

Conformity and social influence



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Conformity is a widely discussed psychology principle, focusing on when and why people imitate others while other people diverge and why they do so. Experiments have shown that although people may tend to imitate others, they sometimes diverge and try to avoid what others do. The paper highlights a social impact theory that specifies the effect of other people on an individual. The theory suggests that when other people are source of impact and the person is the target, impact is a multiplicative task of strength and immediacy. When the individual is stood by other people as the target forces as the target of force, then impact should be divided to result in an inverse power function of immediacy, strength and the number of people standing together. The paper thus will review relevant evidence from research on imitation and conformity.

Conformity and Social Influence

The study seeks to understand the role that predecisional information has on an individual ability to make a choice in a situation where social influence is present and that person wills to conform. The research first discusses the decision making, and how individuals place themselves in a position to be influenced and from there how they chose to respond to the influence they are faced with. The individual must first make a decision to trust his or her feelings or go along with the desire response the group is seeking.

Experiments done on conformity demonstrate that people are likely to conform to others especially in less identity-relevant choice domains, it is the social identity of the others that will determine whether people will diverge or conform in choice domains.

The researcher hypothesized that individuals in the cooperative groups seek more information among themselves than that of the competitive groups. Participants were selected and placed in different groups; the study was done in a lab. In the end the participants had the choice to seek the responses of their fellow participants before making a final selection. The study involved two choice learning tasks where the participants predicted which of two lights would extinguish first. The main factors that differentiate the groups were that there were groups that were cooperative and groups that were competitive.

The results of the study showed that individuals in the cooperative groups interacted more by seeking information from their group members than that of the opposing group, also that essence of the information collected affected conformity. The findings also shared that under higher uncertainty circumstances the cooperative groups were higher but there was no difference in responses in situation of low uncertainty. This study support the thesis of this paper in that a person will conform to soial influence when uncertainty is present in the individual, and the more important the group is the greater is the likelihood that the individual will conform to the influence of the group. The research further indicates that in times of crisis and extreme duress, a person will engage in information seeking with axioms of uncertainty reduction.

Correspondingly the key method to a subsequent study gave the following elements: sketch on simple rules, predicting too many areas, and surrounding a variety of procedures. This specific approach is also detailed in regards to deals with parametric differences, and makes exact forecasts

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about observable features of the real world. However, this method is falsifiable, because if the correlation results to be non-monotonic, the theory will be unobtainable. This approach is useful because it can specify many basics for the measuring interesting omissions to these basic laws, but it can provide a foundation.

The difference within the two approaches used in these two articles is the fact that one of these articles focused on the individuality of a person's influence within another person. The other article emphasizes on the uncertainties of people and how they can easily conform to a group as opposed to how high their insecurities seem to be. The key finding in this individual research entitled "The Psychology of Social Impact" was that one can usefully think of social impact as the result of social forces. For instance, according to this article everyday people need to make a decision of some kind and the social environment is a gravitational force of an individual's influence within the source.

Similar findings and result within these two studies is the fact that "psychology of social impact" suggests that the significance of the basic regulations for an individual is far more than just instant influence effects. It is also implied that for current deliberations about groups and dissatisfactions the result of the presence of another individual benefices or is harmful. In other words the impact on an individual is larger when a person is isolated and then associated with a large crowd. As the two groups in the other study were put into two different assemblies more groups were cooperative and the others were more competitive. Yet the study shows that

the cooperative group was more responsive and had a more positive correlation than the other one.

The results support the paper by showing that it is not important just to have a group around you to have a great influence on an isolated person but a group that works together is more successful in their influence on an individual. In other words if an individual has some kind of uncertainty he/she will be more likely to conform to a group.

In conclusion, the result of each study supports the thesis by showing how important a group is to an individual as it increases the likelihood of a person conforming to social influence. The study showed that people in cooperative groups interact more by seeking information from their members than that of the opposing group. The “psychology of social impact” seems to suggest that the significance of social regulations is more than just instant effects implying beneficial or harmful deliberations. The result above supports the thesis further by showing that it is not just necessary to have a group around you to have great influence. This means that if an individual has some uncertainty, then he/she is likely to conform to a group.

Bibliography

The study seeks to understand the role that predecisional information has on an individual's ability to make a choice in a situation where social influence is present and that person will conform. The research first discussed the decision making, and how individuals place themselves in a position to be influenced and from there how they choose to respond to the influence they are faced with. The individual must first make a decision to trust his or her

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feelings or go along with the desire response the group is seeking. The study also mentions that uncertainty is the major factor of the information search. So before they make a decision they may try to find the responses of others to help them make a decision in a period of uncertainty which by then can be conformed by them. The research used probability learning paradigm to examine the social influence process in the experiment. Under situations of uncertain stimuli, conformity has shown to increase. Participants were selected and placed in different groups, and were first involved in a probability-learning task. In the end the participant had the choice to seek the responses of their fellow participants before making a final selection. The study involved two choice-learning tasks where the participants predicted which of two lights would extinguish first. The main factors that differentiate the groups were that there were cooperative groups and groups that were competitive. This was so to get them to think of the prize which was 5 dollars. The researcher hypothesized that individuals in the cooperative groups seek more information among themselves than that of the competitive groups. The results of the study showed that individuals in the cooperative groups interacted more by seeking information from their group members than that of the opposing group, also that essence of the information collected affected conformity. The finding also shared that under higher uncertainty circumstances the cooperative groups were higher but there was no difference in responses in situation of low uncertainty.