

BCIT Research Ethics Board

Definitions

Anonymity (5A)

[OED: not identified by name; of unknown name]

Anonymized information – the information is irrevocably stripped of direct identifiers, a code is not kept to allow future re-linkage, and risk of re-identification of individuals from remaining indirect identifiers is low or very low.

Anonymous information – the information never had identifiers associated with it (e.g., anonymous surveys) and risk of identification of individuals is low or very low.

Benefits and risks (2.8B)

Research involving humans may produce benefits that positively affect the welfare of society as a whole through the advancement of knowledge for future generations, for participants themselves or for other individuals. However, much research offers little or no direct benefit to participants. In most research, the primary benefits produced are for society and for the advancement of knowledge.

Because research is a step into the unknown, its undertaking can involve harms to participants and to others. Harm is anything that has a negative effect on the welfare of participants, and the nature of the harm may be social, behavioural, psychological, physical or economic.

Risk is a function of the magnitude or seriousness of the harm, and the probability that it will occur, whether to participants or to third parties (as outlined below). A proper ethical analysis of research should consider both the foreseeable risk and the available methods of eliminating or mitigating the risk.

Coercion (7.4)

[OED: The practice of persuading someone to do something by using force or threats]

Dual roles of researchers and their associated obligations (e.g., acting as both a researcher and a therapist, health care provider, caregiver, teacher, advisor, consultant, supervisor, student or employer) may create conflicts, undue influences, power imbalances or coercion that could affect relationships with others and affect decision-making procedures (e.g., consent of participants).

Confidentiality (5A)

[OED: The state of keeping or being kept secret or private]

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes obligations to protect information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss or theft.

Conflict of interest (7)

[OED: A situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible]

A conflict of interest may arise when activities or situations place an individual or institution in a real, potential or perceived conflict between the duties or responsibilities related to research, and personal, institutional or other interests.¹ These interests include, but are not limited to, business, commercial or financial interests pertaining to the institution and/or the individual, their family members, friends, or their former, current or prospective professional associates.

Consent (3.1)

[OED: Permission for something to happen or agreement to do something]

Free, informed and ongoing

Consent shall be given voluntarily.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time.

If a participant withdraws consent, the participant can also request the withdrawal of their data or human biological materials.

Core principles of ethics (1.1)

[OED: Moral principles that govern a person's or group's behavior]

- Respect for Persons (autonomy)
- Concern for Welfare (physical, mental spiritual, economic, social)
- Justice (fairness and equity)

Creative practice (2.6)

Creative practice is a process through which an artist makes or interprets a work or works of art. It may also include a study of the process of how a work of art is generated. Creative practice activities do not require REB review, but they may be governed by ethical practices established within the cultural sector.

Creative practice activities, in and of themselves, do not require REB review. However, research that employs creative practice to obtain responses from participants that will be analyzed to answer a research question is subject to REB review.

Minimal risk (2.8B)

Research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research is no greater than those encountered by participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the research.

Participant (2.1)

[OED: A person who takes part in something]

research involving living human participants (subjects of the research)

research involving human biological materials, as well as human embryos, fetuses, fetal tissue, reproductive materials and stem cells. This applies to materials derived from living and deceased individuals.

For example, one may collect information from authorized personnel to release information or data in the ordinary course of their employment about organizations, policies, procedures, professional practices or statistical reports. Such individuals are not considered participants for the purposes of this Policy.

2.2 - the information is legally accessible to the public and appropriately protected by law; or the information is publicly accessible and there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

2.3 - it does not involve any intervention staged by the researcher, or direct interaction with the individuals or groups; individuals or groups targeted for observation have no reasonable expectation of privacy; and any dissemination of research results does not allow identification of specific individuals.

Private information (5A)

[OED: The state or condition of being free from being observed or disturbed by other people]

Privacy refers to an individual's right to be free from intrusion or interference by others. It is a fundamental right in a free and democratic society. Individuals have privacy interests in relation to their

bodies, personal information, expressed thoughts and opinions, personal communications with others, and spaces they occupy.

Such information may include personal characteristics or other information about which an individual has a reasonable expectation of privacy (e.g., age, ethnicity, educational background, employment history, health history, life experience, religion, social status)

FIPPA/FOIPPA and PIPA govern in BC (Personal Information Protection Act/Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act)

Examples: Name, age, weight, height / Home address and phone number / Race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation / Medical information / Income, purchases and spending habits / Blood type, DNA code, fingerprints / Marital status and religion / Education / Employment information

Personal information does not include the name, job title, business address, telephone number or other contact information of an individual at a place business.

Qualitative research (Chapter 10)

Qualitative research aims to understand how people think about the world and how they act and behave in it.

Quality improvement/assurance studies (2.5)

Assessments of the performance of an organization or its employees or students, within the mandate of the organization, or according to the terms and conditions of employment or training.

Quality assurance and quality improvement studies, program evaluation activities, and performance reviews, or testing within normal educational requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management or improvement purposes, do not constitute research for the purposes of this Policy, and do not fall within the scope of REB review.

Research (1A/2.1)

An undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation. The term “disciplined inquiry” refers to an inquiry that is conducted with the expectation that the method, results, and conclusions will be able to withstand the scrutiny of the relevant research community

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Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC)
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

Vulnerable populations (4.7 and 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada)

Individuals or groups whose circumstances may make them vulnerable in the context of research should not be inappropriately included or automatically excluded from participation in research on the basis of their circumstances (e.g., cultural, social and economic circumstances of prospective participants, groups or communities).

Includes institutionalized, those in dependent situations, or those whose circumstances (e.g., poverty or poor health status) may render even modest participation incentives so attractive as to constitute an inducement to take risks they would otherwise not take.