

# Importance of Research Bioethics

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Editorial

**"Ethics is Knowing the Difference What you have a Right to do and What is Right to do." (Potter Stewart)**



**Figure 1:** Ethics.

Ethics is crucial in profession. The importance of ethics and ethical conduct clearly recognizes your position as a professional. A stable ethical footing leads to a genuine professional.

Bioethics deals with ethical, social, and legal issues that occur in biomedicine and biomedical research. It comprises of research ethics, medical ethics, dental ethics, public health ethics and environmental ethics. Research ethics focuses on the comportment of research. Medical ethics emphasizes on issues in health care. Dental ethics concentrates on moral duties and responsibilities of the dentists towards the patients, professional contemporaries and to the society. Environmental ethics deals with matters concerning the relationship between human activities and the environment, and public health ethics, which addresses ethical issues in public health.

Bioethicists are individuals holding a graduate degree in bioethics or a related discipline like medicine, law dentistry public health etc. They conduct research and instruct courses and seminars that outline institutional policies for ethics committees and provide consultation and advice on ethical issues. They deal with ethical, social, and legal issues arising in biomedicine and biomedical research. They provide insight and guidance for academic institutions, hospitals, medical centers, government agencies, private corporations, and foundations [1].



**Figure 2:** Research Ethics.

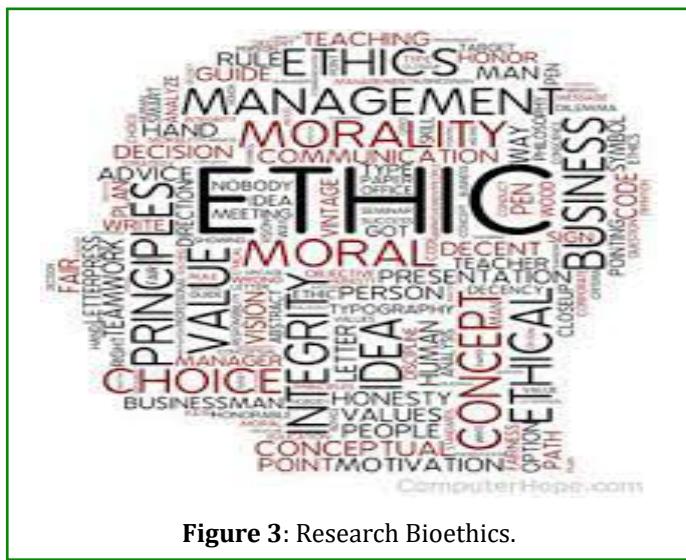
Medical ethics deals with fundamental issues like physicians' authoritarian deceptions and desecration of patient confidentiality along with the rights of patients or their substitutes to refuse life-sustaining treatments or ask for support in dying. It also ethical decisions when involving drug experiments on children mentally challenged or dying

patients. Medical ethics defines prejudice-free meanings of health, death, disease, and useless treatment. It also justifies whether to remove useful organs from patients who are either brain dead or had cardiac arrest. It also describes matters that are concerned with finding basis for fetal testing and abortion. It also deals with involuntary hospitalization and treatment of mentally distressed people; disputes between physicians and their employers and third-party (Figure 2).

Professional Dentistry in Pakistan is presently being challenged. It is about professionalism whether it is patient related or in research dentistry. It is essential to disseminate ethical behaviour and stress on formal ethics education be given to dental students through curriculum of Dental schools. There are needs in ethics education that need to be fulfilled. Four general themes that surfaced are: the need for ethics to be more fully incorporated in the curriculum and be carried on into the clinical years; ways of evaluating and certifying competence; the necessity for faculty development; and appropriate method of instruction

This would develop best possible education to its students, giving priority to public service over self-interest and enforcing regulations and codes of ethics through self-government.

The development of oral health is dependent upon ethical guidance from the dental profession in science and technology through impartial research and conscientious clinical investigation and ethical clinical practice, a dentist can substantially impact the health and well-being of the public (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Research Bioethics.

Individuals have basic human rights that include dignified treatment by researchers. Research subjects are not “objects” or resources to be used for some end.

The highest body within an institution shall establish the Ethical Board for Research that is provided with necessary and sufficient ongoing financial and administrative resources to fulfill their duties. They must be independent in their decision making and are accountable to the highest body that established them for the process of research ethics review (Figure 4).

There are three core principles of Research.



**Figure 4:** Three core principles of research.

Informed consent, which is free and ongoing, is necessary for the researchers and participants to act as collaborators. Participants must be advised of the risks and potential benefits of the research. Potential participants must be given an information sheet and/or consent form outlining what the research is about. Researchers must keep in mind the Welfare which is the Beneficence concerned with the well-being of person, group, community affected by the research. No person or group should be exploited for research e.g., prison inmates nor should be systemically excluded from the benefits. Confidentiality and anonymity are ethical practices designed to protect the privacy of human subjects while collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. Privacy and Confidentiality must be maintained when there is contact between researcher and subject to avoid harm, embarrassment, inadvertent identification. Benefits must outweigh any harm to participants. The ethical duty of confidentiality includes obligations to protect information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss, or theft. Researcher may have a duty to report on certain activities observed or disclosed (e.g., child abuse, crime). Permission from the participants to use the data may be sought after-the-fact if they are available [2].

The consent process is important step in research. Researchers must provide to prospective participants, or authorized third parties, full disclosure of all information necessary for making an informed decision to participate in a research project. The researcher demonstrates that the research is being carried out for the participant's direct benefit, or for the benefit of other persons in the same category. If the research does not have the potential for direct benefit to the participant but only for the benefit of the other persons in the same category, the researcher shall demonstrate that the research will expose the participant to only a minimal risk and minimal burden and demonstrate how the participant's welfare will be protected throughout the participation in research. Prospective participant must

have the ability to understand to consent. A consent form is important because it mentions the ability of the participant to leave study at any time. A person with limited ability (e.g., child, medically limited) must have an agent or guardian provide the consent [3].

The scope and objectives of the research, dictates that researcher should be inclusive in selecting participants. Researchers shall not exclude individuals from the opportunity to participate in research based on attributes such as culture, language, religion, race, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, linguistic proficiency, gender or age, unless there is a valid reason for the exclusion. Groups must not be unfairly included in research because they are convenient populations (prisoners, students, people with limited financial resources or those in other circumstances of vulnerability) [4].

The outcome of research is disseminated by the Researchers, through publication or otherwise, the analysis of data and interpretation of research results, including those that do not support the research hypotheses. The dissemination shall take place in a timely manner without undue restriction.

It is Researchers' responsibility to monitor their research to ensure that it is conducted in an ethical manner, report unanticipated issues or changes to the research, supervise all team members in the application of the research procedures, and ensure that they are properly qualified and versed in the conduct of ethical research.

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