

Evaluation and Assessment of Instructional Design



Module #1

Educational Research Fundamentals and Ethics

Part 4: Prevention of Ethical Issues & Examples of Wrongdoing

Module 1, Part 4 Introduction



Armed with an understanding of ethics, we now take a look at ways to prevent issues from coming up as well as some examples of studies going wrong.

- Best practices for ethical behavior
- Examples of unethical behaviors
- Tie-in to educational research & instructional design

Best Practices for Ethical Behavior in Educational Research / Inst. Design



Though mentioned before, it is good to take a second glance at this as it is important in every aspect of research and design.

- Honesty, integrity, transparency, and acceptance to feedback/criticism
- Respect for individuals and persons involved in study
 - Better results and inquisitive participants once study has been completed.
 - Humanity of a research study.
- Foundational research – means to an end.
- Direction of moral compass

Best Practices for Ethical Behavior in Educational Research / Inst. Design



Other tips that can be used for effective studies includes the following:

- Documentation trail – virtual, physical, or both
 - Strengthens findings and also validates results and research conclusions.
- Law Mandates – federal, state, and/or local
- ADA Compliance (more in-depth in Module 4)
- And so on.

Unethical Behavior Examples



Numerous studies that have gone rogue are documented in textbooks annually showing a lack of ethical behavior.

- Example #1 – Calculation Errors & Net Results
 - Intentionally published data which was erroneous.
 - Ignored error claiming it was too late to rectify.
 - Example #2 – Data Sharing Agreements
 - Providing data without authorization can dilute credit of original researchers and jeopardize future papers.
 - Can violate *FERPA* and *APA* guidelines depending on what was shared.
- Resnik (2011)

Consequences of Unethical Behavior



Although the chance of unethical behavior occurring is very low, there are some dire consequences that could result – including...

- Disciplinary action up to termination of one's employment (in industry and academia).
- Restrictions in place barring one from conducting research in a specific field or industry for some period of time.
- Civil, criminal, and potentially severe financial penalties.
- Risk of effectiveness of educational and/or instructional design research due to intentional errors committed.

Checklist for Ethical Behaviors



- Comprehensive description of research study including purpose, research methods, etc.
- Acknowledgement of participants' authorization to collect data on their behalf.
- Multiple data collection methods
- Review of applicable policies and procedures.
- When in doubt, ask!

Ethical Tie-In To Instructional Design



- Most studies that are conducted for the betterment of instructional designs require the use of human participants.
 - Accurate description of research study
 - Consent forms to participate / not participate
 - Opportunity for feedback of study
- Observational Challenges
 - Virtual studies and effectiveness
 - Accommodation challenges to suit most learners
- Criticizing of online instructional design methods
 - Defensive position on ethics