

## Replications and Refinements

Under this heading are brief reports of studies providing data that substantiate, disprove, or refine what we think we know. These Notes consist of a summary of the study's procedure and as many details about the results as space allows. Additional details concerning the results can be obtained by communicating directly with the author.

# The Effectiveness of Compliance Techniques: Foot in the Door Versus Door in the Face

ANGELOS RODAFINOS  
ARSO VUCEVIC  
*Department of Psychology  
City Liberal Studies  
Thessaloniki, Greece*

GEORGIOS D. SIDERIDIS  
*Department of Psychology  
University of Crete  
Rethymno, Greece*

EFFECTIVE PERSUASION OR COMPLIANCE—social psychologists (e.g., Dillard, 1991) have studied how multiple requests can achieve it. Two techniques are the foot-in-the-door (FITD) technique and the door-in-the-face (DITF) technique. The *FITD technique* can be defined as a gradual-persuasion technique in which an initial, modest request precedes a larger request. In contrast, the *DITF technique* involves (a) making a costly, large first request that the recipient will

---

*We thank Margarita Diakou, Tamara Dimitrijevic, and Irene Nikiforou for their assistance in data collection.*

*Address correspondence to Angelos Rodafinos, Department of Psychology, City Liberal Studies, 24 Pr. Koromila Street, 54 622 Thessaloniki, Greece; rodafinos@city.academic.gr (e-mail).*

probably refuse and then (b) making a second, less costly, and more realistic request.

Several researchers have attempted to examine the effectiveness of the two sequential compliance techniques (FITD and DITF) and the factors that may affect their effectiveness (see Burger, 1999). According to Dillard (1991), when they are compared separately with a control group, both techniques increase the rate of compliance from 15% up to 25%. However, when he compared the two techniques to each other directly, the results were equivocal. To add to the extant literature, in the present study we compared the effectiveness of the FITD and DITF techniques in a telephone solicitation for the participant to attend an educational seminar.

We randomly assigned undergraduate and postgraduate students ( $N = 99$ ) to one of three experimental conditions. Students were asked (a) a small initial request (two short questions regarding racism) and then a moderate target request (FITD), (b) a large initial request (to attend ten 1-hr seminars about racism) and then a moderate target request (DITF), or (c) a moderate target request only (control group). The dependent variable was compliance with the moderate target request (to attend a 1-hr seminar on racism).

Chi-square analyses indicated statistically significant differences between the three conditions,  $\chi^2(2, N = 99) = 7.48, p < .05$ . Pair-wise chi-square analyses indicated that the DITF technique produced significantly more compliance (75.8%) than did either the FITD technique (48.5%),  $\chi^2(1, N = 66) = 5.21, p < .05$ , or the control group request (45.5%),  $\chi^2(1, N = 66) = 6.35, p < .01$ . No differences emerged between the FITD condition and the control condition.

Although in the DITF condition three fourths (75%) of the participants accepted the target request to attend a 1-hr seminar about racism, the FITD technique was not more effective than the control request. Because of the contradictory nature of past findings in the literature, the present findings agree with some studies (e.g., Cialdini et al., 1975; Harari, Mohr, & Hosey, 1980) and contradict others (Schwarzwald, Bizman, & Raz, 1983; Snyder & Cunningham, 1975).

It is difficult to explain, even post hoc, why in the present study the DITF was effective, and the FITD was not. Apparently, compliance with an initial small request is not always adequate for producing further compliance with subsequent requests. Factors that may influence the effectiveness of the two-step techniques include the type and size of the initial request (Even-Chen, Yinon, & Bizman, 1979; Seligman, Bush, & Kirsch, 1976), the length of delay between the first request and the second request (Beaman, Cole, Preston, Klentz, & Steblay, 1983), and the source variable and the target variable (Fern, Monroe, & Avila, 1986; Patch, 1988). Thus, the size of the request might be one reason for the present findings. Another reason might be that answering two questions on racism does not necessarily link (self-consistency-wise) to attending a seminar on discrimination. Future researchers should examine also the attitude-behavior consistency in relation to the two-step compliance techniques.

## REFERENCES

- Beaman, L. A., Cole, C. M., Preston, M., Klentz, B., & Steblay, N. M. (1983). Fifteen years of foot-in-the-door research: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 2, 181–196.
- Burger, J. M. (1999). The foot-in-the-door compliance procedure: A multiple-process analysis and review. *Personality & Social Psychology Review*, 3, 303–325.
- Cialdini, R. B., Vincent, J. E., Lewis, S. K., Catalan, J., Wheeler, D., & Darby, B. L. (1975). Reciprocal concessions procedure for inducing compliance: The door-in-the-face technique. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31, 206–215.
- Dillard, J. P. (1991). The current status of research on sequential-request compliance techniques. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17, 283–288.
- Even-Chen, M., Yinon, Y., & Bizman, A. (1979). The door-in-the-face technique: Effects of the size of the initial request. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 8, 135–140.
- Fern, E. F., Monroe, K. B., & Avila, R. A. (1986). Effectiveness of multiple request strategies: A synthesis of research results. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 23, 144–152.
- Harari, H., Mohr, D., & Hosey, K. (1980). Faculty helpfulness to students: A comparison of compliance techniques. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 6, 373–377.
- Patch, M. A. (1988). Differential perception of source legitimacy in sequential request strategies. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 128, 817–823.
- Schwarzwald, J., Bizman, A., & Raz, M. (1983). The foot-in-the-door paradigm: Effects of second request size on donation probability and donor generosity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 9, 443–450.
- Seligman, C., Bush, M., & Kirsch, K. (1976). Relationship between compliance in the foot-in-the-door paradigm and size of first request. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 33, 517–522.
- Snyder, M., & Cunningham, M. R. (1975). To comply or not comply: Testing the self-perception explanation of the foot-in-the-door phenomenon. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31, 64–67.

*Received January 21, 2004*

*Accepted December 6, 2004*

Copyright of Journal of Social Psychology is the property of Heldref Publications and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.