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**BHARATA MATA
COLLEGE
THRIKKAKARA**

Affiliated to MG University, Re-accredited by NAAC with 'A+' Grade, ISO 9001-2015 Certified

RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

INTRODUCTION

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PREAMBLE

Bharata Mata College believes in the emancipatory potential of knowledge, and hence in the ethical production of knowledge. We adapt our Research Ethics Policy and hereby promise to abide by it in order to promote integrity, conscientiousness, social commitment and ecological sustainability in research work undertaken by the students and staff of the institution. We hereby pledge to protect the interests and rights of vulnerable stakeholders and ensure data privacy in the process of research. We express our willingness to utilize the outcomes of our research to the betterment of human society and the planet.

INTRODUCTION

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara (henceforth, the College) is committed to producing original, rigorous, socially committed, and quality research. The Research Ethics Policy (henceforth, the Policy) document of the College elaborates on a set of principles that should govern and rules that regulate the research work pursued by any member of the College. We believe that a researcher should be ethically and procedurally responsible and accountable - in addition to oneself- to the College, to the funder, to the participants and stakeholders involved in the research project, to the academic community and to the society at large. Since this process demands high levels of ethical consciousness, social sensibility, legal awareness and discretion, the institution deemed it necessary to formulate a set of general code of ethical conduct for research activity. The Research Ethics Policy is instated and promulgated by the College for maintaining high levels of ethical standard for its research output. The Policy is drafted by the Research Ethics Committee, which is constituted as a subsection of the Research Committee of the College. The Policy is approved and adopted by a body comprising of the Research Committee, the Principal, and the Manager.

OBJECTIVES

- To foster an ethical and principled academic culture
- To enlighten and train faculty, researchers, and students in practices of principled production of knowledge
- To ensure that the potential benefits of a research project outweigh its potential risks or harm
- To protect the dignity and welfare of human participants involved in research
- To safeguard constitutional and human rights of the researcher and participants
- To ensure data privacy and protection for the participants
- To safeguard rights of children, and vulnerable or marginalized individuals and social groups who participate or are studied in the research
- To ensure compliance with the existent copy-right and patent laws
- To ensure compliance with the existent animal-protection laws
- To ensure compliance with relevant environment-protection laws
- To encourage original research by curbing plagiarism

SCOPE

- All M.A., M.Sc., M.Com. and Ph.D projects registered with a research centre of the college
- All M.A., M.Sc., M.Com. and Ph.D projects registered under the supervision of a faculty of the College
- Research undertaken by a faculty (both permanent and guest faculty) or student of the College with internal or external funding. The policy applies to guest faculty during their tenure at the College.
- Research work that utilizes the human and material resources of the College
- All the post-graduate and undergraduate projects of the students of the College
- Researchers, supervisors, and students must familiarize themselves with the Policy before commencing the research.

AUTHORITY

A four-membered Research Ethics Committee (henceforth, the Committee) shall be formed as a sub-committee of the existent Research Committee (excluding the chairperson) to oversee matters related to research ethics. The committee will act as the nodal authority on the matter. A Research Ethics Appellate Committee shall be formed with the chairperson of the Research Committee, the Principal, the Research Dean, IQAC Co-ordinator and the Librarian of the College as its members. This Appellate body will address and adjudicate on appeals against the decision taken by the Committee. The Policy can be amended by the Committee as and when deemed necessary by it, with the approval of the Appellate body.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Researchers should strictly abide by the following rules:

[A] Research involving human participants

Research work involving interviews, surveys, focus groups, observation, correspondence, or any kind of access to private data of individuals or groups come under 'Human Participation.'

- The researcher must respect and preserve the rights and dignity of the individual.
- It is the responsibility of the researcher to be aware of the existing legal aspects pertaining to human participation in research work.
- Additional care should be taken in research that involves vulnerable members and/or sections of the society. This includes children, victims of violence, people with disability, and people with any kind of social disadvantage.
- The participants should be clearly informed about the nature, aim, relevance and reach of the research.
- The participants should be clearly informed about their available legal rights, protection, the stakes involved for them in the research, potential risks (if any) to their life or well-being.
- The privacy of the participant should be protected to the extent deemed necessary by the participant.
- The participant should be well-informed about who all will have access to the information shared by them (data privacy), where the information would be saved (data protection), and the duration of preservation of the information.
- A full-informed consent of the participant should be obtained by the researcher in an on-paper and attested mode.
- The permission for the commencement of the research shall be granted only upon the submission of the above-mentioned agreement to the office-in-charge.
- The participant will have the right to retract from their consent at any point of the research, with retrospective effect. They can demand the destruction of data shared so far.
- If the participation in the research involves monetary reward, it has to be clearly spelled out in the consent form and a receipt of the payment has to be obtained by the researcher.

[B] Research involving copyrighted data and patented knowledge/ products should abide by the existent rules and regulations upon the secondary utilization of the same.

[C] Research involving flora and fauna should abide by the Central and State Government's rules and regulations pertaining to the same. If the study involves endangered species or risks to environment or intervention into ecologically sensitive areas, it is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain due permission for the same from authorities concerned and ensure compliance with the regulations.

[D] The research work should clearly acknowledge and cite references, failure of which would amount to plagiarism.

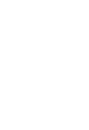
[E] The permissible percentage of content overlap for Ph.D thesis is 8%. It is limited to 12% for the Post Graduate Degree and 20% for Under Graduate Degree projects

[F] The college has to constitute a College Animal Ethics Committee (CAEC) to approve and monitor any experiments involving animals and all procedures and experiments must be strictly be in compliance with the existing CPCSEA (The Committee for the Purpose of Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals, formed under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960) rules and regulations.



RESEARCH ETHICS PROCEDURES

- The College's Research Ethics Policy and associated application formats are available on the College's website. The acceptance of proposal for PhD research project and any funded/unfunded research work undertaken by faculty is conditioned upon an electronic submission of agreement to the Policy, along with a copy of the proposal. If the research falls under any of the regulations listed above, a written application form should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee, elaborating on the nature and extent of the issue.
- The Supervising faculty shall be the nodal authority on research ethics of the Post Graduate and Under Graduate projects. In the event of a concern, the Supervisor can report to the Research Ethics Committee.
- Upon receiving an application, the Committee shall look into the matter. The Committee shall grant permission, suggest modifications, or deny the proposal. The decision has to be taken and informed within 30 days of receiving an application.
- External expert counsel can be sought on the matter, if deemed necessary.
- If dissatisfied by the decision of the committee, the researcher can further appeal to the Research Ethics Appellate Committee, and a decision has to be taken and informed within 15 days of receiving an application.
- If the research project redirects or deviate from the original proposal submitted at the commencement of the work in a way that involves an ethical concern, an application for a fresh approval should be submitted to the Committee.
- If the researcher is found to have misled or misinformed the authorities at any stage of research, it amounts to the violation of the policy, and due measures shall be initiated by the Committee.
- Prior to the submission, an undertaking has to be submitted to the Committee by the researcher that the Research Ethics Policy of the institution has been adhered to at all phases of research.



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Thrikkakara, Kochi-21, Kerala, India

Owned and Managed by the Archdiocese of Ernakulam- Angamaly

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