



Factors influencing obedience

This activity will help you to...

- Identify factors that make obedience more or less likely
- Explain how such factors affect people's willingness to obey an authority
- Draw conclusions from the results of psychological research

Variations on the Milgram study

In the original Milgram experiment, 65% of the participants were prepared to give the maximum 450v shock. Milgram carried out a number of variations on his experiment. For each variation, suggest whether the obedience rate would have been higher or lower. Be ready to explain your answer.

The experiment was repeated, but this time with female instead of male participants.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
During the experiment, the victim screams and shouted in pain, and complained about his heart condition.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
The victim was placed in the same room as the participant, rather than being hidden behind a screen.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
The participant had to hold the victim's hand down onto the electrode in order to give the shocks.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
The experimenter left the room and issued instructions by telephone.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
The experiment was moved away from Yale University and conducted in a run-down office block in the centre of town.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
The participant was paired with two confederates (actors) who refused to go on giving the shocks.	Estimate	Actual	Reason
A confederate pushed the shock button. The participant only read out the questions.	Estimate	Actual	Reason

Why do you think participants in the Milgram study were prepared to obey or disobey? Which factors do you think swayed them one way or the other?