

Ib psychology sociocultural notes

[Science](#)



Explain the formation of stereotypes and their effect on behavior.

- Definition: Stereotypes assign similar characteristics to all members of a group, despite the fact that the group members may vary widely from one another.
- Characteristics:
- social-cognitive theories:
- our social world is very complex and presents us with too much information
- since our capacity to process information is limited, there is a need to simplify our social way
- one of the way to avoid information overload is social categorization
- these are stereotypes

Stereotypes simplify information processing in social perception

- stereotypes are schemas as they: are energy-saving devices, automatically activated, stable and resistant to change, affect behavior.
- Not stable across culture

Studies COHEN Cohen presented participants with a videotape showing a woman having dinner with her husband. Half the participants were told that the woman was a waitress and the rest that she was a librarian. At a later memory test, participants showed better recall for stereotype-consistent information. Those who thought she was a waitress remembered her beer drinking.

Participants who thought she was a librarian were more likely to remember that she was wearing glasses and was listening to classical music. Like the studies on the effects of schemas, Cohen's study shows that we are likely to notice and subsequently remember information which is consistent with our stereotypes.

FISKE AND DYER Like all schemas, stereotypes are formed over time on the basis of relevant experiences. For Fiske and Dyer (1985), stereotype formation begins with the learning of independent schema elements. For example, the formation of a gender schema for 'female' begins with isolated elements such as 'girls dress in pink' and 'girls play with dolls'

whereas, ' boys dress in blue and play with cars'. With advancing age additional elements are added, such as information about gender-appropriate behaviours and work-related preferences. Eventually, strong associations form between all the various elements and a single schema emerges. Once formed, repeated practice in the use of the schema may lead to such levels of integration that it can be activated automatically and unconsciously seen then. Bargh Participants in this experiment were asked to complete a test involving 30 items.

This task was presented to the participants as a language proficiency task. Each of the 30 items consisted of five unrelated words. For each item participants had to use four of the five words to form, as fast as possible, a grammatically correct sentence. There were two conditions in this experiment. In one, the task contained words related to and intending to activate the elderly stereotype (e. g. grey, retired, wise). In the other condition, the words used were unrelated to the elderly stereotype (e. g. thirsty, clean, private). After completing the experimental tasks, participants were directed towards the elevator.

A confederate, sitting in the corridor, timed how long the participants took to walk from the experimental room to the elevator. •Bargh et al. found that participants who had their elderly stereotype activated walked significantly more slowly towards the elevator than the rest of the participants. Priming of this stereotype must have taken place unconsciously. As Bargh et al. note, the task words did not directly relate to time or speed and no conscious awareness of the elderly stereotype was ever in evidence for the duration of the study. Illusory correlation

These researchers asked participants to read descriptions about two made-up groups (Group A and Group B). The descriptions were based on a number of positive and negative behaviours. Group A (the majority group) had twice as many members than Group B (the minority group). In the descriptions, Group A members performed 18 positive and 8 negative behaviours. Group B members performed 9 positive and 4 negative behaviours. So, for both groups, twice as much of the information involved positive, rather than negative, behaviours. Clearly, there was no correlation between group membership and the types of behaviours exhibited by the groups.

However, when asked later, participants did seem to have perceived an illusory correlation. More of the undesirable behaviours were attributed to the minority Group B, than the majority Group A. Hamilton and Gifford's explanation of their findings is based on the idea that distinctive information draws attention. Group B members and negative behaviours are both numerically fewer and therefore more distinct than Group A members and negative behaviours. The combination of Group B members performing negative behaviours, therefore, stands out more than the combination of Group A members performing such behaviours.

This causes the illusory correlation. • Explain social learning theory, making reference to two relevant studies. Social Learning theory: In particular social learning theorists emphasise the role of observation and imitation of role models. In general, social development is seen as a continuous learning process, rather than as happening in stages. -If children were passive witnesses to an aggressive display by an adult they would imitate this aggressive behavior when given the opportunity. -The researchers

attempted to reduce this problem by pre-testing the children for how aggressive they were.

They did this by observing the children in the nursery and judged their aggressive behaviour on four 5-point rating scales. It was then possible to match the children in each group so that they had similar levels of aggression in their everyday behaviour. The experiment is therefore an example of a matched pairs design. Controlled 24 in a group The findings support Bandura's Social Learning Theory. That is, children learn social behaviour such as aggression through the process of observation learning - through watching the behaviour of another person.

The findings from this and similar studies have been used in the argument that mediaviolencemight be contributing in some degree to violence in society. The obvious criticism of this argument is that there are many other factors influencing whether or not we are likely to imitate screen violence. One of the major factors is perhaps the level of aggression we already have, which might have been learned, in ourfamilyrelationships or elsewhere. The major criticism of the Social Learning Approach tochild developmentis its oversimplified description of human behaviour.

Although it can explain some quite complex behaviour it cannot adequately account for how we develop a whole range of behaviour including thoughts and feelings. We have a lot of cognitive control over our behaviour and simply because we have had experiences of violence does not mean we have to reproduce such behaviour. It is also worth noting that the Social Learning Approach has little room for the role of inherited factors or for the role of maturation in development. This theory assumes that humans learn

behavior through observational learning - in other words, people can learn by watching models and imitating their behavior.

Explain Attention: The person must first pay attention to the model.

Retention: The observer must be able to remember that behavior has been observed. Motor reproduction: The observer has to be able to replicate the

action. Coding/remember the act. Motivation: Learners must want to demonstrate what they have learned. Whether or not they like the model.

Liking. Rewards/punishment. Identification. Consistency. Internalized outcome expectancies. Increases the likelihood of carrying out. If we identify with the model (we want to be like them) Bandura: Reinforcement is not necessary for learning

Vicarious- Unintentionally picking up something. Indirect learning.

Unconscious. This theory assumes that humans learn behavior through observational learning - in other words, people can learn by watching models

and imitating their behavior. Attention: The person must first pay attention to the model. Retention: The observer must be able to remember that

behavior has been observed. Motor reproduction: The observer has to be able to replicate the action. Coding/remember the act. Motivation: Learners

must want to demonstrate what they have learned. Whether or not they like the model. Liking. Rewards/punishment.

Identification. Consistency. If we identify with the model (we want to be like them) Internalized outcome expectancies. Increases the likelihood of

carrying out. Bandura: Reinforcement is not necessary for learning Vicarious- Unintentionally picking up something. Indirect learning. Unconscious.

Conscious Control condition - The children were shown the film with the

<https://assignbuster.com/ib-psychology-sociocultural-notes/>

adult behaving aggressively towards the Bobo doll. Model-rewarded condition - Children saw the same film used in the control condition but after the aggression was over, a second adult appeared in the film to reward the aggressor with sweets and a soft drink.

Bobo dolls are clown-like dolls with a weight in the bottom. They are designed in such a way as to always bounce back when knocked down. Model-punished condition - As the model-rewarded condition, but the second adult scolded and pked the model for behaving aggressively. After viewing the film, all the children were taken individually into a playroom with several toys which included a Bobo doll and a mallet. While in the playroom, the children's behaviour was observed for a period of 10 minutes and any acts of aggression similar to those performed by the model were recorded.

The control and the model-rewarded groups showed an equal level of aggressiveness towards the Bobo doll (2.5 acts). The model-punished condition was associated with significantly fewer aggressive acts (1.5 acts). However, when at a later stage the children were asked to reproduce the behaviour of the model and were rewarded for each act of aggression they displayed, they all (regardless of which original condition they were in) produced the same number of aggressive acts (3.5 acts). Bandura's study exemplified and supported the following features of SLT.

Vicarious (observational) learning - The children clearly learned specific aggressive behaviours by observing the adult model. The learning manifested during the second part of the study was based on vicarious reinforcement or punishment as the children were never rewarded or punished themselves. Reinforcement or punishment was necessary for

<https://assignbuster.com/ib-psychology-sociocultural-notes/>

performance not learning: All children behaved in an equally aggressive manner towards the Bobo doll when rewarded to do so. Selective imitation in 14-month-old infants (Gergely et al. , 2002) This experiment used 14-month-old infants as participants and involved two conditions.

Hands-free condition - In this condition, the infants observed an adult place her hands on a table. Following this, she used a strange action to illuminate a light box: she bent over and pressed the box with her forehead. One week later, the same infants were given the opportunity to play with the box; 69% of them used their head to illuminate the light. Hands-occupied condition - Infants in this condition observed the adult perform the same strange action to illuminate the box. In this condition, however, the model was using her hands to hold a blanket around her shoulders.

This rendered the hands unavailable for other actions. When given the opportunity one week later to play with the box, only 21% of the infants illuminated the light by using their head. The rest used their hands to press the light. Discussing their findings, Gergely et al. note that in the hands-occupied condition infants seem to have assumed that the adult used her head because she had to. But this constraint did not apply to the infants. In the hands-free condition, the adult could have chosen to use her hands. She did not.

The children seem to have assumed there must have been a reason for this choice, so they copied it. •Discuss the use of compliance techniques (for example, lowballing, foot? in? the? door, reciprocity). Aronson et al. (2007) define compliance as ' a form of social influence involving direct requests from one person to another'. A demonstration of the FITD technique <https://assignbuster.com/ib-psychology-sociocultural-notes/>

(Freeman and Fraser, 1966) These researchers arranged for a researcher, posing as a volunteer worker, to ask a number of householders in California to allow a big ugly public-service sign reading ‘ Drive Carefully’ to be placed in their front gardens.

Only 17% of the householders complied with this request. A different set of homeowners was asked whether they would display a small ‘ Be a Safe Driver’ sign. Nearly all of those asked agreed with this request. Two weeks later these same homeowners were asked, by a ‘ volunteer worker’, whether they would display the much bigger and ugly ‘ Drive Carefully’ sign in their front gardens. 76% of them complied with this second request, a far higher percentage than the 17% who had complied in the first condition.

In a second study, Freedman and Frazer (1966) first asked a number of householders to sign a petition in favour of keeping California beautiful, something nearly everybody agreed to do. After two weeks, they send a new ‘ volunteer worker’ who asked these homeowners whether they would allow the big and ugly ‘ Drive Carefully’ sign of the previous study to be displayed in their front gardens. Note that the two requests relate to completely different topics, but nearly half of the homeowners agreed with the second request.

Again, this is significantly higher than the 17% of homeowners who agreed to display the sign in the absence of any prior contact. But, how could the findings of the second experiment be explained? According to Freeman and Frazer (1966), signing the petition changed the view the homeowners had about themselves. As a result, they saw themselves as unselfish citizens with well-developed civic principles. Agreeing, two weeks later, to display the ‘

'Drive Carefully' sign reflected their need to comply with their newly-formed self-image.

Not only do commitments change us but also, to use Gialdini's own expression, they 'grow their own legs'. Sherman (1980) called residents in Indiana (USA) and asked them if, hypothetically, they would volunteer to spend 3 hours collecting for the American Cancer Society. Three days later, a second experimenter called the same people and actually requested help for this organization. Of those responding to the earlier request, 31% agreed to help. This is much higher than the 4% of a similar group of people who volunteered to help when approached directly. Low-balling

It involves changing an offer to make it less attractive to the target person after this person has agreed to it. A demonstration of lowballing (Burger and Cornelius, 2003) In this study, students were contacted by phone by a female caller and asked whether they would be prepared to donate five dollars to a scholarship fund for underprivileged students. There were three experimental conditions. ?? The lowball condition - Students were told that those who contributed would receive a coupon for a free smoothie at a local juice bar. Students who agreed were then informed that the investigator realized she had run out of coupons.

The students were asked if they would still be willing to contribute. 77.6% agreed to make a donation in this condition. ?? The interrupt condition - The caller made the same initial request as in the lowball condition. However, before the participants had a chance to give their answer, the caller interrupted them to let them know that there were no more coupons left. Only 16% of the participants made a donation in this condition. ?? The

control condition - Participants were simply asked to donate the five dollars without any mention of coupons. 42% made a donation in the control condition.

The results support the view that the lowball technique is based on the principle of commitment. The technique is effective only when individuals make an initial public commitment. Once they have made this commitment, individuals feel obliged to act in accordance with it even when the conditions that led to them making the commitment have changed, (Cialdini, 2009).

- Discuss factors influencing conformity (for example, culture, groupthink, risky shift, minority influence). Examine the role of two cultural dimensions on behaviour (for example, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, Confucian dynamism).

We have already defined the terms individualism and collectivism as used by Hofstede. Cultures differ with respect to how they socialize their members to develop identities that are either individually or collectively based. In individualistic cultures: -the personal is emphasized more than the social - persons are viewed as unique -individual autonomy and self-expression are valued -competitiveness and self-sufficiency are highly regarded. Societies high on collectivism are characterized by giving priority to the goals of important groups (e. g. extended family, work group) and define one's identity on the basis of one's membership of such groups. So, in collectivist cultures: -the social is emphasized more than the personal -the self is defined by long-standing relationships and obligations -individual autonomy and self-expression are not encouraged -there is more of an emphasis on achieving group harmony rather than on individual achievement. It is not that

members of individualistic societies do not have the need to belong or that their identities are exclusively personal identities.

SIT was after all developed in individualistic countries (e. g. UK, Australia) to explain primarily the behaviour of members of those societies. However, they are less focused on group harmony or doing their duty for the types of mostly traditional group that collectivist societies are based on (Brewer and Chen, 2007). This hypothesis was tested in a field experiment-experimental study by Petrova et al. (2007). Their study involved over 3000 students of a US university. Nearly half were native US students and the rest were Asian students at the same university.

All were sent an e-mail asking them to participate in a survey. A month later, the students received a second e-mail asking them whether they would agree to take part in an online survey. Petrova et al. obtained the standard FITD effect. The proportion of students who had agreed to the first survey and then agreed to the second was higher than the proportion who had initially agreed to the first survey. More importantly, the researchers also found that compliance was twice as strong with the native US students as it was with the Asian students for the second request. This finding is even more remarkable if one takes into account that the first request led to a higher level of compliance among the Asian students. Bond and Smith (1996) carried out a meta-analysis of 133 conformity studies all using the Asch paradigm. The studies were carried out in 17 countries. The meta-analysis showed that more conformity was obtained in collectivistic countries like the Fiji Islands, Hong Kong and Brazil than in individualistic countries like the USA, the UK or France (Table 4. 2).

Bond and Smith's findings are consistent with the way that the individualism/collectivism dimension was portrayed earlier (pages 135-136). Members of collectivistic countries value conformity because it promotes supportive group relationships and reduces conflicts. This, agreeing with others in collectivist societies is more likely to be viewed as a sign of sensitivity than one of submission to somebody else's will, which is the way it is often perceived in individualistic cultures (Hodges and Geyer, 2006). Many have argued that time is not defined and perceived in the same way everywhere.

To a significant extent, the way humans experience time is influenced by their culture (Hall, 1959). In 2001, Hofstede proposed a classification of cultures based on their time orientation. In the mid-80s, Bond asked a number of Chinese social scientists to create a list of what Chinese people viewed as their basic values (Hofstede and Bond, 1988). A questionnaire, based on this list, was then administered to people in 23 countries. The outcome of this project was the emergence of a fifth cultural dimension, not related to the other four originally identified by Hofstede (page 000).

The additional dimension was called Confucian dynamism because it reflected Confucius's ideas about the importance of perseverance, patience, social hierarchy, thrift and having a sense of shame. The new dimension was later renamed long-term vs short-time orientation. Cultures scoring high on this dimension show a dynamic, future-oriented mentality. These are cultures that value long-standing, as opposed to short-term, traditions and values. Individuals in such cultures strive to fulfil their own long-term social

obligations and avoid loss of face. Cultures with a short-term view are not as concerned with past traditions.

They are rather impatient, are present-oriented and strive for immediate results. In practical terms, the long-term versus short-term orientation refers to the degree to which cultures encourage delayed gratification of material, social, and emotional needs among their members (Matsumoto and Juang, 2008). •Seven of the ten highest ranking countries on Hofstede's time orientation dimension were in Asia. Western countries tended to be more short-term oriented. In eastern countries, characterized by a long-time orientation, patience is valued more than in Western countries.

Based on this, Chen et al. predicted that part of the Western mentality is to place a higher value on immediate consumption than an eastern mentality. They investigated this idea in an experimental study using 147 Singaporean 'bicultural participants'. This technique uses participants who have been exposed extensively to two different cultures (in this case, Singaporean and American) and assumes that both can affect behaviour depending on which is more actively represented in the mind at any particular moment. Chen et al. electively activated one or the other of the two cultures by presenting half the participants with a collage of easily recognizable photos which were relevant to Singaporean culture and the other half with a collage of photos relevant to US culture. Impatience was tested by having the participants perform an online shopping scenario in order to purchase a novel. The book could be delivered either within four working days for a standard fee or next day for an additional charge. The extramoneyparticipants were willing to pay for faster delivery of the book was used as a measure of impatience.

Chen et al. found that US-primed participants valued immediate consumption more than the Singaporean-primed participants. Strong support of cultural differences in time orientation comes from an impressive study by Wang et al. (2009). They surveyed over 5000 university students in 45 countries and compared them on time orientation. They found, for instance, that students coming from what they call long-term orientation cultures were also more likely to postpone immediate satisfaction and wait for bigger rewards later.

Ayoun and Moreo (2009) used a survey method to investigate the influence of time orientation on the strategic behaviour of hotel managers. A questionnaire was posted to top-level hotel managers in the USA and Thailand. Compared to US managers, Thai managers were found to place a stronger emphasis on longer-term strategic plans and a stronger reliance on long-term evaluation of strategy. Cultural differences in time orientation also seem to relate to everyday behaviours.

Levine and Norenzayan (1999) measured how fast people walked a 60-foot distance in downtown areas in major cities, the speed of a visit to a post office, and the accuracy of clocks in 31 countries. They found that life pace, as indicated by the activities they measured, was fastest in countries like Switzerland, Ireland and Germany and slowest in Mexico, Indonesia, Brazil, and Syria. The last three studies are natural experiments and, in effect, observational studies. Their findings should, therefore, be interpreted with caution as no confident causal statements can be made in the absence of adequate extraneous variables.