

Ethics in prosthodontic research



Ethics originated from the greek term ethikos (ethos), denoting character or custom. Ethics are noble values that control the conduct of an individual or a society. It serves as an effective guide that advances the life and success. It is essential to follow in research to build a civilized society with right attitude, fair practices, and nonthreatening environment. It is not mandatory by rule but a moral requirement. It is unwritten code of conduct that encompasses both professional conduct and judgment. Although it varies from profession, the underlying principles remain the same.^[1]

A lack of ethical commitment will always result in academic, research, and moral failure. It is important to follow than drafting as rules and listing in literature. The adaptation of practice aids in building healthy environment and the benefits the entire social unit. In addition, it aids in obtaining the basic needs of achieving credibility to the group, uniting people, improving decision-making, prospective long-term gains, securing the society and more importantly protects the researchers.^[2-4]

Ethics can promote research, knowledge, and truth and minimize error. In addition, it promotes cooperation and coordination among people. It endorses trust, accountability, respect, fairness, and collaborative work. Most important in the ethical research is the accountability to the public or humans. The ethical norms in research also aid in obtaining community support for research. In recent years, extensive funds obtained are provided from public money that accounts for more accountability. Organizations are more likely to fund a research if it is reliable and qualitative.^[5-7]

Prosthodontics has undergone greater transitions in concepts, procedures, materials, technology, research, and evidence-based prosthodontics. The ethical concerns in prosthodontics are in two major zones – clinical prosthodontics and research. The clinical concerns involved widely from decision-making on treatment, standard of care to patients, and conflicts with noncooperative patients.^[8] The advances in prosthodontic research have

explored new avenues, but the majority of the data have lesser clinical applications. The end product users of research are the clinician and the benefits are for the patients. Most of the researches have lost its value when it had an unproductive clinical endpoint. Further, few researches lacked the concrete investigation, qualitative exploration, and demanded further analysis. This requests more realistic research questions, demanding methodology and analysis. Many of the studies oversight on the research protocol procedures which are essential to avoid conflict research design. The concerns in prosthodontic research range from recruitment procedures, methodology involved, publication and to clinical endpoint. It is optimum to follow the standard ethical procedures to avoid the divergence in research data.

The guidelines in prosthodontic research aid in education and monitor the conduct of the research. It involves majorly on protection to patients, research protocol followed, publication, funding, and declaration of conflicting interests. In clinical environment, the advice should include informed consent, respect of integrity, and patient autonomy.^[5] The research design should emphasis on honesty, objectivity, integrity, responsibility, confidentiality, protection of patients, and responsible conduct of research.^[9] It should also follow the standard statement guidelines of various research designs for better appreciation.

The report should not possess fabricated data, falsified information, plagiarism, statistical misuse, and other forms of research misconduct which are to be avoided. These can lead to erroneous growth of incorrect concepts and philosophies. The research standards encourage values such as obedience to law, community health, social accountability, human rights, animal care, and protection. Ethical lapses in research can significantly harm human and animal subjects, students, and the public. It is essential that the generalized guidelines in research to be followed. The WHO, Indian Council of Medical Research and International Committee of Medical Journal Editors have provided standard guidelines for research. The adaptation

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of these guidelines along with social responsibilities can enhance the quality of research.

The journal has made initiatives to educate widely and adopt mentorship practices to reduce the ethical concerns in prosthodontic research. Amid all rules, regulations, and policies, self-policing can reduce majority of the ethical issues in prosthodontic research.

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