SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY · IAL WPS01 · A LEVEL 9PS0

Milgram's Variations Grid

Place, presence, person: what changed, what happened and why.

Study	What changed	Full obedience (450V)	Link to theory
Baseline (1963)	Yale University; experimenter in a grey lab coat in the room; 40 men aged 20–50	**65%** (everyone reached 300V)	Agentic state: participants saw the experimenter as responsible
Rundown office block (Exp. 10) · PLACE	Moved to a shabby office in Bridgeport, run by an unknown company	**47.5%**	Less legitimate power: the setting lacked prestige
Telephonic instructions (Exp. 7) · PRESENCE	Experimenter gave orders by phone from another room	**20.5%**	Less proximity to authority, so easier to stay autonomous; some gave lower shocks than ordered
Ordinary man gives orders (Exp. 13) · PERSON	Experimenter left; an "ordinary man" (confederate) took over	**20%**	No legitimate power; not seen as an authority, so no agentic shift

Don't lose marks: each variation used **new participants**. They were not the same people as the baseline, and they believed the shocks were real.

Four prods (same in every variation)

1. "Please continue" or "Please go on."
2. "The experiment requires that you continue."
3. "It is absolutely essential that you continue."
4. "You have no other choice, you must go on."

Quick test

- Which variation tested the effect of prestige?
- What percentage obeyed fully when orders came by phone?
- Explain the drop in obedience when an ordinary man gave orders. (2 marks)

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