

<p>Assumption of the social approach</p>	<p>The major influence on people's behaviour is the social situation they are in. It is also influenced by other people and by the culture and society.</p>
<p>Define conformity</p>	<p>A change in behaviour or belief as a result of real or imagined group pressure</p>
<p>Three <b>types</b> of conformity</p>	<p>Compliance (superficial) Identification Internalisation (the deepest form of conformity)</p>
<p>Define compliance</p>	<p>This refers to instances where a person may agree in public with a group of people but the person actually privately disagrees with the group's viewpoint or behaviour. This type of conformity therefore leads to a change in public behaviour but not of private beliefs. This is the shallowest form of conformity.</p>
<p>Define identification</p>	<p>This refers to instances when the individual takes on the views of a group they join or they admire. The change of behaviour is mostly limited to the time when the person is with the group. It does not necessarily result in a permanent change of a person's private beliefs.</p>

<p>Define internalisation</p>	<p>This refers to instances where a person behaves or agrees with a group of people because they have actually accepted the group's point of view or beliefs. This type of conformity results in a change in the persons' private beliefs and attitudes as a result it may have longer lasting effects than public compliance (conversion). This is the deepest form of conformity</p>
<p>Give two explanations of conformity</p>	<p><b>Normative Social influence (NSI)</b>- This refers to instances where someone conforms in order to fit in and gain approval or avoid disapproval from other group members. <b>Informational social influence (ISI)</b>- This refers to instances where people conform because they are uncertain about what to do in a particular situation, so they look to others for guidance. This explanation tends to lead to internalisation. <b>NSI &amp; ISI work together – the “two process” approach:</b> Deutsch and Gerrard argue that behaviour is often influenced by both normative social influence and informative social influence working together.</p>
<p>Describe Asch study </p>	<p>Asch (1951) Aim: to find out if Ps would conform to majority social influence and give incorrect answers in a situation where the correct answers were obvious. Sample: 123 males, American, students, volunteers. One real participant, the rest of the group were confederates. Task: match 1 line to three comparison lines. Findings: Out of 12 trials there was a conformity rate of 37%. 74% of all Ps conformed at least once. When they were interviewed after the study, the Ps said that they know the answer was wrong but they did not want to be ridiculed (shows influence of normative social influence).</p>
<p>Evaluation of Asch</p>	<p>It was a controlled experiment therefore it is replicable therefore the results are reliable. It lacked of ecological validity as in real life people's decisions would have meaning and consequences so they might be less willing to conform. Population validity: the Ps were all American, conformity in other cultures might be different. The Ps were males, females might be conform in different situations. They were all students, older people might be more confident and conform less. Ps were not really part of the group as they did not know each other, the Ps might have acted differently if the group had been known to them. Sogon (1984) found that conformity was higher when the majority of the group were friends of the participants.</p>

Variations on Asch

**Size of majority:** conformity increased as the number of confederates increased however this was true until the number reached 6-7 after the rate stabilised to 37%.  
When the Ps had an **ally** (who gave the right answer) the conformity rate decreased. Social support.  
When the lines were closer (**less difference in length**) conformity rate increased.  
When the task was done with maths and science students compliance disappeared (Perrin and Spencer (1981) showing that individual characteristics (**confidence and expertise**) influence conformity.

Factors influencing conformity.

**Size of the majority:** See Asch  
**Gender:** Larsen et al. (1979) Males conform more in higher status groups, Women conform more in peer groups.  
**Individual characteristics: confidence**  
Perrin & Spencer (1981)- maths and science students performed the task, no conformity.  
**The importance of time:** When Asch carried out his research, the USA was very conservative; schools were more hierarchical than they are now. This could have influenced conformity rate.  
**Culture:** Smith and Bond (1996) found that collectivist cultures have a greater tendency to conform than individualist cultures.  
**Answer in Private:** When participants were told to answer in private (so the rest of the group do not know their response) conformity decreased to 12%.  
This is because there is less group pressure as there is no fear of disapproval or rejection from the group. Therefore normative social influence is less powerful.  
**Unanimity and social Support:** When one other person in the group gave a different answer from the others, then group was not unanimous, conformity dropped.  
Asch found that even the presence of just one confederate that goes against the majority choice can reduce conformity by as much as 80%.  
This suggests that individuals conform because they are concerned about what other people think of them (i.e. normative influence).

### **Conformity to social roles:**

Describe the Stanford Prison experiment (1973)



Aim: To see whether people will conform to social roles.

Method: Ps volunteer male American students. Tested extensively for “mental stability” then randomly allocated to two groups: prisoners or prison guards. The prisoners were to spend two weeks locked in 'cells' in a wing of the university. The prison guards were there to look after the prisoners and to keep them under control. Prisoners arrested at home, stripped, deloused and given a prison uniform and prisoner number. Referred to by number only, not by name. They were to spend 23 hours a day locked in their cells for two weeks.

The prison guards: uniforms, including sticks and mirrored sunglasses. Worked shifts and went home at the end of their shift. They were told that they had complete power over the prisoners but were not allowed to use physical violence.

Zimbardo acted as the prison superintendent.

Results:

Experiment called off after only 6 days. Within two days, the prisoners rebelled against the harsh treatment by the guards. The guards had become so brutal to the prisoners that two prisoners had some form of nervous breakdown, one developed a nervous rash all over his body and one went on hunger strike!! While the guards were giving their orders, the prisoners became subdued and apathetic. They did not stand up to the guards and simply did as they were told, even though it caused them distress.

Conclusion:

This study shows the power of the situation to influence people's behaviour. Both the guards and the prisoners conformed to their roles within the prison.

Evaluation of the Stanford Prison experiment (1973)

Good control over extraneous variables and to some extent over individual characteristics as the participants were tested for “mental stability” and were allocated randomly to the conditions “guard” or “prisoner”. Therefore high internal validity.

It has been argued that the participants were only play acting their role however when filmed and recorded secretly the Ps carried on acting in the same way so this might not have been the case.

The sample, 24 normal, healthy, male college students middle class and white was unrepresentative so we have to be careful generalising the results to other people.

lack of ecological validity: even though the fake prison was very alike a real, some aspects of real prison life could not be allowed for ethical reasons such as involuntary homosexuality, racism, beatings and threats to life so we can generalise to real life only with caution.

Fromm (1973) argued that Zimbardo exaggerated the power of the situation to influence behaviour and minimised the role of dispositional factors (personality factors). Only 1/3 of the guards were brutal towards the prisoners another 1/3 wanted to apply the rules fairly whilst the last third tried to protect the prisoners from abuse. This shows that dispositional factors affect the way people respond to the situational factors.

Study replicated by Reicher and Haslam (2006) – The BBC Prison Study- the findings were very different, the prisoners took control of the prison and harassed the guards. This could be explained by the Social Identity Theory but it could also be partly due to cultural factors (the study took place in the UK).  
Real life application: this study can be used to explain situations like Abu Ghraib and Zimbardo acted as an expert witness in the trial of the American soldiers involved. It could also be used to prevent these situations from developing by putting in place measures i.e. independent supervision and training the staff.

Ethics of the Stanford Prison experiment (1973)

The study was approved by an ethics committee.  
The Ps signed a consent form  
The Ps were protected against physical harm but not psychological harm  
The Ps were debriefed and followed up for a long time after the study  
Confidentiality: only the Ps who consented are shown in the video made public.  
Zimbardo argued that the benefits gained about our understanding of human behaviour and how we can improve society should outweigh the distress caused by the study.

Define obedience

To carry out the orders given by someone we perceive as being in a position of authority i.e. obeying a policeman. You do not necessarily agree with the orders.

Describe Milgram's study



Aim: to find out what factors in a situation lead people to obey  
Procedure:  
Sample: 40 American, males, from a variety of social and educational background. Recruited by an advertisement in local paper paid \$4.50.  
PS told that the experiment was aimed to find out the effects of punishment on learning  
The Ps were ordered to give the learner (a confederate) an electric shock if he made a mistake in the pairs of words he had to learn from 15v to 450v in steps of 15 v. (no electric shocks were given in reality).  
If the Ps refused the experimenter (dressed in a lab coat) would use verbal prods i.e. "the experiment requires that you continue".  
Findings (relate to the sample): 65% of Ps went to the maximum 450v.  
Conclusion (relate to the general population): under certain circumstances most people will obey orders and go against their conscience.

Evaluate Milgram's experiment

It is a laboratory experiment therefore it has a high control of the variables because of this it is replicable. Give examples of variables and how they were controlled  
The sample consisted of 40 volunteer American (cultural factors), middle-aged (age might influence obedience i.e. younger people might not have the confidence to disobey), men (women might differ in their obedience patterns i.e. be more compassionate, however when women were used the obedience rate was the same than men) therefore the findings cannot be generalised to the whole population. However the Ps were of various educational and professional backgrounds which makes it more representative.  
It lacks ecological validity: in most cases order of this type are given in social context i.e. anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany.

Ethics of Milgram's study

Deception: The Ps were deceived because they were not told the real aim of the study and they did not know that Mr Wallace was a confederate.

Consent: The Ps gave consent but it was not informed consent as they were deceived about the aim of the study.

Debrief: The Ps were debriefed and introduced to "Mr Wallace" so they could check for themselves that he was fine. They were assured that no shocks had been given. They were assured that their behaviour was normal.

Protection from harm: The Ps were not at risk of any physical harm but they did show signs of severe stress i.e. laughing inappropriately.

However...

83.5% of the Ps said that they were pleased they had taken part in the study and only 1.3% said that they wished they had not been involved. 74% claimed that they'd learned something of 'personal importance. Ps assessed a year later by a psychiatrist and none were found to have suffered long-lasting negative effects from taking part in the study.

Cost-benefit analysis: A positive outcome of the study could be the realisation of that we could potentially behave in the same way and this could result in people taking more responsibility for their own actions and not blindly follow orders thus preventing a recurrence of situations like the Holocaust.

Describe the agency theory

Milgram (1973) proposed the **agency theory** to explain why people obey orders even when these go against their conscience.

He suggested people can exist in two distinct states.

- The **autonomous state** in which we act according to our own moral values and we feel responsible for our actions. In this state, most people behave decently towards other people.
- The **agentic state** in which act according to the orders given by an authority figure. We see ourselves as agents of others. We do not feel responsible for our actions. When in this state people justify their behaviour by saying that they acted that way because they were instructed to do so.

People move from the autonomous state into the agentic state when given orders by someone they perceive as an authority figure. The shift from autonomy to 'agency' is called the **agentic shift**.

If we obey an order that goes against our conscience, we experience moral strain, as we know we are doing something we believe to be immoral. People find it difficult to stop in these situations because of **binding factors** – aspects of the situation that allow a person to minimise the damaging effect of their behaviour.

<p>Evaluate the agency theory as an explanation of obedience</p>	<p>Bass and Schmitt (2001) support the theory. When they showed a film of Milgram's study to students then asked them who they thought was responsible for the harm done to Mr Wallace they blamed the "experimenter". They saw the experimenter as an authority figure.</p> <p>However it does not explain why 35% of the participants stopped before reaching 450 volts. This indicates that individual differences are involved. It cannot explain why in real life on many occasions people are "zealous" and go far beyond the orders they are given i.e. the actions of Lieutenant William Calley in My Lai (Vietnam).</p> <p>Other factors influence obedience: buffers, social support, and personal characteristics such as authoritarian personality.</p>
<p>How does legitimacy of authority explain obedience?</p>	<p>We feel obligated to those in power because we respect their credentials and assume that they know what they are doing.</p> <p>We give up some of our independence and hand over control to people who are sanctioned by society to exercise control so it functions smoothly and protect us from wrongdoers. We trust them to exercise their power appropriately and train our children to obey them.</p> <p>This is supported by Milgram, when the study was moved to a run-down office and when the orders were given by an ordinary person, obedience decreased as there was less perceived authority. It is also supported by Bickman (1974)</p>
<p>How does the authoritarian personality explain obedience?</p>	<p>Authoritarian personality is a dispositional explanation. Adorno et al. (1950) proposed the concept of the authoritarian personality, someone who is prejudiced because of specific personality traits which predispose them to be hostile towards ethnic, racial and other minority and out- groups.</p> <p>This personality type is also likely to obey orders from people they perceive as being higher than them in the social hierarchy. According to Adorno, people with authoritarian personality are likely to have had a harsh, punishing and disciplinarian upbringing with little affection shown to them.</p> <p>Adorno argued that these experience created resentment and latent hostility towards parents which was displaced onto minority groups and /or projected onto these groups (the authoritarian felt threatened by them). This is a psychodynamic explanation.</p>

Evaluate authoritarian personality as an explanation of obedience

This is supported by Adorno's research who found that a set of personality characteristics tended to be linked together, and were related to a particular type of upbringing.

If prejudice is explained in terms of individual differences how can it be manifested by a vast majority of a population as was the case in pre-war Germany?

Milgram and Elms (1966) carried out a small scale study on the participants who had obeyed to 450V, they found a positive correlation. However correlation do not show cause and effect, other factors could be involved such as level of education. The evidence relies on interviews (about childhood) and questionnaires the results could be influenced by social desirability and the interpretation of the qualitative data of the interviews could be biased. The characteristics measured by the F-scale are linked with extreme right wing views but extreme left-wing views could lead to prejudices and obedience also.

There are alternative explanations: gradual commitment, presence of buffers, gender and cultural factors.

Alternative explanations of obedience

**Gradual commitment:** This refers to instances where a person might show some sort of commitment to a particular task e.g. by starting something and then as they continue it becomes harder to back down/change their mind i.e. in Milgram's study the severity increased by 15 volts at a time.

**Buffers:** Any aspects of a situation that protects people from having to confront the consequences of their actions i.e. in Milgram's study when the participant was ordered to hold the "learner's hand on the shock plate only 30% of the Ps went up to 450v because the Ps could see the consequences of their actions.

**Gender:** when Milgram's study was replicated with women the results were similar but in Sheridan and King, women obeyed more than men.

**Cultural factors:** Milgram's study was replicated in different cultures, highest obedience rate Germany: 85%, lowest Australian women 16%. This shows that cultural factors influence our tendency to obey.

Compare conformity and obedience

Conformity	Obedience
No request to change our behaviour but imagined or real pressure to change	There is a direct request to change our behaviour.
The pressure to change comes from a group	The request to change our behaviour is usually from just one person.
The pressure to conform comes from people like us	The person influencing us is of a higher status (they have authority).
The group act in the way to which we conform	The person influencing us does not necessarily act in the same way as us.

Name the two types of factors which influence conformity and obedience.

Situational: this accounts for behaviour in terms of aspects of the environment. i.e. the prison environment made the guards aggressive in Zimbardo's study.

Dispositional: this accounts for an individual's behaviour in terms of his/her personality or disposition.

Explain social support as a way of resisting social influence

Social support is the presence of people who refuse to conform or obey. They can act as models for others.

The presence of a dissenter makes people more confident in their own judgement and more able to resist the pressure to conform. This is shown in Asch, when a confederate broke away from the majority conformity decreased from 33% to 6%. Social support also helps to resist obedience. In Milgram's study, the obedience dropped from 65% to 10% when a confederate refused to obey. When we obey especially as part of a group we come to think of harmful actions almost acceptable. A disobedient model change our perception of what is acceptable and we become more confident in refusing to obey.

This is also supported by Gamson et al. (1982).

Explain how the locus of control (LOC) helps people to resist social influence

Locus of control is an individual's perception of personal control over their own behaviour.

Internal locus of control: outcomes within your control-determined by your hard work, qualities and decisions. People high in internal LOC rely less on other's opinions so they are more able to resist social influence.

External locus of control:

Outcomes outside your control, determined by fate. People high in externality tend to be more passive and fatalistic so they are more likely to accept the influence of others.

The influence of LOC on the ability to resist social influence is supported by Oliner and Oliner (1988) who found that people that rescued Jews during WW2 had scores demonstrating an internal locus of control. However Twenge (2004) analysed data from American studies of obedience and found that resistance to obedience has increased over time but so has externality. This challenges the link between LOC and resisting social influence. Furthermore LOC is a continuum we are never completely internal or external. Rotter (1982) argues that LOC is more important in new situations, in familiar situations we tend to refer back to previous experience.

<p>What is minority influence?</p>	<p>Minority influence: when a minority influences a majority to change their attitudes, beliefs or behaviours.</p>
<p>Describe research in minority influence (Moscovici, 1969)</p>	<p><u>Aim</u>: to investigate the effect of a minority on a majority.  <u>Sample</u>: female students.  The Ps were placed in groups consisting of 4 Ps and 2 confederates. They were shown 36 slides of different shades of blue and asked to state the colour aloud. There were two groups in the experiment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Group 1: the confederates were consistent and answered green for every slide.</li> <li>– Group 2: the confederates were inconsistent and answered green 24 times and blue 12 times.</li> </ul> <p><u>Results</u>  In the consistent group 8.42% of trials Ps answered green (agreeing with the minority). 32% of the Ps agreed at least once. In the inconsistent group 1.25% of trials resulted in Ps answering green.  <u>Conclusion</u>: This suggests that minorities can change the opinion of the majority, particularly if they are consistent.</p>
<p>Evaluate Moscovici's study</p>	<p>It was a very artificial task therefore it might not reflect the way people behave in their real life. In a variation, Moscovici asked the Ps to write their answers in private, the agreement with the minority was higher in this variation than in the original study. Moscovici argued that the participants had changed their views but were reluctant to admit this for fear of being considered "radical".</p>
<p>Factors influencing the effectiveness of minorities.</p>	<p><u>Consistency</u>  The minority must be consistent in their opinion-keep the same beliefs over time and between members of the minority.  <u>Flexibility</u>  The minority must not appear to be rigid &amp; dogmatic. The minority needs to adapt their arguments to new situations.  <u>Relevance</u>  The minority will be more successful if their views are in line with social trends and concerns.  <u>Commitment</u>  A minority must show dedication to their cause and demonstrate clearly that they are not acting out of self-interest.  <i>Link to Moscovici</i></p>

<p>What is social change and how does it occur?</p>	<p>Social change: “When society adopts a new belief or way of behaving which then becomes widely accepted as the norm”  It can occur as the result of:  <u>majority influence</u> and people will conform and obey the new laws i.e. “drink and drive”. People’s attitudes and beliefs can be altered through the use of social norms interventions i.e. media campaigns. Social change can also occur through <u>minority influence</u> however the process is very different.</p>
<p>How does social change occur as a result of minority influence?</p>	<p>It is described in stages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drawing attention to an issue: If minority views are different from the majority’s it creates a conflict that people want to reduce.</li> <li>2. Cognitive conflict: The conflict created will require the members of the majority to think more deeply about the issues as their views are being challenged.</li> <li>3. Consistency of position: Moscovici showed that consistency increases the chances of changing the majority’s views.</li> <li>4. The augmentation effect: The minority appears willing to suffer for their cause so is taken more seriously by the majority.</li> <li>5. The snowball effect: a minority converts a small group of people to their views, this group converts other people. Over time the original minority view can become the view of the majority.</li> <li>6. Social cryptoamnesia: Minority ideas are assimilated into the majority viewpoint without those in the majority remembering where the ideas came from.</li> </ol>
<p>Evaluate the influence of minorities in social change</p>	<p>The change is more gradual than changes by majority influence as people have a strong tendency to conform to majorities i.e. the suffragettes. People do not want to be seen as “deviant” by the majority, this might limit the impact of minority influence. However there are famous examples showing that it is effective i.e. the Civil Rights campaign in America.  Moscovici argued that minority influence is due to conversion as people have to think more deeply about the minority views which challenge them. However Mackie (1987) disagrees as she thinks that for individuals who do not share the views of the majority more processing is needed as we assume that others think like us and if they don’t we need to look carefully at their arguments and reasoning.</p>