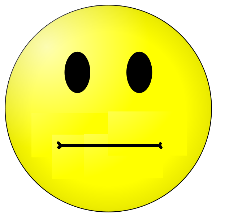
**KEY FOR ICONS USED WITHIN THE BOOKLET**

**The following Icons are used within this booklet to give additional guidance on the amount of information you need to cover in order to achieve the grade you are aspiring to.**



**MUST**

**This symbol indicates the amount and depth of information that needs to be covered in order to achieve a pass. Students learning this basic account of research and covering this basic level of evaluation would achieve a pass within the lower range of grades.**

 **SHOULD**

**This symbol indicates the amount and depth of information a student should learn in order to achieve a grade within the higher range. Students learning this detailed account of research and covering this reasonable level of evaluation, would achieve a pass within the higher range of grades.**

 **COULD**

**This symbol indicates where students can extend their learning by completing additional activities and gaining wider / deeper understanding of concepts and thorough critical evaluation. Students would be working at a high A grade level when covering the specification to this depth, and would increase the chances of achieving an A\* grade at the**

**end of the A level.**

**Social Influences : Conformity**

Social influence is the process by which an individual’s beliefs, attitudes or behaviours are adapted by the action or presence of those around them. We like to think that we act independently and we can identify when someone is trying to manipulate us but is this just an illusion?

**Conformity = A change in a person’s behaviour or opinions as a result of real or imagined pressure from a group of people.**

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| **Types of conformity**  **(Kelman 1958)** | **Description** | **Example** | **Research Evidence** |
| **Compliance** | When an individual will publicly conform to a behaviour or view of a group whilst privately still maintaining ones own opinion. It results in a superficial change that stops as soon as the group pressure stops. | If you are with a group of friends that support a particular football team, you may claim to also support that team and not reveal to them that you actually support a different football team. http://www.trbimg.com/img-537001d8/turbine/la-sp-premier-league-20140512 | * Demonstrated by Asch’s research as the majority of participants who conformed continued privately to trust their own perception and judgement, but changed their public behaviour by giving incorrect answers to avoid disapproval from other group members. |
| **Identification** | This occurs when an individual adjusts their opinions and behaviour to those of a group because they value the membership of that group. The beliefs are held both publicly and privately but are generally temporary and not maintained when individual leaves the group. | A group of students who spend time together at college may adopt a similar dress code and hobbies however, once they move to university they may change the way they dress as they no longer have that same sense of identity.  [dress_code_pic1](http://mail.livermore.k12.ca.us/~jackson/Graphics/dress_code_pic1.jpg) | * Supported by Zimbardo’s research as the participants embraced their roles as prisoners or guards by behaving in a certain way during the experiment. However, they did not continue in their roles once they left the experiment. |
| **Internalisation** | The process by which an individual converts their private view to match those of a group. These new beliefs or attitudes are held both publicly and privately, becoming part of a value system and are therefore not dependent on the presence of the group. | An individual may turn to religion for an alternative way of life, if the person loses contact with the source which influenced them initially to turn to religion and the new beliefs are still maintained then this is considered a true conversion. ghandi | * Supported by research by Sherif as participants truly believed the light had moved a different distance after hearing the judgements of others therefore internalising the new viewpoint privately, not just agreeing publicly. |



**Explanations of conformity**

Deutsch and Gerard (1955) proposed a dual process model that leads people to conform, it suggest there are two types of majority influence.

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| **Normative social influence** | **Informational social influence** |
| People conform in order to be liked and accepted by others. The best way to be accepted is to agree with them but this does not mean we truly agree with them, therefore an individual will publicly go along with the majority but still privately hold their own view. NSI is an emotional rather than cognitive process to seek social approval and avoid rejection. It may occur more powerfully when the group are important to us or in stressful situations when there is a greater need for social support.  An example would be wearing certain clothes to a party because you want to fit in and be liked rather than clothes that make you feel comfortable.  This may result in **Compliance** | People conform due to the basic human desire to be right. As individuals we like certainty and look to others to provide us with information about how to behave. This is most common in either new or ambiguous situations especially if we believe others have superior knowledge to ourselves. Abrams et al (1990) said we are influenced by others with similar characteristics to ourselves so we are more likely to internalise the opinions of friends. This type of social influence is likely to lead to long lasting beliefs or opinions.  An example would be starting a new school and looking to other students for an acceptable way to behave.      This may result in **Internalisation** |
| Evaluation:   * Informational social influence is supported by Lucas (2006) who asked students to give answers to mathematical problems that were either easy or more difficult. There was greater conformity to incorrect answers when they were difficult rather than easier which was most true for students who rated their mathematical ability as poor. This supports ISI as people conform when feeling uncertain about the correct answer.      * Normative Social influence is supported by research conducted by Asch as people gave a clearly wrong answer to a simple question because they did not want to feel the disapproval of the rest of the group. This supports NSI as people conformed to fit in and be accepted. * These explanations of conformity have been criticised because it suggests that these two types of conformity are separate and independent. It is suggested by Insko et al (1983) that the two compliment each other and in turn work together to affect levels of conformity, therefore they are not discrete processes as proposed by Deutsch & Gerrard. * Individual differences are not explained by NSI or ISI. Some people are less concerned with being liked than others therefore less affected by NSI. Some people have a greater need for affiliation and these people are more likely to conform. Individual differences also affect whether people conform due to ISI. | |

**Sample questions**

1. What is meant by social influence? (2 marks)
2. One type of conformity is internalisation. Explain what psychologists mean by the term internalisation in this context (2 marks)
3. Describe and evaluate informational social influence and normative social influence as explanations for conformity. Refer to evidence in your answer. (12 marks)

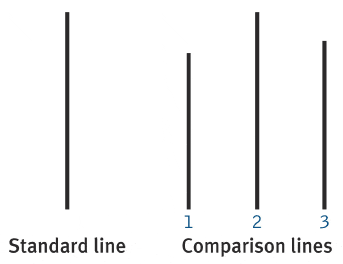
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**Research into conformity**

**Majority Influence**

Asch (1951)

**Aim:** to examine whether participants would yield to majority social influence and give incorrect answers in a situation where the correct answers were always obvious.



**Procedure:**

* Seven male students were shown two cards, the test card showed one vertical line and the other card showed three vertical lines of different lengths.
* The participants were required to call out in turn which of the three lines was the same length as the standard line. The correct answer was always obvious.
* There was one genuine participant who called out his answer last but one; all other participants were accomplices of the experimenter.
* Accomplices gave unanimous wrong answers on 12 on the 18 trials, which were referred to as the critical trials. A total of 50 male college students as naïve, genuine participants were used in Asch’s first study.

**Findings:**

* In 32% of the critical trials the participants conformed to the unanimous incorrect answers.
* 75% of the participants conformed at least once.
* 25% of the participants never conformed; these participants were generally confident in their judgement and managed to resist the pressure of the unanimous majority.
* 5% conformed to all 12 wrong answers
* A control group had an error rate of only 0.04%
* Post experimental interviews were carried out, most yielded because they could not bear to be in the minority, as they risked being ridiculed by the others. However, some individuals conformed because they believed their judgement to be distorted thus their perception of the line was inaccurate therefore they yielded to majority view.

**Conclusion:** There is strong group pressure to conform, especially when the group is a unanimous majority. After the experiment Asch carried out some interviews to investigate the reasons why people conform:

* Some people experienced normative social influence therefore feeling compelled to accept the majorities view in fear on rejection.
* Others doubted their own judgement, experiencing informational pressures.



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| http://www.tucrs.utulsa.edu/images/smiley.jpgYou **must** be able to identify and explain at least **two** evaluation points briefly |
| You **should** be able to fully explain approximately four evaluation points in detail |
| http://www.rockinwproductions.com/images/smiley-face.jpgYou **could** discuss a range of evaluation points in depth, making links to research and or explanations |

Evaluation of Asch’s research

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| Positive | Negative |
| This study clearly demonstrates conformity due to NSI as it was a simple, unambiguous task compared to previous research studies where the measurement could genuinely be misinterpreted. | The sample was limited as all the participants were male American college students. As this is an individualistic society, collectivist societies may differ in their rates of conformity and women may also be more conformist therefore the findings may not generalise to other cultures and genders. |
| This study gives insight into why some people do not act on their own values and beliefs at times and how important it is for people to feel socially accepted. This has useful application in understanding events within society. | The time and the place when the research was carried out may have affected the findings. In 1950’s America a left wing viewpoint typically resulted in a “witch hunt” against them (McCarthyism) resulting in greater conformity. Perrin and Spencer (1980) were unable to replicate Asch’s findings in the UK using engineering students which may be due to the different era or the type of participant. |
| The experimental method enabled control of extraneous variables such as timings, order and number of confederates. | The situation was artificial which may result in demand characteristics and the group was not typical of a real life situation with no major consequences for not conforming therefore findings may not generalise to the real world. |

**Factors affecting conformity**

Situational variables are features of an environment that affect the degree to which individuals yield to group pressures.

* The size of the majority

Conformity rates increase as the size of the majority increases but after a certain point further increases in size have no effect. Asch (1956) found with only one confederate conformity was zero, 13% with two confederates and 32% with three. Adding further confederates beyond this did not effect the rate of conformity. Bond & Smith (1996) supports this, finding conformity peaks with about four or five confederates. Gerard et al (1968) questioned these findings however stating conformity rates do rise as more confederates are added although the rate of increase declines with each additional confederate.

* Unanimity

Conformity rates drop when majority influence is not unanimous. The important factor seems to be the reduction in the

Majority’s agreement rather than an individual being given support for their opinions. Asch found if one confederate went

against the other confederates, conformity dropped from around 32% to 5.5% but if the rebel went against both the other

confederates and the real participant, conformity still dropped to 9%.

* Task difficulty

Greater conformity rates are seen when task difficulty increases as the right answer becomes less obvious. This means

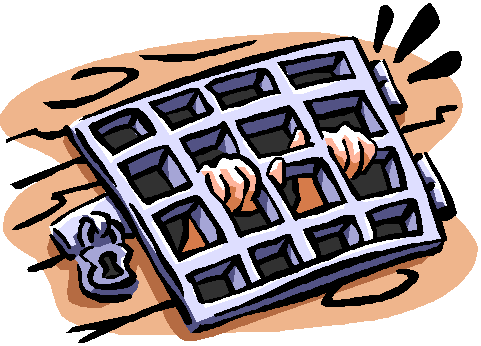
that individuals will look to others more for guidance as to what the correct response is, suggesting that informational

social influence is the dominant force. Asch increased task difficulty by making the comparison lines similar to each

other, finding that when he did so participants were more likely to conform to wrong answers thus demonstrating the

effect of task difficulty on conformity.

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**Conformity to Social Roles Zimbardo et al (1973)** **Aim:** To examine how readily people would conform to new roles, by observing how quickly people adopt the roles of the guards or prisoners in a role play exercising simulated prison life.



**Procedure:**

* To take part in a two week simulation study of prison life, healthy male volunteers were paid $15 a day to take part. They were randomly allocated to either a prisoner or guard.
* The 9 prisoners were arrested without warning at their homes by police officers. They were then blindfolded and taken to the Stanford university basement (prison) where the experiment took place.
* Once arriving they were stripped and sprayed with disinfectant then given a smock to wear. They were allocated a number which, they would be referred to from then on.
* Three guards were allocated to a shift; they wore khaki uniform, dark glasses and carried a wooden baton and were not permitted to be physically aggressive with the prisoners.



**Findings:**

* The guards conformed to their perceived roles with such strength that the study had to be discontinued after 6 days, even though the plan was to conduct it for two weeks. The guards put the prisoners through a vast amount of humiliation and harassment.
* Prisoners rebelled against the guards after two days and guards controlled the rebellion using fire extinguishers.
* Depression and anxiety were experienced by some of the prisoners, one prisoner had to be released after the first day, 2 more on the fourth day and by the sixth day all prisoners were submissive to the guards.

**Conclusion:**

* The explanation for why the participants’ conformed is due to situational factors, the type of conformity being identification. The prison environment was an important factor in the creation of the guard’s cruel behaviour towards the prisoners as none of the participants that acted as guards illustrated sadistic tendencies before the study.
* A strong stereotypical role such as a prison guard leads to a high level of conformity demonstrating the power of social roles.
* The attitudes and behaviours are shaped by the roles people play. It demonstrates that if a six day experiment can alter the behaviour of participants in a study then the roles we play in real life must have a significantly higher impact on shaping our behaviour.



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| http://www.tucrs.utulsa.edu/images/smiley.jpgYou **must** be able to identify and explain at least **two** evaluation points briefly |
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| http://www.rockinwproductions.com/images/smiley-face.jpgYou **could** discuss a range of evaluation points in depth, making links to research and or explanations |

Evaluation of Zimbardo’s Research

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| Positive Evaluation | Negative Evaluation |
| Demonstrates the power of social roles which may help explain real world events involving brutal regimes and have practical application by influencing prison reform. | This may be due to demand characteristics as the participants may have behaved in a way they thought the experimenter wanted them to rather than a result of the situation. |
| Some control of variables such as selecting emotionally stable individuals and randomly assigning them to roles of prisoner and guard, increasing the internal validity of the study. | Individual differences are not accounted for as not all guards behaved brutally, only approximately one third. Some rarely exerted control over prisoners. The conclusion that prisoners were conforming to social roles may therefore be overstated and dispositional influences may have played a large part. |
| In response to the criticism of demand characteristics, Zimbardo insists the situation was real to the participants and that 90% of their conversation was about prison life. Prisoner 416 said the prison was real but run by psychologists not the government. | This study has received many criticisms regarding ethics, including lack of fully informed consent and protection of participants. Participants were not aware that they were going to be arrested at home and suffered distress and humiliation throughout the study. The guards had to face up to their sadistic behaviour towards the prisoners and that this may have caused long term psychological harm. However, interviews that were carried out after the study showed this was not necessarily the case. |



**Sample questions**

1. One variable that affects conformity is unanimity. Explain what is meant by unanimity in relation to conformity. (2 marks)
2. Explain what is meant by the term social roles. Use an example to explain the concept. (2 marks)
3. Apart from unanimity, identify two variables that have been shown to affect conformity. Briefly outline how each of these variables affects conformity. Refer to evidence in your answer. (6 marks)
4. Describe Asch’s study of conformity. Include details of what he did and what he found. (6 marks)
5. Describe and evaluate Asch’s research into conformity (12 marks)

5. Discuss research into Conformity to social roles (12 marks)

Obedience to Authority 

**Conformity v Obedience**

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| **Obedience** | **Conformity** |
| The person giving the order is an authority figure of higher status than the person receiving the order. They have the power to exert consequences. | The majority are of the same status as the person conforming but exert influence on an individual by the power of numbers ie due to them being a majority group. |
| Involves no more than public compliance with private attitude left unchanged | Conformity might involve a more long lasting and fundamental change to ones beliefs or attitudes, if the individual identifies with the group or internalises the opinions of the majority. |
| Conscious – people who obey authority figures are usually well aware when they are obeying such a figure. | Unconscious – individuals may be unaware that they have been subjected to conformity pressures and may disagree with the idea that they have been influenced by others to change their views or behaviour. |

**Obedience:** This is the compliance with an order from another individual to carry out a specific action. Much of the interest within obedience stemmed from the extreme obedience that took place in Nazi, Germany. At the time when Stanley Milgram decided to carry out his research in to obedience, the trial of Adolf Eichmann prominent Nazi was taking place. He presented with the case that he was an ordinary man just obeying the orders of his authority.



Research into Obedience

**Milgram (1963)**

**Aim:** To investigate whether ordinary Americans would obey an unjust order from a person in authority to inflict pain on another individual.

**Procedure:**

* Carried out on 40 male volunteers who were each paid $4.50 and deceived into believing that they were giving electric shocks. They were told that the purpose of the study was to examine the role of punishment in learning.
* The genuine participant always played the role of the teacher and the confederate played the part of the learner whose task was to memorize pairs of words. The learner would have to indicate his choice using a system of lights. The teacher was sat in front of a shock generator, which had 30 levers, each which indicated a different level of shock. Every time the learner made a mistake the teacher would have to administer an electric shock. The genuine participant (teacher) had to watch the learner being strapped into a chair with electrodes attached to his arms.
* Initially the learner answered correctly, however, then they began to make mistakes at which time he was given an electric shock by the teacher.
* The shocks started at 15 volts which increased at 15 volt increments all the way to 450 volts. If the teacher was reluctant to give the electric shock the experimenter would encourage them to continue (“Please continue, Please go on”).
* There was no actual electric shock administered.
* The study was continued until the teacher refused to continue with giving the electric shocks or until 450 volts was reached and received four times by the learner.
* Once the experiment was over the participants were debriefed and then taken to meet the learner confederate.

**Findings:**

* All 40 participants went to at least 300 volts on the shock generator.
* A further 65% went to 450 volts on the shock generator.
* A majority of the participants found the procedure very stressful and wanted to stop. Some of the participants showed extreme signs of anxiety and even though they dissented verbally, they still continued as the experimenter prodded them to continue giving the shock.

**Conclusion:**

* Under some circumstances, most people will obey an order that goes against their conscience
* People can potentially lose their ability to sympathise, show compassion and morality when occupying a subordinate position within a dominant hierarchy, resulting in blind obedience.
* The pressure to obey powerful authority may explain atrocities such as those carried out in World War II. Therefore, supporting the notion that crimes such as torture or murder of innocent people are a result of situational forces and not the underlying disposition of those who carry out such evil acts.

**Milgram’s Variations: Situational variables** 

**Proximity (3 variations):** When the teacher and learner were in the same room the obedience rate dropped from 65% to 40%. When the teacher had to force the learner’s hand onto an “electroshock plate” when incorrect answers were given, the rate dropped to 30%. If the experimenter gave instructions by telephone from a different room, obedience fell to 20.5 %.

**Location:** When conducting the study in a “run down” building rather than the university, obedience fell to 47.5%, still reasonably high although lower than the original.

**Uniform:** The experimenter originally wore a grey lab coat as a symbol of authority. When the experimenter was “called away” in one variation so that an ordinary person in everyday clothes took over, obedience dropped to 20%.

**Evaluation of Milgram’s research**

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| **http://www.tucrs.utulsa.edu/images/smiley.jpgYou must be able to identify and explain one positive and one negative evaluation point** |
| **You should be able to fully explain approximately four evaluation points in detail** |
| **http://www.rockinwproductions.com/images/smiley-face.jpgYou could discuss a range of evaluation points in depth, making links to research and or explanations** |
|  |
| * **Reliability**: The original study took place in a highly controlled environment with the use of standardized procedures to ensure the participants were exposed to similar conditions. This made the study highly reliable. He then systematically altered one variable at a time to see what effect it would have on the level of obedience. All the other procedures and variables were kept the same as the study was replicated over and over again with more than 1000 participants in total. * **Ethical issues: 1. Deception / informed consent**: Participants were told the study was about the effects of punishment on learning and that Mr Wallace was receiving shocks therefore participants could not give informed consent, they volunteered without knowing the true purpose of the procedure.   However Milgram claims deception was necessary for natural behaviour and he did debrief the participants. He also attempted to gain presumptive consent in the community prior to the study.  **2. Right to withdraw**: Attempts to withdraw were met with verbal prods encouraging them to continue.  However Milgram said they could withdraw as 35% did exercise this option.  **3. Psychological harm**: Participants were put into an extremely stressful situation, which may have led to psychological damage, 3 participants suffered seizures.  However afterwards only 2% had regrets about being involved and 74% thought they had learned something useful about themselves. They were given a thorough debriefing and also visited by an independent psychiatrist a year later to examine the potential psychological damage, no evidence of psychological harm was found. Milgram claimed that it was the findings of the study that upset people not his procedure, if participants had not continued shocking it would not have been deemed unethical and nobody could have predicted the results.   * **Internal validity:** Orne and Holland (1968) argued that Milgram’s research lacked internal validity as participants knew the shocks were not real and behaved the way they did to please the experimenter. However Milgram argued that the participants showed extreme signs of distress therefore must have believed the shocks were real and 75% of the participants in post study interviews said they believed them to be real. Perry (2012) however traced as many original participants as she could and claimed the true figure was only about 50%. * **External validity:** It has been claimed that the findings of the study lack population and ecological validity.   **Gender bias**: Sheridan and King (1972) however used both male and female participants to give real electric  shocks to a puppy (although deceptively mild) when responding incorrectly to a command, increasing by 15  volts each time. 54% of males and 100% of females obeyed up to an apparent 450 volts showing Milgram’s  study was androcentric as females can actually be more obedient.  **Cultural bias:** Milgram’s study only used American participants so findings may not generalise to other  cultures. Meeus & Raaijimakers (1986) found the highest recorded obedience level of 90% in Spanish  participants and Kilham & Mann (1974) found 28% among Australians. This demonstrates obedience levels  reflect cultural attitudes to authority. Mantell (1971) found a rate of 80% in Germany.  **Ecological validity:** Milgram’s research has been criticised as being unrepresentative of real life however  Hofling (1966) and Bickman (1974) demonstrate high levels of obedience to authority in naturalistic situations.  Research carried out by Bickman (1974) demonstrated the power of uniform by carrying out a study in New  York on passers by. The passers by were ordered to pick up rubbish, stand on the other side of the bus stop  sign or lend money to a stranger for a parking metre. The order was given by the experimenter who was either  dressed in street clothes or a security guard’s uniform. It was found that passers by were more likely to obey if  the experimenter was wearing uniform indicating legitimate authority. This supports Milgram’s research in a  naturalistic environment. Hofling et al (1966) provides further evidence.   * **The “Obedience alibi”:** Milgram supports a situational explanation of obedience. Mandel (1998) criticised this as making an excuse for evil behaviour. It is offensive to survivors of the holocaust to suggest that Nazi’s were just obeying orders and were victims of situational factors beyond their control. * **Historical validity**: It has been claimed that Milgram’s research is only relevant in 1960’s society however   Burger (2009) adapted the procedure to diminish ethical issues and was able to replicate Milgram’s findings**.** |

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**Explanations for Obedience**

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| **Situational factors** | **Description** | **Evaluation** |
| Legitimate authority  005_cartoon_police_01 | Most societies have a hierarchical order, with those who have social power instructing others who are subordinate to them within society. We obey legitimate authority because we trust them and they have the power to punish us. From an early age people experience examples of social roles relating to master and servant relationships such as parent-child, teacher-student etc when we learn those is social authority should be obeyed. | * When Milgrams research into obedience was carried out in an office block there was a decline in obedience levels from the original study which was carried out in a University. This was due to the fact that the power and authority of the experimenter was diminished by setting the experiment outside the academic context. * Bickman’s research showed that people are more likely to obey those in a uniform as it is a visible symbol of authority. * Doesn’t account for individual differences, the time frame and cultural differences. Some people are more likely to obey than others due to their up bringing or culture.   Mantell (1971) carried out a replication of Milgram’s study in Germany and found an 85% obedience rate. Alternately, Mann (1974) carried out the same study in Australia where people are more likely to question authority and found only a 28% obedience rate.   * It is also considered that people are less obedient now than they were 50 years ago. |
| The Agentic state  220px-Defense | When an individual has control and acts according to their own wishes, they are said to be in an **autonomous state** and see themselves as responsible for their actions. However when they obey an authority figure they give up some free will and enter an **agentic state** where they see themselves as an agent of the authority figure giving the order. It is therefore the authority figure who is seen as responsible for the consequences of the individual’s actions. In this way they may obey orders that go against their moral code as they do not see themselves as responsible. | * In Milgram’s variation where the experimenter was out of the room, obedience fell to 20.5% suggesting they were in the autonomous state without the presence of the experimenter whereas in the original study they no longer felt responsible if the authority figure was in the room with them. * It is unclear at what point an individual moves into an agentic state and no longer acts in a voluntary way but is no longer responsible for their actions. For example, at what point does a soldier decide, if he does that he is not responsible for his actions (Killing another during war) and take an agentic shift into an agentic state. |
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| **Dispositional factors** | **Description** | **Evaluation** |
| The authoritarian personality  authoritarian | Individuals with an authoritarian personality have a tendency to be obedient. A psychologist called Adorna carried out research in America on over 2000 white middle class students during the 1940’s and 50’s. He used interview techniques and projective testing and found that children who were exposed to a strict upbringing and physical punishment were more obedient individuals. | * Demonstrates that it’s not necessarily the situation which leads to obedient behaviour as in Milgram’s study it was found that scores on a test of authoritarianism were higher for individuals who were fully obedient and went to 450 volts. * It does not take into account other personality types. |

**Sample questions**

1. Explain what is meant by the term obedience. (2 marks)
2. Explain how obedience and conformity differ from one another (4 marks)
3. Milgram investigated situational variables affecting obedience to authority. Identify two of these variables and explain how each of them affects obedience. (3 + 3)
4. Give one criticism of the agentic state explanation for obedience. Refer to Milgram’s research in your answer. (4 marks)
5. Milgram provided situational explanations for obedience. Describe and evaluate two situational variables that have been shown by Milgram to affect obedience to authority. (12 marks)
6. Outline and evaluate one or more explanations of obedience. (12 marks)

**Explanations of resistance to social influence**

**Resistance to social influence** refers to the ability of people to withstand the social pressure to conform to the majority or to obey authority. This ability to withstand social pressure is influenced by both situational and dispositional factors.

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| **Social Support friends-holding-hands-clipart-tinh-ban-19** | |
| Description | Evaluation |
| This can help people resist conformity if there are others present who are not conforming. The person not conforming does not have to be correct, simply the fact that somebody else is not conforming enables a person to follow their own conscience. The non-conformist acts as a model.  The same occurs when resisting obedience, it is easier for people to disobey when another individual firstly disobeys. Disobedient models reduce the unanimity of the group making it easier for others to act independently. They model how to be disobedient and show that it is possible. | * Allen & Levine (1971) found that conformity decreased when there was one dissenter in a replication of the Asch study. This occurred even if the dissenter wore thick glasses and said he had difficulty with vision, therefore having social support enables someone to be free from the pressure of the group. * Asch (1956) found that if there is a dissenter who answers correctly from the start, conformity drops from 32% to 5.5% but if the confederate only starts to dissent later in the study, conformity drops to 8.5%. Early social support is therefore more effective than support received later. * In one variation of Milgram the obedience rate dropped from 65% to 10% when the participant was joined by two disobedient confederates. Disobedient models can be seen as a form of conformity as they create a group norm for individuals to follow suit. |

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| **Locus of Control**  **Internal Locus of Control**  **External Locus of Control** | |
| Description | Evaluation |
| This is a personality dimension identified by Rotter (1966). It refers to the extent to which people perceive themselves as being in control of their own lives. Locus of control is measured on a scale of which there are two extremes:  **Internal Locus of Control:**  Those with Internal locus of control believe that things happendue to their individual choices and decisions which they then act upon. They see themselves as in control of situations therefore believe they are free to either conform or not through their own choice which makes them more likely to resist social pressure. People with an internal locus of control accept responsibility for their actions but also believe that their actions can bring about change in society. Those with ILC are more likely to become leaders than to follow others. They may therefore actively participate in attempts to bring about change, which could involve some degree of sacrifice or sometimes personal risk e.g. becoming a vegetarian to stop animals being slaughtered. Those with strong internal locus of control believe they have a significant influence over events that happen in their life, for example, receiving a promotion at work because they have worked hard. Therefore they believe that what happens to them is a consequence of their own behaviour and strive to succeed in stressful situations.  **External Locus of Control:**  Those with strong external locus of control believe that outside factors have a significant influence over events that happen in their life e.g. star signs, fate and luck. Therefore, receiving a promotion at work is because the boss is in a good mood that specific day. They believe that things that happen to them are largely uncontrollable and face stressful situations with a fatalistic and passive attitude. Things will turn out a certain way regardless of their actions. | * Holland (1967) repeated the Milgram study and measured whether participants were internals or externals. He found 37% of internals did not continue to the highest shock level whereas only 23% of externals did not continue, therefore increasing the validity of the LOC explanation. * Oliner and Oliner (1988) used an interview method to study two groups of non-Jewish people who had lived through the Holocaust in Nazi Germany. They compared 406 people who had protected and rescued Jews from Nazis with 126 who had not. The results showed that those who were rescuers scored higher on measures of social responsibility and had scores that demonstrated an internal locus of control. This illustrates that independent behaviour is more likely to be carried out by those with internal locus of control, as they disobeyed the Nazis. * Moghaddam (1998) found that Japanese people conform more easily than Americans and have more of an external LOC. This suggests that differences in resistance to social influence across cultures can be explained by differences in LOC. * Williams and Warchal (1981) carried out a study on 30 university students using Asch’s experimental paradigm. They were also assessed using Rotter’s locus of control scale. They found that those who conformed the most were significantly less assertive but did not score differently on a locus of control scale. This suggests that assertiveness is more important than locus of control with regards to conformity. * Twenge et al (2004) analysed data from American obedience studies over a 40 year period. Over this time people had become more resistant to obedience but also more external. If resistance was linked to internal LOC, we would expect people to have become more internal. * The role of LOC in resisting social influence may be exaggerated as Rotter (1982) states that LOC only influences novel situations. In familiar situations we tend to repeat our previous behaviour whether internal LOC or not. |
| You **must** be able to identify and explain at least **two** evaluation points briefly  ( possibility one strength and one weakness) | |
| http://www.tucrs.utulsa.edu/images/smiley.jpgYou **should** be able to fully explain at least **four** evaluation points in detail  (one strength and one weakness) | |
| http://www.rockinwproductions.com/images/smiley-face.jpgYou **could** discuss a range of evaluation points in depth, making links to research and or explanations  See Extension Material | |

**Sample questions**

1. In the context of resistance to social influence, explain what is meant by the term social support (2 marks)

2. Identify and explain an everyday example of how social support could lead to resistance to authority (2 marks)

3. Outline locus of control as an explanation of resistance to social influence (4 marks)

4. Describe and evaluate two explanations of resistance to social influence. Refer to evidence in your answer. (12 marks)

**Minority Influence**

**Minority Influence:** A form of social influence in which a minority of people, or one individual, persuade others to adopt their beliefs, attitudes or behaviours. It leads to internalisation or conversion in which private attitudes are changed as well as public behaviours.

**The processes by which minorities influence society**

1. **Consistency:** this increases the amount of interest from other people. This may be consistency within the minority group (synchronic consistency) or consistency over time (diachronic consistency) where they have all been saying the same thing for some time. Consistency makes other people start to rethink their own views.

**Moscovici et al (1969)**

Procedure

* Ps were tested in groups of 6
* Asked to judge the colour of 36 slides (All were BLUE)
* Two experimental conditions: **Consistent Minority** & **Inconsistent Minority** and a control group

**Inconsistent minority**

* 2 of 6 participants were confederates
* In 24 trials they judged the slides to be GREEN. In 12 trails they judged the slides as BLUE

**Consistent minority**

* 2 of 6 participants were confederates
* In all trials the confederates judged the slides to be GREEN

A **control group** had no confederates

Findings

**Consistent condition**

* Genuine participants judged slides to be GREEN = 8.4% of trials
* 32% of genuine participants judged a slide to be GREEN at least once

**Inconsistent condition**

* Genuine participants judged slides to be GREEN = 1.3% of trials

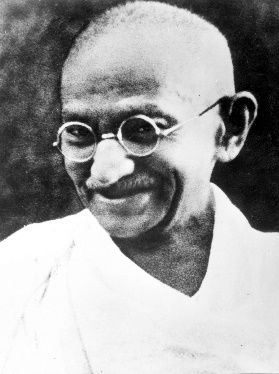
**Control Group** judged slides as GREEN on 0.25%

trials

Conclusion

* It is important that those in a minority behave consistently in order to influence a majority to change its viewpoint
* Inconsistent minorities lack any real influence on majorities. Their opinions are viewed as groundless.

1. **Commitment:** It is important for the leaders of the minority/new movement to be seen to be sacrificing some aspect of their lifestyle in order to demonstrate how important the ideals are. In this way they are not acting out of self-interest. Sometimes they will engage in extreme activities which demonstrate great personal risk. This makes the majority group pay even more attention as it shows the minority must be firmly committed to their viewpoint so they deserve others to at least consider their perspective. This is called the augmentation principle.



The above processes explain how minority groups in the real world have exerted influence such as the work of Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. Both demonstrated commitment by giving up comfortable lives for their respective causes. They also gave consistent persuasive arguments, acting on behalf of their own race, expressing what was at that time a minority viewpoint. For example in 1930 Muhatma Ghandi and 78 volunteers began a protest against the salt tax that had been introduced by the British. Just three weeks later, over five million people followed his example and broke an unfair law. This ultimately led to British colonial power being removed from India.

1. **Flexibility:** Although consistency is important, minority groups must not appear to be unbending, rigid and dogmatic. Just repeating a message without reflecting on others beliefs is counterproductive. Minorities need to be prepared to adapt their point of view and accept reasonable and valid counter arguments. They need to balance between consistency and flexibility.

**Nemeth (1986)** created groups of 3 participants and 1 confederate who had to decide how much compensation to pay to the victim of a ski lift accident. When the confederate, acting as a consistent minority, argued for a low amount and refused to change his position, he had no effect on the majority. When however he compromised a little and moved to offering a slightly higher amount, the majority changed their opinion to a lower amount. This shows how minorities need to be flexible to be persuasive while at the same time questions the importance of consistency.

**Mugny & Papastamou (1982)** asked participants questions about responsibility for pollution. They were also exposed to a minority’s extreme views on how to control pollution. When the minority refused to budge from their opinion they were not persuasive however when they appeared flexible by compromising, they were seen as less extreme, co-operative and reasonable and were more persuasive in changing majority opinions.

**Sample questions**

1. Explain what is meant by the term minority influence. (2 marks)
2. Psychologists believe that minority influence involves consistency, commitment and flexibility. Explain what is meant by each of these factors in relation to obedience (3 marks)
3. Describe and evaluate research into minority influence. (12 marks)

**The Role of Social Influence Processes in Social Change**

**Social influence** is the process by which individuals and groups change each other’s attitudes and behaviours.

**Social change** occurs when whole societies rather than just individuals adopt new attitudes, beliefs and ways of doing things eg gay rights, environmental issues.

Minority influence is the main driving force for social change. Minority viewpoints slowly win the majority over to what will become new social norms. Social change can be positive such as the increased rights for women that developed in western cultures through the 1900’s but can also be negative such as the adoption by society of eugenic beliefs which led to mass extermination of whole groups of people such as that performed by the Nazis. Minority influence changes attitudes and behaviour over time, incurring a strong, long-lasting form of conformity involving fundamental changes in belief systems. Individuals direct their thinking at understanding why the minority hold a particular viewpoint and conversion to the minority view then takes place. New ideas and behaviours become adopted as mainstream practices. At a certain point the minority view becomes that of the mainstream and the majority will begin to conform through compliance. For more permanent social

change to occur, more people will need to conform to the new viewpoint through identification involving a change in their belief systems. As social change is generally a slow gradual process of cryptoamnesia it allows for change to occur in a manner that is not too disruptive to social order. Rapid change would cause conflict within society that could be very harmful in the short term, the slowness of the process therefore allows for the new ideas to be carefully considered by the majority of society to ensure they are suitable.



**Eg Greenpeace** started in Canada in the early 1970’s. They were originally ridiculed and subjected to legal action but slowly over time through minority influence changed more and more people’s belief systems so finally becoming the mainstream, legitimate voice for environmental issues.

**Knowledge gained from conformity research:** In a variation of Asch’s research the power of dissent was highlighted as when one confederate gave the correct answers, it broke the power of the majority, encouraging others to dissent. This has the potential to lead to social change. Some health campaigns use normative social influence by providing information on what others are doing eg preventing young people from taking up smoking by telling them that most other young people do not smoke.

(+) Nolan et al (2008) investigated whether social influence processes led to a reduction in energy consumption in a community. They hung messages on the front doors of houses in San Diego every week for one month. The message said most residents were trying to reduce their energy usage. In a control condition, some residents had a different message that just asked them to save energy but made no reference to other people’s behaviour. Significant decreases in usage were found in the first group showing social change can occur through normative social influence.

**Knowledge gained from obedience research:** Milgram’s research clearly demonstrates the importance of disobedient role models. In addition the process of **gradual commitment** can be used to create social change by making people obey a small instruction following which it gets harder to resist obeying instructions and people gradually move towards a new kind of behaviour.

**Sample questions**

1. In the context of social influence, explain what is meant by social change. (2 marks)
2. For many years, drinking alcohol and then driving was something that many more people did. Over time this behaviour has come to be seen as less and less acceptable and is now much less common than it used to be. Using your knowledge of social influence, explain how this social change came about. (4 marks)
3. Describe how social influence processes contribute to social change. (6 marks)
4. Discuss the role of social influence processes in social change (12 marks)

Extension Material



**A Further Study into conformity**

The Emergence of Group Norms: Sherif (1935)

**[](http://www.baro.co.nz/IMAGES/baro-Hero-SQC.jpg)Aim:** To investigate the emergence of group norms using the autokinetic effect.

**Procedure:** The participants were placed in a totally dark room and told to watch a pin point of light and report how far it moved.

Condition one: involved Sherif asking participants to judge how far the light appeared to move on a number of trials in the room by themselves.

Condition two: groups of participants were put in the dark room, 2 or 3 at a time, and asked to agree on a judgment.

**Findings:**

* Condition one: when students were in the room on their own Sherif found that they soon established their own individual *norms* for the judgment—usually 2 to 6 inches. In other words, when given many opportunities (trials) to judge the movement of the light, they settled on a distance of 2-6 inches and became consistent in making this judgment from trial to trial.
* Condition two: Sherif noted a tendency to compromise. People who usually made an estimate like 6 inches soon made smaller judgments like 4 inches. Those who saw less movement, such as 2 inches, soon increased their judgments to about 4 inches. People changed to more resemble the others in the group.
* Sherif's participants were not aware of this social influence. When Sherif asked subjects directly, "Were you influenced by the judgments of other persons during the experiments," most denied it. However, when participants were tested one at a time, later, most now conformed to the group judgment they recently made. A participant who previously settled on an estimate of 2 inches or 6 inches was more likely (after the group experience) to say the light was moving about 4 inches. These participants had been changed by the group experience, whether they realized it or not. They had increased their conformity to *group norm*s even though the light never moved!!! It a perceptual illusion called the **autokinetic phenomenon**.

**Conclusion:**

* The study showed that when people are faced with an ambiguous situation, people will look to others in the group for guidance, that is that they experience informational social influence. Once a group norm has been established people will continue to use it when they later make individual judgements.
* Sherif's experiment showed group norms are established through interaction of individuals and the levelling-off of extreme opinions.

Evaluation of Sherif’s Research

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| --- | --- |
| Positive Evaluation | Negative Evaluation |
| The study illustrates the impact of group situations when individuals are faced with making a decision about a situation that is ambiguous. | May lack ecological validity –The experiment was carried out in a lab based setting , which questions whether the results would have been the same if the study was carried out in a more natural setting. Further research would need to be carried out to investigate this dilemma. |
| The findings are an example of informational social influence as people are more likely to conform because they have a desire to be right. | Demand characteristics – because the participants had already given their own opinion individually, when they were asked to agree on a judgement they thought they were expected to change their opinion to conform but may still have actually believed in their first judgement about the light. |

Additional Factors affecting conformity

* The importance of time

Conformity rates vary across time along with individual differences. The way in which Asch’s research was carried out and the findings may have been a reflection of the time in which it was conducted ie the 1950’s. During the time when Asch’s study was conducted there was strong pressure to conform regarding the social and historical aspects within America.

* The importance of place and culture.

It has been found that there is a high variation across cultures in conformity rates.

One explanation for this is individualistic and collectivist cultures. Those within

individualistic cultures such as the UK and the US value independence and one’s ability to make their own decisions, rather than being influenced by those around you. On the other hand, those within collectivist cultures will look to fit in with the views of other people and value the attachment to social groups and interdependence.

* The importance of modern technology

Research in computer mediated conformity compared to face to face communication has been carried out as it is thought that people are less likely to conform it they can’t see each other.

**Further Analysis and Evaluation of Obedience Research**

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| --- |
| * **Obedience in field studies:** Milgram’s research was conducted in a laboratory setting and it has been thought that obedience in a real life setting would be different. However, Studies into obedience in real life settings have also found high levels of obedience. In addition to Bickman’s study, Hofling et al (1966) is another example of a study on obedience in the field that supports Milgram. The study looked at nurse’s response to an order from a phoney doctor. The doctor (experimenter) phoned the hospital requesting the nurses (22) to check for a drug called Astroten in the drugs cupboard and then administer 20 milligrams to a patient on the ward. This order broke many hospital rules. Firstly the nurses were not allowed to take orders from an unknown doctor and or take orders over the phone but would have to wait for the doctor to visit the ward and sign the prescription. Secondly, the dose instructed by the unknown doctor was twice that of the maximum dosage and as the drug was fictional it was not on the ward list. From the 22 nurses studied, 21 were prepared to obey the order given. Research on obedience in the field has demonstrated a significant amount of advantages as well as disadvantages. The likelihood of demand characteristics is minimised as individuals will not be aware that they are taking part in an experiment. In addition, research that is of high ecological validity is significantly more likely to be produced. However, ethical dilemmas often arise in research carried out in the field, as it is impossible to ask participants for consent or debrief them afterwards. * **The consequence of a situational perspective:** Research by Milgram and Zimbardo has illustrated that when individuals are put in specific situations and are put under certain pressure extraordinary things can happen to people’s behaviour. Berkowitz argues that it is ‘the situationalist view of evil’, which suggests that evil acts are due to the situation rather than personal choice and responsibility of the individual. This has however led to the obedience alibi, implying that those who have committed war crimes have alibi’s because any ordinary person could commit a terrible crime under social pressure. David Mandel (1998) suggests that this is a justification for their behaviour as they were just obeying an order. However, it could be suggested that it justifies the brutality of devastations such as the Holocaust and is therefore offensive to those who survived. * **The validity of obedience research:** Orne and Holland (1968) argued that Milgram’s research lacked internal and external validity, that the participants were only going along with the act and the situation within Milgram’s study was nothing like that of a situation experienced in everyday life. The participants should have questioned why there was a need for a teacher, as why could the experimenter himself not administer the shocks if the study was really about punishment and learning. Milgram suggested that the participants showed extreme signs of distress on the film footage. However, Orne and Holland argued that they behaved in this way to please the experimenter. |

**A Further Explanation of Obedience**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Gradual Commitment  MPj04225330000[1] | This is characterised by commitment in small stages. In Milgram’s study the participants were required to give the learner shocks at only 15 volt increments each time the learner made a mistake. Therefore, each action by the participant was a small step beyond the previous action. This made it hard for them to back out at any time and they became locked into obedience in small stages. If they had to increase the voltage by a significantly higher increment they probably wouldn’t have obeyed but because they committed in small stages. Through this technique Milgram established a basis for obedience, it was known as the “foot in the door technique”. | * This explains how Milgram’s study worked so effectively and can also be applied to other situations as it illustrated that by getting individuals to commit to something but through small requests and gradually increasing the demand they are more likely to obey. * Individual Differences - Does not explain why some people obey straight away as it suggests that people need to be convinced or reassured but this is not always the case. |

**Further explanations of Independent Behaviour**

**Resisting Pressure to Conform**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Prior Commitment** | **Time to think and find social support** |
| The fear of being perceived as indecisive encourages people to stick to their original decisions. Therefore once an individual has committed themselves to an opinion publicly they are less likely to change their opinion than if their first opinion was held privately.   * Illustrates how other people perceive you, is very important to human beings. The fear of being indecisive results in the resistance of conformity rather than strong beliefs or opinions. * Individual differences – some may not be bothered what others think of them and change their mind or not regardless. | If an individual is given time to think about the situation that they are in and are potentially able to find an ally to build their confidence. They will be more likely to resist the pressure of being swept along by the social norm present. Aronson (1999) suggests that the best way to stop ourselves being swept along by social norms is to take time to think about what we are doing. Also to be aware that the desire to be accepted or liked is not a valid explanation to conform.   * Supported by research conducted by Asch, as conformity levels dropped to 8.7% when participants received social support. As when the participants had allies they felt that it was more acceptable for them to resist conformity. * Individuals may still be swept along by social norms, even though they have social support as there is still a majority. |

**Resisting Pressure to Obey**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Time for discussion** | **Reactance** |
| When participants have been given a significant amount of time to share information and discuss any suspicions they were more likely to resist conformity.  [kids_sharing](http://images.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://noimpactman.typepad.com/photos/uncategorized/2008/10/16/kids_sharing.jpg&imgrefurl=http://noimpactman.typepad.com/blog/guest_author_posts/&usg=__8xv3qzmnlmGHuakS3nEtWwl4rU0=&h=334&w=500&sz=28&hl=en&start=21&um=1&tbnid=fNkjqwjtWHEO7M:&tbnh=87&tbnw=130&prev=/images?q%3Dsharing%26ndsp%3D18%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26start%3D18%26um%3D1)   * Supported by Gamson et al (1982) who investigated situations where people would refuse to go along with an unjust authority. The participants were involved in making video and signing statements that could be used in court proceedings. However, the participants that were working in groups became suspicious about the true purpose of the study and began to refuse to obey. This was because they realised that they were being manipulated into producing tapes that any oil company could exploit in court.   + Time for discussion may not necessarily lead to disobedience. Discussion with other people may just confirm their reason to conform rather than resist. | Protection of a sense of freedom, as if individuals feel that their freedom is being restricted they may then do the opposite of what is being asked (boomerang effect) Underage drinking and smoking is thought to be a result of reactance, as they are told to do the opposite and as a result rebel.  ManwBoomerang   * Illustrates the current issues with under age drinking and smoking. Teenagers are constantly reminded of the negative effects of smoking and consuming too much alcohol and age restrictions are also put on these legal substances. Yet this does not stop them consuming these substances and teenagers will go to lengths to get them, such as getting others to buy them.   + Individual Differences – this depends on the type of personality; such as authoritarian personalities who may find it hard to disobey. |

**Locus of Control – Further research**

*Locus of control and conformity:*

* Avgtis (1998) considered locus of control and conformity by carrying out a meta-analysis of studies. It was found that those that scored high on external locus of control were more easily persuaded and likely to conform than those who scored low. A correlation between locus of control and conformity was carried out and showed an average of 0.37 which was statistically significant. This implies that conformity rates are higher in those with an external locus of control.
* *Gender Differences:* Research by Linz and Semykina (2005) used survey data from over 2,600 Russian employees between 2000 and 2003. Men were more likely to exhibit an internal locus of control and a need for challenge. Alternately, women were more likely to exhibit external locus of control and a need for affiliation.

**A further process enabling Minority influence**

**Persuasive argument:**

Clark (1989) demonstrated with use of a mock jury that people change their viewpoint if convinced by the evidence/arguments presented. The majority were likely to adopt the minority verdict when the sole dissenter could produce evidence / arguments to change their minds. A consistent, **persuasive argument** is therefore an important part of minority influence.

Clark also found the knowledge of others changing their point of view influenced participants to change their mind. Once a few jurors had defected from the majority viewpoint, participants were increasingly influenced by these arguments and one by one started to join the minority. This leads to the **snowball** **effect**, which describes the increasing momentum gained by the movement until the original minority becomes the majority.