Amy Chapman

Research Report #1

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Colby, A., Kohlberg, L., Gibbs, J., Lieberman, M., Fischer, K., & Saltzstein, H. D. (1983). A

longitudinal study of moral judgment. *Monographs of the society for research in child*

*development*, *48*(1-2), 1-124.

1. **Need.** Kohlberg’s initial study detailing moral development had been called into question by subsequent studies. It is important because it is the research which developed the stages of moral development.
2. **Purpose.** To validate Kohlberg’s stages of moral development using the Standard Issue Scoring model, which does not include stage 6 from Kohlberg’s initial research (1958).
3. **Sample.** 84 boys were the initial participants in the study. Of that number, only those who came to one or more of the interviews was included in the study; this resulted in 58 total participants. This limits generalizability because girls were not included.
4. **Method.** The study is a longitudinal, qualitative study, which is appropriate because Kohlberg’s theory requires analyzing participants’ answers to “dilemmas”. Participants were interviewed every four years for a total of six possible interviews. Their responses were evaluated using the Standard Issue Scoring model.
5. **Results.** Kohlberg’s second model of scoring, Standard Issue Scoring, was shown to be both reliable and valid in its assessment of the stages of moral judgment.
6. **Conclusions.** Validated five of six stages of moral development from Kohlberg’s earlier work (Standard Issue Scoring).
7. **Limitations.** This study is limited because the sample population did not include girls as participants.
8. **Implications.** In the future, studies should be (have been) done using girls as a sample set to ensure that the model works for both genders.