

MICOLLAC 2025: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chan Mei Yuit

Title

ETHICAL OVERSIGHT OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES: DO WE NEED IT?

Abstract

Ethical approval and oversight of research involving human subjects have long been established in the medical and health sciences. Most institutional review boards at universities began with the need for ethical oversight on medical research. Later, the "service" was extended to research in the humanities and social sciences. However, awareness, and even willingness to apply for ethical approval from an IRB is still low among researchers in these disciplines. As a researcher often conducting research involving human subjects, and as chair of the social sciences section of the UPM ethics committee, I discuss briefly the IRB set up in Malaysia, and share my experience reviewing ethical issues in research that are often overlooked by researchers in the social sciences and the humanities.