

Principle 7 : Welfare of research participants

General

The decision to undertake research rests upon a considered judgement by the individual psychologist about how best to contribute to psychological science and human welfare.

Specific

- (i) In planning research the psychologist has the responsibility to carefully evaluate its ethical acceptability.
- (ii) The investigator must determine whether the participant in research will be a "subject at risk" or a "subject at minimal risk" and to take account of the implications of this.
- (iii) The investigator always retains the responsibility for ensuring ethical practice in research. The investigator is also responsible for the ethical treatment of research participants by collaborators, assistants, students, and employees, all of whom, however, incur similar obligations.
- (iv) Except in minimal risk research, the investigator establishes a clear and fair agreement with research participants, prior to their participation, and clarifies their obligations and responsibilities.
- (v) Research with children or with participants who have impairments that would limit understanding and/or communication requires special safeguarding procedures.
- (vi) The investigator respects the individual's freedom to decline to participate in or to withdraw from the research at any time.
- (vii) The investigator protects the participant from physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger that may arise from research procedures. If risks of such consequences exist, the investigator informs the participant of that fact.
- (viii) Research procedures likely to cause serious or lasting harm to a participant may not be used.
- (ix) Where research procedures result in undesirable consequences for the individual participant, the investigator has the responsibility to detect and remove or correct these consequences.
- (x) Information obtained about a research participant during the course of an investigation is confidential unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.

Principle 8 : Public statements

General

All public statements by psychologists concerning their services are aimed

primarily at aiding the public to make informed judgements and choices. Statements aimed at communicating psychological knowledge must take the implications of such statements for the welfare of the public into account.

Specific

- (i) Psychologists accurately and specifically present their professional qualifications, affiliations and functions and those of organisations or institutions to which they relate. They avoid any statements which directly solicit clients.
- (ii) A psychologist accepts the obligation to correct others who misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
- (iii) Psychologists present the science of psychology factually and accurately. They avoid misrepresentations through sensationalism or superficiality.
- (iv) Psychologists do not compensate or give anything of value to a representative of the press, radio, television, or other communication medium in anticipation of, or in return for professional publicity in a news item.
- (v) Psychologists do not participate for personal gain in commercial announcements or advertisements in their role as psychologists.
- (vi) When personal advice is given by means of public lectures or demonstrations, newspaper or magazine articles, radio or television programmes, mail, or similar media, the psychologist utilizes the most up-to-date and relevant information and exercises the highest level of professional judgement.

Principle 9 ; Professional relationships

General

Psychologists should keep professional relationships on a mature level and free from petty actions demeaning to themselves and their profession.

Specific

- (i) Psychologists understand the areas of competence of related professions. They make full use of all the professional, technical, and administrative resources that serve the best interests of clients.
- (ii) Psychologists know and take into account the traditions and practices of other professional groups with whom they work.
- (iii) Psychologists should not accept for diagnosis or treatment a person who is currently receiving psychological assistance from another professional worker, except by agreement or after termination of the client's relationship with the other professional worker.
- (iv) Psychologists who employ or supervise other professionals or professionals-in-training, accept the obligation to facilitate their further

professional development, and to provide appropriate working conditions, timely evaluations, constructive consultation, and opportunities to gain experience.

- (v) Psychologists do not exploit their professional relationships with clients, supervisees, students, employees, or research participants sexually or otherwise. Psychologists do not condone or engage in sexual harassment which is defined as deliberate or repeated comments, gestures, or physical contacts of a sexual nature.
- (vi) In conducting research in institutions or organizations, psychologists secure appropriate authorization to conduct such research. They are aware of their obligations to future research workers and ensure that host institutions receive adequate information about the research and proper acknowledgement of their contributions.
- (vii) Publication credit is assigned to those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their professional contributions.
- (viii) When psychologists know of an ethical violation by another psychologist, and it seems appropriate, they informally attempt to resolve the issue by bringing the behaviour to the attention of that psychologist. If the misconduct is of a minor nature and/or appears to be due to lack of sensitivity, knowledge, or experience, such an informal solution is usually appropriate. If the violation does not seem amenable to an informal solution, or is of a more serious nature, psychologists bring it to the attention of the Professional Board for Psychology.

Principle 10 : Research with animals

General

An investigator of animal behaviour strives to advance understanding of basic behavioural principles and/or to contribute to the improvement of human health and welfare. In seeking these ends, the investigator ensures the welfare of animals and treats them humanely. Laws and regulations notwithstanding, an animal's immediate protection depends upon the scientist's own conscience.

Specific

- (i) The acquisition, care, use, and disposal of all animals must be in compliance with current laws and regulations.
- (ii) A psychologist trained in research methods and experienced in the care of laboratory animals closely supervises all procedures involving animals and is responsible for ensuring appropriate consideration of their comfort, health, and humane treatment.
- (iii) Psychologists ensure that all individuals using animals under their supervision have received explicit instruction in experimental methods and in the care and handling of the species being used.
- (iv) Psychologists make every effort to minimize discomfort, illness and pain of animals. A procedure subjecting animals to pain, stress, or privation is permissible only when no better alternative procedure exists and

the research is justified by its prospective scientific, educational, or applied value.

Principle 11 : Conflicting principles and ethical dilemmas

General

Ethical dilemmas arise when two or more ethical principles conflict. This is most likely to occur when issues of autonomy are related to uncertain autonomous status of the client as, for example, often is the case when dealing with adolescents and the aged, the former not being accorded full adult status and the competence of the latter in question, because of possible loss of competence due to pathology associated with deterioration.

Specific

- (i) The principle of autonomy is based upon presumptions of a person's competence. In dealing with issues of competence particular efforts should be made to determine the level of competence of clients in regard to various roles and areas of psychological functioning.
- (ii) The criteria used to assess competence should rise in relation to the potential seriousness of the effects of the decision taken. For example, in the case of child battering the decision of whether or not to return the child to its parents would depend on the ability of the non-abusing, but colluding, parent to demonstrate concern for the child, an awareness of danger signals, ways of reducing risk, and willingness to seek help.
- (iii) Two related ethical principles, namely *beneficence* and *nonmaleficence* may be used to make decisions concerning the clients whose competence may be limited. *Beneficence* refers to any action which prevents harm or removes harmful conditions and positively benefits a client. *Nonmaleficence* means doing no harm to another.

These two ethical principles may conflict, for example, when harassment by adolescent peers may be counteracted by reporting this to higher authorities. However, if such reporting could increase the risk of harassment, a psychologist may choose not to undertake such action. Here, the principle of non-maleficence overrides the principle of beneficence.

- (iv) The principle of *fidelity*, that is of faithfulness to a commitment, trust or duty, is an essential part of the relationship between psychologist and client. Yet this principle may conflict with an action deemed in the best interest of the client but which is contra to his wishes. A case in point would be the placement of a frail, handicapped person in a home for the aged. In such cases it may be justifiable to override the principle of fidelity in favour of the principles of beneficence and non-maleficence. Such action may be seen as *paternalistic* intervention. This is justified in cases where (a) there is some doubt about the client's ability to make a competent decision, and (b) where the consequences of a person's decision are likely to be very serious and deleterious.

- (v) When confronted by any serious ethical dilemma psychologists should apply several principles and consider the likely outcome of various courses of action. If necessary, psychologists with particular experience in regard to certain aspects of the situation should be consulted.
- (vi) In the final analysis, when dealing with ethical conflicts or confronting entirely new issues a psychologist must take responsibility for what seems the morally right action, guided by concern for his fellow man.

SOURCES

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