

## Chapter 13 Part II Psychology Notes

### Social Psychology

#### Attitudes and Beliefs

- Social Psychologists are interested in attitudes and beliefs

#### Attitudes

- Attitudes are evaluations towards people, places, and things. Attitudes, however, are not set in stone. Social psychologists study attitude formation and attitude change.

#### Implicit vs. Explicit Attitudes

- Attitudes can be implicit or explicit

#### Implicit Attitudes

- Implicit attitudes are evaluations, beliefs, feelings that happen below conscious awareness.

#### Implicit Association Test

- Psychologists attempt to measure implicit attitudes with what is called the implicit association test or IAT.
- Example of Implicit Association Test: People views may think whites are bad and blacks are good but others may think the opposite.
- It predicts the behavior in some contexts, but explicit attitudes predict behavior in others

#### Explicit Attitudes

- These are our conscious beliefs and evaluations of a person, place, or thing.

#### Attitude Formation

- Attitudes are affected by experience, familiarity, personality, and culture.

#### Familiarity

- Due to the mere exposure effect, just being exposed to a stimulus can make us like it more. The more we hear a "fact" the more likely we are to believe it.

#### Culture

- Cultures have rules about what is right or wrong, good or bad, acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior. Some of our attitudes come from our culture.

#### Personality

- Some people are naturally more open. Some people are more anxious. Some people dislike ambiguity. All of these traits affect attitude formation.

#### Conflicting Attitudes

- People can hold conflicting implicit and explicit attitudes about something.

## What about Our Attitudes towards Other People?

- We will cover 2 topics
  1. Attitudes about individuals
  2. Attitudes about groups

### Attitudes about Individuals

- We tend to commit what is called "the fundamental attribution error."

### The Fundamental Attribution Error

- We tend to assume other people's actions are due to internal characteristics and underestimate the influence of the environment.
- We also tend to blame circumstances for our own failings, but attribute success to our own ability.
  1. The Just World Hypothesis: We believe people deserve what happens to them.
  2. Saliency: Our attention is so focused on the action of the other person that it can be hard to be aware of the circumstances.

### Attitudes about Groups

- Prejudice: Prejudice is a generalized negative attitude about a group.

### Stereotypes

- Stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics of a group.
- Stereotypes can be positive or negative, conscious or unconscious, and accurate or inaccurate.

### Positive Accurate Stereotypes

- Harvard students are good at standardized tests.

### Negative Inaccurate Stereotypes

- These tend to be racist, classist, sexist, etc. beliefs demeaning another group?

### Why do Negative Attitudes Towards Others Exist?

- *In group bias*: There is a tendency to like people who are similar to us
- *Out of the group homogeneity*: There is a tendency to overestimate how similar people in our "out groups" are.

### Other Reasons

1. *Scapegoating*: The tendency to blame out-groups when bad things happen.
2. *Just World*: again
3. *Conformity*: If prejudice is common in a society, may conform.

### Attitude Change

1. Cognitive Dissonance
2. Persuasion

## Cognitive Dissonance

- When our behavior doesn't match our beliefs, there is an uncomfortable tension
- People tend to change their behavior to bring it in line with their attitudes in order to bring them in line with their behavior.

## Persuasion

- Attitudes can also be changed due to persuasion. A lot of persuasion research started with sales techniques.

### Techniques: Foot in the Door

- Make a small request. After someone commits, ratchet it up.

### Techniques: Door in the Face

- Start with a large request that is likely to be refused. Then make a smaller one.
- Example: Boxes marked with the biggest amount first and another box where they will donate a little less

### Techniques: Low-ball

- Quote a price below the actual price. Then charge more for "optional" add ons.

### Techniques: But You are Free

- Reminding people they can say no to a request makes them more likely to comply.

## Cognitive Dissonance

- A lot of these techniques change behavior first. The attitude often changes later as a result of cognitive dissonance.

## Elaboration Likelihood

- *Central Route*: A persuasive message makes a direct argument.
- *Peripheral Route*: Superficial characteristics influence whether one trusts the messenger.

## Psychology Part III Notes

### Social Situations are Subtle

- Others and social situations can affect our behaviors in ways that are very subtle and often outside of our conscious awareness.

### Social Facilitation

- In 1897, Norman Triplett did a study in which he found that bicycle racers were faster when they raced each other than when they raced the clock.
- Weirdly enough, this effect doesn't just happen with humans.
- Robert Zajonc did a study in which he found that cockroaches trained to run a maze ran faster when other cockroaches were present.