

Ethical dimensions of studies

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Ethical Dimensions of Research Studies 11st, December Ethical Dimensions of Research Studies Case Study This Human Subjects Research case involves a popular American HIV/AIDS researcher who is convinced that he has found a lasting solution to the AIDS pandemic. He believes that the HIV/AIDS treatment he has discovered will be cheaper than the present drugs used, while offering a permanent cure to AIDS, unlike the ARVS, which only prolong life. In order to prove the effectiveness of his new discovery, this researcher has to go to the field and test his medicine. However, he learns that cannot be allowed to carry out this kind of testing in the U. S. A as it is considered illegal and unethical. He therefore, resolves to conduct his testing on HIV/AIDS patients in one of the poorest countries in Africa. This idea works, as this African country, unlike the U. S. A, does not have laws against the withholding of standard treatment. He justifies his action with his assumption that it is better for poor HIV/AIDS patients to receive an unfamiliar treatment, than to die without any treatment at all.

This research is an ethics case as it fails to adhere to the principles of conducting a research. The main ethical issues involved in conducting research include informed consent, respect for anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality, and beneficence. Of all these ethical issues, the researcher fails to allow for informed consent of the people to whom, he was administering his new AIDS drug. By not telling the patients the truth about this new drug, and through taking advantage of the weak legal system of the African country, this researcher does not avail an opportunity for the patients to choose if they will be his guinea pigs or not. These patients therefore unknowingly are injected with the new drug, thinking it is the standard

medication. In addition, when this researcher fails to give the patients information about the drug, he breaches the patients' right to information, which is essential for them to base on while making their decisions of agreeing or disagreeing to the process (Murphy, 2004).

The possible cause of this researcher's actions could be the strict rules and standards that the American government places on such sensitive cases, which involve lives of people. In addition, the researcher could have been evading the standard procedure for testing of new drugs, which is often quite long, and costly. This kind of practice by the researcher is sub-standard and does not measure up to the requirements of medical research ethics, thus considered unethical. The researcher does not follow the required procedure for fear of time and resource consuming processes. This is unethical as the researcher only minds about his welfare, while putting the lives of many people at risk (Johnson, 2001).

In order to reduce the ethical problems related to this case, the researcher could have opted to follow the right procedure of new drugs testing, no matter the expenses he would have incurred, as lives of people must be treated with integrity in research. The basic procedure for testing new drugs involves conducting laboratory tests as the first step. If the drug passes the test and does not cause death of the animal organisms used, the researcher then qualifies for the application of an Investigational New Drug (IND) from the United States Food and Drugs Administration. If the researcher acquires the IND, they are free to test volunteer humans in different stages (" U. S. Food and Drug Administration" Web). If the researcher in the case study followed this procedure, he would not have experienced any ethical issue in

his research. Research on such sensitive issues should be as transparent as possible. The participants in the research must be fed with the complete true information about the research in order for them to make an informed decision. Sensitive issues, which may easily affect people's lives, need to be handled carefully, while adhering to all the principles of research.

References

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