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A few rough spots, but I like the care with which you have examined the basic steps that we discussed in class.

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Ethics Paper
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Case 3: Negotiating the Social Relations of Research in an International Context

Facts of the Case:

Funds have been provided to a Third World country by the World Bank for development projects. The funds are intended to aid disadvantaged groups of small farmers, rubber tappers, and indigenous peoples. The details of the project development funds distribution and use is the independent variable in the researcher's study. Documents containing this information are supposed to be public and accessible by anyone; however, ^{they} are in the possession of the government. In order to get these documents they must be requested from the government, but access may be blocked through foot-dragging, demanding bribes, or other means due to the political will of the agency holding the documents.

Ethical Issue:

The ethical issue for the researcher in this case is whether or not he or she should disclose the true nature of the research project when requesting the documents from the government agency. Is it ethical to withhold information about the research project to obtain the necessary documents? Is it ethical to lie about the purpose for requesting the necessary documents to complete the research?

Parties Affected:

The parties affected in this situation are the researcher, the government officials involved in the distribution of the documents, the government officials involved in the distribution of the World Bank funds, the World Bank, the individuals or parties that received funding, and the public.

Scenarios and Consequences:

1. The researcher fully informs the government agency truthfully about the project and reason for requesting the documents.
 - a. The researcher will probably not be able to get the data if there is any corruption in the system. The research will not be completed.
 - b. Potential corruption in the distribution of World Bank funds will never be exposed.
 - c. The party in power will remain in power and those who need aid will be out of luck if there is corruption.
 - d. If there is not corruption in the distribution of the funds, then the public opinion may be misinformed and throw a legitimate party out of power.

Explains a bit

it not clear exactly how these differ.

2. The researcher withholds information about the research project when requesting the documents.
 - a. The government agency will probably take a very long time sending the documents if they are sent at all.
 - b. Delays in the research will lead to delays in the exposure of corruption which the public may have to endure for longer periods of time.
 - c. If the research is not conducted, then the consequences from scenario one will play out.
3. The researcher lies about the purpose for requesting the information or obtains it through an intermediary source which presents false intentions for the acquisition of the documents.
 - a. The research will be able to be completed.
 - b. Any corruption in the distribution of World Bank funds will be exposed.
 - c. Corrupt politicians will be thrown out of office.
 - d. Future regimes will ensure fair distribution of the funds in order to maintain their power.

Obligations:

The obligations of the researcher are to provide an accurate unbiased picture of how the distribution of World Bank funds affected voting patterns in elections. The obligation of the agency that is involved with the distribution of the public documents is to do so. The obligation of the political figures distributing the funds is to appropriately distribute them as they were intended by the World Bank. The obligation of the individuals and parties receiving the funding is to ensure the funding is used as it was intended. The obligation of the public is to use the democratic process to make sure all other parties are meeting their obligations.

Character and Integrity:

The character and integrity of the researcher will be tarnished if the records are obtained through dishonesty. Other governments may become unwilling to work with the researcher and future research projects may be hindered. The character of the World Bank as well as the officials involved in the distribution of the funds may be tarnished if it turns out that the funds have been misappropriated.

Potential Alternatives:

If the government is unwilling to release the public documents when the researcher has requested them openly and honestly, then there are a couple of ways to pressure their release. The World Bank could be contacted by the researcher and told of the situation, in which case the World Bank would be expected to enforce the conditions under which aid was granted and ensure public access to the documents. Alternatively, the public could democratically pressure the release of the documents and possibly their publication on the internet. There could be protests and petitions to release the documents or candidates that run on the platform of transparency.

so this is how?
exactly how?

Conclusion and Best Course of Action:

It is not appropriate for the researcher to lie about his or her project. That may provide instant gratification on this project; however it will hinder the effectiveness of the researcher in the future and tarnish his or her reputation. If the agency will not release the documents as it is required to, then action must be taken to pressure the government from either the top (World Bank) or the bottom (public) or both to release the documents and disclose the distribution of funds. At that point the research can be conducted and the exposure of corruption will have the full attention of those it most directly affects.