

Ethical challenges in community-university participatory research

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Summary

1. What is ethics?
2. Approaches to research ethics
3. Ethical challenges in CBPR
4. Ethical guidelines for CBPR
5. Ethics cases
6. Groupwork exploring cases
7. Feedback and discussion



Ethics is a topic that covers questions relating to what kinds of lives we should lead, what counts as a good society, what actions are right and wrong, what qualities of character we should develop and what responsibilities humans have for each other and the ecosystem.

In the context of research, ethics as a subject area traditionally covers topics such as the overall harms and benefits of research, the rights of participants to information, privacy, anonymity, and the responsibilities of researchers to act with integrity.

Approaches to ethics in research

- **Ethics as regulation** – codes, research ethics committees
- **Ethics as decision-making** – dilemmas, difficult choices
- **Everyday ethics** – embedded in the research process: attitudes, ethos, ways of working, relationships

Ethical challenges in CBPR

1. Partnership, collaboration and power
2. Blurring the boundaries between researcher and researched, academic and activist
3. Community rights, conflict and democratic representation
4. Ownership and dissemination of data, findings and publications
5. Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality
6. Institutional ethical review processes

(see Durham Community Research Team (2011) *Community-based participatory research: ethical challenges*, www.dur.ac.uk/resources/beacon/CCDiscussionPapertemplateCBPRBanksetal7Nov2011.pdf)

Community-based participatory research:

A guide to ethical principles and practice



Guide to ethical principles & practice: Purpose



- raise ethical awareness amongst research partners and participants
- encourage discussion about ethical issues that can arise in CBPR
- offer ethical guidance to partners and participants in CBPR
- inform research institutions (including universities), research funders and sponsors about what ethical issues might come up so they can ensure CBPR is conducted according to the highest standards
- inform research institutions, research funders and sponsors about the complexities and nuances of CBPR to ensure they do not impose ethical standards that are impractical, patronising to community researchers or partners or inappropriate in other ways
- improve ethical practice in CBPR

Guide to ethical principles & practice: Principles

1. Mutual respect
2. Equality and inclusion
3. Democratic participation
4. Active learning
5. Making a difference
6. Collective action
7. Personal integrity



Guide to ethical principles & practice: Practice guidelines

1. Preparing and planning

- Why work together?
- Who should be involved?
- What are the aims and objectives of the research?

2. Doing the research

- How will the participants work together as research partners?
- How will researchers handle information and treat people who provide it?

3. Sharing and learning from the research

- How to analyse and interpret research data and findings?
- How to share the research?
- How to make an impact?



Ethics in CBPR: Case studies, case examples and commentaries

Case studies – overviews of research projects

Case examples – accounts from individuals of ethical issues and challenges for them

Commentaries – on each case example from two different people



1. A community partner perspective on involvement in development and use of ethics materials. 'Growing ethics' film (Amelia Lee)
2. A university researcher's perspective on using the materials (Erinma Ochu)
3. The value of participating in workshops on ethics in CBPR (Sue Shaw)
4. NCCPE perspective on the need for and use of ethics materials (Sophie Duncan)



www.publicengagement.ac.uk/about/ethics

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www.durham.ac.uk/beacon/socialjustice/ethics_consultation

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