**Research Methods in Health Promotion**

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**Week 01**

**Lecture 05: Ethics in Health Promotion Research**

Hello everyone I am Dr. Sweety Suman Jha from IIT Kharagpur. So, this is the fifth lecture of this course on research methods in health promotion and also this is my first lecture of this course. So, see in this lecture I will be talking on ethics in health promotion research. Now, see most of you know right what is the importance of ethics in conducting any kind of research. And now and then we are conducting so many researches and at any while conducting any kind of research, we keep in mind all the ethical concerns and ethical issues.

Here we will cover in this lecture we will cover the basic principles of you know the medical research ethics, the informed consent process and very important is that ethical concern regarding health promotion communication interventions. So, see health promotion research it commonly involves biomedical or behavioral research we all know. And the health promotion practice it involves implementing biomedical or behavioral interventions. So, see the first two lines ok.

So, both are different the first in the first line what I have mentioned the health promotion research commonly involves biomedical or behavioral research and in the second health promotion practice involves implementing biomedical or behavioral interventions. So, see we can implement either behavioral intervention in most of the behavioral research we develop some behavior change you know packages the intervention packages we develop. And we implement those among the community members or among the study participants. Now, protections for human subjects and program participants are essential to minimize risk and maximize benefit in both research and practice. So, see one thing most of you know that ICMR Indian council of medical research you know they have developed a guideline.

What guideline regarding the ethical issues, the ethical guidelines, the ethical concern regarding you know on conducting any kind of biomedical research and involving human participants. So, protection for human subjects and the you know the participants are very very essential. Because we have to keep in mind, we you know we cannot do something which is completely unethical which can harm somebody ok, be it physically or psychologically or financially or anyway. So, it is very very essential that we have to minimize any kind of harm, any kind of damage, any kind of risk on the participants. And definitely we have to keep another thing in our mind that we have to maximize the benefit that is itself an important issue.

Now, see ethical conduct should be fundamental to any type of research particularly research involving human subjects. Now, this is very important you have to keep all the ethical guidelines in your mind. Whenever you are you know planning to conduct any kind of research the very very first thing is that you have to be very clear with the ethical guidelines. And most importantly when you are thinking you are involving human participants in your study in your research then definitely that you know that ethical issues are much more important. So, that is why I have mentioned here that ethical conduct it should be fundamental to any type of research, but particularly research involving human subjects ok.

Now, see as I said in my first slide only that the important thing is that we all know the basic guidelines, the basic principles, the you know basic guidelines that we have to keep in mind while we are planning and implementing, I mean we are conducting any kind of research. So, in this lecture also what I will do I will you know I will briefly just tell you the important points, the important principles and what are the must to do you know areas. And definitely after that we will move on to what are the ethical concerns regarding the I mean regarding implementation of health promotion communication interventions. So, see health promotion research frequently studies behaviors and behaviors that we study often very sensitive right. So, whenever we think that we are going we have I mean we are planning research which is health promotion research.

So, what happens mostly frequently we think that we will do some studies regarding the human behavior ok. So, what happen and whatever behavior we study see most of the behaviors are very very sensitive. Like you see the mental health issues a very sensitive issue then another important thing is regarding any sexual behavior practices then you know the substance use. So, I have given just 2 3 examples there are many such kind of examples and behaviors that we study in our community and those are really really very sensitive. And we have to be very careful while we are planning any research which involves any kind of such sensitive behavior ok.

So, health promotion communication interventions invariably it raises ethical issues because they aim to influence people views and lifestyles. And now you see generally we all know different people have different views their opinions their lifestyles you know their own perceptions. I mean it is something like that you cannot change you know something just overnight it takes time you know some behavior change some views and opinions you know it takes time to be you know modified to get changed. And they are often initiated and funded and you know it is influenced by government agencies and also you know the path of the public and a private organization. So, regarding the basic principles of medical research ethics or biomedical ethics you can say.

So, these are the 4 basic principles I know most of you know because as I said now and then we are planning projects we are planning research and we are also conducting. So, without knowing the basic principles, without keeping in mind these basic principles we cannot move you know a single step ethics is so important especially nowadays you know you never know. I mean you have conducted a study without keeping in mind some of the you know principles of ethics. And you never know after few days you know one or two participant they can you know what happened they can just tell you that no these are the things you did not tell us you did not tell us you did not inform us that no remuneration will be given or if something happens to us you people are not going to take some responsibility or many things you know there are so many things like if you start doing you know activity if you are doing if you start doing any kind of research activity and then you will see people you know they have so many you know complaints and problems and no you did not say that. So, you could you should have told us that the research will go like this it will go for such a long time you did not inform us.

Autonomy is itself a very important thing very very first important thing is that the participant they should know the entire thing whatever they are supposed to know. So, the very first principle will talk on autonomy that is respect for the individual right this is very important. So, it is a right of an individual to determine whether he or she will participate in the research or not I mean you cannot just force somebody right you cannot simply force somebody to participate in a particular research or in a particular study. So, whatever be it intervention study be it non-interventional study any kind of research any kind of study this is very important that it is a right of a person it is right of that particular study participant to determine whether he or she will participate in the research or not. You can approach them, but whether they are ready I mean whether they give you the consent or not whether they are willing to you know to be a participant of this particular study or not.

Then so, autonomy as I said this is you know something very important because you cannot force somebody somebody you know they have their own you know right to participate on to not participate. The next is beneficence. Now, see the researcher should act in the best interest of the research participant that is what is the meaning of this that to bring about more beneficial consequences than the harmful ones that is why the name is beneficence. So, as a researcher you have to keep this in your mind that the researcher should always act in the best interest of the study participant or the research participant. And to bring about the more beneficial you know the consequences should be more beneficial than the harmful.

So, you have to keep this in mind and the next one is the non-maleficence first do no harm that is very important ok. So, this principle you know according to this particular principle it ensures that the research procedure does not harm the participant ok. So, you cannot that is why I have mentioned here see first do no harm. So, maybe you are planning something very big you think this is going to be you know a very innovative very noble kind of research very good study that is ok. But if you are planning any big research small research whatever the

important thing is that you have to you know keep all this principle you know the basic principles in your mind.

And one more important thing is do not think that I will just pay importance to the first two basic principle and the other two or three I will not pay any attention it is not possible you know you know I have seen you know some people are talking then to it is very difficult to conduct any kind of study ok. It is difficult we cannot help, but you cannot be you know unethical you cannot do something which will harm that particular participant this is very important. Next is justice equal justice for all. So, see there should be equal opportunity of all individuals to participate in research it must be ensured and the same time persons must not be unfairly compelled into participating as you know most of the time it happens with the vulnerable population of the society. We just try to vary you know very unfairly in a very unfair manner we try to compel them we try to force them to participate in your research.

So, this is very important definitely there should be equal opportunity of all the individuals you just cannot you know you obviously, there should be some inclusion exclusion criteria, but if the inclusion criteria if you know that particular person is actually belongs to that inclusion criteria. Then you know he or she I mean what I am trying to say there should be equal opportunity he or she should also participate in the research and it should be ensured. And the same time what did I say you cannot force somebody we you cannot just vary you know by unfair means unfairly you cannot just compel somebody to participate in your study. As you know most of the time it happens with vulnerable population the prisoners you know the commercial sex worker then the you know the institutionalized children. Those who are vulnerable you know we know that these section of the you know the vulnerable children, payment dwellers etc.

So, we cannot just forcefully compel them to participate in our study. The informed consent process now see in the previous slide only we were talking about all the principles right all the basic principles. So, the very important thing is what I was saying just few minutes back that you have to inform them everything. They should know that what is the purpose of this research, what is the aim of this research, then why actually the researcher you know they are researcher is approaching them to participate in the study, what will be the consequences of the study. So, many things are there everything you know they should know the participant has the right to know before they actually say you yes they have the right to know everything.

And do not think that you will just disclose one or two things and you will not disclose other three or four important things. Now, this you cannot do this is completely an unethical you know process you cannot just even think of doing this. So, then informed consent is a process we all know most of us know that in which the research participant should have full access to right full information. This is what I was just trying to tell you that the participant should have

full access to right full information related to research and they should understand it in full comprehension and sign agreement with voluntariness ok. You know the consent form they have to first understand everything as a researcher you know as a principal investigator as a researcher this is your responsibility to inform them everything.