

Researcher's Code of Ethics

The National Research Council of Thailand

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Rationale

At present, research findings play a crucial role in economic and social development. If publicized research results correlate truthfully with existing problem, solution to the problems can be more effectively and directly applied. Quality research entails several features. Apart from following standardized research methodology, the researcher should be aware that observing ethics is an essential part of all quality research.

The Social Science Committee under the aegis of the National Research Committee of Thailand is aware of a need for a standard code of ethics for researchers. It has therefore prepared a researchers' code of ethics applicable to researchers and academics in all disciplines. The draft has been reviewed by researchers, specialists, and experts in different fields and has been revised to ensure precision and clarity. It has now been approved by the Administrative Board of the National Research Council and will come into effect as the ethics code for all researchers.

Objectives

This ethics code aims to serve as principles of guidance for all researchers. It seeks to foster a more active awareness of ethics among researchers rather than be a *sine qua non* of all research undertaking.

Definitions

Researchers refers to individuals who are systematically searching for knowledge to answer questions, relying on a methodology which is recognized in the relevant field including the concepts, visions, and strategies employed in data collection and analysis.

Ethics is defined as a code of appropriate practice formulated by professionals in various fields as a guideline for fellow professionals to uphold their reputation and enhance the dignity of their profession.

Ethics code of researchers refers to a code of practice for researchers designed to ensure that their research conduct is based on appropriate ethics and academic principles for the purpose of assuring quality and maintaining the dignity and integrity of researchers and research subjects.

Ethics Code of Researchers & Principles of Guidance

1. Researchers should be honest and fair-minded with regard to academics ambitions and management.

Researchers should be upright. They are urged to acknowledge their sources and to give credit where it is due. They should never claim others' work as their own nor plagiarize. They should be honest when applying for research grants and should see to it that each member of their research team has an equitable share in any benefits that might be derived from research.

Principles of Guidance:

- 1.1 Researchers should be upright in relation to themselves and others.
 - Researchers should keep their integrity intact at every stage of the research procedures from the selection of the research topic, of team member, of research methods to the application of research findings.
 - Researchers should record their indebtedness to others by acknowledge ideas, opinions, and data sources used in their research.
- 1.2 Researchers should be honest when applying for research grants.
 - Researchers should submit sound research proposals which lucidly explain their planned research processes when applying for research grants.
 - Researchers should avoid obtaining duplicate funding for the same research project.
- 1.3 Researchers see to it that each member of their research team an equitable share in any benefits that might be derived from research.
 - Researchers should let their team members take appropriate credit for research outcomes and discoveries.
 - Researchers should present their research findings truthfully without resorting to plagiarism.

2. Researchers should abide by research obligation and agreements specified by and entered into with fellow researchers, funding agencies, and their affiliates.

Researchers should comply with all obligations specified in research agreements. Allotted time should be fully devoted to the project in hand to ensure high research quality and to meet the set time schedules. They should demonstrate a sense of responsibility, not abandoning their work half-way to the process.

Principles of Guidance:

- 2.1 Researchers should fulfill their research obligations.
 - Researchers should carefully and thoroughly study all conditions rules and regulations set by the benefactors to prevent any future conflicts.
 - Researchers should abide by all conditions, rules, and regulations set forth in research agreements.

- 2.2 Researchers should spend as much time as possible on their research.
- Researchers should devote all their efforts to their research work so as to ensure the best possible research outcome.
- 2.3 Researchers should have real sense commitment to their research work.
- Researchers should have a strong sense of responsibility and should not abandon their research in midstream without good reason. They should submit their work on time and should not violate research agreements.
 - Researchers should confirm the usefulness of their research, never failing to hand in a final report on the completed project.

3. Researchers should have impeccable training in the academic field related to their research.

Researchers should be sufficiently knowledgeable in the field of their research undertaking and should be equipped with skills or experiences related to their research topic so as to carry out quality research and to prevent errors in analysis, interpretation or conclusions.

Principles of Guidance:

- 3.1 Researchers should have a solid grounding in the field related to their research topic to ensure the high quality of their research undertaking.
- 3.2 Researchers should uphold relevant academic standards so as not to bring discredit on fellow professionals engaged in similar scholarly research.

4. Researchers should treat all research subjects, whether animate or inanimate, with appropriate respect and consideration and should take full responsibility for the impact and consequences of their research.

Researchers should take extra care when pursuing research into human subjects, plants and animals, arts and culture, natural resources, and the environment.

Principles of Guidance:

- 4.1 Researchers should use human beings or animals as subjects as a last resort only when there is no other choice.
- 4.2 Researchers should take precautions against possible damage to human beings, plants and animals, arts and culture, or the environment while conducting research.
- 4.3 Researchers should take full responsibility for the consequences of their research in regard to themselves, research subjects, or society at large.

5. Researchers should have respect for their human subjects' dignity and right.

Researchers should not put academic benefits before the dignity of fellow human beings. They should take pains to explain the objectives and scope of their research to the human subjects without deceiving or coercing them and they should not violate their subjects' right as private individuals.

Principles of Guidance:

- 5.1 Researchers should respect the rights of their human subjects and should enlist their consent prior to any research experiments involving human subjects.
- 5.2 Researchers should be courteous and kind to human and animal subjects. They should not put academic benefit before the human factor, and should be wary of potential conflict where such experiments are concerned.
- 5.3 Researchers should act in the best interest of their subjects and should be discreet as regards private data relating to subjects.

6. Researchers should enjoy freedom of the intellect and should be free from bias at every step of the research undertaking.

Researchers should be able to enjoy intellectual freedom across every phase of their research. They should realize how personal bias or academic prejudices may lead to distortion of data and of academic findings, thus jeopardizing the success of their research.

Principles of Guidance:

- 6.1 Researchers should maintain an independent enquiring mind and should avoid conducting research under any coercion.
- 6.2 Researchers should conduct their research in the spirit of scholarship without letting any personal bias get in the way.
- 6.3 Researchers should not fabricate research results and should avoid temptation with research findings for a personal gain or in the interest of the third party.

7. Researchers have a moral obligation to put their research findings to good use.

Researchers are encouraged to publicize their findings as a significant contribution to their field and for the benefit of the general public. They should refrain from aggrandizing their findings or from using their findings in an unethical manner.

Principles of Guidance:

- 7.1 Researchers should be committed, cautious, and savvy when publicizing research results.
- 7.2 Researchers should publicize research results for the benefit of other researchers in the same field and of general public without exaggerations in their own interests.

7.3 Researchers should present research findings truthfully and should not modify/alter their findings without adequate additional scholarly investigation and verification.

8. Researchers should respect peers' opinions.

Researchers should be broad-minded, ready to make publicly known their data and research methods, to welcome opinions and responses from others, and to revise and correct their research.

Principles of Guidance:

8.1 Researchers should demonstrate good social and inter-personal skills. They should be willing to debate their ideas with their colleagues and other academics.

8.2 Researchers should accept suggestions and recommendations concerning their research and revise their research accordingly if they are of value. Their overriding concern should be how to genuinely contribute to scholarship.

9. Researchers should have a firm sense of commitment as regards all strata of society.

Researchers should find it in their heart to make an all out effort in intellectual terms to carry out research, thus contributing to the world of scholarship and to the prosperity and welfare of society and indeed of the entire human race.

Principles of Guidance:

9.1 Researchers should choose their research topics carefully and conduct their research wholeheartedly with a view to making contributions to scholarly progress, to prestige of their own institution, and to the well-being of society.

9.2 Researchers should be committed to undertaking academic research which is in the interests of social well-being. They should avoid having anything to do with research which is potentially subversive or which is against moral values traditionally upheld by society.

9.3 Researchers should strengthen their role so as to make heftier contributions to society. They should also be prepared to serve as mentors to younger researchers to ensure continuity in the scholarly tradition for the benefit of society at large.

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