

Selection of Subjects & Ethics in Research

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PSY 6217 – Research Design



Obtaining Informed Consent

- ☞ Who can legally give informed consent?
- ☞ Obtaining informed consent on behalf of minors
- ☞ Vulnerable populations
 - ♦ Children
 - ♦ Populations that are dependent (e.g., individuals in institutions such as prisons, nursing homes, etc.)
 - ♦ Populations that might easily be exploited for research (e.g., seriously ill, economically disadvantaged, etc.)

Statistical Issues

- ☞ Populations and samples
- ☞ Effects of selection method on generalizability of outcomes
 - ♦ Random selection
 - ♦ Representativeness of the sample
 - ♦ Random assignment to conditions
- ☞ Volunteer problem
- ☞ Special problems posed by data collection on the internet

Elements of Informed Consent

- ☞ Statement that the study involves research
- ☞ Purpose of the research & expected duration
- ☞ Description of procedures used. Disclose all features of the research that might influence the decision about participation.
- ☞ Potential risks associated with participation
- ☞ Potential benefits associated with participation
- ☞ Disclose alternative sources of these same benefits (if relevant)

Ethical Issues in the Use of Human Participants

- ☞ Institutional Review Boards
- ☞ Informed consent
- ☞ Voluntary participation
- ☞ Protection from harm
- ☞ Problems posed by deception
- ☞ Debriefing

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Elements of Informed Consent (continued)

- ☞ Information about the level of confidentiality of the data collected
- ☞ Research that involves risk must explain compensation and treatments available if participant is injured & information about who to contact
- ☞ Contact information for answers to questions about the research and participant rights
- ☞ Statement that participation is voluntary and reminder of the right to decline to participate or withdraw from the experiment

Protection from Risk

- ☞ **Types of risk**
 - ♦ *Physical risk*
 - ♦ *Psychological risk*
 - ♦ *Social risk*
- ☞ **What constitutes minimal risk?**
- ☞ **Confidentiality of data**
- ☞ **Problems posed by deception**

Use of Animals in Research

- ☞ **Animal Care & Use Committee**
- ☞ **Value of animal research**
- ☞ **Obtaining animals for use in research**
- ☞ **Regulations concerning housing & use of animals in research**

Deception

- ☞ **Compromises ability to obtain informed consent**
- ☞ **Risk of psychological harm associated with being deceived**
- ☞ **Active deception**
- ☞ **Passive forms of deception**
- ☞ **Technical illusions**

Scientific Misconduct

- ☞ **Ethical issues in the profession of scientific research**
- ☞ **Protection of human participants & humane treatment of animals**
- ☞ **Integrity of data collection**
- ☞ **Authorship issues**

Debriefing

- ☞ **Explain all aspects of the research**
- ☞ **Disclose and explain any deception used & explain why this deception was necessary**
- ☞ **Answer questions the participant might have**
- ☞ **Opportunity to learn about the participant's interpretation of experimental conditions (manipulation checks)**
- ☞ **Teach participants about the research process**