

Ethical Dilemmas

Directions

As a member of the IRB committee at Yale University, you have been asked to examine a proposal for research in your department. Your task is to determine if this request meets all of the ethical requirements necessary for research with human participants. Check each box that meets the qualifications for ethical guidelines, leave the box blank if it does not meet the given requirement and place an N/A in the box if it does not apply to this proposal. Finally, indicate whether you believe the research should be approved or denied. If the research is not approved, please indicate the specific reasons that the request has been declined.

Proposal

Yale University is planning to conduct research with an all male subject pool. Volunteers will be found by running advertisements in the local newspaper and will be paid upon arrival to the laboratory. The study will run one hour in length and the participants will be told that they are part of a study on learning and memory, the study will actually be testing obedience to authority. The key figures will be the teacher who will be a participant volunteer and the subject who will be a confederate of the experimenter. The experimenter will also be paid by the researcher.

The study will test pairs of words, for each word pair that is incorrect the teacher will be asked to proctor a shock to the learner. The experimenter will oversee this process. For each incorrect response, the shocks will increase by 15 volts up to 450 volts. The only actual shock, which will be given in the study will be to the teacher as a demonstration of 15 volts of shock before the experiment begins. The learner will not be shocked but will be in a separate room and will protest and shout out as if they are being shocked and will eventually stop responding at all. The experimenter will encourage the teacher to continue but if after four attempts to persuade the teacher to continue they still protest, the experiment will be discontinued. Before the teacher leaves the laboratory they will be debriefed and assured that the learner was not being shocked and is in fact fine. The learner will also be told that the experiment was actually testing obedience to authority.

Directions: Identify which of the following ethical criteria has been met for each of the following ethical guidelines. Check each box, that has been met, leave those that have not been met empty and write N/A for those that do not apply to this proposal.

Informed consent

Coercion

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Risk

Deception

Debriefing

Animal Research

If declined indicate

reason(s): _____

