



**Faculty of Applied Science**  
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**3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE**

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**Medical and Professional Ethics**

# **Research ethics**

**Spring Term**

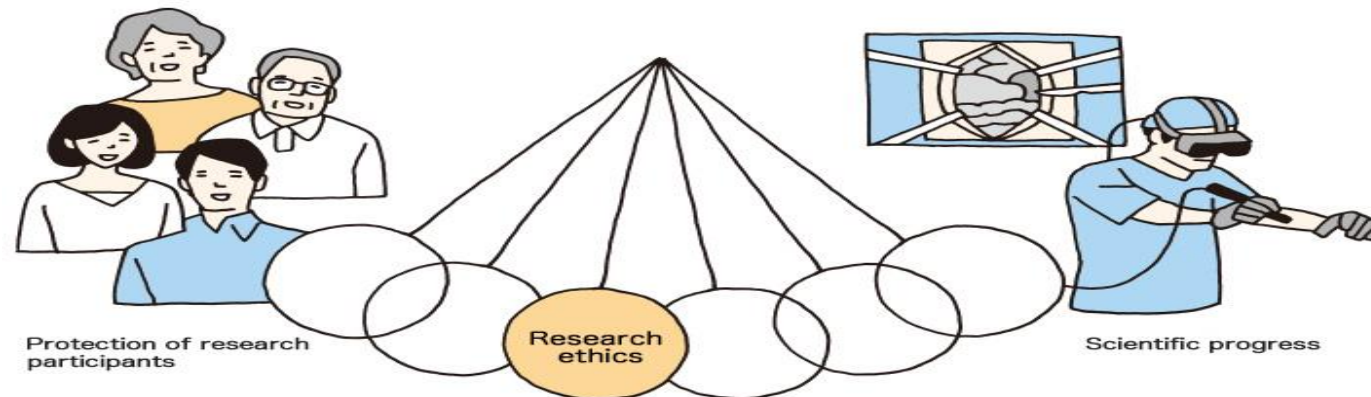
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# Definition

**Research ethics** are **moral** principles that guide **researchers** to conduct and report **research** without deception or intention to harm the participants of the study or members of the society as a whole, whether knowingly or unknowingly

# Human research is:

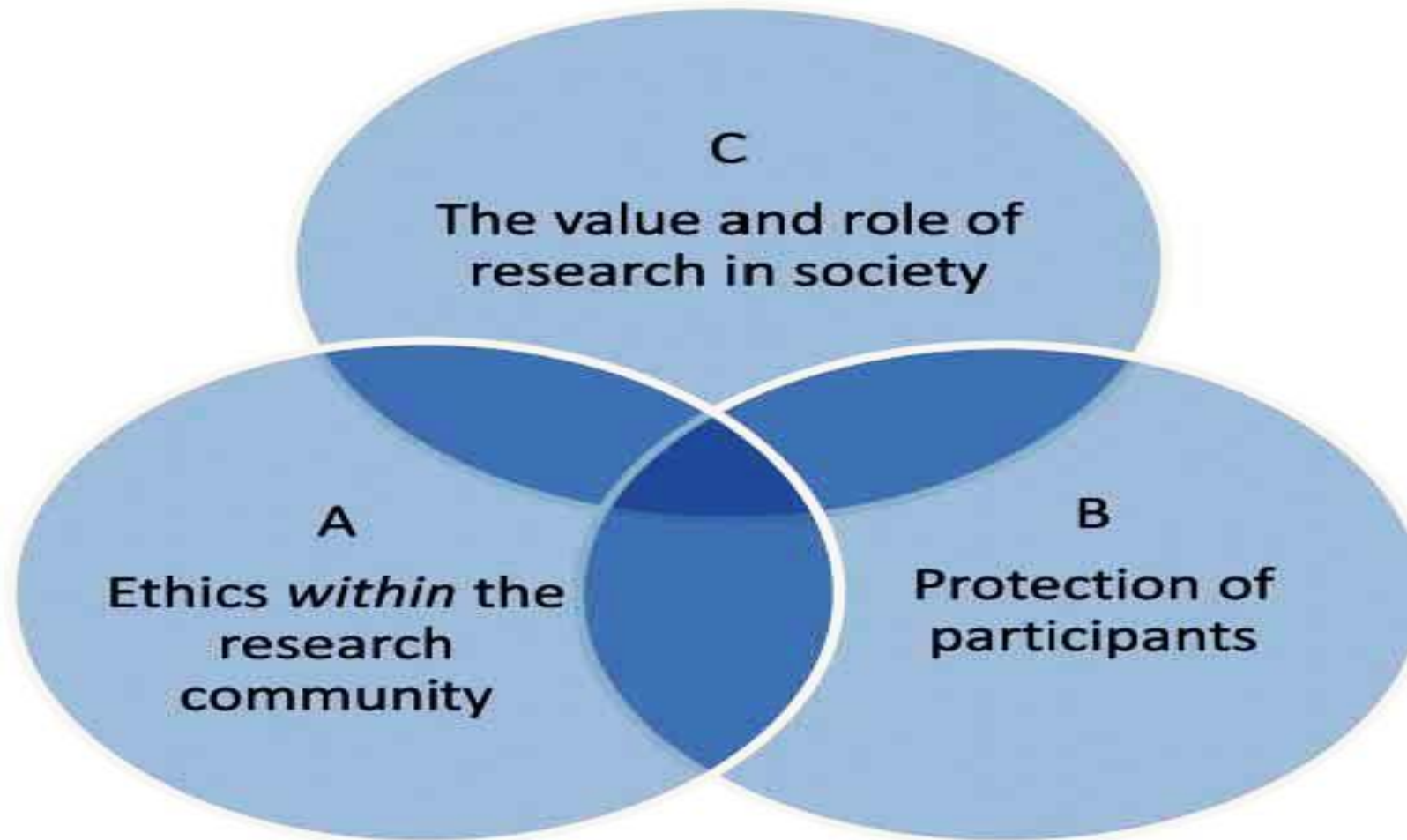
- Research conducted with people
- Research conducted about people
- Research dealing in their data or tissue



# Importance of Research Ethics

- It is a reflection of respect for those who ‘take part’ in research
- It ensures no unreasonable, unsafe or thoughtless demands are made by researchers
- It ensures sufficient knowledge is shared by all concerned
- It imposes a common standard in all the above respects

# Three domains of research ethics



# Ethical Principles Guiding Research

1. Respect for human dignity
2. Respect for free and informed consent
3. Respect for vulnerable persons
4. Respect for privacy and confidentiality
5. Respect for justice and inclusiveness
6. Balancing harms and benefit
7. Minimizing harm
8. Maximizing benefit
9. Social and clinical value.

# 1. Human Dignity

**Human dignity** refers to the inherent and inalienable value of every human being which cannot be destroyed, taken away or measured

In **research** ethics, this means that individuals have interests and integrity, which cannot be set aside in **research** in order to achieve greater understanding or to benefit society in other ways.

## 2. Consent

The **consent form** provides potential **research** subjects sufficient written information to decide whether to participate in a **research study** or not based on an explanation of the proposed **research** and the nature of the participation that is requested of them.



### 3. Vulnerable Persons

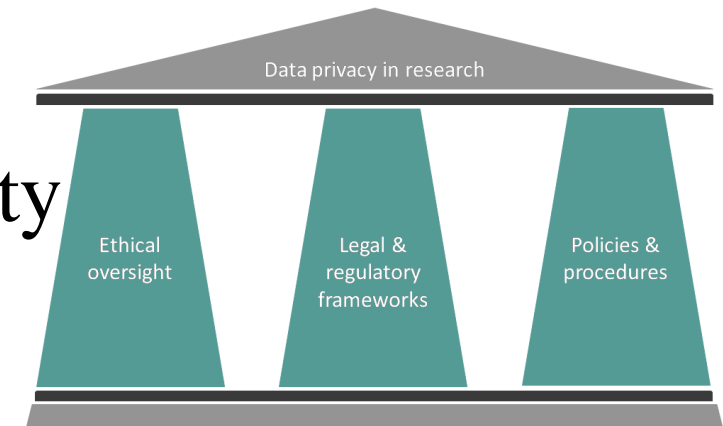
Someone who is **vulnerable** is weak and without protection, with the result that they are easily hurt physically or emotionally.

There are many possible ways to define who is **vulnerable** in the **research** context. Some would include the following: those who are ill (dependent on clinician for care), ethnic or racial minorities, non-English speakers, children, the economically disadvantaged, adults with diminished capacity.

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## 4. Privacy & Confidentiality

1. Fundamental to human dignity
2. Standards protect the access, control, dissemination of personal information
3. Helps to protect mental, psychological integrity



## 4. Privacy & Confidentiality

All identifiable patient information, whether written, computerised, visually or audio recorded, or simply held in the memory of health professionals, is subject to the duty of confidentiality.

This includes:

- Any clinical information about an individual's diagnosis or treatment
- A picture, photograph, video, audiotape or other image of the patient
- Anything else that, directly or indirectly, might lead to identifying the patient.

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## 5. Harms and Benefits

1. Balance critical to ethics of human research
2. Harms-benefits analysis affects welfare and rights of subjects

## 6. Justice and Inclusiveness

The principle of **justice** could be described as the **moral** obligation to act on the basis of fair adjudication between competing claims. As such, it is linked to fairness, entitlement and equality

## 7. Non-maleficence

A term in medical ethics that derives from the ancient maxim *primum non nocere*, which, translated from the Latin, means first, do no harm.

The principle of **non-maleficence** directs health care provider to “do no harm” to patients

## 8. Beneficence

**Beneficence** is a concept in research ethics which states that researchers should have the welfare of the research participant as a goal of any clinical trial or other research study.

The antonym of this term, maleficence, describes a practice which opposes the welfare of any research participant.



## 9. Social and clinical value

Answering certain questions will have significant value for society or for present or future patients with a particular illness. An answer to the research question should be important or valuable enough to justify asking people to accept some risk or inconvenience for others.

