

Ethical Criteria in Global Research Competition

*Encancing Life. Ethics in Science and Technology
Conference May 2, 2011, San José/Costa Rica*

Prof. Dr. Christoph Stückelberger
Director and Founder of Globethics.net
Professor of Ethics at the University of Basel/Switzerland

Content

1 Global Research and Publications

2 Cooperation and Competition

3 Ethical challenges

3.1 What? Selection of Topics

3.2 Who? Qualification and Location of Researchers

3.3 With whom? Objects and participation

3.4 For whom? Beneficiaries

3.5 How? Funding

3.6 How? Online Research

3.7 How? Instruments

3.8 Who owns? Publication, Copyright, Open Source

4 Ethical Principles for Research and Research Partnership

5 Globethics.net: A Platform for Research Ethics and Ethics Research

1. Global Research and Publications

Some global research challenges in general:

- Unequal research capacities and research results (publications) mirror the unequal economic and political global situation.
- Example: World map of number of publications
- Language barriers: “Beyond the pale: ethical considerations in research with non-native speakers of English” (article in GE lib)
- Sensitive fields esp. medical ethics (rights of the human, informed consent, handicapped persons), bioethics/GMO’s
- Research diversity: «Against one-size-fits-all research ethics» (art.)

Research ethics covers all fields of ethics, especially

- Economic ethics (funding), political ethics (policy), environmental ethics (impact), ethics of science and technology (limits) etc.

2. Cooperation and Competition

Competition between

- private research and public research
- multinational private companies and SME's
- North and South research institutions

Cooperation between

- Bilateral and multilateral academic institutions
- Public-private partnerships
- Increased funding partners from the South (e.g. Golf countries-US)
- Cooperation today becomes often more important than competition (for reasons of cost sharing)

Geographical shifts

- Fast research growth in BRICS countries (especially India, China, Brazil) BRICSIT (including Indonesia and Turkey) in future?

3. Ethical Challenges

3.1 What? Selection of Topics

- Needs-oriented, not greed-oriented is the ethical criteria for selection of research topics. (including the needs of nature). Not the potential profit of the researcher/ company, but the potential benefit for the needy is the selection criteria. «There is enough for anybodies need, but not for anybodies greed» (Gandhi)
- Long term, not only short term: Politicians in all countries, but especially in poorer countries, are under pressure to have short term results of research investments (within the four year term of service/election). Electorate and parliaments have to be convinced that long term research investments are needed for success in research.
- Balanced, not only technical: research must include technologies, but also social, cultural, religious sciences etc.

3.2 Who? Qualification and Location of Researchers

- Qualification criteria? Scientific, but also cultural and language competencies needed for international research cooperation
- Location: Where to locate the research capacities? Private sector research allocation is more centralised than production units. Shift from US/Europe to South East Asia (Singapur, China, India, e.g. In medical, bioetech and IT research). Research ethics should reflect on fair, decentralised allocation of research resources and capacity building in the global South.

3.3 With whom? Objects, Participation

Examples of titles of articles (to download in www.globethics.net)

- «Research Ethics with underserved groups»
- «Privacy and Research Ethics»
- «Community based research ethics»

Medical research ethics concentrate to a large extent on criteria for participants in research. Criteria broadly acknowledged:

- Equipoise (a true null hypothesis should exist)
- Safety of the research participant
- Informed consent of the participant (Nueremberg Code 1946!)
- Privacy and confidentiality
- How to handle adverse effects (how to inform, who pays)

Three values for the participant: autonomy, beneficence, justice

3.4 For whom? Beneficiaries

Basic research: no specific target group

Applied research should contribute to fundamental ethical values such as justice, peace, freedom, empowerment, community etc. Therefore, beneficiaries (target groups) of research should correspond to these values:

- The needy (ethics of basic needs, MDG's)
- The victims of conflicts
- The oppressed and powerless

Make research results available to the target groups
(otherwise they do not benefit as beneficiaries)

3.5 How? Funding, Payments, Benefits

Funding

- Domination of Northern Funding and private funding
- Need of conscientisation for importance of research in and from the South (e.g. Ministry of Science and Technology), incl. research in humanities

Payment/Remuneration

- Existing terms of trade of knowledge sources are often not fair
- Academic research and especially publication does not pay. Unrealistic expectations in Southern countries

Benefits

- Benefit sharing of research results to be clarified at the beginning of the research

3.6 How? Online Research Methods

Desk research is done more and more online: Cost saving, global access. Online research methods:

- Brainstorming: random
- Conceptual: systematic
- Laizy: more of the same
- Critical: dialectic
- Spiritual: value-centered
- Fair: no plagiarism

3.7.1 How? Instruments

How to increase research ethics competences and capacities?

- Training: «Research ethics training in Peru. An Empirical Study» (research needs ethical training)
- Ethics Committees: Committees to screen and approve research projects. In Southern and Angolosaxon countries more established than in others, in medical field more established than in others.
- Control of controlers: «The Ethics of research ethics committees»
- Multistakeholder Research Ethics Negotiations of scientific academies, governments, private sector, NGO's with the goal of
- International Research Ethics Policies, e.g. WHO's Operational Guidelines for Ethics Committees
- Research ethics publications, transparency in research
- Local/national monitoring capacities.

3.7.2 Regulations and Policies

Research ethics regulations and policies: Numerous legislative and guidance documents on research ethics exist, at international, national and institutional levels. E.g. medical ethics in UK/globally:

“Legislation

Legislation affecting researchers in the UK includes the EU Clinical Trials and Good Clinical Practice Directives (2001 and 2005) and the UK Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations (2004, amended 2006).

International guidance

Documents include the World Medical Association’s Declaration of Helsinki (2000), which sets out ethical principles, as well as regulatory instruments such as the Good Clinical Practice guidelines of the World Health Organisation (1995) and the International Conference on Harmonisation (1996). The Council for International Organisations of Medical Sciences has produced guidelines outlining how the Helsinki declaration can be applied in developing countries. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation adopted the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights in 2005, to assist member states in the formulation of national legislation, regulations or policies.

National guidance

The Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Trust in the UK have each produced ethical guidelines on research in developing countries. The Nuffield Council on Bioethics’ report, *The Ethics of Research Related to Healthcare in Developing Countries* (2002, followed up in 2005), is also frequently referred to by researchers and RECs in the UK and in many other countries. Several institutions in developing countries have also produced ethics documents, including the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Kenyan National Council for Science and Technology. “

(Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology UK: Postnote, April 2008 Number 304 Research ethics in developing countries, 2)

3.8 Who owns? Rights (copyright), Open Source, Publications

Right to information (to access to information) is Human Right

Copyright as right to (intellectual) property is also Human Right, but less vital than right to information and in case of conflict inferior.
Rights of authors, institutions, community (society)

Fair copyright rules

- Respecting copyright rules indicated in each publication;
- Submitting new publications under the international «Creative Commons Copyright» CCC: *“The author grants the right to copy, distribute and transmit the work under three conditions: attribution, non commercial, no change of text”*.
<http://www.globethics.net/web/guest/copyright>
- Illegal copying of knowledge can ethically be legitimate („social bookshop“) under very restrictive conditions: not for profit, if no other way, if available means are not otherwise used/vasted.

4.1 Ethical Criteria/Principles for Research Ethics + Research Partnerships

1. Need, not greed: Research freedom with research reason (sophrosyne, limitation, Masshalten). Not greed for knowledge, but curiosity for knowledge (Thomas Aquinas: Wissensneugier aber nicht Wissensgier!).
2. Justice as Fairness: Fair sharing. Golden rule of mutuality: sharing of resources means «Give and Take» (principle of Globethics.net).
3. Freedom with Respect: Free and caring. Free research, freedom of expression, but respectfully caring for cultural sensitivities, religious feelings, community needs, victims.
4. Unity in diversity: searching on common ground and enforcing diversity in languages, methods, approaches.
5. Participation: empowerment through participation of research «objects» (e.g. informed consent in medical research)

Twelve further criteria on next slide:

4.2 Twelve Globethics.net Principles of Research Partnership (2005)

1. Deciding on objectives together
2. Building mutual trust
3. Developing networks
4. Sharing the responsibility
5. Creating transparency
6. Evaluating the results
7. Disseminating the results
8. Applying the results
9. Sharing profits
10. Increasing research capacity
11. Building on the achievements
12. Research cycle

Download of text on www.globethics.net/library

5. Globethics.net: A Platform for Research Ethics and Ethics Research

- Online library as resource (700'000 articles for free), many on research ethics and research on ethics. (948 articles with keyword "research ethics")
- Online workgroup space for free for international or national online research partnership
- Online network of 23'000 registered participants. Finding peers, research partners/experts online
- Online research projects: join existing projects by joining respective work groups

gracias

adube

oshe

thank you

asante sana

धन्यवाद (Danyavad)

merci

danke

grazie