Ethical Challenges in Data Collection

Student’s Name:

Institutional Affiliation:
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Any research has to consider ethical issues since dark events in history have shown that human rights can be violated all in the name of scientific research. The researcher does always have some level of power over the participants, which may open opportunities for manipulation. Ethics play a more significant role from the protection of participant’s dignity to validating and approving any given research study. As a nurse participating in research, it is possible to face challenges raised by the profession, society and science and which may conflict with the practices and values of the communities, culture and subjects leading to dilemma and conflict of interest in nursing (Hazzan & Nutov, 2014). This study aims to highlight some of the ethical challenges that one may face in qualitative research regarding protecting privacy, minimizing harm, and respecting the shared experience of others.

One of the ethical challenges is based on the researcher’s role as a nurse and researcher. For example, if in the process of study, a participant experiences a harmful situation, the nurse is obligated to provide care. Still, on the other hand, others may find that the interception during an interview may lead to biased results hence inhibiting generalization as the aim of the study is to contribute to knowledge. The principles of beneficence and non-maleficence are at stake when the expectations of nursing are contradicted with those of research as they may cause mental and physical harm or discomfort to the patient and even the nurse. According to Sanjari et al (2014), other factors that may cause ethical challenges include the scientific value of the study, the qualifications of the study supervisor, the information provided to patients, and consent procedures.

Another challenge is on the aspect of confidentiality, a trait impacted in nursing though it exempts situations that involve the interest of society and legal processes. As a researcher, the
nurse is expected not to reveal confidential information and dissemination of the results of such a study may require seeking advice from an ethics committee. The other aspect is dealing with anonymity while these are elements of the survey that may identify the participants quickly while trying to protect their privacy (Petrova, Dewing & Camilleri, 2016). The participants reveal information in their mind and body and expect the researcher not to jeopardize the trust placed on them.

A researcher needs to respect the shared experience of others, that is why it is, for example, essential to provide informed consent in any given study. As a nurse, one is expected to provide the patient with the necessary information, but conflict may arise in a study that requires the nurse to withhold information (Petrova, Dewing & Camilleri, 2016). Conflict can also occur when providing consent for vulnerable populations in the study, such as the mentally ill, the aged and children due to their diminished autonomy. Such a group of people may likely lose their privacy and dignity, which is their right to be protected. The researcher sticking to professional principles and ethical codes of confidentiality, autonomy, and justice can alleviate the ethical aspects and challenges in research.
References

