Guidelines for Collecting Data
Ethical Issues, Choice, Challenges

- Research Norms:
  - Respect
  - consideration for people, including research subjects, who are entitled to informed consent.
  - Beneficence
  - an obligation on the part of researchers to do good, to maximize benefits, and to minimize harm.
  - Justice
  - fair action, including issues such as benefits, and burdens associated with a study.

Guidelines prepared through the US department of health and human services in 1979, (Belmont Report)

- **Informed consent** – researchers respect participants by informing them about the nature of the research and giving them choice to participate without coercion or undue influence.
- **Assessment of risks and benefits** – researchers reflect on beneficence to determine whether the potential benefits of research outweigh any possible risks to subjects/participants.
- **Selection of subjects** – researchers use the principle of justice so that no subject is unfairly included or excluded, with special protection given to subjects/participants whose capacity for informed consent might be limited.
Review Committees

- Institutional Review Boards (IRB)
  The IRB’s principal task is to review research proposals and evaluate risks and benefits

- Most policies and procedures designed by these review boards were initially intended for quantitative traditions in research methodologies to protect animals and human subjects (Eikland, 2006)

Participants need to be informed regarding how their privacy will be protected involving storing and disposing of data. To avoid misunderstandings an informed consent letter to participants providing as much details as possible is required, including:

- The purpose and focus of the study
- Various phases or strategies that will be implemented
- A timeline for the project
- Assurances that the information will be confidential and anonymous
- Assurances that the study is voluntary and that the participants can discontinue at any time,
- Any potential risks or benefits to participants
- How the project will be made public and how participants can obtain findings
- How to contact the principal investigator (researcher) with any additional questions
• Full board review is conducted for studies that involve possible risk to human subjects or when studying vulnerable populations.

• An “exempt” category is given when it is highly unlikely that the research will result in any damage or psychological harm to individual human subjects, such as when the study uses less invasive survey techniques or minimal interviewing methodologies.

• The approval of the study will be delayed until the IRB is satisfied that all the institutional guidelines have been followed. If the rules are poorly designed or does not fit the institution’s view of suitable research, and therefore could not yield benefits to participants or researcher, the proposal could be denied.

• Studies conducted in schools by outsider researchers are most likely to be reviewed by IRBs.

• When planning work in partnership with outside researchers, the issue of ownership requires a clear understanding of who has the final decision-making authority about data collection, analysis, and reporting.

• Highly detailed information on participant involvement and instruments used to collect data.

• Signed informed consent from all participants as well as written approval from the school district or corporation for access to school settings may be required.

Outsider Studies in School setting

Studies conducted in schools by outsider researchers are likely to be reviewed by IRBs

A formal agreement between the academic university researcher and the school administration is frequently required.

Roles, Tasks, Outcomes, Costs, and Ownership of Data.

Clear understanding of the final decision-making authority about data collection, analysis, and reporting.
Qualitative studies in schools

- Outsider researchers who conduct research in schools frequently design studies that incorporate social science qualitative methodologies in effort to examine the familiar, taken for granted ways in which schools shape professional activities.
- Social research is frequently open ended, collaborative, and without specific methods or goals determined in advance.
- Although traditional ethical research involves maintaining an objective distance to the subjects, the element of maintaining distance is removed in qualitative designs (Boser, 2006).
- Within the action research model, the individual researcher is frequently a member of a group working together to define the research and determine strategies for gathering and analyzing information (Brydon-Miller, 2008).

Participatory action researches (PAR)

- Often designed to address complex questions of power imbalances between organizations, such as schools and their communities (Grant, Nelson, & Mitchell, 2008).
- Difficulties to make qualitative studies completely compliant with IRB policies, especially regarding requirements such as preapproved and sanctioned specific methodologies and clearly defined participant involvement.
- Despite the wide debate and new scholarship suggesting that conventional definitions of research are too limiting, the working definitions of research and IRB committees have not changed in a quarter of century."

Ethical Dilemmas for Insiders

• Classroom teachers are increasingly expected to demonstrate and inquiry disposition, to produce rationale and evidence for actions and judgements that take place in their classrooms.
• When schools conduct insider studies without outside involvement, they bypass outside controls over their studies.
• Insider studies are most often collected in day-to-day activities derived from teaching activities and frequently completed while teaching.
• Ethics, firmly grounded and established in school policies and procedures for teaching, becomes multifaceted when teaching practice and inquiry study occur together.
• The teacher is never detached from the study and remains at the site both before and after the study.

• Teachers as insider researchers confront role conflict and ambiguity regarding ethical issues such as informed consent from participants,
• Protecting subjects (students) from harm and ensuring confidentiality.
• They must demonstrate a commitment toward fully understanding ethical dilemmas that present themselves within the unique set of circumstances of the school context.
Seeking direction from administration

- Policies and procedures provide teachers with interpretations of how the school addresses research principles regarding respect for persons, doing no harm, and justice for groups being studied.
- Many schools have policies about filming and taking images of students that may also be applicable to a study.
- Policies are frequently geared more toward outsiders coming into schools rather than researchers from the inside, and teachers are infrequently involved in preparing these policies.
- When policies do exist, they are unlikely to be aligned to qualitative design that engages community, includes active research with classroom students, or involves multiple teachers in self-study designs.
- When school policies are vague or nonexistent, teachers turn to supervisors for clarity and direction regarding the ethical concerns of their studies.
- Conversation with the building administrator before beginning a study confirm whether there are policies to adhere to or other approvals are required.
- Classroom teachers as researchers are generally required to obtain some level of permission if the findings or conclusions are to become part of a presentation or made public in some way.

Due Diligence

Involves the actions and thoughts or care that a person uses to avoid harm to others or their property.
Taking responsibility and reasonable steps to avoid harm to others.

Due diligence, as it applies to practitioner teacher inquiry, involves conscience, ethical reflection, and empathy. There must be mutual respect for a caring relationship, as well as a moral interdependence involving empathy of those involved throughout the study. (Rossman & Rallis, 2010).

- The very nature of good teaching presumes not only what is taught but also involves the well-being of youth under our care.

- Classroom teachers are expected to practice due diligence through honest reporting of student in working with youth, avoid biases, and act with sincerity and consistency in their actions with youth and families.
- Ethics > comes into play whenever we are dealing with people through good will and kindnesses.
- Beneficence > involves research with actions that are done for the benefit of others to minimize harm.
- Conscience > involves a sense of right and wrong that governs one’s thought, motives, and actions.
Risk and Harm

- Ensuring that participants are not harmed by research procedures in which they are taking part is important, especially when the study involves youth.

- Teachers are expected to avoid risk and harm to students in their day-to-day teaching roles.

- Teachers routinely think ethically about maximizing benefits and minimizing harm when pedagogy or practices are implemented or changed.

- A teacher practices good will and benevolence whenever there is reason to believe that a modification may likely result in improved learning and she or he embraces the responsibility to improve one’s practice (Foreman- Peck & Wiinch, 2010)

Trust issues

- Trust implies confidence that the behavior of another person will be exercised in honest ways.

- The voluntary nature of participation in a study involves the principle of respect and trust.

- Outsider to schools require some level of formal consent to enter; the nature of studies by insiders in schools makes trust and informed consent more complicated.

- Teachers are given few opportunities to exercise, autonomy and authority, and when teachers believe the disposition of teacher inquiry is a part of the instructional role and responsibility, they often must face controls or administrative approval that suggest mistrust in their work and that impose more bureaucratic controls over their inquiry studies.
Confidentiality

- As insiders, our studies must carefully protect others. Participants must trust that their involvement will remain confidential.
- A breach of confidentiality is a failure to maintain the security of data that may identify individual participants at any stage of the project.
- Confidentiality is thought to be more important when a study is going to be released to a wider audience, which may more likely be the goal for an outside researcher.
- Depending on the involvement of personnel and students, confidentiality may not be as big an issue if the results are to remain within the school setting. (Brydon Miller and Greenwood (2006)).
Care and Action

• Caring can involve both positive and negative labor (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006)
• The care ethic involving empathy gives rise to behaviors that position us away from merely caring for youth toward seeking social justice for all society (Slote, 2007)
• Moral behavior is reliant on our ability to imagine how our actions will affect others (Patnaik, 2009)
• Caring and passionate teachers rise above the negative demands of emotional labor and the lack of trust and step forward in schools to assume ethical risks in pursuit of new knowledge supportive of youth and communities.

• Passion for justice looks beyond the dominant curriculum and involves a willingness to act to create new and innovative relationships with students (Zembylas & Schutz, 2009).
• Judyth Sachs (2003) described the activist professional identity, in which the teacher is driven by a belief in the significance of a role in improving the conditions of teaching and learning.
• Teachers identity driven by a belief in the significance of their roles in improving the conditions of teaching and learning involving broad social ideas and values.

• Activist inquiry requires due diligence in courage, confidence, and a clear understanding of moral purpose.

• Teachers must trust their abilities to exercise control over inquiry in efforts to produce caring justice in the classroom. For teachers as insider researchers, relationships must be central to ethical and credible research. Researchers must engage in caring reflexivity to build relationships with participants (Rallis & Rossman, 2010, p. 496)

• The researcher is imperative in terms of both personal presence and also the reflexivity the researcher brings to that role (Gibbs, 2007)
Thank You!
Research Presentation
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