Group size:

refers to the tendency of an individual to make less effort when involved in a group activity than when working alone. It was first systematically studied and observed in a tug-of-war experiment involving two teams of eight people. The results showed that the collective effort exerted by each team did not match the total of the individual efforts. For example, blindfolded participants who were assigned the first position in the tug-of-war machine (see figure 9.27) and told to ‘pull as hard as you can’ pulled 18 per cent harder when they knew they were pulling alone than when they believed that others were also pulling

Unanimity:

complete agreement among members of a group.

Informational influence:

occurs when conformity results from a need for direction and information on how to respond in a specific situation. Informational influence leads people to accept other people’s views when they are uncertain about what to do. Research studies have specifically found that informational influence is more likely to lead to conformity when participants feel incompetent, when the task is difficult, or when participants are concerned about being right (Myers, 1990; Hewstone, Stroebe & Jonas, 2008). In all these situations, we may be motivated by wanting to be ‘right’ and access to relevant information can influence us to conform.

Normative influence:

to conform occurs when our response in a group situation is guided by one or more social norms. When we are aware of social norms for a particular situation, awareness of these norms can be a powerful influence on both the likelihood that we will conform and the severity of conformity that occurs.

Culture:

the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

Social loafing:

refers to the tendency of an individual to make less effort when involved in a group activity than when working alone. It was first systematically studied and observed in a tug-of-war experiment involving two teams of eight people. The results showed that the collective effort exerted by each team did not match the total of the individual efforts. For example, blindfolded participants who were assigned the first position in the tug-of-war machine (see figure 9.27) and told to ‘pull as hard as you can’ pulled 18 per cent harder when they knew they were pulling alone than when they believed that others were also pulling (Ingham et al., 1974).

Deindividuation:

is the loss of individuality, or the sense of anonymity, that can occur in a group situation. Deindividuation is a psychological state and is believed to be an important factor in explaining the extreme behaviour of some people in crowds, particularly in situations where high levels of emotion are involved; for example, screaming hysterically during a rock concert or abusing a football umpire, as well as less restrained mob behaviour, street riots and the violence observed in some English and European soccer fans.