

## Addressing Cultural Discrimination in Research Design: The Responsibilities of Ethics Committees

**Authors :** Elspeth McInnes

**Abstract :** Research design is central to ethical research. Discriminatory research design is a key risk for researchers examining diverse cultural groups without conscious commitment to anti-discrimination values or knowledge of their culture. Culturally discriminatory research design is defined here as research proceeding from negative assumptions about people on the basis of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality or religion. Such discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination is the uncritical mobilization of dominant group negative stereotypes of cultural minorities. Indirect discrimination is the examination of policies or programs grounded in dominant culture negative stereotypes that have been uncritically accepted by the researchers. This paper draws on anonymized elements of planned research projects and considers both direct and indirect cultural discrimination in research design and the responsibilities of ethics committees. Human research ethics committees provide a point of scrutiny with responsibility to alert researchers to risks of basing research on negative cultural stereotypes, as well as protecting participants from being subjected to negative discourses about them. This issue has become an increasing concern in a globalizing world of human displacement and migration creating a rise in the presence of minority cultures in host countries. As a nation established through colonization and immigration Australia has a long history of negative cultural stereotypes of Indigenous Australians as well as a legacy of the White Australia policy, which still echoes in attitudes to each wave of non-European immigration. The task of eliminating cultural discrimination in research design is vital to sustaining research integrity and ensuring that research is not used to reinforce or justify cultural discrimination.

**Keywords :** cultural discrimination, cultural stereotypes, participant risk, research design

**Conference Title :** ICSMRE 2019 : International Conference on Scientific Method and Research Ethics

**Conference Location :** Barcelona, Spain

**Conference Dates :** May 23-24, 2019