

# The Influence of Conformity Effect and Emotions on Decision-Making

Ruofei Tian

*Kunshan Kangqiao High School, Kunshan, 215300, China*

**Keywords:** Conformity Effect, Emotions, Decision-Making.

**Abstract:** The article investigates how emotions and conformity effects impact decision-making. When people make decisions based on what they believe to be the ideas of the majority, it is known as the conformity effect and can have negative consequences. According to studies, conformity has a big influence on people's travel and employment choices, since they tend to choose well-liked options. In a similar vein, risk-taking behaviours are significantly impacted by emotions like happiness and melancholy. Research indicates that whereas pleasant emotions frequently result in risk aversion, negative affect increases the propensity for risk-seeking. The results demonstrate how important these elements are in influencing human choices, which can occasionally lead to biased or illogical results. The following tactics are suggested to lessen these influences: making judgements calmly, evaluating possibilities objectively using a list of advantages and disadvantages, and minimising reliance on the decisions of others. These methods can lessen the impact of emotional biases and conformity while assisting people in making more autonomous, well-informed judgements.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Everyone makes various choices every day, and people always chose what was most suitable for us. But is it really an advantage that influences our choices? Understanding how people make choices is a highly focused field in cognitive psychology. There are several factors that can affect decision-making (Dietrich, 2010). These factors, including past experiences (Dietrich, 2010), cognitive biases (Dietrich, 2010) influences people's choices (Dietrich, 2010). To understand the decisions made, one must have a solid understanding of the elements that influence the decision-making process (Dietrich, 2010). In other words, elements that influence the process might also influence the result (Dietrich, 2010). These elements influence people's decisions and include cognitive biases, as well as prior experiences (Dietrich, 2010). One needs to have a firm grasp of the factors influencing the decision-making process in order to comprehend the choices chosen.

In other words, elements that influence the process might also influence the result. These influencing factors can make people make decisions that are unfavorable to themselves and affect the outcome, which can affect everyone even when making laws and surgeries.

This article focuses on how conformity effect and emotion affect decision, and investigates through experiments whether these factors will affect the decision and thus the results

## 2 INTRODUCTION TO THE KEY CONCEPTS

### 2.1 Conformity Effect

The term "conformity effect" is used in social psychology to describe conformity behavior and conformance psychology. People are easily swayed by other group members to abandon or alter their opinions and actions, even if they are the same as those of the group (Wang, 2014). Conformity effect is the common phenomenon. In the new social media developed environment, it was complex cause. The "conformity effect" refers to the phenomenon of public opinion self-impacting (Wang, 2014). People will support the majority or prevailing position in society that they believe to be in place or expected (Wang, 2014). This implies that alternatives that seem to be generally accepted are likely to garner more support because success breeds further success.

Consequently, the perception of public opinion takes on the characteristics of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

This phenomenon's metaphorical name originates in American politics of the late 19th century and refers to parade floats with bands that draw sizable crowds of spectators who march behind the float and take in the music (Liu & Chen, 2022).

The Conformity effect is one of several hypothesized manifestations of "impersonal influence" - the influence on individuals' attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors that arises from their impressions of the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors of anonymous others who are outside their personal sphere of contact (Schmitt-Beck, 2015). Other examples include the "weak man effect," which complements the bandwagon effect by stating the negative impact of perceived majority or dominant opinions, and - specifically in elections - the concept of "strategic" voting (Schmitt-Beck, 2015). Voting "in good faith" may result in wasted votes, for instance, if voters feel that their chosen candidate or party has only weak support from other voters, they may back the second or even third best option in an election. (Schmitt-Beck, 2015).

## 2.2 Emotions

Emotions are people's thoughts when they face different situations. It is important part in psychology. Emotions can also affect people's behaviors (Tyng, 2017).

Human cognitive processes are significantly impacted by emotions (Tyng, 2017). Particularly when it comes to controlling attentional selection and inspiring actions and behaviors, emotions have a significant influence on attention (Tyng, 2017). Because the naturally constrained attention is more focused on pertinent information, attention and executive control are directly tied to the learning process (Tyng, 2017). Emotions also assist in encoding and help retrieve information efficiently. However, the effects of emotions on learning and memory are not always one-sided benefits, and emotions may also have negative effects on action and memory.

Since emotions control almost every part of cognition, emotional experiences are common in nature and are significant—possibly even essential—in educational contexts (Tyng, 2017). A variety of emotional states, such as boredom, worry, and frustration, are linked to tests, exams, homework, and deadlines (Tyng, 2017). Furthermore, the subject's content might influence feelings, which can then impact memory and learning (Tyng, 2017).

## 3 IMPACT OF CONFORMITY ON DECISION

Student between 13 to 18 may always follows peers decision to decide their occupations. 136 students in class XII serve as the samples for this study, which employs quantitative research methods (Fadilla et al., 2017). The Likert scale instrument is used to collect the data, and analysis (Fadilla et al., 2017).

This research by Fadilla et al. method is quantitative with career decision making as dependent variable and conformity as independent variable. This study uses the method of random sampling in the cluster (Fadilla et al., 2017). The data were obtained by Likert scaler, and regional analysis was performed using regression analysis. The scaler consists of favorable and unfavorable statements that the result of research shows conformity exactly affect students' occupation decision (Fadilla et al., 2017).

The result of research shows conformity exactly affect students' occupation decision. In research, the classification that was conformity was occupied 60. 29% (Fadilla et al., 2017). Occupation classification is low, that was occupied 54. 41% (Fadilla et al., 2017). The effective contribution rate is 32. 9%, the coefficient's value is -0. 573 ( $p < 0. 01$ ), and other factors account for the remaining 67. 1% (Fadilla et al., 2017). It meant the more herd effect students had, the less occupation decision students made. Like the conclusion of this experiment, people are susceptible to the herd effect and then influence their choices. But the sample may be influenced by other factors rather than the herd effect, and the limited sample may affect its impact on the whole. It may also only have the effect of conformity among those students and affect the choice, not among ordinary people.

Research by Mark A. Orloff et al. is to study the influence of herd behavior on decision-making by two Focal insular lesion people that experiencing cognitive impairment through their behavior in single person and make decisions in social situations (Orloff et al., 2024). Research shows that in personal circumstances, humans will make choices according to their preferences. If humans weigh their preferences and information in public, humans may give up their preferences and choose to make the same choices as others. These findings show that in the social context, when utility based risk management is destroyed, following others' choices may be a heuristic method of decision-making (Orloff et al., 2024).

Research by Boto García studies the "drift" effect in tourism decision-making. The author uses the representative micro data of 28 European countries from 2014 to 2016 and an empirical model involving more than 60000 people to explain the potential endogenous social impact effects using the method of control function (Boto-García & Baños-Pino, 2022).

According to the study's findings, the percentage of persons who travel overseas in their local area has a beneficial impact on both tourism participation and international travel, exhibiting a conformity effect (Boto-García & Baños-Pino, 2022). The study also found that: (i) the conformity effect varied among countries, and (ii) the social effect of non travelers was greater in the previous year (Boto-García & Baños-Pino, 2022). According to certain research, vacation travel allows people to display their personalities, accomplishments, and status, which could result in social contagion and imitation in the context of the tourist sector (Boto-García & Baños-Pino, 2022).

Research by Mark A. Orloff et al suggests that conformity behavior does indeed affect students' career decisions. This means that the greater the conformity effect of students, the fewer career decisions they make, but there is no representativeness that can point to the whole (Orloff et al., 2024).

Moreover Research by Boto García studied the conformity effect in tourism travel decisions. According to the research findings, the percentage of persons who travel overseas in their local communities has a beneficial impact on both tourism involvement and international travel, exhibiting a Conformity effect. (Boto-García & Baños-Pino, 2022).

These two experiments tested in different populations whether they would be affected by conformity effects when making decisions. For example, in career choices, students tend to favor popular careers chosen by the public, while in travel choices, people tend to choose places where more people go. This indicates that the choices made by individuals in different situations are influenced by conformity effects.

The study mainly investigates the impact of other people's vacation plans on individual travel participation (vacation travel) and destination choice (foreign and domestic) in the context of summer vacation travel (Boto-García & Baños-Pino, 2022). There is relatively little research on the herd effect at the overall level among a large population. It can also indicate that the conformity effect among this group of people will affect their decision-making.

## 4 IMPACT OF CONFORMITY EMOTION ON DECISION

Cheng Peng's study examined the influence of emotional states on risk decision-making, specifically the ways in which human risk-seeking behavior was impacted by emotions like happiness and melancholy (Peng, 2024). The experiment involved 53 Chinese participants, divided into two groups, each group manipulated emotions through a short video clip to induce happiness or sadness (Peng, 2024). Following emotional state verification, participants engaged in a gambling game designed to assess their decisions to take or not take risks in a variety of gain-and-loss scenarios. Compared to those in the cheerful condition (44.44%), participants in the sad condition had a greater propensity for risk-seeking behavior (60%). (Peng, 2024). In addition, there is a significant difference between the gains and losses in the grief group, with risk seeking behavior being more pronounced in the losses. The t-test results ( $t=2.66$ ,  $p=0.0104$ ) indicate a statistically significant difference in risk seeking behavior between the two emotional states (Peng, 2024). These findings suggest that in risky situations, emotions significantly influence decision-making processes, and sadness promotes greater risk-taking tendencies (Peng, 2024). This study contributes to understanding the emotional drivers behind decision-making and emphasizes the importance of considering emotional states in risk-based decision-making models. However, this experiment still has its limitations as it only studies two emotions: happiness and sadness. It has been proven that these two emotions can affect decision-making, but it is unclear how other emotions affect decision-making like anger, fear.

Research by Zhang, who organized relevant literature, found that emotions have an impact on judgment and decision-making (Zhang, 2017).

For example, when a person makes risk decisions under the influence of anxiety, they often tend towards safer choices (Zhang, 2017). A person who is grateful to a certain school may even be grateful to him willing to donate more money to the school due to a lack of consideration for my own payment ability. The integration of emotional effects can work consciously or unconsciously in humans. Integrate emotional biases. Due to arbitrary judgments or decisions, emotions can be integrated and can lead to biased decisions being made. For example, even within the same mileage, the mortality rate of driving is higher than that of flying, but when people travel. they often fears flying and chooses to drive instead (Zhang, 2017). Researchers have found that

accompanying emotions generally continue from one situation to the next situation, for example, anger triggered in a situation will automatically trigger. The motivation to blame others in another situation, even if the goal of venting anger is to the reason for being angry is irrelevant. In addition, typical characteristics associated with the occurrence of emotions. The dots are unconscious. Author's examples all demonstrate that emotions can influence decision-making. Unlike the previous one, she did not point out specific emotions but instead mentioned several emotional biases. The downside is that she did not have specific experiments to achieve the example, but instead gave an example.

The effect of emotion on rational person behavior is a topic of concern in the field of decision science, according to study by Guoqiang Xiong et al., and it is a forward direction to carry out the pertinent research using the method of decision neuroscience (Xiong et al., 2014). In this study, 30 effect values that were taken from 19 literature sources were analyzed using the meta-analysis approach (Xiong et al., 2014). The outcome demonstrates that emotion significantly affects the behavior of rational people (Xiong et al., 2014). This finding indicates how emotion and rational behavior are related, as well as where future research should go. Their investigation also reveals that emotional valence significantly improves the two parties' relationship (Xiong et al., 2014). A rational individual may be influenced by positive emotions to act in a risk-seeking or cooperative manner when making decisions, or by negative emotions to act in a risk-averse or non-cooperative manner when making decisions in social situations (Xiong et al., 2014). There is no clear conclusion on the direction of change in the amplitudes of each EEG component, but the differences in EEG component amplitudes indicate the influence of good or negative emotions on rational human behavior (Xiong et al., 2014). Compared to other experiments, this study investigated people of different age groups, which is more representative and can better explore the impact of emotions on human decision-making.

## 5 SUGGESTIONS

All the experimental studies above indicate that conformity and emotions can influence the choices people make. The more conformity effects there are, the greater the impact on decision-making. People will be influenced by others' multiple choices. On the other side, emotions significantly influence decision-

making processes, and sadness promotes greater risk-taking tendencies.

These experimental studies demonstrate the severity of conformity and emotional impact, which can lead people to make decisions that are detrimental to them with serious consequences. These are three methods to minimize their impact as much as possible.

For conformity, people can try not to look at other people's choices as it can affect our own thoughts and make us doubt ourselves. Be more confident in people's choices and believe in yourself.

For emotion, it is best not to make any choices when we have intense emotions, as this may be something we do unconsciously. We can count prime numbers to quickly calm down and make the right choices with a clear mind

The best solution is to list the pros and cons of each decision and then compare them. Objective data will not change due to our own reasons, and constantly making a comparison list will make people think about the problem without bias.

## 6 CONCLUSION

This study emphasises the impact of emotions and conformity effects on judgement. These results highlight how social and psychological aspects impact human decision-making. People should refrain from depending too much on the opinions of others, and make sure they are made in an emotionally neutral state. Furthermore, objective techniques like lists of advantages and disadvantages can encourage more logical decision-making. This study provides valuable insights into human behavior and offers practical strategies to reduce biases, contributing to more effective decision-making in both personal and societal contexts.

## REFERENCES

- C. C. Wang Research on conformity and counter conformity behavior based on decision neuroscience: Comparing property decision and health decision scenarios Doctoral dissertation, Zhejiang University. (2014)
- C. Dietrich Decision making: Factors that influence decision making, heuristics used, and decision outcomes *Inquiries J.* 2(02) (2010)
- C. M. Tyng, H. U. Amin, M. N. Saad, A. S. Malik The influences of emotion on learning and memory *Front. Psychol.* 8 235933 (2017)

- C. Peng Emotion-impacted decision-making under risks  
Adv. Soc. Behav. Res. (1) 68-76 (2024)
- D. Boto-García, J. F. Baños-Pino Social influence and  
bandwagon effects in tourism travel Ann. Tour. Res. 93  
103366 (2022)
- G. Xiong, Y. Liu, X. Liu The meta-analysis on the effect of  
emotion on rational person behavior in the decision  
neuroscience perspective Open Cybern. Syst. J. 8(1)  
1123-1128 (2014)
- M. A. Orloff, D. Chung, X. Gu, X. Wang, Z. Gao, G. Song,  
P. H. Chiu Social conformity is a heuristic when  
individual risky decision-making is disrupted PLOS  
Comput. Biol. 20(12) e1012602 (2024)
- P. F. Fadilla, S. M. Abdullah, M. Wu Does conformity  
occur during students' decision making for their careers?  
Asian J. Assess. Teach. Learn. 10(1) 1-9 (2020)
- R. Schmitt-Beck Bandwagon effect Int. Encycl. Polit.  
Commun. 1-5 (2015)
- W. Liu, J. Chen Research on the causes and  
countermeasures of college students' conformity  
behavior from the perspective of new media news  
research (2022)
- Xiaozhang Will emotions affect your decision-making  
Knowl. Base (16) 197 (2017)

