

Chapter 18 Review Guide

Chapter 18 Review Guide: Social Psychology

Social Psychology: The scientific study of how we think about, influence, and relate to other people.

Attribution Theory: (Fritz Heider) The theory that we tend to explain other people's behavior in terms of the situation or in terms of their dispositions (personality).

Fundamental Attribution Error: The tendency, when analyzing *another person's behavior*, to underestimate the importance of the situation and overestimate the importance of personal dispositions.

HOW ACTIONS AFFECT ATTITUDES

Foot-in-the-door Phenomenon: The tendency for people who agree to a small request to agree to a larger one later on.

Role Playing: The strong effects of "playing a role" were demonstrated by Phillip Zimbardo's prison study in which college students were assigned the roles of prisoners or guards. The study was called off after only 6 days.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory: The theory that we act to reduce the discomfort (dissonance) we feel when 2 of our thoughts (cognitions) or a thought and an action are inconsistent. When our actions and attitudes clash, we can reduce the resulting dissonance by changing our attitudes.

Self-fulfilling Prophecy: Process by which our beliefs or attitudes about another person causes that person to behave in a way which only confirms our beliefs.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES

Conformity: Adjusting one's behavior or thinking to coincide with a group standard.

In a set of famous studies conducted by Solomon Asch (where subjects were asked to judge the length of lines), it was found that subjects would conform when the rest of the group was wrong in their judgments about 1/3 of the time. It was found that conformity would increase if:

- The group has status or is admired
- The group consists of at least 3 people
- The group is unanimous
- The group is observing and is aware of your behavior

GROUP INFLUENCES (cont.)

Group Polarization: The enhancement of a group's prevailing attitudes following discussion within the group.

Groupthink: The form of unrealistic thinking that can occur in a cohesive group when a desire for harmony within the group overrides logical and realistic thinking.

SOCIAL RELATIONS

Prejudice: An unjustifiable (and usually negative) attitude toward a group and its members. Prejudice typically involves stereotyped beliefs, negative feelings, and a predisposition toward discriminatory behavior.

Stereotype: A generalized (sometimes accurate, but often overgeneralized) belief about a group of people.

e) You have made no prior commitments

f) You feel incompetent or insecure

g) Your culture encourages conformity

Normative Social Influence: Conforming to obtain approval or avoid disapproval (conforming simply to "fit in").

Informational Social Influence: Conforming because of a willingness to accept others' opinions about reality (conforming because we believe others' "know more" than we do).

Obedience: Behavior in response to a command from another person, usually an authority figure.

*In a set of famous studies by Stanley Milgram, it was found that 67% of the subjects (called teachers) would "shock" "learners" (who were really confederates) until apparent death simply by being told to do so by the researcher. The level of obedience could be increased to almost 100% if:

- The person giving orders was in close proximity to the "teacher" & was perceived as a legitimate authority figure.
- The authority figure seemed to be from a prestigious institution (such as Yale)
- The "learner" (the confederate victim) was not in close proximity to the teacher (e.g., in another room)

d) No other subjects were observed disobeying the orders of the authority figure

***Milgram's studies had a huge impact on "ethics" in experimental research.

GROUP INFLUENCES

Social Facilitation: Improved performance of tasks in the presence of others; occurs with simple or well-learned tasks but not with tasks that are difficult or not yet mastered.

Social Loafing: The tendency for people in a group to exert less effort when pooling their efforts.

Deindividuation: Due to a sense of anonymity and high arousal, a loss of self-restraint sometimes seen in a group (i.e., mob behavior).

PSYCHOLOGY OF ATTRACTION

1. Proximity: Simple "geographical nearness" may be the most powerful predictor of friendship and attraction to others. It helps create **The mere-exposure effect:** repeated exposure to a novel stimulus increases our "liking" of that stimulus.

2. Physical Attractiveness: Studies reveal that our 1st impressions of people are based on their level of physical attractiveness. While there are many cultural differences in what is deemed attractive, men are attracted to "youthful" women and women are attracted to "mature, dominant, and affluent" men.

3. Similarity: We tend to be attracted to people who are similar to us in beliefs, attitudes, interests, attractiveness level, etc. In truth, "opposites do not attract".

Love: The premiere researcher in this area is Elaine Hatfield.

Scapegoat Theory: The theory that prejudice offers an outlet for anger by providing someone to blame for your (or your society's) problems.

Ingroup: "Us"--the people with whom we share a common identity.

Outgroup: "Them"--those perceived as different or apart from one's ingroup.

Ingroup Bias: The tendency to favor one's own group.

The Just-World Phenomenon: The tendency for people to believe that the world is fair and just and therefore, people get what they deserve and deserve what they get.

AGGRESSION

Any physical or verbal behavior **intended** to hurt or destroy.

Biological Influences:

Genetics

Neural Influences: amygdala stimulation; diminished activity in the frontal lobes

Biochemical Influences: testosterone; alcohol

Psychological Influences:

Violence in the media: movies, TV, video games

"Learned" violence at home

Frustration-aggression Principle: When an attempt to achieve a goal is blocked, frustration is created. This, in turn, creates anger, which can generate aggression.

Passionate Love: An aroused state of intense positive absorption in another, usually present at the beginning of a relationship (also typical of adolescent love).

Companionate Love: The deep affectionate attachment we feel for those with whom our lives are intertwined. It involves:

Equity: A person feels they receive as much from the relationship as they put into it.

Self-disclosure: Ability to reveal intimate feelings and aspects about oneself to others.

ALTRUISM

A total unselfish regard for the welfare of others.

Social Exchange Theory: The goal of our social behavior is to maximize benefits and minimize costs.

Reciprocity Norm: Through socialization, we learn that we should help, not harm, others----and they may someday help us.

Bystander Effect (or Diffusion of Responsibility): The tendency for a person to be less likely to give aid in an emergency if other bystanders are present. (We are MORE likely to help if we are not in a hurry, we are in a good mood, we have seen someone else being helpful, we feel the victim deserves help, we feel the victim is somehow similar to us).