

Experiment review

Psychology



Stanley Milgrim Obedience experiment Stanley Milgrim Obedience Original experiment Introduction Stanley Milgrim was a psychologist at Yale University who conducted several experiments to test the hypothesis of the power of authority on their subjects. This was shortly after the trial of Adolph Eichmann who persecutes multitudes in the Hitler regime during the Second World War. The argument of the defendant that he was following orders interested Stanly to study the power of authority and obedience.

Recruitment of participants There were a total of 40 participants recruited by means of newspaper advertisements and paid \$4. 5 for each volunteer (Milgram, 1963). Each volunteer was a signed the role of a teacher who would ask a student a question. The student was a confederate and pretended to be experiencing pain under shock. The shock would be administered for every wrong answer given by the student. These roles were distributed randomly between the teacher and the students. Both players were given different scripts to read and act. The teacher was to administer the shock in steps of 15 volts and the student would present to be under extreme pain. The teacher was supposed to administer the shock for every wrong answer, and if he showed signs of wanting to stop the experimenter volunteer would read out the words, please continue to him. The experimenter was the figure of authority that the teacher was supposed to obey. Several teachers reached the maximum voltage of 415 volts despite several complain by the students. Stanley attributed these high rates of obedience to obedience to authority and the fact that the experiment was carried out at the prestigious university of Yale hence considered safe. The random nature of the selection of the teacher and the students also played an important role in the obedience levels. The fact that participant were

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made to believe that the experiment were painful and not dangerous contributed majorly to the high rates of obedience (Cherry, 2009). Stanley's experiment independent variable was the teacher who had the free will to stop administering the pain but, still continued to administer the shock. The dependent variable was the student who pretended to feel pain as the shock was administered by the teacher. His actions were dependent on the decision of the teacher to administer the shock. The original experiment yielded shocking results as 65% of the 40 teacher participants administered maximum shock. This translates to 26 of the participants administering maximum shock and only 14 stopping on the way. Stanley asked 14 psychology major students in their final year to give their prediction on the experiment before releasing the results. The result of the approximate prediction was that only 3 out of the 100 participants delivered the maximum shock. Stanley then went ahead to give the shocking statistics from the experiment. His experimenting raised some major ethical issues on the use of human beings in an experiment. Many people saw this act as unethical and from the participants of the experiment 1% regretted their involvement and 84% were glad for their participation. Stanley Milgrim replica Obedience experiment in 2009 A psychology professor in at the Santa Clara University performed a replica of Stanley Milgrim Obedience experiment with some modifications to cater for the ethical issues raised in the original experiment. In this experiment, Jerry Burger hypothesis was similar to Stanley Milgrim. The hypothesis was mainly centered on power of authority on their subject's obedience. The participants were carefully screened not include only those who would not experience post trauma after the experiment. The role of the teacher and the learner was assigned the <https://assignbuster.com/experiment-review/>

same as that in Stanley Milgrim obedience experiment. Surprisingly the same factors that influence Stanley Milgrim rate of obedience experiment were the same authority. The dependent variable was the student, and the independent variable was the teacher. The results in the replica experiment surprisingly were the same as those of Stanley Milgrim obedience experiment (Burger, 2009). The experiment still raised ethical issues of use of human beings to conduct experiments. Conclusion Both these two experiments raise the ethical issues of the use human beings to conduct experiments. However, the second experiment having used 150 volts as the maximum voltage compared to the 415 volts. This was perceived to be a less harmful voltage to the human conscious but; critics still argue that the experiment is not similar to the original experiment. The second voltage was a bit lower and had less post-traumatic stress on the participants. The results just show the power of the people in power over their subjects and this should be monitored in some way to avoid abuse of power. Bibliography Burger, J. (2009). Replicating Milgram: Would People Still Obey Today? *American Psychologist*, 202-206. Cherry, K. (2009, October 05). The Milgram Obedience Experiment. Retrieved August 4, 2013, from About. com Psychology: [www. psychology. about. com](http://www.psychology.about.com) Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral Study of Obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 371-378.