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Do you know what
conformity is?

What is conformity ?

Conformity is when individuals change their perceptions, beliefs or behaviours due to the real or imagined influence of other people. People tend to act in a way that is consistent with the group norm. This change in behaviour is not initiated by a request and it depends on the situation you are in.

Why do we conform?

Informational social influence:

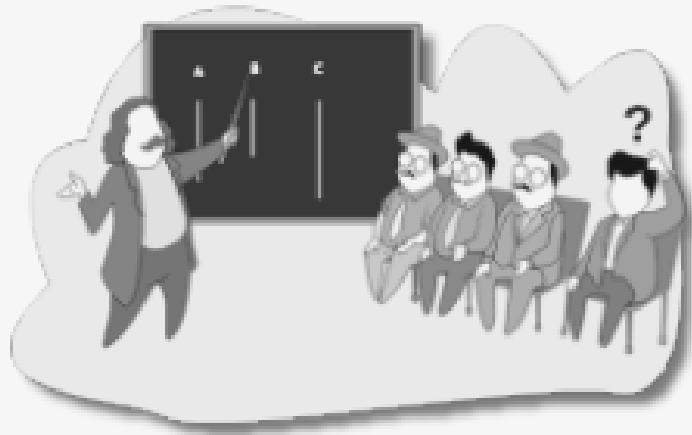
This is when individuals rely on other people as a “source of information to guide [their] behaviour.” Individuals conform because they believe the person that they are following is more knowledgeable about the ambiguous situation that they are in. They want to act correctly and appropriately in the situation. Informational social influence can lead to ***public compliance*** and ***private acceptance***.

(Aronson et al., 2016, 226- 244)

Why do we conform?

Normative social influence:

This is when individuals change their behaviour in order to follow other members of their social group to be liked and accepted by them. Normative social influence always leads to ***public compliance*** ***but*** it doesn't always lead to ***private acceptance***.



Asch (1951):

In this study, there was one participant who had to choose which line (of three lines) was the same length as a target line. There were also confederates that purposefully gave the wrong answers. When the confederates gave the wrong answer, so did the participant - even though they knew it was wrong. This is a clear example of normative social influence.

(Aronson et al., 2016, 226- 244)
& (Mcleod, 2023)

Types of conformity:

- Compliance: When individuals change their public beliefs but not their private ones so that they can fit in with their social group. This change in attitude is short-term.
- Internalisation: This is when an individual changes their public and private beliefs to match those of their social group. This change is long-term and will continue outside of the group situation.
- Identification: When an individual changes their public and private beliefs because they value the beliefs of a certain social group and they wish to be part of the group. This change in belief tends to be long-lasting .

Source: StudyRocket

Pros and cons of conformity

Pros:

- It can help you abandon bad habits
- It aids in rule enforcement
- It can create a safety net
- It makes work easier for everyone

Cons:

- It often hinders personal progress
- It causes you to lose your identity
- It doesn't encourage change in the world
- It can lead to dependence

(15 Biggest Pros and Cons of Conformity in Society, 2019)

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Sources

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**How do you think
conformity can help or
hinder your performance
at work?**

comment below