

Social that the  
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Psychology



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Social psychology is about the understanding of individuals' behaviour in a social perspective. Baron, Byrne, and Suls (1989) define social psychology as "the scientific field that helps to understand the creation and causes of individual behaviour in social situations" (p. 6). Many social psychologists are concerned about the topic of prejudice. Social psychologists attribute many factors with causing humans to behave in a particular way towards others and how this may make them feel.

Social psychology contributes to the idea of how thoughts, feelings, goals, intentions, beliefs are built and how these psychological factors impact the way in which we communicate with each other. Many social psychology topics cover this concept: self-concept, attribution theory, social cognition, prejudice and discrimination, social influence, group processes, aggression, attitudes, and stereotypes. The history of social psychology and early influences such as Aristotle believed that humans are inherently sociable, essentially allowing us as individuals to live together. This is also known as the individual-centred approach. Whereas, Plato had a different view on social psychology and believed that the situation controlled the individual, also persuading social responsibility a socio-centred approach (social context).

In 1770-1831, Hegel introduced the idea that the society has specific links to the evolution of the social mind, leading to the concept of a group mind, which is known to be an essential study in social psychology. In 1924, Allport's work focused on the current thinking on a broader aspect. He discovered that social behaviour develops the interaction that people have with each other. Allport also used a methodological approach, considering

official results and highlighting the field as one of the scientific studies on “the behaviour of an individual as far as his behaviour stimulates and transfers onto other individuals (1942: p. 12)”. Prejudice is one of the leading topics that cover the concept of social psychology. Bias is an incorrect behaviour toward another individual, mostly contrary, based on the individual’s social group. An example would be a person holding prejudiced views on an individual because of his or her gender or race.

A person who is prejudiced would not act on their attitude. There are three main components of someone being prejudiced, and these include cognitive, affective, and behavioural characteristics. There are also four main explanations of bias: stereotyping, the social identity theory, the realistic conflict theory (Robbers Cave), and the authoritarian personality.

Adorno et al. first proposed the theory of authoritarian personality in 1950 and introduced prejudice as the impact of an individual’s personality type. He then argued that deep-seated personality traits that are inclined toward some individuals and are highly fragile to anti-democratic and totalitarian ideas were susceptible to be highly prejudicial. The evidence Adorno used to support his conclusion comprised case studies, e. g., Nazis and clinical testing revealing aspects of their childhood of being brought up by strict parents that were found in participants who scored highly on the F-scale but weren’t seen in the context of lower scorers.

Individuals with an authoritarian personality are belligerent to others with an inferior status. However, they are compliant to those with high status and strong opinions and beliefs. Those with a strict character also uphold

traditional values. Adorno believes that individuals with authoritarian personalities tend to group people into "us" and "them" and seeing themselves as dominant over anyone else. The second primary explanation of prejudice is the realistic conflict theory, also known as the Robbers Cave. Muzafer Sherif is a well-known psychologist significant to the psychological understanding of groups.

Muzafer Sherif's contribution to psychology is the Realistic Conflict Theory, which also rationalizes negative prejudices, stereotypes, and group conflict as the outcome of the competition that occurs between groups coveting resources. Muzafer Sherif proved his theory through one of his most well-known experiments, "The Robber's Cave." Muzafer Sherif later argued that intergroup conflict meaning conflict that occurs between groups of people, when one group goes against the other group for the competition of restricted resources. Investigating group conflict which has been supported by evidence from the theory of a well-known study that investigates conflict "The Robbers Cave"- Sherif, 1954, 1958, 1961. Muzafer Sherif carried out a field study to get a better understanding of the causes and results of intergroup conflict. The subjects included normal boys that were all the same age, educational level, had similar socio-cultural backgrounds that all came from the same city Oklahoma. The group formation, they all arrived in two different groups these groups consisted of the eagles and rattlers, and they stayed apart from each other for a week.

The robber's cave experiment hypotheses tested included when two in groups are brought together into a practical relationship, and the competition is taken under condition and group frustration, anger towards

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the out-group. Both groups were taken into a competition, a variety of competitive activities had taken place these include tug of war, baseball, etc. Soon both groups the eagles and rattlers became violent, burning each other's flags, attacking each others privacy space(cabins), verbal prejudice became obvious leading it to aggressive territorial violence which then led to the groups being separated. The experimenters reducing the prejudice concluded that neither propaganda nor contact worked. Instead, cooperative action helped reduce the prejudice, so the experimenters came up with the idea of making the camp truck break down. Both groups cooperated by pulling the car uphill; this allowed the teams to come together, and friendships started to develop. Another excellent contribution reducing prejudice is the social identity theory by Henri Tajfel.

Social identity refers to the type of person someone is, and this is based on that person's group membership. In 1979, Tajfel suggested that the family, social class, and other groups that people belong to are essential to their self-esteem and pride. Simplypsychology. org. (2018). Robbers Cave Experiment / Realistic Conflict Theory | Simply Psychology. online Available at: [https://www. simplypsychology.](https://www.simplypsychology.org/robbers-cave.html)

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