

Research Ethics



Aims of Session

- ▶ Explore Research Ethics
- ▶ Discuss research ethics within the following context:
 - ▶ Research Guidelines
 - ▶ Statutory obligations
 - ▶ Organisational guidelines
 - ▶ Professional : codes of practice
 - ▶ Personal: Responsibilities
- ▶ Begin to fill in an UWTSD Ethical Approval Form.

Ethics

- ▶ Ethics:
 - ▶ The formal intellectual process of analysing moral situations is called ethics, which examines underlying issues and principles in personal choice.
- ▶ Ethics is an area where debate on issues is not always clear cut e.g.,
 - ▶ Ethical committees
 - ▶ Can you think of any examples?

Ethics: Research

- ▶ An important subject to explore in Research?
- ▶ Why?

Ethics

- ▶ Making Ethical judgements and judging.
 - ▶ What now is the basis of ethics?
 - ▶ How do we act ethically?
 - ▶ What is the basis for agreement about what is right and wrong?
- ▶ Ethics struggles with these as it often is about competing authorities.

Ethics: Research

- ▶ In this context we are looking at Research Ethics which is normally concerned with:
 - ▶ overall harms and benefits of research,
 - ▶ the rights of participants to information, privacy, anonymity, respect...
 - ▶ the responsibilities of researchers to act with integrity,
 - ▶ The positioning of Children and Young People in the research process "Whose voice" ?

Ethics: Research

Research ethics are an integral part of any research project:

- You will have to be able to argue that you have taken reasonable, best possible measures to conform to high standards of research ethics.

Ethics: Research

► Can be viewed in the following ways:

- Research Guidelines
- Statutory obligations
- Organisational guidelines
- Professional : codes of practice
- Personal:
 - Values of honesty frankness and personal integrity
 - Responsibilities to those you are working alongside

Ethics Research Guidelines

- Research Guidelines:
 - E.g. British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines,
 - British Psychological Society
 - Community Based Participatory Research : A Guide to Ethical principles and practices: University of Durham

Research Guidelines: BERA

- ▶ BERA Educational Research Guidelines 2017
- ▶ *Openness and Disclosure*
- ▶ *Right to Withdraw*
- ▶ *Children, Vulnerable Young People and Vulnerable Adults:*

Research Guidelines: Community Based Participatory Research

- ▶ Participatory research can cause challenges to institutional research guidelines:
- ▶ Because this is research, where the boundaries between researchers and 'research subjects' begin to blur.

Research Guidelines: Community Based Participatory Research

- ▶ Community Based Participatory Research : A Guide to Ethical principles and practices: University of Durham

Research Guidelines: Community Based Participatory Research

- ▶ See Hand out
- ▶ Are you able to relate these to your own practice?

BERA Consent

- ▶ Children, Vulnerable Young People and Vulnerable Adults:
 - ▶ *The Association requires researchers to comply with Articles 3 and 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 3 requires that in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration. Article 12 requires that children who are capable of forming their own views should be granted the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, commensurate with their age and maturity. Children should therefore be facilitated to give fully informed consent.*

Consent

- ▶ Consent is possibly the largest and most complicated issue for researchers hoping to involve children / Young People in a study.

Consent

- ▶ It is best practice to ensure that all research participants fully understand the research so that they give their permission to be part of it (this is known as informed consent).

Consent

- ▶ If a child is under 16 then they cannot legally give consent themselves and a researcher should ask a parent or guardian for consent.
- ▶ However your organization as it works with Young People may have asked for a generic consent form to be filled in to cover what you may be doing with them, please check this.

Consent

- ▶ Consent is not a one-off process, but continues for as long as anyone is involved in the research.
- ▶ Ascent: Right to Withdraw?

Consent

- ▶ Skånfors (2009) shows the variety of ways in which children might withdraw their consent once the research has begun. "Say no", "show no", "non-response", "pulling away" and "ignoring" are ways in which a child has been observed to indicate their unwillingness to participate.

Research Guidelines :Incentives

- ▶ *Research Incentives ?*
- ▶ *Good thing or not?*
- ▶ *What sort of Incentives could you offer ?*
- ▶ *See BERA Ethical Guidelines*

Confidentiality

- ▶ Can you offer 100% confidentiality?

Ethics: Confidentiality

- ▶ Good Practice:
 - ▶ Development of a **confidentiality policy** which clearly sets out under what circumstances a researcher may and should break confidentiality.

Organisational Guidelines

- ▶ You need to ensure that you consider the organisation you are working for on any research project.
- ▶ Including the Universities (Ethics Approval see attached form).

Organisational Guidelines:

- ▶ contract/protocol where carrying out research
- ▶ Code of Conducts within your organisation

Organisational Guidelines

- ▶ In small groups discuss and outline what these may entail from your organisational perspective?

Ethics: Law

- ▶ Data Protection (e.g. how long you can store things, informed consent for taking photographs).
- ▶ Child protection/ Safeguarding

Data Protection

- ▶ The Data Protection Act 1998 came into force 1 March 2000 to bring the UK into line with a European Community Human Rights Directive
 - ▶ Consent
 - ▶ The individual must be made fully aware of the purposes for which the data are to be used
- ▶ Every item of personal data that is held or processed must be accurate and up to date, and held for no longer than necessary
- ▶ Individuals have the right to know what data are held about them
- ▶ GDPR

Ethics: Law

- ▶ Child Protection / Safeguarding
- ▶ DBS: Disclosures and barring service: all researchers working with children, and vulnerable adults should be subject to this...
- ▶ What are the Safeguarding issues from a research perspective?

Professional Ethics

- ▶ How would below inform your research?
 - ▶ Professional Codes of Practice?

Ethics: Personal

- ▶ Research Activities:
 - ▶ **Honesty:**
 - ▶ What you write will be regarded as your own work unless stated otherwise e.g. use of references.

Ethics: Personal

- ▶ Using the thoughts, ideas and works of others without acknowledging their source, even if you paraphrased into your own words, is unethical.
- ▶ Plagiarism is a serious offence

Ethics: Personal

▶ Research Activities:

- ▶ **Honesty is essential in the substance of what you write:**
 - ▶ Accurate descriptions of how and what, why you have done things.
 - ▶ Accurate descriptions of information you have obtained, techniques used, analysis carried out, the results .
- ▶ E.g. silently rejecting or ignoring evidence which happens to be contrary to one's beliefs constitutes a breach of integrity.

Ethics: Personal

- ▶ Research relationships:
 - ▶ May depend upon the guidelines you adopt and the research methodology you adopt:
 - ▶ e.g. BERA or British Psychological Society;
 - ▶ a qualitative or quantitative paradigm
- ▶ However in all cases the approach has to be un-harmful in anyway, and subject to certain rights
- ▶ A Considerate and courteous attitude to people will help their readiness to assist you.
- ▶ You are relying on their good will and co-operation to make the research possible!!!

Ethics: Personal standpoint and values

- ▶ Your own perspective will influence the type of research and research ethics you will adopt
- ▶ Ask yourself how do I want to be in relation to those I am studying?
- ▶ Do I want to see them as objects or agents in the research process?
- ▶ In other words do I want to do research on people or in collaboration with people?

Ethics: Personal standpoint and values

- ▶ Avoidance of harm, fully informed consent, and the need for privacy and confidentiality (Punch, 1994 P.89)

Ethics: Qualitative Research

- ▶ Essential to this position on ethics is that you are open and honest with those you are working alongside.
- ▶ Guba and Lincoln (1989) illustrate,
 - ▶ 'Deception is worse than useless to a non-conventional evaluator; it is destructive of the effort's ultimate intent' (122)

Directed Study

- ▶ Consider your own research and write down the ethical considerations you will need to consider: (See attached Ethics Form)
- ▶ Make reference to ethical guidelines and other organisational requirements--points discussed today.

Ethical Considerations

All evaluation research with human subjects involves some ethical considerations:
See:

National Research Ethics Service (NRES)
Provided by the National Safety Patient Agency of the National Health Service (NHS). Presents guidance on the requirements for ethical review, how to apply for ethical approval and what the requirements are after review. Includes information for patients and members of the public on the National Research Ethics Service and ethical review and information for Chairs, members and Co-ordinators of NHS Research Ethics Committees.

Research ethics framework (PDF)
Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
Swindon: Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), 2005

Based on:
Funded by the European Commission's Information Society Technologies (IST) Programme, to draw up professional and ethical guidelines for the conduct of socio-economic research. Provides the ethical code, a user guide and related publications.

Revised ethical guidelines for educational research (PDF)
British Educational Research Association (BERA)
Macclesfield, Cheshire: British Educational Research Association (BERA), 2004

Social Research Association: ethical guidelines (PDF)
Social Research Association
Social Research Association, 2003

References: Ethics

- ▶ BERA. (2011) British Educational Research Association Ethical Guidelines (online) Available from www.bera.ac.uk/guidelines.htm. (accessed October 2011)
- ▶ HSMO Data Protection Act 1998 Chapter 29. http://www.hmsa.gov.uk/acts/acts_1998/19980029.htm
- ▶ Guba E.G & Lincoln & S (1989) Fourth Generation Evaluation, London: Sage Publications
- ▶ Maykut P & Morehouse R (1994) Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide, London: The Falmer Press
- ▶ Punch M (1994) Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research and in Denzin NK & Lincoln YS (eds) Handbook of Qualitative Research Thousands Oaks: Sage 88-97
- ▶ Sercombe H (2010) Youth Work Ethics. London : Sage
- ▶ Wolf DL (1996) Situating Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork in Wolf DL (ed) Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork Oxford: Westview 1-59
