

Ethical code of conduct in psychological research



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BUSTER**

The Purpose of this assignment is to study various experiments and to see if and how they had broken the code of conduct in ethics. The main body of the code of conduct in ethics is as follows: Informed Consent, Confidentiality, Release of information to clients, these rules are to be used as guideline for Psychologists and Researchers to make sure that they treat the participants with the human rights they deserve (Day & White, 2007). ⁻¹

In this paper there will be a discussion about experiments that have breached the code of ethics in certain ways. Two experiments will be discussed in this paper, the two experiments are: The Stanley Milgram Experiment (Obedience) and The Harry Harlow Experiment (Maternal Bonding).

Milgram Experiment on Obedience

The Milgram experiment was carried out by Stanley Milgram. The experiment began in July 1961. The experiment focused on “ Whether or not the soldiers who committed the crimes should be charged, or where they just following orders from their superiors.” ⁻²

The procedure was that the participant was paired with another person and drew straws to discover who would be the ‘ pupil’ and who would be the ‘ educator’. The draw was fixed so the participant would be the ‘ teacher’, and the learner would be one of Milgram’s co-conspirators. The ‘ pupil’ was taken into a room and had electrodes attached to his arms, and the educator went with the observer into a next room which contained a shock generator that

had switches of voltage all the way up to 450 volts. ⁻² The pupil gave purposely wrong answers every time the educator gave an electric shock.

The ethical issues where of Deception, protection of participants and the right to withdraw, the main ethical issue was Deception, Milgram did not fully allow the participants to withdraw, he coerced them into following orders, he justified his actions by saying the study was about obedience so orders were necessary.

Harry Harlow Experiment on Maternal Bonding

An experiment was carried out by American Psychologist Harry Harlow in his Wisconsin University laboratory, the experiment was carried out on the hypothesis of the first causes and mechanisms in the relationship between infants and mothers.

The experiment was carried out with Rhesus Monkeys instead of humans, because it would have been extremely unethical to use humans in such a subject.

He separated the infant's monkeys from their mothers shortly after their birth. He then moved them into a completely separate area and placed them with surrogate machines monkey mother, one group was made of wire mesh, the other terry cloth, both were equipped to dispense milk to the infants, he noticed that the monkeys raised by the wire mesh surrogates, behaved differently to the terry cloth infant monkeys. When a substance was introduced into the area, they terry cloth monkeys retreated to their mothers for comfort, but when the wire mesh monkeys had the same thing done to

them, instead of going to their mothers, they threw themselves on the floor and rocked back and forth, while screaming in terror.

The ethical issues were of: Protection from harm, to be debriefed and to be able to withdraw consent. The main problem was the monkeys were not protected from harm, they had been forcefully removed from their natural mothers and after the experiment was concluded with no debrief.

Conclusion

In conclusion these experiments showed that we need the ethical guidelines to support

Psychologists in making sure they understand and support their subjects in making sure they don't cause any long term injuries, whether psychological or physical.

References

[1] Day, A and White, J ' Commentary on the uses and value of the Australian Psychological Society (2007)'

[2] McLeod, S. A. (2007). The Milgram Experiment. Retrieved from www.simplypsychology.org/milgram.html

ADOPTION HISTORY: HARRY HARLOW, MONKEY LOVE EXPERIMENTS

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