

# [Milgram and zimbardo – ethics and usefulness assignment](https://assignbuster.com/milgram-and-zimbardo-ethics-and-usefulness-assignment/)

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Read the material on Malaria & Zanzibar and explain which study is the most useful in understanding human behavior in a social situation (focusing on the methods used and findings obtained) and which study is the most unethical. The study of social psychology, particularly conformity, is very difficult to conduct both ethically and accurately in order to be able to obtain useful results.

In the studies done by Malaria and Zanzibar, ethics were definitely breached but to what extent were these experiments useful, and which one offered the most insight into human behavior? While both Malaria and Sombrero’s methods were flawed and unethical towards the participants I believe that the ends of the Malaria experiment Justified the meaner to a fuller extent. It seems that while both methods were quite brutal for the participants there was not as much long-term stress and fear for the participants of the Malaria experiment compared to those of Zanzibar.

Without the intention to sully the stress that the participants of the Malaria experiment did go through, it is obvious that six days locked in a prison cell is bound to do more long term psychological damage and create more stress to find almost the same findings, that humans will conform to the roles that they are set into. If participants are set into a role to be inferior to authority they will obey, Just as if participants are set into a role of authority they will act accordingly.

While the Zanzibar experiment shows a more social representation as it was a group of people instead of Just two, I don’t believe that the usefulness of the results would be Justified due to the methods used. In the Malaria experiment, even some of the participants admitted to learning something of personal importance through the experiment, therefore showing that not only was there a sort of personal usefulness but also social and psychological usefulness.

All those who were questioned before the Malaria experiment thought that only a few would end up conforming, which is a large reason as to why this experiment was so useful, as it proved a view that most people would not have expected and created a new view on how humans behave under authority and in social situations. How such different were the results Zanzibar found compared to those that Malaria had found prior? Amalgam’s results showed that people would follow orders while violating their deepest beliefs, and in fact this was more common the view that most people held.

While Sombrero’s experiment was still useful I believe that Amalgam’s experiment was most useful in understanding human behavior when it comes to conformity. When speaking of ethics, I believe that both experiments were very much against the standards of ethics that we now hold true today, however, I believe Sombrero’s experiment was a larger violation of ethics. The protection of participants is very important having to do with humiliation, embarrassment and loss of dignity of the participants.

In social situations in bigger groups it is more humiliating for humans to do something morally incorrect then in front of only one person. Similarly the fact that the participants were in larger groups can create more social stress and anxiety. While both experiments had implications of violence, Sombrero’s experiment also caused participants to abuse each other while Amalgam’s participants were only leveling they were electrocuting someone when in debrief they were assured no one was harmed.

Both studies are highly criticized for the deception of the participants however, it is important to realize without these experiments there would be no information of this topic, as it is necessary for deception in order to gather accurate and somewhat valid results. As Zanzibar said, the ‘ as if procedures do not produce results that would necessarily pertain to a real-life situation; what we perceive would happen may not always be the case of reality.

Zanzibar, after his experiment, admitted that he had almost been trapped’ like a participant in his own role of prison superintendent which causes ethical questioning as to what extent was Zanzibar putting additional and unnecessary stress on the participants. On the other hand Malaria was participating in a role as a psychologist. This meaner he was taking his own personal role in the experiment, which can be seen as a less deceptive procedure to gain the results.

While both Malaria and Sombrero’s experiments were extremely unethical and could not be approved in modern day, they both offered very useful ideas and results about how people act in human behavior. These results could not have been obtained using other procedures which shows that the information found did outweigh the costs of them. I believe that both experiments did the best they could to preserve the participants throughout the experiments and while now it would be unacceptable without this important information about human social behavior there would still be a lot of questions involving conformity in our society.