

The **Justice-Oriented** View

Ethics in science must address structural injustices, such as exploitative research in developing countries, and ensure that benefits are shared equitably.

This perspective broadens the scope of research ethics beyond individual interactions to encompass broader issues of social justice and equity. It argues that ethical research must actively work to dismantle and avoid reinforcing existing power imbalances and systemic inequalities. A core tenet of this view is that "ethics without justice is not ethical enough."

A major focus of the justice-oriented view is the historical and ongoing issue of **exploitative research in developing countries**. This includes situations where researchers from high-income nations conduct studies in low-income settings without ensuring that the local communities will benefit from the research outcomes. The justice-oriented approach calls for fair and equitable partnerships between researchers from the Global North and the Global South. This includes co-designing research projects, sharing leadership roles, and ensuring that research agendas are relevant to the needs of the communities being studied.

This perspective also emphasizes the importance of a **fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of research**. This means that the populations who bear the risks of participating in research should also have access to any resulting benefits, such as new treatments or knowledge. Furthermore, it advocates for the inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable populations in research, not as a means of exploitation, but to ensure that research is representative and that its benefits are widely shared.

Key considerations from a justice-oriented perspective include:

- **Challenging power dynamics:** Recognizing and actively working to mitigate the power imbalances inherent in many research relationships.
- **Community engagement:** Involving communities in the research process, from setting the agenda to disseminating the findings.
- **Epistemic justice:** Recognizing and valuing different forms of knowledge and expertise, particularly from marginalized communities.
- **Compensatory justice:** Considering whether there is a need to compensate individuals or communities who have been harmed by past research practices.

Ultimately, the justice-oriented view argues that research cannot be considered truly ethical if it ignores the broader social and economic contexts in which it is conducted.

How does this research scenario risk perpetuating or creating injustice? Who holds the power, who takes the risks, and who stands to benefit? What would need to change for this research to be truly just?