

Read racism and research: the case of the tuskegee syphilis study by allan m. bra...

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Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study

What Were the Main Discussion Points of the Essay? The main discussion in the Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study is to explore the ethical implications of the research. Specifically, Brandt (1978) examines the holistic aspects of the research from a medical and social perspective to draw the justification of the study. Drawing from the medical assertions by Dr. W. T. English, the rationale of the study takes a conflicting view of the White and Black supremacy (Brandt, 1978). Specifically, the racial aspect of the study understood from the Black study is not only an issue of Syphilis study but also an example of the White discriminatory approach towards the Blacks (Freimuth, et al., 2011).

What Were the Outcomes and Significances of the Study?

According to Brandt (1978), the results of the investigation found out that Syphilis study was unjustified, and therapy should be provided to the subjects. However, the consequences of the research had both positive and negative impacts. On the positive, the study facilitated the confirmation of penicillin as an adequate treatment for the disease (Pritchard, 2006). On the other hand, the study led to social, economic, and health deterioration of the subjects and the families. Most significantly is the number of deaths and health implications of the study. According to Brandt (1978), more than 100 participants died from advanced lesions of the disease.

Would it be Acceptable to replicate this Study Today? Why? Or Why Not?

The replication of the Tuskegee study in the modern world is impossible.

Specifically, this is due to the set guidelines protecting human subjects in research the Tuskegee study violates most of these principles such as the

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consent of the participants and contains some high-level deception (Heintzelman, 2003). For example, the research increased the risk factor for the patients and lied about the existence of a medical treatment of the infection. For this reason, a typical replication of the research is impossible but with various adjustments as required by the law and a study on understanding the impact of a disease or other social issues is possible (Menikoff, 2008; Pritchard, 2006).

Was this study Ethical or Unethical? Explain why

An important ethical issue presented in the case study is the use of persons as a research subject. Although medical researchers need human participants in their studies, the protection of human life should be given top priority. However, in Tuskegee case, the salvarsan and mercury rubs were ineffective (Ogungbure, 2011; Pritchard, 2006). Therefore, the study was not to improve the health condition of the subjects but to track the effects of the diseases without any therapeutic intervention. In addition, the research increased the risk factors and caused extreme pain through lumbar punctures given as treatment. According to Dr. Clark, the scientific benefit of the study outweighs the risks to the men (Ogungbure, 2011). However, this is an unethical conclusion since the subjects were human whose lives and health should be protected at any cost regardless of their status, race or religion among others.

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