

Potential ethical problems

Psychology



Pennebaker 1997

1. Identify any potential ethical problems. Be sure to explain WHY these are ethical problems.

Upon examining the article written by Pennebaker (1997) entitled " Writing About Emotional Experiences as a Therapeutic Process", the author discussed the common writing paradigm used in the study of psychology. Aside from mentioning the significance of time given to the research participants when writing down their traumatic personal experiences on a piece of paper, Pennebaker discussed the significance of self-disclosure and its effectiveness in reducing the patients' emotional distress.

APA ethics office is working on the promotion of writing ethics particularly in the study of psychology (American Psychological Association a). In relation to the importance of self-disclosure over the emotional health of the patients, this article failed to tackle issues related to the APA ethics code when conducting a research study. Based on the ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct, it is necessary to seek institutional approval and informed consent from the randomly selected patients before conducting the actual research study (American Psychological Association b).

Even though the use of self-disclosure technique could significantly help the psychologists in effectively reducing the emotional disturbances felt by each patient, it is but ethical on the part of psychologists to explain the main purpose of self-disclosure program over the mental health improvements of the patient and keep the gathered information private and confidential at all times (American Psychological Association b & c). Likewise, psychologists should also respect the patients' decision to participate or not participate in the self-disclosure practice. In case the patient wishes to withdraw from self-

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disclosure program, psychologists should respect the patients' decision with no questions ask. Failure to observe these APA ethical guidelines could increase the risk of psychologists from being legally sued by the patients.

2. Imagine you are a member of an Institutional Review Board (IRB). Would you approve of this study? Why or why not?

As a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I will not approve the publication of this article since the information coming from this article could increase psychologists' risk of violating the ethically accepted code of conduct.

3. Psychologist also needs to do no harm and to strive to benefit people -- could the participants of this study have been harmed by writing about these experiences? What precautions or help was put in place in the event that the writing practice induced extreme stress?

Since the article of Pennebaker focused on discussing the common writing paradigm used in the study of psychology, the author did not conduct a primary study that could cause harm to the patients. To avoid causing harm to research participants, it is necessary to observe the law of confidentiality by not publishing any forms personal information that could expose the personality of the research participants to the readers (American Psychological Association c).

*** End ***

References

" American Psychological Association." 2011. APA Ethics Office. 2 February 2011 .

" American Psychological Association." 2011b. Ethical Principles of <https://assignbuster.com/potential-ethical-problems/>

Psychologists and Code of Conduct. 2010 Amendments. Standard 8: Research and Publication. 2 February 2011 .

" American Psychological Association." 2011 c. Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. 2010 Amendments. Standard 4: Privacy and Confidentiality. 2 February 2011 .

Pennebaker, James W. " Writing about emotional experiences as a therapeutic process." Psychological Science (1997): Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 162-166.