

Conformity: summary assignment

Psychology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Conformity – a change in behavior or belief as the result of real or imagined group pressure. Varieties of Conformity 1 . Compliance – conformity that involves publicly acting in accord with an implied or explicit request while privately disagreeing. It is insincere. 2. Obedience – acting in accord with a direct order or command. 3. Acceptance – conformity that involves both acting and believing in accord with social pressure. Conformity and Obedience Studies 1.

Muzier Sherif on Norm Formation * The Autocratic Effect/Phenomenon is when very small movements of the eyes aka a spot of light in a darkened room appear to move because the eyes lack a stable frame of reference. 2.

Solomon Asch on Group Pressure * Asch found that one of the situational factors that influence conformity is the size of the opposing majority. In a series of studies he varied the number of confederates who gave incorrect answers from 1 to 15. ; Asch concluded that it is difficult to maintain that you see something when no one else does.

The group pressure implied by the expressed opinion of other people can lead to modification and distortion effectively making you see almost anything. . Milgram's Obedience Experiments * Stanley Milgram, a psychologist at Yale University, conducted an experiment focusing on the conflict between obedience to authority and personal conscience. What breeds obedience? 1 . The Milgram's distance – When victims were remote and “teacher's” heard no complaints, nearly all obeyed calmly to the end. 2. Closeness and Legitimacy- The authority must be perceived as legitimate and must be close to the participants.

If orders were done through the telephone, obedience drops. 3. Institutional Authority- Authorities backed by institutions wield social power. 4. Liberating Effects of Group Influence – If more people obey, then it must be okay or legitimate and partly because we are conforming to extraordinary group loyalty. What predicts Conformity? 2. 3. Group Size – majority Manually – stand against everyone Cohesion – ‘we feeling’, the extent to which members of a group are bound together, such as by attraction from another. 4. Status ; higher than higher status people. 5.

Public Response – people conform more when they must respond in front of others. 6. No Prior Commitment – Prior commitment restrain conformity with another group and restrain also persuasion. Why conform? Normative influence – conformity bases on a person’s desire to fulfill other’s expectations, often to gain acceptance. Informational influence – conformity occurring when people accept evidence about reality provided by other people. Who conforms? Personality Personality scores were poor predictors of individual’s behavior. Internal factors (attitudes and traits) seldom precisely predict a specific action.

They better predict a person’s average behavior across many situations. * predicts behavior better when social influences are weak. * Kurt Lewin – “Every psychological event depends upon the state of the person and at the same time on the environment, although their relative importance is different in different cases”. Culture James Whittaker and Robert Meehl repeated Asch’s conformity experiment in several countries and found similar conformity traits. * Rod Bond and Peter Smith analyzed 133 studies in 17

countries showed how cultural values influence conformity. Those in collectivist countries are more responsive to others' influence.

Social Roles The process of conforming will have shifted one's behavior, values and identity to accommodate a different place. **Persuasion** The process by which a message induces change in beliefs, attitudes, or behavior. **Central Route** - the process by which a message induces change in beliefs, attitudes, or behavior. **Peripheral route** - occurs when people are influenced by incidental cues such as a speaker's attractiveness. **Elements of Persuasion** **The Communicator** b. **Similarity** - we tend to like people who are like us. **Subjective preference** - when choice concerns matters of personal value, taste or way of life.

Objective reality - Judgment of fact, a dissimilar person provides a more independent judgment. **The Message Content** - what the person says a. **Reason vs.. Emotion** - Good feelings often enhance persuasion, partly by enhancing positive thinking. Messages can also be effective by evoking negative emotions like Fear. **B. Primacy vs.. Regency** **Primacy effect** - other things being equal, information presented first usually has the most influence. * **Regency effect** - information presented last sometimes has the most influence. **The Channel of Communication** - The ways the message is delivered-face to face, in writing, on film or in some other way. A.

Active or Passive Experience - Persuasion decreases as the significance and familiarity of the issue increases. Your attitude on topics matter. **B. Personal vs.. Media Influence** - Persuasion studies demonstrate that the major influence on us is not the media but our contact with people. 4. The

Audience - age and thoughtfulness a. Life cycle explanation: attitudes change as people grow older. B. Forewarned is forearmed - if you care enough to counter argue. C. Distraction disarms counter arguing d. Verbal persuasion is also enhanced by distracting people with something that attracts their attention just enough to inhibit counter arguing.

Cult - a group typically characterized by 1. Distinctive ritual and beliefs related to its devotion to god or a person. 2. Isolation from the surrounding "evil" culture. 3. A charismatic leader. Hindsight analysis - it uses persuasion principles as categories for explaining, after the fact, a troubling phenomenon. Explaining why people believe something says nothing about the truth of their beliefs. A theist tells us why they believe in God and an atheist tells us why they don't but no one tells us who is right. Attitudes follow behavior - people internalize commitments made voluntarily, publicly and repeatedly. Cults know this.

Compliance breeds acceptance - new converts soon learn that membership is How can persuasion be resisted? Strengthen personal commitment - stood up for your convictions, you will become less susceptible to what others have to say. A. Challenging Beliefs - Charles Kessler offered one possible way: mildly attack their position. Attack committed people, strongly enough to cause them to react, but not so strongly to overwhelm them, they might become more committed. B. Developing Counter Arguments - Attitude inoculation: exposing people to weak attacks upon their attitudes so that when a stronger attacks come, they will have refutations available.