

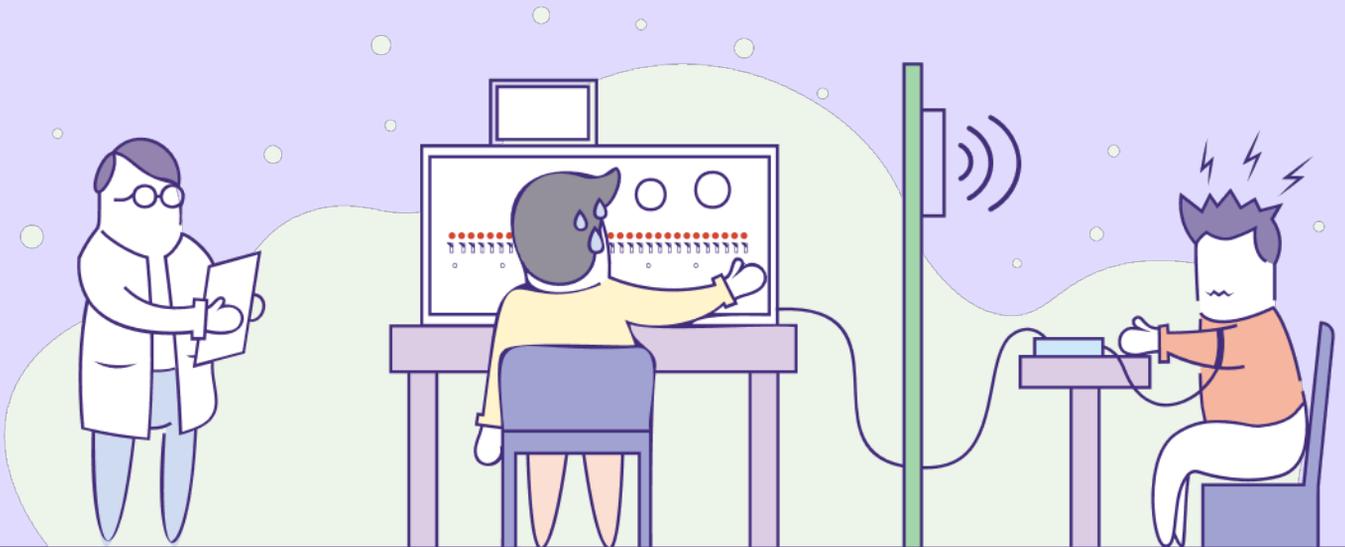
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New 9-1
GCSE

Chapter 5: Social Influence

Complete Revision Guide & Practice Questions



AQA GCSE PSYCHOLOGY

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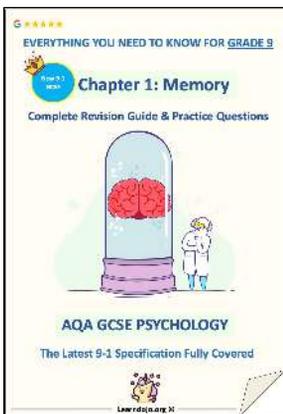


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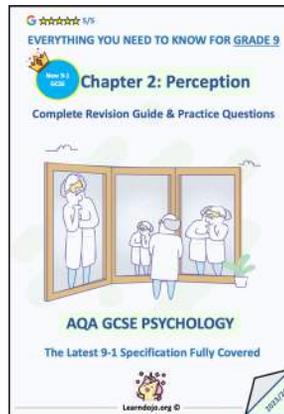
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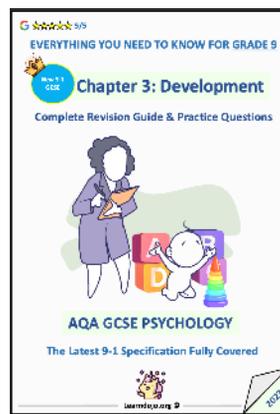
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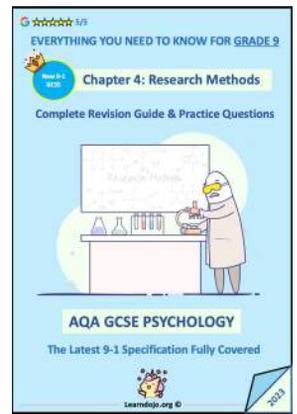
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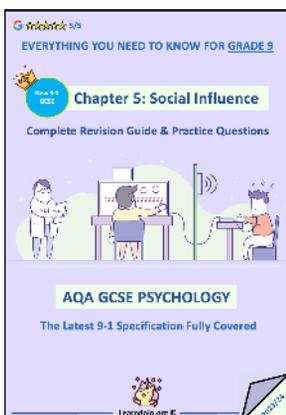
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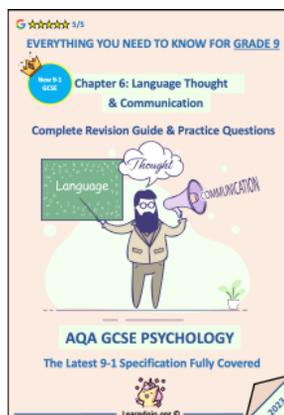
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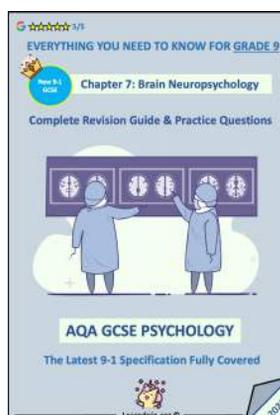
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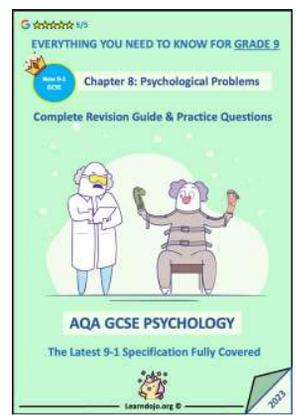
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This resource covers AQA GCSE Psychology and the Social Influence topic. Everything in this pack follows the specification exactly so it should provide you with everything you need to know to master this topic.

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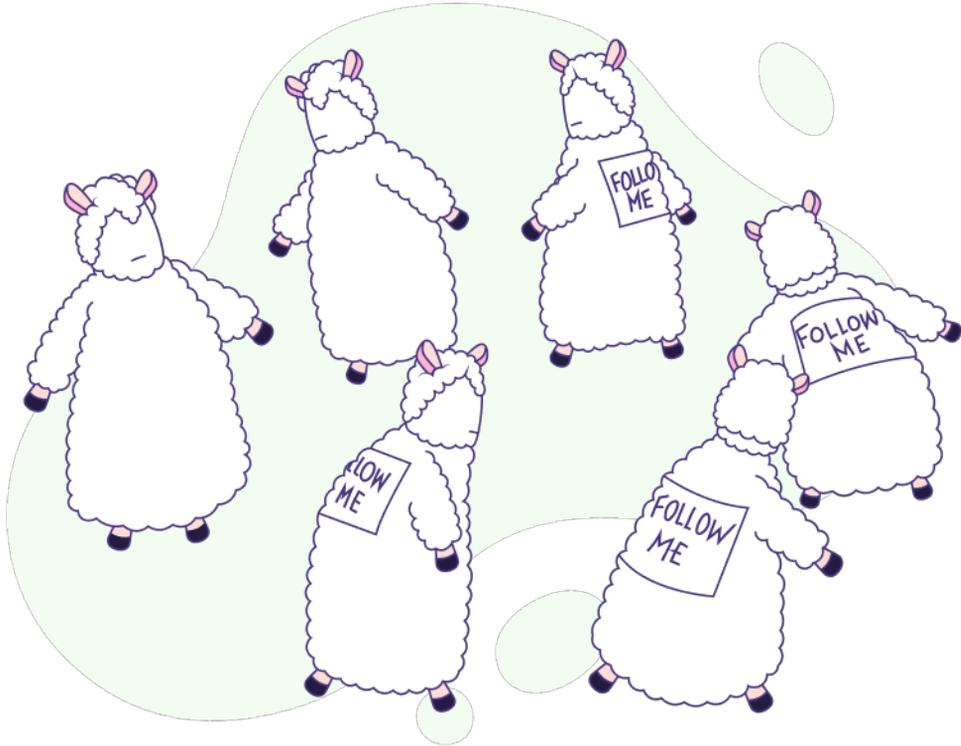
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What the specification says you need to know for Social Influence..

Content	Additional Info
Conformity	<p>Identification and explanation of how social factors (group size, anonymity and task difficulty) and dispositional factors (personality, expertise) affect conformity to majority influence.</p> <p>Asch's study of conformity.</p>
Obedience	<p>Milgram's Agency theory of social factors affecting obedience including agency, authority, culture and proximity.</p> <p>Explanation of dispositional factors affecting obedience including Adorno's theory of the Authoritarian Personality.</p>
Prosocial behaviour	<p>Bystander behaviour: identification and explanation of how social factors (presence of others and the cost of helping) and dispositional factors (similarity to victim and expertise) affect bystander intervention.</p> <p>Piliavin's subway study.</p>
Crowd and collective behaviour	<p>Prosocial and antisocial behaviour in crowds: identification and explanation of how social factors (social loafing, deindividuation and culture) and dispositional factors (personality and morality) affect collective behaviour.</p>

What is conformity?



Social influence describes **how other people affect our opinions, feelings and even behaviours.**

Conformity is one form of social influence that occurs when **an individual thinks or acts similar to those around them.** The individual may be aware that they are conforming or this may be an unconscious process whereby they do not realise that their thinking and behaviour has changed because of others influencing them.

This form of social influence is sometimes referred to as **majority influence.** Fashion is a good example of conformity as people conform to the latest trends.

When an individual conforms and goes along with the majority in public, this does not necessarily mean they have changed their private attitudes or beliefs (**attitude conversion**) although exposure to majority positions on subjects can cause this. If an individual goes along with a majority view or behaviour but does not agree internally, this is usually a form of **compliance.**

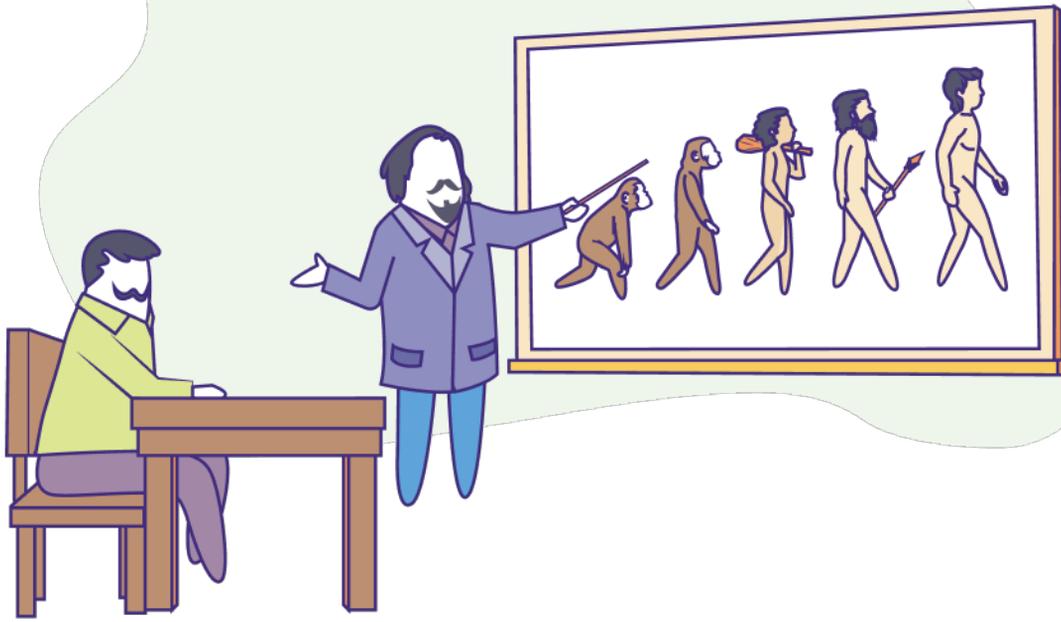
Conformity may, therefore, be characterised by public compliance rather than private acceptance and internalisation of the views or behaviours expressed.

What You Need To Know

For Social Influence and Conformity, the GCSE psychology specification states you need to know about the following:

- Identification and explanation of how social factors (group size, anonymity and task difficulty) and dispositional factors (personality, expertise) affect conformity to majority influence.
- Asch's study of conformity.

Informational social influence



Informational social influence occurs when an individual accepts the information they receive from others to be true. This type of social influence sees the individual change their beliefs and views in line with those doing the influencing. This would involve the changing of both public and privately held beliefs and attitudes as these become internalised.

Informational social influence is most likely to occur in the following situations:

- When the situation is ambiguous and the right course of action or behaviour is not clear.
- The situation is a crisis or urgent requiring immediate action.
- When an individual believes others to be the experts in the situation who are more likely to know what to do.

Deutsch and Gerrard (1955) believe there are two reasons why people may conform.

- The first is the need to be right; when presented with an unfamiliar situation or surrounded by people who we think may know more than us, we see what they are doing and assume it to be correct.

Take the example of starting a new school. We may go into the canteen area and be unsure exactly where to line up or get our food. Through observation of others, we then follow what they are doing and rely on them to guide our behaviour.

This is another example of **informational social influence**.

Normative Social Influence

- Another reason we may conform is the desire or need to be liked by others.

When we are in social situations, we want to be accepted by other people so we are more likely to say and do things that allow us to fit in or be liked.

For example, we may agree to watch a movie we are not particularly interested in because being among our friends is important to us. We may, of course, be more motivated to fit into some groups more than others and our behaviour altering will depend on how important it is for us to fit in with that particular group.

This type of social influence is known as **normative social influence**.

Social Factors Affecting Conformity

There are **three social factors you need to know** about that affect conformity.

These are:

1. **Group size**
2. **Anonymity**
3. **Task difficulty**

Group Size



People are more likely to adopt the behaviour of others when they are in a group with three or more other people who are behaving in a similar way. This is because they are likely to feel an increased level of pressure to fit in when more people are behaving similarly.

This is a form of **normative social influence**.

Task Difficulty



People are more likely to show a higher level of conformity when they are attempting to complete a more difficult task, compared to one that may be easy. When people find something challenging they are more likely to look to others to help them guide their decisions because we lack confidence in our own judgements about the situation.

This would be a form of **informational social influence**.

Anonymity



When we are in public, we are aware of the potential ridicule we may face if everyone was to hear what we say or do in comparison to when we are in private.

This is because in private company, we remain anonymous from the public majority and so this reduces our concerns about sharing our views and others disagreeing (as the majority do not know what our views are). Being anonymous can reduce conformity as it reduces normative social influence (the desire to be accepted) as we are anonymous.

When we are not identifiable, we also no longer have the fear of consequences for our actions and this can also reduce conformity.

Dispositional Factors Affecting Conformity

Dispositional factors are the individual or personal characteristics of a person that may affect how they behave or conform.

There are a number of factors identified but we will focus exclusively on how personality factors affect conformity and how expertise affects conformity.

How Personality Affects Conformity

Research has found that some personality characteristics increase the tendency to conform.

These include low self-esteem, low status in a group as well as low IQ levels.

Such factors may lead to insecurity in social situations and such individuals may assume others have a better understanding of how to behave. Such individuals may be more likely to look to others for guidance and follow what they do (informational social influence) so that they are accepted and liked (normative social influence).

How Expertise Affects Conformity

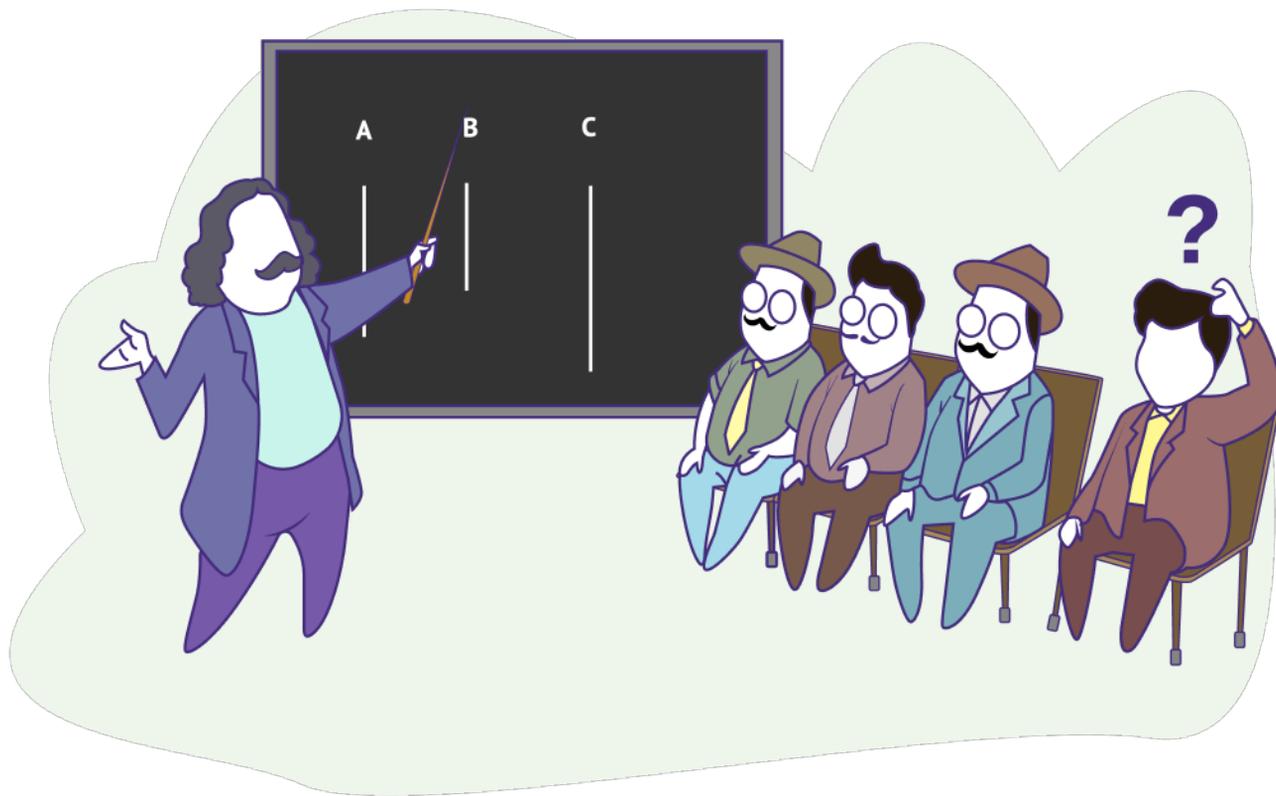
A person is less likely to conform in situations where they have a high level of expertise because they are likely to be more confident in their own opinions and experience of what to do.

This would then explain why older people are less likely to conform than younger people.

Through age and experience, we may come to feel more certain about our own understanding and knowledge base, so we feel less pressure to conform.

Expertise affects conformity due to informational social influence.

Asch's study of conformity (1956)



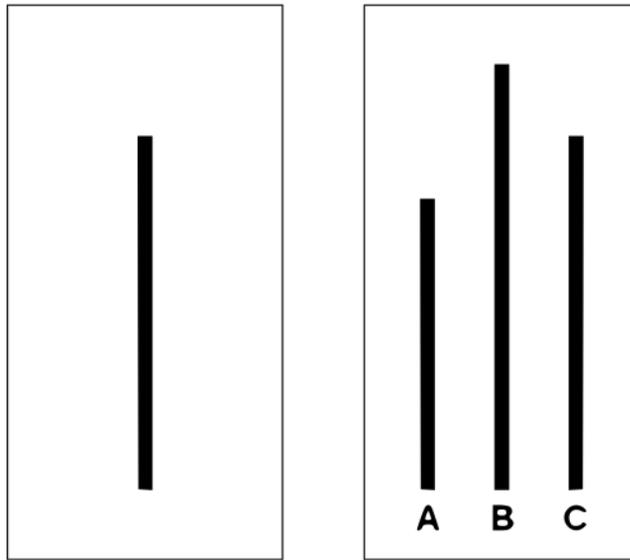
Solomon Asch was a Polish-American psychologist and is famed for his study into how conformity and peer pressure works.

Aim: To investigate if people would conform to the opinions of others and knowingly give an incorrect answer.

Study design: A laboratory experiment was conducted in which there was control of extraneous variables.

Procedures were standardised to ensure the study could be easily replicated and findings checked for reliability. Participants consisted of American male students.

Asch's study of conformity (1956) cont..



Method: Groups of 7 to 9 people were shown a set of 4 lines: a standard line and 3 other comparison lines. They were asked to say out loud which comparison line was the same length as the standard line. The correct answer was always clear.

There was only one real participant in the experiments with the rest confederates. The real participant was told the experiment was to investigate visual judgements while the confederates were all told to give the same incorrect response for 12 out of the 18 sets of lines.

The real participant was always among the last to answer so they could hear other people's responses first before giving their own judgement. This was done in an attempt to place pressure on them to conform to the majority's incorrect viewpoint.

Results: Participants were found to give the incorrect answer in line with the confederate group 36.8% of the time. Participants also conformed to the incorrect majority at least once 76% of the time. Only 24% of participants resisted the pressure to conform and gave the correct judgement in every trial.

Conclusion: The results demonstrated how people conform to fit in with the group despite knowing they are giving an incorrect judgement.



Strengths of Asch's conformity study:

- A strength of Asch's line study was that it demonstrated the extent to which people conform within social situations. When Asch's line study was repeated without confederates and the pressure to conform, the error rate was less than 1%. This rose to 36.8% when performed in a group setting demonstrating how people will conform due to normative social influence to fit in and be accepted by a group of people.
- Another strength of Asch's study was it was conducted within a laboratory setting where high levels of control over variables were achieved. This allowed researchers to limit extraneous variables and alter specific factors (such as group size) to ascertain responses were due to conformity. For example, Asch found that as he increased the group size, conformity rates increased. Asch also found that when participants could give their responses anonymously they were less likely to conform. This demonstrates how social factors evidently affect conformity rates.
- Another strength of Asch's conformity study was it was conducted in a laboratory setting with standardised procedures. This made replication possible to check for reliability and subsequent recreations of Asch's line study have confirmed the validity of the findings.

Weaknesses of Asch's conformity study:

- Asch's line study was conducted in a laboratory setting which lacks ecological validity. This means the environment was artificial and unnatural which may have caused them to behave in a way that may not generalise to natural settings. As a consequence of this, the results may not reflect how conformity could occur in everyday settings and the findings may not generalise and lack external validity.
- The task itself (judging and comparing the lengths of lines) is a contrived task that lacks personal significance to most people involved. In everyday life, conformity related behaviour is likely to be about decisions that are more important to individuals and so the results may not predict how people respond to real-life situations involving conformity.
- Another weakness of Asch's study is it was culturally biased. For example, the participants were all American and cultures such as the USA and UK are examples of individualistic cultures that emphasise the needs of the individuals. Collectivist countries such as China place greater value in meeting the needs of the group and cross-cultural research as found conformity rates are higher in collectivist cultures compared to individualistic ones. This would mean that Asch's findings can not generalise to all countries as culture is likely to be a mitigating factor that influences conformity levels and this will vary.

What You Need To Know

For Social Influence and the obedience section, the GCSE psychology specification states you need to know the following:

Milgram's Agency theory of social factors affecting obedience including agency, authority, culture and proximity.

Explanation of dispositional factors affecting obedience including Adorno's theory of the Authoritarian Personality.

What is Obedience?



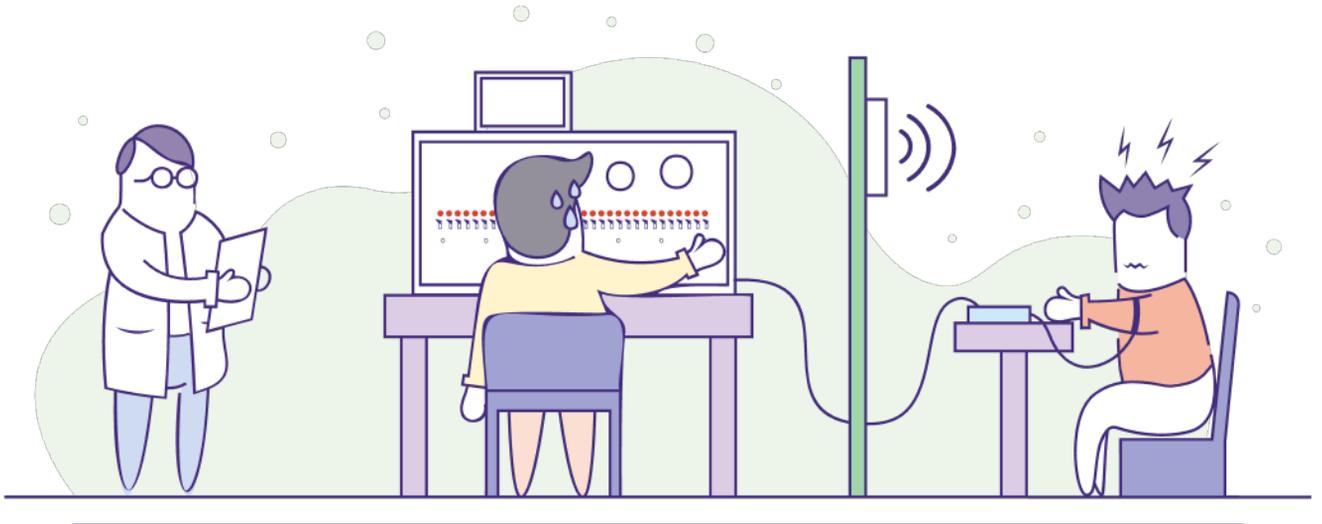
Obedience is when people follow the orders of an authority figure.

With this type of social influence, an individual has the choice to either comply with the order given by the authority figure or defy them and face potential consequences.

Research into obedience to authority came from the need to understand the situational conditions under which people would suspend their own moral judgements in order to carry out an order from a malevolent authority figure.

Stanley Milgram conducted a landmark study into obedience after Adolph Eichmann was executed for his part in the murder of European Jews during the Holocaust. Eichmann claimed at his trial that he was merely "following orders" much like many other war criminals when brought to justice. Psychologists have since then tried to understand why people will follow orders even when they know it will cause us to do things that are wrong.

Milgram's Obedience Study (1963)



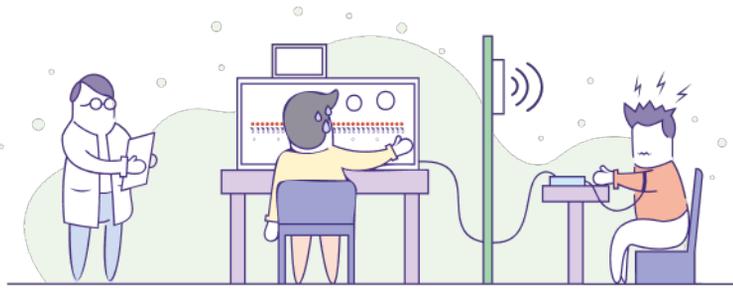
Stanley Milgram set out to explore whether ordinary people would obey a person in authority even when required to injure an innocent person. He was interested in seeing under which circumstances people might be induced to act against their consciences by inflicting harm on other people.

Before conducting the experiment he asked 14 Yale University senior psychology students to predict the outcome of the experiment. All the students asked believed that only a tiny fraction of the participants (teachers) would be willing to inflict the maximum voltage of 450volts.

Milgram also asked colleagues, Harvard University graduate Chaim Homnick and 40 psychiatrists from a medical school with the majority predicting the experiment would end before reaching the final 450volts.

Many believed that obedience rates would be tiny and most would refuse to continue beyond the 300-volt mark when the learner refused to answer. They believed only 3.73% would be willing to continue all the way.

Milgram's Obedience Study (cont.)



Procedure: Milgram's study recruited 40 participants for each variation of the study conducted. Different versions of the study were created to calculate the effects on obedience. Participants were told that the study measured how punishment affected learning (the ethical issue here would be deception).

There were two experimental confederates: an experimenter, and a 47-year-old man introduced as another volunteer participant. The two participants (one of which was the confederate) drew lots to see who would be acting as the "teacher" or the "learner". In reality, this was rigged so that the real participant would always be the teacher and the confederate always played the role of learner. The "teacher" was required to test the learner on their ability to remember word pairs. Every time an incorrect response was given, the teacher would be required to administer an electrical shock that increased in strength for the next incorrect response. The shocks started at 15 volts and increased in 15-volt increments all the way up to 450 volts.

In one variation of the experiment, the learner who sat in the other room gave mainly incorrect answers and received his fake shocks until the voltage reached 300-volts. At this point, he would pound on the wall and then give no response to the next question. This behaviour would be repeated at 315-volts and from this point onwards they would say or do nothing. If the teacher (real participant) asked to stop or question what was happening, the experimenter had a series of "prods" to repeat, such as saying, "it is absolutely essential that you continue" or "you have no other choice, you must go on".

- In the image above the "teacher" is labelled L.
- The "learner" is labelled S.
- The "experimenter" is labelled V.

Findings from Milgram's study: Contrary to the expectations of most academics, psychiatrists and colleagues, 65% of the participants continued all the way to 450-volts. This was even despite the shock generator being labelled "Danger, severe shock at 420-volts" and "XXX at 450-volts". All participants in the study reached at least 300-volts with only 12.5% (5 people) stopping there once the learner first objected.

Conclusion: This study demonstrated how ordinary people are obedient to authority, even when requested to behave in an inhumane way. This showed us that it was not evil people that committed atrocities but just ordinary people who obey orders. This may mean that many crimes against humanity may be the outcome of situational factors rather than dispositional factors. An individual's capacity for making independent decisions is suspended when they find themselves in a subordinate position within a powerful social hierarchy.

Milgram's Agency Theory Of Obedience (1963)



Milgram's Agency Theory (1963) suggests we are more likely to obey orders when we enter an "agentic state".

Normally, we feel as if we are responsible for our own actions with the freedom to choose how we may behave. This is known as an autonomous state.

An agentic state is when we believe we are acting on the behalf of an authority figure so we are therefore no longer accountable for our own actions. We see the responsibility for our behaviour laying with the authority figure giving us the orders to carry out. Milgram called this move from an autonomous state to an agentic state the "agentic shift".

Milgram argued that we are taught to enter the agentic state as children because we are taught to respect and follow the orders from authority figures within society. We, therefore, think this is normal to do with little thought and this can lead to blind obedience.

Evaluating Milgram's Agency Theory Of Obedience (1963)

- Milgram's Agency Theory is supported by his study into obedience (1963). In this infamous study, 65% of his participants were prepared to give what they believed to be potentially fatal electric shocks to another person when an authority figure told them to do so.
- Milgram argued they were acting in an agentic state on behalf of the authority figure (an experimenter in a laboratory coat) because they were being paid to perform a role and informed the experimenter will take responsibility for their actions. If they had been informed that they would be responsible for their own actions, it is unlikely that so many people would have followed the orders.
- Not everyone blindly follows orders, which suggests that some people are less likely to enter the agentic state than others. Milgram's theory focuses on social factors that affect obedience however other psychologists have argued that dispositional factors such as personality are more important in determining how obedient someone will be.

Social factors affecting obedience



How Does Authority Affects Obedience?

Some people within society hold higher positions of authority than others.

We are raised in a society **where we are told to obey authority figures** such as **parents, police officers, teachers and even doctors and nurses**. People are almost **conditioned into obeying authority figures** with little thought and this makes it more likely that we will follow orders given by them too as they have legitimate authority over us.

People **trust the expertise and social status** they hold within society authority figures present and so fear potential punishments should we not obey.

Uniforms are associated with positions of authority and have also been shown to increase obedience levels.

How Does Culture Affect Obedience?

The culture we live in can also influence how we think about authority figures.

Some research studies (not all) have found that individualistic cultures like western societies have lower levels of obedience compared to collectivist cultures. This is thought to be because collectivist cultures place greater importance on group values and respecting authority while individualistic cultures place a greater value on independence and individual freedoms.

This would affect obedience levels as it influences how people respond to authority figures.

How Does Proximity Affect Obedience?

Proximity simply means how far away something is from us.

Research into social factors affecting obedience has found that the closer we are to an authority figure, the more likely we are to obey them.

For example, in Milgram's obedience research, obedience levels were higher when the experimenter gave instructions from the same room as the participant rather than using a telephone.

Another factor affecting obedience levels is the proximity to the consequences of our actions. For example, if our boss was to tell us to dismiss someone, we are more likely to find it easier to do if this was by email rather than in person.

Not being able to see the effects of our actions or consequences of this in person makes it easier to do. Therefore obedience levels are higher when we are distanced from the consequences of our actions and do not see the outcomes.

If we were to be closer, this is likely to lower obedience levels.

Dispositional Factors Affecting Obedience



Dispositional factors are **internal factors about a person** that affect obedience levels.

These can be **high or low self-esteem, confidence levels or even intelligence levels**.

These characteristics all **affect whether a person is likely to obey or not**. For example, in Milgram's obedience research, the people that tended to disobey the experimenter were often found to be more confident and articulate.

Adorno Theory of the Authoritarian Personality

Adorno argued that some people develop personalities that make them more obedient than others due to their early childhood experiences. Adorno named this personality type the authoritarian personality.

Adorno believed this personality was shaped in early childhood by parenting that focused on hierarchical and authoritarian parenting styles. Under such conditions, children learn to obey authority and acquire the same attitudes through a process of social learning and imitation.

To test for an authoritarian personality, Adorno created the "F-Scale" questionnaire which comprised of 30 questions assessing nine personality dimensions.

Adorno's theory was formed after interviewing two thousand American students (cultural bias) about their early upbringing. He found that students who had experienced a harsh, critical or strict parenting style that involved physical punishments in the early years were more obedient as adults. As children, they felt angry about the tough punishments received but this appeared to result in them demonstrating more submissive and obedient behaviours as adults towards authority figures.



Evaluating Adorno's Theory of the Authoritarian Personality

- Adorno developed the F scale questionnaire to measure people's attitudes and behaviour. People who scored highly on this scale are believed to have authoritarian personalities and thus more obedient and there is some research evidence to support this theory.
- However, Adorno was only able to find a correlation between personality type and obedience, not prove that the authoritarian personality actually caused higher levels of obedience. Furthermore, some of the most obedient participants in Milgram's study did not experience the authoritarian upbringing Adorno predicted.
- Research evidence has also found intelligence is a factor in obedience levels with lower educational levels associated with higher levels of obedience compared to those educated to a higher level. This would suggest that dispositional factors such as intelligence and knowledge may also play an important role in obedience to authority.

Prosocial Behaviour

For Social Influence and Prosocial behaviour, the GCSE psychology specification states you need to know the following:

- Bystander behaviour: identification and explanation of how social factors (presence of others and the cost of helping) and dispositional factors (similarity to victim and expertise) affect bystander intervention.
- Piliavin's subway study.



What is pro-social behaviour?



Prosocial behaviour is defined as **acting in a way that would benefit other people.**

This is most commonly seen in bystander behaviour, where people who witness events or emergencies offer to help people who need assistance.

Bystander apathy is when they choose **not to help others in distress.**

Research into prosocial behaviour has tried to understand what factors determine whether or not bystanders will help other people.

Social factors affecting bystander behaviour

The presence of others

We are more likely to help other people when we are alone then compared to when other people are present. There are believed to be two explanations for this.

Firstly, it is difficult to determine whether or not a situation is, in fact, an emergency. For example, when children scream, it may be simply because they are playing rather than due to them genuinely hurting themselves. People do not wish to overreact and make themselves appear foolish so they rely on the behaviours of those around them to judge what is happening. If others are not reacting, then a person may assume the situation is not an emergency and therefore conform to the group behaviour.

Secondly, a person is more likely to react and help another person if they are alone. This is because, in an emergency situation, we have to assume full responsibility for helping a person in need as there is no one else that can help. When others are present, the responsibility of helping is divided or shared among these people through diffusion of responsibility. The more people that are present, the more we diffuse responsibility and assume others can help instead and would be more likely to do so.



The Cost of Helping

When deciding whether to help or not, it is believed that people weigh up the potential costs and rewards of helping someone in need.

In some circumstances, a person may decide that it is too costly to help as we may injure ourselves, put ourselves at risk, be inconvenienced too much or lose time and money. In other situations, we may decide the cost is low and worth the potential benefits. People may also determine whether to help based on what help is required.

For example, helping someone who is being attacked may be deemed risky however helping someone with directions would not. People may also help based on what they believe the rewards to be. This may be praise, social recognition, financial reward or simply avoiding the feelings of guilt they may experience for not helping someone. These can all be seen as rewarding to the individual in some way.

People weigh up the costs and benefits of helping others before making their decision and if the costs outweigh the rewards, we are less likely to help. If the rewards outweigh the costs, then we are more inclined to intervene.

How dispositional factors affect bystander behaviour

Similarity to victim

When a bystander feels there are similarities between them and the person in need of help, research suggests they are more likely to offer assistance.

If people are the same gender, similar age levels, or have other characteristics in common, people find it easier to empathise with those in need of help because they think they are similar to us.

This means we are able to put ourselves in their shoes and imagine how they are likely to be feeling in the situation.

By assisting them, we are then likely to feel better because our distress about their situation is reduced.

How expertise affects bystander behaviour

Bystanders are more likely to help others if they feel they have the skills or expertise required to be able to help them based on the situation.

For example, if someone was in trouble while swimming, someone who is an excellent swimmer (or lifeguard) would feel more confident in their ability to help due to their knowledge and experience. People who are not able to swim may be less inclined and it is through this, expertise becomes a factor in whether bystanders choose to help or not.

Bystanders may still feel concerned and distressed observing someone else in trouble however when other people are present, they may believe that someone else might be more capable of helping, or is more able to help better or more easily than themselves which prevents them from joining in.

Piliavin's Subway Study (1969)

Watch the YouTube video on this study here: <https://youtu.be/z4S1LLrSzVE>

Aim: Piliavin's subway study investigated whether the appearance of a victim would influence whether people helped or not.

Study design: A field experiment was conducted in which there was limited control over extraneous variables. Participants were male and female passengers who were travelling on the 8th Avenue subway train in New York City. They were unaware that they were part of a psychological study (this raises ethical issues of deception and lack of informed consent).

Method: An actor pretended to collapse in the train carriage with his appearance altered.

In 38 of the trials his appearance was altered to be that of someone who was drunk; he smelt of alcohol and had a bottle of alcohol wrapped in a paper bag. In 65 trials he appeared sober and carried a walking stick.

Researchers recorded how often and how quickly the "victim" was helped.

Results: When the actor was carrying a walking stick, he was helped within 70 seconds 95% of the time. When he appeared drunk, he received help within 70 seconds 50% of the time.

Conclusion: A person's appearance will affect whether or not they receive help and how quickly this help is given.

Evaluating Piliavin's Subway Study (1969)

- Piliavin's subway study was important because it helped us understand why some victims are less likely to receive help compared to others due to the cost of helping.
- If someone is drunk for example, they may be seen as unpredictable and therefore helping them may put ourselves at risk of harm. This study also demonstrated how vulnerable members of society such as children, pregnant women or senior citizens were more likely to receive help because bystanders perceive them to be deserving of help and present less risk of harm.
- Another strength of Piliavin's study was that it was conducted in a natural setting with real people who were unaware they were involved in the study. This means demand characteristics were eliminated and people acted as they would in a real example. This study, therefore, has high ecological validity and could help explain bystander behaviour even in real-life situations.
- Piliavin's study has limitations however as it was conducted in America and could be argued to be culturally biased.
- For example, America is an individualistic culture where people are expected to help themselves and deal with their own problems. In collectivist cultures, there is a greater emphasis on reciprocal support and helping others and research suggests that altruistic or "helping behaviour" is not the same across individualistic cultures and collectivist cultures. This is a weakness of Piliavin's research as it cannot be generalised to explain all bystander behaviour across different cultures.
- There is also some research evidence to suggest that people living in rural areas are more helpful in emergency and non-emergency situations than those living in cities and urban environments. This would mean that Piliavin's study may not reliably predict bystander behaviour outside of cities or towns.
- Another criticism is Piliavin's research ignores individualistic characteristics such as personality variables.
- For example, some people may have a stronger belief that it is their duty to help others or greater experience or expertise in doing so compared to others. These variables would make it more or less likely for bystanders to help which is ignored by Piliavin's study.
- Piliavin's study also ignores the findings of previous research which identified the diffusion of responsibility as a factor. He concluded that the characteristics of a person in need were more important than the number of bystanders present in influencing helping behaviour. He believed that people were just as likely to be given help on a crowded subway compared to an empty one based on the "victims" characteristics rather than the "helpers". This contradicts other research that has looked at how the diffusion of responsibility occurs which influences helping behaviour with people more or less likely to help dependent on the number of other bystanders that are present.

Crowd and collective behaviour

For Social Influence and Crowd and Collective behaviour, the GCSE psychology specification states you need to know the following:

- Prosocial and antisocial behaviour in crowds: identification and explanation of how social factors (social loafing, deindividuation and culture) and dispositional factors (personality and morality) affect collective behaviour.



Crowd and collective behaviour refers to how people behave when in group settings. Psychologists have found that people behave differently when they are part of a group or crowd compared to when they are alone.

Early theories have suggested that crowds had a tendency to act as a violent mob and although the majority of the research has focused on antisocial behaviour, most crowd behaviour tends to be peaceful.

A growing body of research evidence also highlights that crowds can act in prosocial ways too. An example of this is after the 2005 London underground bombings, large numbers of people who were trapped underground united to work together and help fellow passengers. Peaceful crowds showing responsible behaviour occurs on a regular basis at sporting events, train stations, tourist attractions or even religious gatherings.

Social loafing

Social loafing refers to the idea that **individuals will put less effort into completing a task when they are part of a group** compared to when they are completing it alone.

When a group are completing the task together, every individual is being helped by others within the group and this results in the diffusion of responsibility occurring as each individual does not have to work as hard. This results in each person ultimately contributing less towards the task.

There are some key factors that reduce the likelihood of social loading occurring, such as:

- When people are in a small group (compared to a large group).
- If individuals are completing a task or activity they think is important.
- If the group is in competition with another group.
- If each individual's efforts are identified and evaluated within a group task.

Deindividuation



Deindividuation



Deindividuation refers to what happens when people **lose their sense of individuality**. Individuality refers to who we are, our personality values, our sense of right and wrong.

Psychologists have found that people can become deindividuated when in a crowd because they feel like they are anonymous. Within a crowd, it is hard to be identified and more so if their appearance is masked or they look like other people in the crowd. This leads people to lose their inhibitions and sense of responsibility for what they do. As a result, they are less able to monitor their own behaviour and judge whether their actions are right or wrong because they behave as part of the crowd rather than an individual.

Research into deindividuation has found that when people are in crowds, they look to those around them to guide their own behaviour. If the crowd is happy and joyful, the people joining the crowd will change their behaviour to adapt accordingly. If however, the crowd is a hostile mob, the people joining in will also become aggressive and hostile. This is because they feel they are anonymous within the group and no one knows who they are and so they think they cannot be punished.

Culture

The **social norms within a culture can also affect collective behaviour.**

Interestingly, social loafing does not occur in all societies. For example, in collectivist cultures such as China, people are prepared to work just as hard for the good of the whole group even when they do not need to. This means that it is difficult to assume that collective behaviour will be the same across all cultures.

Personality

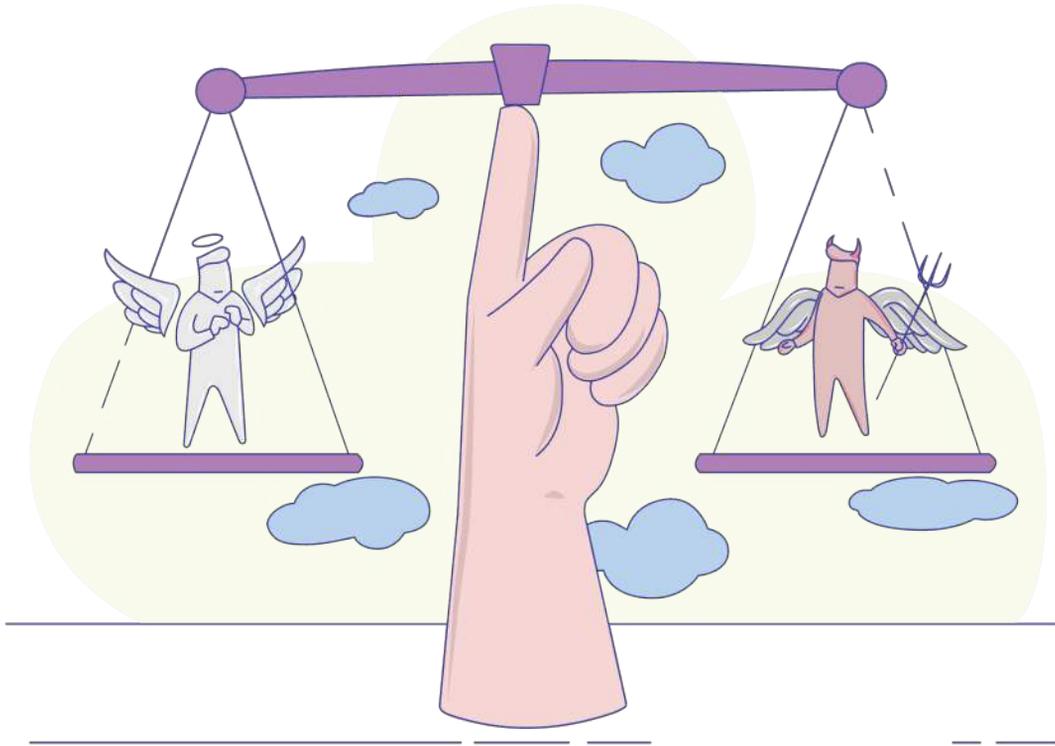
Rotter (1966) believed that some people have an internal locus of control while others had an external locus of control.

People with an **internal locus of control believe they control the things that happen to them.** People with an **external locus of control, attribute the things that happen to them to factors outside of their control.**

If people with an internal locus of control (dubbed “internals”) did poorly in an assessment or test, they are likely to believe this was because they did not revise enough whereas people with an external locus of control (dubbed “externals”) would blame the result on poor teaching or difficult questions in the test.

Subsequent research has found that people with an internal locus of control **take greater responsibility** for their own behaviour and thus are more likely to decide how to behave based on their own idea of what is right or wrong (rather than conforming to the group's behaviour). This means such people are less likely to conform to crowd collective behaviours compared to those with an external locus of control.

Morality



Whether a person engages in prosocial or antisocial behaviour may also depend on their sense of morality.

Morality is defined as their sense of what is right and wrong. For example, young people may not trust the police or believe they are there to protect them and their communities and may, therefore, feel justified in abusing or attacking them when in collective situations. However, this is not the only factor to influence their behaviour.

If for example, they believe their behaviour is right and justified, they may still avoid getting involved in anti-social behaviour if engaging in it presents a personal risk to them, such as getting in trouble, prison, losing their job or facing negative consequences.

Past Paper Practice Questions 2021

1) Which of the following is a **social** factor that affects obedience?

Select **one** answer.

- a) Personality
- b) Proximity
- c) Similarity to victim
- d) Social loafing

[1 mark]

Task difficulty **and** expertise are two factors known to affect conformity.

2) Use an example to describe how **each** of these factors could affect conformity.

[2 marks]

3) Briefly evaluate Adorno's theory of the Authoritarian Personality.

[3 marks]

Past Paper Practice Questions 2021

4) Briefly explain **two** weaknesses of laboratory experiments. Refer to Asch's study of conformity in your answer.

[4 marks]

5) Describe **and** evaluate Piliavin's subway study.

[9 marks]

Past Paper Practice Questions 2021

Read the following conversation.

Two boys went to see a football game where a fight happened between two groups of fans. They talked about the fight after the game.

Liam: "I'm not really sure why I joined in, I just went along with the crowd."

Lukas: "When I saw the fight starting, I knew I had to walk away because I strongly believe violence is wrong".

Liam: "I don't really like violence either, but the friend I was with joined in so I had to join in as well because I didn't want to look like I was scared."

6) What is meant by the term **deindividuation**? Refer to the conversation above in your answer.

[3 marks]

Dispositional factors can affect how likely it is that someone will join in with collective behaviour.

7) Explain why Liam joined in the fight but Lukas did not. Use the conversation **and** your knowledge of dispositional factors in your answer.

[3 marks]

Past Paper Practice Questions 2020

8) Which **two** of the following statements about conformity are correct? Circle two answers.

- a) Conformity is when people follow the orders of someone in a position of authority.
- b) Group size does not affect how likely people are to conform.
- c) People are more likely to conform when the task they are doing is difficult.
- d) People are more likely to conform when they have a high level of expertise in the task they are doing.
- e) Personality can affect how likely people are to conform.

[2 marks]

9) You have been asked to design an experiment to investigate the effect of anonymity on conformity.

In your answer outline the following information:

1. What your independent and dependent variables would be
2. One thing you would do to standardise your procedure and why this would benefit your research
3. The results you would expect to find from your experiment.

[6 marks]

10) When carrying out the experiment outlined in in your answer to the previous question, you should consider ethical issues.

- Identify **two** ethical issues that you would need to consider.
- Suggest **one** appropriate way of dealing with **each** of the issues you identify.

[4 marks]

Ethical issue one:

Ethical issue two:

Read the following information:

A psychologist wanted to understand more about bystander behaviour. She carried out a study to see if someone's appearance would affect how quickly people helped them when they fell over.

In condition 1, an actor fell over in a public place. He was using a crutch and pretending to have a broken leg.

In condition 2, an actor fell over in a public place. He was pretending to be drunk. The psychologist recorded how long it took for people to offer help to the actor in both conditions.

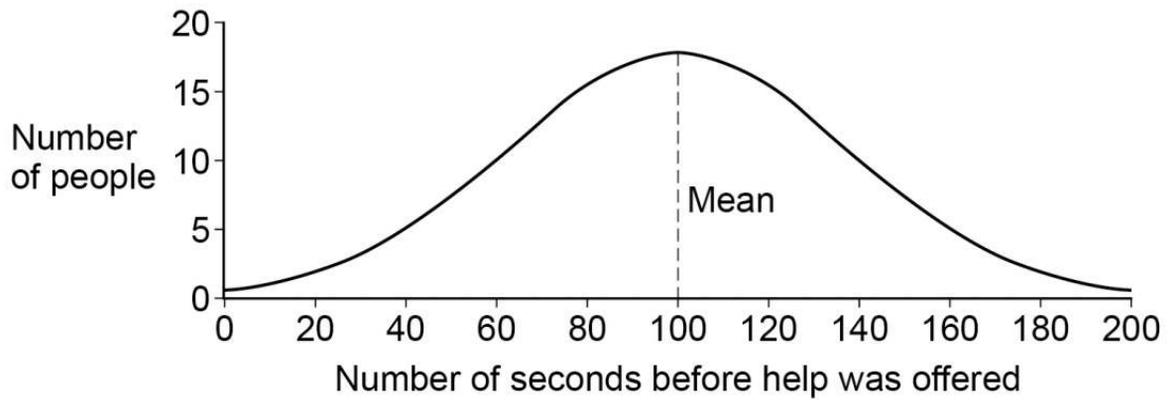
11) Which of the following research methods is being used in this study on bystander behaviour? Select **one** answer.

- a) Case study
- b) Field experiment
- c) Interview
- d) Natural experiment

[1 mark]

The results for condition 1 are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1



12) When data is plotted on a graph and makes the shape seen in Figure 1, what name is given to it?

[1 mark]

13) Name **two** other descriptive statistics that would have a very similar value to the mean in **Figure 1**.

[2 marks]

14) Describe **and** evaluate Milgram's Agency theory of obedience.

[9 marks]

A large area of horizontal blue and light blue lines for writing, consisting of 20 rows of alternating light blue and medium blue bands.

Past Paper Practice Questions 2019

15) Read the following descriptions of bystander behaviour. Decide which factor that affects bystander intervention is the **most likely** explanation of the behaviour being described:

Caitlin jumped into a river and rescued a child who had fallen in. Caitlin was called a hero but dismissed the praise saying 'I just did what any other off-duty lifeguard would have done.'

Circle **one** answer.

- A. Anonymity
- B. Cost of helping
- C. Deindividuation
- D. Expertise
- E. Presence of others
- F. Similarity to victim

[1 mark]

16) People were waiting at a bus stop. Just as the bus arrived, one of the people collapsed on the pavement. All of the people who were concerned they would be late for work got onto the bus. Some other people stayed behind to help.

Circle **one** answer

- A. Anonymity
- B. Cost of helping
- C. Deindividuation
- D. Expertise
- E. Presence of others
- F. Similarity to victim

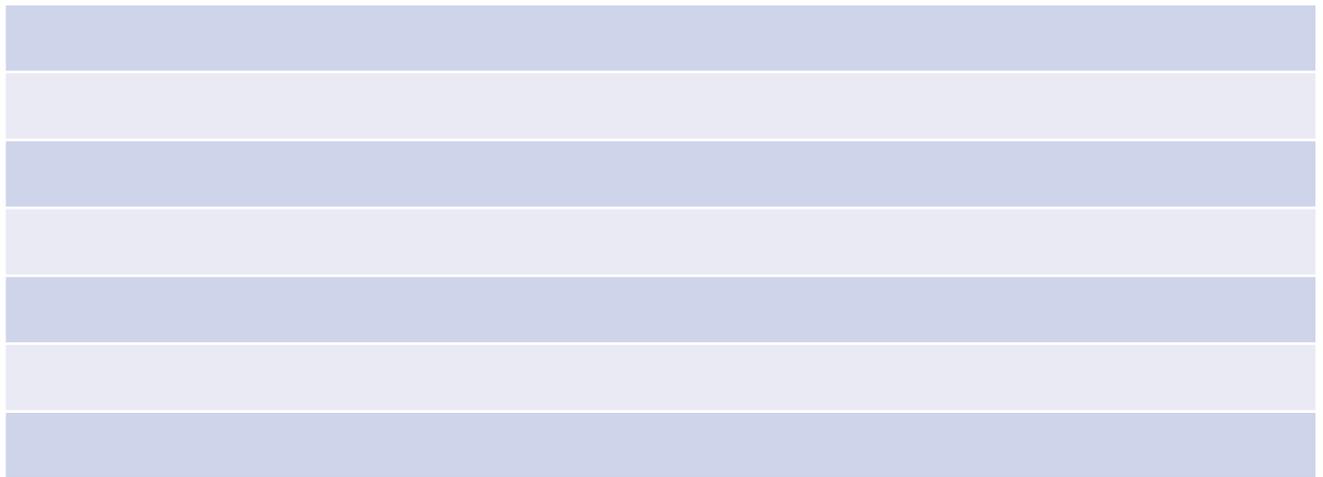
[1 mark]

17) After a football game, a supporter fell over. The only people who stopped to help were wearing shirts showing that they were supporters of the same team as the person that fell over.

Circle **one** answer.

- A. Anonymity
- B. Cost of helping
- C. Deindividuation
- D. Expertise
- E. Presence of others
- F. Similarity to victim

[3 marks]



18) A psychologist conducted a study to see if people will conform to the opinion of others.

The psychologist put each participant into a group with seven strangers. The group was asked to compare the length of three different lines to the length of a single line. Each group member was asked to say out loud which of the three lines was the same as the single line. The participants were asked to say their answers last.

The participant did not know that everyone else in the group was a confederate and deliberately giving the wrong answers.

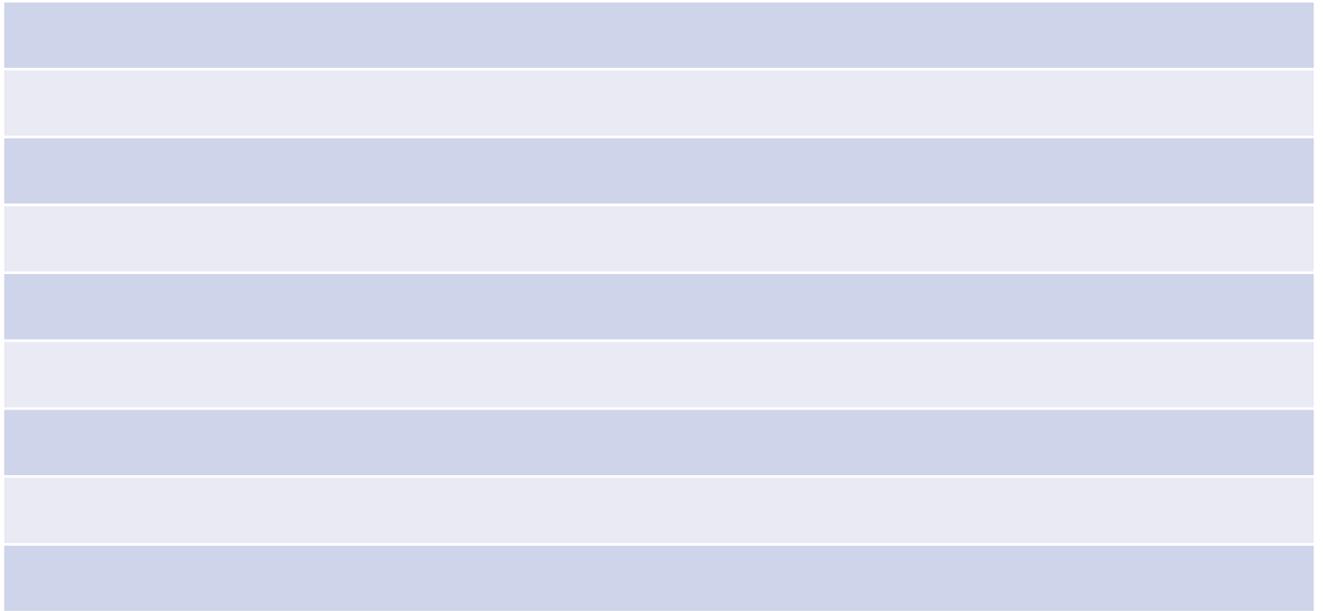
The psychologist found that 91% of the participants conformed by giving the wrong answer at least once.

Use your knowledge of **one** social factor affecting conformity to explain these results.

[3 marks]

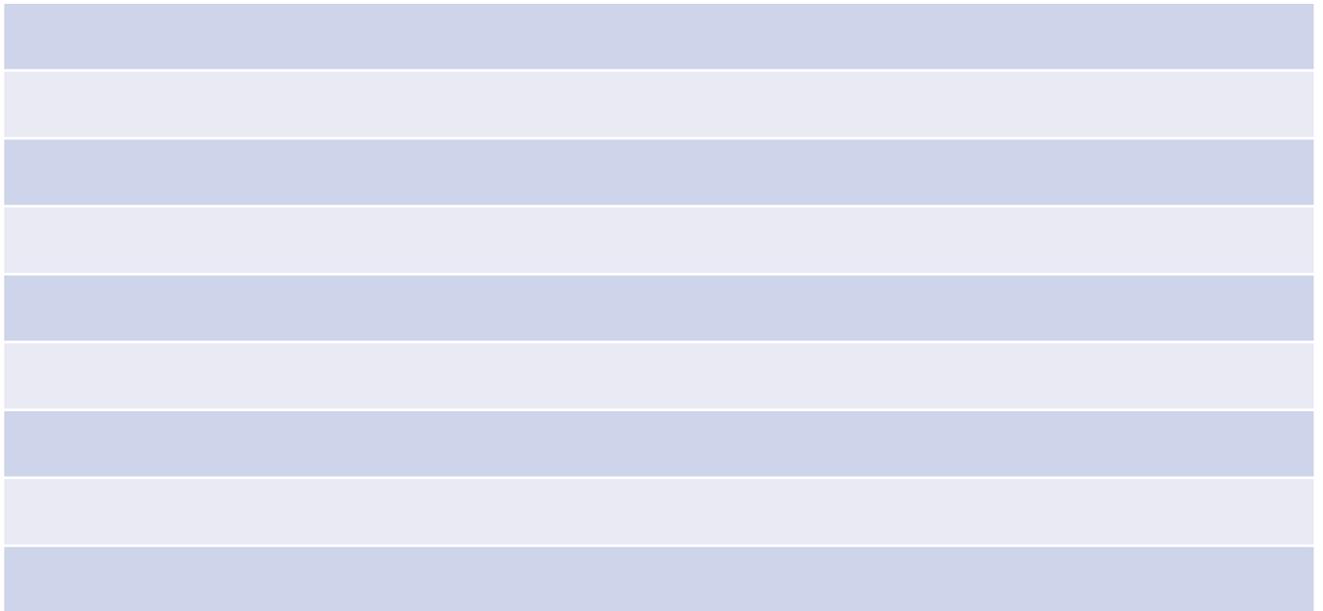
19) Evaluate the study described in the previous question.

[4 marks]



20) Briefly explain Milgram's agency theory of social factors affecting obedience.

[3 marks]



21) Use your knowledge of psychology to evaluate Adorno's theory of the Authoritarian Personality.

[5 marks]

Read the following article:

Research of study into collective behaviour

Researchers have carried out a study into collective behaviour with students from two different countries. People from Country A are more individualistic and people from Country B are more collectivist. The researchers found a difference in the way that students from each country behaved when they were put into a group and did a shared task. Students from Country A were found to put in less effort than students from Country B

22) What is meant by 'collective behaviour'?

[1 mark]

23) Identify and explain **two** social factors that influenced the collective behaviour described in the article.

[4 marks]

Social factor 1:

Social factor 2:

24) Use an example to explain how **one** dispositional factor could affect collective behaviour.

[2 marks]



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