

Conformity is a type of social influence assignment

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Where An Individual Changes His Thought Or Behavior To Adhere To The Existing Social Norm By Sees-Parlor Conformity is a type of social influence where an individual changes his thought or behavior to adhere to the existing social norm. There are various reasons why people conform, perhaps group norms is one of the reasons conformity occurs. Group norms are a certain set rules that govern an individual's behavior in a group. There are various factors that affect conformity in-group norms.

Culture is one such factor, if you look at a collectivist society individuals are more keen to conform more than in an individualistic society. The study carried out by Bond and Smith (1993) consisted of 133 conformity studies including Cash paradigm, it was a Meta analysis. The results of the study showed that 14% of Belgium students conformed whereas 58% of Indian teachers in Fiji conformed. This supported the factor that culture affected conformity. The study was mimetic, which means that it could be applied to all the cultures around the world.

Perhaps one can argue about the reliability of the result as there are possibilities that the limitations of all the studies would have largely affected the result. However the study carried out by Thani Emir supports the result of the Bond and Smith study. He carried out the study on Kuwait which is a collectivist culture, the results showed that another study carried out by Williams and Smith in 1984 in Japan also used the Cash paradigm. In this study there were two phases: In the 1st phase all the participants and confederates of the same university were present and in the 2nd phase the formal football club was present.

The results showed that there was 27% of conformity in the 1st phase and 1% in the 2nd phase. Hence one can argue that even though the society is of collectivist nature the conformity was not because of culture but familiarity. Another factor that affects conformity is unanimity. The chances of people conforming are higher when the majority of the people agree to a point. Conformity in a large group could be because of various reasons like you agree to a larger group of people because you want to be socially accepted or because an individual wants to be right. This is termed as normative influence.

The study carried out by Asch in 1951 had participants who thought they were in a visual perception test. There were 18 trials with 1 participant and 6 confederates in each room- they all were males. Results: 75% conformed at least once to the wrong answer 32% conformed to more than half of the wrong answer, 24% did not conform at all. Conformity happened, this result supports normative social influence. At the end Asch asked the participant why they conformed to the group it was because they feared rejection.