



6. How often do you show conformity in your behaviour? What are the determinants of conformity?

Ans:

Conformity: It is a most indirect form of social influence in which individuals change their behaviour or beliefs to correspond more closely to the behaviour of others in the group. It essentially involves yielding to group pressure.

- People conform because it is comfortable.
- Non-conformity is socially undesirable and many a times punishable offence.
- Most people believe that majority is always right, so it is better to conform.
- Whenever individual gets confused and not confident he/she conforms.
- Conformity provides assurance that individual is right.

People conform because of two types of influences:

1. Informational Influence, i.e., influence that results from accepting evidence rather than reality.

It is social influence based on individuals desire to be correct—to possess accurate perceptions of the social world.

We conform because we have a strong desire to hold the right views. We want to be correct about various matters so we turn to other persons for guidance as to what is appropriate, e.g., if children see that, in the colony, no body is playing in the park then they get information from the actions of others that | park should not be used as playground. This is behaving according to evidence then from reality.

2. Normative influence, i.e., influence based on a person's desire to be accepted or admired by others. Individual follows the reality and conforms.

We conform in order to meet other's expectations and so to gain their approval, e.g., if we see rules written on the board outside the park that playing in the park is prohibited then children avoid playing there.

Sheriff's experiment known as auto-kinetic effect and Asch's experiment prove that people do get carried away by the social influence whenever taking decisions.

Determinants of Conformity:

The degree of conformity among the group-members is determined by many factors which are as follows:

1. Size of the Group:

(i) Conformity is greater when the group is small. It happens because it is easier for a deviant member to be noticed in a small group.

(ii) In a large group, if there is strong agreement among most of the members, conformity makes the majority and its norms stronger. In such a case, the minority would be more likely to conform because the group pressure would be stronger.

2. Size of the Minority: When the deviating minority size increases, the likelihood , of conformity decreases.

3. Nature of the Task:

- Where there is something like a correct or an incorrect answer, conformity is more.

- Where answers can vary widely without any answer being correct or incorrect, conformity would be less.

4. Public or Private Expression of Behaviour:

- If the group-members are asked to give their answers publicly, conformity is more.
- Less conformity is found under private expression.

5. Personality Characteristics:

- Some individuals have a conforming personality that is tendency to change their behaviour according to what others say or do in most situations and vice- versa.

7. Why do people obey even when they know that their behaviour may be harming others? Explain. (Delhi Board 2014)

Ans:

Obedience: It is most direct form of social influence. Obedience refers to accepting commands/orders from the authority. Authority refers to a person who has inherent power to give reward or punishment.

- If a person has power over another, obedience can be demanded; such a person usually has the means to enforce orders.
- Milligram's studies seem to suggest that the ordinary people are willing, may be with some, reluctance, to harm an innocent person if ordered by someone in authority.
- It has been observed that obedience to authority relieves the individual from the responsibility of their actions.
- Individual believes that if he/she will not obey then it will attract penalty.
- Authority commands for destructive obedience are gradually increased from lesser to greater levels of violence.

Sometimes events involved in destructive obedience move so quickly, that the people obeying orders have little time for thinking logically.

8. What are the benefits of co-operation?

Ans: Groups may be co-operative or competitive. Technically, the behaviour that yields maximal joint profit for all the parties involved is called co-operation. The behaviour that yields maximal relative gain is labelled competition.

Co-operative goals are those, which are defined in such a way that each individual can attain the goal if other members are also attaining their goals. There is interdependence in goal attainment.

Effects of co-operation:

- Goal achievement becomes easy.
- Interpersonal relations get strengthened.
- Cohesiveness rises in the group.
- Group-members become ready to work for others.
- Willingness to accept other's divergent view-point.

9. How is one's identity formed?

Ans: Identity refers to the aspect of one's self-concept that is based on group-membership.

- Our identity tells us what we are in a larger context.
- After one develops an identity, he/she internalises the norms emphasized in a group and adopts them.
- Identity provides a member of a group with a shared set of values, beliefs and goals about the social world.
- Identity helps to co-ordinate attitude and behaviour.
- The development of identity leads to the devaluation of the

out group.

10. What are some of the causes of intergroup conflict? Think of any international conflict.

Reflect on the human price of this conflict.

Ans:

- Conflict is a process in which either an individual or a group perceives that the others have opposite interest, and both try to contradict each other.
- In such conflicts intense feeling of 'We' and 'They' dominate.
- Both the groups believe that only their group (in group) will protect their interest. Individual group conflict occurs when the individuals' needs are different from the group's needs, goals or norms. Inter group conflict refers to the situation of conflict between groups. It often occurs to maintain the identity of the group different and stronger than the other groups.

Some Major Reasons for Group Conflicts:

1. One major reason is lack of communication and faulty communication between both parties. This kind of communication leads to suspicion, i.e., there is a lack of trust, and hence, conflict results.
2. Another reason for inter group conflict is relative deprivation. It arises when members of a group compare themselves with the members of another group, and they perceive that they do not have what they desire to have, which the other group has. In other words, they feel that they are not doing well in comparison to other groups. This may lead to feelings of deprivation and discontentment, which may trigger conflict.
3. Another cause of conflict arises when one party believes that it is better than the other, and what it is saying should be done. When this does not happen, both parties start accusing each other.
4. A feeling that the other group does not respect the norms of my group, and actually violates those norms, can cause conflict.
5. Desire for retaliation for some harm done in the past could be another reason for conflict.
6. Biased perceptions are at the root of most conflicts.
7. Research has shown that when acting in groups, people are more competitive as well as more aggressive than when they are on their own. Groups compete over scarce resource, both material resources (e.g., territory) and money as well as social resources (e.g., respect and esteem).
8. Perceived inequality is another reason for conflict.
9. According to Gardener Murphy most conflicts begin in the minds of men and then go to the field.

Gardener Murphy, in his book 'In the Minds of Men', explains intergroup conflicts at three levels:

- (a) Structural Level: It includes high rates of poverty, economic and social stratification, inequality, limited political and social opportunity, e.g., Tribal areas of Jharkhand and West Bengal becoming fertile ground for Naxal movement.
- (b) Group Level: Social identity, realistic conflict between groups over resources and unequal power relations between groups lead to conflicts, e.g., Dalits in India or Women Empowerment Movement.
- (c) Individual Level: It includes beliefs, biased attitudes and personality characteristics. These are important determinants.

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