



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Module Name: Study Skills for Psychology

Module Code: MWPS4005

Lecturer's Name: Karen Eaton-Thomas

Assignment Component 1 E-Portfolio

Student Name	Student ID
Grace Easter Devina Marpaung	25090128

Word Count	2165 words
-------------------	------------

Task 1: Paraphrase a Section From a Selected Book Chapter

What is Conformity?

In social psychology, the presence of one individual can influence another, either overtly or indirectly. Overt influence might be exemplified by the demonstration of obedience, whereas people can also be influenced unintentionally through social influence or conformity. According to Crutchfield (1955), conformity is defined as yielding to group pressure, while Zimbardo and Leippe (1991) define conformity as a change in belief or behavior in response to real or imagined group pressure without any direct request to join the group. This is typically a manifestation of "majority influence," where a peer group constituting the majority can indirectly influence an individual to adopt the same mindset and behaviors.

Asch's and Recent Studies of Majority Influence

To further illustrate conformity and majority influence, a study was conducted by Asch using a task with an unambiguous correct answer that required participants to match line lengths. The experiment involved one participant who was unaware of the study (naive participant) and a group of the researcher's confederates who had agreed beforehand to provide incorrect answers. The primary objective of the study was to determine whether the naive participant would follow the incorrect answer or maintain their independence by giving the correct answer. The results revealed a conformity rate of 32%, with participants agreeing with the incorrect answer in approximately one-third of the trials. Following Asch's research, subsequent studies evaluated the validity of his findings by highlighting that conformity is not absolute, as it is highly sensitive to socio-historical shifts, political situations, and ecological validity. One such example is the study by Perrin and Spencer (1981), which found very low levels of conformity among university students during an era that prioritized self-expression. Conversely, when testing young offenders within the political climate which did not afford the same freedom, they observed high levels of conformity. This aligns with the research by Mori and Arai (2010) in Japan, which found that conformity levels among women who knew each other were very high, whereas men remained unaffected. These findings demonstrate that conformity is influenced by gender dynamics and familiarity, suggesting that the Asch experiment lacks ecological validity.

Informational and Normative Social Influence

The reasons why people conform can be explained by two widely accepted types of social influence proposed by Deutsch and Gerard (1955): Informational Social Influence (ISI) and Normative Social Influence (NSI). ISI is rooted in the desire to be correct. Consequently, when individuals feel uncertain about their choices, they adopt the answers of others to reduce that uncertainty. In contrast, NSI is rooted in the need for social acceptance. This drives individuals that are certain of their correct answer to follow others to make a positive impression. These two motivations give rise to two distinct types of conformity. The first is internalisation, which occurs when an individual's personal beliefs undergo a permanent transformation to align with the group. The second is compliance, where an individual's

personal beliefs differ from the group's, yet they choose to agree with the majority to gain acceptance.

Minority Influence and Group Interaction

Majority influence demands conformity as a means of adapting to the status quo, whereas minority influence drives social change and innovation. This is illustrated by the blue/green color slide experiment conducted by Moscovici et al. (1969), in which a minority group consisting of two confederates consistently identified the color as green, even when the slides displayed blue, thereby producing a significant 8% "green" response rate among the majority. The study demonstrates that while the majority imposes its views by demanding direct compliance, the minority employs more indirect methods to achieve a more permanent shift in perspective. This is further explained by Moscovici's (1976, 1980) conversion theory, which posits that minority and majority influences are qualitatively distinct processes, making minority influence trigger the majority to process the message more deeply, resulting in changes that occur unconsciously. Group interactions can often drive views toward extremes rather than leading to more cautious decisions. This gives rise to the "risky shift" phenomenon, which is viewed as part of a broader phenomenon known as group polarization. Group polarization can be described as a tendency to make extreme decisions because group members may present information overlooked by others (related to ISI) and wish to appear superior to other members (related to NSI). One example of how group decisions can become extreme is groupthink. Groupthink occurs when a cohesive group, led by a directive leader, suppresses individual opinions to maintain harmony. In conclusion, according to Hewstone and Martin (2012), groupthink represents an extreme form of normative influence, wherein members willingly disregard any informational influence in favor of preserving group harmony, even when doing so could lead to devastating consequences for the decision.

References

- Crutchfield, R. S. (1955). Conformity and creative thinking. In *Contemporary approaches to creative thinking, 1958*. Atherton Press.
- Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. B. (1955). A study of normative and informational social influences upon individual judgment. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 51*(3), 629.
- Martin, R., & Hewstone, M. (2012). Minority influence: Revisiting Moscovici's blue-green afterimage studies. *Social Psychology: Revisiting the Classic Studies*, 91–105.
- Mori, K., & Arai, M. (2010). No need to fake it: Reproduction of the asch experiment without confederates. *International Journal of Psychology, 45*(5), 390–397.
- Moscovici, S. (1980). Toward a theory of conversion behavior. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (pp. pp. 209–239). Academic Press.
- Moscovici, S., Lage, E., & Naffrechoux, M. (1969). Influence of a consistent minority on the responses of a majority in a color perception task. *Sociometry, 36*5–380.
- Perrin, S., & Spencer, C. (1981). Independence or conformity in the Asch experiment as a reflection of cultural and situational factors. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 20*(3), 205–209.
- Zimbardo, P. G., & Leippe, M. R. (1991). *The psychology of attitude change and social influence*. McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Task 2: Summarise Three Selected Journal Articles into Abstracts

Article: Why We Cheat? (210 words)

Abstract

This article explains why people cheat and explores the underlying psychological mechanisms from an ethical perspective, specifically the cognitive-behavioral view of how individuals can engage in morally questionable actions while still convincing themselves that they are good people. The meat paradox concept is used to illustrate the moral hypocrisy described by Daniel Batson that highlights how humans often employ self-deception to convince themselves that their actions are moral when they are not. This is also what allows people to cheat in trivial games without high stakes, such as Wordle or online chess, because they can act dishonestly without viewing themselves as cheaters, while also feeling that their victories are genuinely the result of their own ability. Further study into self-interest under the veil of moral integrity conducted via coin-flipping experiments also reveals that people can manipulate scores while using fair procedures as a trick to justify self-serving outcomes, all while maintaining a high opinion of their own morality. Furthermore, selective self-assessment also means that even when people claim to uphold moral principles, they tend to be more tolerant of their own moral shortcomings. Ultimately, this serves as a warning that humans are prone to moral hypocrisy, necessitating caution regarding those who project an image suggesting they are not that way.

Article: Workplace Friendships (202 words)

Abstract

Workplace friendships are spontaneous relationships based on shared interests that fulfill both socio-emotional and instrumental functions, fostering close bonds among employees. Naturally, this dynamic has its pros and cons. Research indicates that workplace friendships can create a supportive work environment and cultivate mutual trust. This fosters a sense of psychological safety, which in turn can boost creativity and encourage knowledge sharing. On the other hand, workplace friendships can also give rise to complex issues, such as favoritism, personal conflicts stemming from excessive expectations, and conflicts that lead to the exclusion of others due to internal gossip or inside jokes. One risk associated with workplace friendships is cronyism, which is the preferential treatment an individual extends to a friend based on their personal closeness rather than on competence. This unfair practice can undermine social capital, trigger stress, and diminish employee performance. Additionally, a distinction is observed between friendships centered on interpersonal benefits and networking, which focuses more on building relationships to achieve specific professional goals. Therefore, to prevent issues such as unilateral promotions or favoritism among colleagues, clear boundaries between professional and personal life must be maintained to ensure flexibility in all situations and guarantee that all employees perceive fairness in the workplace.

Article: Gender and Stereotypes (214 words)

Abstract

Gender stereotypes persist in modern society and fall into two categories. Descriptive stereotypes portray how people behave and prescriptive stereotypes dictate exactly how individuals ought to behave. Research conducted over the past 50 years indicates that both men and women associate various traits and roles with gender. For instance, women are perceived as gentle, whereas men are often associated with aggression. To gain a global perspective, the Towards Gender Harmony project collected data from 30,000 participants across 62 countries, asking them to rate themselves on more than 50 traits. The findings revealed that over 6,000 men were reluctant to support gender equality due to a zero-sum belief, which is the conviction that men must sacrifice everything for women. There is also a phenomenon known as the Nordic paradox, in which some countries with the highest levels of gender equality actually exhibit high rates of partner violence. The project further reveals that less egalitarian countries show a strong adherence to the concept of Precarious Manhood Beliefs. Furthermore, the Gender Harmony survey revealed a difference in responses, while women defined a "real man" as someone who is faithful, male respondents focused on activities such as sports and drinking. Ultimately, changing current stereotypes requires cross-sector collaboration, ranging from education and media to national policy formulation.

Task 3: Create a Reference List

1. Mazzetti, G., Schaufeli, W. B., & Guglielmi, D. (2014). Are workaholics born or made? Relations of workaholism with person characteristics and overwork climate. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 23(3), 227–254.
2. Hefferon, K., & Boniwell, I. (2011). *Positive psychology: theory, research and applications*. Open University Press.
3. Office for National Statistics. (2016). *Adult drinking habits in Great Britain: 2005 to 2016*.
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/druguse/alcoholandsmoking/bulletins/opinionsandlifestylesurveyadultdrinkinghabit%20singreatbritain/2005to2016>
4. Evans, L., Mitchell, I. D., & Jones, S. (2006). Psychological response to sport injury. In S. Hanton & S. D. Mellalieu (Eds.), *Literature Reviews in Sport Psychology* (pp. 289–319). Nova Science Publications.
5. Phelps, Ceri, Minou, M., Baker, A., Hughes, C., French, H., Hawkins, W., Leeuwenberg, A., Crabtree, R., & Hutchings, P. B. (2017). Necessary but not sufficient? Engaging young people in the development of an avatar-based online intervention designed to provide psychosocial support to young people affected by their own or a family member's cancer diagnosis. *Health Expectations*, 20(3), 459–470.
6. Davey, G. (2014). *Psychopathology: Research, assessment, and treatment in clinical psychology* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.
7. Geekie, J., & Read, J. (2009). *Making sense of madness: Contesting the meaning of schizophrenia*. Routledge.
<http://www.tandfebooks.com/doi/view/10.4324/9780203878422>
8. Vartanian, L. R., Trewartha, T., & Vanman, E. J. (2016). Disgust predicts prejudice and discrimination toward individuals with obesity. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 46(6), 369–375.
9. Williamson, H. (2016, October 12-14). *Supporting adolescents struggling with appearance-altering conditions: The feasibility of using an online psychosocial intervention (YP face IT) in primary care*. Annual Primary Care Conference, Royal College of General Practitioners.

10. Day, S. (2015, September 9-11). *Families experience of poverty stigma in education*. British Psychological Society Developmental Psychology Section.
11. Young, E. (2017, September 18). *Women know better than men what other women are thinking and feeling*. Research Digest.
<https://digest.bps.org.uk/2017/09/18/women-know-better-than-menwhat-other-women-are-thinking-and-feeling/>
12. Voigt, D. C., Dillaro, J. P., Braddock, K. H., Anderson, J. W., Sopory, P., & Stephenson, M. T. (2009). Carver and white's (1994) BIS/BAS scales and their relationship to risky health behaviours. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 47, 89–93.
13. Tarrier, N., Liversidge, T., & Gregg, L. (2006). The acceptability and preference for the psychological treatment of PTSD. *Behaviour, Research and Therapy*, 44, 1643–1656.
14. Hill, E. M. (2015). The role of narcissism in health-risk and health-protective behaviors. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 1–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105315569858>
15. Bennett, P. (2011). *Abnormal and clinical psychology: An introductory textbook* (3rd ed.). Open University Press.
16. Van Hasselt, V. B., Romano, S. J., & Vecchi, G. M. (2008). Role playing: Applications in hostage and crisis negotiation skills training. *Behavior Modification*, 32(2), 248–263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145445507308281>
17. Ulleberg, P., & Rundmo, T. (2003). Personality, attitudes and risk perception as predictors of risky driving behaviour among young drivers. *Safety Science*, 41, 427–443.
18. Mental Health Foundation. (2017, September 10). *Computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy* [Audio Podcast].
<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/podcasts-and-videos/computerised-cognitivebehavioural-therapy>
19. Mohamed, S. (2011). *Stigma and mental illness: Are there cultural differences?* (Doctoral dissertation, University of East Anglia). uk.bl.ethos.573771
20. Welsh Government. (2015). *Well-being of future generations (Wales) act 2015*.