

Social Considerations of Human Biobanks

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Abstract

Background: Biobank is a new phenomenon that besides economic, moral, scientific and legal aspects is also socially important. This is due to its connection to the society, which necessitates doing researches about its social dimensions. To elaborate these dimensions, effective elements on either increase or decrease of trust and contribution of various age and sex groups in the donation process were surveyed in this study.

Methods: After reviewing the literature regarding social aspects of biobanks and taking the advantage of practical researches (Like the ones conducted in 2010 in Netherlands, England, Austria, Greece and BBMRI reports of 2007 and 2013 in United States, Finland and France), the amount of contributions and social trust in five dimensions of confidentiality, interests sharing, informed consent, biobank governance and social discriminations was evaluated.

Results: Parameters like geographical region, public beliefs, culture, tradition, gender, age, social class and race, public trust and contribution in the five mentioned dimensions vary between societies and require implementation of different strategies.

Conclusion: Increasing public trust in biobanks researches requires effective social contribution. Furthermore, the first prerequisite is that participants should be assured their privacy is respected. Secondly, participants should provide informed consent to every step of the research. Third, they receive something in exchange of their sample. Forth, the governing institution of biobank should be trustworthy. Fifth, there must be no discrimination between different groups.

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