

7-1977

The Relationship Between Sensation Seeking & Conformity

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1977

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SENSATION SEEKING
AND
CONFORMITY

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Shirley J. Rabuck
July 1977

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SENSATION SEEKING
AND
CONFORMITY

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. C. Clinton Layne, my Thesis Committee Chairman, for the support which he offered throughout all stages of this study, and for his time and effort which went into this study. A special thanks also to Dr. Lynn Clark and Dr. Sam McFarland for all of the assistance and support which they offered. I would also like to thank all of my dedicated confederates, without whom this study would not have been possible. Appreciation is also extended to the Faculty Research Committee of Western Kentucky University, who generously supported this study through a Research Grant.

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Review of Relevant Literature.	4
Statement of Problem	15
Method	17
Results.	21
Discussion	26
Appendix A	34
Appendix B	35
Appendix C	40
Appendix D	41
Appendix E	42
Appendix F	43
References	44

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1 Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between SSS, SSS Subscales, Autonomy, Dominance, and ASCH Scores	22
Table 2 Partial Correlation Coefficients for TAS and ASCH when Controlling for Autonomy and Dominance	25
Table 3 Mean ASCH Scores for High, Middle, and Low Scorers on Sensation Seeking Scale.	29

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSATION SEEKING
AND CONFORMITY

Shirley J. Rabuck

July 1977

48 pages

Directed by: C. Clinton Layne, Lynn Clark, and Sam McFarland

Department of Psychology

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Two hundred male, Introductory Psychology students were tested using the ACL and SSS. Forty-two students were then selected using approximately the upper, lower, and middle 7% of the distribution of scores on the total SSS as cut-off points. The Asch Conformity Test (ASCH) was then administered to each of those 42 subjects. It was hypothesized that high sensation seekers (based on total scale score, SSS) would behave in a nonconforming manner and that low sensation seekers would more readily conform to social pressures as measured by the ASCH. It was also hypothesized that when the effects of dominance and autonomy (as measured by the ACL) were discounted, the SSS would continue to predict nonconformity in the subjects. The results obtained through the use of Pearson product-moment correlations suggest that nonconformity is not significantly related to sensation seeking (as measured by the total SSS score). However, a significant relationship was found to exist between Thrill and Adventure Seeking (TAS, one of the SSS subscales) and nonconformity.

When the effects of dominance and autonomy (ACL) were eliminated through the use of partial correlations, TAS continued to predict nonconformity in the subjects.

Introduction

In recent years, research on the personality dimension of sensation seeking has identified a variety of characteristics associated with sensation seeking. A review of the literature suggests that many of the same personality characteristics which can be attributed to high sensation seekers are also common to nonconforming individuals. Also, those characteristics common to low sensation seekers are found in conforming individuals (Bacon, 1974; Bone, 1972; Byrne, 1961; Crutchfield, 1955; DiVesta and Cox, 1960; Izard, 1959; Kish, 1971; McGhee and Teevan, 1967; Ozeran, 1973; Tuddenham, 1959; Vaughan, 1964; Zuckerman and Link, 1968; Zuckerman, Bone, Neary, Mangelsdorff, and Brustman, 1972).

Henry A. Murray's concept of need can be incorporated in an attempt to explain some of the behaviors exhibited by both high and low sensation seekers, and conforming and nonconforming individuals. Autonomy and dominance (two needs which have been identified by Murray) have been suggested as factors accounting for sensation seeking and nonconforming behavior. The need for autonomy, as described by Murray, is to be independent, unattached, and resistant to coercion. The need for dominance has been described as being in control of oneself and others and influencing or directing the actions of others (Murray, 1938).

While there has been no research attempting to examine sensation seeking within the framework of Murray's need system, Zuckerman (1964) attempted to develop a theory of optimal level of stimulation to understand individual differences in responding to sensory deprivation. One part of this theory (Postulate III) states, "Every individual has characteristic optimal levels of stimulation (OLS) and arousal (OLA) for cognitive activity, motoric activity, and positive affective tone" (Zuckerman, 1964, p. 429).

One of the characteristics which has appeared to relate to sensation seeking in studies using personality questionnaires is that of nonconformity, a concept which was studied thoroughly in a series of experiments by Asch (1951, 1956, 1958). These experiments were concerned with the conditions of independence and lack of independence in the face of group pressure. Asch's study of conformity was influenced by the work of Sherif (1935) on the autokinetic effect. When one looks at a stationary light in a room which is otherwise completely dark, the light seems to move. Sherif found that subjects' reports of movement were influenced greatly by the reports of other individuals. This study sparked interest in more advanced studies of conformity.

While Sherif used an ambiguous stimulus in his study, Asch's stimulus was almost completely nonambiguous. He generated a disagreement between a single person and a group concerning a clear matter of fact involving visual perception. The majority group, which disagreed with the individual, judged

the simple problems wrongly. Each person's judgments were publicly stated, and the subject was always asked to announce his judgment after a group of peers had stated a wrong judgment. The study was concerned with public independence when faced with the opposition of a majority group. The aim of Asch's study was to observe the impact this situation would have on an individual when the conflict involved was that of either resisting or giving in to prevailing group consensus.

Asch found in these early studies that a significant minority never conformed, but a very small percentage conformed to group pressure on almost all of the critical trials. He also found that if a subject yielded, he tended to do so early in the series. Those subjects who started out being independent tended to remain so until the very end of the experiment.

The present investigation attempted to assess the possibility of a relationship between the two concepts of sensation seeking and conformity and their relationship to two of Murray's needs, autonomy and dominance. This was done by studying sensation seeking in relation to its influence on subjects' performance on a behavioral task, a conformity situation. The needs for autonomy and dominance were then studied as they related to both sensation seeking and conformity.

Review of Relevant Literature

Sensation Seeking

Murray placed great emphasis upon the importance of motivation in understanding human behavior. The concept of need was analyzed in detail by Murray and is a central construct in his theory of personality. He describes a need as something which initiates activity in an organism and causes this activity to continue until the organism-environment situation has been changed in such a way as to reduce the need (Hall and Lindzey, 1970, p. 175).

In an attempt to formulate a theory of sensory deprivation, Zuckerman has suggested drive or need as one theory, postulating the existence of a specific need or drive for varied stimulation, and suggested that individuals show reliable differences in this need.

Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob (1964) developed the Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS) to provide a quantitative trait measure for optimal levels of stimulation (OLS) and arousal (OLA), with the intention of using the scale as a predictor of individual differences in response to sensory deprivation.

Although the SSS has not been shown to be a sound predictor of tolerance to deprivation in most research which has been done using this scale, the SSS has proved to be very useful in another area of research. The SSS provides a new

approach to personality, allowing the study of behaviors beyond the sensory deprivation situation.

Form I of the SSS was written as a general trait measure and consisted of 50 items drawn up to measure individual differences in the hypothesized trait, "Optimal Level of Stimulation." This form was administered to 268 male and 277 female undergraduates. The 50 items were intercorrelated, and separate factor analyses were performed for males and females. The presence of a single dominant factor was found to exist for both males and females. There were 22 items on this general MF scale.

Form II of the SSS (Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob, 1964) consisted of 34 items which included the 22 items in the general MF scale. Some reliability and validity data are discussed in the above cited article.

Farley (1967) suggested that more than one simple factor may be included in the General SSS. Zuckerman and Link (1968) rotated the factors obtained in the factor analyses of the original sample (Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob, 1964). Additional factors which were suggested in the results were thrill seeking, social sensation seeking, visual sensation seeking, and antisocial sensation seeking. All of these factors were identifiable for males, but only the first two seemed to be identifiable in females.

There were not enough items included in Form I to measure these factors. Therefore, additional items were written based on initial results of the Zuckerman and Link (1968) study. Items were also written to measure another hypothe-

sized factor which was not considered in Form I : sexual sensation seeking. Form III consisted of 113 items and was an experimental form. Four interpretable factors were found for both males and females. These were labelled Thrill and Adventure Seeking, Experience Seeking, Disinhibition, and Boredom Susceptibility. Good factor reliability across the sexes was found on the first three of the factors. However, the Boredom Susceptibility factor was not as consistent in structure and was more clearly identified in males. Based on factor analyses performed with Form III, it was decided to retain the same general MF scale contained in Form II, for Form IV. This form was used for considerable research. The most recent form which is presently being used is Form V.

The Thrill and Adventure Seeking (TAS) factor includes items which express a desire for participation in outdoor sports or other activities which involve elements of speed or danger.

The Experience Seeking (ES) factor consists of items which indicate wander-lust, exhibitionism in dress and behavior, the use of marijuana and hallucinatory drugs, associating with unusual and unconventional persons, and a liking of modern, arousing music and art.

The Disinhibition (DIS) factor consists of items which express a desire to engage in heavy social drinking, variety in sexual partners, "wild parties," and gambling.

The Boredom Susceptibility (BS) factor in males includes items which indicate a dislike of repetitive experiences, routine work, predictable, dull, or boring people, a desire

for variety, and to be with exciting people, and restlessness when things are unchanging.

Although, based on cultural expectations, males would seem to be more sensation seeking than females, there was found to be no sex difference on SS tendency as measured by the common (MF) scale of Form I of the SSS. In data collected using Form III (Zuckerman, 1971), males scored significantly higher than females in two samples on the General Scale. In one sample, males also scored significantly higher on both the TAS and DIS subscales. In the other sample, males scored significantly higher than females only on the DIS subscale.

Attempts have been made in various studies to correlate the SSS with other measures of personality characteristics (Bone, 1972; Bone and Choban, 1972; Farley, 1974; Kish, 1971; Ozeran, 1973; Waters and Kirk, 1968; Zuckerman, 1972; Zuckerman, Bone, Neary, Mangelsdorff, and Brustman, 1972; Zuckerman and Link, 1968).

In a 1972 study (Zuckerman, Bone, Neary, Mangelsdorff, and Brustman), the SSS (particularly the ES subscale) was found to be related to an MMPI triad of F, Pd, and Ma. Zuckerman (1975) summed up the relationship between the SSS and MMPI by indicating that the primary pattern of relationship is with scales measuring nonconformity to social mores (Pd), response pattern which differs with most individuals (F), and energy, activity, and impulsivity (Ma). Zuckerman (1972) also found that the SSS was related to scales of the 16 PF which indicated an uninhibited, nonconforming, impulsive, dominant type of extraversion, and a lack of rigid superego controls.

Bone (1972), in correlating the SSS and Psychological Screening Inventory (PSI), found the primary pattern of correlation between Social Nonconformity (a measure of similarity of the client's response to those of incarcerated prisoners) and all scales in males, and ES, DIS, and BS in both males and females; between Expression and all scales in males, and TAS in both males and females; and between Discomfort and ES in both males and females.

Kish (1971) found the SSS to correlate negatively with the Socialization, Self-Control, and Good Impression scales on the California Psychological Inventory (CPI). The Socialization scale tends to yield low scores with groups which are characterized by a defiance of social rules and conventions. Also, with the CPI, the SSS was found to correlate positively with scales of flexibility, dominance, masculinity, and several other scales intended to measure confidence in social relationships.

Zuckerman and Link (1968) correlated the SSS (Form II) with the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) and the Gough-Heilbrun Adjective Check List (ACL). These tests both attempt to measure 15 of the Murray needs, however, the two tests are quite different in format. The SSS correlated significantly with the same need variables on both tests. Negative correlations were found on the Affiliation, Orderliness, Nurturance, and Deference scales, and positive correlations were found on the Autonomy, Change, and Exhibitionism scales.

Several studies have been done comparing the SSS with field dependence-field independence (Bone and Choban, 1972;

Farley, 1974; Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob, 1964; Zuckerman and Link, 1968). Concerning personality variables, the field independent person has been described as task-oriented, less socially considerate, low risk-taking, assertive, non-conforming, and with leadership traits. The field dependent person has been described as more risk-taking, more considerate of others, less achievement oriented, conforming to group standards, and lacking leadership traits (Colclough, 1972). Mixed results have been found in the studies mentioned, suggesting that there may be a mixture of field independent and dependent traits in the sensation seeker.

Ozeran (1973) used the SSS as a predictor of leadership behavior in task-oriented leaderless groups. She found that high SS subjects began conversations more frequently, spoke more, and tended to be selected as leaders of groups more than other group members.

Sensation seeking has also been studied in relation to risk-taking behavior. It has been found in studies of both gambling behavior and physical risk-taking (Bacon, 1974; Hymbaugh and Garrett, 1974; Ireys, 1974; Kuhlman, in press; Kusyszyn, Steinberg, and Elliot, 1973; Waters and Kirk, 1968) that the high SS subjects were significantly more likely to engage in risk-taking activities.

The results of most of the studies correlating sensation seeking with measures of personality characteristics have been fairly consistent in many respects. To sum up some of the findings of the studies which have been cited, it would appear that high sensation seekers tend to be autonomous,

nonconforming, dominant, more risk-taking, and with a tendency toward leadership. The low sensation seeker appears to be conforming, less risk-taking, and lacking confidence in social situations.

Conformity

Since the early studies by Asch (1951, 1956, 1958), which clearly pointed out the existence of individual differences in conformity behavior, an increasing amount of attention has been focused upon various personality correlates of conformity behavior.

The literature dealing with conformity and personality is too extensive to review completely here, but a few studies which indicate the general nature of the findings will be discussed. Research linking personality variables with conformity behavior has proceeded much more rapidly than investigations of nonconforming responses.

Many researchers have attempted to determine whether conforming behavior is a personality characteristic (for example, Abelson and Lesser, 1959; Back and Davis, 1965; Crutchfield, 1955; Hollander and Willis, 1967; Hunt, 1965; Rosner, 1957; Vaughan, 1964; Wrightsman, 1977).

Murray's need theory may also be applicable in an attempt to better understand conformity-nonconformity. It has been suggested that whenever an instrumental behavior stands between a need of an individual and his achievement of a goal which will satisfy that need, that behavior will occur (Walker and Heyns, 1961, p. 11). An individual may possess a variety of needs and may have a variety of behaviors available to

satisfy a number of goals. Therefore, conflict often occurs. Conflict is an element which is often present in conformity situations. When conformity is instrumental to the satisfaction of one need, and nonconformity is instrumental to the satisfaction of another, the behavior which occurs depends on the relative strengths of the two needs (Walker and Heyns, 1967, p. 93). The model (a) need, (b) instrumental behavior, (c) goal, may be one approach to the question of how an individual may come to be characterized as conformist or nonconformist (Walker and Heyns, 1967, p. 10).

Crutchfield (1955) found conformers and independent subjects to differ in many respects. Independent subjects in contrast to highly conforming subjects showed "more intellectual effectiveness, ego strength, leadership ability, maturity of social relations, and an absence of inferiority feelings and rigid self-control." He also found that independent subjects are more adventurous and dominant than conformers and that they feel freed from the compulsive limits of rules.

Other researchers have found conforming subjects to have a stronger need for affiliation (McGhee and Teevan, 1967), stronger tendencies to blame themselves (Costanzo, 1970), and lessened degrees of self-esteem (Stang, 1972).

Byrne (1961) also found that subjects low in affiliative need tend to remain independent in response to disagreeing strangers; those high in affiliative need do not. Hardy (1957) also noted the important role of the need for affiliation in determining whether subjects conform.

Tuddenham (1959) used a large battery of tests in an effort to describe individuals who conform with a majority made up of confederates in laboratory situations. Conformers were said to be characterized by cooperativeness, patience, conventionality, and conscientiousness. The self-ratings of such individuals emphasized such things as affiliativeness, abasement, and nurturance. These interpretations are consistent with the findings of DiVesta and Cox (1960), who concluded that conforming persons are restrained, cautious, submissive, and oriented toward consideration of others. Vaughan (1964) found conformers to rank low on such things as intelligence, assertiveness, and extroversion. Izard (1959) has reported evidence indicating that conforming individuals score low on measures of need for autonomy and dominance and high on need for deference and abasement.

Hollander and Willis (1967) stated that although individual differences are invariably observed in specific situations, conformity is not always predictable from one situation to another. Studies on the predictability of conformity behavior over various situations indicates a modest amount of consistency. Vaughan (1964) found some consistency in conformity or nonconformity for 20% of the subjects he studied across four situations. Rosner (1957) placed student nurses in a conformity situation, using some peers as confederates on one occasion and others as confederates on another. The degree of conformity for specific individuals was similar across occasions. In another study by Back and Davis (1965), subjects who conformed in a situation concerning perceptual

judgments were also found to be more likely to report acceptance of authority pressures and peer-group norms. Children who conformed to teachers' judgments were also found to respond in a similar way to their mothers' judgments (Abelson and Lesser, 1959).

It was concluded by Wrightsman (1977) that there are some people who tend to conform regardless of behavioral setting and also those who tend to remain independent. He did, however, stress the idea that situational factors must be taken into consideration along with personality traits. As Hunt (1965, p. 86) stated, "It is neither the individual differences among subjects, per se, nor the variations among situations, per se, that produce the variations in behavior. It is rather, the interactions among these which are important."

Several studies have been done in which the subject was not personally identified with his judgment on his decision to conform or remain independent despite a discrepant majority (Crutchfield, 1955; Deutsch and Gerard, 1955; Mouton, Blake, and Olmstead, 1956). It has been found that more conformity occurs when the subject can be held personally accountable to the group than when the subject is protected by anonymity. This has provided evidence that a subject's response to this type of situation is affected by the degree of interdependence among group members. There are many issues which come into play here which may be of much significance, such as the importance the individual sees others placing on his membership in the group and the attractiveness which the group has for the individual.

When the individual has anonymity, the judgments of others are used merely as a frame of reference against which to estimate whether his own judgment is correct. Some of the factors which would affect the final judgment of the subject are the ambiguity of the stimuli and the size and number of alternatives available to the subject.

It has been found in several studies that the more ambiguous the stimulus the greater the influence of the group (Asch, 1951; Kelley and Lamb, 1957). The greater the ambiguity the more uncertain the person will be, and the more he will depend on others for information.

Going along with this, more conformity has also been shown to occur when the majority chooses an answer which is closest to the correct response (Fisher and Lubin, 1958).

Concerning the effects of the size of the majority, Asch (1951) found that opposition by one other person has minimal effects in producing conformity. This was shown to increase markedly when the person is opposed by two others, and still further when opposed by three. Beyond three, there is a tendency for the effect to level off. Larger majorities do not appear to produce greater conformity.

The following is a summary of personality traits which have been found to characterize conforming individuals: conventionality, cautiousness, and submissiveness, with a low need for autonomy and dominance, and a high need for affiliation and nurturance. Nonconforming individuals appear to be adventurous, dominant, and autonomous, with a tendency toward leadership.

Statement of Problem

The literature concerning sensation seeking includes many references in which the sensation seeker is described as a nonconforming or independent individual. In all of the research which has been done comparing these two dimensions, conclusions have been based upon correlations between scales which measure personality characteristics.

The literature is devoid of references in which sensation seeking has actually been shown to correlate with an observable behavioral measure of conformity. Both sensation seekers and nonconforming individuals are seen as dominant, autonomous, adventurous, and risk-taking, with a tendency toward leadership. At the opposite end of the continuum, it appears that low sensation seekers and individuals who are conforming tend to be cautious, conventional, and submissive, with a high need for affiliation and nurturance, and low need for dominance and autonomy.

The present study investigated the relationship between sensation seeking and conformity in a behavioral setting. Autonomy and dominance, two of Murray's needs which have been suggested as factors accounting for sensation seeking and nonconforming behavior, were also studied. The Adjective Check List (ACL, Gough and Heilbrun, 1965) was used to obtain a measure of autonomy and dominance for each of the subjects.

The hypothesis which was tested was that subjects who scored high on the SSS (total scale score) would obtain significantly higher scores on the Asch Conformity Test (ASCH; higher scores on the ASCH indicate nonconformity) than subjects who scored low on the SSS. In other words, high sensation seeking subjects would behave in a nonconforming manner. Low sensation seeking subjects would more readily conform to social pressures as measured by an Asch conformity situation. It was also hypothesized that when the effects of dominance and autonomy (as measured by the ACL) were discounted, the SSS would continue to predict nonconformity in the subjects.

Method

Subjects

The 42 subjects selected for use in this study were chosen from a pool of 200 subjects who were administered the SSS and the ACL. All subjects were male Introductory Psychology students from Western Kentucky University. Using approximately the upper, lower, and middle 7% of the distribution of scores on the total SSS as cut-off points, the subjects were chosen from this sample for the administration of the Asch Conformity Test (ASCH).

Design

The independent variables were sensation seeking propensity, which was measured by the subjects' scores on the Sensation Seeking Scale (Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob, 1964), and autonomy and dominance, which were measured by the Adjective Check List (Gough and Heilbrun, 1965). The dependent variable was degree of conformity-nonconformity, which was measured by the Asch Conformity Test. A comparison of the subjects' performances on the SSS, ACL, and ASCH was assessed by the use of Pearson product-moment correlations. Partial correlations were also used to study the comparison of the subjects' performances on the SSS and the ASCH when the effects of autonomy and dominance were eliminated.

Procedure

Each subject was given the ACL and the SSS in a group testing situation. The ACL was administered first, and the directions for that test were read to the subjects by the experimenter (see Appendix A). After the subjects had completed the ACL, the SSS was administered, and the directions to that test were read to the subjects by the experimenter (see Appendix C). The entire testing period lasted approximately 45 minutes.

The subjects to continue in the study were selected as described above and invited to participate in the research for extra credit. The names of the subjects from the high, low, and middle scoring (SSS) groups were combined and selected at random for the administration of the ASCH. This created a double blind situation, so that the experimenter was unaware from which group each subject had been selected for participation in the ASCH.

The ASCH (see Appendix D) was administered, and each of these subjects was one of five individuals who were seated in a classroom to participate in what appeared to be a simple discrimination experiment. All subjects were required to match the length of three comparison lines (see Appendix E for a description of the lines). One of the three comparison lines was equal to the standard; the other two lengths differed from the standard and each other by considerable amounts. The total task consisted of eighteen such comparisons, and the subjects were required to announce their judgments orally in the order in which they were seated.

In order to produce the conformity effect, only one subject in the above group was the real or intended subject. The other subjects, unknown to the intended subject, were confederates. The confederates met with the experimenter before the actual conformity testing situation and were instructed to exert social pressure on the intended subject by performing in a predetermined manner. On trials one through twelve (see Appendix D), they were instructed to respond with unanimous, but obviously wrong answers in matching the length of a comparison line to a standard line. Trials a. through f. were neutral trials in which the confederates responded with correct judgments in order to lend face validity to the task. Therefore, the intended subject was the only subject in the room who did not know the real purpose of the experiment.

The seating arrangement consisted of two rows of chairs with three chairs in the front row and two chairs in the back row. When the subjects (confederates and intended subject) entered the room, they were instructed (seemingly at random) as to where they would sit. The intended subject was always placed in the second row (the row farthest from the experimenter) and in the next to last seat on the left. The experimenter read a printed set of instructions (see Appendix F) and then showed each subject a standard line, followed by the three comparison lines. As mentioned above, the subjects were asked to give their comparisons orally. As the intended subject heard the majority respond from time to time unanimously and with judgments which obviously

contradicted his own, a clear disagreement situation was introduced between the intended subject and the rest of the group.

At the end of each session, the intended subject was interviewed by the experimenter. This interview session served four purposes. First, the experimenter explained the true purpose of the experiment and elicited the subject's reactions. Second, the experimenter attempted to alleviate any anxiety or subjective distress that the subject might have experienced as a result of being "duped." Third, the subject was questioned to determine whether he had learned the nature of the experiment before coming into the room. Fourth, a verbal commitment not to mention the purpose of the study for a period of at least four weeks was obtained from each subject.

Results

A comparison of the subjects' total scores on the SSS and the ASCH yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .2240 (high scores on the ASCH indicate nonconformity; see Table 1 for Pearson correlations). This correlation indicates no significant relationship between the total SSS score and the ASCH score.

The subjects' scores on the individual subscales of the SSS were also compared with their scores on the ASCH. A comparison of the subjects' scores on the TAS subscale and the ASCH yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .3788. This correlation indicates a significant relationship between the TAS subscale and the ASCH ($p < .01$).

A comparison of the subjects' scores on the other SSS subscales (ES, DIS, and BS) with the ASCH yielded Pearson product-moment correlations of (respectively) .2635, .0495, and .0260. These correlations indicate no significant relationships between the ES, DIS, or BS subscales and the ASCH.

A comparison of the subjects' scores on the AUT subscale of the ACL and the SSS (total scale score) yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .6741 ($p < .001$). This correlation indicates a significant relationship between AUT, as measured by the ACL, and the SSS.

Significant relationships were also found to exist between each of the subscales of the SSS and the AUT subscale

Table 1
 Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between SSS, SSS Subscales,
 Autonomy, Dominance, and ASCH Scores
 (N = 42)

SSS	TAS	ES	DIS	BS	AUT	DOM	ASCH
SSS	.8343****	.8619****	.8859****	.6894****	.6741****	.2984*	.2240
TAS	.8343****	.6829****	.6411****	.3482**	.5211****	.2887	.3788****
ES	.8619****	.6829****	.6529****	.4893****	.5135****	.1463	.2635
DIS	.8859****	.6411****	.6529****	.5590****	.6345****	.2910	.0495
BS	.6894****	.3482**	.4893****	.5590****	.5502****	.2491	.0260
AUT	.6741****	.5211****	.5135****	.6345****	.5502****	.5633****	.2462
DOM	.2984*	.2887	.2910	.2491	.5633****	-----	.0817
ASCH	.2240	.3788****	.2635	.0260	.2462	.0817	-----

* $\bar{p} < .05$
 ** $\bar{p} < .02$
 *** $\bar{p} < .01$
 **** $\bar{p} < .001$

of the ACL. Pearson product-moment correlations for the SSS subscales and the AUT subscale are as follows: TAS, .5211 ($p < .001$); ES, .5135 ($p < .001$); DIS, .6345 ($p < .001$); BS, .5502 ($p < .001$).

A comparison of the subjects' scores on the AUT subscale of the ACL and the ASCH yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .2462. This correlation indicates no significant relationship between the AUT subscale and the ASCH.

A comparison of the subjects' scores on the DOM subscale of the ACL and the SSS (total scale score) yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .2984. This correlation indicates a significant relationship between DOM, as measured by the ACL, and the SSS ($p < .05$).

The individual subscales of the SSS and the DOM subscale of the ACL had approximately the same correlations as the total SSS and the DOM subscale, but they did not reach significance. Pearson product-moment correlations for the SSS subscales and the DOM subscale are as follows: TAS, .2887; ES, .1463; DIS, .2910; BS, .2491.

A comparison of the subjects' scores on the DOM subscale of the ACL and the ASCH yielded a Pearson product-moment correlation of .0817. This correlation indicates no significant relationship between the DOM subscale and the ASCH.

A Pearson product-moment correlation of .5633 was obtained when a comparison was made between the subjects' scores on the DOM subscale and the AUT subscale of the ACL. This correlation indicates a significant relationship ($p < .001$) between the DOM and AUT subscales of the ACL.

When AUT (based on the subscale of the ACL) was partialled from the subjects' scores on the TAS subscale of the SSS and the ASCH, a partial correlation of .3028 was obtained ($p < .05$) (see Table 2 for partial correlations). When DOM (based on the subscale of the ACL) was partialled from subjects' scores on the TAS subscale of the SSS and the ASCH, a partial correlation of .3722 was obtained ($p < .01$). When both DOM and AUT were partialled from subjects' scores on the TAS subscale of the SSS and the ASCH, a partial correlation of .3031 was obtained ($p < .05$). This correlation indicates that when the effects of both DOM and AUT are discounted, a significant relationship continues to exist between TAS and the ASCH.

Table 2

Partial Correlation Coefficients for TAS and ASCH
When Controlling for Autonomy and Dominance

(N = 42)

Controlling for	TAS/ASCH	df
AUT	.3028*	39
DOM	.3722**	39
AUT and DOM	.3031*	38

* $p < .01$

** $p < .05$

Discussion

The low Pearson product-moment correlation (.2240) between the total SSS and the ASCH is somewhat at odds with the predictive implications suggested by existing literature. Although the present study appears to be one of the first behavioral investigations to actually assess the possibility of a significant interrelationship between sensation seeking and nonconformity, other research mentioned earlier in this study has described personality characteristics which are common to both.

The results obtained from the correlational analysis suggest that although the sensation seeking dimension and the concept of conformity-nonconformity may have some personality correlates common to both, the two scores on measures of these factors are not necessarily related.

Although nonconformity does not appear to be significantly related to sensation seeking (as measured by the total SSS score), when the SSS was broken down into its subscales a significant relationship was found to exist between Thrill and Adventure Seeking (one of the SSS subscales) and nonconformity. This suggests that individuals who express a desire to engage in outdoor sports or other activities involving elements of speed or danger may be less likely to conform to social pressures than individuals who do not have such a desire.

The Thrill and Adventure Seeker and nonconformist may both be seen as bold, adventurous, and somewhat risk-taking. This contrasts with a conforming individual (and one who would score low on Thrill and Adventure Seeking), who appears to be more cautious and in need of security. Security may be obtained for these individuals by going along with group norms and avoiding "risky" activities.

The ASCH was not significantly related to any of the other subscales of the SSS (Experience Seeking, Disinhibition, or Boredom Susceptibility). This would suggest that nonconformity is not necessarily related to such things as a desire to engage in drug use, exhibitionism in dress and behavior, heavy social drinking, variety in sexual partners, or a dislike of routine activities.

Although the AUT and DOM subscales of the ACL were both found to be significantly related to the SSS (which is consistent with previous research), neither of these subscales was found to be significantly related to the ASCH. This may indicate that nonconforming individuals do not necessarily tend to have a high need for autonomy and dominance. This finding contradicts previous studies which have described nonconformers as autonomous and dominant individuals.

When dominance and autonomy (as measured by the ACL) were partialled from the subjects' scores on the TAS subscale of the SSS and the ASCH, a significant relationship continued to exist between TAS and the ASCH. Therefore, when the effects of DOM and AUT are discounted, TAS continues to predict nonconformity in the subjects.

Although a significant relationship was not found to exist between the SSS (total scale score) and the ASCH, a tendency appears to exist in this direction when the separate preselected groups for this research are studied. When the high, low, and middle scoring subjects on the SSS were given the ASCH, the means for these groups were in the predicted direction. Although the means on the ASCH for the middle and high scoring (SSS) subjects were approximately equal, the mean for the low scoring group was lower by approximately two responses (in the conforming direction; see Table 3). Because these results were in the predicted direction but did not reach significance, it is possible that, with a larger sample of subjects, significance may have been reached for the total SSS.

It is interesting to note that conformity is considered in some instances to be a favorable characteristic, while under other circumstances it is viewed as unfavorable. For instance, conformity to social codes is often judged as more desirable than nonconforming behavior. However, in a situation such as the ASCH, nonconformity is often judged as more desirable because it indicates an ability to make independent judgments without being easily coerced by others. Therefore, if a different type of conformity measure had been used in this study (for example, one which deals with conforming to social codes), this may have brought about somewhat different results.

There were several factors present in this study which may have produced less conformity than what would have occurred

Table 3

Mean ASCH Scores for High, Middle, and Low Scorers
on Sensation Seeking Scale

Group	N	Mean Score
High	14	9.0714
Middle	14	9.2857
Low	14	7.4286

under different circumstances. Walker and Heyns (1967, p. 94) observed that the greater the degree of certainty the subject has in his own solution to a problem the less susceptible that subject will be to social pressure toward conformity. In this study, the stimulus was almost completely nonambiguous. Therefore, the subjects' certainty about the correctness of their judgments probably caused less conformity to occur than may have occurred if the stimulus had been more ambiguous. It was noted in the present study that more conformity appeared to occur on items (ASCH) for which there was the least amount of discrepancy between the wrong answer announced by the group and the answer which was actually correct.

Walker and Heyns (1967, p. 96) also pointed out that more conformity is likely to occur if the subject sees the behavior as being effective in helping him achieve acceptance by the group. The attractiveness of the group for the subject and the degree of security which he attaches to being accepted by that group would also affect the subject's decision to conform to the group or remain independent. Walker and Heyns also suggested that the more intimate the association between the subject and the group (confederates in this case), the greater the power of the group to produce conformity because of the greater need for group acceptance. In the present study, the subjects were not previously acquainted with the confederates. Therefore, the need for group acceptance in this instance may not have been as strong and therefore not as effective in producing conformity. Many of the subjects commented during the interview session (after the ASCH)

that they felt they would have conformed more often if they had been in the same situation with a group of close friends.

High sensation seekers (based on total scale score, SSS) do not appear to behave in a predictable fashion when placed in a potential conformity situation. However, it would appear that high Thrill and Adventure Seekers (based on TAS subscale, SSS) do behave predictably when placed in that same conformity situation. The results of the present study indicate that the predictability of an individual's behavior in a conformity situation can be increased if the individual obtains a certain score on the TAS subscale of the SSS.

Dominance and autonomy scores (as measured by the ACL) for an individual may also be useful in predicting his scores on the SSS. Individuals who are more dominant and autonomous would also appear to be higher sensation seekers (based on the SSS and its subscales). When the effects of dominance and autonomy are discounted, the TAS subscale of the SSS would continue to be a good predictor of the individual's behavior in a potential conformity situation. An individual who scores high on TAS would be less likely to conform to group pressure than an individual who scores lower on that subscale.

The relative significance of this predictability might be apparent in several settings. The use of the TAS subscale of the SSS as a screening instrument to predict an individual's tendency toward conformity could be useful in certain settings where the knowledge of an individual's tendency to conform is needed. For example, the tendency of an in-

dividual to conform to group pressures would appear to be an important variable to take into consideration in the selection of officers for the armed services. Most branches of the service have employed live conformity situations to assess a potential officer's tendency to conform to group pressures (Asch, 1956). The use of the TAS subscale of the SSS as a partial substitute for this technique may be expected to be beneficial.

Implications for Further Research

The results of the present investigation suggest several opportunities for further study. It appears that a replication of this study is warranted in order to further substantiate the results found in the present investigation.

The use of a different method for the selection of subjects for this study may have produced different results. One possibility would have been to choose subjects based on the ASCH rather than the SSS, using the ASCH as the independent variable. Subjects could then have been tested using the SSS and the ACL. Another possible method for selecting subjects would be to choose subjects for the ASCH based upon the subjects' scores on the various subscales of the SSS rather than solely on the total score. This may have produced more information concerning the subscales of the SSS as they relate to the ASCH than the present study was able to do. Also, as was previously mentioned, a larger sample of subjects may have been useful in producing a wider range of responses to be studied.

The current findings suggest that a nonconforming individual may be more adventurous and more of a risk-taker in general than a conforming individual. This possibility could be explored in another study using a behavioral measure of risk-taking behavior.

It has already been suggested that the conformity measure used in this study could be altered to possibly bring about different results. Variables within the Asch Conformity Test used in this study could be altered to see if the results produced would be different. Also, as was already mentioned, another type of conformity measure (possibly looking at conformity to social codes) could be studied as it relates to the SSS.

Appendix A

Directions Read to Subjects for the Adjective Check List (Gough and Heilbrun, 1965)

This test consists of a list of 300 adjectives. Please read them quickly and blacken in the space on your answer sheet for each one you would consider to be self-descriptive. Do not worry about duplications, contradictions, and so forth. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective. Try to be frank, and fill the spaces for the adjectives which describe you as you really are, not as you would like to be.

Appendix B

Sensation Seeking Scale

(Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob, 1964)

1. A. I like "wild" uninhibited parties.
B. I prefer quiet parties with good conversation.
2. A. There are some movies I enjoy seeing a second or even a third time.
B. I can't stand watching a movie that I've seen before.
3. A. I often wish I could be a mountain climber.
B. I can't understand people who risk their necks climbing mountains.
4. A. I dislike all body odors.
B. I like some of the earthy body smells.
5. A. I get bored seeing the same old faces.
B. I like the comfortable familiarity of everyday faces.
6. A. I like to explore a strange city or section of town by myself, even if it means getting lost.
B. I prefer a guide when I am in a place I don't know well.
7. A. I dislike people who do or say things just to shock or upset others.
B. When you can predict almost everything a person will do and say he or she must be a bore.

8. A. I usually don't enjoy a movie or play where I can predict what will happen in advance.
B. I don't mind watching a movie or play where I can predict what will happen in advance.
9. A. I have tried marijuana or would like to.
B. I would never smoke marijuana.
10. A. I would not like to try any drug which might produce strange and dangerous effects on me.
B. I would like to try some of the new drugs that produce hallucinations.
11. A. A sensible person avoids activities that are dangerous.
B. I sometimes like to do things that are a little frightening.
12. A. I dislike "swingers."
B. I enjoy the company of real "swingers."
13. A. I find that stimulants make me uncomfortable.
B. I often like to get high (drinking liquor or smoking marijuana).
14. A. I like to try new foods that I have never tasted before.
B. I order the dishes with which I am familiar, so as to avoid disappointment and unpleasantness.
15. A. I enjoy looking at home movies or travel slides.
B. Looking at someone's home movies or travel slides bores me tremendously.
16. A. I would like to take up the sport of water-skiing.
B. I would not like to take up water-skiing.

17. A. I would like to try surf-board riding.
B. I would not like to try surf-board riding.
18. A. I would like to take off on a trip with no preplanned or definite routes, or timetable.
B. When I go on a trip I like to plan my route and timetable fairly carefully.
19. A. I prefer the "down-to-earth kinds of people as friends.
B. I would like to make friends in some of the "far-out" groups like artists or "hippies."
20. A. I would not like to learn to fly an airplane.
B. I would like to learn to fly an airplane.
21. A. I prefer the surface of the water to the depths.
B. I would like to go scuba diving.
22. A. I would like to meet some persons who are homosexual (men or women).
B. I stay away from anyone I suspect of being "queer."
23. A. I would like to try parachute jumping.
B. I would never want to try jumping out of a plane with or without a parachute.
24. A. I prefer friends who are excitingly unpredictable.
B. I prefer friends who are reliable and predictable.
25. A. I am not interested in experience for its own sake.
B. I like to have new and exciting experiences and sensations even if they are a little frightening, unconventional, or illegal.
26. A. The essence of good art is in its clarity, symmetry of form, and harmony of colors.

- B. I often find beauty in the "clashing" colors and irregular forms of modern paintings.
27. A. I enjoy spending time in the familiar surroundings of home.
- B. I get very restless if I have to stay around home for any length of time.
28. A. I like to dive off the high board.
- B. I don't like the feeling I get standing on the high board (or I don't go near it at all).
29. A. I like to date members of the opposite sex who are physically exciting.
- B. I like to date members of the opposite sex who share my values.
30. A. Heavy drinking usually ruins a party because some people get loud and boisterous.
- B. Keeping the drinks full is the key to a good party.
31. A. The worst social sin is to be rude.
- B. The worst social sin is to be a bore.
32. A. A person should have considerable sexual experiences before marriage.
- B. It's better if two married persons begin their sexual experience with each other.
33. A. Even if I had the money I would not care to associate with flighty persons like those in the "jet set."
- B. I could conceive of myself seeking pleasures around the world with the "jet set."
34. A. I like people who are sharp and witty even if they do sometimes insult others.

- B. I dislike people who have their fun at the expense of hurting the feelings of others.
35. A. There is altogether too much portrayal of sex in movies.
- B. I enjoy watching many of the "sexy" scenes in movies.
36. A. I feel best after taking a couple of drinks.
- B. Something is wrong with people who need liquor to feel good.
37. A. People should dress according to some standards of taste, neatness, and style.
- B. People should dress in individual ways even if the effects are sometimes strange.
38. A. Sailing long distances in small sailing crafts is foolhardy.
- B. I would like to sail a long distance in a small but seaworthy sailing craft.
39. A. I have no patience with dull or boring persons.
- B. I find something interesting in almost every person I talk with.
40. A. Skiing fast down a high mountain slope is a good way to end up on crutches.
- B. I think I would enjoy the sensations of skiing very fast down a high mountain slope.

Appendix C

Instructions for the Sensation Seeking Scale

(Zuckerman, Kolin, Price, and Zoob, 1964)

Each of the items contains two choices; A and B. Please indicate on your answer sheet which of the choices most describes your likes or the way you feel. In some cases you may find items in which both choices describe your likes or feelings. Please choose the one which better describes your likes or feelings. In some cases you may find items in which you do not like either choice. In these cases mark the choice you dislike least. Do not leave any items blank.

It is important you respond to all items with only one choice; A or B. I am interested only in your likes or feelings, not in how others feel about these things or how one is supposed to feel. There are no right or wrong answers as in other kinds of tests. Be frank and give your honest appraisal of yourself.

Appendix D

Majority Responses to Standard and Comparison Lines
on Successive Trials of Asch Conformity Test
(Asch, 1956)

<u>Trial</u>	<u>Length of Standard</u>	<u>Length of Comparison Lines</u>		
a*	10"	8 3/4"	10"	8"
b*	2	2	1	1 1/2
1	3	3 3/4	4 1/4	3
2	5	5	4	6 1/2
c*	4	3	5	4
3	3	3 3/4	4 1/4	3
4	8	6 1/4	8	6 3/4
5	5	5	4	6 1/2
6	8	6 1/4	8	6 3/4
d*	10	8 3/4	10	8
e*	2	2	1	1 1/2
7	3	3 3/4	4 1/4	3
8	5	5	4	6 1/2
f*	4	3	5	4
9	3	3 3/4	4 1/4	3
10	8	6 1/4	8	6 3/4
11	5	5	4	6 1/2
12	8	6 1/4	8	6 3/4

*Letters of the first column designate "neutral" trials, or trials to which the majority responded correctly. The numbered trials were "critical," i.e., the majority responded incorrectly.

Appendix E

A Description of the Lines Used in the Asch Conformity Test (Asch, 1956)

The lines were vertical black strips, $\frac{3}{8}$ inches wide, pasted on white cardboards which were $17 \frac{1}{2}$ by 6 inches. One card carried the standard line; on the other card appeared the three comparison lines. All lines start at the same level, their lower ends being $2 \frac{1}{2}$ inches from the lower edge of the cards. The standard line appeared in the center of the card, while the comparison lines were separated by a distance of $1 \frac{3}{4}$ inches. The comparison lines were numbered 1, 2, and 3 from left to right with black gummed figures $\frac{3}{4}$ inches long. They were placed directly underneath the lines and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from their lower end. The standard and its matched comparison line were always separated by 40 inches.

Appendix F

Directions Read to Subjects in the Asch Conformity Test (Asch, 1956)

This is a task involving the discrimination of lengths of lines. Before you is a pair of cards. On the left is a card with one line; the card at the right has three lines differing in length; they are numbered 1, 2, and 3, in order. One of the three lines at the right is equal to the standard line at the left--you **will decide** in each case which is the equal line. You will state your judgment in terms of the number of the line. There will be 18 such comparisons in all.

As the number of comparisons is few and the group small, I will call upon each of you in turn to announce your judgments, which I shall record here on a prepared form. Please be as accurate as possible. Suppose you give me your estimates in order, starting at the right in the first row, proceeding to the left, and then going to the second row.

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