
Abstract

A qualitative study of ethical challenges encountered by psychology professionals

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The objective of this study is to clarify the ethical challenges Japanese psychology professionals have experienced in their practices in recent years. Three hundred and seventy-two certified public psychologists or clinical psychologists received the study questionnaire and 199 reported 329 occurrences of ethical challenges. Ten categories were generated from a content analysis using the KJ method. The most frequently reported issues, in descending order, were confidentiality (93 incidents), relationship with clients (60 incidents), respect for autonomy (35 incidents), and unethical behavior of colleagues (30 incidents); 49 incidents cited COVID-19-related influences. Compared to similar surveys completed previously, these results show a wider range of content, suggesting that psychologists are increasingly recognizing a variety of issues as ethically challenging. In addition, many problems related to collaboration with colleagues were observed, suggesting that collaboration has become a major ethical concern for psychologists. This study also analyzed the differences in the reported incidents according to the participating psychologists' years of experience, type of work, and domain.

Keywords: professional ethics, ethical challenges, psychological professionals
