

Conformity assignment

Psychology



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This phenomenon of social uniformity is called conformity. Individuals orientate on their environment and adjust the behavior. Conformity is the act of matching attitudes, beliefs and behaviors to group norms. As seen in the Sash's experiment, where broadband had to collate a given line to another line of three with the same length, most of the participants picked the same answer as its group members. Even though the correct answer seemed obvious, the broadband acted conform. The tendency to conform occurs in small groups and in society as a whole.

It can occur in the presence of others, or when an individual is alone. It later showed up that this psychological incident occurred most often when we feel insecure or incompetent, know that others in the group will observe our behavior and admire the group's status and attractiveness. Frequently, we conform to avoid rejection or to gain social approval. In such cases, we are responding to normative social influence. We are sensitive to understand rules for accepted and expected behavior. (Myers, 2014) Related to conformity in groups is obedience to the leader of a group.

People tend to act the way they are told by somebody else. In this connection they give up their own responsibility for the action and relate on others. The psychologist Stanley Amalgam invented an experiment on obedience which became psychology's most famous and controversial one. In his studies, he wanted to test what happens when the demands of authority clash with the demands of conscience. Therefore he invited broadband to participate in a study of learning memory. But the actual study on obedience wanted to detect how far people can go when they follow an order.

Frighteningly, almost all participants handed their responsibility to the investigator and issued high electric shocks. (Myers, 2010) In human behavior, obedience is a form of social influence in which a person accepts instructions or orders from an authority. Obedience differs from compliance, which is behavior influenced by peers, and from conformity, which is behavior intended to match that of the majority. (Boundless, 2015) To sum it up, “conformity is a change in behavior or belief as the result of real or imagined group pressure, while obedience acts in accord with a direct order or command. (Myers, 2010, p. 192) In general we can't say that being conform or obedient is a bad characteristic of a human being. It strengthens our confidence and corporate feeling. But when we think of how this feature can be abused by the wrong people, it's a dangerous tool to gain control. This happened in Germany after the First World War. When Doll Hitler seized power, millions of people were killed by the Nazi in concentration camps. But Hitler couldn't have killed them all by himself. What made all those people follow the orders they were given?

Anti-Semitic ideology also produced eager killers, but obedience was the main factor. In the summer of 1942, nearly 500 middle-aged German reserve police officers were dispatched to German-occupied Josef, Poland. They were to round up the illegal's Jews, who were said to be aiding the enemy. It happened that all able-bodied men were sent to work camps, and all the rest was shot on the spot. The commander gave the recruits a chance to refuse to participate in the executions. Only about a dozen immediately refused. Within 17 hours, the remaining 485 officers killed more than thousand helpless women, children, and elderly.

In real life, as in Amalgam's experiments, those who resisted did so early, and they were the minority. (Myers, 2014) In view of the Amalgam experiments, the Nazi crimes are not difficult to understand. Amalgam himself suggested that one of the major factors accounting for the Holocaust was the ready propensity of human beings to obey authorities even when obedience is wrong. This led to the cruel doings against Jewish and disabled people under the Third Reich. The executors of the acts passed their responsibility to somebody else.

Declaring it as an order from a higher position, it made them feel appropriate what they were doing. (Eely, 2003) In order to obey authority, the obeying person has to accept that it is legitimate for the command to be made of them. An example for this is the trial of Doll Coachman. He was executed in 1962 for being part of the Holocaust, in which six million Jewish people were murdered by the Nazi. Coachman was a logistical genius whose part in the Holocaust was the planning of the efficient collection, transportation and extermination of those to be killed.

At his trial he expressed surprise at being hated by Jewish people, saying that he had merely obeyed orders, and surely obeying orders could only be a good thing. Coachman was declared sane by six psychiatrists. He had a normal family life and observers at his trial described him as very average. According that there was nothing articulacy unusual about Coachman, we must face the uncomfortable possibility that his behavior was the product of the social situation in which he found himself. The situation in the military ruled state forced him to do cruel things by being obedient and conform to society. McLeod, 2007) Following the Second World War – and in particular <https://assignbuster.com/conformity-assignment-essay-samples/>

the Holocaust – psychologists set out to investigate the phenomenon of human obedience. Early attempts to explain the Holocaust had focused on the idea that there was something distinctive about German culture that had allowed the Holocaust to take place. (McLeod, 2007) But as we can see on Asch's experiment, it is not a fact of culture but of people behaving brutally under authority. Mass events were one method of control.

The Nazis praised in speeches the new unity of Germany: ' The individual is nothing; the Folk is everything. Once we unite internally, then we shall defeat the external foe. ' (Allen, 1965, p. 199) To come back on conformity, the deviant behavior of some Germans in the Third Reich can also be explained in a historical way. When World War One was over, people were seeking for a sense of community due to the aftermath and damage of the war. The disorientation and confusion during his time made them more susceptible to totalitarian regimes. It's not easy to be a minority of one.