

# The asch study: the need to conform essay sample



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The experiments led by Solomon Asch requested a group of students to participate in a “ vision test. ” However, in actuality, all but one of the participants was a co-conspirator of the experimenter. The study led by Asch was performed to determine how the remaining student would respond to the behavior and answers of the confederates’ who was actually working with the experimenter (Boeree, 1999).

According to the results of the experiment, while most participants answered questions asked of them correctly even though the confederates were prearranged to give incorrect answers to questions asked, 32% of the participants actually conformed to the erroneous popular view of the others in the room when there were at least three confederates in attendance when the confederates were in agreement (Boeree, 1999).

Participants who had no exposure to a majority view had no trouble giving the correct answer based on what they really believed (Boeree, 1999).

People tend to be more influenced by external factors (other people’s views) instead of thinking for themselves. This may be due to fear of rejection or punishment. Everyone wants to be accepted by others and because of this they’d just rather go with the majority view even at the risk of losing ones own self worth in the process.

According to the Milgram experiment people enthusiastically and readily obey when an authority figure is the one giving a command even when the command is irrational. This may be due to many reasons such as fear of punishment or expectancy of a reward (Boeree, 1999). It is also generally

due to an element of trust being involved. Many people may relate “obedience to authority” as being righteousness (doing what is right).

The problem with this is that they should first evaluate whether the command or instruction is a valid, rational and righteous command to obey. In regard to the need to obey as well as to conform, people tend to fear embarrassment of rebuke before their peers due to having ego and pride issues. Humans hate to be wrong therefore, they would rather go with the status quo. Overall, it is important for humans to realize that every one of us is created to be different. We have our own minds and should be fully persuaded in our own minds.