

Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal

Code of Ethics for Research

Scientific research involves the cooperation and coordination of different people to achieve goals that have impact on society and are essential for overall development in all areas. Research requires experimentation, data analysis, writing research papers and grant proposals and educating future scientists. Thus, it is essential that research is carried out in ways that are ethically correct. Guidelines for research ethics are laid in such a way that concerns of research institutions and individuals are simultaneously addressed. Also, it is important to adhere to these ethical guidelines in order to preserve the dignity, rights and welfare of researchers and research participants. Based on area of research and subjects involved, guidelines for carrying research has been defined by various agencies. All the researchers at Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal are expected to follow the Ethics of research as described in the guidelines.

Misconduct/Mismanagement in Research

Research misconduct or fraud in science refers to the fabrication, falsification, plagiarism and deception in proposing, carrying out or reporting results of research and deliberate, dangerous or negligent deviations from accepted practice in carrying out research. It includes failure to follow established protocols if this failure results in unreasonable risk or harm to humans, other vertebrates or the environment. It shall also include facilitating of misconduct in research by collusion in or concealment of, such actions by others, and any plan or conspiracy or attempt to do any of these things. Misconduct does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretation or judgment in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct unrelated to the research process.

- Fabrication – reporting of experiments never conducted
- Falsification – Misrepresentation or suppression of data to project a desired result
- Plagiarism – reporting another's data as one's own Policy document on Misconduct in research
- Fraud – Deliberate and wilful suppression of previous work in publications to claim originality or to avoid quoting previous publications contrary to present results.

- Breach of confidentiality, i.e., presenting as one's own ideas or data obtained from privileged access to original grants, manuscripts etc. is also considered as misdemeanour in the same category.

All complaints related to research activities or any matters relating to differences among scholars or complaints about the supervisor or seeking any information related to research shall be addressed to Dean – Research of the University. Only in the absence of any response, alternate measures shall be sought.

Plagiarism in Research

Plagiarism means representation of another's work or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas.

Plagiarism is unacceptable and constitutes a serious breach of recognised norms of research ethics. A plagiarist undermines not only his or her own reputation as a researcher, but also the credibility of the research. Both researchers and research institutions are responsible for preventing plagiarism. Plagiarism in research ethics is taking something from someone else and presenting it as one's own without correctly citing their sources. Plagiarism violates the duty of truthfulness in science, and the requirement of originality, humility and collegiality. Researchers who build on the work of others must cite their sources in accordance with good practice. The most obvious type of plagiarism is pure duplication. Plagiarism can nonetheless take other forms, for example the use of ideas, hypotheses, concepts, theories, interpretations, designs, illustrations, results etc. Citing another work early in one's own text and then making extensive further use of it without subsequent citation may also be plagiarism. It is important to distinguish between direct quotes and paraphrasing in footnotes and endnotes as well as in the text. Paraphrasing must not be so close to the original text that it in reality constitutes a quote. If several paraphrases are connected, the entire interpretation and argumentation may be based on the work of others. If so, this may also constitute plagiarism.

Research Integrity and Ethics Review Committee

The Vice-Chancellor has formed a special Committee on Academic Integrity in Research, which will be responsible for preliminarily inquiring into a complaint on receipt of direction from the Vice-Chancellor. If need be, the Vice-Chancellor may take assistance of

the Committee to take a decision on whether the complaint so received needs to be inquired into or not. In addition, the Committee may be vested with the additional responsibility of setting and communicating standards with respect to the principles of academic integrity in the conduct of research and overseeing the administrative procedures relating to the review of any allegation of Research Misconduct. The members of Committee shall have a three-year term subject to renewal by the Vice-Chancellor and reconstitution at the end of every three years.

In conducting the Inquiry, therefore the Inquiring Committee shall:

- use diligent efforts to ensure that the Inquiry is thorough and sufficiently documented and includes the examination of all research records and evidence relevant to reaching a decision as to whether there is material to support the allegation;

- take reasonable steps to ensure an impartial and unbiased Investigation to the maximum extent practicable, record statements of the Complainant, the Respondent and any other available person who has been reasonably identified as having information regarding any relevant aspects of the Investigation; and pursue diligently all significant issues and leads discovered that are relevant to the Investigation.

Disciplinary Measures

The Vice-Chancellor shall proceed to pass final order imposing penalty/action after taking into consideration the gravity of the allegations/charges proved and the reply, if any, submitted by the Respondent to the Enquiry Committee.

The Committee or the Competent Authority is at liberty to also impose one or more of the following actions.

In Case Respondent is Ph.D Scholar, the Committee may recommend the following action

- a. Issue a written warning
- b. Impose penalty depends on the malpractice done by the research scholar.
- c. Declare the Respondent ineligible to be considered for award of Ph.D degree.

Any scholar exhibiting misconduct, their registration will be cancelled. Such a scholar will not be eligible for readmission to any of the courses of this University. Further, if such scholar receives any fellowship from the University, it will be withdrawn and the fellowship has to be refunded from the date of the last award. Vice-Chancellor shall be the ultimate authority in imposing disciplinary actions against the scholars for acts of prohibited behaviour

In Case Respondent is a Faculty Member or any other Employee, whether permanent, on tenure track, or on contract, the Committee may recommend the following actions to the Vice-Chancellor

- a. Issue a written warning.
- b. Delay career advancement (promotion for example) for a specified time period in the range of 1 to 5 years.
- c. Make the Respondent ineligible to receive any form of research funding from the Institute for a specified time period in the range 1 to 5 years.
- d. Prohibit the Respondent from taking on any new PhD/M.Phil scholars for a specified period in the range of 1 to 5 years.

If Supervisors are found to indulge in any of following acts, based on the severity of the complaint, the supervisorship will be cancelled for a specific duration and disciplinary action will be taken.

- i. Exploiting the services of the scholar for completing the academic tasks assigned to an individual.
- ii. Any act of financial extortion or forceful expenditure burden put on the scholar.
- iii. Any act of abuse by spoken words, phone calls, short message service (sms) through mobile, emails, posts, public insult leading to the discomfort to the scholar.

For Supervisors under suspension/ undergoing any disciplinary proceedings of the University, Supervisor-in-charge should be nominated by the Dean - Research based on the request of the Supervisor and / or the recommendation of the Head of the Department of the Supervisor. The Supervisor-in-charge shall function up to one year or

till Supervisor resumes duty. However if the supervisor continues under suspension/undergoing any disciplinary proceedings of the University for more than one year alternate supervisor shall be nominated by the Dean - Research based on the request of the Supervisor-in-Charge and the recommendation of the Head of the Department.

Declaration

The declaration to be included by the researchers as a part of the Thesis submitted for assessment or examination. The specific content of the declaration will require the scholars to affirm:

- That the scholar's has read the University Policies on research misconduct, and any other guidelines on research provided in the University and that none of these policies has been violated in the thesis.
- That the work being submitted is the Scholar's own work, that all sources have been acknowledged in the work, that the information contains no plagiarism, and that the information provided is not knowingly inaccurate and
- That, unless explicit provision has been made and written permission obtained from the concerned authorities. The work or any version of it has not been previously submitted for assessment or examination for any other award offered by the University or other institutions.

Right to Appeal

The scholar/scholars aggrieved by the action of any authority of the University can appeal to the Dean - Research and any scholar aggrieved by the action of the Director, Centre for Research can appeal to the Registrar and then to Vice-Chancellor. The decision of the Vice-Chancellor shall be final and binding on the scholars. The scholar shall seek legal remedy about any matter with prior notice and only after their representations to the higher authorities have been negative.


REGISTRAR,
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