

INTEGRITY OF THE RESEARCHER, DESIRED AS A EUROPEAN CITIZEN

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Abstract: Integrity appears and develops only in an environment that values human dignity, where truth, justice and honesty are unanimously accepted moral values. In an environment where people can freely assert their opinions, beliefs and make choices without any constraints, we can talk about integrity. In the context where intellectual freedom and social responsibility are the core values of scientific research, which must be consistently respected and promoted, this article examines how the integrity of the researcher, from an individual perspective, contributes to strengthening and enriching the quality of citizenship. Europe. At the same time, the article examines practices that undermine the integrity set out in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

Keywords: *integrity, scientific research, european citizenship, diversity of opinion, European Union*

Introduction

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian language, integrity represents “*the quality of being honest; honesty, probity; incorruptibility*”¹. At the same time, integrity defines the integrity of an individual, the feeling of dignity, justice and conscientiousness, which serves as a guide in human conduct, honesty, honesty and probity. It expresses the quality of being or remaining intact, whole, of keeping its qualities unaltered.

From an individual perspective, it can be said that integrity is a matter of personal choice; it is about assuming a set of values, ethical

¹ Academia Română, Institutul de Lingvistică “Iorgu Iordan”, *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*, ediția a II-a revăzută și adăugită, Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2009.

norms of professional and personal conduct, ensuring a certain degree of self-esteem. From the outside, the integrity of the individual is evaluated and quantified, either in terms of the elements that make up the collective consciousness, or in terms of compliance with the mandatory rules in this area.

Integrity, along with ethical behavior, underpins the success of a long-term leadership process. Personal integrity is the source and foundation of the integrity and ethics of the organization to which the individual belongs. She assumes that he is authentic with his own person but also with other people, as well as to do what he says he does.

To be authentic with one's own person means to achieve the congruence between one's own feelings and actions. On the other hand, being authentic with other people means having a connection between what you say and what you do. Finally, doing what you say means keeping your promises and agreements. This may involve accepting responsibility even if, in the end, the expected result is not reached.

According to Kantian philosophy, integrity as personal autonomy means acting "*always in such a way as to treat humanity, both in yourself and in others, always as an end in itself and never only as a means*"². From this perspective, integrity becomes a necessary restrictive condition that applies to institutional systems of rules.

An honest man is a man who adheres to his principles, a person who acts impartially when evaluating cases in which he is involved and who performs his duties with devotion, proving probity. At the same time, being an integral person presupposes giving others the presumption of integrity.

Theory

At present, interactions between groups and individuals have become extremely complex, and differences between the norms of social / professional groups can create misunderstandings or facilitate violations that have negative consequences, affecting future collaborations, mutual trust, professional prestige of individuals, image of institutions, etc. Hence the express need to regulate these rules, only in this way it is possible to know

2 Immanuel Kant, *Critica rațiunii practice*, trad. Nicolae Bagdasar, Ed a-2-a, Bucuresti, Universal Enciclopedic Gold, 2010.

and respect the moral / ethical / deontological values protected and accepted by the scientific communities.

Professor Costică Voicu observes that: “*each social category has its own special morality: that of intellectuals and workers; of masters and servants; of teachers and students; of rulers and governors; of men and women; of adults and children; of bosses and subordinates, etc.*”³.

Intellectual freedom and social responsibility are the core values of scientific research, which must be respected and promoted consistently. These two values should be mutually reinforcing in the increasingly open systems of training and knowledge production characteristic of 21st century society.

Individual researchers and groups of scientists are morally responsible not only for research processes (choice of subject, research methods and research integrity), but also for their results. That is why they must elaborate and strictly observe codes of ethical norms that regulate their scientific research activity.

More than a set of skills, research is a way of thinking. Research is an active and systematic process of discovering, interpreting, or reviewing facts, events, behaviors, or theories, or making practical applications with the help of such facts, laws, or theories⁴.

Scientific research is an essential and powerful tool in leading man to progress, and without systematic research the progress of mankind would have been very small.

Results and Discussions

The progress of knowledge is based on the freedom of scientific research. This freedom is restricted by respect for dignity and human rights, animal protection and environmental protection.⁵ If we discuss the principles of scientific research, the psychomoral principle concerns both the

3 Costică Voicu, Adriana Voicu, *Teoria generală a dreptului – Curs universitar*, Ediție revăzută și actualizată, Editura Universul juridic, București, 2013.

4 World Conference on Research Integrity WCRI (2013). Montreal Statement on Research Integrity in Cross-Boundary Research Collaborations, disponibil la: <http://www.researchintegrity.org/Statements/Montreal%20Statement%20English.pdf>.

5 Marilena Marin, Human Rights Between Abuse And Non-Discrimination (Drepturile omului între abuz și nediscriminare), Managementul Intercultural, Volumul XVI, Nr. 2 (31), 2014, pp. 209-213, Brașov, 2014.

researcher and the way in which his scientific research is carried out. The question is the seriousness and honesty of the research activity or, in other words, both the scientific and the moral responsibility of the researcher, towards the research, for the research results, but at the same time for the consequences deriving from the theoretical application or practice of research results. For this reason, the following should be considered:

- ✦ Any scientific research activity must have a character in itself, be sincere and disinterested in obtaining material or other advantages by the researcher who performs it;
- ✦ Research, being placed under the sign of responsibility,⁶ must be conducted according to the ethical principles of a correct activity, respecting the ethical-professional relations between researchers in the same field of research and even communicating with them during the research;
- ✦ The research undertaken must be in accordance with the nature of the researcher's personality, with his personal training and concerns, with the degree and specificity of specialization and with his professional competence in the field in which he carries out his scientific research activity;
- ✦ To accept the collaboration with specialists from the same field or with specialists from related scientific fields, sincerely and openly, selflessly, in order to avoid overlapping studies or errors that may serve in obtaining and interpreting the results;
- ✦ The researcher has the duty to support, demonstrate and defend the results of scientific research against controversies or criticisms that may be brought in connection with the research undertaken;
- ✦ The person who carried out the scientific research must have credibility, be convincing in order to impose, through arguments and demonstrations, the theoretical and practical results of the research, so that they are recognized and accepted by specialists in the respective scientific field.

An issue subject to international regulation, refers to good conduct in research. An important document in this context is the Bologna

6 Mădălina Botină, Alina Georgiana Pangrate, „Some Problems of Jurisprudence concerning the difference between delictual liability and contractual liability”, în *Ovidius University Annals (Analele Universității Ovidius, Seria Științe Economice)*, Volume XII, Issue 2, Ovidius University Press, Constanța, 2013, pp. 83-87, <http://stec.univ-ovidius.ro/html/anale/RO/cuprins%20rezumate/volum2013p2.pdf>.

Declaration (1999) which set out to achieve a Europe of Knowledge “as an indispensable component for strengthening and enriching Europe’s citizenship”⁷.

Also, the international scientific communities have adopted codes and established rules of good practice in scientific research and innovation, thus pursuing the development of knowledge of scientific fields, good collaboration within research teams, recognition of the merits and contributions of each, etc.

In this respect, the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, in paragraph 2 of the Preamble, states that “*scientific research involves direct or indirect collaboration which in many cases transcends social, cultural and political boundaries*”⁸.

The first chapter of the Code lists and defines the principles that should govern good practice in scientific research:

- + the accuracy and authenticity of the results obtained, the methods used, etc.;
- + transparency and correctness of communication of research results;
- + respect for colleagues, participants in scientific studies, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment;
- + responsibility for the published results, the organization of the research, etc.

Researchers must focus on the good of mankind and the expansion of the frontiers of scientific knowledge, but at the same time enjoy the freedom of thought and expression and the freedom to identify ways of solving problems in accordance with the principles and recognized ethical practices.

However, researchers must recognize the limits of this freedom resulting from special research circumstances (including supervision / guidance / management) or operational constraints, for example: budgetary or infrastructure reasons, or, especially in the industrial sector, for reasons protection of intellectual property. Such limitations must

7 The European Higher Education Area, *Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999*, disponibil la: http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/Ministerial_conferences/02/8/1999_Bologna_Declaration_English_553028.pdf.

8 ALEEA ALL European Academies, *The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*, Revisited Edition, ALLEA, Berlin, 2017, disponibil la: https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/hi/h2020-ethics_code-of-conduct_en.pdf.

not, however, run counter to recognized ethical principles and practices to which researchers must adhere.

Chapter 3 of the Code contains the listing and definitions of violations of good practice in scientific research, emphasizing the essential nature of knowledge and violation of the rules governing good practice in scientific research. Among the violations of good practices in scientific research provided by the Code, we mention: fabrication and falsification of research results, plagiarism, autoplagerism, etc.

The general principles and obligations applicable to researchers range from research ethics and professional responsibility to justification, good practice, dissemination of results, public employment and continued professional development.

Researchers are advised, for example, to do their utmost to ensure that their research is relevant to society and does not repeat research previously conducted elsewhere.

The honesty of the researcher towards himself and towards other researchers is a basic ethical principle for good conduct in scientific research. Dishonesty can lead to an inappropriate image of science and can alter the mutual trust of researchers.

The honesty of the scientific researcher ensures the respect of the contributions of the predecessors, competitors and partners and leads to the decrease of the number of errors and exaggerations.

Cooperation and collegiality in scientific research groups represent a protection against scientific errors and fraud, ensuring the transparency of results and leading to an increase in the value of scientific products. Cooperation must allow the exchange of ideas, mutual criticism, mutual verification of results, etc.

The originality and quality of scientific products must take precedence over quantity when evaluating the results of scientific research.

Conclusions

There is a very strong link between ethics and scientific research that can be seen as a mutual interconditioning in the sense that ethics can impose by social will certain conditions in which scientific research must take place and in turn, ethics can be a subject of research. The emergence of a European Researcher's Charter and a Code of Conduct for the

Recruitment of Researchers⁹ has undoubtedly had a positive impact on research development, on the achievement of the overall European objectives of creating the European Research Area, a market for work for researchers and economic growth at the expense of the development of science.

In a recent call for projects launched by the European Commission on ethics and integrity in research, it was made quite clear that integrity refers to the internalisation of ethical norms by individual researchers and their assumption by the organizations in which they operate.

At EU level, research and innovation are key to spreading excellence and expanding participation, so measures are needed to ensure the convergence and improvement of innovation performance of all Member States and their regions. Experience shows that when crises arise (economic or health, such as the current situation in the context of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic) that impose constraints on national budgets, disparities in innovation become more evident across Europe.

In recent months, the remarkable advances in science and technology and the new scourge that has affected the world, the new Coronavirus, have greatly influenced the scientific and political world to work together to find solutions to stop the pandemic and the integrity of researchers and researchers. it appears more and more pregnant as a desideratum.

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⁹ European Commission, *The European Charter for Researchers. The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2005 (EUR 21620), disponibil la: https://www.euraxess.at/sites/default/files/am509774cee_en_e4.pdf.

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