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Perceived influence upon events as a premise for social behavior

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PERCEIVED INFLUENCE UPON EVENTS AS A PREMISE FOR
SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

The theoretical and empirical material presented in this work was not written in isolation from works within the theoretical circle concerned with perceived control and freedom of choice (cf. White, 1959; De Charms, 1968, 1976; Rotter, 1966; Bandura, 1977; Kelley, 1971; Seligman, 1975; Abramson et al., 1978; Kofta, 1983 and others). Presented studies remain in clear relation with tens of others described in the literature of the subject. Our task, however, is not to present this vast and quite diversified theoretical circle nor to point to where our ideas lie within that circle. This was a subject of separate elaborations, (cf. Łukaszeński, 1980; Nawrat, 1984). In the works presented, results come from the relation of data obtained with theories and with other studies.

Our intention here is to present theoretical concepts and study results obtained by our research group in the years 1980-1985. For obvious reasons, theoretical propositions should be presented rather laconically and obtained data frequently brought down to description of the most important dependencies found.

Private concepts of causality and their psychological sense

Events occurring objectively, if they are not of chance character, are usually conditioned by a coincidence of many causes, interrelated and mutually conditioning each other. An event takes place if there are several causes existing simultaneously and if previously yet another fact occurred. Thus, in an objective approach, causative relations between events must be described in terms of conditional probabilities and the final value of probability ascribed to a defined event is for that reason smaller than the probability of occurrence of each cause separately (productive function of conditional probability).

Reasoning in terms of conditional probability, explaining and predicting facts on its basis is quite difficult for an untrained mind and therefore rarely applied in everyday practice. Subjective, private conceptions of causality avoid the problem by appealing to additive functions of causes prejudging occurrence of an event. Therefore, regardless of the number of considered causes, people are inclined to estimate the final probability of a given event and determine - if need be - contribution of each factor in the probability separately. Thus, if success probability for a given task situation is e.g. 60%, both the task characteristics and characteristics of a person solving the problem being decisive in the equal degree, then each factor brings a 50% contribution to the final probability, in this case they equal 30%.

In private conceptions of causality, the number of considered causative factors is rarely smaller than two, one of them being, most often, one's self, generally speaking. It is obvious that for a variety of target or real life situations man is able to differentiate further each factor considered. He can isolate within his own self his his efforts, his abilities, etc., just as he can specify particular features or elements of the remaining set of factors. One can find in the literature of the subject more or less complex typologies of causes with which people account for presence of events, the following dimensions of cause being the most frequently distinguished:

internal - external

stable - unstable

controlled - uncontrolled

global - specific (cf. Weiner 1980; Abramson et al. 1978; Miller and Norman 1989).

There are premises to believe that depending on their tasks and needs people take into consideration a smaller or greater number of causes for analysis of a situation. What is more, two styles of causative thinking emerge (cf. Łukaszewski et al., 1986). The first, let us call it contemplative or analytic, is aimed at learning profoundly the structure of causative event conditions thus considering the greatest possible variety of causes. The result of such an approach is undoubtedly better subjective recognition of reality though not necessarily a decrease of uncertainty. The second style may be named activist or pragmatic. It is expressed in a strong tendency to reduce the number of causes to the indispensable minimum, leaving out others as marginal, so as to find finally and subjectively the most advantageous effect, the one sufficient cause in a given event. This approach in causative thinking effectively reduces diversity and uncertainty though not always ensuring better recognition of reality. It is not, however, impossible that, subjectively speaking, the two styles are equivalent from a cognitive standpoint.

It follows from the above, that private causality conceptions are a priori erroneous though by no means useless. It appears that they ensure a subjective comprehension of the world and a subjective sense of ability to control events. They are a useful instrument in prognosing future events, both the events already known and quite novel ones. Also, these conceptions are an important factor in an individual's behavior organization because it is only the assumption about causative character of events that enables the tendency to actively participate in the course of events; also because the assumption about causative relations between one's own actions and a certain set of consequences is the fundamental precondition to forming inner motivation of human activity.

Influence upon events and perception of this influence

We can speak about one factor's influence upon a given event when - within the time span considered as a criterion - probability of the event in the presence of separated factor is different from probability of the same event in the absence of the separated factor. Naturally, the notion of "presence" has a general meaning also including actions. We shall say that a given factor does not affect the event when the probability of the event is the same in the presence as in the absence of the factor. Objective influence so understood may result from passive presence of the factor among others, e.g. catalyst, or may result from active performance by this factor. Influence may include all or only a few aspects of the event, that is: a) occurrence or initiation of the event, b) structure of the event, course of interaction, number of participants, etc., c) consequence of the event in various time range, and d) distribution of consequences among participants (components) of the event and other objects located outside the event.

The volume of influence is measured by the volume of a difference between the probabilities. Considering that the span is between zero and one, the smaller the initial probability of the event (in the absence of a given factor) and the higher the final probability of the event (in the presence of a given factor) the higher the influence of the factor on an event. Note that it is not obvious that the differences between 0 and 30 and 70 and 100 are equivalent when we take values of probability into account.

Our studies show that people - when faced with such a task - are able to estimate probability of events considering their own presence and absence, but usually they underestimate the difference volume. It turns out, however, that this is not the manner of estimation of one's own influence which people turn to spontaneously. When making spontaneous estimates of their own influence on an event people make use of two values: subjective probability volume of a given event and estimation of the

volume of that portion of subjective probability that is related to actions undertaken by an individual. This is true for past events as well as for anticipated events. In the first case (past events) the first value is present only in its theoretical dimension because the probability of a past event is one. In this case people usually estimate their influence by estimating the volume of contribution to that probability. It is a relatively easy procedure usually leading to a percentage estimate of one's own authorship of a given event. In the case of anticipated events the situation is slightly more complicated. This is primarily so because in an individual's perception his own actions are in many cases the condition of accomplishing a certain event probability. Under such circumstances, the higher the event probability estimation, and the higher the portion of probability that depends on individual's actions, the higher the individual's perceived influence upon the event. Analogous reasoning may be applied to "negative" influence when actions taken by an individual are to prevent an event from happening.

In the categories of perceived influence, constructive and destructive influence upon events is often mentioned. Such an approach is additionally connected with positive or negative values of events for their separated participant. The influence may be regarded as constructive when its consequence is increased probability of a positive event and decreased probability of a negative event. The influence is destructive when its consequence is an increase of probability of an event estimated as negative and/or a decrease of probability of positive event.

Influence upon an event versus influence upon events

Inasmuch as an estimate of an individual's influence upon a certain event is a relatively simple operation, estimating an individual's influence upon events (many events, sequences of events, etc.) is an operation of such complexity as to render objective estimates practically impossible. However, it turns out

that within private conceptions of causality this problem has been solved successfully and relatively simply, the solution being general attitudes to one's efficiency or inefficiency shaped as a result of accumulated experiences. These attitudes require comment because they make an appeal to relatively stable convictions concerning event probability and beliefs concerning personal contribution to the probability volume.

As a result of individual and social experience accumulation, an individual learns what is and what is not possible, what is only partially possible, etc. In other words, he is learning what a typical probability of a given kind of event is, what typical probabilities of events in a greater class of events, are etc. These convictions, being a synthesis of earlier experience, are expressed by means of a certain central value describing the typical probability of events and a certain interval restricting the range of typical variability of probabilities. The value of this interval depends of course on quality and diversity of an individual's experience. Having taken that into consideration, we can talk about optimistic perspective in probability estimate (typical probability of events in a given class is high) and pessimistic perspective in probability estimate (typical probability of events in a given class is low). Optimistic and pessimistic attitudes are obviously poles of a certain dimension including an infinite number of intermediate values.

The described generalizations concerning the interval, which includes typical probability values of events, are the basis for anticipating events both already known from one's own experience and new ones (Łukaszewski, 1974, 1984; Kozielec-ki, 1975).

The subjects of cumulating experience are also pieces of information - not necessarily accurate - on personal contribution to events of certain probabilities. These are convictions on event controllability in general and experience pertinent to the relation between individual's presence and action and events - their probability, development, etc. (cf. White, 1959; Bandura, 1977; Reykowski, 1977; Łukaszewski, 1974). They are convic-

tions determining a typical level of dependence of events on individual's actions expressed by means of a central value located within the interval of typical estimate variability. The said central value and accompanying it variability interval can be differently located, one extreme of the dimension being total helplessness (nothing depends on me) and the other being extreme omnipotence (everything depends on me). Convictions of that kind are an important element of self-evaluation and are one of the basic premises in expectations of one's self and expectations concerning the course of events.

We believe that the convictions described above do not have to be numerically expressed, though everything seems to indicate that they may. However, regardless of the manner of articulation of convictions about typical probability of events and typical personal contribution into probability, they are - so we believe - processed into a more general scheme of personal contribution to an event. Influence upon wider event classes or sequences perceived by an individual is increasing the higher the value of typical event probability and the higher the value of typical contribution of individual to probabilities are. The convictions may, though do not have to, be expressed numerically.

Naturally, from the fact that an individual's experiences are subject to generalization and processing it does not by any means follow that specific estimates, related to certain single events or narrow classes of events, are impossible and insignificant. Rather, we believe, we are dealing with various levels of conviction generalizations with varying degrees of specificity and unspecificity of the convictions in regard to events.

Beliefs concerning perceived personal influence upon events play important regulative functions. First of all, they constitute behavior-regulating standards in that that incoming information is compared with the standard, existing divergencies nivellated in such a way as to, if possible, maintain the standard. As in other areas of experience there are function standards of two kinds: typical influence standards and ideal influence standards.

Convictions of personal influence on events are the basis for formulation of expectations about course of events, prognoses for one's own efficiency and also for explanation of the course of events and one's own role in the events. Finally, these convictions determine the manner of individual behavior organization, involvement or its lack in the events, structure of undertaken actions in such a way as to ensure realization of one's appreciated values.

The role of convictions about personal influence is particular in the formation process of task motivation - both permanent and situational. We find the failure of various motivation theories of anticipating and explaining behavior to consist in their exclusive focusing on, e.g. success or failure probability while ignoring an individual's contribution in that probability and general opinions about one's own capability to influence events. Thus, for instance, a man convinced of little influence capability upon an event will engage in high success probability events that do not require much activity from an individual. On the other hand, an individual convinced of his great influence upon an event will not get involved in such an event; instead he will be very active in situations with relatively low success probability but modifiable by that individual's activeness.

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The considerations presented above serve as starting point to numerous theoretical and empirical hypotheses. These hypotheses have been presented in separate works that also include information about conditions limiting accuracy of hypotheses (cf. Łukaszewski, 1980; Łukaszewski, 1986).

Setting out from such cognitive understanding of perceived personal influence upon events, we carried out a series of studies on various aspects of people's behaviors. Within the stretch of several years, we conducted several cycles of studies that will be discussed here. They were studies in which we diagno-

sed relatively permanent (personality-wise) opinions about influence as well as studies in which we created these opinions experimentally in randomly selected groups of examined individuals. The latter studies are especially important since the obtained results are susceptible to generalizations.

None of the study results referred to above have ever been published. They are a fragment of a vast research project the result of which should be a synthetic elaboration of found regularities. However, it turned out that the studies at this stage already signal a certain, relatively systematic image which made us publish them prior to completion of the entire project. When quoting research we mention names of authors but leave out the year in which the material was worked out.

In describing materials we are making use of the contrast "convinced about influence - convinced about lack of influence". Such an antithesis is naturally a simplification conveniencing the description itself.

Task preferences, result expectations and level of accomplishments

The research cycle dealt with functioning of people in task situations. Except for one (Weigl and Łukaszewski), all other researches were carried out on adults. Two studies diagnosed permanent opinion about influence (Stefańczyk, Łukaszewski) in others these opinions were induced experimentally.

One of the present research cycle problems were people's preferences toward tasks they would like to solve. For all studies, analogous results were obtained in skill tasks (results depending on an individual's actions) and chance tasks (results depending on lottery): the persons convinced of their influence preferred skill to chance tasks, while those convinced of lack of their influence preferred chance to skill tasks (Łukaszewski, Nawrat I, Nawrat II, Stefańczyk, Weigl and Łukaszewski). The obtained findings were the same whether opinions were formed experimentally or were just diagnosed. Moreover, the result is

manifested so forcibly and with such regularity that perhaps it ought to be considered an empirical indicator of an individual's attitude.

One of the studies (Weigl and Łukaszewski) tested children's preferences with regard to difficult/easy tasks and individual/group tasks. It was found that influence-oriented children preferred difficult tasks to easy ones and individually solved problems to group tasks. On the other hand, lack-of-influence-oriented children preferred easy tasks to difficult ones and group tasks to individual work.

In three studies, we found that influence-oriented individuals formulate higher expectations of the results of their action. In other words, they expect to have better results in task situation than those convinced of lack of influence (Łukaszewski, Stefańczyk, Weigl and Łukaszewski). In all studies in which we examined efficiency of task performance (result levels), influence-oriented individuals achieved better results than individuals convinced of lack of influence (Litawor, Łukaszewski, Nawrat I, Nawrat II, Stefańczyk, Weigl and Łukaszewski). All our studies show high correlation between expectation level and obtained results for influence-oriented subjects, and low correlation for those convinced of lack of influence. The situation is somewhat reversed in the case of correlation between obtained results and level of next expectations - it is much higher for lack-of-influence subjects than for the influence-oriented, though in both cases the correlation is remarkable (Weigl and Łukaszewski).

Causative justification of obtained results

In the studies where opinion about influence was diagnosed, Stefańczyk found that influence-oriented individuals perceived the source of achieved results to be located in themselves, while the others tended to attribute their results to external factors. Other diagnostic studies showed that both groups similarly perceived the basis of their success as accomplished mainly

through their own efforts, but their perception of failure differed: individuals convinced of their influence attributed failure to internal factors - their own effort, 'while those convinced of lack of influence attributed failure mainly to external factors especially to task characteristics and chance (Łukaszewski).

Similar relations were the findings of one of the experimental studies where results were identified as success or failure. Both groups interpreted similarly the source of success as due to internal factors, especially abilities and knowledge, but at the same time those convinced of influence stressed the role of the factor remarkably more strongly than those convinced of lack of influence. However, interpretation of failure was quite different: individuals in the group convinced of lack of influence accounted for their failure because of internal factors - abilities, knowledge - while the group convinced of their influence pointed to external factors, especially features of task situation, as the source of failure (Kurowska).

In several studies results obtained by the subjects were not identified as failure or success. Those studies yielded quite systematic effects. Both children and adults who were convinced of influence attributed their results primarily to their capabilities and to a lesser degree to their own effort. Those convinced of lack of influence regarded their results as conditioned by external factors, especially by an accident and presence of other people and - to markedly smaller degree - task features (Nawrat I, Nawrat II, Weigl and Łukaszewski).

The findings are quite systematic and indicate differences in interpretation of accomplished results, depending on whether or not those results were identified as success or failure. The result pattern seems to show that the result is perceived by influence-oriented group rather as a success (if, naturally, there is no clear success/failure classification) while the group convinced of a lack of influence sees it as a failure. They also show a definite "self" attribution of accomplished results for influence-oriented individuals and lack of such attribution (except situations univocally perceived as failure) for individuals convinced of lack of influence.

Temporal orientation towards the future

A separate work discussing temporal orientation problems (Łukaszewski, 1983) notes a number of facts that suggest a link exists between the conviction about influence and an individual's concentration on the future. We decided to examine these relations experimentally. For that purpose three experiments were devised: one with copper miners (Jenerał); the second and third with high school students (Nawrat III, Andruszkiewicz). Each of these studies examined a different aspect of concentration on the future. In the experiment with miners where opinion on influence was being manipulated, Jenerał found that individuals positive about influence perceived their own future as longer and more attractive, while those convinced about lack of influence perceived the future as shorter and less attractive. An interesting finding made by Jenerał was that individuals positive about their influence anticipated longer life than the other group.

Nawrat, in his experiment, created opinions about influence and tested whether they conditioned the so-called task concentration on the future, i.e. concentration on long-term tasks and tasks yielding effects after passage of some time (delayed effects). Nawrat found that if tasks were easy, influence-positive individuals concentrated more strongly on the future than influence-negative individuals. A similar tendency was found in the case of difficult tasks (low-success probability) but it was statistically negligible. In the third experiment, individuals were to choose tasks of varying times of result availability - from one week up to two months. Positive influence individuals, chose long-term tasks significantly more often while influence-negative individuals significantly more often chose short-term tasks (Andruszkiewicz).

Social perception

The presently discussed cycle of studies is undoubtedly the richest and the most diversified. In the first three studies, conviction about influence was the subject of diagnosis, while in others convictions about influence were experimentally induced.

In her vast studies, Okręglicka examined the perception of certain aspects of social life and an individual's place in the social world by studies differing in their opinions about influence. She was particularly interested in finding an answer as to whether social environment is perceived as strong or weak, safe or threatening to man. She was also interested in finding whether people of different influence orientation perceive themselves as strong or weak (sense of power) and safe or threatened (sense of security). The studies comprised a large number of women and men, workers of two large industrial factories. The studies were conducted in the fall of 1980.

Okręglicka found that influence-positive subjects perceived social environment as less threatening and weaker than influence-negatives. She also found the influence-positives to have markedly higher senses of power and of security than influence-negatives.

Similar results were obtained in the study on a much smaller group of female industry workers in June, 1981. Also in this study, influence-positives perceived social objects as weaker and less threatening than individuals convinced of a lack of influence upon events. Influence-positives had a higher sense of power and security than influence-negatives (Łukaszewski II). Other studies examined attitudes of copper miners with differing opinions upon influence toward various aspects of their work (Stępień). Positive-influence individuals were significantly less satisfied with their wages and interpersonal relations in their work groups, they were also more apt to change jobs and regarded a significantly smaller improvement in offered conditions of work as sufficient reason to change their job. Perhaps, satisfac-

tion with work and stable relation in their factory is connected in influence-positive individuals with lack of a sense of power and lack of a sense of security found in earlier quoted studies.

In a number of studies we have examined attitudes to other people as a consequence of experimentally induced conviction about influence.

Weigl investigated whether opinion about influence conditions the level of confidence in other people. Frequency of checks on the partner and information on his honesty were manipulated. The study also included high school students. The findings show that individuals convinced of their influence have far greater confidence in their partners (if it is a partner presented as trustworthy) than individuals convinced of a lack of influence. This effect, however, is not evident when the partner has been presented as dishonest. In such case both groups examined, regardless of what they thought about their influence, displayed equally low confidence in their partners. The difference in the confidence level is not modified by frequency of checks (1-3-5-7-9 times). In one study variant where partners were checked five times the objective was to find whether opinion about influence, information on partner's honesty and information on his vulnerability to external influence would affect the level of confidence. Under such conditions interactive effect of two variables was found - conviction about the influence and partner's vulnerability to externally exerted influence. Individuals convinced about their influence have greater confidence in partners less vulnerable to influence, while individuals convinced of lack of influence have greater confidence in partners vulnerable to influence (Weigl).

The studies presented indicate that individuals convinced of a lack of influence are characterized by greater interpersonal unconfidence. And if they have confidence, it is rather in partners vulnerable to external influence. Many studies find a relation between distrust and tendency to dishonest behavior (lies, cheating, manipulation of partner, etc., cf. Rotter, 1980). There-

fore, the results found by Hlubek are extremely interesting. She manipulated the conviction about influence and then eliminated the individuals on whom manipulation did not give decisive effects. After manipulation the examined individuals were given a Mach IV questionnaire to fill out, the questionnaire having been designated to detect Machiavellian inclinations or an individual's potential apteness to manipulate other people. The disadvantage of the questionnaire as a diagnostic instrument is small stability of effects in time and vulnerability to situational influence, which we have used in our studies. It was found that individuals convinced of influence were characterized by markedly lower Machiavellian tendencies than individuals convinced of a lack of influence. It is coherent with results of studies on confidence because one element of a Machiavellian attitude is suspiciousness (cf. Jarymowicz, 1976). One should also anticipate other forms of manipulation on social environment by influence-negatives, e.g. ingratiation, favorable self-presentation, manifestation of helplessness, etc. (cf. Lis-Turlejska, 1976).

Litawor in her studies manipulated conviction about influence and then put her subjects in a situation of a decision-making game, which contained conflict of interests with their partners. One of the players was the experimenter's assistant. In this type of game, conflict of interests may be solved by application of coercive and competitive tactics with the partner, which as a result lead to maximizing one's interests even at the expense of the partner's interest. Such behavior, however, calls for persistence and an uncompromising attitude. Conflict of interests may also be resolved by compromising tactics of concessions in return for a partner's concessions. Obtained results show that influence-positives significantly more frequently applied competitive tactics rather than cooperative, doing it significantly more often than influence-negatives. The latter often resorted to strategies of concession in return for certain benefits obtained from the partner. Perhaps, the tendency to concession is one way to manifest one's helplessness and to execute one's interests.

Other studies examined whether convictions about influence differentiate the aptness of study subjects to unethical behavior toward partners (electric shock as punishment for a partner's mistake in learning). The studies showed that individuals with a diagnosed conviction of influence are significantly less inclined to such behaviors - they punish less and more weakly - than individuals convinced of a lack of influence. Thus influence-negatives are more inclined to unethical actions against the other man than influence-positives (Barczak). Though a similar vector tendency was found, no significant effect in the case of experimentally induced conviction of influence was confirmed. The author accounts for the fact by weakness of experimental manipulation (Barczak).

It is apparent that results obtained by Barczak are quite coherent with results obtained in the studies on confidence, Machiavellism and solving conflicts of interests. It is possible that the tendency found in the latter studies is an element of some syndrome characterizing people convinced of a lack of influence. Perhaps, not without significance, there is also the difference in vulnerability to external pressure of individuals differing in their opinion about influence.

In another experiment on the relation between opinions about influence and unethical behavior (Gromski and Nawrat), not the readiness to such behavior such but further consequences of examined individuals' behavior was the objective. The task of the individuals was to persuade their partners to take a medicine whose numerous negative side-effects were known to those individuals. When the partner (in reality the experimenter's assistant) took the medicine she developed disturbances in balance, a headache and nausea that required a doctor's (another assistant) intervention. Gromski and Nawrat found that influence-positive persons felt far greater responsibility for the partner's condition than the influence-negatives. Moreover, those convinced of their influence more frequently showed their interest in the partner's condition on the following day, giving the partner a much greater compensation for participation in the experiment.

These findings show that individuals convinced of their influence were inclined to see the harm inflicted upon a partner as greater and had a higher sense of responsibility and guilt as the consequences of their own behavior.

Similar results have been obtained by Nawrat II in an experiment on another form of unethical behavior toward a partner. The subjects persuaded a young woman to learn and repeat aloud, among others, taboo words. The partner was in fact the experimenter's assistant. Those convinced of their influence saw the harm done to the partner as greater and gave higher financial compensation to her for participation in the experiment than individuals convinced of their lack of influence. This may suggest a greater sense of guilt in influence-positives than in influence-negatives.

Submission to external pressure

In all studies of the present cycle, convictions about influence were manipulated under experimental conditions. In the first experiment, subjects of diversified convictions were exposed to group and intermediate pressure. The subjects were shown three highly equivocal photographs. Each photograph was accompanied by a commentary explaining the quality of presented events suggested by a certain number of persons competent in perception of people (photographs presented social situations). Three pressure levels were applied: low (20 per cent favored the suggested interpretation), medium (50 per cent) and high (80 per cent competent persons supported the interpretation). The study subjects were to determine the extent to which they agreed with suggested interpretation of each photograph. Obtained results demonstrate that groups differing in their opinion about influence respond differently to pressures. For influence-negatives, the higher the pressure the greater submissiveness. For that group then, submission was a function of pressure volume. Individuals convinced of influence were most submissive at medium pressure, achieving the submission level

similar to influence-negatives in the same situation. Under both low and high pressure that group did not display the tendency to submit. Submission under high pressure was for that group remarkably lower than for the group of persons convinced of a lack of influence (Biała). Apparently in the group of persons convinced of their influence there manifested the effect of higher resistance to higher pressure postulated by Brehm's (1966) theory of reactance in limited choice situation. If so, then this effect is found only in individuals convinced of their influence while those convinced of the lack of influence do not perceive high pressure as limitation to freedom of choice.

The purpose of another experiment was to find if persons of different opinions about influence respond differently to external pressure addressed directly to themselves (to only one person) and to pressure addressed to two persons remaining simultaneously in experiment situation without pointing specifically to any of them. Pressure was exerted when the examined persons were completing other experiment tasks and knew about completion of the session. Thus the pressure was unexpected and unrelated to the task situation in which they had been so far. Though in this situation persons convinced of influence displayed greater submission, the difference between them and persons convinced of lack of influence is not statistically significant. However, it appeared that pressure worked differently upon the two groups depending on whether it was addressed directly to the subject or "between two persons". Influence-negatives submitted remarkably easier when pressure was addressed "in between" than when directed only to them. Influence-positives, when pressure was addressed directly to them, submitted significantly easier than persons to which the pressure was addressed "in between". To look at the results from a different point of view: when pressure was addressed to only one person, influence-positives showed greater submission than influence-negatives. When pressure was addressed nonspecifically "in-between" the influence negatives showed greater submission than influence-positives (Żarczyńska). In the interpretation of obtained results, we should undoubtedly take into consideration the fact that the mea-

sure of submission to pressure was the level of execution of imposed task. As has been said earlier, persons convinced of a lack of influence usually gave poorer results in such situations. The results seem to indicate that influence-positives respond to pressure when it is addressed to them while ignoring the pressure and delegating the job to the partner when it is addressed to two persons. Consequently, individuals convinced of a lack of influence are in this latter situation inclined to regard the pressure directed "in between" as addressed just to themselves. These effects, as important from the point of view of effective social actions, call for more studies.

In the last experiment of the presently discussed cycle, Nawrat tested whether differences in convictions about influence and the volume of pressure exerted by subject on his partner (volume of broken resistance offered by partner) propitiates the subject's submission to external pressure. This was examined in the experiment mentioned above where subjects persuaded their partners to learn and repeat taboo words. Upon conclusion of this experiment, another experimenter turned to the examined and asked them to wait for him for some time (his exact words were: "Perhaps I'll need you. Hang on a bit I'll be right back". He then left the subject to himself for half an hour or until the subject left the room). It was found that individuals convinced of their influence displayed significantly greater submission than those convinced of a lack of influence (Nawrat IV). The results suggest that the experienced conflict caused by responsibility for harm inflicted on other people and associated guilt weaken the resistance of individuals convinced of their influence to external pressure. There opens here a very interesting perspective for research.

Final remarks

As has been said, work on theoretical aspects of the problem of opinions about influence and research work on conse-

quences of different peoples opinions their capability to influence events in progress. It is therefore too early for generalizations and tempting applications in social life.

Obtained results, however, show clearly different patterns of functioning for people differing in their opinion about influence. This is reflected in the level of task functioning of people, in the manner of evaluation of their achievements, in attitudes to the future and, above all, in social perception and social behavior of individuals. Further studies will certainly bring new data, but also - as presently - they will become the starting point for formulating new expectations and hypotheses.

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Notes:

Shortly after this work was written results were obtained strongly supporting the hypothesis (Rozpędowski).