

Social psychology — the study of how people think about, influence, and relate to other people

- Intrapersonal topics
- Interpersonal topics

Social cognition — how people select, interpret, remember, and use social information to make judgement and decision

Attributions

- Explanations for why people behave the way they do
- Internal or external

Fundamental attribution Error — tendency to make internal attributions for other people's behavior and underestimate the role of situational factors

Self-serving attribution

Self-serving bias — explanations for one's success that credit internal, dispositional factors, and explanations for one's failures that blame external, situational factors.

Why do we make self-serving attribution:

- We want to maintain self-esteem
- We want other people to think well of us and to admire us
- We know more about the situational factors that affect our own behavior than we do about other people's.

Just world hypothesis

- The assumption that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get
- Type of defensive attribution

Cognitive dissonance — discomfort that people feel when two cognitions (beliefs, attitude) conflict, or when they behave in ways that are inconsistent with their conception of themselves.

Three ways to reduce dissonance

- Change behavior
- Justify behavior by changing one of the dissonant cognitions
- Justify behavior by adding new cognitions

Persuasion — process of changing our attitudes toward something based on some kind of communication

Elaboration likelihood model

- An explanation of the two ways in which persuasive communications can cause attitude change
- Central route — when people are motivated and have the ability to pay attention to the arguments in the communication
- Peripheral route — when people do not pay attention to the arguments but are instead swayed by surface characteristics

Foot-in-the-door technique

Getting people to agree first to a small request makes them more likely to agree later to a second, larger, request.

Door-in-the-face technique

First, ask people for a large request that they all probably refuse make them more likely to agree later to a second, smaller request.

Conformity — a change in one's behavior due to the real or imagined influence of other people

- Informational social influence: the need to know what's "right" — when individuals conform to group standards because they are uncertain about the correct answer or behavior.
- Normative social influence: the need to be accepted — when individuals conform to gain social acceptance and avoid rejection

Social norm — the implicit or explicit rules a group has for the acceptable behaviors, values, and beliefs of its members.

Obedience — the change of an individual's behavior to comply with a demand by an authority figure

The Milgram experiment showed the surprising degree to which people obey authority.

Attraction and relationships

Mere exposure effect — the finding that the more exposure we have to a stimulus, the more apt we are to like it.

Similarity

- "Birds of a feather flock together" (similarity)
- What about "opposites attract" (complementarity)?
- Research overwhelmingly supports similarity, not complementarity.

The matching hypothesis — the tendency for people to choose as partners those who are a "good match" in attractiveness and other traits.

Prejudice

- a negative attitude and feeling toward an individual based solely on one's membership in a particular social group.

Stereotype

- a specific belief or assumption about individuals based solely on their membership in a group
- "Yankees fans are arrogant and obnoxious"
- A generalization about a group of people
- Certain traits are assigned to virtually all members of the group, regardless of actual variation among the members

Discrimination

- a negative action toward an individual as a result of one's membership in a particular group.
- "I would never hire nor become friends with a person if I knew he or she were a Yankees fan"
- An unjustified negative or harmful action toward the members of a group simply because of their membership in that group

From prejudice to discrimination

Black people have been 28% of those killed by police in 2020 despite being only 13% of the population.

Everyday discrimination

Microaggressions

- Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group
- Can be outright negative
- But can also seem positive
- Can accumulate and results in negative consequences

Reducing prejudice

- Working from the top down
- Prejudice exists within a cultural context, legitimized by the laws, customs, and norms
- Changing these laws, customs, and norms can lead to reduced prejudice.

Counter-stereotype narratives

The more counter-stereotypic narratives pervade the cultural landscape, the more people are exposed to examples of real people who break down preconceived ideas about certain groups

The contact hypothesis

- Under appropriate conditions interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members
- Prejudice will decrease then two conditions are met: both groups are the equal status or both share a common goal.