

# Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 (9–1) GCSE Psychology

## Topic Guide 5

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### Social Influence – How do others affect you?

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## Social Influence – How do others affect you?

### Specification requirements

This topic is a compulsory topic and will be examined in Paper 1.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate and apply the knowledge, understanding and skills described in the content.

To demonstrate their **knowledge**, candidates should undertake a range of activities, including the ability to recall, describe and define, as appropriate.

To demonstrate their **understanding**, candidates should explain ideas and use their knowledge to apply, analyse, interpret and evaluate, as appropriate.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the interrelationships between the core areas of psychology and **issues and debates** within them.

Candidates may be asked to consider the following issues when **evaluating** studies:

- validity
- reliability
- generalisability
- ethics
- objectivity
- subjectivity.

Candidates may be required to **apply** their understanding – for example by responding to scenarios that are drawn from the topic area and/or associated research – and in doing this they should use psychological concepts, theories and/or research from within their studies of social influence.

### Opportunities for practical activities

Candidates should gain hands-on experience of carrying out ethical, investigative activities to aid their understanding of this subject. To help centres identify opportunities for carrying out these activities, studies that can be replicated have been marked with an asterisk.

**Research methods** are delivered in Topic 11. However, as a way to aid candidates in evaluating the studies, centres can encourage them to consider the methodology of the key studies as they progress through each individual topic. For example, candidates could consider the ethical issues surrounding testing social influence when studying **Haney, Banks and Zimbardo's (1973) prison study (5.2.2)**.

Although candidates will not be directly assessed on practical activities, the experience they gain will give them a better understanding of this subject and may enhance their examination performance.

## Guidance

### 5.1 Content

#### 5.1.1 Know the terms:

- a. obedience
- b. conformity
- c. deindividuation
- d. bystander effect

Candidates should be able to define the key terms and understand their meaning in the context of social influence. Centres may wish to discuss each term as an introduction to the respective content below.

*Elizabeth is watching football when she is told by her father to wash the dishes. She immediately does as her father has instructed her to. Is Elizabeth conforming or showing obedience?*

#### 5.1.2 Understand the factors affecting bystander intervention, including:

- a. personal factors
- b. situational factors

Candidates should be able to define and explain what is meant by a **bystander effect** (5.1.1d). Centres may wish to contextualise the difference between bystander **'intervention'** and bystander **'apathy'** with examples, such as the 1964 case of Kitty Genovese who was murdered in New York City while bystanders failed to intervene. Following this, candidates should be able to explain the different factors that affect intervention from bystanders. Centres may wish to include the study by **Piliavin et al. (1969)** (5.2.1) as a research example of bystander effect.

**Personal factors** (5.1.2a) could include the arousal model and the empathy–altruism hypothesis. Candidates could discuss whether there is an altruistic personality type and the characteristics this individual may have. Beirhoff et al. (1991) suggest five dispositions evident in bystanders who helped in an emergency (empathy, belief in a just world, internal locus of control, social responsibility, low egocentrism). Centres may also wish to draw upon evolutionary concepts, such as being genetically predisposed to help those who share our genes; for example, parents who intervene to save their children.

When considering **situational factors** (5.1.2b), centres may wish to include the decision model suggested by Latané and Darley (1968). Candidates could discuss examples such as defining the situation as an emergency, diffusion of responsibility, the number of other bystanders and how social norms lead to behaviour that is desirable and acceptable. This may also generate discussions that can draw on **social and cultural issues** (5.3.1), such as whether individualistic or collectivist cultures have differing social norms around how to behave in social situations.

Application of these concepts to stimulus materials would benefit candidates. Centres could develop scenarios and examples from which candidates can identify the key features of social influence that are evident and describe them in relation to the key concepts.

*There is a car accident outside a small office block with 32 employees inside. The employees in the office all witness the car accident but none of them go outside to help the injured driver or passengers. Why might the employees have remained inside?*

Bystander intervention can be evaluated through comparisons to other models, theories and explanations, such as whether it is more likely that personality or situation would affect behaviour in given situations. For example, were all the bystanders in the Kitty Genovese case likely to have the same personality that resulted in apathy?

Some candidates may benefit from being extended by drawing on the concepts delivered in the 'issues and debates' content, where themes such as nature versus nurture could be used to evaluate evolutionary versus social norms explanations of bystander effect.

### 5.1.3 Understand conformity to a majority influence and factors affecting conformity to majority influence, including:

- a. personality
- b. the situation

Candidates should understand the terms **conformity** (5.1.1b) and **majority influence** (5.1.3) and the connection to group pressure. Contextualising these concepts could be beneficial, for example by using video clips highlighting majority influence such as Asch's 'line study'. Candidates may benefit from knowing the difference between majority and minority influence in order to apply the concept of majority influence effectively. Centres may wish to structure their delivery using the core concepts of compliance, internalisation and identification.

The research and concepts given by Asch (1951) can be used to explore the idea of compliance, while Sherif (1953) can be used to highlight the concept of internalisation. Identification is highlighted in the study by **Haney, Banks, and Zimbardo (1973)** (5.2.2) and centres may wish to deliver this study at this point in the course. This study is a particularly useful example for ethical discussions found in Topic 11. It may be beneficial for candidates to understand the term **deindividuation** (5.1.1c) when this study is delivered.

Candidates may benefit from understanding the differences between normative and informational conformity, and how these could be applied to society, for example by looking to a group for guidance when someone perceives them to have more information than they do as an individual.

An understanding of factors affecting majority influence would include **personality** (5.1.3a) and **situation** (5.1.3b). **Personality** factors (5.1.3a) could include whether a person has an internal or external locus of control (Rotter, 1954, 1966); candidates could complete an online test to see their own locus of control as an applied element to their learning. Personality can also include gender differences of individuals and whether this influences a person's likelihood to conform. Also, candidates may benefit from discussing the influence of age on conformity to a majority group, in that adolescents are more likely to conform (Steinberg and Monahan, 2007).

This may also generate discussions that can draw on **social and cultural issues** (5.3.1), such as whether people in individualistic or collectivist cultures are more or less likely to conform – for example, the research and ideas proposed by Smith and Bond (1998).

When delivering **situational factors** (5.1.3b), centres could explore the effect of group size and the research by Asch that developed this idea. The presence of an ally can also be explored, along with whether the unanimity of the group affects the likelihood of influence over others. Also, candidates could discuss whether decision making in private, such as writing answers down or giving responses privately to the group, would affect conformity.

Application of these concepts to stimulus materials would benefit candidates. Centres could develop scenarios and examples from which candidates can identify the key

features of majority influence that are evident and describe them in relation to the key concepts.

*Michael is in the local shopping centre with six of his friends and they begin to shout at a passer-by in the shopping centre. Michael joins in with the shouting, but later he feels upset at what he did. Why might Michael have joined in with the others and feel upset?*

Majority influence can be evaluated through comparisons to other models, theories and explanations, such as whether obedience to an authority better explains conformity to groups where there is a clear leader. Equally, comparisons can be used where they show that the theory or explanation may be inaccurate – e.g. examples of resistance and dissent, such as the story of Oskar Schindler adapted in the 1993 film *Schindler's List*, highlight that not everyone conforms.

Candidates can also judge how useful the theory or explanation is, such as whether peer pressure in schools can be reduced using these ideas. Some candidates may benefit from being extended by drawing on the concepts delivered in the 'issues and debates' content, where themes such as cultural issues could be used to evaluate explanations.

**5.1.4 Understand obedience to authority and factors affecting obedience to authority figures, including:**  
**a. personality**  
**b. the situation**

Candidates should understand the term **obedience** (5.1.1a) and be able to explain this in the context of **obedience to authority figures** (5.1.4). Explanations of obedience to authority figures could include agency theory (proposed by Milgram), social impact theory (proposed by Latané), and social power theory (proposed by French and Raven). Candidates would benefit from understanding more than one explanation – this would be helpful in evaluations. This content could be contextualised with real-life examples, such as genocide in WWII or Rwanda, and perhaps introduced with a film or video clip of such examples to encourage candidates to understand why psychologists might research these issues.

Agency theory includes the concepts of free-will, agentic state, moral strain, autonomous state and diffusion of responsibility. This provides candidates with a strong explanation of **obedience to authority** (5.1.4), with supporting evidence from Milgram's own research and research such as Hofling et al. (1966). Additionally, Milgram conducted further experiments to test the impact of situations (such as closeness of authority, or when two peers rebel) which may aid students in discussing the **situational factors** (5.1.4b) affecting obedience, such as dissent by others. Milgram's research is a particularly useful point for ethical discussions, as found in Topic 11.

Social impact theory addresses the strength of a source of authority, the immediacy of this figure to the individual and the number of sources of authority versus targets for obedience. There is supporting evidence from Latané. It is also a useful explanation when considering the **situational factors** (5.1.4b) affecting obedience, such as the proximity of the authority figure.

Social power theory considers the authority figure themselves, looking at five key features of power that legitimise the authority of an individual. French and Raven (1959) proposed five 'bases of power': perceptions of the legitimacy of the authority figure, their ability to deliver rewards, their expertise, their referent appeal and their coerciveness. It is also a useful explanation when considering the **situational factors** (5.1.4b) affecting obedience, such as the legitimacy of the authority figure.

**Personality** (5.1.4a) can be addressed by revisiting the concept of an internal and external locus of control if this was discussed as part of conformity (5.1.3a) and

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considering personality types, such as how authoritarian personalities are more likely to obey orders and looking at Adorno et al. (1950).

Application of these concepts to stimulus materials would benefit candidates. Centres could develop scenarios and examples from which candidates can identify the key features of social influence that are evident and describe them in relation to the key concepts.

*Michael is told by his teacher to tidy the stationery cupboard at lunch time. Michael has homework and revision for a test that he wanted to do at lunch time, but instead he tidies the teacher's stationery cupboard. Why might Michael have tidied the stationery cupboard instead of doing his own work?*

Explanations of obedience to authority figures can be evaluated through comparisons to other models, theories and explanations, such as the similarities and differences between agency theory, social impact theory and social power theory. The use of supporting evidence is helpful in evaluating the credibility of the explanation.

Candidates can also judge how useful the theory or explanation is, such as the reduction of aggressive crowd behaviour at sporting events. Some candidates may benefit from being extended by drawing on the concepts delivered in the 'issues and debates' content, where themes such as ethical issues could be used to evaluate the research behind the explanations provided, perhaps with a focus on **Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973)** (5.2.2) and Milgram's research.

### 5.1.6 Understand possible ways to prevent blind obedience to authority figures

This section can be delivered following on from the candidates learning about obedience, or as a distinct section within the topic. If leading on from studying obedience, it may benefit candidates to understand the ways to **prevent blind obedience** (5.1.6) having developed their understanding of the reasons for such obedience.

Candidates can consider the practical issues of **reducing blind obedience** (5.1.6); for example, the education of others about the danger of blind obedience. They could discuss how people can be encouraged to question authority figures and ways that disobedience has been positive. It may be useful to explore reactance theory (Brehmn, 1966) as a psychological explanation that draws on free will and resistance to authority. Research by Pennebaker and Sanders (1976) looks at graffiti in an American school and may help contextualise the concept of reactance.

Application of these concepts to stimulus materials would benefit candidates. Centres could develop scenarios and examples from which candidates can identify the key features of social influence that are evident and describe them in relation to the key concepts.

*Michael is at home and his mother has told him to tidy his room. Michael does not want to tidy his room today as he has homework to complete. His mother states that he must tidy his room and Michael refuses, stating that it is his choice and he is going to do his homework first. Can you explain why Michael reacted in this way?*

Some candidates may benefit from being extended by drawing on the concepts delivered in the 'issues and debates' content, where themes such as nature versus nurture could be used to evaluate the practicalities of reducing blind obedience, for example by debating the extent to which blind obedience can really be prevented if obedience is an inherent personality trait rather than a perception of authority figure legitimacy.

**5.1.5 Understand the behaviour of crowds and the individuals within them and the effect of collective behaviour, including:**  
**a. pro- and anti-social behaviour**

Candidates should revisit the term **deindividuation** (5.1.1c) in the context of crowd behaviours, in that there is a loss of personal identity and responsibility. The discussion of the **behaviour of crowds** (5.1.5) can be contextualised with examples, such as football crowd violence or rioting. Candidates should understand that crowd behaviour consists of a large group of individuals behaving collectively (mob mentality) combined with a decrease in personal responsibility resulting from the anonymity of being in a crowd. The concept originally proposed by Le Bon may provide a starting discussion.

Candidates should understand that crowd behaviour and deindividuation may result in both **pro- and anti-social behaviours** (5.1.5a). For example, violence in a football crowd would be seen as anti-social, whereas a religious gathering or vigil would be considered pro-social behaviour.

Application of these concepts to stimulus materials would benefit candidates. Centres could develop scenarios and examples from which candidates can identify the key features of social influence that are evident and describe them in relation to the key concepts.

*Michael and Oscar attend a football match between Michael's favourite team and Oscar's favourite team. Both boys are dressed in their team football shirts. Michael and Oscar do not sit together at the match; they sit with the groups of fans for their own team on different sides of the stadium. Both boys shout negative comments at the fans of the opposing team during the football game. After it is over, they return home and continue to be friends. Why might the boys behave in this way at the football match?*

Crowd behaviour can be explored and evaluated through comparison to other models, theories and explanations, such as majority influence and identification as an explanation of crowd behaviours or obedience to authority figures where crowds have a perceived leader. Supporting evidence can be used where available, such as **Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973)** (5.2.2) where deindividuation is explored.

Candidates can also judge how useful the theory or explanation is, such as reducing anti-social crowd behaviours or promoting pro-social behaviour. Some candidates may benefit from being extended by drawing on the concepts delivered in the 'issues and debates' content, where themes such as social and cultural issues in psychology could be used to evaluate the extent to which explanations and solutions could apply cross-culturally.

## 5.2 Studies

Candidates should understand the aims, procedures and findings (results and conclusions), and strengths and weaknesses of:

5.2.1 Piliavin et al. (1969) Good Samaritanism: An Underground Phenomenon?

5.2.2 Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973) A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison

### Study One

#### **Piliavin et al. (1969) Good Samaritanism: An Underground Phenomenon?**

##### **Aim(s)**

To investigate the effect that the type of victim would have on the speed and frequency with which someone would respond to aid them in an emergency. Piliavin et al. also wanted to investigate the effect of the race of the victim.

Additionally, they investigated the effect of role model behaviours in emergency situations and the relationship between the size of the group and helping a victim.

##### **Procedure**

The 'type' of victim was portrayed as either drunk or ill (through the use of a cane). Piliavin et al. assumed that helpers would have less sympathy for a drunk victim and that any sympathy they did have may be overruled by a fear of the victim becoming aggressive or causing a scene.

The 'race' of the victim was either 'black' or 'white'.

Sample: A total of 4450 men and women were present over the duration of the scenes being staged. Approximately 55% were 'white' and 45% 'black'. The mean number of bystanders in the train carriage was 43 people and the mean number deemed to be in the 'critical area' (close proximity to victim) was 8.5 people.

The staged scenes took place on a 7 ½ minute continuous train journey between 59<sup>th</sup> Street and 125<sup>th</sup> Street stations in the New York subway between 11.00am and 3.00pm during the period 15<sup>th</sup> April – 26<sup>th</sup> June 1968.

There were four groups of confederates consisting of four students, two male and two female, who boarded the train. The two female confederates recorded data and the two male confederates were the victim and model. The victims in all conditions were dressed identically. The 'drunk' victim carried a bottle of alcohol and smelled of alcohol; the 'ill' victim carried a cane. There was only one black confederate (reducing the number of black trials that were conducted).

After 70 seconds into the train journey, the victim staggered forward, collapsed and remained on the floor until they received help. If he received no help by the time the train stopped at the station, the model helped him to his feet and they left the train.

The two female confederates also left the train.

The group of four would then make their way to the other platform, get on the next train heading in the opposite direction and repeat the trial.

Approximately five to eight trials were completed each day.

A total of 103 trials took place.

On each day, the victim's condition (drunk, cane, black, white) remained the same.

The conditions for the model were used in all victim conditions; the model trials are summarised in **Table 1**.

Model condition	Model behaviour
Critical area: early	Intervened approximately 70 seconds after collapse.
Critical area: late	Intervened approximately 150 seconds after collapse.
Adjacent area: early	Intervened approximately 70 seconds after collapse.
Adjacent area: late	Intervened approximately 150 seconds after collapse.

**Table 1**

The two female confederates were seated away from the 'critical area' in an adjacent area and they covertly recorded the data from the trial.

One made a record of the race, sex, number of and location of the passengers in the 'critical area'. Data was recorded on the race, sex, number and location of bystanders who came to help the victim.

The second confederate recorded the race, sex, number of and location of the passengers in the 'adjacent area' and the time between the model helping and the first bystander helping. They also documented comments made by passengers around them.

## Results

The results of the trials showing where help was spontaneously given or given following the model are shown in **Table 2**.

Trial	White victim		Black victim	
	Ill (cane)	Drunk	Ill (cane)	Drunk
No model trial – help spontaneously given % (n)	100% (54)	100% (11)	100% (8)	73% (8)
<i>Number of trials</i>	54	11	8	11
Model trial – help spontaneously given % (n)	100% (3)	77% (10)	0% (0)	67% (2)
<i>Number of trials</i>	3	13	0	3
<b>Total number of trials</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>

**Table 2**

Help **before** 70 seconds for the ill, white victim was recorded in 52/57 trials.

Help **before** 70 seconds for the ill, black victim was recorded in 7/8 trials.

Help **before** 70 seconds for the drunk, white victim was recorded in 5/24 trials.

Help **before** 70 seconds for the drunk, black victim was recorded in 4/14 trials.

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Of the total number of helpers, the race of the helper and victim is shown in **Table 3**.

Race of helper	Ill (cane)	Drunk
Same as victim	36	16
Different to victim	26	3

**Table 3**

Of the 81 spontaneous (within 70 seconds) helpers, 90% were male – from an average of a 60% male / 40% female presence in the 'critical area'.

In 21 of the 103 trials, 34 people left the 'critical area' (close proximity) of the victim; this occurred more often when the victim was drunk than when they were ill.

A content analysis of comments made by train passengers highlighted that discomfort was felt if no one had helped within 70 seconds. Other comments attempted to seek confirmation that not helping was the right decision.

There did not appear to be a strong correlation between the number of bystanders and helping behaviour.

### Conclusions

Spontaneous helping occurred within 70 seconds, before a model could assist. Where a model assists a victim early it elicits further help from bystanders. Helping behaviour is not affected by proximity to the victim (in this study).

The longer the emergency continues, the more likely people are to leave the area and the less impact intervention from a model will have on others helping.

Bystanders are more likely to offer immediate help for an ill victim than a drunk victim. The 'costs' (embarrassment, aggression) are higher for helping a drunk victim.

There is a tendency for same-race helpers to be more frequent, and also more likely to assist the drunk victim, whereas there is no race effect when helping the ill victim with the cane.

Men are more likely to help a male victim than women; the costs of not helping are lower for women (it's not a woman's role).

Students may be asked to consider the following issues when **evaluating** studies:

- validity
- reliability
- generalisability
- ethics
- objectivity
- subjectivity.

### Information for centres

*It is recommended that, wherever possible, centres combine the use of the summary of studies resource with the original study. However, where studies are not freely available or easily accessible, the summary resource is designed to help provide key starting points to enable teachers to deliver the content.*

## Study Two

### **Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973) A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison.**

#### **Aim(s)**

Haney, Banks and Zimbardo wanted to create a simulated prison to see what behaviour resulted when 'normal-average' people were assigned the roles of 'guards' and 'prisoners'. They specifically wanted to look at any changes in emotions, mood, interactions, coping skills and attitudes towards oneself and others.

#### **Procedure**

Sample: 75 people responded to an advertisement in a newspaper. Of the respondents, 24 male participants were selected as 'normal, healthy males' following assessments and interviews. They were each paid \$15 per day of the study.

22 took part in the study and 2 were kept on standby in case a participant dropped out before the study began.

Participants were told that they would be randomly assigned to the roles of prisoner or guard and they agreed to play these roles. They were also made aware that they would be under constant surveillance through observations, video and audio recordings.

Participants were advised that they would receive suitable necessities, such as food, medical care and clothing, and that they would lose basic civil rights, especially freedom if given a prisoner role. Guards would be able to leave after their 'shift' to go home and lead their usual lifestyle. All were advised by phone to be available on a specified Sunday to start the experiment.

Those assigned to be guards attended an orientation meeting on the day before the experiment. They met the researcher, who would be the superintendent, and the research assistant, who would be the warden. Their task to 'maintain the functioning' of the prison was given but not elaborated upon. They believed that the purpose of the study was to observe the prisoner behaviour.

The warden explained the duties of the guards, such as shift patterns, shift reports, and the administration of food, free time and work activities. The only direct instruction was that physical punishments were not to be used on prisoners. The guards then helped finalise the simulated prison, for example by moving furniture, arranging the beds in the cells and putting up signs.

The guards and prisoners were given uniforms. The guards had military style clothing to suggest power and control and the prisoners had a plain smock with an ID number, a chain on one ankle and no undergarments to deindividuate and humiliate them.

Palo Alto City Police Department arrested the 'prisoners' at their place of residence. They were charged, searched, handcuffed and taken away in a police car. At the police station, they went through the process of arrest, for example by being fingerprinted and detained. They were then blindfolded and driven to the simulated prison for their two-week sentence.

At the prison, they were stripped, sprayed with a delousing spray and made to stand alone and naked in the yard before being given their uniform to wear. They were then taken to their cell.

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The guards read the rules to the prisoners, who were referred to only by their ID number, and they were instructed to memorise them.

The rules included:

- three supervised toilet visits a day
- two visits per week
- scheduled exercise and movie times
- lining up to be counted three times a day
- testing on their knowledge of the rules and their ID number
- three meals per day
- work assignments and payment for these (\$15).

The prisoners and guards could engage in any form of interaction – for example, friendly or unfriendly, supportive or unsupportive – that they elected to do. No direction was given to either group about how they should or should not interact with each other.

Self-evaluations using questionnaires and tests were completed by prisoners and guards over the duration of the study in order to assess the individual's moods and personality.

The experiment was terminated on day six. This was eight days earlier than scheduled. The prisoners were extremely pleased at this but the guards were not as happy about the decision to end the study.

### Results

Group interactions tended to be hostile, in negative and dehumanising encounters.

Guards verbally gave orders that were impersonal to the prisoner and sometimes aggressive (although not physically aggressive, as this was explicitly disallowed at the start of the study). Guards were more active in initiating interactions, while the prisoners became passive to interacting.

The rules were modified or ignored by the guards. They also forgot about privileges such as movies. None of the guards were ever late to work, and some remained on duty voluntarily after their shift had ended, receiving no pay for their time.

In private, the interactions and conversations between prisoners were dominated by a focus on their current situation, guard harassment, punishments and other aspects of prison life. They rarely discussed their life outside of prison. The interactions between the guards was also dominated by prison life, discussing things like 'problem prisoners'. There were very few occasions where there was interaction between the two groups.

Guard aggression increased and intensified on a daily basis, despite prisoner submission and emotional breakdown, and was more serious when they were with prisoners away from surveillance.

Five prisoners had to be released early due to extreme emotional reactions; for example, crying, extreme depression, anxiety or rage. For four of these prisoners, the symptoms began as early as day two and they were released. The fifth participant required treatment for a psychosomatic rash covering his body before he was released. Other prisoners requested a lawyer to get them out of the prison.

After four days, prisoners attended a 'parole' meeting, where three out of five said they would give up their money (the incentive to take part) if it would get them out of the prison.

Individual differences were evident. Half the prisoners accepted the oppressive rule of the guards and not all the guards became hostile. Some guards were fair, others became very cruel and some were quite passive and did not exercise power over the prisoners.

Prisoners perceived the guards to be 'bigger' than they were, despite the random allocation and no real physical differences in average height or weight between the groups.

### Conclusions

The guards acquired social status and the ability to exercise complete control from their role in the simulation. The use of this power became self-serving and intensified over the period of the study. Despite absence from the prison, the aggressive and hostile nature of their behaviour did not subside. The redefinition of prisoner rights as privileges after the first day meant prisoners had to earn their rights. Their behaviour highlights the impact of coercive power.

The prisoners rebelled against the oppression at first, attempting to do this within the rules in the beginning and then, as this broke down, they began to feel depressed, isolated and anxious. Half became emotionally disturbed and left the study; others became excessively well behaved, such as siding with guards. One prisoner who refused to eat was treated as a troublemaker rather than having his act of rebellion unite the prisoners against the guards. Having to wear their uniform with no underclothes forced prisoners to move and sit in ways that were unfamiliar, often feminine. Their behaviour highlights the impact of a loss of identity leading to compliance, dependency on those in power who can control even the basic necessities and emasculation from being belittled by those seen to have masculine power.

It seems that when applied to real-world prison life, the role of power should be considered. The participants as 'normal' people aspired to be powerful and disliked being powerless, therefore explaining both guard behaviour and the hierarchy of status of prisoners found in prison settings.

Students may be asked to consider the following issues when **evaluating** studies:

- validity
- reliability
- generalisability
- ethics
- objectivity
- subjectivity.

### Information for centres

*It is recommended that, wherever possible, centres combine the use of the summary of studies resource with the original study. However, where studies are not freely available or easily accessible, the summary resource is designed to help provide key starting points to enable teachers to deliver the content.*

## 5.3 Issues and debates

### 5.3.1 Understand social and cultural issues in psychology, including:

- a. the terms 'society' and 'social issues'
- b. the term 'culture'
- c. the use of content, theories and research drawn from social influence to explain social and cultural issues in psychology

The issues and debates content in each compulsory topic, including research methods, is designed to enable candidates to understand the wider issues in psychology that underpin psychological knowledge and research. These are delivered within specific topic content. Candidates can, however, draw upon issues and debates in their evaluations and extended open essays across each topic area (compulsory and/or optional), and while this is not an expected feature of responses, it may – if appropriate, accurate and relevant – be creditworthy in examinations. For example, if they chose to evaluate a social influence explanation of behaviour drawing from an accurate understanding of culture then this can be an acceptable response.

Issues and debates will be specifically assessed in Paper 1 through an extended open-response question.

**Social and cultural issues in psychology** (5.3.1) have been included in this topic because explanations of social influence have been found to differ across cultures. For example, there has been research that suggests individualistic cultures respond to authority differently from collectivist cultures. Similar differences occur when researching conformity.

Candidates should be able to explore the key terms in this debate, including what is meant by **society**, **social issues** (5.3.1a) and **culture** (5.3.1b). From this, they should develop their understanding through the application of the concepts to the content they have learned within this topic. This may be the cultural differences in conformity or bystander intervention.

Candidates should be able to use this debate to address the **content of topic 5** (5.3.1c) and they may benefit from taking each core explanation and addressing the underpinning assumptions of the explanation, perhaps by determining whether different cultures respond in different ways because of social norms and values in society; for example, whether there is evidence in collectivist cultures of greater pro-social behaviour than in individualistic cultures.

These issues and debates can also be applied to the key studies within this section. By addressing these concepts, candidates could determine whether the studies and evidence they have presented demonstrate effective applications to society, for example in the management of prisons or encouraging pro-social behaviour.

## Resources and references

### Studies

**5.2.1 Piliavin et al. (1969) Good Samaritanism: An Underground Phenomenon?**  
[https://www.homeworkmarket.com/sites/default/files/article\\_3\\_1.pdf](https://www.homeworkmarket.com/sites/default/files/article_3_1.pdf)

<http://holah.co.uk/files/piliavin1969.pdf>

**5.2.2 Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973) A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison**

<http://www.zimbardo.com/downloads/1973%20A%20Study%20of%20Prisoners%20and%20Guards,%20Naval%20Research%20Reviews.pdf>

<http://pdf.prisonexp.org/ijcp1973.pdf>

### Resources for social influence

*Sources suggested here are additional guidance for centres to aid with teaching resources and ideas. These are not compulsory components and centres should select delivery content as appropriate to their candidates. Centres can draw upon any research evidence to support evaluations and explanations of topic areas. This list is not exhaustive.*

'Crash Course' social influence video clip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGxGDdQnC1Y>

Social influence overview <https://www.getting-in.com/guide/gcse-psychologysocial-influence-obedience/>

### Bystander intervention

Bystander effect and links to further information

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/bystander-effect>

Kitty Genovese <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/not-just-bystander/201403/the-1964-kitty-genovese-tragedy-what-have-we-learned>

Bystander effect <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/apr/09/kitty-genovese-jamie-bulger-bystander-effect>

Latané and Darley information

[http://faculty.babson.edu/krollag/org\\_site/soc\\_psych/latane\\_bystand.html](http://faculty.babson.edu/krollag/org_site/soc_psych/latane_bystand.html)

Arousal and decision model overview <https://revisionworld.com/a2-level-level-revision/psychology/social-psychology/models-bystander-behaviour>

Empathy-altruism, bystander models, pro-social behaviour and culture <http://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/psychology/pro-and-anti-social-behaviour/revise-it/altruism-and-bystander-behaviour>

### Conformity to majority influence

Asch 'line study' clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcmvbXgmdsU>

Locus of control online test <http://www.psych.uncc.edu/pagoolka/LocusofControl-intro.html>

Individual differences in conformity <http://www.psychteacher.co.uk/social-influence/individual-differences-independent-behavior.html>

Steinberg and Monahan (2007) Age Differences in Resistance to Peer Influence <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2779518/>

### Obedience

Hofling et al. (1966) summary <http://www.integratedsociopsychology.net/hofling-nurses.html>

Authoritarian personality [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304194497\\_Authoritarian\\_Personality](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304194497_Authoritarian_Personality)

### Preventing blind obedience

Brehmn (1966) <http://www.sicotests.com/psyarticle.asp?id=65>  
<http://gatortracks.pbworks.com/f/Reactance+Theory.pdf>

Pennebaker, J., W., and Sanders, D., Y. (1976) American Graffiti: Effects of authority and reactance arousal. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*; 2: 264–267.  
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/014616727600200312>

<https://opentextbc.ca/socialpsychology/chapter/person-gender-and-cultural-differences-in-conformity/>

### Crowd behaviour

Research review of explanations of crowd behaviour  
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/2ed1/dacbd7177d6c1709dda3a8254e7e58a6d1af.pdf>

### Teacher resource sharing

Further suggested resources can be found in the 'Getting Started' publication, where a scheme of work has been provided.

<http://www.psychlotron.org.uk>  
<http://www.psychteacher.co.uk>  
<http://www.resourcd.com>

### Teacher and student resource sites

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/> – this website gives an overview of many of the key areas.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/> – this is an online magazine (with an option to subscribe) that brings psychological theories into modern, contemporary issues.

<https://play.google.com/store/search?q=psychology%20free%20books&c=books&hl=en>  
– this site has a number of free short books about key areas of psychology.

<http://www.open.edu/openlearn/body-mind/psychology> – The 'OpenLearn' programme offers freely accessible resources, provided by the Open University.

<http://allpsych.com/> – a useful site with books, articles and summaries of some of the key concepts.

## GCSE Psychology

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtOPRKzVLY0jJY-uHOH9KVU6> – Psychology 'Crash Course' is a YouTube channel that provides 40 short overviews of psychological issues.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008cy1j> – 'BBC Mind Changers' is a series of radio episodes (that can also be downloaded) about key psychologists, their work, and the development of psychology over time.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxx9> – 'BBC In the Mind' is a series of radio episodes that focus on the human mind using the application of psychological concepts and theories.

*\*All weblinks included here have been checked as active at publication, however the nature of online resources is that they can be removed or replaced by webhosting services and so it cannot be guaranteed that these sites will remain available throughout the life of the qualification.*