

Personality and age on conformity assignment

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Age is expected to have an influence on conformity in adolescents, but not on older participants. The conformity rates are expected to show significance between conformity and participants aged between 14 and 18, but decrease in the group of older individuals. Influence of Personality and Age Differences on Conformity and Peer Pressure Society is filled with an abundance of rules and laws as to what is deemed as acceptable and what is not. It is up to an individual whether or not to conform to social decorum.

Conformity is defined as behaving in accordance from the influence of others. This study will examine how an individual conforms to society and the influences around them, based on personality type and age group. The most imperative thing to understand is how conformity is defined. It is a type of social influence which demonstrates a change in behaviors or beliefs in order to fit in. The importance of measuring conformity via social influence is to allow more insight into understanding the desire for social acceptance in people. What causes people to conform to social norms?

Many studies have attempted to explain obedience and social influence. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the relationship between personality, age differences, and conformity. The study hopes to show if personality and age differences influence conformity behavior. This study will delve into the differing theories, studies, and explanations of influences people conform to daily. To understand the effects on conformity, this study will focus on relationships between personality and conformity, age and conformity, and then how both aspects relate to conformity together.

Conformity is often described as the agreement to a position through majority influence, usually either to fulfill a desire to be liked, correct, or perceived as normal. Many reasons have been supported as to why individuals conform. Many cases can suggest that individuals search for clues from those around them on how we should behave in unknown situations. In other cases, individuals simply do not want to appear incorrect among society. The Autocratic Effect experiment was conducted with the intent of supporting the notion that individuals conform to societal or group norms when placed into a situation of uncertainty.

The results suggested that a person will rely on majority of those around them for guidance to provide the correct answer (Sheriff, 1935). What this experiment from Sheriff showed was an example of informational influence, as the participants went along with the responses of individuals who they thought had more knowledge on the issue at hand when they, themselves, had little knowledge. Personality can and has been defined in various ways. This study will refer to the Type A and Type B personality theory, originally developed by cardiologists Friedman and Roseanne.

These types each define their own behavioral and cognitive biases through observation. Friedman and Roseanne concluded a Type A personality have a more competitive drive that urges individuals to strive towards goals (McLeod, 2011). Type A individuals are presented as high-achievers, finding difficulty in accepting failure and seeking the need for competition. It was also suggested that Type A personalities have the tendency to easily express hostility, being perceived as impatient or aggressive (Van Dill, 1978).

Type B personality type individuals exhibit more relaxed and tolerant traits. According to Van Dill (1978) Type B personalities are more reflective and receive higher levels of satisfaction in their accomplishments, relative to Type A personalities. Type B personalities are considered more even-tempered and allow themselves the opportunity to learn or accept their failures. There have been many limitations on research of personality and conformity relations. Measuring personality has had its restraints, as it is only a theoretical construct.

Personality can only be inferred, and therefore the validity of the study can only be as accurate as the methods used to measure (McDonald, 2008).

Research on personality and conformity has not been replicated, as well as little attention to extraneous variables in this research, such as if potential sex differences influence conformity and influence processes (Adams, Ryan & Hoffman, 1984). A study conducted by Dodder and Marcia (1973) resulted that achievement-oriented women, similar to Type A personalities, were the least likely to conform to peer pressure.

This study failed to include male participants in the comparison, limiting the validity of the study. From this, it is inferred that personality has no significant influence on conforming to social behavior. Influence to peer pressure and conformity is assumed to progress through the developmental process. During early childhood, a young child is not influenced by social norms and rules. According to Constants and Shaw (1966), adolescents do not begin to internalize social norms until the age of eleven or twelve.

Throughout this development conformity behavior in an adolescent will increase until rules and norms are learned, and then are expected to decrease thereafter. Results from Staccatos and Shaw experiment demonstrated that conformity was low for children in young adolescence and increased to maximum scores for children age eleven to thirteen, while older participants continued to decline. Susceptibility to peer pressure was shown to increase during early adolescence and then decline while entering early adulthood (Steinberg & Ammonia, 2007).

From reviewing research on age influences on conformity, it can be predicted that younger individuals, in adolescence, will have higher conformity rates. Whereas, individuals above adolescence age will have similarly low conformity rates. The present study is to review efforts to show how personality traits and age influence conformity. Very little research has been conducted to correlate personality and its influence on conformity and has been rendered inconclusive. Research that has been conducted has presented confounding variables within the study, such as the influence of gender and the defining traits of personality.

Both personality and age, together, have not shown any significant influence on conformity behavior. This study aimed to look at whether there are age differences in conformity, whether conformity is influenced by participants' personality type, and whether there is an interaction between both age and personality on conformity and peer pressure. Results from previous experiments concluded that conformity behavior increased during early adolescence, but decreased during young adulthood.

From these questions, it is hypothesized that there is no conclusive support for conformity to be influenced by personality, and that age differences in late adolescence to early adulthood will show some significant influence. It is predicted that the younger participants will be far more likely to have higher conformity rates than older participants. Method Design This study will be a ex. between-subjects design, as it involves more than one independent variable. This research study consists of two independent variables, personality type and age group and one dependent variable, conformity.

Participants Participants will include 50 randomly selected people within a fifty mile radius through mail solicitation. All volunteers who respond to the mail solicitation will be sent the Jenkins Activity Survey, which measures a Type A or B personality, Meridian and Steel's (1995) Conformity Scale, and a demographic questionnaire. 50 of the volunteers who fit the criteria will be picked and split into 4 equally divided groups: 10 participants age 14 to 18 with Type A personality, age 14-18 with Type B, age 26-30 with Type A, age 26-30 with Type B.

Measures A demographic questionnaire will be mailed to each participant in order to categorize them based on age. To assess the participants personality the Jenkins Activity Survey will be mailed out after to define each participant as having either a Type A or Type B personality. In order to figure out how each participant would inform in social settings, the Meridian and Steel's Conformity Scale will also be mailed out to be completed, at the same time. The demographic questionnaire asking the age of each participant.

The Jenkins Activity Survey is a 12 question multiple-choice test. Participants who answer with mostly As on the test indicate a type A personality, while those who answer with mostly Bi's indicate a type B personality. Meridian and Steel's Conformity Scale is a 11 question test that uses a 9-point agree-disagree scale, indicating how much participants self-report themselves to agree or disagree with the question at hand. Procedure A questionnaire asking for participants, aged 14 to 30, to participate in a research study will be mailed out to all residences in a fifty mile radius.

On the questionnaire, an age demographic survey will also include in order to categorize the participants. After receiving the demographic questionnaire, the Jenkins Activity Personality Survey and Conformity Scale will be mailed to the respondents. Upon receiving the completed responses, those who are between the ages of 14 to 18 and 26 to 30 will be pulled out. Then Type A and Type B personalities will be separated in each age group. After categorizing ages and personality types, 10 people will be randomly selected for each group.