

# Obedience!



# What's the difference between obedience and defiance?

- Obedience is following orders from an authority figure. Defiance is the opposite – disobeying orders.



# Describe the Situational Factors Theory



- There are 4 VARIABLES that can lead people to be obedient in this theory
- 1. Denial of responsibility – Hofling et al ( 22 nurses, phonecall from doctor, twice safe amount of drug). Blaming actions on higher authority rather than accepting blame.

- 2. Effect of setting – Milgram’s experiment. University setting had higher obedience levels than run down office block.



- 3. Cultural setting – Some cultures are more likely to be obedient than others. Milgram’s study, Australians least obedient (individualist culture), Italy most obedient (collectivist culture)



- 4. Impact of consensus – Milgram’s study showed that if others disobeyed so did the participants. Influence of other people.



# Criticisms of Situational factors theory

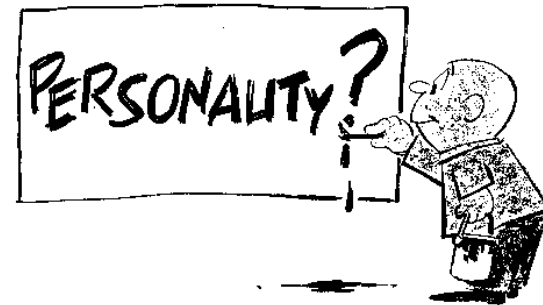
- Lacks ecological validity because done in a lab, not asked to electrocute people in real life so can't explain real life obedience.



Ethical problems –based on research where people can become distressed and anxious and causing long term harm.



Dispositional factors theory says it doesn't give enough weight to the role of personality. Some people are more anxious or ambitious than others.



What is the name of the alternative theory?

# Dispositional Factors



# Describe the dispositional factors theory.

- Obedience is determined by personality.
- Adorno et al – authoritarian personality
- F scale Questionnaire - more prone to
- obedience, bigoted and prejudiced.
- F stands for fascism.
- Dislike for lower social classes
- Conventional ideas of right and wrong
- Can't deal with ambiguity
- Always willing to follow orders



# Bickman (1974)

- The effect of appearance on obedience
- Field experiment
- 3 male experimenters dressed up



# Procedure

- Field experiment
- 153 pedestrians
- In New York
- 3 instructions



# Results



guard

89%



milkman

57%



civilian

33%

# Conclusion

Dress alone can suggest that somebody has the authority to punish you. Therefore you are more likely to obey them.

# Limitations

Limitation	Extraneous variables	Opportunity sampling	Unethical	Gender bias	Cultural bias
Because					
Therefore					

# Applications of research

- Applied in prisons, schools and armed forces
- Promote obedience – uniforms, loss of identity (numbers), punishments from people in authority (guards, teachers, majors/generals), solitary confinement (no consensus)

