

TYPE A/B PERSONALITY IN UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL STUDENTS AND GROUP PRESSURE; CONFORMITY

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: To assess the type of personality i.e. type A & type B in undergraduate medical students and to verify which personality takes more group pressure and shows conformity. This study also estimates time to reconsider their decision in each personality.

Methods and materials: A comparative study conducted in Peshawar. Simple probability sampling technique was used and sample of 60 were selected (30 Type A personality & 30 Type B Personality). Informed consent was taken from the participants. After the evaluation, the groups were formed having six confederates and one subject. Participants were asked to observe the three glasses and select one of them in which they contemplate have more green color kancha and write the glass number on paper. The experiment was conducted in three trials and instructions were given to them. Time taken by subject, when they were thinking over their decision and final answer were recorded. All the participants were debriefed. The data was entered and analyzed in SPSS version 22.

Results: This study reveals that the Type A personality individuals take less group pressure and show conformity. It was also disclosed that Type A Personality do not reconsider their decision or take minimum time as compared to Type B personality after listening the opinions of other group members even when they were right.

Conclusion: It is essential for the trainers to recognize and work on the personality development and modification of the students. Such personalities can be molded towards positive and healthy activities.

Key words: Personality, Conformity, Group pressure, Decision making, Reconsider Time

INTRODUCTION

People having interaction living in a common area and having the same norms, goals and culture makes a society and this society has an impact on people i.e. social influence. Social influence is the modification in behavior that one person causes in

another, consciously or involuntarily, individual recognizes themselves in connection to the influencer, other people and society generally¹. Social influence can be termed as group pressure when any implicit or explicit social pressure that's deployed by a group on its discrete members to influence their choices and in a way to make them conform². Group pressure can either be encouraging their friends to smoke, drink or engage in another risky behavior or it can be sort of motivation to do charity, taking care of their parents and helping other people, so it can be negative or positive³. Group pressure is tremendously

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effective in producing social conformity, and insignificance is that the pressure to adopt stronger than in small, close groups like those just demarcated⁴. And simply how powerful group pressure is often has been demonstrated through an experiment⁵. An earliest and most notable study was conducted by the psychologist Solomon Asch⁶. He showed the subjects 2 cards, the first card has the primary line and the second card has the 3 lines which were like the primary line. But he organized the confederates to give their answers before the other subjects and answer should be wrong. In the result, 3 out of 4 subjects agreed with wrong answers of the confederates minimally once—one in four subjects go with the incorrect answer fifty per cent of the time⁷. A neuroscientist repeated Asch’s experiment and found similar results⁸. He finds out that the volunteers who spend time in the waiting room, agreed with answers to the confederates⁹. In a research study¹⁰, outcomes showed that occipital–parietal function changes observed during conformity. High amygdala and caudate activity were linked with independence. These results offer primary genetic proof in immersion of sensory activity and emotive operations throughout social conformity¹¹. The reasons behind accepting the group pressure can be a sense of cohesion in the society, approval from the group members or to be a part of the group, desirability to be like the one to whom they are idealizing, bullied, low self-esteem, low confidence level and socioeconomic status¹². In a study¹³, Substantially good-looking people were more likely to have adopted socially prudent dispositional traits and display resistance to social influences¹⁴. The type A Personality individuals are extremely competitive, ambitious, work-driven, time-conscious, and aggressive—has been the topic of analysis for quite 50 years¹⁵. The construct was developed within the late Fifties by American

cardiologists Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosen man, who argued that type A behavior pattern was a risk issue for coronary cardiovascular disease¹⁶. type B personality tends to be additional tolerant of others, are more relaxed than type A people, more reflective, experience lower levels of tension and show a better level of imagination and creative thinking¹⁷. Personality Type A could be an idealist and will have problem in performing duties, and thus ends attempting to try and do things himself¹⁸. Such an individual is incredibly unlikely to undertake an excessive amount of self-analysis. They sometimes feel insecurities and wants to control it¹⁹. In contrary, Type B individual one expression might be “laid back”. Type B personalities have enough confidence in their fellow people at large to be ready to delegate. They’re calm and rational¹⁸. A study was conducted to rule out patterns of decision-making strategies among type A and B personality people²⁰. The results show that both personality types were not different in their dimensions, but type A personality individuals performed fast and selected those alternatives which were more non-compensatory strategy and avoided gross errors.

Reconsider time taken by Type A
Type B Personality

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was a comparative study conducted on undergraduate medical students of the Peshawar. The sample size of this experiment was 60 students, consisting of 30 Type A participants and 30 Type B participants. Simple random sampling was done, and the type of personalities were assessed. Participants Type A and Type B personality was evaluated through “Personality Type A/B questionnaire”, a modified version of the Jenkins Activity Survey developed by Jenkins, Zyzanski, & Rosenman in 1971. It has been adopted to use with the college students having 20 items. The reliability of this scale is .86.

Table 1: It represents the personality types taken group pressure and show conformity

	Conformity		Total	Chi-square value	P-value
	Change decision	Not change decision			
Type A personality	11 (36.7%)	19 (63.3%)	30 (100)	9.77	<0.05
Type B personality	23 (76.7%)	7 (23.3%)	30 (100)		

Table 2: Reconsider time taken by Type A & Type B Personality

	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	95% confidence interval
Type A personality	30	2.1	1.15	-8.1	<0.05	(-5.8) - (-3.5)
Type B personality	30	6.7	2.93			

The experiment was conducted in the laboratory comprising of 3 trials. There were 6 confederates, instructed to give wrong answers and show gestures towards subject. This was done to exert group pressure that his/her answer is incorrect. kancha (marble balls) in glasses were used in this experiment. Sitting of the participants were in a circle and the subject was seated in the middle position, among the Confederates. The participants were asked that in which glass there was greener color kancha. After giving answers, the participants were asked if they want to reconsider their answer. similarly, after 5min intervals the second and third trial conducted. The responses of the participants and time taken during the reconsideration of their opinion recorded. In the end, the participants were debriefed. SPSS version 22 was used for data analysis, chi-square and t-test was applied for interpretation of the data. The approval for this study was taken from ethical committee of the Gandhara university, Peshawar..

RESULT

This study reveals that the Type A personality individuals take less group pressure and show conformity. It was also disclosed that Type A Personality do not reconsider their decision or take minimum time as compared to Type B personality after listening the opinions of other group members even when they were right. Table 1 represents the personality types taken group pressure and show conformity while Table 2 reconsider time taken by type A & type B personality.

DISCUSSION

Type A Personality individuals have burst of energy, high motivation, achievement and dominance¹⁹. In a study it was concluded that type A personality has high frequency of conflicts as compared to type B personalities. Another reason was the cultural factor, parents teach their children to obey your seniors and authorities and its collectivistic culture, so people consider others opinion. A study conducted in Pakistan¹⁸ reveals that Type A personality is more prevalent in medical students and they reported the characteristics of urgency, hostility and competitiveness in their education. On perceptual ability task the connection between conformity and type A personality was examined²¹. The experiment was based on the Asch conformity paradigm and twenty-three extreme type A and B persons participated ($p < .02$).

The type B participants showed double conformity than type A participants. Similar experiment was conducted on the subgroup of the participants and it showed that changes in judgmental accuracy of stimuli (conformity measure) was led by social pressure to conform. The results suggest that Type A persons' resistance to subtle social coercion to conform may reflect their increased sensitivity to threats to their personal control²¹. In our study (table 1), shows that Type A personality doesn't take group pressure and undergo in conformity with members by changing their opinion and decision whereas on other side Type B personalities expressed conformity to their group members ($p < .002$). It was postulated there are two factors through which people show conformity i.e. normative and informative²⁵. Type A personalities has subordinate self-control relative to stress level whereas Type B personalities have better self-control lacking any effect of stress²², therefore we can say that in our study these factors may also played role in the Type A & B participants decision. Type B personalities are relaxed, easy-going and gave importance to people around them¹⁸, as conformity is considered as a positive reinforcement and protects from negative feedback of others²³ so it can support our results, 76.7% participants changed their decision. In table 2, the results show the reconsideration time of the participants. When participants were asked if they want to reconsider their decision, the time in between their response were recorded. The type A personality mean is 2.1 whereas the Type B personality mean is 6.7 having p-value < 0.05 . The Type A personality took minimum to respond as compared to Type B personality ($p < 0.001$). A study revealed that Type A personalities wants to achieve more in a less time even when its needed to oppose other persons whereas the Type B personalities are calm, and they take their time to handle different tasks²⁴. This study supports our results of Table 2, as during the experiment Type A personalities behavior showed impulsivity and urgency to complete the task. When they were asked about reconsider their decision, they abruptly said no whereas Type B personalities gave second thought to their decision.

LIMITATIONS

The sample size was small, and the selection was not purely on an extreme level of type A/B personality. There was a need to have more control over the extraneous variables.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the higher authorities should worked on the personality development of the students and arrange programs for them. At this age, they can adopt some unhealthy habits through social influence and peer-pressure which are harmful to their physical and mental health.

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