

Patrician College of Arts and Science

Department of Psychology

Social Psychology - I

SAT5D

Odd Semester

Pavithra



Social Psychology

- Social psychology is the study of how people and groups interact.
- Social psychology is the scientific study of how people's thoughts , feelings , and behaviors are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others.
- 3. Attitudes In social psychology, attitudes are defined as learned, global evaluations of a person, object, place, or issue that influence thought and action. Put more simply, attitudes are basic expressions of approval or disapproval, favorability or unfavorability, likes and dislikes

THEORIES OF ATTITUDE

- Theory of cognitive dissonance:

The theory of cognitive dissonance proposes that people have a motivational drive to reduce dissonance by changing their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, or by justifying or rationalizing their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

THEORIES OF ATTITUDE

- **Attitude Formation** :

- In Social Psychology attitudes are defined as positive or negative evaluations of objects of thought. Attitudes typically have three components.
- The cognitive component is made up of the thoughts and beliefs people hold about the object of the attitude.
- The affective component consists of the emotional feelings stimulated by the object of the attitude. The behavioral component consists of predispositions to act in certain ways toward an attitude object.

- Attitudes are acquired through:
- 1. social learning
- 2. social comparison
- 3. genetic factors (not all agree on this)
- 4. Self experiences

Factors of Attitude Change

- The Communicator credibility
- expertise,
- Trustworthiness
- and attractiveness

Measurement of attitude

- **Scales by Thurstone**

The Thurstone scale was the first formal technique for measuring an attitude .

It was developed by Louis Leon Thurstone , as a means of measuring attitudes towards religion .

It is made up of statements about a particular issue, and each statement has a numerical value indicating how favorable or unfavorable it is judged to be. People check each of the statements to which they agree, and a mean score is computed, indicating their attitude.

Thurstone Scale

- Put a check mark in the blank if you agree with the item.
- 1. Blacks should be considered the lowest class of human beings. (scale value = 0.9)
- 2. Blacks and whites must be kept apart in all social affairs where they might be taken as equals. (scale value = 5.4)
- 3. I am not interested in how blacks rate socially. (scale value = 5.4)
- 4. A refusal to accept blacks is not based on any fact of nature, but on a prejudice which should be overcome. (scale value = 7.9)
- 5. I believe that blacks deserve the same social privileges as whites. (scale value = 10.3)
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- Bogardus Social Distance Scale The Bogardus Social Distance Scale is a psychological testing scale created by Emory S. Bogardus to empirically measure people's willingness to participate in social contacts of varying degrees of closeness with members of diverse social groups, such as other racial and ethnic groups

Likert scale

- It is a psychometric scale commonly used in questionnaires , and is the most widely used scale in survey research. When responding to a Likert questionnaire item, respondents specify their level of agreement to a statement.

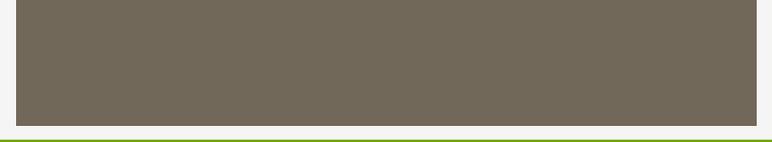
Guttman Scale

- On a Guttman scale, items are arranged in an order so that an individual who agrees with a particular item also agrees with items of lower rank-order.
- For example, a series of items could be (1) I am willing to be near ice cream
- (2) I am willing to smell ice cream
- (3) I am willing to eat ice cream
- (4) I love to eat ice cream

- Agreement with any one item implies agreement with the lower-order items.

○ Prejudice :

Prejudice is a negative attitude about members of a group. Prejudice translated into behavior is called discrimination , behaving differently, usually unfairly, toward group members. Prejudice often develops through stereotypes , fixed, simplistic (usually wrong) conceptions of traits, behaviors, and attitudes of a particular group of people.



- **Group dynamics :**

- A group can be defined as two or more individuals that are connected to each another by social relationships . Groups tend to interact, influence each other, and share a common identity.

- Group Conformity Conformity is the process by which an individual's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors are influenced by other people. This influence occurs in both small groups and society as a whole, and it may be the result of subtle unconscious influences, or direct and overt social pressure .

- Group cohesiveness :It is the force bringing group members closer together. Cohesiveness has two dimensions: emotional (or personal) and task -related. The emotional aspect of cohesiveness, which was studied more often, is derived from the connection that members feel to other group members and to their group as a whole.

- Group thinking :Groupthink is a type of thought exhibited by group members who try to minimize conflict and reach consensus without critically testing, analyzing, and evaluating ideas. Individual creativity, uniqueness, and independent thinking are lost in the pursuit of group cohesiveness, as are the advantages of reasonable balance in choice and thought that might normally be obtained by making decisions as a group.

- De-individuation :

De-individuation is the situation where anti-normative behavior is released in groups in which individuals are not seen or paid attention to as individuals. Simply put, de-individuation is immersion in a group to the point of which the individual ceases to be seen as such.

LEADERS

- Lewin's leadership styles

Autocratic

In the autocratic style, the leader takes decisions without consulting with others.

Democratic

In the democratic style, the leader involves the people in the decision-making, although the process for the final decision may vary from the leader having the final say to them facilitating consensus in the group.

Behavior in Groups:

- The Impact of Others **Hawthorne** Effect (Observer Effect): is a type of reactivity in which individuals modify or improve an aspect of their behavior in response to their awareness of being observed.
- **Social Facilitation**: presence of others increases our performance on simple tasks Ex. Being watched while doing task vs. being alone when doing task □ better on simple tasks □ worse on complex tasks **Social Impairment**: presence of others worsens our performance.
Social Loafing: tendency to put less effort in when working with others

Behavior in Groups:

- Decision Making
 - Group Polarization - when group discussion leads to a more “polarized” point of view by the group
 - Groupthink - when feel pressure to conform to the group, stops critical thinking to avoid dissent in the group

Behavior in Groups:

- Group Polarization
- Conformity:
- Chameleon Effect: our tendency to unconsciously mimic those around us
- Conformity: Asch Line Study
- • Conformity - yielding to social pressure • Asch's Conclusions
- 1) subjects often conform to a group, even when the group states clearly inaccurate conclusions
- 2) conformity to a group increases with the size of the group, up to five or six, but only when the group is unanimous in its beliefs

- Compliance:
- Persuasion Techniques
 - Limited time offer
 - Everyone is buying!!!
 - DEAL!!!
- Reciprocation
 - Foot –in-the-door (first small request then big request)
 - Door-in-the-face (big – large)
 - Lowball (after commitment, cost is increased)

- Contributors to Attraction • Proximity: Physical closeness (mere exposure)
- • Physical Attractiveness: Pleasant physical appearance (often different depending on culture),
- signs of health such as symmetry (universal) • Similarity: Commonalities between two people • Opposites?: Complementary Qualities • Reciprocity: The tendency to like those who like you

- Aggression & Altruism
- Aggression: Any form of behavior intended to harm or injure another living being Where does aggression come from? - Instincts - Genes - Brain & Nervous System - Substance Abuse - Mental Disorders - Hormones & NTs - Aversive Stimuli (e.g. noise, heat, pain, bullying, frustration), culture & learning, Violent media/video **games** **Altruism:** Actions designed to help others with no obvious benefit to the helper Why are we altruistic? Evolutionary Perspective: favors survival of genes Egoistic Model: motivated by anticipated gain Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis: sometimes for selfish gains, other times truly selfless & motivated by concern for others Kitty Genovese Story...diffusion of responsibility

Components of Attitudes

- Cognitive Dissonance Definition: Sense of discomfort or distress that occurs when a person's behavior does not correspond to that person's attitudes.
- Social Categorization and Implicit Social Categorization and Implicit Personality Theory Personality Theory • Social Categorization:: assignment of a person one has just met to a category based on characteristics in common with people you have experienced in the past

Components of Attitudes

- Attribution Theory (Heider, 1958) Definition: Inferences that people draw about the causes of events, others' behavior, and their own behavior
Dispositional Attribution: we attribute a person's behavior to an internal state (personality, abilities, etc.)
Situational Attribution: attributing a person's behavior to an external state (stress, abuse, hardship, wealth, etc.)
• Function: People like to explain and understand behavior and the events that impact their lives
• Attributions are made when an event is unusual and personal
• "Just world" phenomenon



Thank you

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