



AP Psychology Unit 6 Study Guide

Social Psychology

What is it: The development and expression of attributes, attitudes, how we are influenced, and how we influence/interact with others.

Attitudes: Set of beliefs and feelings about an individual. Attitudes have behavioral, cognitive, and emotional components. Some people say something (have a certain attitude) but behave differently.

Attributes: How we explain the cause of behavior, belief, or feeling for ourselves and others. We have internal theories on why people behave the way they do, and therefore, we expect specific things from them.

Attribution Theory

Attribution Theory: The process in which we attribute feeling and intention to people to understand and adjudge their behavior. For example, if we see someone yelling, we may attribute that they are rude.

Situational Attribution: One's actions are explained because of external factors. For example, when one fails a test, they blame that due to the weather.

Dispositional Attribution: One's actions are explained because of internal factors. For example, you failed the test because you did not study.

Fundamental Attribution Error: When judging others' behavior/actions, you overemphasize dispositional factors and ignore situational factors. However, when judging yourself, you only look at situational factors, not putting any blame to yourself.

Ultimate Attribution Error: Unlike fundamental attribution error, ultimate attribution error has to do with groups of people rather than individuals. Ultimate attribution error makes people favor options that make their group look like something bad happening to them isn't their fault.

Cognitive Dissonance: When our actions do not match our beliefs/attitudes, so we experience dissonance. Brain tries to justify past actions, so eventually our actions start to affect our attitudes, so we believe in the things we do. This is the **cognitive dissonance theory**, where we bring our attitudes to align with our actions.

Phenomena, Altruism, Role Playing

Foot-in-the-door phenomenon: We agree to one request and then gradually agree to larger requests. An example of this is when a friend asks to borrow a small amount of money, then later asks to borrow a larger amount.

Door-in-the-face phenomenon: When we initially disagree with a very large request, but then agree to a smaller request. An example is when a friend asks to borrow an unreasonable sum of money, to which you say no, only to turn around and ask for a smaller sum that you agree to give.

That's-not-all phenomenon: Offering a something at a high price, not allowing the customer to respond for a few seconds, then offering a better deal by either adding another product or lowering the price.

Altruism: Principle of concern for the well being/happiness of others above oneself.
Selflessness. Actions greatly influence racial attitudes and altruism, as our moral actions strengthen our moral compass; for example, people who do actual actions to help the oppressed.

Role Playing: The action of role playing affects our attitudes because we wanna fulfill our preconceived notions (self fulfilling prophecy), so even in fake situations, we want to still have our actions match our attitudes.

Conformity and Obedience

Group: A collection of people who interact together.

Conformity: Subtle process where an individual shapes their behavior to make it consistent with the group.

Normative Influence: People conform to groups norms to fit in, even knowing that they are correct.

Informational Influence: People conform because they think that the group is correct.

Obedience: Process by which an individual follows the commands of a perceived authority figure. Obedience is greatest in face-to-face communication.

Compliance: An individual goes along with a request made by another person.

Conflict and Conflict Resolution

Conflict: The interception of two opposing forces or groups.

Conflict Resolution: The reduction of tension between two opposing people or groups, usually through the use of active strategies like bargaining, negotiating, and compromise.

Realistic Conflict Theory: When there are two or more groups competing for scarce resources, there will be conflict between the groups, leading to negative attributions and discrimination between groups.

Mirror Image Perception: Two conflicting groups who share the same negative image. One group believes that they are the best and the other group is the worse and vice versa.

Prejudice: An unjustifiable attitude toward a group and its members. According to the **scapegoat theory**, prejudice stems from frustration and anger. Prejudice is most likely to develop as a way of justifying social inequalities.

Social Affiliation

What is it: The human motivation for social cohesion, social activity, and sense of communing and belonging.

Social Facilitation: The presence of others boosts performance on familiar or challenging tasks because we feel aroused and motivated to do well. *Social impairment is the opposite.*

Deindividuation: Intense closeness with a group, so we have a diminished sense of individuality and personal responsibility. We will tend to behave in a way that we normally would not. An example is when college women were dressed in Ku Klux Klan style hoods, they demonstrated significantly more aggression.

Social Loafing: Work less hard and put less effort when with others. For example, during tug of war, one may loaf, thinking the rest of the group will pick up the slack.

Groupthink: The harmonious but unrealistic thinking of a group to preserve the good, cohesive group feeling, where there's no conflicts and everyone agrees. This demotes critical thinking and leads to poor decision making.

Group Polarization: The more a group discusses and talks, the group will develop extreme beliefs/attitudes/decisions.

Bystander Effect (Diffusion of Responsibility): During an emergency scenario, people do not do anything when there's a lot of people, thinking someone else will step up to take action.

Social Psychology Studies and their Implications

Milgram's Study on Obedience (1961): Subjects were given the task to administer electric shocks by the command of an authority figure. Most of the people obeyed and shocked the individual, showing how people will behave differently/immorally under authority. When asked why they did what they did, the subjects experienced cognitive dissonance.

Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Study (1971): People were assigned roles (prisoner or guard), and the guards were tasked to ridicule the prisoners. The prisoners were very distressed and had mental breakdowns while the guards were happy/content with what they were doing, showing how role playing had an effect on attitudes/actions. Roles led to deindividuation, as the guards started acting in surprisingly negative, hostile ways.

Robber's Cave (1954): Researcher divided boys at a summer camp into two groups, who were in competition for scarce resources. This study showed that hostility occurs when two groups are competing for something (realistic conflict theory). It showed that just bringing two

opposing groups together does not mitigate conflict, but rather the imposition of superordinate goals (common goals for both groups) reduced the conflict because it required teamwork.

Lapierre Study on Attitudes and Behaviors (1934): This was set in the U.S. during the Chinese Exclusion Act. The researcher brought a Chinese American to restaurants and hotels, and most chains accepted him. However, after the researcher called the same establishments at a later date regarding if they serve Chinese Americans, most chains said no. This showed how attitudes do not explain behavior, and just cause you believe something does not mean you will act accordingly.

Schacter Study on Anxiety and Affiliation (1962): The researcher created a high anxiety and low anxiety group, by telling the high anxiety group the experiment is about electrical shocks. Then, he gave both groups the opportunity to wait in a room by themselves or as a group. The anxious people preferred being in a group (high affiliation). This experiment further showed how girls prefer to be together to reduce anxiety more than boys, and how anxiety motivates affiliation with people who are equally anxious.

Asch's Conformity Study (1951): People were put into groups, wherein their group members were actors in the experiment. The groups filled with actors answered some basic questions wrong, and the subject either had the opportunity to go with the right answer or conform. Most of the subjects conformed to fit in the group while a minority conformed thinking the group was correct. The more people in the group, the higher the conformity; the harder the task, the more conformity.

Festinger and Carlsmith's Study on Cognitive Dissonance (1951): They paid volunteers either one dollar or twenty dollars to lie about a boring task being fun. The well-paid volunteers suffered no cognitive dissonance because they could justify lying for payment. Eventually, to reconcile their cognitive dissonance, the poorly compensated participants reported liking the task, showing how changing one's behavior could alter their attitude as well.

Rosenthal and Jacobson Study on Self-fulfilling Prophecy (1968): Teachers were tasked with having positive expectations on their students, leading to increased student IQ scores. This showed that one person's attitudes can elicit a change in another person's behavior, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy to meet the expectations.

Sherif's Study on Superordinate Goals: Unfriendly, competing groups of campers came to have positive feelings about one another after working together in several activities. This showed how intergroup prejudice can be reduced by working together in superordinate goals.

Darley and Latane's Study on Bystander Effect (1968): College students were more likely to help when they thought they only heard their peers have a seizure than if they thought many people heard as well. This showed that the more people witnessed an emergency, the less response.

More Info

In-Group and Out-Group: An in-group is the group one belongs to and anyone else who is perceived as belonging to that group. Members of in-groups view each other in a positive light and give each other preferential treatment. Out-Groups on the other hand is anyone who doesn't belong to your group or in-group.

Ethnocentrism: Believing that one's culture or ethnic group is inherently superior to all others. This involves viewing other ethnic or cultural groups as inferior and from one's own perspective.

Aggression: Any behavior whether it be physical or verbal with the intent of hurting somebody, either through a means of hostility or as a calculated means to an end. Aggression can be caused by a variety of factors such as frustration, aversive events, reinforcement, media influence, biological factors, and disinhibitors such as alcohol.

Mere Exposure Effect: A psychological phenomenon in which people develop a liking or disliking to objects solely based on how familiar they are with that thing.

Just World Hypothesis: It is a belief that the world is just and fair and that people generally get what they deserve. In other words, actions will always have fitting consequences for the actor. This hypothesis is problematic as it proposes that everyone deserves what they get ignoring many cases where this certainly isn't true.

Self Serving Bias: The self-serving bias refers to our tendency to overattribute our successes to internal factors and overattribute our failures to external factors.

Self Fulfilling Prophecy: The phenomenon whereby a person's or a group's expectation for the behavior of another person or group serves actually to bring about the prophesied or expected behavior.

Actor-Observer Bias: The tendency to attribute the behavior of others to internal causes, while attributing our own behavior to external causes.

Central Route vs. Peripheral Route of Persuasion: Use of information vs. use of beauty, fame, and positive emotions.