

Bias, prejudice, and stereotyping

[Sociology](#), [Social Issues](#)



Throughout a person's life, they are faced with different challenges and obstacles of all kinds. They have to learn how to overcome these difficulties to succeed in life. People who are not classified as part of the ingroup are stereotyped, shown prejudice, and discriminated against by others. All of these are concepts that represent acts of bias.

The difference between bias and prejudice is subtle but definable. But both are two attitudes that result in injustice and discrimination. They play a huge part in how our society perceives each other and the others around us whether it is their sex, gender, culture, religion, and more. Prejudice can be seen from a person's point of view of having biased opinions about a particular group, with very little knowledge of who they are. It is usually a preconceived mindset. Prejudice can be defined in many ways; an attitude of how people think about others or people judging each other ignorantly. In the dictionary, prejudice is a preconceived opinion that is not based on any actual experience or evidence or reason. It is usually considered to be negative, unfair towards the person based on that person's participation in a social group. Prejudice can be based on factors like religion, gender, age, caste, and race. For example, some people consider that majority of South Asians living in Surrey, B. C. is gangsters and are involved in all the gang activity that occurs in the lower mainland. That Punjabi rap music is promoting that behavior. "Gangster lifestyle is being celebrated in music videos, just for entertainment". This is prejudice against religion. Just like how the majority of the world thinks that all Muslims are terrorists and want to blow up everything. This is prejudice against religion.

People are grouped off depending on their religion and the color of their skin. Although prejudice can be taken as both negative and positive, we often tend to fall towards the negative views towards those that do not belong to our social groups, whereas we show a positive attitude towards people who do belong to our social groups. This is due to a lack of trust and ignorance. Keep in mind that we learn prejudice from people around us; it is not something we are born with. It is not easy to change prejudiced views since it has been ingrained in people since they were young.

“ Notes of prejudice” by Isiah Berlin, explains how in the “ nineteenth-century” around 1840 “ the French were thought of as swashbuckling, gallant, immoral, militarized, men with curly mustaches, dangerous to woman” that were most likely to invade England for revenge. While they thought of the Germans as “ beer-drinking, rather ludicrous provincials, musical, full of misty metaphysics, harmless but somewhat absurd”. The Russians are thought of as “ crushed serfs, darkly brooding semi-religious Slav mystics who write deep novels, a huge horde of Cossacks loyal to Tsar, who sing beautifully”. The English are thought of as “ ruthless imperialists lording it over fuzzy fuzzies, looking down their long noses at the rest of the world and so on”. All these stereotypes are just substituting for real knowledge which is “ never of anything so simple or permanent as a particular generalized image of foreigners”. In the article, Berlin explains how each race had its own perceived thoughts about how Germans, French, English, and Russians would act. Bias is an inclination for or against a group or a person, especially if it is unfair. It is a belief that some people and ideas are better than others. when a person is biased towards a certain thing, it is

difficult to make a fair and equal justice. This is why we say that judges should always be biased because bias is linked to unfairness.

As individuals, we all have some sort of form of own-race bias, which makes us less able to recognize and differentiate between people of a different race than to recognize and differentiate between people of our own race. If you have some sort of good impressions of something, then you are biased towards it. If you have a bad impression of something, you are biased against it. If you have to decide about these things, you will be more inclined towards the thing you have a good impression about. Meaning you will not consider the disadvantages or weak qualities.

So, the question is, how do we overcome bias? Bias is not something we can change overnight, but with the right education and acceptance of others, it can be solved. We start by overcoming bias once we know we are biased and becoming aware of them. The solution to our problem lies in information and knowledge. The issue is to shift from negative to positive feelings regarding others. The issue is to enhance the shift from anger and fear to interest. And being the curious human beings that we are, humans' first response is to know. The person has to realize that it is not his or her fault how he or she is viewed by others and only needs to focus on being their own person and improving him or herself for his or her own benefit.

Bias can have a huge impact on people. Bias can cause issues with self-esteem. Whether bias is subtle or blatant, it can cause people to have low self-esteem. People begin to feel unaccepted, worthless and degraded by the people around them. Most people want to be accepted by others, but when

bias is present there is no acceptance due to the differences that are present. Feeling degraded because the person belongs to a certain group. When that feeling is present, it feels like there is nothing that a person can do or say to change the other person's view about them. They are simply classified according to their appearance. "Green Eggs and Ham" by Dr. Seuss, has a hidden theme. It shifts from disgust and anger, "I do not like green eggs and ham," to interest and enjoyment, "I do so like green eggs and hams". The book convinces the characters to try green eggs and ham and to gain some knowledge. So, we as a society should be helping each other in becoming aware of bias and prejudice opinions and overcoming them together.

We should encourage others to gain knowledge of trying and understanding new things rather than their own judgments. Stereotyping has become such a common thing in today's society. It puts a label on people and how an individual should live and act according to their personality, race, gender, and other factors. This may or may not affect individuals who like different things or do different things than others but are suddenly ashamed to do them because of stereotypes or being stereotyped.

The negative effects that stereotyping causes can sometimes be long-lasting. Stereotypes create a misconception of how people are and how they live in other cultures, religions, or races. This could cause problems of discrimination. This is a big problem in our multicultural society. Stereotypes are creating problems in kids. These problems can affect children in many negative ways. We can see these negative effects on children in their actions

and words. The problem of stereotyping is causing confusion in children because they are growing up thinking that they should be one way because according to society that is the right way. Stereotypes are creating a false idea of how they interact with other individuals. Many stereotypes that children receive are through media or books. We cannot change what our children see through the media but we can teach children to value other people for what they are, and not for what they appear to be. It is important to teach them to respect each other regardless of sex, race, culture, religion, and more.

With stereotyping comes bullying, since children do not quite understand the true meaning of stereotypes, bias, and prejudice they tend to make fun of others that are different than them because that is what they are taught. An example of this would be how some male Sikh children wear a turban that signifies their religious beliefs but since people do not educate themselves about other cultures they tend to call them Muslims and how they should go blow something up. This is a form of bullying. There are so many religions, races, cultures that people all have their preconceived thoughts about them from the news or what they have heard. Overall, we as the new generation should do something to avoid this problem of judging others. Letting prejudice and bias opinions control what we think of others before we actually get to know them is disappointing. The real motive is to feel like you belong somewhere.

Individuals will always have their own perception of others that are not in their group, but as an individual, it is your responsibility to ignore as much as

possible and to avoid stressing yourself. No matter what bias and prejudice will always be there. No matter how hard you try to change the mindset of society. We can start by changing our perception of stereotypes. We should be aware that all stereotypes are bad regardless if they are good or bad because it causes prejudice. We should learn to understand and respect other cultures. This could help avoid problems of discrimination. And more importantly, teach generations coming up to respect each other regardless of their differences. With all this, we can change the perception of bias and prejudice that are deeply ingrained in our society and making it better.