



CBR NEWSLETTER

A NEWSLETTER OF CENTER FOR
BIOETHICS AND RESEARCH



The Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) is the leading organization providing training in research ethics in Nigeria. CBR continues to train healthcare and biomedical research professionals on research ethics and promote research ethics in order to ensure the ethical conduct of research in Nigeria.

This edition of the CBR Newsletter describes the activities of CBR in the last 12 months. We wish you a happy reading.

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1.0 The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) awards a grant to build Research Ethics Capacity in Nigeria to a Consortium led by CBRTips for Science Projects

CBR is leading a Consortium that includes the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED) of South Africa, National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) of Nigeria and the Nigerian National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in the implementation of the “Deepening Research Ethics in Nigeria (DREIN)” project. The project is supported by the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP).

The project includes several work packages including implementation of:

- Upgrading of Nigerian institutional health research ethics committees to RHInno Ethics Software and Training in its use.
- Consultative meeting and oversight visits to institutional health research ethics committees by NHREC and NAFDAC
- Blended Diploma in Research Ethics.
- Postgraduate Training in Research Ethics.
- Nigerian Clinical Trials Registry.



1.1 Training and Implementation of the RHInnO electronic ethics review software for six Institutional Health Research Ethics Committees in Nigeria

As part of the work packages/deliverables for the DREIN project, CBR organised the implementation of RHInnO electronic ethics review software for six Institutional Health Research Ethics Committees in Nigeria, including the National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC). The 3-day capacity development and training program lasted from the 26th to 29th of August 2018 at Banex Hotel, Lagos, Nigeria. During the program there was (a) deployment of an upgraded version of the RHInnO Ethics software and (b) training of members of staff of the ethics committees on the use of the software. The RHInnO Ethics software enables the ethics committees to efficiently review research ethics protocols including those for complex clinical trials and report serious adverse events, online.

The training was officially declared open by Dr Margret Mafe on behalf of the Chairperson of NHREC, Prof Zubairu Iliyasu. In her opening remarks, Dr Margret Mafe thanked members of the Institutional Health Research Ethics Committees (HREC) for attending the training. She described the training as an important milestone towards digitalizing the operations of HRECs in Nigeria. She emphasized that the world is changing, and technology has contributed enormously to where the world is now. She noted that Nigeria currently lags in use of technology for health research ethics review. She also enumerated some problems associated with the traditional manual systems, including but not limited to difficulty in reviewing bulky protocols, delay in sending out protocols to reviewers, challenges in storing ever-increasing printed protocols and long turnaround time. Dr Mafe stressed the importance of transitioning to the RHInnO Ethics software as an important milestone towards the technological advancement of health research ethics committees in Nigeria and on the African continent.

On the 27th August, 2018, Mr. Olusegun Adeyemo, Manager of the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) welcomed participants to the training venue and gave an overview of the Deepening Research Ethics in Nigeria Project and the RHInnO Ethics software. He then introduced the RHInnO Ethics software trainer from the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED) – Mr. Francis Kombe, to the participants.



Mr. Francis Kombe of COHRED taking participants through the RHInnO Ethics software



Participants learning about the software

Mr. Francis Kombe began the training by taking participants through an overview of RHInnO Ethics software so they can appreciate the importance and benefits of transitioning from manual to an online ethics review system .

The RHInnO Ethics software enables administrators, researchers and reviewers to comprehensively manage the entire review cycle, including protocol submission, reviewing protocols, approval and follow-up through an online platform. The training involved intensive participatory techniques, involving a do-it-yourself training approach that ensures every participant learned how the system worked by performing activities and navigating through the system. Participants were taught to develop applications and assign them to reviewers and have reviewers review the applications before a final decision was made by the committee.

During the training, participants went through how to perform tasks for specific roles such as administrators, reviewers or researcher. They were able to understand and follow what different users do and the full cycle and functionality of the software.

Participants were informed that they need to ensure that their ethics committees implement mechanisms to ensure sustainability of the Software beyond the EDCTP support period of the DREIN Project.

All the participants indicated that the training fully met their expectations and helped them to understand the platform and how to use it. The participants rated the training as very successful and liked that it was participatory and hands-on. They were able to learn practically, and this helped them to master the use of the software. The training was officially closed by Dr. Margret Mafe at 2 p.m. on the 29th of August 2018. She advised committee members to develop strategies to facilitate the payment of their annual subscription for use of the software before the end of EDCTP support period. There was a group photograph at the end of the training session.

The facilitators and participants decided that they will publish a paper titled 'Ethnic Differences in Disclosure of Negative Genetic Test Findings: Nigerian Perspectives'.



Participants at the DREIN RHInnO Electronic Ethics Review Software Training with the Chairman, NHREC. From left to right, first row, Mr. Ahmed Yusuf Olanrewaju, Dr. Sani Aji, Mr. Francis Kombe, Prof. Zubairu Ziliyasu, Dr. Mazi Onyimba Eze, Dr. Mrs. Zubaidu Farouk, Dr. Vincent Yakubu Adam. Second row, Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Chukwu, Mrs. Margaret Sunday Temitope, Mr. Abubakar Mahmud, Mr. Labran Haruna, Mr. Emmanuel Ikpe, Dr Ehiga Enabudoso, Mrs. Foluke Olubunmi Bello, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Omolara Adewumi, Mr. Hodefe Olufemi Paulinuse, Mr. Ado Danladi. Third Row, Dr. Onochie Okoye, Dr. Mrs. Margret Mafe, Mr. Ogunbamise Adebisi, Prof. Kolo Philip Mahma, Dr. Ayodele Ekun, Dr. Ahmed Oloyo.

1.2 DREIN Blended Diploma Program

The Center for Bioethics and Research supported by the European Development Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the European Union organised a Blended Diploma in Research Ethics for 11 members of health research ethics committees in Nigeria from 9th of July 2018 to 23rd of September 2018. The attendees were selected from the 6 geo-political zones in Nigeria by the National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) as part of the deliverables for the Deepening Research Ethics in Nigeria (DREIN) project.

The Diploma program consists of two, four weeks long online lectures and chat sessions and two in-person weekend retreats designed to provide graduate level training for members of ethics committees who cannot take time off their primary assignment to attend full time graduate programs. The online component consists of lectures recorded by faculty members of the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) based on the curriculum of the MSc Bioethics course at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. These are hosted online using the Moodle® Courseware platform of the Center for Bioethics and Research. The course aims to improve the review of protocols and advance the skills of members of institutional health research ethics committees in Nigeria. Trainees were provided with internet access and course materials during their training.

During the retreat, participants met each other, the course faculty and program administrators. They briefly described their primary assignments and the ethics committee that they belong to. This was followed by review of the lectures they had received online, including Introduction and History of Research

Ethics, Ethical Principles for Review of Research Protocols, and Informed Consent. This was concluded with a question and answer session. There was a Mock IRB session for participants to deliberate and decide on protocols that were submitted for Ethical approval. One of the participants was selected to lead the session by acting as Chair of the committee. CBR facilitators provided guidance and monitored the deliberation sessions.

The participants also received a guest lecture titled “Research Ethics Review in Nigeria: Taking it to the Next Level” that was delivered by Prof. Ade Malomo, CBR Faculty member, Episcopalian priest and Professor of Neurosurgery, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He spoke extensively about bridging the gap between the theoretical knowledge of bioethics and its practise in in professional and personal settings. He highlighted the need to live by the learned ethical standards in professional circles. The lecture was followed by a question and answer session.



Prof. Malomo presenting a lecture on Research Ethics Review in Nigeria.

On the second day of the retreat, participants watched an NIH Mock IRB review video. This was interspersed with contributions from CBR facilitators to better explain certain aspects of the video. Participants were informed about career opportunities within Nigeria and abroad at various levels in Bioethics. There was a group photograph with the guest speaker at the end of his presentation.

The second weekend retreat for the Blended Diploma program took place from the 21st to 23rd of September 2018 at Davies Hotel, Bodija, Ibadan. The retreat marked the concluding part of training for the first set of diploma participants on the Deepening Research Ethics in Nigeria project (DREIN), and it was also another opportunity for participants to meet again, exchange ideas and have face to face interaction with their lecturers after a month of online meetings and chat sessions. CBR faculty members facilitated the order of events for the retreat, the review of lectures was top on the agenda as usual, the review was done in an interactive manner between the participants and the lecturers. As part of the review of online lectures, Dr Adebayo Adejumo explained how illness makes people vulnerable in many ways, and how offering money may help participants to clearly distinguish research from treatment. He mentioned that in research trials, health improvement is often cited as the primary motivator to participate in research, and studies have shown that participants in clinical trials have better outcomes compared to individuals that received routine care. He also talked about community advisory committees and how they are established by the study investigators depending on the nature of the proposed research, the research site,

the study base or on the recommendation of either the institution where the research is based or the HREC supervising the research.

He added that they are important forums for facilitating dialogue between community members, research participants and researchers. Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members should be identified from communities where research is to be undertaken through a stakeholder consultative process.



Dr Adejumo interacting with participants during the review of lectures at the retreat.



Prof. Malomo presenting a lecture on Research Ethics Review in Nigeria.

Dr Adejumo also mentioned an important role of the community advisory committee as Primarily to assist investigators understand and incorporate community concerns into their research activities, advising on; issues central to the informed consent process, participants recruitment. He added that CAC responsibilities vary according to the study location and size but generally they are to provide information on traditional beliefs and needs of the study population and their concerns regarding research, they also provide advice and support regarding recruitment and retention of participants in the research, including gender equity.

Dr Adejumo talked about conflict resolution and adjudication, he defined resolution to mean analysis into clear components for finding solution to a problem. He defined adjudication as the final judgment in a legal proceeding; the act of pronouncing judgment based on the evidence presented. He said conflicts could vary in intensity, number of parties involved as well as the possible consequence on ethical conduct of scientific research, but to avoid its possible negative effect on conduct of scientific inquiries, it often becomes necessary to resolve or adjudicate over conflicts occurring in the process of ethical review of research proposals and conduct of research.

Prof. Jegede discussed the review processes for exempt and expedited research, he said these types of research involves the collection or study of existing data, document, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these are publicly available.

Collection or study of existing data or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that participants cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants. He explained that adequate information must be submitted, enough for the committee to make a decision. Prof. Jegede added that expedited review may be carried out by the HREC chairperson or his designee from among members of the HREC.



Prof Jegede during his review of lectures at the retreat

Participants asked questions and interacted with the faculty members.

Dr. J.O Akintayo from the Department of Law, University of Ibadan, Nigeria delivered a Guest Lecture titled 'Legal and Ethical Issues in Mandatory Premarital HIV Testing'. In the lecture, Dr Akintayo stated that HIV /AIDS is an incurable transmissible disease that has impacted adversely the social and economic conditions of Sub-Saharan

Africa. The rate of Voluntary HIV testing is low thereby frustrating the plans of governments to control the disease. The cultural recognition of marriage as an important landmark presents opportunity for a scheme of widening the scope of persons who are aware of their HIV status. Premarital HIV testing is an extension of present premarital blood testing scheme. Participants who attended both weekend retreats and successfully completed the program were awarded Diploma Certificates in Research Ethics.

"The facilitators and participants decided that they will publish a paper titled 'Ethnic Differences in Disclosure of Negative Genetic Test Findings: Nigerian Perspectives'."



Dr Akintayo, during his guest lecture.



DREIN Blended Diploma's first weekend retreat. From left to right - Mr Felix Obi, Dr Chiedozie Ike, Prof. Temidayo Ogundiran(CBR Facilitator), Dr Theophilus Maaji, Prof. (Mrs) Feyi Adepoju, Prof. (Mrs) Oluwakanyinsola Salawu, Dr. Sani Ali, Mr. Godwin Brooks, Prof. Ade Malomo,(Guest Speaker) Mr. Attahiru Salisu, Prof. (Mrs) Aisha Mamman, Dr. Akinjide Ogundokun, Dr. Adebayo Adejumo,(CBR Facilitator) Mr. Abubakar Jamda, Mr. Olusegun Adeyemo. (CBR Staff)

2.0 2018 Annual Bioethics Conference of the Bioethics Society of Nigeria

The Annual International Bioethics Forum was held on the 12th and 13th December 2018 at the Ibis Hotel, Toyin Street, Ikeja, Lagos state. The theme of the conference was "Bioethics: Vulnerability and Protection from Exploitation in Research". The focus of the forum was to explore the concepts of vulnerability and exploitation and its application in the African context. The programme objectives were to highlight the bioethics context for protecting vulnerable populations in research, identify limits to effective protection of vulnerable research participants, discuss the place of the international and local laws and regulations in preventing and addressing research exploitation during infectious disease emergencies, and discuss the practice of bioethics where the law fails to offer protection. There were four plenary sessions, two panel discussions, a community session, a case study session and two abstract presentation sessions. Seven abstracts were presented during the abstract sessions.

The forum was organised by the Bioethics Society of Nigeria (BESON). In fulfillment of one of the work packages of the Deepening Research Ethics in Nigeria (DREIN) project, the Center for Bioethics and Research (CBR) and the Nigerian National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) sponsored 44 participants from 22 Nigerian institutional health research ethics committees, 8 members of the NHREC, 14 faculty members of CBR and program Coordinators from NHREC, CBR and NAFDAC to the meeting.

The first plenary session was chaired by Prof Z Ilyasu, the Chairperson of the National Health Research Committee.

Prof Godfrey Tangwa spoke to the topic: Vulnerability and Exploitation in Clinical and Non-Clinical Health Research: Ethical Considerations for Africa. He noted that the African population faces multiple vulnerabilities - economic, health and physical vulnerabilities. This multiple vulnerabilities could be linked to colonisation, the greatest crimes against humanity with the cumulative effect of Africans being defined as unequal, inferior beings who do not count and who are dispensable. The protection of research participants for studies conducted in Africa is therefore of paramount importance because allopathic medical research is fundamentally opportunistic and exploitative.

The Second plenary session was chaired by Prof Mohammed Borodo and Dr Ifeoma Ezeome. The lead paper, presented by Dr Abha Sexana, was titled Vulnerability, exploitation and emergencies: what do we do. She emphasised that during emergencies, everybody is vulnerable. During emergencies vulnerability is not a personal deficiency but rather an interaction of many individual and community-level risks over which an individual or family may have limited control. Research is often the only way to learn more about the epidemic/ emergency.

The third plenary session was chaired by Mr Aminu Yakubu. The speaker, Prof Jegede, made a presentation titled Vulnerability and management of infectious disease of public health emergencies. He gave several definitions of vulnerability and emphasised that there is a widening of the concept of vulnerability. Vulnerability is multidimensional, dynamic, scale-dependent and site specific.

The fourth plenary session was chaired by Prof O Salawu and Dr Ejiekham. The lead paper by Dr Paulina Tindana was presented on her behalf by Prof. Morenike Folayan. The paper was titled Social value of research: assessment and implications for vulnerability and exploitation. The paper discussed extensively the value of community engagement as a key consideration for enhancing the social value of a research.

3.0 Research Ethics of Alzheimer's Disease and Alzheimer's Disease-Related Dementias (AD/ADRD) In Nigeria (Reading) Project.

The Center for Bioethics and Research was awarded a grant to study the ethical implications of conducting research on Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's disease related dementias (AD/ADRD). People with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are considered vulnerable populations in research because they have impaired cognitive capacity. There are a number of key ethical issues, which researchers need to consider when involving people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in research. CBR hopes to study the experience of participants, research staff and scientists involved in past AD/ADRD research in Nigeria. These findings will be used to develop new guidelines that will form the basis of a research ethics educational program in the ethics of research in AD and ADRD. The project will involve and train post-doctoral, doctoral and pre-doctoral bioethics' students at CBR, Ibadan, Nigeria. CBR will work with researchers at the University of Maryland, Baltimore which is the prime recipient of this supplemental award.

4.0 M.Sc Bioethics at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

My Experience as a WAB Scholar by Dr. Mrs Victoria Ijeoma Ezeome:

I am Ijeoma Victoria Ezeome. I am an Obstetrician/Gynaecologist at the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital and a Senior Lecturer in the Obstetrics & Gynaecology Department of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria.

I have always been interested in ethical issues while in Medical School. I specialized in Obstetrics partly because I was concerned about the ethical implications of male hegemony in a field involving women at the most vulnerable moments in their lives which also involved an intimate part of their body! It seemed to me then that females did not have a level playing field with respect to this important area of Medicine. When I qualified as a doctor, the Hippocratic Oath was all I knew about bioethics. While I was interested in Medical Research, I did not then know how far reaching the dimensions of bioethics were.



Figure 12: Dr Mrs Ijeoma Victoria Ezeome. Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital. M.Sc. Bioethics Student, 2017/2018 session.

My first contact with bioethics was in 2006 when my husband went for a Master of Arts programme in Bioethics at the Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Ohio, USA. It was then I got to know the dimensions of ethics especially distinguishing its research and clinical practice components. I took advantage of attending short courses on research ethics organized by my University, but nursed the hope of studying this emerging field in detail, so as to be able to apply it in my own Specialty. It was a dream come true when I got admission into University of Ibadan Postgraduate School in the 2017/18 session as a WAB Scholar.

My experience has been very humbling, but also exciting. Notwithstanding that I was warned about the rigors of the program and I was not expecting it to be a walk-over, I had assumed that having completed my Residency Training in Obstetrics & Gynaecology at the same time that I became a mother, this program should be relatively easy. With the benefit of hindsight, I now how this was rather presumptuous of me. The Bioethics program is very intense and exacting. The volume of readings are massive, with multiple assignments during each module. I find myself struggling to beat deadlines for assignments.

Before attending the program, I looked at Philosophy as an esoteric abstract discipline but I have since learnt that we are actually all philosophers, even though we may be inactive. I learnt the different moral theories (Consequentialism, Deontology, Aristotelian Virtue ethics, Rights theory, etc.) with their advantages and disadvantages. I also learnt about the beneficence, non-maleficence, respect for autonomy and justice, as put forward by Beauchamp and Childress in Principlism, which is a middle of the road approach to resolving ethical dilemmas that may lead to consensus in moral philosophy.

The lectures on the foundations of bioethics were brilliant. It was a real overview of what bioethics is about and opened my eyes to the many opportunities available in the field. I learnt the different codes/guidelines (Nuremberg, Declaration of Helsinki, Belmont Report, Common Rule, CIOMS, [NCHRE & NRA, Nigeria]) which were introduced following the inhuman abuses by the Nazi war doctors, Tuskegee Syphilis study, Thalidomide event, Milgram Experiment, Willowbrooks and the Pfizer's Trovan Studies. We have completed modules on Informed Consent and Management of Ethics Committee, Teaching and Writing Methods in Bioethics, Research Designs and Quantitative Research Methods, with its ever challenging biostatistics.

I have realized that there is so much depth to the informed consent process which we take for granted and which in many ways lead to the exploitation of research participants. We were taught the value of respecting others' opinions and views no matter how "stupid" they sound. The more one internalizes this attitude, the easier it becomes for one to respect the informed decisions of patients and research participants. I got into the world of Literature and Medicine and its attempts at humanizing Medicine, so as make physicians more humane in their relationship with their patients/clients.

The Teaching and Writing Methods module was particularly illuminating. We were taught the Generic Structure Potential (GSP) catalogue which made writing, whether as thesis or for publication easier. Many aspects of Research ethics that were difficult for me are now clearer, thanks to the crop of lecturers we have. They are simple, unassuming and well versed in their specialties, with excellent ability to transfer knowledge.

They employed skills that engendered our active participation in the learning process, making use of film shows, well prepared Power-point

presentations and impromptu tests that helped our recall and encouraged us to concentrate and make the most of the classes.

The modular design of the program is also very helpful as we are able to concentrate on a particular aspect of the program at each point in time, and each module as arranged builds on the previous one. We are now being prepared for our projects, having been given supervisors who are eager to help us. I look forward to the remaining modules, confident that the experience can only get better. My class is a good-mix of specialists: two social scientists, a social worker, general practitioner, an NHREC desk officer and myself. This has helped me to see the world through different prisms whilst we engage in debates among ourselves. With an understanding program administrator who is readily available, providing us with all we need to make our learning environment most conducive, we have access to the most current educational materials, international publications and internet resources, constant internet connectivity, and light, with dedicated generators. I live in the accommodation provided by the WAB with some of my colleagues and this has helped me to get to know them closely, leading to lasting friendships.

"I hope to use the knowledge and experience from this program in my University and Teaching Hospital hoping to be an active participant in the Hospital Research Ethics Committee as well as a member of the Faculty of my University's new Postgraduate programme in Bioethics. It will also aid me, both as Researcher and Clinician in my field of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, with its numerous ethical challenges. I look forward to developing a career in Bioethics with a PhD, hoping to add my own modest contribution to the West African Bioethics Community. Make sure that your project is both functional and creative. Think outside the box and impress everyone!"

5.0 M.Sc Bioethics Trainees at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Six students were admitted for the 2017/2018 session into the Masters degree program on scholarship provided by the Fogarty International Center of the U. S. National Institutes of Health (FIC/NIH) and the European Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP). The students have completed the course work for the program and are currently working on their individual final research project as follows:

- **Dr. Mrs. Victoria Ijeoma Ezeome:** Her research project is titled “Ethical and legal implications of Genomic research data sharing”.
- **Dr. Olusola Aluko-Arowolo:** His research project is titled “Dispositional and Contextual Differences in Perceived Hindrances in Research regulation Compliance and Suggested Remedies among Social Science Researchers in Selected South-West Nigeria Universities”.
- **Dr. Mrs. Ibijoke Ehimowo:** Her research project is titled “Vaccine Mandate: Perspective of adults attending vaccination centers on the role of medical paternalism and personal autonomy”.
- **Dr. Isaac Adedeji:** His research project is titled “Socio-cultural and Ethical Issues of Conducting Research among People Living with Alzheimer Disease in Yoruba Culture”.
- **Ms. Oluwumi Solomon:** Her research project is titled “Ethics of Research on Prisoners in Nigeria”.
- **Mr Ado Danladi:** His research project is titled “Assessment of the Nigerian Institutional Research Ethics Committees Regulatory and Record Keeping Compliance”.

The CBR Academic Director, Prof. Temidayo Ogundiran met with the students after completion of their course work to advise them on career choices when they successfully complete the Bioethics program, he asked them to take advantage of the resources provided by CBR and encouraged them to be dedicated to their final research work to ensure that it is completed within the stipulated time.



Prof. Temidayo Ogundiran, CBR Academic Director during a meeting with the students on mentorship and benefits of successfully completing the M.Sc. Bioethics program. First row, Ms Oluwunmi Solomon, Dr. Isaac Adedeji, Mr Ado Danladi Second row, Dr. Mrs. Ibijoke Ehimowo, Dr. Mrs. Ijeoma Ezeome, Dr. Olusola Aluko – Arowolo

6.0 ENTRENCH Blended Diploma in Research Ethics

The Center for Bioethics and Research' ENTRENCH program supported by the Fogarty International Center of the U. S. National Institutes of Health (FIC/NIH) organized a Blended Diploma in Research Ethics for 14 people. Trainees were drawn from diverse professions including Doctors, Nurses, Lecturers and Ethics Committee Administrators. The course aims to improve the review of protocols and advance the skills of members of institutional health research ethics committees in Nigeria. Trainees were provided with internet access and course materials during their training. The entire blended diploma program lasted from the 1st of October to 16th of December, 2018.



Participants of the 2018 Blended diploma program. from Left to right, Dr. Oremosu Ayodele, Mr. Abiodun Akindele, Mr Duduyemi Olubanwo, Mr. Adeleye Adeolu, Mrs Kehinde Oludolapo, Dr. Oloyo Kolade, Mr Akani Olatunji, Mr. Ofiabodhe Richard, Ms. Awashima Patience, Dr. Amakoh Charles, Mr. Imodoye Opeyemi, Mr Kelvin Ifechukwude, Mr. Ogundokun Olusegun.

7.0 My personal experience as a trainee in the Blended Diploma Research Ethics program of Centre for Bioethics and Research, Nigeria.

The field of science has always been held particular appeal to me. I have been intrigued by the human body, how it works, and the determinants of health of individuals and communities. This is why I pursued a career in science. As a little boy, I wanted to become a doctor. As I got older, I expanded my knowledge and exposure to science. My quest for knowledge about research prompted me to apply when a past beneficiary introduced this program to me. I was initially skeptical when I was told the program is fully funded (full scholarship) but this my angel (past beneficiary) convinced me to the point of no turning back.

I visited the friendly and interactive website of the Centre for Bioethics and Research, read the instruction and downloaded the application form. I submitted my application on 16th June 2018 at exactly 8 pm. I was told from the website page to attach the CITI-IRB Certificate in Informed consent module and Nigerian National Code for Health Research Ethics module which I did. I began to fall in love with the program when I visited the link to this CITI exam as I saw and did other modules on public health and research which widened my knowledge of public health issues and improved my knowledge as a lecturer. I was flabbergasted when I received a mail on 11th August 2018 from the Centre which was an admission letter informing me that I had been accepted into the program. I count this as one of the most memorable achievement and happenings to me in the year 2018.

The second surprise came 2 weeks before the commencement of the program when a courier was pursuing me here and there to deliver my course reference textbook, "Institutional Review Board: Management and Function, authored by Elizabeth A. Bankert and Robert J. Amdur". He located me at University College Hospital, Ibadan when I was lecturing students at exactly 8.00 am on Wednesday which I counted as being the result of proper monitoring and instruction by the Centre Administrator to the courier company. This book is the Holy Bible of Research Ethics and Ethics Committee Function and along with the National Code for Health Research Ethics book sent to my e-mail also serves as a book of law which serve not depart from my mouth and brain. My internet access fee was also paid regularly and sufficient for me to access the online lectures and videos to listen and read the course materials and do the quizzes.



Author: Akanni, Olukunmi Olatunji Blended Diploma Student 2018. Lecturer, Leadcity University, Ibadan."

I fell deeply in love with the program right from the introduction and history of research ethics that I made sure that I downloaded all the lecture slides, printed it in black and white, archived it and studied it throughout the duration of the program. There were online lectures for each week of the course with additional reading materials available on the website. I also had to take a quiz after each lecture. The lectures were explanatory, clear and concise and the lecturers like Prof. Jegede and Dr. Adejumo were also detailed and practicable with a wealth of experience in research ethics as their testimonies motivated me to quest for more in Bioethics. The quizzes tested not just my level of understanding on the materials but also how the concepts in Bioethics can make a difference in how research is done on human subjects. At the end of each week, there was an opportunity of rubbing minds with fellow students and course instructors in the online chat room. The Saturday weekend interaction with the course instructors was quite educative and interactive that I found it difficult to skip it on every Saturday to the point of still online on my way to Abuja on 20th October 2018 just to ensure not miss every bit of the program. The major principles of research on Bioethics based on the Belmont report: Respect for persons, Beneficence and Justice also widen my scope on ethics on research on human subjects. I learnt from this course how important these three principles are in the conduct of research on human subjects.

The principle of informed consent and vulnerable populations are two topics that widened my vision on research on human subjects. I learnt that the degree of risk involved in research must be assessed and it must not exceed the benefit in the research. The research subject must be aware that they are free to quit the research at any time without fear, and researchers must let them be aware of the benefits and the risks in the research from the onset.

The investigators must be ready and willing to stop the study at any stage if there is any serious or unexpected adverse event to any of the research participants, and if continuation of the study may likely result in injury, disability, or death to the research subjects.

The knowledge I gained on the submission of research protocol and assessment of the research protocol prepared me to assume the head of my Institutional Research Ethics Committee. The two weekend retreats; each at the end of each online sessions widened my scope as I met our online course instructors in person and they were able to provide answers to my sleepless puzzles on principle of research ethics and Bioethics. My experience when I chaired my group called 'Banana group' (group 2) during Mock IRB - Using the Casebook on Research Ethics published by WHO was an experience I can never forget. The lecture delivered by our guest lecturer: Prof. Bolatito Lanre Abass titled "Feminist Philosophy: #MeToo and Indigenous African Women" is an eye opener on feminism and Indigenous Africans. The Course Administrators, Mr. Segun and Mr. Damola were also great as they properly coordinated the program and provided a conducive retreat environment in terms of accommodation, feeding and fair allowances to and fro the retreat venue. My per diem was also a surprise to me as it was paid before I even sat down for the retreat and this confirm that the program was fully funded.

"My per diem was also a surprise to me as it was paid before I even sat down for the retreat and this confirm that the program was fully funded."

I spent no money for this program rather I gained wide range of knowledge that I cannot quantify. This course is the best positive testimony that I have in this year 2018 as I am now an informed person on principle of Bioethics. As I was informed about this program by a friend, I will also spread the gospel of this program on Bioethics far and beyond my domain so as to allow others to benefit from the program and expand the frontiers of Bioethics in Nigeria, West Africa and the World at large.

8.0 Going A Step Further After M.Sc. Training in Bioethics at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria: My PhD Experience.

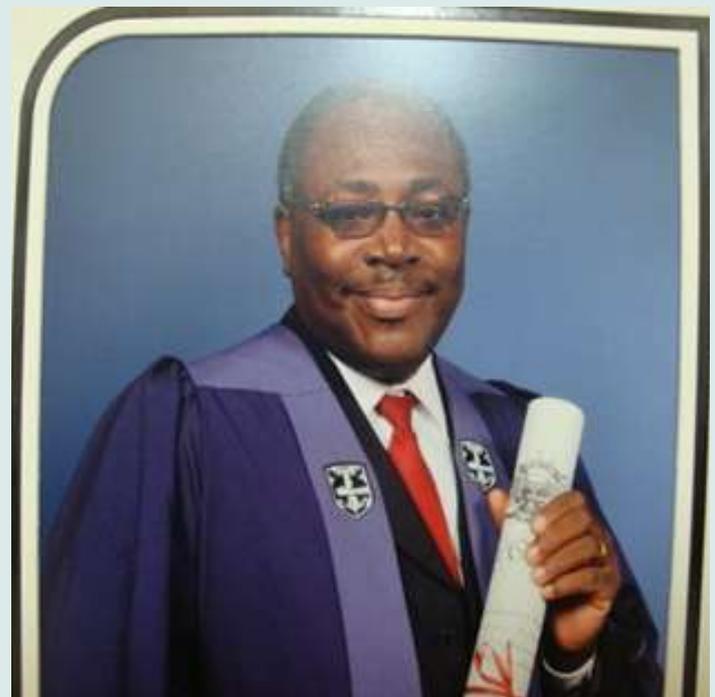
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DEVELOPING A PASSION FOR BIOETHICS

As a clinical neurologist and senior lecturer (just about to be promoted to the post of associate professor in neurology and internal medicine), I engaged in research with little knowledge of research ethics. I encountered ethical dilemmas while conducting research with patients with epilepsy (PWEs). I used 'native intelligence' to resolve these ethical conflicts because some of the senior colleagues I approached for ethical guidance and consultations offered unhelpful advice and encouraged unethical practices. All these occurred prior to 2007, before I got to know about the West African Bioethics program under the Centre for Bioethics and Research (CBR). Coincidentally, or by divine fate (for those who believe in divine ordering of human lives as I do), I was selected by my university Research and Publications Committee (URPC) to apply for the Master's program at the CBR in 2007. I was offered a place on the MSc Bioethics at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and awarded the NIH/Fogarty scholarship, as other members of this inaugural MSc bioethics program set. I learnt a lot during this course. The training in bioethics offered by the CBR faculty stimulated my interest in ethics education and development of ethical guidelines.

I considered pursuing a doctorate when I realised the significance of applications of ethics to research and clinical practice. An experience that strengthened my resolution was the confrontation I encountered at a medical conference of the West African College of Physicians in the Gambia sometime in 2011 when I made a suggestion for introduction and development of an ethics curriculum for postgraduate medical training during a focus group, and to tap the resources available at CBR in Ibadan for this initiative. One of my colleagues, a consultant physician, strongly opposed the recommendation claiming that 'we (that is doctors) know about research ethics already and that we can teach one another, no need to ask experts, is it not just beneficence, non-maleficence and justice'. I was flabbergasted. It was then not surprising that I chose to pursue a doctorate in bioethics rather than neuroscience despite my background neurology specialisation, to contribute to ethics education and capacity building in clinical and research ethics.



Prof. Olubunmi Ogunrin, Alumni 2007/2008 set, M.Sc. Bioethics Program."

Doctorate research at Liverpool

I commenced my doctorate in bioethics at University of Liverpool as a self-funded matured student, scraping all the money I had in my savings and securing a loan along the way to pay my tuition fees. The postgraduate training in health services research at the university is robust and impressive. I received tutoring in biostatistics, epistemology of and practical approach to both quantitative and qualitative research. I had no challenges coping with these seminars because of the foundation I received during my Master's training in bioethics. I discovered that the lectures I received at the Master's level gave me a solid foundation in qualitative and quantitative research methods, communication and writing in bioethics, scientific integrity and principles of bioethics in general. I really appreciate the sound and excellent faculty at CBR.

Overall, though my PhD research was challenging because of the volume of work, the rigour of literature search considering the scope of my research and large volume of literature available on my research topic 'ethics of genomic and neuroscience research', I was able to cope. What I enjoyed most during my doctorate program is the quality of supervision. I was privileged to have very supportive supervisors (Dr Lucy Frith, Professor Mark Gabbay and Dr Kerry Woolfall) who guided and criticised me as I developed my research proposal, prepared and implemented my research, and completed my thesis.

My focus was on informed consent and community engagement processes in genomic and neuroscience research. Using a qualitative approach based on a form of grounded theory,

I explored the interplay between decision making process and communitarianism in sub-Saharan African setting and how this affects informed consent processes and community engagement strategies in genomic and neuroscience research. Using this approach made me appreciate the similarity between qualitative research methods and the patient-doctor interaction in clinical practice. Not just that, I also realised that qualitative researchers interact with people and communities while quantitative researchers interact with numbers and statistics. I found pleasure in qualitative research, using the semi-structured in-depth interview and focus group discussions to obtain data and answer my research questions. It was a unique experience for me. I conducted my field-work single-handedly, with help of a community contact, in a community where I was a stranger. I planned to use my experience as a case-study of what researchers encounter on the field. This was not part of my study although the data from my research diary formed part of my methods to ensure the quality of my research vis-à-vis credibility and transferability.

The data of my PhD research revealed several important observations which are novel and, I believe, will be applicable to implementing sound ethical practice in sub-Saharan Africa and possibly global ethics. I conceptualised a model of relative solidarity for facilitating potential participants' participation in genomic research and described a generational shift in research, being the first empirical study to best of my knowledge to report the impact of the generations Y and Z (millennium) on research and how this can be explained using the Granovetter's 'strength of the weak ties' within the social capital theory. Also, I published my findings on genomic literacy and ethical awareness among clinician-researchers who participated in my study.

This is the first study I am aware of that investigated genomic literacy among biomedical researchers in sub-Saharan Africa. I presented this paper at the recently concluded World Congress of Bioethics in Bengaluru, India. This paper calls for development of educational and training programs in genomics among African scientists at the same level of enthusiasm as the development of biobanks and genetic research groups. Though this study has its limitations, it should serve as a template for further research on genomic literacy, using similar or different methodological approaches, in the sub-Saharan African region.

Furthermore, I proposed a flow dynamics strategic approach for community engagement process for neuroscience and genomic research. This process comprises four stages that compares favourably with Brenner's model and CDC nine principles for community engagement. My strategic model has the added advantage of the post-research cordiality which is lacking in previous models. My doctorate research has afforded me the opportunity to be versatile as a mixed-method researcher, equipped with skills in systematic reviews and meta-analysis, and competent in the use of both quantitative and qualitative analytic software including Nvivo, Atlas.ti and RevMan. I was opportune to participate in facilitating medical undergraduate seminars and lectures in professional ethics, interprofessional learning and conduct of health research.

Conclusion

Bioethics training in developing African countries especially Nigeria needs more funding to encourage interested professionals/individuals to acquire expertise in this area. The discipline of ethics education and professional ethics should be incorporated into the undergraduate and postgraduate medical curricula in Nigeria. The way to growth in science and technology for our country, Nigeria is to actively and purposively develop and sustain ethically acceptable, socially relevant research that will add value to the well-being of people and communities and stimulate scientific advances.

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9.0 Onsite Institutional Ethics Committees and Health Researchers Training

The following onsite trainings were conducted by the Center for Bioethics and Research from January 2018 to date.

The Center for Bioethics and Research provided on-site training to 70 Health Research Ethics Committees Members from various institutions across Nigeria, the trainees had an average score of 47.5% in their pre-test examination and an average score of 82.5% in the post- test examination. These trainings are part of the requirements by the National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC), for members of an Ethics Committee and the registration of a newly inaugurated Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board.

Institution	Date	Attendance	Participants	Training type
Federal Ministry of Health, Oyo State Ethics Committee	April 10 - 12	19	Members of Oyo State HREC.	Modern Research Ethics.
Federal Ministry of Defence, Abuja Ethics Committee	May 21 - 23	11	Members of Health Research Ethics Committee.	Modern Research Ethics.
Institute of Molecular Pathology, Enugu.	Sep. 26 - 29	9	New Members of Health Research Ethics Committee.	Modern Research Ethics.
Ebonyi State Health Research Ethics Committee	Sep. 26 - 29	7	Members of Health Research Ethics Committee.	Modern Research Ethics.
Kogi State Health Research Ethics Committee.	Oct. 2 - 4	11	Members of Health Research Ethics Committee.	Modern Research Ethics.
Nasarawa State Health Research Ethics Committee.	Oct. 19 - 22	13	Members of Health Research Ethics Committee.	Modern Research Ethics.

10.0 Appointments/Achievements

10.1 PROMOTIONS

Dr. Adebayo Adejumo was promoted to Reader (Associate Professor) in Psychology by the University of Ibadan.

10.2 ACHIEVEMENTS

Prof. Temidayo Ogundiran was co-winner of the 2018 Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS) gold medal prize for Life Sciences, for his significant scientific achievement in using the cutting edge and expertise of molecular genetics for advanced and original contribution to the understanding of genetic disparity in cancer between people of African descent and other races.

Prof. Samuel Ayodele Jegede was the recipient of the The World Academy of Science 2019 Prize for Social Science

11.0 Online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) in collaboration with BRANY, New York

As part of our partnership with the Biomedical Research Alliance of New York (BRANY)'s CITI program, we provided 9,690 online CITI trainings in Informed Consent, Responsible Conduct of Research and a specialised module on the Nigerian National Code for Health Research Ethics from the 1st of January to 20th of December, 2018.

12.0 BeOnline Journal – Accepting Manuscripts for Review and Publication

BeOnline, the Bioethics Online journal of the Center for Bioethics and Research is an open-access online journal that provides a platform for individuals to contribute to the global discourse on bioethics by adding the voice of Africans and research in Africa to the discussions about clinical and research ethics, primarily in Africa and in the world at large. We invite you to submit your work to our panel of experienced reviewers and publish in the BeOnline journal. Rapid review and decision is guaranteed. We also provide text editing support to improve the quality of your papers. Let the world hear your view about research ethics.

For more information on how to submit a manuscript for review, please visit us @ <http://www.bioethicscenter.net/journal/> or send an email to admin@bioethicscenter.net



**Center for Bioethics
and Research**



Happy New Year

Closing Remarks

Thank you for taking your time to read this issue of the newsletter, your comments about the current issue, and ideas for the next issue are what will keep the Center for Bioethics and Research Newsletter an interesting and lively newsletter.

Please send contributions and suggestions to admin@bioethicscenter.net

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