



Key terms		Conformity – effect of real or unseen group pressure	
Key Term	Definition		
Conformity	A form of social influence. It occurs when a person’s behaviour or thinking changes as a result of group pressure. The pressure can be real or imagined and can come from one person or a group.	<p>Asch’s study (key study)</p> <p>Aim – to investigate group pressure in an unambiguous situation</p> <p>Method: 123 American men. Two cards: the standard line and three comparison lines.</p> <p>12 critical trials where confederates gave the wrong answer.</p> <p>Results: On critical trials the participant gave the wrong answer 1/3 of the time. 25% never gave a wrong answer.</p> <p>Conclusion: People are influenced by group pressure. Though many can resist.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>Child of the times – only reflective of conformity in 1950s America, much less conformity in UK (Perrin and Spencer found only 1 conforming response in 396 trials).</p> <p>An artificial task – task (judging lines) was trivial and situation involved strangers so doesn’t reflect everyday situations. Ecological validity!</p> <p>Stretch evaluation</p> <p>Cultural difference: results can’t be generalised to collectivist cultures where rates are higher.</p>	<p>Factors affecting conformity -</p> <p>Social factors</p> <p>Group size – 2 confederates = 13.6% conformity, 3 confederates = 31.8% conformity, more than three made little difference</p> <p>Anonymity – writing an answer down is anonymous and lowers conformity</p> <p>Task difficulty – if comparison lines are more similar to the standard lines this makes the task harder so conformity increases</p> <p>Dispositional factors</p> <p>Personality – the higher your internal locus of control, the less likely you are to conform.</p> <p>Expertise – more knowledgeable, you conform less. Lucas found maths experts less likely to conform to other’s answers on maths problems</p>
Dispositional factors	Explanations of behaviour in terms of an individual’s personality, character or temperament.		
Locus of control	The sense we have about what directs events in our lives. Internals believe they are responsible, externals believe it is a matter of luck.		
Social factors	Explanations in terms of the social world around you. Your ‘social world’ is the groups of people you identify with, friends, family school, football team etc.		
Obedience	A type of social influence that causes a person to act in response to a direct order from a figure with perceived authority.		
Agency theory	Explains obedience in terms of whether an individual is making their own free choice or acting as an agent for an authority figure.		
Agentic state	A mental state where we feel no responsibility for our behaviour because we believe ourselves to be acting for an authority figure.		
Autonomous state	Being aware of the consequences of one’s own actions and therefore taking voluntary control of one’s behaviour.		
Authority	The power or right to give orders and expect obedience.		
Culture	The beliefs and expectations that surround us. We are not conscious of living in a culture, yet it influences us powerfully.		
Authoritarian personality	A person who is especially susceptible to obeying people in authority.		
Cognitive style	Cognition refers to thinking so ‘cognitive style’ refers to the way a person thinks about the world.		
Displace or displacement	A form of ego defence mechanism where an individual unconsciously redirects a threatening emotion from the person or thing that has caused it onto a third party.		
Bystander behaviour	The observation that the presence of others (bystanders) reduces the likelihood that help will be offered in an emergency situation.		
Prosocial behaviour	Behaviour which is beneficial to other people, and may not necessarily benefit the helper.		
Anti-social behaviour	Behaviour which is harmful to other people, includes behaving aggressively as well as other behaviour which may distress others.		
Collective behaviour	Collective behaviour is the actions that happen when people are part of a group/what people do when they are part of a group		
Crowd	A large but temporary gathering of people with a common focus.		
Deindividuation	A psychological state in which you lose your personal identity and take on the group identity of those around them.		
Social loafing	Individuals make a reduced effort when they are part of a group than when they are on their own.		



Y10 HT5 Social Influence Knowledge Organiser



Obedience – response to a direct order from an authority figure

Social factors – Milgram’s agency theory

Agency
 Agentic state – follow orders with no responsibility
 Autonomous – free choice

Authority –
 Agentic shift – move from making own free choices to following orders, occurs when someone is in authority

Culture – the social hierarchy
 Some people have more authority than others. Hierarchy depends on society and socialisation.

Proximity
 Participants less obedient in Milgram’s study when they were in the same room as the learner, increasing the ‘moral strain’

Evaluation –
Research support – Blass and Schmidt showed students a film of Milgram’s study and they blamed the experimenter rather than the participants

Doesn’t explain all findings – can’t explain why there isn’t 100% obedience in Milgram’s study

Stretch evaluation:
Obedience alibi – agency theory offers an excuse for destructive behaviour, potentially dangerous

Dispositional factors – Adorno’s theory of the authoritarian personality

The authoritarian personality – some people have a strong respect for authority and look down on people of lower status.
 This is made up of -

Cognitive style – rigid stereotypes and don’t like change

Originates in childhood – strict parents who only show love if behaviour is correct, these values are internalised

Scapegoating – hostility felt towards parents for being critical is put onto people who are socially inferior

Evaluation –
Lack of support – authoritarian personality is based on the F scale which has response bias

Results are correlational – can’t say authoritarian personality causes greater obedience

Stretch evaluation:
Social and dispositional – Germans were obedient but did not all have the same upbringing. Social factors are involved.

Prosocial – behaviour which is beneficial to other people, and may not necessarily benefit the helper

Piliavin’s study (key study)

Aim – to investigate if characteristics of a victim affect help given in an emergency
Method: male confederate collapsed on subway. 103 trials, victim apparently drunk or disabled (had a cane)
Results: disabled victim given help on 95% of trials compared to 50% helped when drunk. Help was as likely in crowded and empty carriages
Conclusion: characteristics of a victim affects help given. Number of onlookers does not affect help in natural setting.

Evaluation
High realism – participants didn’t know their behaviour was being studied, so acted more naturally

Urban sample – participants from the city so may be used to emergencies

Stretch evaluation:
Qualitative data – observers noted remarks from passengers giving deeper insights into why they helped

Social factors

Presence of others – the more people present the less likely someone will help. Latane and Darley found that 85% on own helped person with seizure but only 31% in a group of four.

Cost of helping – includes danger to self or embarrassment. Also costs of not helping e.g. guilt or blame

Dispositional factors

Similarity to victim - help is more likely if the victim is similar to self e.g. Man Utd fans helping someone wearing a Man Utd shirt

Expertise – people with specialist skills more likely to help in emergencies, eg nurses helping a workman

Crowd and collective behaviour – a large gathering of people who may behave differently from when on their own

Deindividuation – losing your sense of identity and taking on that of the group around you
 Crowds experience deindividuation due to reduced sense of responsibility and antisocial behaviour.

Diener’s study – THIS IS AN OPTIONAL STUDY
Aim – To study the effects of loss of individual identity
Method: Trick or treaters were told to pick one piece of candy and were watched to see what they did. Some did this as individuals, some as part of a group. Some were asked details about their name and where they lived, some were not.
Results: Deindividuated most likely to take extra sweets and money.
Conclusion: Deindividuation increases the likelihood of doing something that you wouldn’t normally do and break rules.

Social factors

Deindividuation – group norms determine crowd behaviour

Social loafing – when working in a group people put in less effort as you can’t identify individual effort

Culture – Earley found Chinese people (collectivist culture) put in the same effort even if amount cannot be identified. Not true of Americans (individualist)

Dispositional factors

Personality – high locus of control enables individuals to be less influenced by crowd behaviour

Morality – strong sense of right and wrong helps resist pressure from group norms