

# Ethical conduct in scientific

[Science](#), [Biology](#)



Ethical Conducts in Scientific Research Ethical Conducts in Scientific Research Tuskegee Study The main purpose of this paper is to examine the unethical consideration in Tuskegee case study and include some of my personal response of the study and, ethical considerations that I consider to be most important. Known as Tuskegee Study, or in other words, the “Tuskegee Study of the untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male”, become the most notorious study that run between 1932 and 1972. The study was byword for unethical medical experimentation and racist. It concerned about 400 impoverished African-American men who were found to be suffering from latent syphilis. Suffering from latent syphilis meant that they had the infection but they showed no sign of the disease until late stages. For about 40 years, the poor men were never told that they were suffering from the disease and were never treated. Instead, they were only told that they had “bad blood” and were not given penicillin even though it was the standard cure for the disease that was available in 1947. The aim of the study was to find out whether syphilis affected the black men in a different way from the way it affected the white men (Katz & Warren, 2011).

For participating in the study, men were given free ride to and from the Tuskegee clinic in Alabama. In addition, they were given hot meals and free treatment for minor ailments. For instance, they were given only aspirin and mineral supplements to cure minor ailments so that the treatment procedure could not interfere with their study. Much worse, even the 250 men from the Second World War drafted from the war to volunteer in the study, arrangements were made to make sure they remained part of the study. When the study ended in 1972, there was a public outcry and only 74 men of

the original participants stayed alive. Other negative outcomes involved 28 men who died from syphilis and related complications, while 40 wives were infected with the disease and 19 children suffered from congenital syphilis. Survivors of the study received financial compensation from the United States and President Bill Clinton was forced to declare on behalf of the state that US had done a shameful thing (Katz & Warren, 2011).

United States demonstrated heinous acts in the study that were considered to be morally wrong. It was unethical for the Tuskegee clinicians to conduct the study without the consent of the patients, according to the World Health Organizations Declaration of Helsinki of 1964. Clinical centers must conform to the ethical conducts stipulated by the legal structures. However, in Tuskegee case, they violated the Henderson Act of 1943, a public health law that required clinicians to test and treat patients suffering from venereal diseases. The study also violated ethical codes of conduct that were to be followed when doing research with human subjects. For instance, the medical practitioners violated the Hippocratic Oath that emphasized the welfare of the human subjects to be at the central of the consideration during the research (Ogunbure, 2011).

### Conclusion

As a widely known among ethicist, I think that the medical professionals should have an informed consent from the participants, which is the most crucial part of the ethical practices in medical research and studies.

Furthermore, in relation to the Tuskegee event, I find there were other ethical considerations that could have been considered. For instance, the clinicians should have ensured the study was value aimed, that is, was

purposed to enhance health knowledge by revealing the information on how they intended to handle the ailment. They needed to practice a fair subject selection; instead of selecting the black men which reflected an element of racism. Nonetheless, I think ethical considerations are important in scientific research since they define boundaries between the accepted therapeutic studies and experimental research. They ensure that the medical professionals show respect to the humans, there will be justice during treatment and that the research ought not to cause an intentional harm.

#### References

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- Ogunbure, A. A. (2011). The Tuskegee Syphilis Study: Some Ethical Reflections. A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya (PAK), (3)2, 75-92.