

# Validity & Social Influence Research



**This activity will help you to:**

- Recall what is meant by validity
- Distinguish between internal and external validity
- Comment on the validity of studies of social influence

## Validity

Validity refers generally to the truthfulness of a research study. A study is said to be valid if it measures what it was intended to measure, rather than something else. We can distinguish between two types of validity:

- **Internal validity** – this is strictly about whether the researcher managed to measure what was intended. It depends on how the researcher operationalised variables, controlled possible nuisance variables and prevented the behaviour of the PPs from being distorted by factors such as researcher effects or demand characteristics.
- **External validity** – this is about whether the results of the study have any relevance beyond the actual research situation. It depends on whether the sample used was representative of the target population and whether the setting and the tasks used for the study were suitably realistic to be applied to the real world.

## Social Influence Studies

Studies	Comment on Internal Validity	Comment on External Validity
Asch & Sherif		
Zimbardo		
Milgram		