Paper- SWRK5001
Unit-1 Research: Nature & Concept
Module-4, Ethics in Social Work Research

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Ethics in Social Work Research-

Ethics, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is 'the science of morals In human conduct'.

Social work is concerned with human relationships and behavior (Shardlow 2002).

Ethics in Social Research refers to a wide variety of values, norms, and institutional arrangements that help constitute and regulate scientific activities.

Research ethics is a codification of 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.

Literature Review

- Research Ethics : A Handbook of Principles and Procedures , University of Gloucestershire, November, 2018 and February, 2020.

- Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology, The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, NESH, June, 2016.

- Handbook of Research Ethics and Scientific Integrity, Iphofen, Ron (Ed.), 2020.

Need of Ethics in Social Research

- Ethics becomes an important part of Social research primarily because it involves humans.

- There should be mutual respect on the part of the researcher, when he/she is mentioning case studies to elucidate a particular respondent.

- There should be trust issues between the Source of information/data and the researcher dealing with articles, as any misunderstanding can create one sided.

- Role of Objectivity- the researcher should be able to present his research in as objective manner as possible, giving a composite picture/ whole picture than fragments.

RESEARCH, SOCIETY AND ETHICS
Ethical Principles of the Codes

1. ***Norms and values of research** : Researchers are obliged to comply with recognised norms of research ethics.*

2. ***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.*

3. ***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.*

4. ***Responsibility of institutions:** Research institutions must guarantee that research is good and responsible by preventing misconduct and promoting the guidelines for research ethics.*

5. ***Human dignity:** Researchers must base their work on a fundamental respect for human dignity.*

6. ***Privacy:** Researchers must respect the participants' autonomy, integrity, freedom and right of co-determination.*

7. ***Duty to inform:** Researchers must provide participants with adequate information about the field of research, the purpose of the research, who has funded the project, who will receive access to the information, the intended use of the results, and the consequences of participation in the research project.*

8. ***Consent and obligation to notify:*** *When a research project deals with personal data, researchers are obliged to inform the participants or subjects of research and to obtain their consent. The consent must be freely given, informed, and in an explicit form.*

9. ***Confidentiality:*** *Generally, researchers must process data acquired about personal matters confidentially. Personal data must normally be de-identified, while publication and dissemination of the research material must normally be anonymised. In certain situations, researchers must nonetheless balance confidentiality and the obligation to notify.*

10. ***Limited re-use:*** *Identifiable personal data collected for a specific research purpose cannot automatically be used for other research.*

11. ***Storage of personal data:*** *Data related to identifiable individuals must be stored responsibly. Such data must not be stored any longer than what is necessary to achieve the objective for which it was collected.*

12. ***Responsibility for avoiding harm:*** *Researchers are responsible for ensuring that participants are not exposed to serious physical harm or other severe or unreasonable strain as result of the research.*

13. ***Respect for third parties:*** *Researchers should consider and anticipate effects on third pa*

14. ***Protection of children:*** *Children and adolescents who take part in research are particularly entitled to protection.*

15. ***Respect for privacy and family life:*** *Researchers must respect individuals' privacy and family life. Participants are entitled to check whether confidential information about them is made available to others.*

16. ***Respect for the values and motives of others:*** *Researchers must not ascribe irrational or unworthy motives to participants without providing convincing documentation and justification. Researchers must show respect for the values and views of research participants, not least when they differ from those generally accepted by society at large.*

17. ***Respect for posthumous reputations:*** *It is important to act with care when conducting research on deceased persons.*

18. ***Defining roles and responsibilities:*** *Researchers are responsible for explaining to the participants the limitations, expectations and requirements associated with their role as researchers.*

19. ***Respect for private interests:*** *Researchers must respect the legitimate reasons that private companies, interest organisations etc. may have for not wanting information about themselves, their members or their plans to be published.*

20. ***Respect for public administration :*** *Public bodies should make themselves available for research into their activities.*

21. ***Respect for vulnerable groups:*** *Researchers have a special responsibility to respect the interests of vulnerable groups throughout the entire research process.*

22. **Preservation of cultural monuments and remains:** *Researchers must respect the need to preserve all types of cultural monuments and remains.*

23. **Research on other cultures:** *A particular requirement of research on other cultures is that there ought to be dialogue with representatives of the culture being studied.*

24. **Limits on cultural recognition:** *Researchers must strike a balance between recognising cultural differences and recognising other fundamental values and general human rights.*

25. **Co-authorship:** *Researchers must observe good publication practice, respect the contributions of other researchers, and observe recognised standards of authorship and cooperation.*

26. **Good citation practice:** *All researchers and students are obliged to follow good citation practice. This is a prerequisite for critical examination and important for enabling further research.*

27. **Plagiarism:** *Plagiarism is unacceptable and constitutes a serious breach of recognised norms of research ethics.*

28. **Scientific integrity:** *Both researchers and research institutions must promote norms for good scientific practice.*

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29. Data sharing: *Research material should be made available to other researchers for secondary analysis and further use.*

30. Impartiality: *Both researchers and research institutions are obliged to report and consider possible conflicts of interest and of roles.*

31. Relations with colleagues: *Research should be conducted in compliance with norms of research ethics, for example with regard to openness, fairness and (self-criticism, thereby contributing to research cultures that promote good research.*

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33. The student-supervisor relationship: *Supervisors are obliged to act in the students' best interests and not to take advantage of their dependence. This applies to academic results and personal matters.*

34. Responsibilities of supervisors and project managers: *Supervisors and project managers must assume responsibility for the research ethics problems faced by students or project team members.*

Different Aspects of Ethics (1)Informed Consent

- Informed consent is the major ethical issue in conducting research. "it means that a person knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently, and in a clear and manifest way, gives his consent" .

- For e.g Informed consent is one of the means by which a patient's right to autonomy is protected in case of whether he chooses or not to be operated . Many times, the researcher asks unnecessary questions to fool the respondent.

- Informed consent seeks to incorporate the rights of autonomous individuals through self determination.

- It also seeks to prevent assaults on the integrity of the respondent and protect personal liberty and veracity.

(2)The Researcher must give Access to Withdrawal of Information

Finally, the freedom to withdraw must be explained. This is very important and raises the issue of how difficult it becomes when the subjects withdraw after developing a personal and sometimes friendly relationship with the researcher. With regard to withdrawal, a researcher may be in a dilemma in case many subjects choose to withdraw at an advanced stage of the study, and this can affect the validity of the results.

Case Study of Withdrawal

Lets say that the researcher is writing an article on levels of aggression in teenagers after seeing a violent film. The researcher draws a questionnaire where he describes the different degrees of violence to the respondent. It can so happen that the respondent finds some actions of violence mentioned in the questionnaire as highly disturbing/ may have some kind of cathartic reactions relating to his past. In this case, the withdrawal symptoms of the respondent has to be respected, if he avoids certain questions being asked.

(3)Beneficience and Maleficience in Research

- Beneficence is sometimes difficult to predict when creating a hypothesis especially in qualitative research. Carr says that if the research findings prove that it was not beneficial as it is expected, this can raise immense ethical considerations especially for some respondents. Ford and Reutter say that " beneficence relates to the benefits of the research, while nonmalificence relates to the potential risks of participation".

- Nonmalificence requires a high level of sensitivity from the researcher about what constitutes "harm". According to Burns and Grove "discomfort and harm can be physiological, emotional, social and economic in nature".

Case Study of Maleficience

- The Sheena Bohra Case
- The Nirbhaya Case
- Arushi Talwar Case
- Jessica Lal Murder case

(4)Consider the Human aspect of research

- When a researcher tries to learn intimate details of the participants lives, he has to deal with opening old wounds.

- Nonmalificence dictates both preventing intentional harm and minimizing potential harm.

- A researcher must consider all possible consequences of the research and balance the risks with proportionate benefit. The type, degree, and number of potential risks must be assessed as well, including trust and transparency.

(5)Protect anonymity and Confidentiality of the Source

- Anonymity is protected when the subject's identity can not 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.

- 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 beyondordinary loyalty".

(6)Do not invade upon the Privacy of the Source

- Invasion of privacy happens when private information such as beliefs, attitudes, opinions and records, is shared with others, without the patients knowledge or consent.

- However, the American Association says that different persons may hold different opinions about when privacy is invaded.

- Treece and Treece suggest that whenever subjects refuse to report personal information as they regard it an invasion of privacy, the researcher ought to respect their views.

- This may even apply to report of age, income, marital status, health status and other details that the subject may regard intimate. They also imply that privacy can be invaded when researchers study certain groups without their knowledge and without identifying themselves.

(7)What about doing interview and collecting Data from Vulnerable People?

- Nowadays, there is an increased concern about vulnerable groups and whether it is ethical or not for them to be used as research subjects." Fisher classifies vulnerability as one characteristic of people unable to protect their own rights and welfare". So, vulnerable groups include captive populations (prisoners, institutionalised, students etc), mentally ill persons, aged people, children, critically ill or dying, poor, with learning disabilities, sedated or unconscious.

- A research was done on the fire survivors of the Sholo Bigha Bustee in South 24 Parganas West Bengal where most of the people were migrants and displaces masses from the Sunderbans. Special care had to be taken, a lot of empathy on behalf of the researcher as they were in an extremely vulnerable condition.

Case Study of Research on Sholo Bigha

- Here the researcher was speaking to Mariam Bibi, a Aila survivor, who fled the Sunderbans and came to Sholo Bigha slum. She was staying here with her husband and 2 children, until there was a deadly fire which broke out during 2017. in a bid to flee, her youngest son, 4 years was burnt alive.

- Mariam Bibi, while this research was being done was in the most vulnerable condition as a mother whose young son hads just died. The researcher needs a lot of empathy while collecting data from this section, as most of the people were homeless and suffering.

(8)How will a Researcher collect data from Mentally Challenged People?

An intense analysis of potential risks and benefits should be the first step of starting such a research and careful approach should exist both in acquiring consent and during the research procedure itself. Persons with diminished autonomy are also more vulnerable to invasion of privacy, since their right to privacy is limited in contrast to other's right to know. In the case of mentally ill, family as well as employers and colleagues have the right to know while patients may not be able to see the testimony of others in their own record.

Data has to collected very delicately from people in Depression

(9)Be Ethical as far as Possible During Focussed Group Interviews

Surveys: Surveys are often used to collect information from large groups of people using scales that have been tested for validity and reliability. However, there is always a possibility to give a general viewpoint to all present during a focused group interview instead of minutely applying the questionnaire to each person present. Thus is often done by the researcher to cater to his/her hypotheses. The data collected about these two variables could offer interesting insights about this communication. As you would guess, an experiment would not work in this case because the researcher needs to assess a real relationship and they need insight into the mind of the respondent.

Case Study of a Slum

While doing a research on the sanitary conditions of a slum, the same happened while making Focussed group Discussions. Often while interviewing, the researcher tends to draw conclusions based on his/her conception of reality, to fit into the sanctity of the hypothesis proposed by her. This will be highly misleading and kill the purpose of the research.

(10)Ethics of Content Analysis

- Content Analysis: Content analysis is used to count the number of occurrences of a phenomenon within a source of media (e.g., books, magazines, commercials, movies, etc.).
- For example, a researcher might be interested in finding out if people of certain races are underrepresented on television.
- They might explore this area of research by counting the number of times people of different races appear in prime time television and comparing that to the actual proportions in society. However it often happens that personal bias/ own socialization process becomes a barrier in proper content analysis.
- We see several bias against certain gender/castes in some of the research papers. This should be avoided.

Plagiarism

what it is and how to avoid it

Plagiarism and its consequences

- Plagiarism is defined in dictionaries as the **"wrongful appropriation," "close imitation,"** or **"purloining and publication"** of another author's **"language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions,"** and the representation of them as one's own original work.

- Maximum we can take **3-5%** from one source but it also differs from situation to situation.

- Write in your own language and do not copy as it is.

- Author's name may be blacklisted because of plagiarism

Terminology: *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the act of stealing someone else's work and attempting to "pass it off" as your own. This can apply to anything, from term papers to photographs to songs, even ideas!

TYPES OF PLAGIARISM

1. Coying

2. Patchwork

3. Paraphrasing

4. Unintentional

5. Self plagiarism

Types of Plagiarism: Copying

The most well-known and, sadly, the most common type of plagiarism is the simplest: **copying**. If you copy someone else's work and put your name on it, you have plagiarized.

Copying: An Example

This one is pretty straightforward. If a writer copies, word for word, the text from Dr. Zimbardo's book and does <u>not</u> acknowledge in any way that it was Dr. Zimbardo's work, the writer has committed plagiarism.

Zimbardo, Philip G. (1977). *Shyness: What it is, what to do about it.* Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus Books.

Types: Patchwork Plagiarism

The second kind of plagiarism is similar to copying and is perhaps the second most common type of plagiarism: **patchwork plagiarism**. This occurs when the plagiarizer borrows the "phrases and clauses from the original source and weaves them into his own writing" (McConnell Library, Radford University) without putting the phrases in quotation marks or citing the author.

Patchwork: An Example

Now, had the "author" of his passage put the colored phrases in quotation marks and added a citation after the quotation, like (Zimbardo 62), the "author" would have been safe. Without the quotation marks and the proper citation, the "author" has committed plagiarism.

Types: Paraphrasing Plagiarism

The third type of plagiarism is called **paraphrasing plagiarism**. This occurs when the plagiarizer paraphrases or summarizes another's work without citing the source. Even changing the words a little or using synonyms but retaining the author's essential thoughts, sentence structure, and/or style without citing the source is still considered plagiarism.

Types: Unintentional

The fourth type of plagiarism is called **unintentional plagiarism** -- it occurs when the writer incorrectly quotes and/or incorrectly cites a source they are using. How is this plagiarism, if the author didn't mean to do it?

Unintentional: An Example

If a writer has incorrectly quoted or incorrectly cited a source, it could be misconstrued as dishonesty on the writer's part. The dishonest usage of another's work is most often considered plagiarism. Therefore, the incorrect usage of another's work, whether it's intentional or not, could be taken for "real" plagiarism.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Avoiding plagiarism is quite simple. The best method for avoiding it is to **simply be honest**; when you've used a source in your paper, give credit where it's due. Acknowledge the author of the original work you've used.

Types- Self Plagiarism

Where a researcher publishes his own previously published material, it is called self plagiarism. Although it does not sound like plagiarism, but where same material is published again without trace of any changes or amendments or improvement, it is unethical.

Avoiding Plagiarism

- Another way to avoid plagiarism is to **use your own work as often as possible**. Quoting and citing sources is usually required and inevitable when doing research -- that's how you "back up" your own work. But using someone else's work excessively can be construed as plagiarism.

- Another way to it is to **quote and/or cite your sources properly**.

Plagiarism Presentation Resources

- Presentation URL
  http://www.ulm.edu/~lowe/plagiarism.ppt

- The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL)
  http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

- Website
  http://www.ulm.edu/~lowe

Software Generally used to check Plagiarism

- Viper
- Turnitin
- Plagiarisma
- PlagiarismCheckerX

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- NESH, Ethical Guidelines for Internet Research, Oslo (2003) 2016.

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- Burns, N., & Grove, S.K. (2005). The Practice of Nursing Research: Conduct, critique, and multi utilisation (5th ed.). St.Louis, MO: Elsevier/Saunders.

- Search Results- What are the Major Ethical Issues in Conducting Research?Is ...

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- Self-Plagiarism — Plagiarism Checker | WriteCheck by Turnitin en.writecheck.com › self-plagiarism.

- Some materials/information taken from "online Research & Publication Ethics Course of IARA-India", from 12th-14th April'2020.