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Research Ethics Association presents

RESEARCH ETHICS CONFERENCE 2023

6th and 7th July 2023

University of Bath, UK

Abstract Booklet

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Research Ethics Conference 2023 (REC2023)

Day 1: In Conversation around Ethics

Keynote: Dr Ernesto Schwartz-Marin

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
Keynote AM



The Banality of Good: Research ethics and the search for justice in the context of mass violence and victimhood

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Keynote Abstract

In 2014, when we launched the project known as Citizen-led Forensics (CLF) that instigated a DNA forensic database managed, created and governed by relatives of the disappeared actively searching for their kin, our hope was to adapt and learn from the effects of our intervention to re-design and improve our ethical and political framework in real time. Our ethical considerations at the time directed to avoiding harm for the mothers searching for their loved ones in Mexico.

We quickly learnt that this was a risk that the relatives of the disappeared had assumed long before CLF entered the scene. Thus, relatives of the disappeared found our ethics paternalistic; and disregarded them; nonetheless, we still had to make sure we navigated both the ethical commitments in the UK, while paying attention to the grounded ethics in Mexico. Our ethical design was simply out of touch with the way in which CLF would shape the search for mass graves, the policy debate about humanitarianism, nor the organisation of citizen-led forensic teams in Mexico. During the year we spent in Mexico it became increasingly clear that most of our ethical frameworks were poorly adapted to a rapidly shifting landscape. So, while we discussed our participatory ethics the mothers at the helm of CLF created new forms of classification and understanding of forensic science, and care for the dead, that shed light into subjects, landscapes, and objects that were not available for governance and scientific enquiry before.

The evolution of CLF often challenged our own ethical design, and the wider arena of justice in Mexico. Thus, inevitably to the eyes of many established NGOs, forensic specialists, and even

relatives of the disappeared CLF was creating 'false promises' and delaying the implementation of models that had already given results to the victims of violence in other Latin American contexts. My talk will question the tacit ethical commitments that permeate humanitarian morality and research ethics, that constantly reproduces what sociologist Gabriel Gatti, has named the 'Banality of Good'; characterised by creating a standardised moral economy of pity and aid. I will show why this leads to a poor ethical and political framework to deal with victimhood, grief and justice in conflict scenarios. Moreover, I argue that the insights we gained during CLF should not be reserved for 'exceptional cases of mass violence' but can also help us to decolonise our ethical frameworks from Eurocentric notions of risk, danger and care.

Session 1

Session 1A (S1A)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S1A - High-Stakes Ethics: Paper 1



Ethics in prison research: Reflections on ethics and integrity

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Abstract

In this presentation, I will share my reflections on the discord between the seemingly neat categories that ethical boards are concerned with and the emergence of ethical issues and dilemmas in the field. This is not to undermine the practice of ethical boards and their role in research, but to reflect on the necessity to continue negotiating and considering ethics throughout the research process and beyond. Using Piacentini's (2013) suggestion, I contend that as well as ethics, prison research must be anchored first and foremost by researcher integrity.

British prisons accept and welcome academic scrutiny, which means that there is a rich tapestry of academic accounts on imprisonment. My research adds to this tradition by exploring the lived experiences of Polish prisoners in a prison dedicated to foreign-nationals, where the goal of imprisonment is to facilitate deportation. As part of this research, I conducted 6 months of fieldwork in HMP Huntercombe, one of two foreign-national only prisons in the UK. I adopted an ethnographic approach to this fieldwork. I observed the daily lives of prisoners and staff and supplemented this with interviews with Polish prisoners to add depth to my understanding. My research underwent thorough ethical review processes, and I conducted my research in accordance with the agreed ethical considerations. And yet, three years after leaving the field, I have an unshakeable concern that my research may have caused harm to those who participated.

Jewkes and Wright suggest that 'prisons are intensely human environments, giving rise to acute difficulties, dilemmas, complexities and contradictions' (2016: 672, emphasis in original). In my experience, this means that many of the planned and prepared-for ethical boundaries become less clear in practice, and likewise, seemingly clear-cut processes for gaining informed consent

were more problematic in practice. Likewise, there are certain ethical issues that are not covered by ethics committees, such as questions dealing with the bigger picture of conducting fieldwork in setting such as prisons. One such issue that I felt acutely throughout the duration of my fieldwork and beyond, was whether it is ethically appropriate to come into an environment that is so politicised and fraught with emotion, uncertainty, anger and sadness at all. And then to ask questions and leave (Carbone-Lopez 2016; Turnbull 2018). There is a degree of voyeurism to prison research, particularly when using ethnographic methods which place so much emphasis on observation, which made this ethical question particularly significant.

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Keywords

ethics in practice, prison research, integrity



Researching criminality: On the borders of (il)legality and ethics

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Abstract

What are the legal, ethical, and data management obligations of a researcher receiving or in receipt of incriminating information? Is there a legal or ethical duty to report, or should the confidentiality of research participants be respected? What about any legal and/or ethical duties a researcher may have to a real or potential (and often unknown) victim? Moreover, in the context of England and Wales, are there any data management requirements in terms of the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 that would apply to such 'special category data'? Many researchers from a wide range of disciplines such as law, criminology, sociology and the other social sciences, must navigate this complex web of legal, ethical, and data management considerations if their research elicits, or could possibly elicit, the disclosure of incriminating information. Various potential legal and ethical obligations as well as possible liabilities may arise, and the answer as to what must be done in any specific research context is usually neither straightforward nor simple, and may also differ depending on the country (and unique legal system) in which the research is conducted and/or the incriminating information is received or stored. This paper offers a critical reflection and concrete roadmap for researchers who either inadvertently or as an explicit and direct consequence of their research receive or find themselves in possession of incriminating information. While the primary focus is on the legal and ethical framework underpinning research in England and Wales, reference will also be made to other countries and contexts in terms of a comparative and cross-jurisdictional perspective.

Keywords

Incriminating Research Data, Special Category Data



Conducting intimate ethnographic fieldwork in active political conflict situations

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Abstract

Doing research in protracted conflict situations is wrought with difficulties where exploration of the daily lived experiences of those inhabiting such precarious terrains is laden with complications. From access and data collection to the overarching concern of safety of individuals related to research [researcher and those that the researcher connects with regarding the research, especially the research community] as well as the data, all remain equally daunting tasks. Under such circumstances doing research can be rather difficult, if not completely impossible, for outside researchers. Thus, having an ethically sound insider perspective brings in the much needed rich and nuanced experiences.

The paper highlights intimate ethnography as a vital methodological approach in capturing the micro-level dynamics of nuanced popular experiences in such terrains. In doing so it underscores the value of appropriate methodology and proper methods for the collection of data and their significance in becoming defining aspects of the research. They remain foundational not only for the quality of data but also for the safety and well-being of the researcher and the research community, through whose help and partnership the research becomes possible at all. The paper draws on my year-long ethnographic fieldwork (between June 2018 to May 2019) done in the active conflict situation of Srinagar, the capital city of Indian controlled Kashmir. The paper brings forth the daunting challenges that such field sites can throw at the researcher and social navigations around them. It also reflects on the ethical challenges that such fieldworks can flag.

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Keywords

Intimate ethnography, fieldwork, conflict, Kashmir

Session 1B (S1B)

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S1B - Conducting Ethical Global Research: Paper 1



Decolonizing social science research ethics in Central Asia

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Abstract

The Soviet period was a period primarily of epistemic oppression for social science research in Central Asia, with research in this period strictly controlled and conducted for economic and ideological purposes. After independence, countries in Central Asia experienced different trajectories. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan faced a period of epistemic uncertainty in social science research, with nationalisation, globalisation and the Soviet legacy, combined with the competing demands/pressures of governments/institutions/international organisations/funders, all vying to fill the gap left by Soviet ideology. One of the key trends in this period has been the impact of western soft power, which is aligned with and serves national strategies to become internationally competitive in knowledge production.

As such, many Central Asian institutions and researchers are under increasing pressure to research and publish internationally, in order to meet knowledge production goals set by governments and institutions. In many cases, however, support systems for research, such as research ethics courses and approval, are not in place. Drawing on work from an ongoing project on social science research ethics in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, this presentation will explore issues of research ethics in the region from the perspectives of decolonization and cultural relevance. Following Linda Tuhiwai Smith's assertion that "decolonization... is about centring our concerns and world views and then coming to know theory and research from our own perspective and for our own purposes" (2021, 43), we explore what it means to research ethically in a Central Asian context from Central Asian perspectives, for the benefit of people in Central Asia as well as beyond.

This presentation will provide a brief overview of the current situation in social science research ethics in three Central Asian countries, and will then develop the argument that the process of developing cultures and practices of research in the region needs to adopt a decolonized approach to research ethics that values epistemic pluralism as well as providing a bridge to the global academic community, rather than a colonizing approach of copying and pasting western research ethics norms and assumptions wholesale into the Central Asian context. Rather than simply assimilating to the monoepistemic norms of Anglo-American social science research, we also argue that in this present time of profound transformation there is potential for Central Asian social science research to use the richness of its past and current context to come together as an epistemic community and create a pluriepistemic foundation for future research in the region.

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Keywords

decolonization, research ethics, Central Asia



Ethically Navigating Research in a Cash Transfer Project

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Abstract

Cash as a tool in social policy is gaining great prominence around the world. This is visible in the rise of policies in different countries relying on direct beneficiary transfers of cash (as opposed to workfare, food or in-kind support), the use of cash across the world as a covid-relief and support policies, and in the astronomical rise in the profile and piloting of cash transfer and universal basic income schemes around the world. In terms of researching the effects of such projects and learning from them, there exists guidance on how to organise such pilots (Standing, 2012), and how to do so ethically (Howard, 2020). However, knowledge on how to navigate qualitative research on such projects is extremely limited, and uniquely complicated. My paper (work in progress) is a reflective paper of practice of conducting ethnographic and qualitative research in one such basic income pilot in slum communities in South India. Reflecting on and putting together successes and failures from over 12 months of participatory and ethnographic research in urban South India, I try to analyse the ethical minefield of navigating ethical research in a project where participants are part of an experiment that gives them 'unconditional' cash. I argue three particular features that require attention. First, positionality. While the issue of positionality, and the power imbalances that may engender, is central to most conversations around knowledge production, informed consent and meaningful participation in research (Mama, 1995; Sultana, 2007), this is particularly complicated in development studies where the gulf between researchers and researched is large, and is accompanied with the colonial history of development research. This gets infinitely more complicated when the 'researcher' is also perceived as the provider of cash! This has significant ramifications for participants' ability to participate freely as well as for their responses. Second, informed consent. While informed consent is a core part of any research process (Iphofen 2011), the ability to do this meaningfully gets blurred when participants' participation in research is accompanied by (in real or perceived terms) their participation in a program giving them access to (otherwise unconditional) cash. This requires its own navigation

of ethical propriety and careful orchestration, not just at the stage of gaining informed consent but in the researchers' practices throughout. The third key component is the actual conduct of evaluation, i.e., the questions asked, the themes covered and the construction of the research sites has huge repercussions on participant comfort, exchanges of power and ethical evaluation. While this too is the case with most evaluations, the dynamic of cash provision has the potential to make participants feel more vulnerable, under scrutiny and subsequently uncomfortable in the process. I collectively also discuss the processing of institutional ethical clearances in such cross-country and multipronged projects, as well as the impacts such experiences have for unconditional cash transfer projects and for social science research as a whole (Hammersley, 2015).

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Keywords

Power, Positionality, Cash Transfers, Ethnography

Session 1C (S1C)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
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S1C - Ethics with children: Paper 1



Ethical challenges from participatory research with disabled children

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Abstract

Ethical reflections upon the course of research and ethnographic field changes enacted by participatory methodology with children with multiple and complex disabilities can forefront researchers with key challenges. Children with complex and multiple disabilities are one of the less represented in research. In the quest to reach out these children voices researchers have turned out to participatory research and mosaic approach, that grant researchers the possibility of using/creating flexible tools intentionally designed to enhance children agency and voice. Commonly ethical concerns of this type of research are addressed by reflexivity and a reflexive practice centralizing the questions of obtaining children's informed consent and voluntary participation.

In our own process of conducting research with 52 disabled children in 5 inclusive classroom settings around Lisbon area, we found that participatory methodology enacted tensions and field changes namely on the pre-existing power balance between children and adults. These changes were felt by a strong exertion and surveillance from the gatekeepers limiting children's access to research by controlling methodological instruments (e.g. Photovoice; emojis; talking cards) or their participation and voice.

The fact that these children are almost absent from research has led to their invisibility compounded by a general perception on their lack of agency, inability to perform autonomous decisions and often resumed by an idea of vulnerability. But participatory research and the mosaic approach challenged this vision of vulnerability allowing for children's autonomy practices and built out from their own interests. We expect to explore examples of how children appropriate the methodological instruments to negotiate their participation in

research, some episodes of individual resistance and evitaton confronts from which children tried to negotiate and affect their daily routine. This situated lens allowed us to perceive that vulnerability can intersect research course from different dimensions - vulnerability as an invisible category holding back children's opportunities to unbecome vulnerable (e.g. gatekeepers exertion on children's participation); vulnerability as the product of the context where the research took place; vulnerability as a consequence of participatory research (e.g. increasing children crises and resistance episodes to gatekeepers control) ; vulnerability as the persistence of medical and educational gazes; vulnerability as an inner space of understanding between selves (researcher and researched). We argue that: participatory methodologies can enact new situations of vulnerability intersecting children experiences and daily routines; vulnerability different dimensions should be taken as research data into the core of the ethical reflections when researching with vulnerable ethnographic subjects.

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Keywords

Participatory Research, Disabled Children, Vulnerability, Reflexivity



The Development of Ethical Guidance for Researching with Children: The Importance of Collaboration not Confrontation with Ethics Committees

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Abstract

It is widely accepted that participation of and collaboration with children in research about their lives is essential, both for that work to have legitimacy, and to ensure findings are robust and accurate.[1] Yet researching with children presents ethical challenges for researchers and for those tasked with conducting ethical review.[2] Subsequently, it can be positioned that there are two key ethical considerations for researchers and ethics committees; firstly, how do we decide that research meets agreed ethical, legal and welfare obligations to children as participants; and secondly, that perceived ethical challenges are not viewed as obstacles that deter or restrict legitimate research aims, which is unethical of itself.[3]

Researchers are able to draw on a rich body of guidance on how to conduct ethical research involving children (for example, The International Charter for Ethical Research Involving Children[4]), however many researchers working with children experience barriers in gaining ethical approval, whilst others have argued that our current approach to ethics needs to be more ambitiously conceptualised for it to be truly children's rights compliant.[5] It is therefore unsurprising that because researching with children poses ethical challenges, some researchers may find obtaining ethical approval an intimidating, time consuming and stressful process.[6] One problematic perception is then that ethics committees can make it more difficult to conduct research involving children, particularly when the research concerns sensitive topics and/or vulnerable groups of participants.[7]

In response, members of the European Children's Rights Unit, based within the School of Law and Social Justice at the University of Liverpool developed a series of guidance papers for the

National Centre for Research Methods – The Ethics of Research Involving Children: Common Questions, Potential Strategies and Useful Guidance.[8] The guidance papers offer tailored commentary and links to useful resources to assist those undertaking research relating to children and childhood. What sets these resources apart, is that they have been produced in collaboration with the University's Central Research Ethics Committee (CREC), so that both researchers and those tasked with providing ethical review are supported in understanding how ethical challenges can be addressed. Working with the CREC presents challenges in respect of the two different paradigms that become apparent when considering both those seeking ethical approval and those reviewing ethical applications. The guidance papers therefore aim to facilitate transparency and positive dialogue between researchers and ethics committees as a collaborative endeavour that underpins best practice and enhances research with children. Moreover, the development of the guidance with the CREC is argued as reducing the tension between the two different paradigms evident in the ethical design and approval process.

The presentation will summarise the guidance papers, highlight the process, challenges and experience of collaboration with the CREC and critically evaluate identified areas of contention, with subsequent resolution, from the process. Finally, the presentation will consider the extension of this approach to the development of ethical guidance for other vulnerable groups within research.

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Keywords

Children, research, ethical guidance, collaboration



Children, but not as we know it: Experiences of developing processes for informed consent when working with children seeking sanctuary in their own right

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Abstract

The writer is a PhD student based in the School of Law at the University of Exeter. This paper realates to their experiences of planning a research project to understand more about the way children seeking sanctuary in their own right (also referred to as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) experience legal advice.

Any research into the experiences of children which does not seek their views risks breaching their rights to have a 'voice' as protected by Article 12 of the UNCRC (Lundy, 2007). However, it is also vital to ensure that participants in any research give their full and informed consent. Many departments have developed strict procedures that seek to balance the protection of vulnerable participants with their rights to take part in research. However, it has also been suggested that these consent procedures have become overly concerned with procedural rather than substantive ethics (Hammersley, 2009).

The question of how to proceed while ensuring an appropriate balance between protection and participation has proved a difficult one when working with a group of children who do not easily fulfil the requirements of standard consent processes – children seeking sanctuary alone by definition do not have a parent or guardian in the UK to consent for them and their particular relationship with the state bodies that accommodate them does not easily overcome that issue. This group of children are often illiterate, both in English and in their first language and have been identified as particularly suggestible due to their past experiences of trauma (Childs et al., 2021).

This paper will first introduce the audience to the position of this group of children described briefly above (with reference to the social care law of England) and describe some of the challenges faced when designing this research project. The paper will then discuss the solutions that have been found and what this might mean for the understanding of consent beyond 'tick box' approaches.

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Keywords

Children, Consent, Refugees

Session 1D (S1D)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S1D - Ethics across Institutions: Roundtable



Ethics across Institutions

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Roundtable Submission

In this session, the heads of Research Governance & Compliance at the universities of Bath, Bristol and Exeter discuss some of the similarities and differences in the ethics processes at each institution, as well as new protocols, systems and proposals launched. This includes the hurdles they have had to navigate throughout the years and the procedures they have developed to grapple with these.

Keywords

Governance, compliance, university ethics, institutional, systems

Session 2

Session 2A (S2A)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S2A - Ethics in times of pandemic: Paper 1



Ethical aspects of conducting social research during the pandemic through the eyes of qualitative researchers

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Abstract

One of the arguments for conducting social research with people during the pandemic may be the desire to learn about social life at a specific time. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many spheres of social functioning, creating a new research context. Recognising these changes, especially while they are “happening”, is particularly important in research approaches such as “hot sociology” or “urgent anthropology”. However, conducting research in the aforementioned circumstances can also raise ethical concerns, such as using participants who might be suffering stress or exhaustion due to lockdowns, exposing vulnerable people (e.g., after the loss of loved ones, or those struggling economically) to harm, or not including those groups with limited internet access, etc. Many researchers had to solve the dilemma of whether to conduct research with people during a pandemic crisis in a situation of great uncertainty in terms of the consequences of their decision. Literature review shows that analyses of possible ethical changes have appeared quite quickly, however texts on social research ethics during the pandemic drew mainly on researchers’ reflections (Steherenberger, 2020; Van Brown 2020) rather than systematic studies with researchers (Surmiak, Bielska, Kalinowska, 2022). In the context of social research, consideration has been given to informed consent (Roberts, Pavlakis, & Richards, 2021; Valdez & Gubrium, 2020); confidentiality and privacy (Lobe, Morgan, & Hoffman, 2020; Roberts et al., 2021); the comfort of participants (Howlett, 2021; Valdez & Gubrium, 2020) and researchers (Meskell, Houghton, & Biesty, 2021); the risk of exploitation/harm and the issue of reciprocity (Crivello & Favara, 2021; Valdez & Gubrium, 2020), especially in the case of vulnerable populations, for example, people in the crisis of homelessness or with hearing problems (Valdez & Gubrium, 2020).

We would like to present how researchers in Poland in the fields of sociological, anthropological, pedagogical and management research dealt with the challenge of conducting ethical research during the pandemic. The presentation is based on the analysis of 32 individual in-depth interviews with researchers who conducted qualitative social research with people during the COVID-19 crisis. We focused on descriptive research ethics, which does not involve evaluating or indicating the morally right and wrong course of action in comparison to normative ethics as normative ethics does. The descriptive approach allowed us to concentrate on social science researchers' views concerning research ethics. We would be able to show similarities and differences between the ethical issues listed in the literature and those underlined by the researchers who participated in our research project. Such knowledge can advance our understanding of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on social research ethics from the perspective of social researchers. Moreover, it can help social researchers better address the emerging ethical problems in research during the current and future pandemics.

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Keywords

ethical challenges; pandemic Covid-19; qualitative research



Ethical implications of using telephones for data collection and informed consent procedures during COVID-19 pandemic in a rural district, South Africa.

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic with subsequent lock down and physical distancing regulations have posed barriers to conventional written informed consent procedures and data collection (1-3). The National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) upholds the primacy of written informed consent as a requirement for research participation but also recognizes other forms of acquiring consent(1,4). The use of telephone and online platforms has been adopted and recognized as means of obtaining consent and collecting data during the COVID-19 lockdown regulations and social distancing conditions. Insufficient guidance on using telephones and virtual platforms for informed consent and data collection procedures can lead to unintended implementation and ethical challenges. This rapid assessment study addresses this gap.

Objectives: To identify the ethical implications of obtaining informed consent for health research using telephones in a rural setting.

Methods: We conducted qualitative interviews with purposively selected participants categorised into three groups: 1). Community participants recruited using Africa Health Research Institute (AHRI) data based on participation in previous studies. Participants were stratified by age to identify consenting experiences- minor participants (12-17 years) (n=10), vs adults 18-84 years (n=10). We recruited AHRI research assistants (n=6-8) and investigators (4-6), as well as research ethics committee members, and ethicists across South Africa (n=7), and globally (n=8).

We used a deductive and inductive organising framework will be used for the data and to develop codes and themes(5).

Results: Ethical implications: Most adult members do not recognise minors' autonomy in this setting, and this raised questions about the level of parental involvement when consenting for minor participants. Most family members share mobile phones, and some of the minors did not feel comfortable during the interview process and they reported caregivers listening to their telephone conversation. This raised concerns about their rights to privacy, and confidentiality.

The research assistants reported that doing informed consent via telephones raised some concerns about the information that participants were able to retain. For example, they could not be certain that participants were able to document or retain the information of who to contact (researcher and ethics committee), if participants had they questions about the study. Furthermore, participants expressed concerns about the research team signing consent forms on their behalf.

Conclusions: The study findings have implication for future studies where telephones are used for data collection and for the informed consent procedures. The study also highlighted complexities regarding minors autonomy vis a vis parental consent for minors participating in research in this setting. Transferring the face-to face approach into telephonic procedures requires guidelines and standards tailored to the participants' context.

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Keywords

informed consent; autonomy; telephones; South Africa



Researching during Covid-19: Methodological Conundrums

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Abstract

Awareness of cultural diversity and race equality has heightened following George Floyd's killing (2020). This increasing awareness is particularly relevant in complex cultural landscapes that have lately experienced a rise in their ethnic minority populations and where inclusive growth is a challenge. My research aims to explore multiculturalism in four South West England primary schools.

My research questions are:

- What are the experiences of practitioners, students, and parents on multiculturalism in four mainstream primary schools in England?
- How are the classroom experiences of practitioners, students, and parents shaped by the primary National Curriculum in England?

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with adult participants (practitioners and parents), observation of students' classroom activities, and documentary analysis of classroom displays. This case study research is underpinned by the sociocultural theory that believes that individuals' thinking is an interpersonal entangled human activity significantly influenced by their own and others' interactions over ages and closely connected to their social and cultural-historical context (Vygotsky, 2004).

Amidst COVID-19, delays in data collection and significant ethical challenges have led to considerable anxiety for many researchers (Davis, 2019). The situation becomes particularly difficult when the research involves a sensitive topic and children's discussions. My paper focuses

on how I addressed these complexities by applying various flexible, innovative, and respectful measures in data collection techniques and research methodology.

Following my conversation with the gatekeeper, I crafted a predominantly virtual research study. My research involved tricky dilemmas that called for the sensitive and ethical handling of uncomfortable conversations around multiculturalism and race equality during data collection. Since the students' activities were designed by me but conducted by the teacher, mutual trustworthiness became the essential criteria for conducting an ethical research through this teacher-researcher collaborative venture. Furthermore, I needed to attend to complex situations by cautiously negotiating with a variety of voices in my research over a prolonged period concerning data collection. I had to be careful as the schools were stretched to limits in the ongoing pandemic. Moreover, the schools have their histories, trajectories, and values. Their responses came from the various motivations in this pandemic situation. Hence, my interpretation of participants' responses needed to be multi-layered by empathizing with the participant schools' rational thinking and approach. I developed an understanding of the necessity to adapt planned research design to circumstances as they unfold. This flexibility added criticality to my thinking and is helping me to write my dissertation honestly, intellectually, reflectively, and sensitively.

As a 21st century "Covid times" researcher, contingency planning for me means being resilient, responsive, and going with the flow, come what may. Personally, readjusting to social interactions as an academic going through tremendous emotional turmoil as a spouse of a frontline health worker also seemed to contribute to my flexibility and adaptability. I am hopeful that my accommodating attitude will possibly stand to be one of the hallmarks of good research, something that was probably difficult for me to conceive in a 'COVID-free' world.

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Keywords

virtual research, teacher-researcher-children dynamics

Session 2B (S2B)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S2B - Reflexivity in Ethics: Paper 1



Developing ethical reflexivity through trialogic spaces: Shared perspectives from an international collaboration between doctoral students in Ireland and Australia

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Abstract

Ethical conduct in educational research is complex and dynamic, with 'ethically important moments' arising across all stages of a research journey (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). However, a sole reliance on proceduralist ethics approaches like university ethics review processes or completion of checklists can often generate a 'single event' conceptualisation of ethics (Velardo & Elliott, 2018). While such processes provide a starting point to consider ethical dilemmas in advance, it is crucial that researchers move beyond adopting a compliance mindset to ethics and focus on their ongoing responsibilities in sensitively and effectively navigating ethical dilemmas that arise in the day-to-day interactions within the research field. As such, there is a need to actively develop identities as ethically rigorous researchers (Head, 2020) who engage in ethical reflexivity.

In this paper, we draw on our experiences as two doctoral students in Ireland and Australia completing educational research with teachers. Whilst positioned geographically in different countries, we committed to a series of 'trialogues' over twelve months, sharing ethically important moments from our doctoral research process in an attempt to strengthen our ethical reflexivity. Triologue refers to technology mediated dialogue where digital tools are drawn on to make deliberate building and creation of knowledge accessible (Hakkarainen, 2009) through iterative exchange of ideas, in order to develop shared objects (Paavola & Hakkarainen, 2014). These shared objects comprise artefacts, for example, written reflective accounts; and practices, such

as ethically reflexive research techniques. Given our location in different time zones, Zoom and a shared Google Drive folder served to support our interactions. In advance of each conversation, our respective dilemmas of focus were documented in reflective vignettes, which were constructed to ensure confidentiality of participants and institutions, before being uploaded to our shared folder. Our 'dialogues' together provided an opportunity to critically reflect together on these vignettes, drawing on a virtues-based framework (Macfarlane, 2009) to scaffold our discussion. Following these, key learning and planned future actions were articulated in our respective post-conversation reflections.

Emerging findings from an analysis of these post-conversation reflections will be shared, highlighting the value of dialogic ethical spaces for doctoral and early career researchers. We highlight three key pillars in the process of engaging in ethical dialogues to strengthen ethical reflexivity, namely the creation of a dialogic ethical space, the maintenance of a dialogic ethical space, and the affordances generated by such spaces. We argue that such spaces can enable doctoral researchers to develop the skills and dispositions required to effectively navigate the unexpected ethical dilemmas that arise within the research field and suggest that formal creation and maintenance of dialogic ethical spaces as part of university doctoral research programmes can support doctoral students to dig deeper into their practice.

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Keywords

ethics, ethical reflexivity, doctoral, dialogic space



Moving Beyond Regulated Ethics: Employing Reflexivity as a Tool for Narrative Analysis in Close Contextual Settings

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Abstract

In this paper, I present the ethical dilemmas of analysing interviews with teachers who have exited the profession. Using bricolage, I employ tools such as reflexivity, deconstruction, and critical and philosophical hermeneutics to examine the power structures projected through the participant's voice. I foreground the voice of the interviewee to avoid objectification and to limit propagating of pre-existing beliefs unintentionally. This process uncovered hidden themes, providing a deeper understanding of the complex processes that contribute to teachers leaving the profession.

Interviews are a social relationship which would affect the results obtained with various distortions embedded in the very structure of the research relationship (Bourdieu et al., 1999). In fields where the interviewer and interviewee share similar experiences, there is a danger of reinforcing pre-existing power structures instead of generating knowledge. (Gerrig, 1993), (Bower & Morrow, 1990) and (Herman & Vervaeck, 2019) suggest that the narration of the interviewee's lived experiences makeup too complex a phenomenon to allow for controllable testing conditions required by the positivistic approach. We, therefore, needed alternate approaches to analyse our data and maintain the complexity that the contextual setting had to offer. In our study, an analysis process was selected actively by considering the data generated through the interviews.

Fifteen exited teachers were interviewed, and their lengths of service varied from 1 year to more than 25 years. The participants taught in both primary and secondary schools. Interviews lasted an hour and were carried out over Zoom; the recordings were analysed on ELAN (Wittenburg et al., 2006). The participant's voice was foregrounded through the voice-centred relational method (Brown & Gilligan, 1993). To account for any tensions, my identity might cause, I thematically analysed the recording through different lenses. This consisted of four listenings within which I

situated myself in different positions: teacher, parent, trade union representative and doctoral student. The use of distinct lenses enables us to draw meaning from the data through a shared understanding of the field through socialisation within the field. Although using insiders to carry out interviews offers benefits, we are quickly cautioned by Derridean deconstructionists that the assumed authority of the field is "purchased by deep violence" (Feldman, 2000). This makes establishing the validity of the participant's voice, therefore, a non-trivial task. I use reflexivity, which requires the researcher to carefully navigate the dilemmas between the ethics of knowledge production and moralism at every analysis stage. An emotional labour-intensive field, like teaching, amplifies this dilemma as there is a danger of misusing the participant's voice to echo the researcher's values.

Using this methodology, a new theme uncovered from our study was the existence of a hierarchy of knowledge for some teachers. Teachers frequently placed themselves below the knowledge generated by the academic community. If the knowledge from teachers' expert experience conflicted with the knowledge presented by the academic community, teachers would surrender their knowledge to succumb to the academic community's knowledge.

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Keywords

Narrative analysis, Reflexivity, bricolage, Ethical dilemma



Faculty and Graduate Students' Views of the Research Ethics Committee at the Regional University in the Caribbean.

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Abstract

Research Ethics committees (RECs) ensure that guidelines and principles to protect participants, researchers and institutions are maintained in the research communities. The guidelines and principles, when followed, minimize harm, increase good, assure honesty and trust, and maintain research integrity (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012; Brown, Spiro, & Quinton, 2020). So, the research ethics committee considers the appropriateness of the methods and procedures used by researchers and the issues associated with the informed consent of participants (Mona Campus Research Ethics Committee, n.d.). In this paper presentation, we will capture the academic staff and graduate students in the Faculty of Humanities and Education voices and experiences with the research ethics committee at our regional university. In addition, their views of the role of the research ethics committee will be compared from the perspective of the student researcher, faculty researcher and research supervisor. This study is a novel empirical study within the Caribbean. Eighteen participants in higher education (nine academic staff and nine graduate students) will participate in individual interviews (Heo, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Most of the interview items to be utilised in the study are adapted from Brown, Spiro and Quinton (2020). The contribution of this study has implications for the relationship between the research ethics committee and the academic staff and graduate students in the Faculty of Humanities and Education. In understanding the participants' experiences, research ethics committee members will be able to plan seminars and workshops to enhance their relationship with researchers within the faculty.

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Keywords

Research Ethics Committee, Humanities and Education

Session 2C (S2C)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S2C - Ethics across species: Paper 1



Researchers' application of the 3rs principles for the humane use of animals in scientific studies in Ghana

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Abstract

Introduction/Background: Animals have played a crucial part in biomedical research and continue to be an essential element in scientific and medical discoveries. Even though the use of animals in scientific studies is on the rise, the conduct of animal experiments remains a controversial issue mainly because of the ethical and moral implications of using research subjects that are unable to indicate an interest to participate in the scientific study. Russell and Burch proposed the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement) principle for the compassionate use of animals in research while also improving the quality of scientific and medical testing. These principles have been widely acknowledged around the world as the most effective and morally righteous method for using animals in research. Despite the overall acceptance of the 3Rs ethical principles, the literature reveals that their implementation still varies across the world. There is no adequate empirical evidence that the framework has been adequately used and implemented by researchers in developing countries like Ghana. Most African countries lag behind Western countries when it comes to adopting and enforcing ethical rules for the use of animals in scientific studies. How researchers in developing countries like Ghana have adhered to the 3Rs principles in conducting their research amid inadequate national frameworks, rules and guidelines regulating the use of animals in scientific studies have not been explored.

Aim: The aim of this study was to explore and describe researchers' lived experiences with applying the 3Rs principles for the conduct of research using animals in Ghana.

Methodology: An exploratory, descriptive qualitative design was used. The constructivist interpretive framework was applied using ontological and epistemological philosophical assumptions. Guided by data saturation, six researchers from three institutions in Ghana were purposively selected for this study. The selection was based on participants who understand the central phenomenon of the study with experience that matched the objectives of this study. Multiple data collection (semi-structured interviews, field notes, naïve sketches, reflective diary) methods were employed. The data acquired was methodically shortened, restructured, categorised, and analysed to allow the researcher to present the findings. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and transcripts were imported into ATLAS.ti version-12 software. Identified Codes were grouped into categories that reflected the themes. Data triangulation was used as a way of validating the responses of participants. Measures of trustworthiness were used to ensure the scientific validity of the study. The researcher also adhered to the research ethics principles based on the internationally recognised ethical principles of conducting research.

Results and Conclusion: Knowledge and application of the 3Rs principles by researchers in Ghana are limited. Researchers do not consciously apply the 3Rs in their studies. Researchers usually consider the 3Rs principles only during the submission of protocols for ethical approval. Animal research governance practices are weak. The study provides insights into researchers' experience in applying the 3Rs principles in developing country settings such as Ghana apply. We recommend establishing specific animal research ethics governance systems and practices in Ghana for the humane use of animals in research.

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Keywords

3Rs, Ghana, Animal Researchers, Exploratory study



Can Animal Experimentation Be Justified if the Animals Involved Have Positive Lives?

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Abstract

Within philosophy, experiments on nonhuman animals are usually justified by appealing to the good consequences they produce. Proponents will argue that the benefits to humans and other animals outweigh the suffering experienced by the animals being experimented on (Cohen, 1986). This argument is rejected by opponents of animal experimentation which argue that no amount of harm to animals for human purposes can be justified (Regan, 2004). But what if animal experimentation was good not only for humans, but for the animals being experimented on as well? Some have argued that animal agriculture can be morally justified if the animals involved have good lives, and if they wouldn't have existed if it weren't for the practice (Scruton, 2000; Zangwill, 2021). In this paper I will examine whether a similar argument can be employed to justify the moral permissibility of animal experimentation.

I begin by examining whether or not animal experimentation can be good for the animals involved. One argument in favour is that (some) lab animals have on-the-whole positive lives, and they wouldn't have existed if it weren't for the demand created by animal experimentation. I will argue that the proportion of animals that have on-the-whole positive lives in animal experimentation may be small, thus limiting the applicability of the argument. I then follow Salt (1914) in questioning whether it can really be good for a being to bring them into existence.

After this I will examine whether animal experimentation can be justified if the animals involved *do* have positive lives. One argument offered in support of this holds that if a practice is good for everyone involved, it must be morally permissible. Following McMahan (2008) and Smolkin (2021), I argue that even if a practice is good for everyone involved, components of the practice may render the entire practice morally impermissible. For instance, it would be morally impermissible to breed happy humans for experimentation, even if the practice was good for everyone involved. This is because certain components of the practice, such as killing the humans before their natural death, would be difficult to morally justify. A similar argument may apply to animal experimentation. If harming or killing animals before their natural death is impermissible, this may render the entire practice impermissible. I will examine four arguments presented by McMahan (2008), Visak (2015), Abbate (2019), and Smolkin (2021), that have been used in the animal ethics literature to argue that killing animals before their natural death is impermissible. I argue that most of these positions fail to demonstrate the absolute impermissibility of harming or killing animals for the purposes of experimentation. Only a rights-based position such as Smolkin's is capable of rejecting all forms of harming or killing animals for the purposes of experimentation. I conclude from this that only a rights-based approach can successfully reject all harmful uses of animals for experimentation in cases where the animals do in fact have positive lives.

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Keywords

animals, experimentation, ethics, vivisection, philosophy, rights

Session 2D (S2D)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S2D - Questions of readiness, benefits and risks in participatory research with potentially vulnerable participants: Symposium



Questions of readiness, benefits and risks in participatory research with potentially vulnerable participants

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Symposium Abstract

As a form of political and intellectual activism to promote social justice, participatory research not only seeks to legitimise 'lived experience' as a critical source of knowledge but also widen spaces for marginalised groups to collaborate in knowledge production alongside research professionals. Trauma-affected young people, however, are rarely granted a central role in research processes due to concerns about 'readiness' and 'risk'.

This symposium explores the concepts of readiness, benefits and risk relating to participatory research with such participants. It does so through the lens of the presenters' experiences of engaging young people with known or suspected experiences of sexual abuse in participatory research projects (refs listed separately below to retain anonymity). It also draws on other studies the presenters have conducted about the challenges and benefits of participatory approaches in the field of sexual violence (refs below). The learning also holds relevance for, and aims to spark thinking and dialogue about, the ethics of engaging young people in participatory work in other related fields.

Presentation 1: Assessing readiness, benefits and risk: Findings from a Delphi study

The first presentation focuses on some of the challenges and tensions of doing participatory work with young people affected by sexual abuse. It highlights that whilst there is clarity about the

benefits of participation, there are also a number of ethical dilemmas and concerns. Based on findings from a (not yet published) international ‘Delphi’ study that captured the perspectives of both professionals and young people, assessing readiness and mitigating impact are key focuses of such concerns. Four specific themes are presented that surfaced as particular areas of complexity: Readiness and risk assessments; triggering; feelings of anger and frustration; and public identity disclosure. Attention is drawn to the differing opinions that can exist between and amongst young people and professionals in relation to these issues.

Presentation 2: Assessing ‘readiness’, benefits and risk, as a facilitating agency

Sexual violence services receive regular requests from researchers wishing to engage ‘service-users’ in research. The primary goal of services is to keep service-users safe and to promote trauma recovery. Ethical concerns over potential re-traumatisation or (involuntary) re-enactments of exploitative power dynamics between researchers and research participants are amplified when research seeks to engage trauma-affected children and young people. As services providers, we must carefully weigh up the potential benefits and risks associated with research involvement and, as part of our risk assessments, routinely make decisions about whether a young person is “ready” to take part (Bovarnick and Cody, 2020). This presentation will shed light on the specific considerations that feed into our organisational risk assessments and decision-making processes about facilitating research with young people we support. As practitioners, our role is not only to protect and act as ‘gatekeepers’, but also to enable trauma-affected young people to take some (carefully considered risks) when there are opportunities for growth.

Presentation 3: Designing participatory research to balance associated risks and benefits for trauma-affected young people

This paper explores how participatory research with young people affected by sexual violence can minimise risks arising from prior traumatic experiences, while offering benefits, such as skill and confidence building, to those involved. It draws on a two year youth-led participatory action research project in Albania that engaged eighteen young people with lived experience of sexual violence and/or trafficking as peer researchers and respondents. The aim of this peer research was to gather youth-informed evidence on victim protection and criminal justice responses to child trafficking in Albania. The process of coproducing research with this target population offered rich learning about the challenges of translating abstract concepts of research ethics into the complex realities of youth participatory action research. Key issues emerging from the youth peer research

context included complex dynamics regarding establishing trust and rapport, managing boundaries, navigating confidentiality and anonymity, listening to upsetting information and responding to distress.

Presentation 4: What about our readiness and risks? Considering researcher welfare

Whilst there is an extensive body of literature on participant welfare, there is comparably little said about researcher welfare. Although ethics committees and guidelines may prompt consideration of this, they offer little in terms of expected standards or practical advice. This is an issue, not only as a concern in and of itself, but also in terms of how a failure to pay sufficient attention to this may impact negatively upon both research participants' experiences and the integrity of the research (ref below). Drawing on her 25 years' experience as a researcher, and as Director of a research centre researching abuse, the presenter will consider the potential for vicarious trauma when undertaking (participatory) research with children and young people on sensitive topics. She will share practice-based reflections on potential risk points, and strategies that she and colleagues have implemented to try to mitigate the potential negative impacts of hearing and holding potentially traumatic accounts.

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Keywords

participatory research, readiness, risk, benefit, trauma

Session 3

Session 3A (S3A)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S3A - The Future of Ethics: Paper 1



The Metaethics of Research: is it time we rethought how (any why) we ‘do’ research ethics?

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Abstract

This paper will examine what place, if any, abstract moral thought may have in what is ordinarily considered to be the wholly applied field of research ethics. Since metaethics is concerned with matters such as the existence (or not) of moral ‘truths, the interconnectedness of values, the nature of ethical imperatives and what they require us to both do and refrain from doing and (more broadly) human motivation; it will be argued that if we are to go beyond developing ethical frameworks that are merely risk-averse and instead promote ethically sound research, the consideration of metaethical questions must be part of our deliberations.

The questions one may ask are myriad indeed, but some of those that will be touched upon here will include:

- What do we mean by terms such as ‘right’ and ‘wrong’?
- What, exactly, is an ‘ethical issue’? Is it unique or are there other things like it?
- Where do our ethical values come from?
- Is morality absolute or relative?

The answers to these questions, it will be argued will reveal much about the ‘kind’ of research ethics we are advocates of, and how our alignment to particular epistemological or normative theories may influence the decisions that we make about what is and is not permissible. In examining such questions, we may also reveal much about the inherent biases we may be unconsciously displaying when making such decisions that issue from our ethical ‘world view’ so to speak.

In addition to the aforementioned introduction of metaethical theory into the applied field of research ethics more generally, the merits (and potential limitations) of the application of a number of normative ethical theories will be explored through the lens of research ethics and will include a discussion of deontology, consequentialism and ethical relativism before offering conclusions on each.

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Keywords

Metaethics, normative ethics, autonomy, obligation, philosophy.



AI Ethics as Research Ethics? On the roles of AI ethicists and the creation of ethics-free situations.

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now being integrated in almost every field of the academic enterprise. However AI is not only a product or a scientific tool, it can also be considered as a field of inquiry on its own, associated with its ad hoc “AI ethics” which are rapidly emerging in the past few years – in the literature as well as in institutions and corporations. However, AI ethics appear to be as equivocal as the nature of AI in itself. On the one hand, there may be a call to embrace it as the new expression of a critical theory fostering the emergence of emancipatory and empowering technologies in society (Waelen, 2022), while on the other hand, it is qualified as toothless and useless (Munn, 2022).

The aim of this intervention is to question the foundations of such a supposedly new ethical field, from a research ethics perspective, with the intention to understand how should so-called AI ethicists be involved in the design process of AI systems – be it in research or in the development of AI-based products. In doing so, we will discuss the possibility of having AI ethicists as designers, directly embedded into the design process. Such an embedding originates from the ethics of technology and of engineering (van Gorp & van der Molen, 2009; van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2013), as well as it stems from a will to consider ethics not only as procedures but also as a process – inspired by the research ethics of anthropology (Perrin, 2018). In doing so, we move from envisioning ethicists as external to the design and research processes, to ethicists as pragmatist in situ translators of ethical stakes, actively contributing to the sociotechnical specifications and orientations of AI systems.

However, having ethicists as designers does not imply getting rid of programmers and designers, it rather requires a redistribution and refinements of the roles of agents in the design process, by integrating ethics as much as possible but also with the definition of ethics-free situations (Grunwald, 2001). These are understood as contexts in which making decisions would not require further ethical scrutiny – such situations can still be value-laden. Ethicists as designers of AI-based systems would thus as much positively participate in the design process as they would highlight the limits of their realm of intervention in this very process.

In the end, the aim is to understand how AI ethics could be a research ethics fostering the ethical design of ethical AI-based systems.

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Keywords

AI ethics, design, processual ethics, pragmatism



Research ethics in a changing social sciences landscape

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Abstract

The role of research ethics committees, and research ethics issues more broadly are often not viewed in the context of the development of scientific methods and the academic community. This topic piece seeks to redress this gap. I begin with a brief outline of the changes we experience within the social sciences before exploring in more detail their impact on research ethics and the practices of research ethics committees. I conclude with recommendations for how the existing research ethics processes may be made more future-proof. This paper has been published in *Research Ethics* and can be viewed open access at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/17470161221141011>

References

This paper has been published in *Research Ethics* and can be viewed open access at <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/17470161221141011>

Keywords

changing social sciences, future-proofing ethics

Session 3B (S3B)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S3B - Ethical Protocols: Paper 1



20 years on: (Re)Framing the ESRC approach to social science research ethics policy and practice as peer assisted self-evaluation.

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Abstract

It is now more than twenty years since the start of the policy processes of the ESRC began what are the most influential research ethics review policies in UK social sciences (ESRC 2003, 2005). The impact of these policies is felt beyond the review of projects funded by the ESRC and impacts the structures and processes of research ethics review through much of UK higher education, and at all levels of research from undergraduate to experienced researchers.

These policies are not without their critics. Concerns have been expressed regarding processes, institutional protectionism, models of ethics and committee structures taken from medical and USA models (Atkinson 2009; Hammersley and Traianou 2012). Often these are framed in terms of impacts on the autonomy and power of the researcher specifically from those working with qualitative approaches and methods. Although the iterations of ESRC policy have addressed some of those concerns, the underlying issues are still of concern (Hammersley 2023).

This paper suggests that following twenty years of development and continuing engagement with the issues raised, now is the time to reappraise and reframe research ethics in the UK social sciences for the next twenty years of policy development. The paper suggests that one helpful approach might be to re-conceptualise the policies and processes in terms of the peer assisted self-evaluation of research ethics.

The paper explores this reconceptualization of the policies and practice of research ethics review through the work of Murray Saunders (2000, 2006, 2011). The paper focuses on two of Saunders

four domains of evaluation practice, those of institutional evaluation and self-evaluation, examining the interplay between the two. The RUFDATA framework developed by Saunders (2011:17) is used as an analytical tool to demonstrate the evaluative considerations of the process.

The paper follows Henkel (1998) in seeing peer review as a form of evaluation and suggests that it is indeed the primary form of evaluation in UK higher education (Tight 2022) which ameliorates the impacts and power of managerialist approaches and to some extent readdresses power in the academy. There is little application of peer review to research ethics across the literature, however critics have raised issues that need to be addressed including the burden of such review process on the academic system (Holmwood 2010), and the questions raised from the work of Hammersley and Traianou (2012) regarding who may be considered as peers. Such questions are addressed, and the case made for the functionality of an approach to research ethics review as peer assisted self-evaluation.

The paper concludes by suggesting ways in which this re-conceptualising of research ethics review in terms of peer assisted self-evaluation may be made impactful through; influencing the future structure of published policy, the use of language within policy and the institutions, and how it may impact the teaching of research ethics.

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Keywords

ESRC, policy, evaluation, peer review,



European Research Council Ethics Process under Horizon Europe Framework Programme

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Abstract

The European Research Council Executive Agency (ERCEA) is the premier European funding organisation for excellent frontier research. It funds creative researchers to run projects based across Europe.

Research ethics plays a critical role in articulating the relationship between science, innovation and society. Under EU framework programmes, all research and innovation activities must comply with ethical principles and relevant national, European Union and international legislation such as the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. For projects funded under Horizon 2020, ethical obligations are set out in particular in Article 19 of the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme and for projects funded under Horizon Europe Framework Programme the ethical principles and ethics are set out under Articles 18 and 19.

Ethics is especially important in the context of the scientific research funded by the European Research Council (ERC). ERC funded research seeks to expand in fundamental ways the limits of scientific knowledge through innovative high risk-high gain research. This research can raise complex and serious ethical questions, for instance due to the use of human embryonic stem cells, human cells and tissues, the involvement of humans participants including vulnerable participants and children, relating to personal data collection and processing, research in non-EU countries especially in low and middle-income countries, potential misuse of research findings, experiments with animals, potential harm to the environment, use of artificial intelligence, among others. To help researchers identifying serious and complex ethics issues in their ERC multidisciplinary projects, the ERC has in place a thorough ethics review and monitoring process

which will be presented in this paper, focusing mainly on serious and complex ethical issues encountered in social sciences.

References

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Keywords

ERC, Ethics, Social Sciences, Horizon Europe



Ethics for professional practitioner researchers

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Abstract

The ethical principles underpinning the current research ethics system were developed based on a bio-medical ethical model. The assumption is that these principles are valid and applicable in all research situations (Msoroka, & Amundsen, 2018). However, with the growth of social research and particularly professional practitioner research, increasingly the ethics system is seen as inappropriate for research that sits outside of a bio-medical context (Brown et al. 2020; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). The tensions created by a process considered ill-fitting for practitioner research appear to have led to a mindset that ethics is an add on, thus a process to circumvent (Brown et al., 2020). Despite a plethora of literature espousing this, the voices of practitioner researchers and those who support them appear to be missing.

The focus of this research was to gain understanding of where research ethics practice rests in the thinking of practitioner researchers and those who support these practitioners through their practice inquiry process. Participants were drawn from those who had / were completing a professional practice qualification (learner) and those who supported them through this process (mentor). Following an initial on-line survey, respondents indicated their willingness to be interviewed by the researcher. In total, six learner and three mentor interviews were completed.

From the interview data, three dimensions were identified as being important to developing an understanding of the scope of ethics within a professional practice context:

- Ethical self: Researchers need to have awareness of their moral codes and what drives their behaviour, understanding themselves in terms of their personal values, professional values, and the values of the organisation for which they work and the tensions between

these is vital. The research as ethics model assumes that the researcher's personal ethics and professional ethics are fully integrated.

- Researcher responsibility: Building, nurturing, and maintaining trusting relationships throughout the changing landscape of the research is the researcher's responsibility. The concept of research ethics is likely to be new for professional practice researchers.
- Institutional ethics: This refers to the formal ethical review process required by the institution at which the research is undertaken. Participants saw this as a constructive learning and developmental process that helped them to identify gaps and / or blind spots in their research ethical thinking.

Identifying the scope of ethics provides a framework for mentors of professional practice researchers to introduce them to what and why of ethics early in their research journey. Explaining the connections between the ethical self, researcher responsibility, and institutional ethics is recommended. Practitioner researchers should come to see ethics not as a compliance task, but as a valuable practice to engage in.

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Keywords

Ethics, research, practitioner, professional practice

Session 3C (S3C)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S3C - Philosophical Approaches to Ethics: Paper 1



Value Pluralism and The List theory

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Abstract

The list theory is known to be a form of value pluralism. I maintain pluralism both in relation to the final values themselves, and in relation to those factors that constitute the notion of the final value (a final value is not only an intrinsic value, or not only a value that is realized for its own sake). In these notes, I will first examine these factors, and then the existing lists of final values. After that, I will consider the relationship between final values, including within the category of well-being. In the end, I will consider the question of the openness of the list and the prospects for its expansion. I consider this last question to be the most important. In the first section “Final value properties” I am not answering the question of ‘what makes good things good.’ As a proponent of the list theory, I share the view that with respect to final goods ‘each good is its own good-maker.’ In this sense every final good is at the same time a limit of explanation. Here I consider the question of how exactly final values differ from other values and formulate 16 final value properties: existentiality, transcendability, inexhaustibility, eternability, irreducibility, intrinsicness, normativity, experientiality, experiential specificity, necessity, teleologicality, analyticity, universalism, metaphysical autonomy, ontologicality, cultural-historical significance.

In the second part, I examine primarily the lists of final values proposed by English-writing authors over the past fifty years (Rokeach 1973, 28; Nagel 1979, 14; Finnis 1980, 85–92; Parfit 1984, 499; Railton 1984; Griffin 1986, 67–68; Lemos 1994, ch. 5–6; Wolf 1997; Kagan 1998, 39; Gert 1998, 93–94; Scanlon 1998, 124–125; Chappell 1998, ch. 2; Nussbaum 2000, 77–80; Murphy 2001, 100–136; Gómez-Lobo 2002, ch. 2; Lewinsohn-Zamir 2003, 1701–1707; Audi 2004, 106–202; Arneson 2004, 83; Kazez 2007, 68–80; Oderberg 2008, 127–165; Zagzebski 2008, 132; Kraut 2009, 136–201; Hurka 2011, 73; Ferkany 2012; Schwartz et al. 2012; Fletcher 2013;

Lauinger 2013; Hooker 2015; Dos Santos 2015, 459–460; Van Camp 2015, 41; Rice 2013, 2017). They are all moral philosophers, with the exception of two social psychologists: Rokeach and Schwartz.

To these I will add Frankena's list (1973, 87–88), which summarizes similar lists of earlier English-language authors (sometimes special attention will be paid to Ross' list (1930, ch. V)). I will also add Maslow's list (1970, 80–106) and ancient lists recorded in various cultures. The latter include the Aristotle's list (Rhetoric, Magna Moralia, Nicomachean Ethics), the Indian Purushartha list (Manusmriti, Natya Shastra etc.), the Chinese Wufu list (Book of Documents and Huan Tan, New Discussion), the Muslim Maqasid (al-Shatibi, The Reconciliation of the Fundamentals of Islamic Law; without modern additions, the nature of which requires special study) and the Thomas Aquinas' list (Summa Theologica Ia-IIae q.94, a.2; q.94, a.3). Having analyzed the proposals from these lists, I will give my own version.

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Keywords

final values, value pluralism, list theory



Engineering the Concept of ‘Person’: the Principle of Procreative Beneficence Revisited

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Abstract

When Hilary Putnam (1975) and Saul Kripke (1980) formulated their metasemantic theory, they suggested that terms such as ‘person’ apply in a certain way. They apply to whatever has the same “nature” as what is paradigmatically dubbed by that term. By claiming so, they imply that all persons share an essence (a genetic makeup), and such essence has somehow natural boundaries. By contrast, a recent trend in philosophy claims that our concepts, especially those with social, legal, and ethical implications, such as the one of “person,” should be “engineered.” That is, they should be normatively improved (cf. Plunkett 2013, 2015; Capellen et al. 2020) and applied according to what serves a better function for our society (cf. Haslanger 2012). What counts is not how the term *is* applied but how it *should* be applied. In bioethics, discussions on abortion see descriptivists vs. normativists accounts. The former hold that what count is whether the fetus *is* a person, basing their claims about the moral permissibility of abortion on the scientific community’s findings. By contrast, normativists ground their ethical claims on abortion on whether we *should* deem abortion morally permissible even if the fetus is a person. In this talk, I aim to defend that normativists accounts bring several advantages over their competing approaches. On similar lines, I also aim to defend that what *should* matter in debates concerning the moral permissibility of abortion is not whether the fetus *is* a person but what person that fetus *would be* were it to be born and how we ought to act accordingly. Adapting Julian Savulescu’s (2001) principle of procreative beneficence, I argue that couples (or single reproducers) *should not* have a child if, based on the relevant, available information, they expect the child to have a painful, terrible life (evaluated on several factors). To this extent, I claim that in the absence of some other pressing reason for action, a person who has good reason not to have a child is *morally praiseworthy* for not bringing that (potential) child into existence.

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Keywords

person, abortion, conceptual engineering, procreative beneficence

Session 3D (S3D)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S3D - Ethics, Science and Technology: Paper 1



Ethics practice for science correction: the case of NanoBubbles

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Abstract

NanoBubbles is an ERC funded, interdisciplinary research project examining science correction. Since the project aims to ensure that good, rigorous science develops effective methods to correct the scientific record, the project needs similarly rigorous, transparent ethics procedures. We seek to achieve this through an ethics by design [1] approach within the structure of the project that encourages high level ethical engagement, embedded ethical practice, and integrated ethics oversight. For instance, within the project is an embedded ethics rapporteur (ER) who is also a team member. This was counter to the EC ethics evaluation panel request to appoint an external ethics advisor (EA). In this paper I outline some of our core reasons and methods, difficulties and solutions.

On the one hand, external EAs maintain independence and are considered objective [2]. On the other hand, it can be difficult to oversee daily work and decisions. Even in cooperative situations, external EAs may lack key information and have limited (unpaid) time to scrutinise or find resolutions. In some cases, consortia may have little good will towards ethics or give it inadequate time beyond minimal compliance. Some appoint EAs who they hope will allow lip service to ethics. These issues are easier to avoid with an internal EA, though this brings other problems: they may struggle to maintain critical distance or to deliver unwelcome but necessary critique. Whether inside or out, pressure can be put on EAs to ignore problems: few enjoy being labelled the cause of detrimental project delays. More than this, an 'advisor' (whether in or outside) can be viewed as the responsible 'ethics person', leaving others as passive advice-receivers.

For these reasons NanoBubbles adopted the term ethics rapporteur (ER), familiar in EC ethics contexts. This term takes the role beyond advice-giving toward facilitation: bringing knowledge of process, with equal share in ‘values’ discussion; sharing practice while giving and taking advice; fostering EAB engagement and promoting ethical responsibility. As an integrated project member, an ER can closely monitor work, provide timely guidance and support, help identify and understand ethical issues in real time, and mediate conflicts about values. The ER thus assumes ‘meta-responsibility’ [3] for the ethical implications of work undertaken in the project but with shared responsibility approaches that guide colleagues in their ongoing ethical decision-making rather than only in response to research ethics requirements, pre- or post-hoc.

In this paper I discuss these issues and the techniques adopted to address them, including space for extensive ethical discussion that acknowledges uncertainty, doesn’t gloss over disagreement, but seeks consensus where possible. I also describe our approach to resolution and agreement as mediated by a ‘Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Working for Effective Ethical Oversight, Governance, and Good Practice’ (MoU). Drafted by the ER, approved by permanent members and the EAB, the MoU outlines relevant formal procedures, legal frameworks, codes of conduct in research ethics and integrity, and core EC ethics principles [4, 5, 6, 7, 8]. The paper ends with an outline for further work and refinement of methods.

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Keywords

embedded practice, responsibility, ethics by design



Ethics of/and science: a correlation perspective

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Abstract

The problem of ethics in science and related dilemmas have been discussed from long time in many different areas of scientific knowledges [1], including, but not limited to, bioscience, automotive and information technologies [2-3]. Particularly of interest, in the last years, is the call for an international reflection around the design, application and use of machine learning and artificial intelligence [4] in different sectors, including industry and education.

Considering the diverse type of audience involve and interested in these topics, the discussions/reflections are presented on national and international journals, at conferences, but also in books as well as newspapers articles and websites. But how research communities and the public community talk about ethic in science? How is the problem presented over time? Are there periods, i.e. years, in which these reflections seems to be more relevant? If so, are they related to specific historical events occurring?

In this paper, a statistical-based analysis related on how these two concepts are developed over the last century is presented and proposed. A humanities analytic approach [5] is used to evaluate the trend in the use of terms related to both science and ethic in different communication platforms, e.g. newspaper articles and/or journal abstracts. An evaluation of the presence of correlations between different words clusters is proposed to verify if specific relations exists, why/when they occurs and how these trends evolve.

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Keywords

Ethics, Science, Humanities analytic



Social Media APIs: A Quiet Threat to the Advancement of Science

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Abstract

High-quality data are critical for research—knowing where data are from and understanding how they were collected is crucial to using data ethically and effectively. Social media companies, such as Twitter, Reddit, and Meta offer Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), which provide users with access to large-scale data sources that are generated in real-time. While these data bring great potential for research across disciplines, Open Science practices are rarely adopted and achieving reproducibility and replicability is challenging. Here, we outline key issues researchers face when working with large-scale social media data relating to: (1) the restricted sharing of data, (2) changes in APIs over time, (3) changes in the datasets caused by the users themselves (e.g., editing/deleting posts), and (4) the ever-evolving terms and conditions that researchers need to be aware of. In discussing these issues, we consider the increasing pressures to demonstrate reproducibility and to share data amidst terms and conditions which may conflict with or hinder such activities. We discuss the current information regarding the new regulations via the DSA and GDPR in hope that their proposed vetting models may rebalance data access especially to aid those in developing countries that are impacted by inequalities already. However, we acknowledge the complex environment to put these regulations in place. Overall, we reflect on these quiet threats to reproducibility and replicability, which may erode confidence in science in the future, thus replicating the reproducibility crisis digitally.

Session 3E (S3E)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S3E - Towards ethical good practice in cash transfer trials and their evaluation: Panel



Towards ethical good practice in cash transfer trials and their evaluation

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Panel Submission

Plain Language Summary

Although cash transfers are now widely used within development and social policy, there is still limited discussion over how (and indeed whether) cash transfer trials and research on them can respect ethical standards. This panel will bring together piloters and pilot researchers to explore how and whether cash transfer trials may take place ethically and with respect for the best interests of participants. The panel may be of interest to scholars and practitioners engaged in cash transfer or basic income piloting or in experimental/trial-based research more broadly.

Long Summary

Since their emergence in the 1990s, cash transfers have spread exponentially throughout the fields of social and development policy, forming a key part of social protection strategies worldwide (Bastagli et al., 2016). Defined as “direct, regular and predictable non-contributory payments that raise and smooth incomes with the objective of reducing poverty and vulnerability” (DFID, 2011: 2), the success of the cash transfer ‘travelling model’ (Olivier de Sardan & Piccoli, 2018a) has been so great that cash transfers have become “the main form of intervention channelled in the direction of the most vulnerable families in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)” (ibid.: 1). One recent study estimated that, pre-COVID-19, as many as 130 countries had cash transfer programmes, with another calculating their share of total worldwide humanitarian aid to exceed 10 percent (CALP, 2018; also see Bruers, 2019; Davis et al., 2016:

iv). In the context of COVID-19, each of these figures has increased significantly (Gentilini et al., 2020).

The spread of the cash transfer model is in large part attributable to how efficient and effective cash transfers have been at achieving policy goals. Pioneering programmes in Mexico and Brazil, for example, aimed at increasing school enrolment amongst poor communities and succeeded unambiguously (Akresh et al., 2013). Following this, newer programmes began targeting transfers at different constituencies and to different ends: to the extreme poor to reduce their poverty; to the elderly to reduce their dependency; or to expectant mothers to improve their calorie intake. Research on programmes across all of these domains suggests that transfers have consistently been successful and that their potential for expansion to other domains is high (Bastagli et al., 2016; DFID, 2011: ii).

In their development phase, many cash transfer programmes begin with a phase of experimental research – as trials or pilots which are evaluated and if successful scaled. Typically, the randomised control trial (RCT) is seen as the ‘gold standard’ in trialling and evaluation (Bédécarrats et al., 2020), since the discourse surrounding RCTs suggests that they can attribute causality in ways that no other method can (e.g., Banerjee & Duflo, 2011). RCTs function by selecting individuals who are putatively identical according to specific criteria and then randomly assigning them to treatment and control groups. The treatment – in this case, cash transfers – is administered before statistical tools are used to measure what changed and to what extent this was caused by the treatment.

Although the literatures on cash transfers and on experimental methods (in particular RCTs) are by now ubiquitous, work that focusses specifically on the ethics of either is still relatively limited (at least outside of the Medical Sciences). The Cash Learning Partnership (CALP) (<https://www.calpnetwork.org/>), for example, is a global collaboration between humanitarian actors that collectively deliver the vast majority of cash and voucher assistance in emergency contexts worldwide. It brings together governments, the United Nations (UN), and civil society actors, and its website is the largest grey literature repository anywhere related to cash assistance and cash transfers. Tellingly, of the more than 1,200 documents it hosts, only a handful specifically address ethics. This is paralleled in both the development evaluation literature (Barnett & Camfield, 2016; Groves Williams, 2016) and the smaller, related literature on UBI piloting (e.g. Widerquist 2018). It is further paralleled in the wider academic literature on experimental social science (Barrett & Carter, 2010: 519), although this latter has begun to take ethics more seriously, with ethics-related

contributions (particularly in relation to RCTs) growing at a rapid rate (see Abramowicz & Szarfaz, 2020; Deaton, 2020; Hoffman, 2020; Kaplan et al., 2020, for recent contributions). It is within this emerging body of work that this panel situates itself.

Concretely, the panel aims to unpick certain of the tangled ethical knots inherent to cash transfer piloting, which relates necessarily to cash transfer programming. What are the challenges experimental researchers face in this field? How do they work to overcome those? What – if any – insights are emerging towards best practice? How does this vary by context? The panel will feature brief presentations and panel discussions from researchers involved in cash transfer pilots across multiple continents. The convenor is involved in two large cash transfer trials in India and Bangladesh and is inviting fellow presenters working in Africa, Latin America, Europe and North America.

Keywords

cash transfers, basic income, pilots, trials

Session 4

Session 4A (S4A)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S4A - Ethics in Education: Paper 1



Research Ethics Education in Central Asian contexts

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Abstract

Kazakhstan and its neighbouring Central Asian, post-Soviet republics represent a cluster of countries in which research ethics education remains a highly underdeveloped field. A focus on issues of academic integrity and the broader field of research integrity are beginning to emerge as issues in Central Asia, however, education to develop knowledge related to human subject research ethics remains scant. This paper explores the availability of research ethics education for faculty and student researchers in three countries of Central Asia. Specifically, it investigates the resources available to develop knowledge of research ethics in the social sciences. A twofold methodological design was used. First, three types of internet searches were conducted for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan to aggregate information on research ethics education resources available for social science researchers. Secondly, primary quantitative data was collected from a larger cross-sectional online survey from October 2021. The findings from the systematic review of policies and higher education institution websites and the quantitative survey show that research ethics education is not stipulated in current national policies of any of the countries. While a small number of higher education institutions have developed institutional requirements to some extent, ethics education is only available at a few internationalized universities, mainly to students and less so to staff. Educational opportunities most commonly consists of either single workshops or a component of a research methodology course. The findings suggest that educating researchers in responsible conduct of human subject research in these three countries is not holistic, despite policies from the state emphasising the importance of research development. It is recommended that a more systematic and widespread approach should be adopted to increase education in human subject research ethics in all three countries and development of an online trilingual research ethics is being developed to serve these needs..

Keywords

research ethics, education, Central Asia



Issues of researcher-insider: a case study on EFL teachers' role in the language policy in education in Kazakhstani mainstream schools

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Abstract

The research on EFL teachers' role in the language policy in education implementation process was conducted during the fieldwork trip to Kazakhstan, where the contexts of urban and rural secondary schools were explored.

The researcher is a former teacher of English (EFL) who used to work in the context of Kazakhstani trilingual policy in education at secondary schools' system. Having started the research and the main data collection was done in the field, where the researcher kept the role of independent expert. However, I admit that as a researcher-insider, the one who is familiar with the whole school system, and the language policy implementation process I have experienced some ethical dilemmas.

There are two main ethical dilemmas which I expect to appear during the research process. The first one is related to pre-understanding, which means that I already possess some knowledge and practical experience, and some insights regarding the researched topic (Brannic and Coghlan, 2007). Eventually, the researcher's pre-understanding might distract the researcher while collecting the data, so that the research misses some important information during the lesson observation or not probing during the interview, if the participants should answer full and understand my questions. But at the same time there is a good side of pre-understanding, since it allows the researcher to explain the research aim and other related information to the participants in details. Secondly, not only data collection but data analysis process might be impacted due to researcher-shaped understanding (Mercer, 2007). Qualitative case study research, the obtained data will be further analyzed and interpreted by me. In this regard, I should

strictly define myself as a researcher and not as a teacher-practitioner. Insider researcher might be biased and subjective in analysis, if not keeping the position of the objective researcher.

Being both a researcher and a practitioner in the fields of mainstream schooling I acknowledge that my insider research perspectives might have both a positive and negative impact during data collection and data analysis processes.

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Keywords

research-insider, researcher’s pre-understanding, research-shaped understanding



Understanding the psycho-emotional experiences of secondary school students with dyslexia from student and educator perspectives.

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Abstract

Dyslexic students have distinctive experiences that both shape and are shaped by their own perspectives, as well as by the viewpoints of and interactions with others in their environment. This can have a significant impact on their psycho-emotional well-being, which is how they think and feel about themselves. The study's objectives were to create knowledge and promote understanding of the experiences of students with dyslexia, and to gain educators' perspectives on classroom practices. The study drew on these viewpoints using a qualitative multi-temporal case study research design. Participants were selected through purposeful sampling, and data was generated using semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Adjustments had to be made to collect data virtually, instead of face to face. It was recognised that the study could have presented particular ethical challenges; some participants could be classified as vulnerable, either because of their age and/or learning difference. Hence, efforts were made to protect participants from psychological harm during the research by including safeguarding practices. Participants were asked to choose a safe, comfortable space at home for semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions, as all interactions were conducted online via Zoom. The researcher respected participants by actively listening to their concerns and adjusting where necessary, given the potential sensitivity of the research topic. However, the researcher could not control other persons entering or listening to the conversation in the participant's environment. The British Educational Research Association ethical guidelines were put into practice at every stage of the research to ensure that the data were credible and trustworthy.

The researcher was open and honest in carrying out the study. To ensure that participants were aware of this, Greene and Hogan (2006) emphasise the importance of a signed informed consent prior to data collection. The investigator ensured that a truthful informed consent was provided,

signed, and returned prior to any collection of data, even though this was done virtually. No form of deception was involved, as it was not required in the study design.

Retrospective and current perspectives of participants were sought to inform the provision of education for dyslexic students in an inclusive environment. Encouraging students to talk about difficult situations and asking adults to reflect on past difficulties also needed careful ethical considerations. Engaging individuals experiencing difficulties has particular ethical concerns, as the researcher must be careful not to raise false hopes that they can affect any change or offer practical or pedagogical support. Nonetheless, discussing difficulties with like-minded individuals can have benefits.

Data generated ethically from conversations with the research participants were interpreted using thematic data analysis (Braun, Clarke, Weate, 2016). Concepts were drawn from aspects of Cultural and Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). CHAT is used as a systemic approach to show how dyslexia is managed in schools and how it is experienced by individuals in the classroom context. Findings included three main themes, structures, relationships, and identity, which allowed recommendations that could be applied practically through research informed teaching and education and create fairer outcomes for individuals with dyslexia.

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Keywords

dyslexia, inclusion, ethics, psycho-emotional

Session 4B (S4B)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S4B - Ethics in Public Arenas: Paper 1



An analysis of Ethical-Legal Frameworks govern the Use of Secondary Data in the five African Countries; Kenya, Liberia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Introduction: The use of secondary data is increasingly becoming a popular strategy for gathering data in developing countries where funding for research is limited. Due to the wealth of information they can provide, the lower cost and less time and effort, than primary data collection. Secondary data refers to data (medical records, surveys, administrative records etc) collected by an individual for another purpose other than its original purpose. The benefits are many, however, it raises ethical considerations varying from one country to another. This paper seeks to gauge provisions of various ethical-legal frameworks concerning the use of secondary data in five African countries.

Methods: Using a qualitative research design, the study utilized a desk review to analyse the major ethical-legal guidelines of the five African countries. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify and explore emerging themes.

Key Results: All countries acknowledge that consenting to future use of secondary data is an important consideration though its extent markedly differs across all countries. There are two schools of thought, one that considers broad consent or additional consent while another one considers waiver of consent. All such considerations for consent seem to be reached on an ad-hoc basis with no proper ethical justification for when consent is or not required. There is also a dependence on outdated laws or guidelines that need to be revised to ensure that research participants' data is protected from inappropriate use. The level of risk associated with the use of

secondary data is a common theme across all the countries and there is an existence of a review criterion by Research Ethics Committees (REC) commensurate with risk, hence the inclusion of concepts such as exemption from full ethical review and expedited review. Lastly, confidentiality and anonymity is a concern that is reflected in all the country's guidelines though the detail of how this is analysed is not specified.

Conclusion: The study has provided an understanding of secondary data use's utilization, dissemination, and ethical considerations. Additionally, the study concluded that guidelines and laws have a number of shortcomings and inadequacies which usually emanate from the cross application of guidelines across both research using primary data collection and secondary data collection.

Recommendations: Given the increase in the number of research being conducted utilizing secondary data in Africa, this study proposes an investment of resources and effort to regularly develop, revise and update the ethical-legal frameworks for the utilization of secondary data in health research. Additionally, an extended involvement of the RECs to provide guidance on the use of secondary data and ethical evaluation which proportionally encourages research whilst protecting research participants' rights and welfare.

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Keywords

Secondary data, qualitative, thematic analysis, guidelines



Conflicts of Interest in Public Health and Nutrition: A Content Analysis of a Ghanaian Newspaper and Policy Documents

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Abstract

Background: Conflicts of interest as defined by the United States National Academy of Medicine are “circumstances that create a risk that professional judgments or actions regarding a primary interest will be unduly influenced by a secondary interest” [1]. We aimed to determine the frequency of reportage of COI in a top Ghanaian newspaper and two policy documents.

Methods: The study employed a content analysis research approach to review stories, articles, features, and news, among others from the most frequently read state-funded Ghanaian public newspaper over a one-year period. The study selected and reviewed hard copies of print newspaper articles from the Ghanaian Daily Graphic published from January to December 2019. This review was guided by the data-driven policy analysis framework and the keywords used in the search included: conflict of interest, public health, nutrition, Ghana, preventive health, research, and disclosure [2]. The study also identified elements of COI reported in the National Nutrition Policy (NNP) and the Ghana Public Health Act (GPHA) policy documents [3, 4]. Additionally, we also analyzed public health and nutrition research articles and documents referenced in the NNP and GPHA. The study employed the constructed week sampling method for selecting articles. Data for the newspaper review was extracted with the aid of a coding sheet and it included the date of publication, the total number of stories, and the total number of public health and nutrition stories. The data for the NNP and GPHA policy documents were also extracted using a coding sheet. Within that, we also looked at what constituted COI in the NNP

and GPHA policy documents, whether or not there are any reporting mechanisms for COI, and what corrective measures were put in place

Results & Discussion: A total of 34 Graphic Newspapers were reviewed. There were 1,588 stories in the 34 newspapers and 105 (6.5%) out of them were health-related. For the GPHA, no references were cited in the document. However, in the document itself, section 86 (page 45) outlined clear guidelines for disclosure of interest for board members of the Food and Drugs Authority. The NNP on the other hand had 15 papers cited in it. These papers ranged from journal articles to reports. There were seven undisclosed COIs in the reports. The journal articles had 3 undisclosed COIs while the guideline and investment plan had one undisclosed COI each. Findings from this showed that there is a low coverage and reportage of health topics as well as COIs in the Daily Graphic. The majority of referenced materials used in the development of the NNP and GPHA document had undisclosed COIs. The majority of the COIs in both newspapers and policy documents were non-financial.

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Keywords

conflict of interest, public health, newspaper



Understandings of autonomy, reliability, and the role of the family within medical law: An analysis of Court of Protection judgements of Baker J, Charles J and Hayden J concerning the withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment from individuals in a minimally conscious state

Francesca Bowles

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Abstract

Section 4(6) of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 demands that decisions made on behalf of incapacitated individuals should be made according to their 'best interests' which involves a consideration of their wishes, feelings, beliefs, and values. Section 4(7) of the MCA 2005 requires, where possible that the decision-maker (D) consult those concerned with the individual's welfare such as their family, friends and healthcare professionals. Determinations as to the best interests of individuals in minimally conscious state (MCS) are often dependent on an account of the individual's previously expressed views as communicated by their family. Analysis of the Court of Protection (CoP) judgements of Baker J, Charles J and Hayden J was undertaken to determine the main factors which influence the difference in weight assigned to the family's views determinations of whether continuation of life-sustaining treatment (LST) from an individual in MCS.

A general definition of autonomy is the 'liberty to follow one's will', i.e. having the freedom to make one's own choices, but it has been argued that different understandings of autonomy can be divided into three broad categories: 'ideal-desire autonomy' (acting according to the choices which P should desire, based on an objective account of autonomy); 'current-desire autonomy' (acting according to P's impulsive choices); and 'best-desire autonomy' (acting in alignment with P's reflective choices) (OED Online, June 2021; Coggon, 2007). At its conception, best interests was a predominantly medicalised, paternalistic concept but the legal definition has evolved to place

an individual's best-desire autonomy at its core. However, the account of autonomy adopted by the judge within the CoP varies and has significant implications for the role assigned to the family, and thus the final determination as to whether to withdraw LST.

Additionally, narratives of the family are created within the CoP to indicate the family's motivations, to assess the credibility of their evidence, and are utilised by the Judge to provide increasing justification for their best interests determination and decision as to whether to withdraw LST. The main themes identified within the narratives created of the family were honesty, respect, selflessness, closeness in the relationship with the patient, and emotional involvement within the case. However, the family must cope with highly stressful circumstances, such as the onset of the patient's disability and their involvement with the legal proceedings, which may modify their behaviour resulting in their perceived character being a poor determinant of reliability. Paradoxically, the consolidation of best-desire autonomy and the family's role within the law may have led to the opposition character profiling the family more aggressively, further compromising determinations of the family's reliability. This may have a deleterious impact on the validity of autonomy assessments, ultimately jeopardising the ethical justifiability of legal decisions regarding the withdrawal of LST from patients in MCS.

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Statue:

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Other:

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Keywords

Medical Law, capacity, autonomy, character profiling

Session 4C (S4C)

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
S4C - Inclusive ethics: Paper 1



Research ethics in a multilingual world: A guide to reflect on practical, social and ideological language decisions

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Abstract

In our daily life as researchers, we have noticed many ethical dilemmas that are connected to language decisions we make while conducting research in globalised contexts. We meet these dilemmas at each stage of the research process, from designing the research to disseminating it. Current literature on research ethics in relation to multilingual research tend to focus on one of two of the stages of the research process and the majority of the existing literature focuses on the ethical concerns that arise while doing fieldwork, data collection and dissemination in multilingual contexts. We have noticed, however, that language decisions with potential ethical implications occur also in other ways.

Based on this, we focus on the real-world ethical questions and unpack the complex and dynamic ethical dilemmas that arise at all stages of the research process. We do this through answering two research questions. Firstly, we investigate how multilingualism and research ethics intersect at each stage of the research process, i.e. what ethical problems arise at the different stages of doing research. Secondly, we examine what ethical concerns arise for researchers in a multilingual world, i.e. what potential linguistic decisions in relation to research ethics need to be made by researchers?

We base our presentation on a critical and transdisciplinary literature review, guided by Grant and Booth's (2009) overview on review types and Montuori's (2013) transdisciplinary approach. Our review is critical as it goes beyond description to include analysis and conceptual innovation that results in a model. We take stock, deconstruct and reconstruct ideas from different disciplines to

identify and map significant literature that “brings information from separate disciplines together so that it can be useful knowledge that allows us to act wisely” (Montuori, 2013, p. 47). For this, we included knowledge produced in several languages that we as a multilingual researcher team could access, which is one of the ethical principles we put forward.

Our literature review – combined with our own research experiences – show that there are ethical dilemmas in which languages play a practical (e.g. understanding, communication), social (e.g. developing trust, relationships, collaboration) and ideological (e.g. power, justice, worldviews) role. In this talk, we present a new framework for reflection on research ethics, grounded in practical research ethics (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). This new framework extends an invitation to the wider research community, including researchers, researcher educators, members of research teams as well as ethics commissions, funders, etc. to systematically reflect on language decisions at all stages of the research process, by considering practical, social and ideological aspects. As different languages and language varieties come into contact in nearly all research contexts this not only concerns colleagues working in language-related subjects, but also those doing research in other disciplines inside and outside of academia.

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Keywords

language decisions, multilingualism, practical research ethics



Equity, diversity and inclusion in research: an exploratory manifesto

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Abstract

We consider the implication of manifesto as a legitimate academic genre (Yanoshevsky, 2009) with a view to exploring how ethical commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion might be fully embedded into the research process from developing questions to research dissemination. Equity recognises that we all do not start from the same place. To offer equity, through fairness and justice, we need to engage in an active and reflective process, identifying and overcoming intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures. Diversity refers to the full spectrum of differences and similarities between individuals, extending beyond socio-demographic variables to diversity in beliefs and values (Claude-Gervais, 2020). Inclusivity needs to be central to our drive for research excellence “[to] mak[e] it more relevant to society as a whole, ethically sound, rigorous, reproducible, and useful” (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, 2023). Whilst grounded in legal obligations (Government Equalities Office, 2010) to eliminate discrimination as framed by identified protected characteristics, our activity is broadened to respond to the urgency of calls to: decolonise universities, recognise Black Lives Matter and enact epistemic justice.

We illustrate this through a process of collaborative exploration in a University Faculty (which covers the Social Sciences of Education, Health and Social Care, Languages and Applied Linguistics) as an approach to guiding inclusive research. The aim is to ensure a range of voices and values are brought together in research, which needs to be disruptive to: recognise that ‘minorities’ are in the majority, to annihilate deficit framing and othering (eg. Claude-Gervais, 2020) and to eliminate discrimination and imposition of views and values on others.

The current working document includes a set of principles followed by questions and provocative statements for key stages of the research process. Our consultation has urged us to develop

further guidance of how to put these principles into action, which this presentation will explore. The EDI manifesto covers six identifiable stages in the research process i) building a team ii) asking research questions iii) methodology and data collection iv) data analysis v) dissemination. We present our working document, as well as steps towards bringing this to life to inspire and support inclusive and ethical research practices. Working from an approach broadly shaped by critical collaborative ethnography and autoethnography (eg. Dutta, 2016; Rappaport, 2008) we draw on lived experiences to present a series of illustrative critical vignettes which will lead to an extended illustrative case study critically exploring aspects of EDI practice in research. This connects with the need to recognise diverse backgrounds and intersectionality as experienced to understand how to support equity.

We conclude with our EDI in research manifesto - an affirmative ethical call to action - that defines what it looks and feels like when equity is thoroughly embedding in the research process. Drawing on voices from within academia and beyond we provide a vehicle to provoke ourselves and our colleagues to convert rhetoric into new norms of ethical and inclusive practice through Embedding, Educating and Elevating voices.

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Keywords

ethnography, ethics-in-design, ethics-in-practice, inclusion, EDI, manifesto



Online research methods: Situating and negotiating ethical principles in sensitive topics research.

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Abstract

Participants' confidentiality and data protection are paramount while conducting online methodologies to comply with research ethics principles, especially regarding sensitive topics. However, those principles are constantly negotiated during the the research process, from the application to Ethics Committee to the fieldwork experience.

Several studies have indicated how people relate in diverse ways to the techno securitisation of everyday life (Ellis, 2020; Ellis et al., 2013; Dencik & Cable, 2017) while using online technologies, including attitudes of indifference and compliance that also question our assumptions regarding participants' concerns and decisions. That was the case with my online fieldwork in Colombia while looking at Congenital Syphilis prevention during the Covid 19 pandemic. I conducted interviews, Online Asynchronous Focus Groups (OAFG) and diaries through mobile phones and WhatsApp with healthcare workers and administrators, pregnant women or recent mothers, and partners. Even though precautionary measures were taken during the application to the Ethics Committee, several unexpected scenarios emerged, ethical principles were constantly being re-contextualised, and procedures were routinely updated in the process of conducting ethically appropriate research and fieldwork. Considerable tensions appeared regarding the differences between data protection regulations between countries, architecture and security configurations of messaging Apps, Internet and mobile data providers (coverage and service provision), users' terms and conditions, social and cultural diversity among participants (Indigenous, Afrodescendants, migrants and internally displaced people), as well as agency

negotiations among participants. For instance, OAFG participants occasionally seemed not "to care" about or "be indifferent" to anonymity or data protection and the use of WhatsApp even after changing users' terms and conditions. In 2021 WhatsApp implemented new terms and conditions for their users in Colombia. Those conditions refer to sharing information with Facebook companies and businesses that use their services. Information such as mobile numbers, IP addresses, location, other contacts' numbers, transactions done through the App and user interactions (frequency, time and duration). I argue for a situational ethics approach (Weis, 2019; Munteanu et al., 2015; Halford, 2017; Warrell and Jacobsen, 2014) that allows flexibility for navigating through online research's constantly changing landscapes. Therefore, it is vital in online research to consider how technical aspects intervene with ethical principles and allow participants to represent themselves and indicate their preferences without imposing our assumptions as researchers.

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Keywords

Situational ethics, WhatsApp, sensitive topics, Colombia

Session 4D (S4D)

Research Ethics Conference 2023

6th July 2023

S4D - Navigating Ethics Within and Across Disciplines: Panel



Navigating Ethics Within and Across Disciplines

Bath Ethics Committee Members

University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom; South West Doctoral Training Partnership, Bristol, United Kingdom

Panel

The University of Bath Committee Chair Panel will bring together Chairs from the various university-mandated ethics committees operating across Bath, to discuss the different ways that ethics are approached, the different challenges each faces, and the kinds of scenarios that each has to deal with

Keynote: Dr Simon Kolstoe

Research Ethics Conference 2023
6th July 2023
Keynote PM



Linking Research Ethics to Research Culture

Dr Simon Kolstoe

University of Portsmouth

Keynote Abstract

Research Culture, Ethics, Governance, Reproducibility, Integrity, Waste, Transparency: all terms that reflect a concern for the quality and conduct of research. But how does, or should, the research community address such issues especially given the wide range of academic interests, subjects and methodologies? Do processes and systems constructed in one area (for instance Medicine) translate well to research in very different areas and contexts? By drawing on experience from Research Ethics Committees (RECs) operating across the UK Health, Defence and University contexts, I will try to define what it is that we are trying to achieve, and how this can be used to encourage high quality, ethical, research.

About the speaker: Dr Simon Kolstoe is a Reader in Bioethics at the University of Portsmouth where his work looks at the role of ethics committees and governance structures in promoting research integrity. He chairs research ethics committees for the UK NHS, Ministry of Defence, and Health Security Agency (formally PHE), and is a member of the specialist "Human Challenge" research ethics committee. He is a trustee of the charity UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), and the UK adapting author of the popular Oxford University Press "Research Integrity" course.

Day 2: Research Ethics Forum

Keynote: Expert Panel

Research Ethics Conference 2023
7th July 2023
Keynote AM



Doing interdisciplinary research ethics in AI

Emma Carmel, Catriona Gray, Mafalda Ribeiro, Iulia Cioroianu, and Julian Padget
University of Bath, Bath, United Kingdom

Keynote Abstract

There is mounting evidence of the potential harms associated with technologies employing data science and AI (or, as it is in most instances, machine learning (ML)). The design, development and use of these technologies in academic research presents novel ethical challenges and amplifies existing ones. Traditionally, institutional ethical review has focused on research involving human subjects, and its main purpose has been to prevent harm to those individuals. This approach has been somewhat disrupted in recent years, however. The increased pace of research using large-scale datasets including publicly available social media data, has prompted debates about appropriate considerations and safeguards when conducting research.

The kinds of harms that may arise from the use of AI related technologies, including downstream harms [3], can be difficult to predict in advance and to quantify. This makes risk assessment particularly challenging, and a task that often requires multi- and interdisciplinary expertise [4]. Much AI research is highly interdisciplinary and international in nature. As a consequence, several different research cultures with different ethical assumptions and practices may be involved [5].

In response to these challenges, many institutions have implemented major changes to research governance structures. Institutions such as Stanford University and the University of Bath have established specialist committees to deliberate and offer guidance on these issues. The University of Bath's Data and Digital Science Research Ethics Committee is dedicated to managing the implications of projects involving large amounts of data, social media data, or the use of AI/ML. It is responsible for, among other things, "taking account of legitimate interests of other individuals, bodies, and communities associated with the research [...]" [6]

This panel will bring together researchers from across disciplines working to advance integrity, ethics and responsibility in AI research. It will provide an opportunity for dialogue between scholars with the possibility of follow-up collaboration.

Questions the panel will discuss include:

- What practical steps are universities taking to address the above challenges?
- What kind of expertise is required to conduct robust and comprehensive assessments of risks associated with data science and ML in research?
- What is the relationship between research ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)?
- How do we teach research ethics in interdisciplinary contexts? What differences can we identify across disciplines?
- Are there ethical divergences between academia and industry? If so, how should researchers navigate them?

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Keywords

Artificial Intelligence, data, interdisciplinary, machine learning

Ethics Surgery

Research Ethics Conference 2023
7th July 2023
Ethics Surgery



All Day Drop-in Ethics Surgery with the Bath Research Governance and Compliance Team

Dr Filipa Vance (Head of Research Governance and Compliance), Fran Baber (Research Integrity Manager) and Dale Topley (Trusted Research Manager)
University of Bath, Bath, United Kingdom

Ethics Surgery Description

The Bath Research Governance and Compliance team have kindly offered to assist students and staff on how to fill in a successful ethics applications and address present research challenges at an all-day drop in surgery. Staffed by University of Bath ethics experts, the Ethics Surgery will provide an opportunity for staff and students in attendance at the conference to receive real-time advice and feedback on ongoing or future applications for ethical approval. Sessions are likely to last between 15 to 20 minutes. Take advantage of their expert advice whatever stage it is you are of your research or ethics application!

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

Whose data is it, anyway?" The question of research participant engagement in secondary data analysis



Workshop: "Whose data is it, anyway?" The question of research participant engagement in secondary data analysis

Karen Lloyd¹, Lynn Laidlaw², Ali Percy³, Barbara Caddick⁴, Geraldine Leydon⁵, Fiona Stevenson¹

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Workshop Abstract

Aim: The aim of this workshop is to explore critical ethical issues around the engagement of research participants in the use of their data for secondary analysis. The focus will be primarily on secondary analysis of qualitative data, but the discussion will also be beneficial for quantitative and mixed methods researchers.

Background: There has been an explosion of interest in open science, and increasingly the use of open data for secondary analysis, in recent years. Major funding bodies in health research and the social sciences increasingly recognise that secondary data analysis facilitates the development of new knowledge and theory. The National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) [1], Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) [2] and Medical Research Council (MRC) [3] all advocate data reuse. To date, much of this momentum has focussed on the sharing and reuse of quantitative data, but there is a growing call for open qualitative data.

Qualitative data collection is time-intensive for both researchers and participants. Secondary analysis of existing data can make savings in terms of time, cost and crucially, is perceived to reduce participant burden. Re-using data removes the need to identify field sites, recruit, and consent participants, as well as access or purchase equipment, and often negates the need for costly transcription. The COVID-19 pandemic has only intensified the existing pressures on 'in person' qualitative work and 'being in the field', rendering some research sites completely

inaccessible [4-7]. Secondary analysis of qualitative data is an attractive solution to these challenges.

Yet, we argue that, in the movement towards open qualitative data and the growing push for re-use of this data, the voices of research participants quite often are not fully heard or may be silenced altogether. This session will turn down the volume on some of the other debates around open science and open data to make room for a conversation about research participant ownership, power and engagement in secondary analysis.

Should research participants have a say in what their data is used for, including the research questions explored through secondary analysis? Should we always sense check our analysis with participants and how, ethically, should this be done? Should people be informed every time their data is used for further analysis, and how accessible should these analyses and publications be to research participants? How can we make them accessible? Should secondary analysis always have patient/participant and public involvement?

Together, these questions lead us to ask ourselves the bigger question of, 'Whose data is it, anyway?' In this workshop, we will create a safe place for critical discussions of key ethical issues related to the involvement of research participants in secondary analysis.

Workshop structure: This workshop will begin with a short introduction to the topic and to ethical issues in the literature around secondary data analysis and participant engagement, with a specific focus on qualitative data. We will then move into breakout groups for more focussed discussions of several cross-cutting themes: (a) Informed consent, (b) data ownership, (c) data accessibility, and (d) participant involvement. A facilitator will join in small group discussions to support and guide conversations and to record observations.

We will then come back together for a fuller discussion of the themes and issues explored in small groups. The facilitator(s) will provide a summary of the key points of discussion at the end of the workshop and aim to develop consensus around core principles related to participant engagement in secondary analysis.

Predicted outcomes: Attendees will develop a greater understanding of the ethical dilemmas surrounding secondary analysis and research participant engagement, which can inform their own future research practices. Drawing on workshop discussions, the facilitators aim develop a set of core principles for research participant engagement in secondary analysis of qualitative

data, which will also be informed by their own original research with key stakeholders. This report will be submitted for publication and made available to attendees.

Facilitators: Karen Lloyd - I am a medical sociologist and qualitative researcher. I am a Senior Research Associate in the Research Department for Primary Care and Population Health, University College London. My interests are in qualitative methods, sexual health and HIV, and digital health. I lead the NIHR School for Primary Care Research funded 'Qualitative Data Preservation and Sharing' (Q-DaPs) project, which aims to develop and launch a repository for the sharing and secondary analysis of qualitative health and social care data.

Lynn Laidlaw - I live with a rare disease and multiple long-term conditions. A 4-year diagnostic odyssey prompted my interest in Patient and Public Involvement, and I now work with multiple different researchers and organizations across the UK, including as a peer researcher. I am involved with the Health Research Authority; one of my interests is how we involve public contributors and participants in research with ethics, ensuring it's not done to them.

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Keywords

Secondary analysis, ethics, participant/public involvement

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

Ethical Complexities of Conducting Research with Young People in
Contexts of vulnerability and the Global South: Workshop



Workshop: Ethical Complexities of Conducting Research with Young People in Contexts of vulnerability and the Global South: Workshop

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Workshop Abstract

This in-person workshop will examine the ethical complexities of conducting research with young people living and working in vulnerable contexts in the Global South. Drawing on a qualitative research project with young African migrants in Ghana (*Promoting sustainable livelihoods and empowerment with young migrants in Ghana* [Spencer et al. forthcoming]), the workshop aims to offer a forum for sharing experiences, debating the ethical challenges, as well as identifying opportunities for ethical youth-centred research with young people occupying vulnerable and marginalised contexts. The workshop will be facilitated using the World Café method (2015) – an approach that aims to engage participants in a number of small structured in-depth discussions and provocations with different participants before sharing insights as a whole group. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to draw on examples from their own research and fields of interest – highlighting the resultant ethical deliberations. The following critical areas will be also used to prompt discussions and ethical reflection:

Proposed discussion areas:

- How can we access and recruit young people on the move and in the absence of parents/legal guardians?
- How can we conduct research 'on the spot' or 'in the moment' whilst upholding ethical standards?

- How can we accurately identify children's ages, and what ethical implications do these processes have? What does this mean for our compliance with institutional ethics requirements?
- Should research ask participants to discuss and further expose their vulnerability?
- How can we report our work to participants in changing circumstances – especially children on the move?
- How should research and ethics processes be adapted to address these questions?

Anticipated workshop outcomes

The workshop will:

- Identify key ethics questions in research with children and young people occupying vulnerable contexts in the Global South and develop mitigating practices that are ethically sound.
- Enhance attendees' critical reflection on the ethics of their own research.
- Develop an ethics checklist/series of questions for researchers to consider when planning and conducting research with young people in vulnerable contexts.

To ensure sufficient time for deep-level discussions and maximise participation, we would like to request 1.5 hours for the workshop. Materials required include AV facilities for opening/PowerPoint presentation, and flip-chart paper and pens to capture small group discussions.

Facilitators and experience

Grace Spencer is an Associate Professor in Young People, Health and Social Equity at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. She is an experienced researcher and facilitator in the area of young people, vulnerability and research ethics. Grace is the Editor of the international volume, *Ethics and Integrity in Research with Children and Young People* (2022, Emerald Publishing) and has over 18 years experience of research with children and young people and facilitating workshops on research ethics in relation to childhood and youth-centred research.

Ginny (Virginia) Morrow is Visiting Professor, UCL Social Research Institute, and Academic Visitor, Young Lives, Department of International Development, University of Oxford. She has

been a member of numerous Advisory Groups, Research Ethics Committees, and acts as ethics advisor on research projects.

Jill Thompson is a Senior Lecturer in Global Health and Wellbeing. She has over 20 years' experience as a qualitative researcher and has facilitated focus group discussions and workshops with a wide range of target audiences.

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Keywords

Ethics, young people, vulnerability, reflexivity, Global-South

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

Understanding Ethical Stress: Scholarly Publishing in the Journal of Academic Ethics



Workshop: Understanding Ethical Stress: Scholarly Publishing in the Journal of Academic Ethics

Loreta Tauginienė

Hanken School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland

Workshop Abstract

Aim. This interactive in-person workshop aims to discuss ethical stress related to scholarly publishing, namely the one related to publishing studies on research ethics/integrity in academia. It will be exemplified with the case study of the Journal of Academic Ethics as a potential outlet for publication in the field. The case study includes introduction of the journal expectations and discussion on the role of open science (e.g. research data availability). It will also present dos and don'ts at the submission stage (e.g. conflict of interest, alleged research malpractice). Afterwards, the workshop participants will be engaged through an anonymised real-life short case. They will be required to reflect and share their observations and insights. Then, ethical stress in research conduct and scholarly publishing will be discussed (e.g. how it emerges, how to minimise it).

The large community might be interested in attending this workshop since it targets all career-stage researchers investigating different aspects of research ethics/integrity. Having different career-stage researchers in the same room would help to enable a broader discussion on complying with ethical standards for scholarly publishing, including experiencing ethical stress, and, hopefully, to reduce the unreasonable fear. Knowledge gained in this workshop is expected to be spread mouth to mouth, so it will build up zest as well as it will increase interest in exploring research ethics/integrity.

Predicted outcomes. The workshop participants will be able to:

- better understand ethical stress in publication of studies on research ethics/integrity; and
- improve skills in submitting the manuscript to the journal.

Length. 60 min.

A short background and experience summary of workshop facilitator. Dr. Loreta Tauginienė is a social scientist, experienced in interdisciplinary research at Hanken School of Economics, Finland. Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Academic Ethics*. Lecturer at international PhD workshops on research integrity/ethics in, e.g. Italy, Latvia, Lithuania. Simultaneously, experienced practitioner due to different roles (e.g., ombudsperson for academic ethics and procedures in Lithuania; vice-president of the association European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO); member of the Council of Europe Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED) Bureau). In the past, a member of the ENAI Board. Main research interests include research ethics/integrity, social responsibility and ethical issues in citizen science.

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No pre-readings are required.

Further reading

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Keywords

Ethical stress, scholarly publishing, submission.

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

Decolonisation??? What has that got to do with contemporary ethics!!!



Workshop: Decolonisation??? What has that got to do with contemporary ethics!!!

Poorna Gunasekera

University of Plymouth, Plymouth, United Kingdom

Workshop Abstract

Background

We are blessed to live in an era where information is available freely. What used to be 'expert knowledge' is now 'common sense', carrying with it the inherent risks of miscomprehension. The sheer diversity of opinions, with limited appreciation of their credibility, has also led to increasing mistrust of 'the professionals'. Therefore, it is vital that 'professionals' respect the collective understanding of 'lay people' in order to find common ground and re-establish that mutual trust.

Wikipedia (2023) defines decolonisation as "... the undoing of colonialism, the latter being the process whereby imperial nations establish and dominate foreign territories, often overseas". This may well be the understanding of many people when considering the concept of 'decolonisation'. Yet is decolonisation purely about redressing past mistakes; can colonisation still manifest in this day and age where domination of foreign territories is almost non-existent?

Aim

This workshop will propose that decolonisation is not merely a matter of the past, hence seemingly outside the remit of contemporary ethical consideration; it is also about providing hidden voices an opportunity to express themselves in this current period (Thambinathan and Kinsella, 2021). 'Colonisation' may indeed manifest within 'local communities' when the values and belief of some parts of the population, especially the marginalised, are overlooked in the search for empirical evidence.

Through discussion of a series of case studies, where participants will be first encouraged to apply the four pillars of medical ethics (Nisselle, 2015), before considering ‘the hidden colonisation agenda’, the workshop aims to highlight the importance incorporating decolonisation as a fundamental consideration of ethics. It will also seek to emphasise the opportunity for knowledge exchange realised through balanced appreciation of the participants of research, as much as the researchers themselves, as envisioned by the New Brunswick Declaration (Van Den Hoonaard, 2013).

Method

Participants will be encouraged to work in progressively larger discussion groups utilising the mini-Delphi technique (Dawn, 2021). Responses to a handful of questions will be first recorded in paper, before participants elaborate on their content through open discussion.

Anticipated outcomes

As much as seeking consensus, the process will seek to draw out key statements that capture the essence of the observations. Vitally, the process will seek to establish a collaborating network to publish concept papers.

Workshop facilitator

The workshop, ideally of 60 minutes duration, will be run by Poorna Gunasekera, who has been a member of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health in the University of Plymouth for almost 10 years. He is also the current co-chair of the Global Health Collaborative (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/global-health-collaborative>), a Health Education England sponsored group of academics, clinicians and researchers, who are dedicated to the development of sustainable global health projects, through the effective delivery, evaluation and coordination of their management. In his role as the Associate Dean (International) of the Faculty of Health, Poorna plays a key role in applying the principals of Decolonisation and Knowledge Exchange in Higher Education and ethics.

Poorna has presented papers and conducted workshops around the world. His most recent contributions have been serving as the co-chair of the 7th Innovative Learning Spaces Summit held in Amsterdam in September 2022 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rjFr3AkoSE>) and being nominated by the World Bank to serve as a panellist at International Conference on Blended

Learning Ecosystem for Higher Education in Agriculture, in New Delhi in March 2023 (<https://icble2023.krishimegh.in/>). His vision of self-discovery leading to mutual empowerment is outlined in the TEDx talk https://www.ted.com/talks/poorna_gunasekera_the_legacy_of_self_discovery.

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Keywords

#Decolonisation, #Ethics, #Knowledge Exchange, #New Brunswick

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

'Integrity is doing the right thing when you don't have to—when no one else is looking or will ever know" (Marshall, 2002, p142)



Workshop: ‘Integrity is doing the right thing when you don’t have to—when no one else is looking or will ever know” (Marshall, 2002, p142)

Kris Hill¹, Jes Hooper¹, Sarah Oxley Heaney¹, Michelle Szydlowski²

¹University of Exeter, Exeter, United Kingdom. ²International Elephants, Florida, USA

Workshop Abstract

Aim and Predicted Outcomes

Investigating ‘the right thing.’

Our workshop will use four case studies of research involving other-than-human animals (OTHA) to open a dialogue concerning the use (and abuse) of animals in social research. Through these cases, we aim to highlight ethics from a moral and institutional standpoint and to query whether published research that has cleared the ethical review board (ERB) process, is in fact ethically and morally justified. Apart from the 5 Rs in research ethics OTHA are rarely considered within the research ethics process beyond how they are treated in invasive laboratory experiments. The direct or indirect impacts on OTHA participants or bystanders are often overlooked in social research. We ask whether morality and ethics differ for each ERB and journal, and non-existent for industry-sponsored research. This discussion aims to problematise these issues amongst others. We ask whether culture bias means we are numbed to a cultural normalisation of how OTHAs are treated and how they are or are not consulted or considered within research. The workshops will ask the audience to consider these elements of ethics and morality within research using these cases as a vehicle for discussion.

Workshop Proposal

We propose a panel-type workshop centered around the four case studies, where the audience will be encouraged to consider their own potential cultural biases and how they react to each of the following other-than-human animal research cases

1) A study published in *Animals* earlier this year focussed on empathy in goats by recording how they responded to the witnessing the slaughter of other goats. The researchers claimed an aim of their research was to improve the welfare of goats destined for slaughter.

2) The 'forced swim test', conducted by biomedical researchers to measure the efficacy of antidepressant medication, involves drowning or near-drowning of mice to measure how long they sustain the will to live. This method has been used since the 1970s, and recently has received renewed attention and a calling for it to be banned. Even if they contribute towards improved human health, are such experiments ever justifiable?

3) The training of rats to sniff out ordnance. Whilst universally reviled by many, companion animals to some, rats are often considered heroes when employed to sniff out ordnance. We juxtapose their position as heroes with that of consent to be trained and their unwilling participation in fatal laboratory studies, ultimately deemed as a research commodity to further "scientific knowledge". Research into the potential of rats as bomb sniffing commissioned by military research bodies seeks to train rodents to detect bombs is deemed successful from a human perspective. However, this raises the question of how the research was reviewed and if the rodents' wellbeing was even considered by any ERB?

4) Temple Grandin has been researching the slaughter of farm animals for decades. Her research, some say, aims at improving animal welfare at the slaughter stage of processing OTHA commodities for meat. Slaughter houses have implemented her recommendations, which arguably reduced the fear experienced by animals during their last few hours of life. However, Grandin's research is criticised as failing to consider the OTHA to be slaughtered as ethically significant. We ask, does she represent the meat industry or to improve animal welfare?

Workshop Facilitator Bios

Sarah Oxley Heaney is an Anthrozoology PhD student with the University of Exeter. Her project 'Kissing Sharks' www.kissingsharks.com examines unique, co-developed shark-human

relationships. Other anthrozoologic interests focus upon abandoned cats in Saudi Arabia, where her research-activist work continues.

Kris Hill is completing her PhD in Anthrozoology with Exeter University. Her doctoral research focuses on cat-human relations in urban communities, and discourses surrounding roaming cats (*Felis catus*). Other areas of interest include more-than-human families, animal representations, and animals in tourism. <https://katzenlife.wordpress.com/>

Michelle Szydlowski earned her PhD in 2021. Her focus is on the intersection of humans and other-than-human animals in conservation and tourism settings. She studies pachyderms at the wild-captive interface and works toward equality for marginalized communities. Find her at internationalelephants.org.

Jes Hooper is an Anthrozoology PhD candidate at the University of Exeter. Her research focuses on human-civet relationships including those involved in civet coffee, tourism, and conservation. Jes is founder of the non-profit www.thecivetproject.com

Useful References

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References

Marshall, C.W., 2003. Shattering the glass slipper. M Power Resources.

Keywords

Other-than-human animals, multispecies, review boards, integrity

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

The intricate ethics of participatory research: exploring complexities and challenges



Workshop: The intricate ethics of participatory research: exploring complexities and challenges

Sarah Banks¹, Mary Brydon-Miller²

¹Durham University, Durham, United Kingdom. ²University of Louisville, Louisville, USA

Workshop Abstract

Participatory research entails people with lived experience of the issue to be researched playing an active role in designing and conducting the study, often in partnership with academics with the aim of bringing about positive change. This might include people living in an area suffering from water pollution participating in a citizen science project, or women with experience of domestic violence co-researching police responses, for example. Often the scope of the partnership and plan for the research develop over time. Community partners may be both research informants and co-researchers, whilst academics may be both co-researchers and advocates or activists.

Participatory research, along with other forms of co-produced and collaborative research, is becoming increasingly popular with funders and university researchers. Reasons include that it is thought likely to generate improved research design, make a real-world impact, and contribute to the democratisation and decolonisation of academic research. Yet it is also a complex process, requiring a high degree of ethical sensitivity, skills in using participatory methods, working in groups, handling conflict and developing strategies for social change. It can also be difficult for research ethics committees to review, as members may be unfamiliar with this type of research and researchers may not be able to answer mandatory questions about research design and process.

In this workshop we will consider some of the main ethical challenges in participatory research (including handling power, ownership, control and the institutional ethics review process) and the implications for community-based and academic researchers and research ethics

reviewers. What ethical sensitivities do community-based and academic researchers need? What should research ethics reviewers and research ethics committees be aware of in assessing participatory research? How can research ethics reviewers best support participatory research whilst ensuring it is ethically conducted? Whose ethics counts?

We will introduce the newly revised 2nd edition of the ethical guidelines for participatory research published by the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action at Durham and the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement and the accompanying toolkits and ethics case examples. We will invite participants to share some of their ethical dilemmas, identify the moral qualities of the good participatory researcher and discuss some case examples of ethically challenging situations.

The aim of the workshop is to inspire each other through sharing examples of good and challenging practice, firing us up both to promote and protect ethical practice in participatory research. We anticipate participants will gain new insights into what counts as ethical practice in participatory research and whose responsibility it is to enable and ensure it.

Facilitators:

Sarah Banks is Professor in the Department of Sociology and co-founder of the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action, Durham University, UK, which promotes and supports participatory action research. She has a particular interest in ethics in participatory research. With colleagues, she has developed ethical guidelines for participatory research, toolkits, guides and collections of ethics cases, and offers training/events for academic and community-based researchers. She has coordinated several participatory research projects, including research on debt, poverty and community development, and coordinates the Ethics Working Group of the International Collaboration for Participatory Health Research. She is co-editor with Mary Brydon-Miller of *Ethics in Participatory Research for Health and Wellbeing: Cases and Commentaries* (Routledge 2019), co-editor of *Co-Producing Research: A Community Development Approach* (Policy Press 2019), and co-author of *Participatory Research for Health and Social Well-Being* (Springer 2019). Contact: s.j.banks@durham.ac.uk

Mary Brydon-Miller is Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership, Evaluation, and Organizational Development in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Louisville, USA. She is co-editor with Sarah Banks of *Ethics in Participatory Research for Health and Wellbeing: Cases and Commentaries* (Routledge 2019) and with David

Coghlan of the SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research (2014). She has written extensively on issues related to research ethics in the context of community-based research (see e.g., Brydon-Miller & Wood, 2022). She is currently working with colleagues at the Centre for Sociodigital Futures based at the University of Bristol on a research fellowship focused on research ethics.

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Keywords

ethics, participatory research, research ethics committees

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

The growing research ethics industry and the need for refocussing on ethics



Workshop: The growing research ethics industry and the need for refocussing on ethics

David Carpenter

United Kingdom Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), Croydon, United Kingdom

Workshop/Activity Abstract

Research ethics review, or 'approval' as it is frequently called, seems to be a growing 'industry', generating an increasing number of hoops for researchers to jump through. In many cases it is seen as the last hoop and the only thing standing between the researcher and their research. A focus on ethics is rarely apparent, rather there seems to be a growth of regulatory review with a focus on compliance. This workshop will challenge the current approach to ethics review with the aim of putting ethics at the heart of research and its review. Pause and think of the much used term 'ethical approval' - are all processes of review ethical?

David Carpenter is an independent consultant and trainer in research ethics. He is a retired moral and political philosopher with experience as a university ethics adviser. David chairs an NHS REC (currently South Central Hampshire A) and Google Deep Mind's Human Behavioural REC. David is a former member of the British Psychological Society ethics committee.

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

Safely and ethically engaging children and young people in 'sensitive' research



Workshop: Safely and ethically engaging children and young people in 'sensitive' research

Helen Beckett^{1,2}, Silvie Bovarnick^{1,3}, Camille Warrington^{1,4}, Claire Soares¹, Hannah Millar¹

¹University of Bedfordshire, Luton, United Kingdom. ²University of Central Lancashire, Preston, United Kingdom. ³Universität Hildesheim, Hildesheim, Germany. ⁴Edinburgh University, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Workshop Abstract

Introduction

Despite increasing recognition of children's Article 12 UNCRC right to have a say about matters that affect them, including through research, there remains a documented reticence to involve children and young people in research that is deemed to be more 'sensitive', such as that exploring issues of childhood abuse. This is particularly true of those who are known to have experienced abuse, with assumptions about their vulnerability often precluding any consideration of the potential benefits of participation or ways in which any associated risks might be effectively managed (Bovarnick et al, 2018).

Whilst recognising that such engagement should not be undertaken lightly, learning from children and young people is a vital element of ensuring that our understanding of, and responses to, their experiences of harm are fit for purpose. Furthermore, such work – if done appropriately - can be a positive and empowering experience for the child/young person involved; offering them the opportunity to reclaim their (frequently silenced) voice, and contribute to positive change (Hamilton et al, 2019; Warrington and Larkins 2019; Beckett et al, 2022; YRAP, 2022)

Drawing on their cumulative experience of engaging children and young people in 20 qualitative and mixed-methods research studies about abuse, the facilitators will host a workshop exploring the 'why' and 'how' of engaging children and young people in 'sensitive' research. Although

drawing primarily on sexual abuse research, the issues to be explored hold clear relevance for other issues often deemed 'too sensitive' for child/youth involvement and for the involvement of adults in 'sensitive' research.

Workshop content

Part one of the workshop will explore why it is important to find safe and ethical ways to involve children and young people in 'sensitive research'. It will consider:

- The perceived tension between children's participation and protection rights
- The importance of learning from children and young people, and challenging traditional hierarchies of knowledge, and
- The potential benefits for participants.

Part two will introduce the trauma-informed approach to research that the facilitators employ to safely and ethically facilitate children and young people's engagement in their research, including those with known experiences of abuse who may be perceived as 'too vulnerable' to consider for participation. The facilitators will share a range of practice-based examples of what adopting a trauma-informed approach to research has meant in practice, exploring the challenges and learning around issues such as:

- Meaningfully facilitating choice and control
- Building trust and rapport
- Managing potential for triggering and distress
- Reciprocity and representation
- Inclusive and accessible research processes

The workshop will involve some online engagement exercises for participants, as well as facilitator-led learning. Predicted outcomes include greater understanding of:

- The rationale for, and benefits of, engaging children and young people in sensitive research
- A trauma-informed approach to research
- The practical challenges, and potential solutions to, practically undertaking such work

Participants will also be informed about opportunities to further engage with the facilitators around these issues, including through our Learning Together project that focuses on supporting researchers to safely and ethically engage children and young people in sexual abuse research.

Facilitators

Dr Helen Beckett is Director of the Safer Young Lives Research Centre (SYLRC) at the University of Bedfordshire. She has been undertaking research with children and young people for 25 years, including in the field of child sexual abuse for the last 14 years. She holds particular expertise around the ethics and practicalities of engaging youth in qualitative research, and in researcher welfare.

Dr Camille Warrington is an Associate Professor in the SYLRC. Camille is an applied researcher specialising in qualitative, participatory and creative research practices to support children's rights in the field of interpersonal, domestic and sexual violence.

Claire Soares is a Research Fellow in the SYLRC. She has been researching child sexual abuse for the last seven years (including at IICSA) and has worked across a range of primarily qualitative projects that have explored different aspects of this; with an emphasis on foregrounding the views of children and young people themselves.

Dr Silvie Bovarnick is a Visiting Research Fellow with SYLRC and Interim Professor at Universität Hildesheim in Germany. Silvie has studied violence and abuse issues for over twenty years, both in the UK and internationally, and has a particular interest in co-producing research with young people who have lived experiences of sexual exploitation and trafficking

Hannah Millar joined the SYLRC in 2020, bringing ten years of experience of working directly with young people across a range of services. She works with the SYLRC Young Researchers Advisory Panel and in wider participatory research which seeks to include the views and voices from lesser-heard young people.

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Keywords

sensitive research; vulnerable participants; trauma-informed research

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023

7th July 2023

Reducing the potential for secondary trauma in research: a protocol to build researcher wellbeing into the research process



Workshop: Reducing the potential for secondary trauma in research: a protocol to build researcher wellbeing into the research process

Tina Skinner¹, Jade Bloomfield-Utting¹, Sophie Geoghegan-Fittall¹, Nicola Roberts², Saffy Sweetland¹, Helen Taylor³

¹University of Bath, Bath, United Kingdom. ²University of Sunderland, Sunderland, United Kingdom. ³(LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP NHS TRUST, Leicester, United Kingdom

Workshop Abstract

Research ethics procedures have substantially improved over the last three decades, such that university ethics committees now adopt independent peer review as well as providing guidance and standardized template documentation (e.g. consent forms). Despite this, researchers' wellbeing is often overlooked. This is particularly concerning when researching topics, such as sexual violence, death, war and homelessness, that may cause secondary trauma for the researcher.

The British Psychological Society (2020) state that the symptoms of secondary trauma are alike to the symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder felt by a victim-survivor of a direct traumatic event and can be experienced at any time in a research project, including whilst conducting interviews, coding quantitative/qualitative data, reviewing the literature or during policy campaigning. Symptoms of secondary trauma include intrusions (e.g., distressing thoughts), avoidance (e.g., of possible threats), increased arousal/reactivity (e.g., limited concentration/sleep), and alterations in cognitions/mood (e.g., withdrawal, negativity).

This in person workshop aims to develop participants:

- Knowledge of secondary trauma
- Understanding of when/how secondary trauma may affect researchers

- Awareness of how funders/institutions/supervisors/line managers/researchers can work together to reduce the potential of secondary trauma in researchers

The workshop will involve 2 x 60 min sessions. In the first session I draw on our chapter (Skinner et al, forthcoming), written with researchers I have worked with over the last 20 years, to: discuss with participants what secondary trauma linked to research is and how it might arise, talk candidly about our own experiences and needs as researchers/supervisors, and outline a protocol for moving forward ethically to help maintain researcher wellbeing. In the second session workshop participants will get the opportunity to participate in group discussions and try out tools (e.g. formulating your own wellbeing plan) to help them think about whether their research has/could cause secondary trauma and how to might mitigate this.

Dr Tina Skinner has worked in the field of gender-based violence since 1993, initially in a women's refuge, then as a PhD student and academic. She is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Bath where she has undertaken/supervised projects on: police, court and support service responses to rape and sexual assault, friends/family/partner responses to victim-survivors, healthy relationship and domestic abuse education for young people, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, and domestic abuse perpetrator programmes. She is currently leading a UKIR Research England funded study on researcher wellbeing and secondary trauma.

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Keywords

researcher, wellbeing, secondary trauma, protocol, distressing

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023
7th July 2023
Navigating ethics in publication practices



Workshop: Navigating ethics in publication practices

Nancy Chescheir

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, United Kingdom

Workshop Abstract

The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) provides guidance for those interested in publication ethics. This workshop will provide a roadmap to COPE resources and highlight current ethics issues in the landscape. The majority of time will be available for questions, answers and discussions and possible case discussions.

Workshop chair: Nancy Chescheir, MD is the Vice-Chair of COPE. She is the editor-in-chief of Reproductive, Female and Child Health and Editor-Emeritus of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is a practicing Maternal-Fetal Medicine physician at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Keywords

ethics, publication, journal, articles, publication ethics

Workshop

Research Ethics Conference 2023
7th July 2023
Navigating ethics in publication practices



Workshop: Building your moral compass with Lego Serious Play

Karen Kenny

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Workshop Abstract

This one hour session will introduce participants to the benefits of using Lego Serious Play techniques to develop their research plans. The activity incorporates 3 different types of LEGO® builds, each helping to develop the participants skills in relation to using LEGO® as a tool to unlock innovative solutions.

Objective: To introduce participants LEGO® Serious Play®

Outcomes: By the end of this session the participants will have uncovered new insights into their own ethical position, and will have explored the ethical impact of their project, and identified steps to ensure their work proceeds in an ethical way, from early planning through to dissemination.

In addition, participants will have learned about the possibilities afforded by using LEGO® Serious Play® to unlock creativity, enabling them to harness this process in the future.

