

## Types of conformity:

1. **Compliance** – public acceptance, private disagreement e.g. saying you like a new song you hate.
2. **Internalisation** – public and private acceptance. You take on the new view permanently.
3. **Identification** – public and private acceptance due to feeling a group membership. Temporary. E.g. supporting different football teams.

## Explanations of conformity:

People conform because...

### **Normative social influence:**

conforming to be accepted by the group.

### **Informational social influence:**

Conforming to be correct or to gain knowledge. Happens in; crisis, ambiguous situation or expert present.

- ☺ Evidence: Lucas (ISI) and Asch (NSI)
- ☹ Individual differences: nAffiliators (NSI), Perrin and Spencer - engineering students (ISI)

## ASCH (1956) – CONFORMITY

- Male undergraduate students asked to judge the length of lines. 12/18 trials confederates gave false answers.
- 33% conformed. 75% conformed once, 25% never conformed. P's stated that they conformed to avoid rejection from the group.

☺ Application to juries

☹ Child of its time - conducted in 50's.

1 in 396 trials for Perrin and Spencer.

☹ Artificial task – strangers used.

☹ American study – doesn't apply to collectivist cultures.

## Milgram

- 40 Male PPs. 2 confederates (learner and experimenter).
- PP was always teacher, who had to punish the learner incorrect answers via electric shocks.
- Pre-recorded responses were played.
- If teacher stopped then experimenter would give 'prods'
- 65% obeyed, all P's gave 300volt shocks.

### **Variations:**

1. Proximity – same room (40% obeyed), forcing hand on shock plate (30%, phone instructions (21%)
  2. Location - run down office – 48%
  3. Uniform – ordinary member of the public – 20% - see Bickman
- ☹ Ethics – withdrawal (prods), harm, informed consent. ☹ low internal validity – p's guessed it wasn't real? ☺ Good external validity – Milgram argued that the lab environment accurately reflected wider authority relationships.

## Zimbardo (1973)- Conformity to social roles.

- 24 male students randomly assigned to either 'guard' or 'prisoner' role in a mock prison in University.
  - Zimbardo was prison superintendent.
  - Prisoners were arrested at home.
  - Guards enforced rules.
  - Guards took up their roles with enthusiasm
  - Study stopped after 6 days instead of 14
  - 2 days: prisoners rebelled. One prisoner released.
- ☺ high level of control – testing prior to selection ☹☹ lack of realism – demand characteristics? BUT Zimbardo found that 90% of conversations of the prisons' conversations were about prison life. ☹ Eth from Zimbardo ☹ replications found differe



### Asch variations:

1. Group size: 3 confeds – 31.8%. More than 3 made no difference.
2. Unanimity: Introduction of a confed who disagreed with the others. Presence of dissenting confed meant that conformity was reduced by a quarter.
3. Task difficulty: the more difficult the task the greater the conformity

## Obedience: social-psychological factors

### **Agentic state**

-agentic: acting as an agent, -autonomous – behaving according to own principles. Shift – moving from autonomous to agentic occurs when an authority figure is present and they will take responsibility for our actions.

☺ Support – film of the experiment to students.

☹ limited – doesn't explain Hofling or when P's did not obey.

### **Legitimacy of authority**

Someone who is perceived to be in a position of social control e.g. the experimenter.

☺ Cultural variations

### Dispositional explanations – authoritarian personality

-Extreme respect for authority and submissiveness to it.

-Formed in childhood, due to harsh parenting (strict discipline, impossibly high standards, severe criticism)

-Creates resentment, displayed into others who are weaker (scapegoating)

-Adorno – people who scored high on the F scale showed excessive respect for authority figures and obeyed.

☺ Milgram and Elms – link between those who obeyed and F scale.

☹ Limited -can't explain anti-Semitic behavior.

☹ Correlation, not causation.

### **Resistance to social influence**

**Social support** – Asch found that unanimity promotes resistance. When another teacher (confed) disobeyed in Milgram's study, obedience dropped to 10%. Eval – supporting evidence (glasses study) and oil company study.

**LOC** – how much control you feel like you have over your behavior. High internal – resist pressure to conform or obey. Achievement orientated.

Eval: 37% of internals did not continue to highest shock level.

### **Minority influence**

Consistency (in minority group and over time), commitment (extreme activities to draw attention) and flexibility (willing to adapt viewpoint).

Moscovici – blue/green slides. Consistency greater effect than inconsistent.

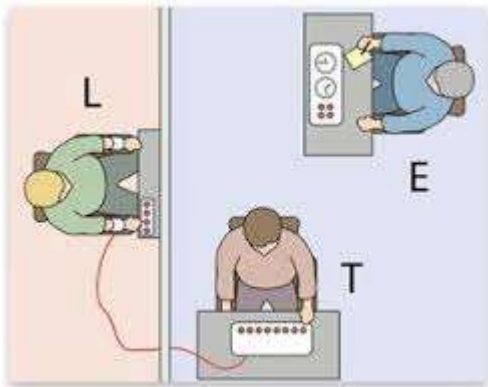
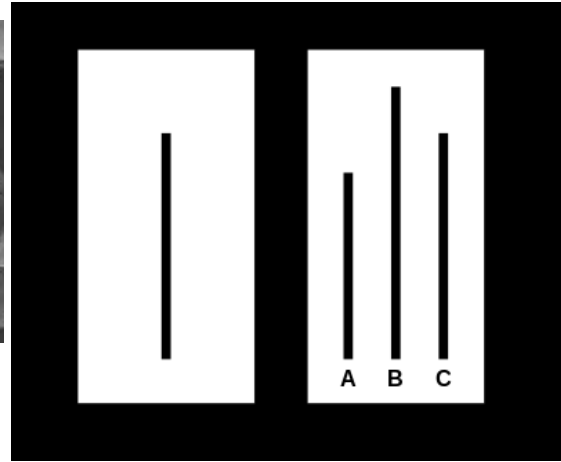
☹ artificial task – colours of slide. Not how minorities really work.

☹ limited real world applications

### **Social change**

Minority – snowballing – majority – social cryptoamnesia, ISI-NSI

Eval – evidence to support (energy consumption), minority influence only indirectly effective, methodological issues surrounding Moscovici.



# SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

