

# Social influences on behavior



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One of the most basic topics in social psychology is the way one agent influences the behavior of another” (Hepburn & Potter, 2011, p. 99). Self-esteem, self-identity, morals, and values can determine which people and how greatly the influence of society will be to each individual (Velvet, 2007). Social pressure is shown in conformity, compliance, and obedience (Runner, Morrissey, Mae, Feldman & Majors, 2011). These pressures can influence an individual into behaviors he or she would not normally partake in.

Often, the actions and behaviors people take are done to ensure acceptance and avoid exclusion (Kowalski & Western, 2011). Social acceptance and approval is a basic human need and can exceed self-value (Kowalski & Western, 2011). Two examples of behaviors that can be traced to social influence are aggression and prejudice. Aggression In the terms of social psychology, aggression can be defined by the purpose behind the behavior (Runner, Morrissey, Mae, Feldman & Majors, 2011). Aggression can be viewed as the intentional harm or injury to another person, physically, verbally or emotionally.

Freud theorized that aggression was inborn primarily, or based on instinct. Further research into aggression suggests the cause may be frustration or reaction to that frustration. According to observational theories, aggression is a learned behavior with focus on reward from the aggression and the model for the behavior to the individual. Examples of aggression and social influence can be seen in children as early as pre and primary school ages. It is not uncommon to observe one child hitting another because the second child will not play the way the first child wants.

If it is discovered that the first child has an aggressive parent it could be surmised that the model for their behavior is learned at home. If the first child has seen his parent be rewarded for their aggression the behavior can be further solidified as positive to the child. A further common example could be video game playing. Even in violent video games, rewards are provided for completing violent or aggressive actions, providing a feeling of euphoria to the player. This learned action/reward response can be transmitted into real world interactions in hopes the same level of reward will be granted for the aggressive behaviors.

With social facilitation “ individual performance can be either helped or hindered by the physical presence of others” (Wood, Wood, & Boyd, 2011, p. 549). Aggression is shown within social facilitation in terms of bullying. It is important to note that even if only one person is acting in the role of bully, an audience can also have influence on the outcome. When an individual or group bullies another person or group, a group mentality can be formed. The aggression can be intensified or lessened by the actions and words of the group surrounding the bully.

Although anger is a natural emotion, inappropriate expression through aggression can be cause for concern (Funder & Engel, 2011). Cognitive-behavioral therapies can be helpful in the elongation of aggressive behaviors. Detonators Day canalling now ten Uninominal flews ten behavior or why they act out aggressively. Aggression can be a positive reaction when reaching toward an individual or team goal, such as winning a sporting event, but these behaviors need to be exhibited in positive manners, not as a method

to harm another. Prejudice Prejudices are generalized, and commonly negative, beliefs and expectations of another group or individual.

Most often prejudice is shown in stereotyping, or the reactive of viewing others as a group instead of unique individuals within a crowd. A stereotype can lead to positive or negative prejudice. An example of positive prejudice is making statements along the lines of “ Italians are great cooks. ” Prejudice can be seen as negative with statements such as “ Mexicans are lazy’. In studies of social psychology, the primary focus is on understanding negative prejudice (Runner, et al. , 2011). Prejudice is shown, not only by statements, but also by discrimination of a group.

Realistic conflict theory states, that as competition elevates among individuals or ropes, so do the prejudices and discrimination (Wood, Wood, & Boyd, 2011). A variant explanation of prejudice is seen prevalently in middle and high school aged children in the form of in-groups and out-groups. The in-group is a social group from which others are excluded based on their differences from those in the in-group. The out-group are those excluded from the in-group. “ Group think” is the act of a group of people sharing the same negative prejudices, with no regard for other individuals’ thoughts or feelings.

Group think may include confused identity, inability define oneself, and low self-esteem. These symptoms are typically characteristic of adolescents (Kowalski & Western, 2011). The act of group think can be seen in such well-known groups as the ASK or the Aryan Nation. In these groups, no one thinks as an individual, but consistently adopts the general beliefs of the entire

group. Basic human behaviors can change quickly in a group situation when an individual leaves their own identity and takes on the group identity (Aquamarine, 2009).

Group mentality can strengthen the group dynamic and prevent fighting within that group (Kowalski & Western, 2011). However, an individual engaged in group mentality can develop a sense of anonymity and could lose the sense of accountability for their own actions (Aquamarine, 2009). “According to social-cognitive theory, people learn attitudes of prejudice and hatred the same way they learn other attitudes” (Wood, Wood, & Boyd, 2011, p. 562). Social-cognitive therapy can be beneficial to a person with prejudicial thoughts and feelings. Cognitive treatments provide methods of teaching more adaptive views of the world around them.

A therapist employing this method of treatment could assist in showing others as individuals and not groups to the person with prejudices.

Conclusion Aggression and prejudice can both be extremely affected by social influences. These behaviors can produce negative consequences for those performing the Demeanor as well as tense In ten role AT velvet to tense Detonators. Monolinguals most likely to be influenced socially often find a greater sense of self from their relationships with others, and highly value those opinions and experiences (Aquamarine, 2009).

By using treatment options available, these behaviors can be re-earned and may produce positive behavioral effects.