RV Institute of Management®

RVIM RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

According to the ICMR guidelines (2017) for biomedical and health research, Guidance Document on Good Academic Research Practices by the UGC (August 2020), UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations 2018, the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICJME) recommendations on defining the role of authors and contributors and the best practices followed by several institutions especially RV University, RVIM have charted a Research Policy Documents to enhance awareness about responsible conduct of research and academic activities, to promote academic integrity and to prevent plagiarism. This document defines general principles and standards that must be adhered to in order to ensure ethical practises in RVIM.

Principles of Ethical Research

RVIM adopts the following principles in ethical research:

a) **Objectivity**: Consciously upholding the values of being independent and true and avoiding individual subjectivity in research.

b) **Integrity**: The researcher must avoid plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, ghost authorship, guest authorship and must maintain good practices for authorship on collaborative work.

c) **Confidentiality**: The researchers must respect the privacy, autonomy, diversity, values, and dignity of research subjects and must be very sensitive while disclosing the information and data of public interest by ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of the source of information.

d) **Transparency**: The researchers must be as open as possible with respect to the decisions made and provide justifications for their actions.

e) **Honesty**: The researchers must possess unbiased and honest attitude in knowing and stating the truth in research.

f) **Informed consent**: The researcher must inform the subjects about the study, emphasize the option available to subjects to participate and obtain their consent before carrying out the study.

g) **Full disclosure**: The researcher must disclose the sources of funding, information of institution and researchers conducting the study and conflicts of interest if any.

h) **Social responsibility**: The researcher must share the research with participants and with the broader research community.

i) **Welfare of animal subjects**: The researcher must maintain three R's ie., (Replacement of animals with other methods if possible, Reduction of number of animals used and Refinement of techniques to reduce impact on animals), minimization of pain and suffering to animal subjects, use of invasive methods of sample collection where possible, minimized human interaction to reduce stress and disease to the animal populations.

Ethical consideration of research with Human Subjects

1. Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of participants to be safeguarded and undue intrusions must be avoided.

2. Safeguard autonomy, rights, and dignity of research participants.

3. Principle of voluntariness according to which participants are free to join in the study or not at any time.

4. Preventing harm and reducing participant risk. https://neac.health.govt.nz/national-ethical-standards/part-two/8-research-benefits-and-harms/

5. Increasing direct or indirect benefits to participants and society

6. Professional responsibility: The research must be planned, conducted, evaluated, and monitored by persons with appropriate qualification, experience, and training. Honesty, integrity, openness, carefulness, non-discrimination and avoiding bias are professional responsibilities of researchers.

7. Informed consent

a) Participants must be made aware of the purpose and aims of research

b) Emphasizing the option available to subjects to participate

c) Full disclosure: Sources of funding, information of institution and researchers conducting the study, conflicts of interest must be disclosed to participants.

8. Storage of data: Data must be stored responsibly so that privacy and confidentiality of participants is maintained. In order to allow for later studies to be compared with the study, complete records of data must be maintained in a clear and complete manner by the researcher.

9. Environmental protection at all stages of research

10. Transparency and accountability whereby research plan and outcomes are shared in the public domain, with participants and with the broader research community. Privacy and confidentiality of participants to be safeguarded.

11. Social responsibility: Conducting research that is factually accurate and socially sensitive.

Research misconduct

Research misconduct is typically defined as any violation of the Research Ethics Policy, regardless of whether it was intentional, careless, or negligent.

1. **Plagiarism:** Without correctly citing the source, using quote marks when necessary, or providing a suitable citation, which includes pasting data from an electronic text, when copying material verbatim from a source. All research conducted by students, faculty, and staff must be based on original ideas, and violations of the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2018, which prohibit plagiarism in higher education institutions, are exempt from punishment for similarity checks up to 10%. Turnitin plagiarism software that should be considered by the institution.
    - If there are similarities of between 10% and 40%, the student must submit a rewritten script within a given time limit of no more than six months. The author will be requested to withdraw the manuscript for academic and research publications.
    - If there are similarities between 40% and 60%, the student will be prohibited from submitting a revision for a year. If the paper is published, the author will be asked to withdraw it, will lose the right to one yearly increment, and will have to wait two years before being permitted to supervise any new Masters, MPhil, or PhD students.
    - Registration for a student will be cancelled if there are similarities of more than 60%. In the case of research publications, this will result in the author withdrawing the paper, giving up the right to two consecutive yearly increment, and preventing them from supervising any new Masters, MPhil, or PhD scholars for three years.
2. **Authorship:** Authorship requires making significant contributions to the conception of the research, the collection and analysis or interpretation of data, the writing and editing of the publication.
3. **Fabrication:** Fabrication means falsifying or misusing data including presenting falsified data in a paper, manuscript, or presentation and making up a source for a citation.
4. **Falsification:** Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting/suppressing data or results without scientific or statistical justification, such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

All authors are required to give their final approval of the version to be published. Authors are accountable for all aspects of the work. Unacceptable authorship misconduct are:

a) Guest authorship: When those that have not contributed to the article are ‘gifted’ authorship. Guest authorship is typically given with the objective of increasing the probability of

acceptance by a journal. This may be linked to ulterior motives such as promotions or other favours.

b) Ghost authorship: When the original author of an article is not mentioned in the list of authors.

a) Denial of authorship for substantial contribution of work.

b) Best practices for authorship on collaborative work

According to International Committee of Medical Journal Editors [ICJME], Authorship is defined on four precise criteria below:

- Significant contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting or revising the work critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND

Consent to take responsibility for all aspects of the work in order to guarantee that any concerns about the accuracy or integrity of any portion of the work are duly investigated and addressed. Before starting the work, a large multi-author group should decide who the authors would be, and then they should confirm this as well as the author order before submitting the paper for publication. The aforementioned qualifications for authorship should be met by all authors mentioned.

Research Conduct

Ethical responsibilities: In experimental research initiatives, the project is often led by a Principal Investigator (PI) and a group of Co-PIs. They should take extra care to make sure that researchers are properly supervised and mentored. When interacting with researchers and students, research supervisors should conduct themselves with the highest ethical standards. Potentially problematic issues should be recognised and resolved as soon as feasible in a fair and transparent manner.

Despite the foregoing, everyone involved in a research project is accountable for their own behaviour and should ensure that it adheres to and upholds high ethical standards. The argument that they were acting unethically because they were following a mentor's directions cannot be supported.

Data management: It is necessary to take precautions to store all collected research materials, including physical and visual data, in a secure location. For experimental work in particular, producing correctly recorded raw data is necessary for defending the publication. Usually, its absence will be seen suspiciously. A well-maintained document offers future publications with not only a permanent record of the findings and procedures, but also crucial support for the assertion of priority in the case of patent applications and evidence of compliance with the

necessary ethical standards. It is unacceptable to alter or manipulate records in recorded documents. Participants should be made aware of how research information should be handled and how long it will be kept as part of the informed consent procedure.

Ownership: Unless explicitly decided otherwise, physical materials from research conducted at RVIM, such as notebooks, data sets, etc., will remain the property of the organisation. The same is true for commercially valuable software and processes.

Responsible use of funds: An appropriate and effective use of resources should be ensured through open and equitable procedures. Funding cannot be used for any other goals than those listed in the grant award, according to researchers.

Sharing of facilities: As long as such access does not interfere with the original purpose for which the equipment was purchased, RVIM equipment is intended to be shared in a cooperative manner with colleagues who need access for their own study. As long as sharing is actively allowed and open protocols are in place, in such circumstances, the PI can decide on aspects like who actually controls the device and when.

Publication of research findings: Unless significant confidentiality concerns exist and subject to the aforementioned standards or contractual obligations, researchers are required to communicate their research findings with the appropriate stakeholders.

All feasible measures must be taken when publishing research to guarantee that published reports, data, and public statements about research activities and performance are comprehensive, accurate, and clear. The correctness and comprehensiveness of the reports that researchers provide are their responsibility.

To appreciate the funding and guarantee transparency, the type of financial support must be disclosed in all reporting of research findings.

The institution is dedicated to upholding regulatory authorities' requirements for open access to publicly funded research data and expects all researchers to do the same.

According to the criteria of authorship for the specific publication, all researchers who have contributed to the production of results and dissemination should be rightly credited.