

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT



ORIENTATION FOR GRADUATE
STUDENTS

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OVERVIEW

- ▶ What is research?
- ▶ Research may involve human or animal participants.
- ▶ This comes with unique complex **ethical**, legal, social and political issues.



SOME ETHICAL ISSUES IN RESEARCH (1)

- ▶ Researchers may observe/cause/experience:
 - Discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, association, etc)
 - Cruelty
 - Unfair practices
 - Crime
 - Ethical dilemma
 - Personal culture/religious conflict
 - Harm/pain to research participants (physical, social, etc)



SOME ETHICAL ISSUES IN RESEARCH (2)

- Encounter secret experiences of participants, confessions, etc
- Record participants voices, pictures or videos
- Record personal confidential details (illness status, marital challenges, abortions, etc)
- Falsify data and results
- Plagiarism
- Coerce participants with diminished autonomy



BACKGROUND TO ETHICAL REVIEWS

- ▶ The Tuskegee Experiment (1932–1972): USA Public Health Service experiment on 399 black men in the late stages of syphilis
 - 28 direct deaths
 - 100 related complications
 - 40 wives infected
 - 19 children born with congenital syphilis
- ▶ Treatment of Jews at Concentration camps.
- ▶ Stanley Milgram's Study on obedience



3 BASIC ETHICAL PRINCIPLES (The Belmont Report)

PRINCIPLE 1: RESPECT FOR PERSONS

- ▶ Two separate moral requirements:
 - Acknowledgement of respondents autonomy; and
 - Requirement to protect those with diminished autonomy including exclusion from study (children, patients, incapacitated, prisoners, etc).



APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLE 1 IN RESEARCH

▶ INFORMED CONSENT

- **Information:** Enough information to enable participants make informed choice–The research procedure, purpose, risk, and anticipated benefit, opportunity to ask questions and to withdraw at any time from the research.
- **Comprehension:** Is the consent form crafted in comprehensible language? Consideration of respondents intelligence, rationality, maturity and language.
- **Voluntariness:** Clarity of consent form on the fact that it is voluntary
 - Autonomy to make reasoned decision/conditions free of coercion and undue influence (non–offering of excessive, unwarranted, inappropriate or improper reward or other overture in order to obtain compliance.



PRINCIPLE 2: BENEFICENCE

- ▶ Efforts / obligation to secure respondents well being.
- ▶ Researchers should not injure respondents regardless of the benefits from the research.



APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLE 2

▶ ASSESSMENT OF RISK/BENEFITS

- Risk: The possibility of harm.
- Benefit: Promotion of health, wellbeing or welfare of respondents.
- Psychological harm, physical harm, legal harm, social harm, and economic harm and corresponding benefits.
- Can the risks be minimized?
- Can the research design be improved to minimise harm and maximize benefit?
- What is the benefit (to participants; society)?



PRINCIPLE 3: JUSTICE

- ▶ “Fairness in distribution” or “what is deserved”.
- ▶ An injustice occurs when some benefit to which a person is entitled is denied without good reason or when some burden is imposed unduly.
- ▶ Distinctions based on experience, age, deprivation, competence, merit and position do sometimes constitute criteria justifying differential treatment for certain purposes.



APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLE 3

▶ Selection of subjects:

- Appropriateness of selection pool.
- Appropriateness of including vulnerable populations.
- Is the recruitment fair and impartial?
- Are the inclusion/exclusion criteria fair and appropriate?



ESSENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

- ▶ Assess the ethical dimensions to be addressed in proposed study.
- ▶ Advice on the ethical dimensions observed, if necessary,
- ▶ Consider the interface of the science and ethical dimensions.



INTERFACE OF SCIENCE AND ETHICS

- ▶ Will the proposed study lead to the achievements of objectives?
- ▶ Are the objectives clear enough to ensure good science?
- ▶ Can the objectives be achieved with the proposed research approach?
- ▶ Are there any deceptions in the proposal?



THE PROTOCOL REVIEW PROCESS

- ▶ Submission to UCCIRB office (To Administrator).
- ▶ Assigning of Reviewers (at least 2).
- ▶ Receipt of Reviewers comments at Board Meetings
- ▶ Feedback to Pis

Note: Protocols must be submitted at least a month to fieldwork



WHY THE ORIENTATION?

- ▶ Understanding of the Ethical Clearance processes.
- ▶ Request for cooperation/supervision of research
- ▶ The increased international support for ethical clearance.



CONTACTS

- ▶ UCCIRB is in DRIC's Office at old site.
- ▶ Email: irb@ucc.edu.gh
- ▶ Cell phone: 0244207814



THANK YOU



REFERENCES

- ▶ The Belmont report
- ▶ IRB 101 notes organised by PRIM&R 2015 Conference at Boston, USA.
- ▶ UCCIRB Application documents.
- ▶ Ulin, P. R., Robinson, E.T., & Tolley, E. E. (2005). *Qualitative methods in public health: A field guide for applied research*. USA: Jossey-Bass

