless reasonable, interpretations of the same material. Consequently, it is important to reflect on and account for how one's own values and attitudes affect the choice of topic, data sources and interpretations. Integrity in documentation, consistency in argumentation, impartiality in assessment and openness regarding uncertainty are common obligations in research ethics, irrespective of the values, positions or perspectives of the researchers.
Freedom of research	**Both researchers and research institutions are responsible for preserving the freedom and independence of research, especially when the topic is controversial or when strategic or commercial considerations impose pressure and constraints on research.** Scientific norms regarding originality, openness and trustworthiness may conflict with the desire of other parties to prevent or govern research. Research must be safeguarded against internal or external pressure that limits the exploration of well-defined problems that may intersect financial, political, social, cultural or religious interests and traditions. However, the independence of research exists as a norm independently of this codification, while at the same time the law now states that teaching and research must comply with recognised scientific and ethical principles. It is the soundness and relevance of the arguments and the quality of the documentation that should provide the foundation for research based conclusions and for knowledge production in research in general not any established interests and traditions in or outside the research community. The duty and obligation of openness and publication means that neither researchers nor research institutions may withhold or selectively report results and conclusions. Any attempts to impose or dictate what results the research should lead to are illegitimate. This calls for arrangements to ensure both the independence of institutions and the independence of researchers within the institutions. Research presupposes the freedom to seek, produce and disseminate scientific knowledge to the wider public.
Responsibility of research	**Responsible research requires freedom from control and constraints, while trust in research requires the exercise of responsibility by both**

	researchers and research institutions. Scientific, ethical and legal norms and values regulate the responsibility of research. Research also has a social responsibility, whether it be instrumental as a foundation for societal decisions, critical as a source of correctives and alternative choices of action or deliberative as a supplier of research based knowledge to the public discourse. Great demands are placed on the justifications of the researchers for their choice of questions, methods and analytical perspectives, and also on the quality of the documentation used to support conclusions, so that preconceived notions and unwitting options have minimal influence on the research. The methodological requirements posed by the research community in respect of argumentation, reasoning, documentation and willingness to revise opinions in the light of well-founded criticism may serve as a model for how to deal with disagreement in other segments of society.
Responsibility of institutions	**Research institutions must guarantee that is good and responsible by preventing misconduct and promoting the guidelines for research ethics.** The institutions must facilitate the development and maintenance of good scientific practice. They should communicate the guidelines for research ethics to their employees and students and also provide training in research ethics and the relevant rules of law that govern research. This would facilitate individual reflection on research ethics and good discussions in the research communities about norms and dilemmas related to research ethics. The institutions must ensure that they manage the guiding and advisory function of research ethics properly, so that the distribution of roles and responsibilities is clear. In this context, the guidelines for research ethics will be an important tool for preventing undesirable practice and ensuring that research is good and responsible. The institutions should also have clear procedures for handling suspicions and accusations of serious breaches of good scientific practice, for example by establishing mis-conduct committees with responsibility for oversight and investigation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Through this paper, also recommend the establishment of research ethics committees at the national and/or international level for each and every country across world by remove from every university-institutional-authority level ethics committees. Researcher of the study paper suggest for centralize ethics committee because I think, ethics is a software which is non-programmable. Ethics have no particular-specific rules and regulations it depends on situation-case also person wise. Following is the proposed-recommended ethics committee body;

The International Research Ethics Committees (Head of the committee at International level)

The Indian National Research Ethics Committees (Head of the committee at National level)

Committees of other Countries

Human remains

Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology

Science and Technology

Internet research

EPILOGUE

I think morality or ethics can be varying person to persons in our daily life. For an example can say, when I was coming to attain to-day's seminar I saw road accident where a dog wounded by a bike driver and the driver also injured to save the dog. In that situation, what should I have done? That time I have two options either I should have to go nearest hospital/clinic with their or which I have done i.e., ignore/avoid the accident. But now question is I am ethical or not. Most of the persons will say, 'You are wrong-heartless-unethical', yes, I am heartless but my point of view was, beforehand I committed to attain to-day's seminar which held at 12 noon but the accident happened suddenly. If I could go hospital then I cannot attain to-day's seminar and with I was broken my beforehand promise. From this view I think, break the promise is unethical. But in case there (accident spot) present a doctor; if the doctors ignore/avoid the accident without first-aid, then that's it wrong-heartless-unethical. However, now come to our point there exits many reasons why ethical norms are maintained while conducting research. **First**, they promote the main aims of the research which include among others, the acquisition of knowledge, promoting the truth in research by avoiding errors that could arise due to providing false information, fabricating or misrepresenting information. **Second**, research involves great efforts which require the cooperation and coordination among many people and researchers. It is therefore vital for the researchers and consumers to trust each other respect the views of other scholars and treat them fairly and are accountable to their research endeavours. In this regard, there exist guidelines which are produced so as to maintain the copyright and patenting policies of their products. But, this can only be achieved if appropriate rules are executed to enhance confidentiality. **Third**, any work that researchers are involved in or any work that is published must be read by the public who also appreciate the efforts of the researcher. **Fourth**, if the research is being sponsored by funds from the public coffers, it must be well accounted for because, such research must be supported so as to enhance its quality and integrity. **Finally**, research ethics focuses on values which are societal in nature. Hence, researchers should enhance social responsibility, maintain the integrity of human values, and protect the welfare of the research subjects and animals in compliance with the international law and safety standards.

Through this study, we explored the dimensions of an ethical research. We also came to learn about the obligations a researcher has towards the participants in particular and society in general. Apart from the general ethics, the paper also examines the ethical issues researchers in India must keep in mind while conducting research.

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