

Ethics In Psychological Research

Background Information

- Nazi Medical War Crimes
 - Nuremberg Code
 - Participation must be voluntary with informed consent
 - Risk should be proportional to benefits
 - Freedom to withdraw
 - Protect participants from harm

Background Information

- Tuskegee Syphilis Study (1932-1972)
 - National Research Act of 1974
 - National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research
 - Belmont Report
 - Respect for Persons
 - Beneficence
 - Justice
 - The Common Rule (1981)
 - Legal guidelines for federally funded research

Background Information

- Human Radiation Experiments (1944-1974)
- Jewish Chronic Disease Hospital Study (1963)
- Willowbrook Study (1963-1966)

APA Guidelines

1. Ethical acceptability must be considered
2. Primary concern should be minimal risk
3. All involved must follow ethical guidelines
4. Full disclosure of greater than minimal risk
5. Minimal concealment or deception with sufficient explanation ASAP

APA Guidelines

6. Subject can withdraw at any time
7. Protect from physical and mental discomfort and harm
8. Provide participant with true nature of study
9. Remove adverse consequences and long-term effects
10. Keep participant confidentiality

DHHS Guidelines

- Apply to all research involving human subjects with exception of research involving:
 - Standard educational tests
 - Anonymous surveys
 - Observation of public behavior
 - Collection of study of pre-existing data
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Institutional Review Board

- Review scientific research involving humans in order to protect the rights of the participants
- Ensures subjects have sufficient information to provide informed consent
- IRB must have:
 - A scientist, nonscientist, and someone not affiliated with the institution
 - Both men and women

What is “At Risk?”

- Risk-benefit ratio
 - Whether the benefits outweigh the risks to participants
- “No Risk” does not exist
 - Is risk beyond what would be experienced in normal daily activities

Types of Risk

- Physical
- Psychological
- Social harm
- Economic
- Legal

Evaluation of Risk

- Evaluate risk in terms of:
 - Likelihood of occurrence
 - Severity
 - Duration after the research
 - Reversibility
 - Early detection

Informed Consent

- DHHS guidelines require:
 1. Statement that study involves research including a description of duration and procedures
 2. Statement of reasonable risks or discomforts
 3. Alternative procedures or treatments
 4. Benefits of research
 5. Statement of confidentiality
 6. Statement of compensation or medical treatments should any injury occur
 7. Who to contact about participants rights
 8. Statement that research is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time

Deception

- Can only be used when
 - benefits outweigh risk of deception
 - Alternatives are not feasible
- Types of deception
 - Active
 - Passive

Active Deception

- Misrepresenting purposes of research
- False statements of identity of researcher
- False promises made
- Violating promise to maintain anonymity
- Using confederates
- Using placebos
- Misleading settings for investigations

Passive Deception

- Unrecognized conditioning
- Concealed observation
- Unrecognized participant observation
- Projective techniques or personality measures

Debriefing

- Debriefing is required when informed consent is not used or if participants are deceived.
- Must Include:
 1. Description of research and methods
 2. Opportunity for questions
 3. Explanation of deceptions and justification
 4. Removal of adverse effects
 5. Offer to remove data to deceived participant
