

TMFRS

LET'S MAKE SENSE OF YER STUPID FUCKING BRAIN

Peer Pressured Environments

How does image control correlate with diminished life experience?

Fall 2025

What increases friend-influenced conformity?

"Peer pressure is an adolescent problem"... unless circumstances have created a second high school experience for us all.

summary

This conversation delves into the dynamics of peer pressure and conformity, particularly in the context of modern society and the influence of the internet. It explores how peer pressure manifests not only in adolescence but also in adult life, driven by social norms and the need for acceptance. The discussion highlights the neurological underpinnings of peer influence, the structural changes in social environments, and the role of the internet in shaping identities and social interactions.

takeaways

- Peer pressure is a significant force in both adolescence and adulthood.
- Social dynamics have shifted, leading to increased peer influence.
- Rejection from peer groups can have severe emotional consequences.
- Similarity among peers fosters compatibility and reduces conflict.
- Individuals often modify their behavior to fit group norms.
- Individual identity within the group norm increases extremity.
- Popularity is prioritized due to social advantages.
- The maturity gap affects how adolescents navigate peer pressure.
- There's a common cause increasing the influence of peer pressure on all of us...

keywords

peer pressure, conformity, social influence, identity development, internet culture, adolescence, social dynamics, emotional maturity, group identity, popularity

So we've focused on abusive supervisors and power imbalances causing facades of conformity and impression management tactics.

But what about friends?

What about platonic culture?

What about... I hate to say it because most of us will probably roll our eyes in assumed condescension but rest assured I don't mean it that way... peer pressure?

And how does THAT relate to the dual temperament and belief system options that seem to exist in the world we live in?

Saying: People apparently have roughly two options these days, you can be red or blue. Antifa or... Fa.

With them come the fanaticism – the personal worship of certain figures – the diehard commitment (supposedly, at least at face value) to certain values... which is hard for some of us to understand.

How are so many folks SO INFLUENCED into a state of conformity, when, supposedly, any identity should be easier to hold than ever?

Being an authentic self SHOULD be supportable, through finding environments on the internet that can stretch into physical reality... friends should be available to everyone, no matter how weird they get... So what gives? What's up with the increasing monoculture? Why is the spiral of silence happening?

Let's briefly talk about the factors that increase peer pressure to deduce what's been happening in modern society.

Today, I'm giving you the basic information. Then the hypothesis. Next time we'll dive into all the details, examine a particular generation for example, and see how well it all fits. To see if you agree that peer pressure may be alive and well... in folks who are most of the way through their own lives already, and obviously rather unwell.

And we begin by understanding that every behavior has a? Function. Tied to survival and evolution. Or else we wouldn't be doing it. So it's not worth being ashamed. It is worth examining and understanding.

This paper is called:

Toward understanding the functions of peer influence: A summary and synthesis of recent empirical research

Brett Laursen, Rene Veenstra

JOURNAL OF RESEARCH ON ADOLESCENCE, 2021

And they say

There is an increasing interest in studying the neural underpinnings of peer experiences in order to understand how peer interactions relate to adjustment and well-being (G€uro_glu & Veenstra, 2021). The presence of peers activates regions of the brain associated with reward processing... Friends appear to elicit stronger neurological responses than other peers (Schreuders et al., 2019).

Of course, when we think of peer pressure, most of us think of? Adolescence.

Structural changes in school and free time settings.

Essentially, children move into new environments with less oversight. With that open frontier, they have to choose new identity characteristics.

Children move from a predictable world where most of their time is spent in relatively small, familiar groups that are closely monitored by the same teacher, to a larger, impersonal, uncertain world populated by unfamiliar peers, with diffuse adult supervision (Eccles et al., 1996).

Autonomy and the maturity gap.

Basically, what they're capable of doing and what they're mentally and emotionally equipped for do not match. They can get into big trouble that they're not prepared for in those unexplored territories.

Compared with children, young adolescents have more freedom over where they go and what they do.

The disconnect between biological and social maturity, known as the maturity gap, creates a specific form of adolescence-limited conformity pressure (Moffitt, 1993).

Identity development and deidentification.

Here they tell us that it's a time of identify transition leaving the insular family culture and joining new ones. Because they need a new template to model, they're susceptible to taking on characteristics of peers.

The normative search for one's own identity, established apart from parents, leaves an opening for input from and influence by others. For most young adolescents, friends are the obvious choice.

Findings from experimental studies indicate that peer influence is greatest when adolescents are confronted with unfamiliar tasks that have uncertain outcomes (van Hoorn et al., 2017). As adolescents grow more secure in their identities and more settled in their tastes, peer influence should decline.

THE INFLUENCE-COMPATIBILITY MODEL

The Primacy of Peers in Adolescent Culture

In this section, they tell us that a brand new society becomes relevant. And having social connections is mandatory to be safe within it.

The rapid reorganization of the social world that begins in early adolescence has several noteworthy consequences. Educational structures "have taken not only job-training out of the parents' hands, but have quite effectively taken away the whole adolescent. The adolescent is dumped into a society of peers" (Coleman, 1961, p. 4).

Most adolescents recognize that friends are required to successfully navigate peer culture.

The consequences of rejection and exclusion from the peer group are also severe.

Peer Influence Promotes Similarity and Enhances Compatibility

I won't bother to summarize this one:

Peer influence is a tool for maintaining and increasing resemblances between friends and among affiliates. In this way, influence promotes compatibility by enhancing similarity.

Peers value similarity because it provides a foundation for interpersonal affinity and intragroup harmony (Laursen, 2017). Individuals who share attitudes, interests, and behaviors find it easy to get along. They are, in a word, compatible.

And similarly, the other side of that coin:

Similarity and Compatibility Reduce the Threat of Friendship Dissolution and Peer Group Exclusion

Dissimilarities are dangerous to relationships. They breed negative thoughts and deeds. Differences are a primary source of disagreement between friends, because they threaten to undermine compatibility.

So, it's better to maintain the façade of compatibility than to risk having differences and lose the safety of friendship.

And also:

CONCEPTUAL COUNTERPARTS

Identity Maintenance Models

Fearing the sanctions levied against those who undermine group norms, individuals monitor and modify their own behavior, to avoid being perceived as an outlier (Wellen & Neale, 2006).

Understanding Voluntary Affiliations

The influence strategies used to promote similarity in friend dyads differ from those in peer groups. Cliques are interconnected friend dyads. Also voluntary, they may contain associations that require an individual to affiliate with a third party in order to maintain a shared friendship.

Understanding the Need for Status

Behavior is influenced by social norms. Typically, norm conformity is enforced through social groups (Veenstra et al., 2018). Adolescents prioritize popularity, because of the influence that popular youth wield and the privileges they enjoy.

So, as friends turn into groups, there is more pressure to conform to the group dynamics so that friends don't detect an outlier and exile them from the crowd.

But also, it's important to human minds to feel unique, so they attempt to have some form of individualism within that group, without going too far and upsetting the group.

But also, also, it's most important to have strong social status and remain attractive to MANY individuals AND groups to achieve popularity to secure a sense of control and stability.

Synthesize and Reveal

And all of this being said... are you hypothesizing the same cause of this incredible world of conformity as I am?

What is creating the drive to be one of two ways, with increasing veracity, in demographics that are not adolescent?

Those items we covered were:

Structural changes : sudden access to a new world

Gaps between ability and maturity ; capacity to do more than one understand the repercussions of

Identity development and deidentification ; leaving behind the confines of the old social structure and developing a new front-facing personality

The Primacy of Peers in the Culture ; a host of new friends and comrades become the point of social contact and authority

Peer Influence Promotes Similarity and Enhances Compatibility ; relationships thrive easily when they're not challenged by dissimilarities

Similarity and Compatibility Reduce the Threat of Friendship Dissolution and Peer Group Exclusion ; group identities cement the need for similarity, outliers may be exiled

Identity Maintenance ; and yet, we also want to have our own unique perspective

Within *Voluntary Affiliations* ; without straying too far from the shared beliefs of the group and accidentally slipping into another or having nowhere to go at all

While meeting the *Need for Status* ; while appeasing high powered social networks and individuals because social success happens by association and it greases the wheels of life

Taking together..... What does this all sound like to you?

Thrust into a new world, mostly made of peer relations, where you can post whatever you want without any tests for expertise or aptitude, where similarity in identify and belief makes you safe,

but standing out earns you viral moments, so you want to reflect the prevailing values of the crowd, while also striking a unique “personal brand,” without pissing off the masses or the men in charge, and often through identifying those figures, joining their haram, and mimicking their plight to popularity.

My answer?

Obviously? Knowing how I feel about tech?

It’s the internet... and algorithms.

Acting as our new, global, high school that we were dumped into without adequate preparation.

And showing how little mankind actually matures between adolescence and old age, when given the platform to demonstrate it. How susceptible the species still is to “seeming cool.” And how easily they can be divided into attention and popularity based cliques.

Was it a mistake to let extremely traumatized (and therefore self-inauthentic, identity-shaky) individuals who’ve not done self-work (Boomers) flood into the gym together to one-up, suck-up, and put-down their peers in the plight for their own sense of individuality, perhaps for the first time in their lives?

Did this create an environment of extreme bullying, built by folks with something to prove and no idea what a “real adult man” looks like, while given the capability to type in all caps about it as often as they’d like?

How has the algorithm-based internet dragged humanity as a collective back into its most volatile, least secure, and most obviously unwise years... together... and let us tussle it out like 14 year olds with everything to prove, to detrimental result?

Tune in next time, when we’ll go through this paper in... I’ll be honest.. boomer-dragging detail, and see if there are other research literature breadcrumbs to support this theory.

Internet plus a world of emotionally immature individuals equals peer pressure that amounts to environments of conformity... for all.

I’ll see you then.

And Cheers, Fuckers.

Notes (fill in blank)

*The presence of peers activates regions of the brain associated with _____..
Friends appear to elicit stronger neurological responses than other peers.*

*Children move from a predictable world where most of their time is spent in relatively small,
_____ that are closely monitored to a larger, impersonal, uncertain world
populated by _____.*

*The disconnect between biological and social maturity, known as the _____, creates a
specific form of adolescence-limited conformity pressure.*

*Findings from experimental studies indicate that peer influence is greatest when adolescents
are confronted with _____.*

*The _____ of the social world that begins in early adolescence has several
noteworthy consequences.*

Individuals who share attitudes, interests, and _____ find it easy to get along.

*Differences are a primary source of disagreement between friends, because they threaten to
_____.*

*Fearing the sanctions levied against those who undermine group norms, individuals monitor and
modify their own behavior, to avoid being _____.*

*Cliques are interconnected friend dyads. Also voluntary, they may contain associations that
require an individual to affiliate _____ in order to maintain a shared friendship.*

Adolescents prioritize popularity, because of the influence that popular youth wield and the _____ they enjoy.

Taking this peer pressure research together, is it possible that the internet has been acting as our new, global, _____ which we were dumped into without adequate preparation?

Hypothesis: Internet + a world of emotionally immature individuals = _____ that amounts to _____ ... for all.

Notes Key

The presence of peers activates regions of the brain associated with _____.. Friends appear to elicit stronger neurological responses than other peers.

reward processing

Children move from a predictable world where most of their time is spent in relatively small, _____ that are closely monitored to a larger, impersonal, uncertain world populated by _____.

familiar groups ; unfamiliar peers

The disconnect between biological and social maturity, known as the _____, creates a specific form of adolescence-limited conformity pressure.

maturity gap

Findings from experimental studies indicate that peer influence is greatest when adolescents are confronted with _____.

unfamiliar tasks that have uncertain outcomes

The _____ of the social world that begins in early adolescence has several noteworthy consequences.

rapid reorganization

Individuals who share attitudes, interests, and _____ find it easy to get along.

Behaviors

Differences are a primary source of disagreement between friends, because they threaten to _____.

undermine compatibility

Fearing the sanctions levied against those who undermine group norms, individuals monitor and modify their own behavior, to avoid being _____.

perceived as an outlier

Cliques are interconnected friend dyads. Also voluntary, they may contain associations that require an individual to affiliate _____ in order to maintain a shared friendship.

with a third party

Adolescents prioritize popularity, because of the influence that popular youth wield and the _____ they enjoy.

Privileges

Taking this peer pressure research together, is it possible that the internet has been acting as our new, global, _____ which we were dumped into without adequate preparation?

high school

Hypothesis: Internet + a world of emotionally immature individuals = _____ that amounts to _____ ... for all.

peer pressure ; environments of conformity

Multiple Choice Notes/Quiz

The presence of peers activates regions of the brain associated with _____. Friends appear to elicit stronger neurological responses than other peers.

self esteem

disassociation

reward processing

safety

Children move from a predictable world where most of their time is spent in relatively small, _____ that are closely monitored to a larger, impersonal, uncertain world populated by _____.

predictable dyads ; abusive supervisors

familiar groups ; difficult family members

secluded cities ; unexplored territories

familiar groups ; unfamiliar peers

The disconnect between biological and social maturity, known as the _____, creates a specific form of adolescence-limited conformity pressure.

maturity gap

great chasm

emotional immaturity canyon

self-image discrepancy

Findings from experimental studies indicate that peer influence is greatest when adolescents are confronted with _____.

large groups of influencers

sexual and emotional immaturity

unfamiliar tasks that have uncertain outcomes

The _____ of the social world that begins in early adolescence has several noteworthy consequences.

dissipation

rapid reorganization

exclusionary nature

sudden contraction

Individuals who share attitudes, interests, and _____ find it easy to get along.

Instagram follows

Family members

Behaviors

Differences are a primary source of disagreement between friends, because they threaten to _____.

shine light on losers

overwhelm fragile egos

undermine compatibility

highlight personal shortcomings

Fearing the sanctions levied against those who undermine group norms, individuals monitor and modify their own behavior, to avoid being _____.

called unkind names

perceived as an outlier

reassigned to another friend group

emotionally crippled

Cliques are interconnected friend dyads. Also voluntary, they may contain associations that require an individual to affiliate _____ in order to maintain a shared friendship.

in carefully detailed ways

with popular individuals

with a third party

with national franchises

Adolescents prioritize popularity, because of the influence that popular youth wield and the _____ they enjoy.

Safety

Sexual experiences

Privileges

Self-esteem

Taking this peer pressure research together, is it possible that the internet has been acting as our new, global, _____ which we were dumped into without adequate preparation?

high school

peer group

community

Hypothesis: Internet + a world of emotionally immature individuals = _____ that amounts to _____ ... for all.

peer pressure ; self-improvement

newfound social discoveries ; novel thinking

influencer culture ; guided self-healing

peer pressure ; environments of conformity

Notes/Multiple Choice with Key

The presence of peers activates regions of the brain associated with _____. Friends appear to elicit stronger neurological responses than other peers.

self esteem

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peer pressure ; environments of conformity