

Good example of the stanford prison experiment essay

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The notion good people change their behaviors when put in an evil environment was experimented by a team of researchers led by Dr. Zimbardo in the infamous Stanford Prison. Twenty- four volunteers were chosen to stay for two weeks in prison where they would be subjected to the harsh prison environment. For their participation, the volunteers who were divided to two groups, the prisoners and the guards would receive \$15 a day as compensation (Zimbardo 244). Prisoners underwent extreme punishment, degradation and depression as they wholly started to believe they were actual prisoners. The guards enforced and abused their newly found authority to the extent the whole exercise had to be stopped on the sixth day when it was realized that the prisoners forgot they were not actual prisoners and could eventually develop a mental breakdown.

Milgram experiment was important since it sought to explain how human behavior tends to be obedient to authority despite conflicts with its personal judgment. It would further explain why the guards in the Stanford prison inflicted pain to the prisoners despite realizing the situation was not real. Therefore, the psychologists realized how easy it is to influence the majority to perform even the most awful atrocities. The Asch experiment was important as it revealed that a person would be subjected to conform to the majority's opinions. Asch learns that it's natural human behavior to emulate blindly the commands of the majority for fear of being ridiculed.

Conclusively, through Dr. Zimbardo's Stanford experiment we learn how the environment plays an imperative role in determining a person's current character, as it was shown when both the guards and prisoners settled quickly into their roles (Zimbardo 252). In fact, the prison environment was a

great setting or factor used in creating the guard's brutal behavior, since Zimbardo reported that, in no circumstances did the acting guards showed any forms of sadistic tendencies before the experiment. Despite the criticism on how far the Psychologists went to prove a scientific study, it's a no-brainer that we humans conform to social roles much more than it can be predicted.

Work Cited

Zimbardo, Philip G. " On the ethics of intervention in human psychological research: With special reference to the Stanford prison experiment." *Cognition* 2. 2 (1973): 243-256.