

## Candidate 2 evidence

A Describe behaviour associated with a chosen psychological topic. (maximum of 2 marks available)

The definition of psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. A psychologist is a mental health professional who specialises in the human body, mind and behaviour where they use various scientific methods to treat psychological disorders and aim to better improve people's lives through the development of their behaviours. Social psychology is the study of people's thoughts, feelings and actions and how they can impact and influence others around them. Conformity means to change your behaviours and act in certain ways when around certain groups of people and the ways that people follow social norms, rules and laws.

B Explain features of the topic with reference to psychological research evidence (maximum of 8 marks available)

People may conform because of many varied reasons such as gender, culture, size of group and age also including situational factors such as status in a group etc

There are many different types of conformity including

**Identification** – to change their beliefs both publicly and privately, only when part of the group (if they were to leave the group, they would not conform)

**Internalisation** – if a person changes their beliefs both publicly and privately, change is even present when the group is not.

**normative social influence** – if a person knows what the 'correct' thing to do but are influenced by social norms

**informational social influence** – if a person feels uncertain about a situation, they will adopt the behaviours of the group to do the 'right thing'

**compliance** – when someone changes their beliefs/ behaviour/ opinion to fit in with a certain group

Some studies that focused on conformity are, **Mori and Arai (2010)** and **Jenness (1932)**

**Jenness (1932)**

- aimed to see if individual people would change their answers to the amount of beans in a jar based on the group setting

Jenness asked participants to estimate how many beans the jar contained. Jenness then put the participants in a room with the jar and asked them to as a group discuss how many beans they thought were in the jar. They were then asked to guess on their own to find out if their original guess matched the group guess.

He then spoke to the participant by themselves and asked if they would like to change their original estimates or stay with the amount that the group discussed together. Almost all participants had changed their original guesses to be closer to the group guess.

**Mori and Arai (2010)**

An adaptation of the famous conformity study of lines conducted by Solomon Asch. Mori and Arai used filtered glasses to study the rates of conformity based on majority influence and gender. Participants wore filtered glasses which allowed all of them to look at the same image while seeing different things and in each group one person's lenses were altered to see a different 'correct answer' to the rest they would give their answers out loud, to see, to see if they would conform with the group and give a different answer to what they were seeing. They found that female conformity rates were higher (likely due to social norms in Japan) and that males did not conform as much as women did.

C Describe an aim for research on this topic (maximum of 1 mark available)

**Aim** – To investigate the extent to which individuals will conform when a group gives an 'obviously wrong answer' on the individual guesses.

D Give an experimental / alternative hypothesis for the proposed research study (maximum of 2 marks available)

**Hypothesis**

- The fake answers provided will increase conformity rates and have an influence on the individual guesses of the participant
- The fake answers will not influence individual guesses when given an 'obviously wrong answer' any difference will be down to random chance.

E Describe a suitable research plan, including method, sampling, variables and procedures (maximum of 12 marks available)

### Research plan

The research method I have decided to use is a lab experiment. A lab experiment is conducted in a controlled environment where the independent variable can be easily manipulated to suit the experiment. The researcher will also be using an independent group design where different participants are used for each condition to show that the effect of fake answers is what is causing the increase in conformity rates.

### Lab experiment

#### Strengths

- Can easily draw a conclusion from results
- Easily replicated
- Allows for control of extraneous and independent variables

#### Weaknesses

- People may act unnaturally because of the environment
- Difficult to generalize findings because of sample size or the conditions

The reason I have chosen a lab experiment to be the most suitable to use is because the experiment will be conducted in a school environment (college), and it will be easier to control extraneous variables in this environment.

The type of sampling technique used will be opportunity sampling where participants are chosen as they happen to be available at the time of the study. So, most likely college students would be the target population.

This method was chosen as it will be the most convenient and less time consuming than other methods such as quota or self-selected.

#### Variables

Independent – will be the fake answers prepared in advance that are 'obviously incorrect'

Dependent – will be the real answers given by the participants after getting told to guess the amount of pasta in the glass.

Controlled – will ensure that both groups give their answers at the same time of day and the same place. the temperature will be (being room temperature) and the lighting will be the same for both groups, conducted in the afternoon each time.

### **Procedure**

A sample group of 10 males and 10 females will be used. All participants will be over sixteen and have given their consent before conducting the experiment, they will also be told that if they want to withdraw, they can and all the information on them, etc will be not used in the final results. 5 females and 5 males will be given a sheet of paper and a clear glass jar of pasta they will see for 2 minutes the jar will be removed then they will be asked to guess how much pasta was in the jar which will be (the control group). In the second group ( the experimental group) 5 males and 5 females also will follow the same procedure however there will be 'fake' answers on the sheet that give higher answers that are clearly out of proportion to the amount of pasta in the jar, then have the remaining participants guess how many pieces of pasta are in the jar while having the 'fake' answers on the sheet in front of them. Afterward, it will be measured how the experimental group's answers (with the 'fake' answers on the sheet) matched the control group's answers. Also, to discover if the participants conformed with the 'fake' answers on the sheet in front of them. After completion the participants will be debriefed and any questions they have will be answered. To ensure that all participants are informed and clear on what happened.

F Describe ethical issues and ways of addressing these in the research plan (maximum of 4 marks available)

- One of the ethical issues necessary for this experiment was deception participants will be told at the start of the experiment that it was investigating visual perception and afterward will be told that, it was about conformity. however, this needs to be recognized as being necessary to gain accurate results. However, participants may feel uncomfortable with this and may feel negatively about the fact that they had conformed. To protect the participants from harm, they will have it explained to them that to conform is normal human haviour and then allow them to ask any questions that they may have during the debrief. After the experiment is finished. They will also be given contact information if they have any further questions regarding the experiment or the results.
- Another ethical issue could be protection from harm, because the participants may feel embarrassed or self-conscious about that fact that they conformed and may not feel comfortable with people knowing this, to help with this issue participants names and personal information will be kept confidential and participants will be referred to as a number, no names or personal information will be published or have any part of the results it will all be anonymous in order to protect participants identities.

G References (maximum of 1 mark available)

<https://www.bps.org.uk/research-digest/aschs-conformity-study-without-confederates>

(PDF) A Questionnaire Analysis of the Asch Experiment without Using Confederates (researchgate.net)

(Mori and Arai study conformity)

<https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/reference/conformity-jenness-1932>

Major studies of conformity (ukessays.com)

(Jenness 1932 study conformity)

[PSYCHOLOGY | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary](#)  
(definition of psychology)