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Research Ethics in Social Science: In-Depth Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract: This study uses data from the Web of Science (WoS) database to carry out a bibliometric analysis of research ethics in social science. The primary aim is to look at the core ethical principles that apply to social science research, including respect, beneficence, and justice, and draw attention to ethical challenges, such as those concerning big data, privacy, and informed consent. In addition, it maps trends in research ethics through the use of visualization tools like VOS Viewer. The search process retrieved 15,259 records, out of which 14,844 relevant datasets were included after the data screening process. The study examined major key terms including "ethics," "research ethics," and "informed consent" and probed their connections and occurrences within the literature. Results revealed a major focus on the ethical concerns raised against the use of big data, qualitative research, and social media in academic studies. The findings will be of immense value to researchers as they present a comprehensive overview of the current ethical challenges and the evolution of research ethics in social science. The study also calls for more stringent ethical guidelines that would guarantee responsible and transparent research practices.

Keywords: Research ethics, social science, big data, informed consent, bibliometric analysis, ethical challenges, VOS viewer, social media, qualitative research, Web of Science

