Review of the Volume “Ethics in Research Practice and Innovation”, Coordinated by Antonio Sandu, Ana Frunză and Elena Unguru, Published by Igi Global Publishing House

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Abstract: The book "Ethics in Research Practice and Innovation", coordinated by Antonio Sandu, Ana Frunză and Elena Unguru, and published in 2019 in the United States of America by IGI Global Publishing House is a collective volume that brings together papers of international relevance, that target many of the relevant areas of ethics in research and scientific innovation, that brought together researchers from 8 countries on 4 continents and 16 universities and research centers, all specialists with a diverse scientific background, leading to a valuable interdisciplinary presentation of the topics addressed in the volume. Among the areas of ethics of research presented in the book we mention: ethical value and limits of knowledge, research on human subjects, ethics of designing and conducting research, publication and communication of science, ethics of technologies with a major impact on lifestyle, artificial intelligence, biotechnologies, natural and life sciences, like the use of genetically modified organisms.

Keywords: ethics in research; research practice; ethics in innovation; book review.

Introduction

The volume "Ethics in Research Practice and Innovation" is an interdisciplinary work of value that addresses researchers at all levels, from debutantes to experienced researchers who coordinate research teams, but at the same time, it can be of interest for any person who wishes to be informed about how the academic community sees the way in which science innovations will be pursued through research and subsequently applied to the everyday life of each individual.

The book is not about restrictions or prohibitions, about "do not" or "make it so", but about how the researcher's personality can feel free during the research process, without breaking their creativity, but while respecting their own ethical principles, which are common to those of the entire academic and scientific community. The book is about identifying these common principles and how science, by applying them, can be free and liberating, as the volume coordinators say in the preface to the book: "abusing ethics and turning it into a coercive system turns ethics into its opposite, and witch hunt, ineffective in promoting good practice in research".

A book about research on how to... do research

Ethics in research is a subject widely debated in the field of humanities, predominantly those that involve, during research activities, the contact with human subjects, or that are about the innovative fields of technology and engineering, where the potentially destructive risks of technologies obtained in breach of the principles ethics are major. All these debates have a common starting point, traditionally identified as belonging to the field of philosophy, but over time the ethics concept has been customized and recontextualized through applied ethics to highlight the specific aspects of each major branch of research, but we are currently dealing with areas of ethics that tend towards a return to a common point, but not necessarily in the field of philosophy, but by the creation of integrative disciplines such as bioethics (the ethics of everything in science that is about life), the ethics of technology (the part of ethics that deals with the opportunity to enable humanity or not to develop certain technologies, such as, for example, artificial intelligence), the ethics of scientific publication (which refers to the responsible way of disseminating knowledge by publishers and editors, in the age of the Internet and communication of
information in real time, without delay from the moment it is launched to the moment it reaches the potential receptors).

This trend of reunification of ethics is also a goal of this volume, which gathers analyzes, views, opinions that take into account global trends which may be of interest to ethics in research. Some topics are treated more extensively, and discussions are repeated over several chapters, but from different perspectives, and other themes are just announced, prefigured, just as research is only prefigured in some areas of science, which makes us look forward to a possible second edition of this volume, to see what the coordinators and authors will choose to add to the range of themes that they are discussing now.

**Contents, interesting debates and trends**

The volume "Ethics in Research Practice and Innovation" (Sandu, Frunză, & Unguru, 2019) is an initiative of the LUMEN Research Center in Social and Humanistic Sciences in Iaşi, Romania, which through the three coordinators of the volume has consolidated the interest and support of peers from some of the most important universities in Romania and abroad, which over the years have published numerous works in the area of interest of the book, joining together from the United States of America, Australia, France, Ukraine, South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, and Turkey, because they felt, like their Romanian colleagues, the need to present in the international scientific literature a work that would synthesize the basic but also nuanced aspects of ethics in research.

The book is structured in three parts, each of which incorporates major principles generally applicable to all sciences. A first part deals with the degree of confidence that research will engender in society, and the guarantor of this trust is the observance of ethics in the way research is conceived and disseminated. In fact, this is also the subject addressed in the first chapter of the paper (Sandu, 2019), then the theme is to be customized on case studies in Ukraine (Artyukhov & Vasilyeva, 2019), South Africa (Naidoo, 2019), Romania (Ciulei, 2019) and Nigeria (Endong, 2019).

A second part is devoted to ethics in research on human subjects, whether it refers to vulnerable population (Loue & Loff, 2019), clinical trials (Macarie & Tebeanu, 2019), risk-benefit evaluation of clinical research (Rizk, 2019), informed consent (Sandu & Frunză, 2019), cultural ethics in research on human subjects (Iyioke, 2019), ethics of risk in psychiatry (Clero, 2019) or family research (Turliuc & Candelo, 2019).
One of the most dynamic parts of the volume is the third part, which deals with aspects that may seem futuristic to a non-specialist reader, but which are already realities of the present: embryonic stem cells research (Huidu, 2019), genetic engineering (Huidu, 2019), artificial intelligent robots (Popoveniuc, 2019), organizational criminology (Taştan, 2019).

The authors of the volume base their analyzes on interdisciplinary approaches that concern multiple fields of social and humanistic sciences, which is evident from the fact that the authors belong to various professional categories, with various expertise: philosophy, sociology, editorial ethics, ethics of research (Prof. PhD Antonio Sandu), higher education, educational management and educational leadership (Assoc. Prof. PhD Tetyana Vasylieva), engineering in the field of research of the vortex granulation, mass-transfer and heat-transfer devices (Assoc. Prof. PhD Artem Artyukhov), corporate strategy, project management, entrepreneurship (Senior Lecturer PhD Vannie Naidoo), philosophy, logic, theory of argumentation (Assoc. Prof. PhD Tomită Culei), international communication, gender studies, digital media, media laws, international relations, culture and religious communication (Research Consultant PhD Endong Floribert Patrick Calvain), bioethics, epidemiology and biostatics, psychiatry, and global health (Prof. PhD Sana Loue), epidemiology and preventive medicine (Assoc. Prof. PhD Bebe Loff), data analysis, statistical analysis, health promotion, quantitative data analysis, health education, psychology (Assoc. Lecturer PhD George Florian Macarie), psychopathology, clinical assessment, personality assessment, clinical health psychology (Assoc. Lecturer PhD Ana Voichiţa Tebeanu), clinical pathology (MD PhD Samia Hassan Rizk), social work, social work ethics, bioethics, supervision of ethics (Researcher PhD Ana Frunză), bioethics, public health ethics, environmental ethics (Researcher PhD Ike Valentine Iyioke), philosophy, ethics (Prof. Emeritus PhD Jean Pierre Clero), applied psychology and social psychology (Prof. PhD Nicoleta Maria Turluiuc), psychology and educational sciences (PhD Student Octav Sorin Candel), law, bioethics, biolaw, human rights, sociology (lawyer, Researcher PhD Student Alexandra Huidu), philosophy of singularity, psychology, ethics of research (Assoc. Prof. PhD Bogdan Popoveniuc), social psychology, positive psychology and personality psychology (Assoc. Prof. PhD Şeşil Taştan).

In conclusion, we can say that the volume "Ethics in Research Practice and Innovation" brings a broad view of what ethics is in research, with emphasis on researchers’ responsibility not only to contribute to the sustainable scientific and technological evolution of humanity, but also to constructively inspire, by the way they conduct their research, the manner in
which humanity will choose to apply technology to themselves, in the spirit of responsibility, to which the desire for knowledge is subsumed.

References


