

What do you feel is
the most unethical
activity that can be
associated with
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Deception is the most unethical activity that can be associated with scientific communication. This may take place during data gathering or during experiments. One common practice in the medical field is the use of the placebo in their experiments. Here, patients are given tablets saying that such items are drugs to cure their ailment. To test the efficacy of the real drugs, placebo tablets are given to the control group. Even the ones who are taking only placebo feel that they are getting better.. The placebo effect or the healing effect is often experienced during control trials. Wampold et al. (2005) investigated the effects of the placebo in medicine and psychotherapy and they found out that the effects are robust in these fields. Those who are taking the placebo felt that they are getting cured too. The use of the placebo is controversial. There are scholars who would not agree to the use of the placebo because not informing the research participants about the procedures in the study is tantamount to deception. For me, misleading the participants about the tablets they are taking, even if this was for the participants' own benefit, is still deception. Such practice is against patients' rights because patients need access to all information to be able to make informed choices. When researchers' communicate with their research participants, they are not truthful because they are withholding information about the placebo. This practice is what this student considers as the most unethical activity in the scientific communication. It is unethical because researchers have to deceive their participants to be able to gather data for the study.

References

Wampold, B. E., Minami, T., Tierney, S., Baskin, T. W., & Bhati, K. S. (2005). The placebo is powerful: Estimating placebo effects in medicine and psychotherapy from randomized clinical trials. *Journal Of Clinical Psychology*, 61(7), 835-854. doi: 10. 1002/jclp. 20129.