



# Beyond Research Ethics: Adherence to Integrity and Conscience as Humans

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## ABSTRACT

*Along with the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century's great boom in information technology, emerged knowledge societies that pivot on the common practice of research. Knowledge is considered the power whose capacity depends on the amount of research involved in its attainment. Research-based knowledge production has already become part and parcel of academia in the rational world, and individuals and institutions claim patents and copyrights for the intellectual products they release to society in terms of ideas or commodities of technical and commercial value. Thus, knowledge being a market item and knowledge production, a lucrative industry, very often the ethical norms of research are violated by individuals affected by corruption. Ethics in research help maintain the patents and copyrights of such knowledge-based products, to safeguard their inventors or discoverers against issues of plagiarism, corruption, exploitation, disreputation, defamation, and moral and intellectual deterioration that tend to become the ruination of the individuals as well as the institutions concerned. It can be resolved only by replacing grotesque materialistic and existentialist defilements with sublime moral and spiritual integrity and conscience as humans. Against this background, this paper attempts to promote integrity and conscience as part of research ethics with an overview of the threats and dangers that corruption would impose on society. The paper thus proposes a way to connect research ethics that has a legal foundation with integrity and conscience as humans that have a moral and spiritual foundation, with a focus on developing a society working with lofty ideals far from mundane materialistic expectations.*

**KEYWORDS:** research ethics, knowledge industry, academic corruption, moral integrity, conscience

## INTRODUCTION

### Objectives, Research Problem, and Significance

This paper is meant to address the problem of blatant violations of ethics in research committed at individual and institutional levels despite the legal conditions laid down in the charters of research ethics. Therefore, its objectives are 1) to draw attention to the question of whether it is sufficient to satisfy only what is stipulated in legal frameworks: and 2) to share the view that adherence to integrity and conscience as humans will ensure the sustainability of a corruption-free research culture within the academia. The significance of the paper lies in the fact that a conscious effort to answer the queries raised in line with these two objectives will have a positive impact on the quality of research being carried out. An insight into the requirement of advancing high moral and spiritual standards in society is meant to help enhance the potential of all individuals by always allowing them to channel their intellectual energies for a genuine cause.

## METHODOLOGY

Fundamentally, the methodology of this study involves

analyses of qualitative contents, narrative accounts, observations, holy scriptures, and theoretical explanations found under a library research approach to the problem concerned, in alignment with its didactic objectives. Accordingly, the paper gathers its structure from the trajectory that develops from the central discussion. At the onset, I draw attention to the ways in which research is identified within a knowledge society. Then I strive to review an institutional research ethics framework to show how far integrity and conscience are represented there. Moreover, I enumerate various identified ways of violating research ethics and the legal issues they entail. Finally, I intend to demonstrate how observation of moral and spiritual values concerned with one's integrity and conscience as humans can ensure the sustenance of a research culture always leading to a genuine cause concerned with the advancement of society.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Observation of research ethics is a primary responsibility of every individual. A genuine endeavour to develop an advanced knowledge society should culminate in getting every



individual to reflect so on research ethics. The establishment of a corruption-free research culture has a vast impact on the development of society. Thereby academic crimes can be minimized, and the individuals' quality can be maximized. The sense of answerability that every individual member maintains becomes a great power to ensure a qualitative improvement of every institution and a large cluster of such individuals and institutions will safeguard society from all possible threats and evils against it.

### **WHAT IS RESEARCH?**

Before going to research ethics, let us focus on what research is. "Research is the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions" (Google Dictionary, Accessed Oct 12, 2021). This short definition emphasizes the requirement of maintaining systematicity in research. Accordingly, systematicity in every aspect of the relevant investigation and study, including the choices made concerning the selection of materials and sources concerned, is meant to enhance the veracity of the facts established thereby as well as the validity of the new conclusions reached. A more elaborate view of research can be gathered from the following list of characteristics of research:

Good research follows a systematic approach to capture accurate data.

Researchers practice a code of conduct while making observations or drawing conclusions.

Analyses involve logical reasoning furnished by inductive and deductive methods.

Real-time data and knowledge are derived from actual observations in natural settings.

An in-depth analysis of all data prevents anomalies associated with it.

It creates a path for generating new questions.

Existing data helps create more research opportunities.

It uses all the available data to prevent ambiguity in inference.

Accuracy is considered one of the most critical aspects of research.

Accuracy is measured in the instruments used, the calibrations of tools, and the final experiment results.

(www.question.pro, Accessed Oct 12, 2021)

The eight characteristics presented here draw attention to eight considerations in research. Like the previous definition, the first characteristic emphasizes systematicity in the investigation and accuracy of the data. To fulfil that requirement, the second characteristic points out the necessity to practice ethics and a code of conduct while making observations or drawing conclusions. An advanced form of thinking on the part of the researcher is expected

in the third characteristic, especially, in carrying out the necessary analyses along with logical reasoning conducted in inductive and deductive methods. The actual observations made in natural settings in search of real-time data and knowledge focused on the fourth characteristic involve a rigorous procedure which very often demands researchers to be alert and active about the developments they work on. As depicted in the fifth characteristic, an in-depth analysis of all collected data, in terms of eliminating all possible anomalies associated with it, is also a challenging task as it needs so much deskwork. The benefits of following a strictly ethical procedure in collecting and analysing data are depicted in the sixth characteristic, in terms of the potential to generate new research questions and more research opportunities. Perfectionism in research is presented in the seventh characteristic, in terms of the qualities of accuracy, transparency, and exhaustiveness in the inferences made. The final characteristic suggests that the most critical aspect of research is accuracy, which is measured in the instruments used, the calibrations of instruments or tools, and the final experiment result.

### **RESEARCH ETHICS**

In carrying out the above activities and maintaining their quality levels, "research ethics provides guidelines for the responsible conduct of research, and in addition, it educates and monitors scientists conducting research to ensure a high ethical standard" (City University of Hongkong, Accessed Oct 12, 2021) In an academic framework, it appears as a set of norms that a researcher has to follow in keeping with the ethical value of research. These norms can be followed in our daily life if we come to terms with our identity as human beings.

#### **Honesty:**

Report honestly data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status. Do not fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data.

#### **Objectivity:**

Avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing, expert testimony, and other aspects of research.

#### **Integrity:**

Keep promises and agreements; act with sincerity; strive for consistency of thought and action.

#### **Carefulness:**

Avoid careless errors and negligence; examine carefully and critically every detail of work. Keep good records of all research activities.

#### **Openness:**

Share data, results, ideas, tools, and resources. Be open to criticism and new ideas.

**Respect for Intellectual Property:**

Honour patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. Do not use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission. Give credit where credit is due. Never plagiarize.

**Confidentiality:**

Protect confidential communications, such as papers or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, trade or military secrets, and patient records.

**Responsible Publication:**

Publish to advance research and scholarship, not to advance just your own career. Avoid wasteful and duplicative publication.

**Responsible Mentoring:**

Help to educate, mentor, and advise students. Promote their welfare and allow them to make their own decisions.

**Respect for Colleagues:**

Respect your colleagues and treat them fairly.

**Social Responsibility:**

Strive to promote social good and prevent or mitigate social harms through research, public education, and advocacy.

**Non-Discrimination:**

Avoid discrimination against colleagues or students based on sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors that are not related to their scientific competence and integrity.

**Competence:**

Maintain and improve your own professional competence and expertise through lifelong education and learning; take steps to promote competence in science.

**Legality:**

Know and obey relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies.

**Animal Care:**

Show proper respect and care for animals when using them in research. Do not conduct unnecessary or poorly designed animal experiments.

**Human Subjects Protection:**

When conducting research on human subjects, minimise harms and risks, maximise benefits, and respect for human dignity, privacy, and autonomy.

(City University of Hongkong, Accessed Oct 12, 2021)

In this list, objectivity and competence are the only two norms that must be scientifically cultivated under a supervisor or an instructor. As an upcoming researcher, one needs didactic

support in realising the extent to which one should be objective and competent in all academic activities involved in one's research. To the degree of professional competence and expertise one cultivates, can one maintain the desired levels of objectivity in research. Therefore, it is understood that there is a clear interrelationship between objectivity and competence. Both these norms ensure sophistication in research. The others must be cultivated, as I emphasized before, through personal endeavour and moral and spiritual commitment.

Integrity in personal life prevents all challenges possible in research, especially, concerned with sincerity in keeping one's promises and agreements and consistency of one's thoughts and actions. Honesty is a primary aspect of integrity. Honest in personal life, one can easily remain honest in research as well, and abstain from practices such as fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting data, while sharing with others, the most accurate information about the subject concerned.

To maintain integrity, one almost automatically becomes careful in all dealings with others. It inculcates in the individual the habit of carefully and critically examining all that is concerned in matters of life. In research too, it helps to avoid careless errors and issues of negligence and keep accurate records of research activities.

A person of integrity does not get threatened by criticism or new ideas, because such a one does not keep any ulterior motives or hidden agendas. Thereby, one cultivates openness to the extent of sharing with the other the data, results, ideas, tools, and resources concerned with research. In the same vein, with integrity only, one can respect whatever belongs to others as theirs. In formal research, it appears in terms of respect for patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property, and prevents one from the temptation of plagiarism or using others' unpublished data, methods, or results without permission or acknowledgement. Integrity helps even to earn confidentiality by building trust. When it comes to preserving confidentiality in research, it is integrity that keeps a team together.

One's character does not get affected by greed in professional life, as far as one upholds one's integrity in personal life. So, in the publication aspect of research, the individual is focused on advancing research and scholarship rather than career expectations. The quality of unselfishness thus cultivated through integrity helps even in mentoring the students with the responsibility to promote their welfare and the consideration to allow them to make their own decisions. It is the same personality trait that makes one respect colleagues fairly. The understanding and respect for the democratic rights of others one cultivates under integrity is the basis of non-discrimination. It helps one refrain from discriminating against colleagues or students because of sex, race, ethnicity, etc. The sense of social responsibility maintained as part of integrity in social relationships is the very element that concerns one's endeavours to promote social good and

prevent or mitigate social harms through research, public education, and advocacy. The attitudes maintained in this respect, promote animal care and human subject protection in research, treating the human subjects with respect for their human dignity, privacy, and autonomy, and animals, with respect for their right to live. The ethical behaviour maintained primarily through integrity safeguards one's status against all possible allegations and threats, as a law-abiding individual acting in accordance with the relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies. The personal, moral, and spiritual commitments one makes thus in the preservation of the quality of research are well explained in the definition where research ethics is introduced as "norms for conduct that distinguish between the acceptable and the unacceptable behaviours" (Resnik, 2020).

### **INTELLECTUAL TRAITS IN THE SUSTENANCE OF A RESEARCH CULTURE**

Formally defined intellectual traits as follows are being promoted in many academic institutions at different rates, with a focus on establishing and resuscitating a moral behaviour, beneficial to humanity as well as all species of life.

Intellectual Integrity - I hold myself to the same rigorous standards of thinking and behaviour to which I hold others.

Intellectual Fair-mindedness - I strive to treat every viewpoint in an unbiased way without reference to my own vested interests.

Intellectual Courage - I dare to question and challenge popular or long-held beliefs in the face of new information or evidence.

Confidence in Reasoning - I rely on the critical thinking process and trust its results.

Intellectual Perseverance - I continue to struggle with confusion, frustration, and uncertainty to gain understanding.

Intellectual Humility - I acknowledge my biases and the limits of my knowledge.

Intellectual Autonomy - I independently think through questions and problems.

Intellectual Empathy - I consider others' perspectives to accurately reconstruct their viewpoints. (Paul and Elder, 2012)

Constant contemplation of this kind of voluntary precept helps one organize one's thinking in such a way that one's existence becomes a blessing to one's environment. The norms of research ethics discussed before, become a part of one's lifestyle when these intellectual traits are consciously absorbed into one's system of thinking. Their indispensability in developing a strong research culture becomes obvious

when violations of ethics openly occur in scientific societies. Once the norms of ethics are ignored or deliberately violated, the entire scheme of research proves useless.

### **ETHICAL VIOLATIONS IN RESEARCH IN THE ABSENCE OF INTELLECTUAL TRAITS**

As stated in the abstract, very often, the market value attached to knowledge as well as the industrial value attached to knowledge-based institutions tends to cause research to become a means of existence by reducing its intellectual, creative, and spiritual foundations to competition for profits. This has resulted in blatant violations of ethics in research. The spiritual pleasure of the scientific achievements and contributions made through research gets buried under the mundane benefits enjoyed through the patents and copyrights attached to various methods, techniques, processes, mechanisms, theorems, discoveries, statistics, machines, instruments, chemical formulae, recipes, etc. which have emerged from the creative and intellectual energies of their real inventors or discoverers. While some people are in a struggle to protect their authorship of research some are on a hunt to exploit others by stealing their authorship. Against such a background, ethics in research is significant in preserving professionalism in society. In the absence of ethics, practices of plagiarism, corruption, exploitation, disreputation, defamation, and, overall, moral, and intellectual deterioration tend to ruin individuals and institutions. Like all other sectors of society, academia is also affected by corruption.

In this concern, Resnik (2020) produces a long list of violations committed by certain members of the scientific community in the US. I present here an extract from it, covering only those violations, which are concerned with the disciplines of humanities and social sciences.

Extrapolating from the available results to produce additional results

Ignoring mathematical errors or factual errors or typos in printed journals

Failing to keep good research records

Failing to maintain research data for a reasonable period

Publishing the same paper in two different journals without telling the editors

Submitting the same paper to different journals without telling the editors

Hiding from a collaborator, your intent to file a patent to appear as the sole inventor

Including a colleague as an author on a paper in return for a favour

Discussing with colleagues, confidential data from a paper under review for a journal

Using data, ideas, or methods you learn about while reviewing a grant or paper without permission

Trimming outliers from a data set without discussing the reasons

Using an inappropriate statistical technique to enhance the significance of the research

Bypassing the peer review process and announcing the results through a press conference  
Conducting a review of the literature that fails to acknowledge the contributions of other people in the field or relevant prior work

Stretching the truth on a grant application to convince reviewers that the project will make a significant contribution to the field

Stretching the truth on a job application or curriculum vitae

Giving the same research project to two graduate students to see who can do it faster

Overworking, neglecting, or exploiting graduate or post-doctoral students

Making derogatory comments and personal attacks in your review of the author's submission

Promising a student, a better grade for sexual favours

Stealing supplies, books, or data

Making unauthorized copies of data, papers, or computer programs (Resnik, 2020)

These violations can be classified as outcomes of negative intellectual traits that are likely to emerge in an individual under various circumstances. They highlight personality traits that are detrimental not only to the progress of the person concerned as well as the other individuals but also to that of the institutions and communities concerned.

Obviously, those who have no faith in reason and evidence are misfits in scientific communities. Through such individuals' involvement, incidents of producing additional results, extrapolating from the available results, and ignoring mathematical errors or factual errors or typos in printed journals, may occur. Their careless attitudes hued with intellectual lethargy can even lead to their failure to keep good research records and to maintain research data for reasonable periods of time. This type of violation committed on the grounds of irresponsibility, negligence, unseriousness, and carelessness, reduces the veracity of the findings and the acceptability of the claims made thereby.

There are often incidents of publishing the same paper in two different journals, submitting the same paper to different journals without notifying the editors, hiding from a collaborator one's intent to file a patent for a joint invention, including an undeserving colleague as an author on a paper in return for a favour, discussing with colleagues, confidential data from a paper under review, unauthorized use of data,

ideas, or methods learnt from unpublished sources, and underhand eliminating of data. They are mainly precipitated by intellectual unfairness. Basically, all these acts expose the perpetrators' opportunism, dishonesty, treachery, and untrustworthiness. Their scandalous reputation affects the credibility of the institutions they are affiliated with.

While academia everywhere in the world is thus more or less affected by egocentrism today, for the sake of personal benefits, many people violate ethics. Underestimating other people's intelligence, they use inappropriate statistical techniques, to enhance the significance of their research. Working towards self-aggrandizement or self-promotion, they bypass peer review processes and announce their results through press conferences or other mechanisms. They even deliberately ignore the contributions of other people in the field or relevant prior work while conducting literature reviews. Sometimes, while applying for research grants, they attract undue attention to the insignificant contributions of their projects, by means of false feasibility reports and evaluations. They hide the facts even in job applications and self-assessments.

Disregarding research ethics observed in these ways may confuse pedagogical environments as well. Unethical research supervisors can ruin the harmony of academic milieu, causing ill-will among the students. They may set graduate students for undue competition by giving two or more of them the same research project and gauging the speed of their submissions. Such practices can reduce research to silly contests. Duped by their intellectual arrogance, they ruthlessly subject the graduate or post-doctoral students in their charge, to overwork, neglect, or exploitation. Such cases even go to the extent of promising students of better grades for sexual favours. They take undue liberty to make derogatory comments and personal attacks in their reviews of authors' submissions, leading the latter to disappointment and disenchantment.

The brute in the researcher may spring out even through acts of stealing supplies, books, or data, affecting the libraries and resource centres, and making unauthorized copies of data, papers, or computer programs, affecting the copyrights of the authors or the commercial firms involved. The intellectual property thefts committed by such individuals ruin the foundations of scientific institutions by relegating serious research endeavours to a mundane struggle for existence. According to Resnik (2020), most scientists consider these violations unethical and a few even illegal, but they are not classified as "actions of research misconduct" by the Federal Government of the US. The implication is that there are clear loopholes in the law, allowing the perpetrators to escape. So, who is going to charge them with such acts of plagiarism, distortion, falsification, damage, deprivation, insult, exploitation, torture, theft, or negligence they commit against others in connection with research? That remains a question forever.

## THE FUNDAMENTAL ENEMY OF ETHICS

While ethics in research is appreciated in every society, violation of ethics has become a common issue in almost every academic milieu. Where do the perpetrators derive motivation from, in their acts of violation? The origin of their criminality lies nowhere else but in their own psyche. The tendency to indulge in profiting from mean behaviour is identified as the fundamental enemy of ethics. According to Davenport (2021), there are negative personality traits described as unforgiving, predatory, passive-aggressive, vindictive, narcissistic, manipulative, judgmental, dishonest, greedy, needing to be right, pessimistic, and egocentric likely to emerge in people under various circumstances. That means that, before fighting ethical violations in society, one must eliminate the mental defilements in one's own psyche as a researcher, conscious of one's obligations to one's discipline, institution, and society by and large.

It is fascinating to perceive that all religions in the world profess, in different fashions but with the same focus, the requirement of maintaining a clear conscience throughout one's existence. The Holy Bible appreciates the conscience in a Christian perspective, which is cultivated in exposure to nature, tradition, and culture and which substitutes law and order in places where there is no legislature and its power in establishing and maintaining personal discipline:

"or when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*." (Romans 2:14-15)

The dynamic behaviour of the conscience in assessing the thoughts demonstrated in the Holy Bible is reflected even in the Holy Quran propounded under Islam:

"We verily created man and we know what his soul whispers to him and we are nearer to him than his jugular vein" (T.Q., Sura 50, The Qaf, verse 16.)"

"In reality, there are two consciences: an apparent conscience, which is known to all people and liable to mistakes, and a higher conscience. At the higher level is the conscience of the revealed religions, which cannot err because it is linked to its Creator. Religion says that each man possesses an innate tendency towards good" (Sheikh Ahmad Kuftaro:1992)

Both these Abrahamic religious sources maintain a similar stance about the role of conscience in streamlining behaviour and emphasise the necessity of cultivating and refining it throughout life. The emphasis the Upanishads lays on conscience under Hinduism is not different.

"When approaching the *Mandukya Upanishad*, it is vital that we transform our attitude toward the concept of consciousness and cultivate a respectful openness and genuine desire to experience consciousness, not as an

object to be understood, but rather as an experience of higher reality. This begins by learning to feel awareness rather than simply thinking about it. Cultivating a felt sense of awareness rather than an intellectual understanding of it allows us to eventually have a direct experience of consciousness" (Tigunait, 2020)

In this case, as all religions profess, it is a primary responsibility to maintain mindfulness through a constant vigil and control of the consciousness. "Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens" (The Greater Good Science Center, 2021).

Mindfulness, according to Buddhism, is achieved through the practice of examining and controlling the stream of consciousness, known as *vitakkavicara*. According to Kragh (2013: 72), *vitarka*(discernment) is "the cognitive operation that is responsible for ascertaining what is perceived by the senses by initially labeling it with a name" while *vicāra* (discursiveness) is "the subsequent conceptual operation of deciding whether the perceived sense-object is desirable and what course of action one might want to take in relation to it". The combination of the two cognitive operations *vitakkavichara* is the basis of *samma sati* (right mindfulness), the seventh aspect of the *noble eight-fold path* in Buddhism. "Right mindfulness, as explained by Walpola Sri Rahula, "is to be diligently aware, mindful, and attentive with regard to (1) the activities of the body (*kaya*), (2) sensations or feelings (*vedana*), (3) the activities of the mind (*citta*) and (4) ideas, thoughts, conceptions, and things (*dhamma*)". Thus, Buddhism professes mind control against mental defilements.

It is noteworthy that the Buddha, who founded a secular school of philosophy in ancient India, is called *arahant* in the sense that he does not commit a sin even in utter secret. Accordingly, even while remaining atheist, one can follow the Buddha's principle of refraining from all sins with a sense of discretion.

Should conscience-based protections be based only on religious grounds, or is there room for non-religious moral claims (as there is in conscientious objection)? Can the conscience-based moral claims of atheists be protected under a scheme of religious-based conscience exemptions? (The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, 2011)

In response to the above undergraduate question on non-religious moral claims, Thomas F. Farr has provided the following answer:

"I believe the non-religious content of conscience deserves protection, so long as it is ordered to the truth about man and society, which is to say that conscience drives action that accords with natural reason" (Farr, 2011).

Accordingly, one must take into consideration “the truth about man and society” and “natural reason” in all actions concerning oneself and others.

While research is an elite intellectual practice, mindfulness is fundamental to the preservation of the intellectuality of research. Researchers without ethics become either charlatans, cheats, or chauvinists. Therefore, it is indispensable for researchers to adopt a mindfulness-based intellectual approach to making decisions for the sustenance of the ethical standards of research. If researchers are in the right frame of mind, there is no reason for them to go wrong.

### **CONSCIOUSNESS-CONSCIENCE UNITY IN THE PRESERVATION OF RESEARCH ETHICS**

“Consciousness” as Vithoukias and Muresanu (2013) define, “is the function of the human mind that receives and processes information, crystallizes it and then stores it or rejects it with the help of the following: 1. The five senses; 2. The reasoning ability of the mind; 3. Imagination and emotion; and 4. Memory. The five senses enable the mind to receive information, then imagination and emotion process it, reason judges it, and memory stores or rejects it.” The exact parts of the human brain (Bogen, 1995) where those functions take place are supposedly defined by neurophysiology. According to Libet (2004), the more information one gathers and processes, the more “aware” one becomes; and the more “conscious” one becomes of one’s internal and external world, the more “wakeful” one remains throughout one’s life. Thus, awareness and wakefulness represent the two main components of consciousness. “Accurate reportability of something perceived or known is widely used as a behavioural index of conscious awareness” (APA Dictionary Accessed Oct 12, 2021) “Awareness contains self-awareness, which perceives the internal world of thoughts, reflection, imagination, emotions, and daydreaming, as well as external awareness, which perceives the outside world with the help of the five senses” (Vithoukias and Muresanu, 2013). “Wakefulness is a condition of awareness of one’s surroundings, generally coupled with an ability to communicate with others or to signal to understand of what is being communicated by others” (APA Dictionary Accessed Oct 12, 2021). By cultivating awareness and wakefulness with reference to the values maintained in one’s culture, one may achieve one’s integrity and virtue as a human.

What I propose here, is that, as cultured humans, we have to keep a vigil on our consciousness, intelligently arguing about the feelings that emerge to us through our sensory channels – eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind - reasoning out the thoughts that develop in reaction to the feelings, distinguishing between the imaginations and the emotions engendered by the feelings, and recollecting the imaginations and emotions and deciding whether to retain them in our memory or abandon them. The idea is to keep the mind free of all possible mental defilements originating from craving,

wrath, and delusion that are detrimental to mental sanity or spiritual integrity. (See Hatcher, 2013)

The control we have over our consciousness in this manner can positively impact our “conscience”, which Slate (2011) defines as “the inherent ability of every healthy human being to perceive what is right and what is wrong and, on the strength of this perception, to control, monitor, evaluate and execute their actions”.

“Such values as right or wrong, good or evil, just or unjust, and fair or unfair have existed throughout human history but are also shaped by an individual’s cultural, political and economic environment. The closer our inner state of conscience identifies with the higher perception of these concepts, such as good, right, just, and fair, the higher our degree of “conscience”, and less physical stress is experienced if we feel that we act according to these concepts. It can be said that “conscience” is the degree of integrity and honesty of each human being because it monitors and determines the quality of one’s actions. One who acts with a “clear conscience” has the advantage of feeling inner peace, which is a feeling that mitigates the adverse physiological effects experienced in times of stress. Conscience is the “highest authority” and evaluates information to determine the quality of an action: good or evil, fair or unfair and so on” (Vithoukias and Muresanu, 2013).

When it comes to research, as we are aware of the norms that we follow in terms of research ethics and the violations that occur in scientific communities, the first thing we should do is to maintain within ourselves a stance about what to do and what not to do in research. In other words, we address all our issues objectively, and make all relevant decisions, being true to our conscience. When we develop a strong moral footing about research in this manner, we can easily resist the temptations triggered by the internal forces or suggestions emerging from our own wants and needs as well as those by the external forces or suggestions emerging from our personal or professional associates, to violate the conditions laid down for everybody to follow. Once our integrity and conscience as humans become strong, we become capable of maintaining a clean research record for our own benefit as well as for that of the others.

### **CONCLUSION**

In today’s scientific society, in the context of research attracting more and more of commercial value and an escalation being experienced in the violation of ethics in terms of infringement of trust at interpersonal, intra-institutional, and inter-institutional levels, it is imperative to make sure that ethics in research is given the due prominence. In the cause of attracting attention to this necessity, first, research is defined with reference to its inter-related define features. In relation to the quality enhancement of research, a set of norms are presented as ethics desired in all advanced communities. Ethical behaviour in research is

further explicated as part of lifestyle in the perspective of the intellectual traits that advanced thinkers follow in daily life. Further, what happens to research, disciplines, institutions, and individuals, through the violation of research etiquette is elaborated on, in search of the real enemy of ethics in research. In fact, one's own mental behaviour that vacillates in the face of temptations is the origin of all threats to ethics in research. To ensure faithful observation of research ethics, the paper professes the cultivation of mindfulness, as prescribed even in some world religions. The result of such an endeavour is appreciated in terms of a consciousness-conscience unity controlling the mind in all decision-making concerned with research. Finally, integrity and conscience concern the ethics of the individuals engaged in research, and the quality of the individuals concerned mirrors the quality of the research they carry out. Therefore, it is crucial for society to keep a vigil on the ethical concerns of research for the well-being of the planet we live on.

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