

# Free essay about two ethical principles tantamount to conducting human subjects r...

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Three ethical principles have been defined in the Belmont Report of 1979. They are the principles of respect for persons, beneficence and justice.

## **Respect for persons**

All human subjects enrolled in research are treated as autonomous agents with extra protection given to those with decreased autonomy. So the principle of respect for persons has two moral requirements: the requirement to acknowledge autonomy and to protect those with diminished autonomy.

In a human subjects research, the investigator gives weight to the autonomous person's considered opinions and choices (Beauchamp, 2008).

The informed consent process demonstrates the investigator's respect for the participant's considered judgments, allowing him to act on those considered judgments. In case of participants not capable of self-determination, because of illness, mental disability, age, or circumstances that restrict their liberty, which make them vulnerable, the research team offers extensive protection (Rhodes, 2010). So the respect-for-persons principle when applied to human subjects research demands that participants enter the research voluntarily and with adequate information (Johnsson, Eriksson, Helgesson, & Hansson, 2014).

Justice: In any human subjects research, participants are treated equally. No benefit to which a person is entitled is denied without good reason or a burden imposed unduly. There are fair procedures applied in the selection of

the human participants. Researchers do not offer potential beneficial research to participants for whom it is favorable or select only “undesirable persons” for risky research. One special group that may be enrolled in research are vulnerable participants like racial minorities, the economically disadvantaged, the very sick, the institutionalized, the elderly or children. This might be because they are readily available in research settings. The principle of justice requires that research be conducted on those groups for whom there might be a potential benefit. The principle of social justice is applied when conducting human subjects research (Weijer, Taljaard, Grimshaw, Edwards, & Eccles, 2013)

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