

Social Processes, Attitudes, and Behaviors

- **Michelangelo phenomenon:** Concept of self is made up of both intrapersonal self (the ideas an individual has regarding his or her own abilities, traits, and beliefs) and the interpersonal self (the manner in which others influence creation of the ideal self).

Group Psychology

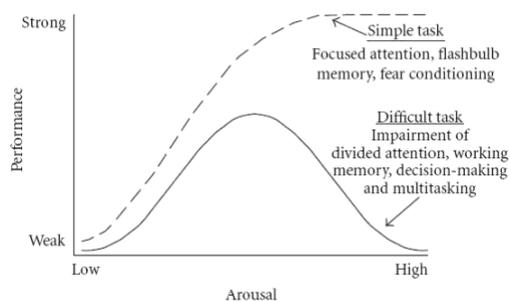
- Weber defined **social action** as actions and behaviors that individuals are conscious of and performing because others are around.

Social Action

- Social action considers just the individual that is surrounded by others by others

Social Facilitation

- People tend to perform better on simple tasks when in the presence of others
 - This supports the idea that people naturally exhibit a performance response when they know that they are being watched.
- Theory suggests that performance sparks a perceived evaluation in the individual performing.
- Yerkes-Dodson law of Social Facilitation: being in the presence of others will significantly raise arousal
 - This enhances the ability to perform tasks that one is already good at (simple tasks) and hinders the performance of less familiar tasks (complex tasks)



Deindividuation

- Social phenomenon that occurs when individuals are in group settings: individual behavior can be dramatically different in social environment.
 - Presence of a large group provides anonymity and causes the loss of individual identity
- Can lead to **antinormative behavior:** behavior against the norm
 - Attempts to provide an explanation for violent behavior seen in crowds and riots
- In group settings, individual loses sense of individuality
 - Person is thus more likely to act in a manner that is inconsistent with his normal self
 - Further enhance when the group is uniform or masked

Bystander Effect

- Individuals do not intervene to help victims when others are present
- Likelihood and timeliness of response is inversely related to the number of bystanders.
- Due to many factors:

- People are less likely to notice danger or anything out of the ordinary when in groups.
 - Social etiquette deems that it is rude to watch others and their surroundings.
- Humans take cues from others when in groups.
 - i.e. – if other people are not responding to a situation, an individual is less likely to perceive the situation as a threat or emergency.
- Degree of responsibility felt by the bystander
 - Determined by the competency of the bystander, their relationship with the victim, and judgement of the victim.
- Cohesiveness of the group also plays a part
 - If the group is made up of strangers, the likelihood of response and speed of response is much slower

Social Loafing

- Tendency of individuals to put in less effort when in a group setting
- May include physical effort, mental effort, or initiative

Peer Pressure

- Social influence placed on an individual by a group of people or another individual
- Peers: individuals who are equals within a social group
- Peers become very important as teenagers become independent from their parental figures.
- Pressure exerted by peers can cause changes in behavior, attitudes, or beliefs to conform to the norms of the group
 - Pressure can come in many forms: religious ideals, appearance, values, drug use and sexual behavior.
 - Can have either a positive or negative affect
- Identity Shift Effect: mechanism behind peer pressure
 - An individual will often conform to the norms of the group when their individual state of harmony is disrupted by a threat of social rejection.
 - Individual will begin to experience internal conflicts since the behavior is outside their normal character
 - Sense of internal conflict is eliminated through an identity shift
 - Identity shift is where the individual adopts the standards of the group as their own.
 - **Cognitive Dissonance**: simultaneous presence of two opposing thought or opinions
 - Leads to an internal sense of discomfort which may result in anxiety, fear, anger or confusion
- Conformity experiments have shown that individuals will often conform to the opinion held by the group
 - E.g. – Asch's experiment showed that individuals will sometimes provide answer they know to be untrue if it avoids going against the group

Group Processes

- A contrast to social action, **social interaction** takes a look at the behavior and actions of two or more individuals who take one another into account

Group Polarization

- The tendency for groups to make decisions that are more extreme than the individual ideas and inclinations of the members
- Polarization can lead to riskier or more cautious decisions that are based on the initial tendencies of the group members towards risk or caution.
- Hypothesis: initial ideas tend not to be extreme, but discussion within the group causes these ideas to become more and more extreme.
 - Originally termed **risky shift** since groups tended to make riskier decisions than individuals
 - When it was found that groups could also shift towards caution, the term became **choice shift**
- Choice shift and polarization are the same idea, but polarization is used to describe behavior at the individual level, while choice shift describes the behavior change of the group as a whole.

Groupthink

- Phenomenon that refers to the desire for harmony or conformity results in a group of people coming to an incorrect or poor decision.
 - This is due to an attempt towards eliminating or minimizing group conflict.
 - Consensus decisions are reached without alternative ideas being assessed
- Desire to agree with the group causes a loss of independent critical thinking
- Group also begins to isolate and ignore external viewpoints, sees their own ideas as correct without question.
- Groupthink is influenced by a variety of factors.
 - E.g. – group cohesiveness, group structure, leadership and situational context.
- Janis studied the effect of extreme stress on group cohesiveness and its resulting effect on groupthink. Examined eight specific factors:
 - Illusion of Invulnerability: creation of optimism and encouragement of risk-taking
 - Collective Rationalization: Ignoring warnings against the ideas of the group
 - Illusion of Morality: belief that the group's decisions are morally correct
 - Excessive Stereotyping: construction of stereotypes against outside opinions.
 - Pressure for Conformity: pressure put on anyone in the group who expresses opinions against the group. Opposition is viewed as disloyal.
 - Self-Censorship: withholding of opposing views
 - Illusion of Unanimity: false sense of agreement within the group
 - Mindguards: appointment of members to the role of protecting against opposing views.

These group interactions are what underlie many cultural phenomena like riots, fads and mass hysteria.

- Fad: behavior that is transiently viewed as popular and desirable
- Mass Hysteria: a shared intense concern about the threats to society

- Many features of groupthink – collective rationalization, illusion of morality, excessive stereotyping and pressure for conformity – lead to a shared delusion that is enhanced by distrust, rumors, propaganda, and fear mongering.

Culture

- Defined as the beliefs, behaviors, actions and characteristics of a group or society of people.
- Learned by living within a society and observing/adopting their behaviors and traits.
- A universal concept throughout all of humanity. Many animals show purely instinctual behavior, while humans show variable behavior based on the culture where they reside.
 - E.g. All wolf mothers care for their young in the same way. Human mothers may breastfeed for years, a short duration or not at all depending on the culture.
- Beliefs held by an individual are typically based on learned behavior, expectations and pressure from the group that one is in.

Assimilation and Multiculturalism

- Assimilation: individual's or group's behavior and culture begins to resemble that of another group.
 - Groups with different cultures begin to merge into one
 - Integrates new aspects of society and culture with old ones
- Immigrant assimilation can be assessed by using four factors:
 - Socioeconomic status, geographic distribution, language attainment, and intermarriage
- Ethnic Enclaves: location with a high concentration of one specific ethnicity
 - Usually slows the process of assimilation
- Multiculturalism: communities or societies that contain multiple cultures
 - Encourages, respects and celebrates cultural differences
 - Can enhance cultural diversity and acceptance within society (opposite of assimilation)
- Multiculturalism is credited with creating a *cultural mosaic*, while assimilation is described as creating a *melting pot*.

Subcultures

- Groups of people within a culture that distinguish themselves from their primary culture
- Symbolic attachments (e.g. - clothing or music) are the main differentiating aspects of the group from the majority
- Can be formed based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.
- Counterculture: a subculture that gravitates towards an identity that is at odds with the majority culture
 - Deliberately opposes the prevailing social mores (customs)

Socialization

- Using of social experiences to learn acceptable behavior in society
 - Involved in the process of developing, inheriting, and spreading norms, customs and beliefs.

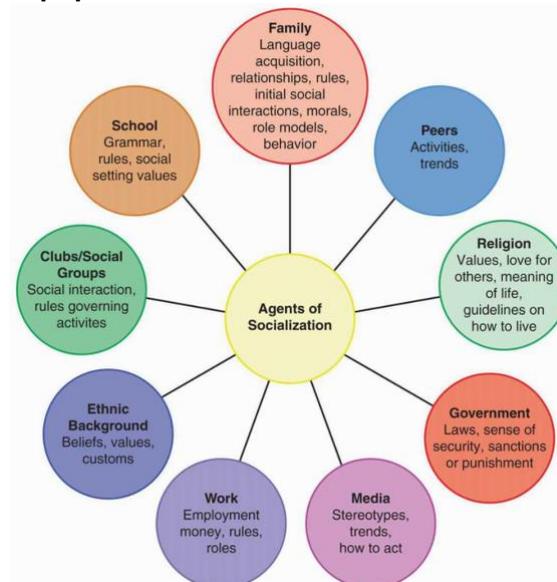
- Cultural Transmission/Cultural Learning: The way a society socializes its members
- Cultural Diffusion: spread of norms, customs, and beliefs.
- Primary Socialization: occurs during childhood when acceptable actions and attitude in society are initially learned.
- Secondary Socialization: process of learning appropriate behavior within smaller sections of the larger society.
 - Occurs outside the home and is for learning rules in specific environments
 - Associated with adults and adolescents and includes smaller changes and refinements to behaviors.
- Anticipatory Socialization: process by which one prepares for future changes in their occupations, living situations or relationships.
- Resocialization: one discards old behaviors in favor of new ones to make a life change

Norms

- Norms: Societal rules that define the boundaries of acceptable behavior
 - Provide a mechanism for regulating the behaviors of individuals and groups
 - Serve as a mean for **social control** even though they aren't laws.
- Mores: widely observed norms
- Sanctions: penalties for misconduct or rewards for appropriate behavior
 - Can be used as a means for social control
 - Negative Sanctions: fines, incarceration, corporal punishment (infliction of pain), capital punishment (execution)
- Norms provide us with a sense of what is appropriate and what is considered taboo
 - Taboo: socially unacceptable, disgusting or reprehensible
- Folkways: norms that refer to behavior that is considered polite in particular social interactions

Agents of Socialization

- Media has the ability to impact beliefs and determine what is important
 - Can establish **pop culture**



Deviance and Stigma

- Deviance: any violation of norms, rules, or expectations within a society
 - Does not necessarily have to be negative, just against societal norms.
- Social Stigma: extreme disapproval or dislike of a person or group based on perceived differences from the rest of society.
 - Deviations can include differences in beliefs, abilities, behaviors, and appearance
 - Certain medical conditions like HIV, obesity, dwarfism
 - Can spread to affect those who are associated with a particular individual.
- Labeling Theory: suggests that the labels given to people affect both a person's self-image, and how others respond to that person.
 - Behavior can be channeled into deviance or conformity
 - Person can either have a reinforced motivation to be deviant and go against norms or want to reform and be welcomed by society
 - Links deviance, stigmatization and reputation
- Differential Association Theory: deviance can be learned through interactions with others.
 - Exposure to deviant individuals may lay the groundwork for one to engage in deviant behavior themselves.
 - At same time, person can be exposed to norm-adhering individuals
 - **Differential Association** is the degree to which one is surrounded by ideals that adhere to social norms vs. ideals that go against them.
 - More association with one group over the other would cause the person to gravitate towards that behavior.
- Strain Theory: explains deviance as a natural reaction to the disconnect between social goals and social structure.
 - E.g. – The “American Dream” – individuals believe that they can obtain great wealth and status based on social goals. But structure of society does not guarantee that these goals are met.
 - Deviant behavior may arise an attempt to achieve the social goal *outside* of the limiting social structure.

Conformity, Compliance, and Obedience

Conformity

- Matching one's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors to societal norms
- Also known as **majority influence**.
- Normative Conformity: desire to fit into a group in fear of rejection
- Internalization: changing one's behavior to fit with a group while also privately agreeing with the ideas of that group.
- Identification: outward acceptance of others' ideas without personally believing them.

Compliance

- Change in behavior based on a direct request
 - Person or group that asks the individual to make the change usually has no actual power to command the individual

- Foot in the door technique: small request is made, and then a larger request is made after the first one is accepted.
- Door in the face technique: opposite of above. Large request is made at first and then a second smaller request is made if the larger one is refused.
 - Smaller request is usually the goal of the requester. Usually seems more reasonable and more likely to be accepted.
- Lowball technique: requestor will get an initial commitment from an individual, and then raise the cost of the commitment.
- That's not all technique: individual is made an offer, but before making a decision, they are told the deal is even better than expected.

Obedience

- Changing one's behavior in response to a direct order from an authority figure.
- People are far more likely to obey than comply due to the real or perceived social power of the individual.
- Tested out by using the *teacher* and *learner* experiments
 - Teachers deliver a shock to learners for incorrect answers
 - Over 60% of teachers administered shocks even if they showed discomfort in doing so.
 - This was done by the researchers insisting that they **must** deliver and increase the shock for every wrong answer.

Attitude and Behavior

- Social Cognition: focuses on the ways in which people think about others and how these ideas impact behaviors

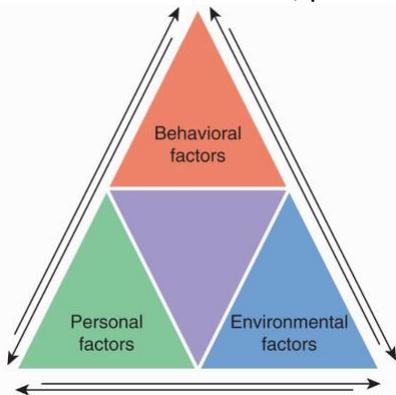
Components of Attitudes

- Attitude: expression of positive or negative feelings towards a person, place, thing or scenario.
 - Develop from experiences with others who affect one's opinions and behaviors.
- Three primary components of attitude:
 - Affective: refers to the way a person feels towards something
 - The emotional component of attitude.
 - Behavioral: way a person acts with respect to something
 - Cognitive: way an individual thinks about something
 - This is usually the justification for the other two components.

Theories of Attitudes

- Functional Attitudes Theory: states that attitudes serve four functions: knowledge, ego expression, adaption, and ego defense
 - **Knowledge functions**: provides consistency and stability
 - Knowing the attitudes of others help to predict their behaviors
 - **Ego-Expressive**: allows one to communicate and solidify self-identity
 - **Adaptive**: idea that one will be accepted if socially acceptable attitudes are expressed

- **Ego-Defensive:** protect our self-esteem or justify action that are known to be wrong.
- **Learning Theory:** attitudes are developed through different forms of learning
 - Direct contact with an object can influence attitudes
 - Direct instruction from others can also influence attitude
 - Can also be influenced by others' attitudes
 - Attitudes may be formed through classical condition, operant condition or observational learning.
- **Elaboration Likelihood model:** separates individuals on a continuum based on their processing of persuasive information
 - **Central Route Processing:** people who elaborate extensively and think deeply about information. Make decisions based on their thought
 - **Peripheral Route Processing:** people who do not elaborate and focus on superficial details like the appearance of a person, a slogan, or credibility.
 - Most people fall in the middle of this spectrum between the above two, but can sway one way depending on the social situation.
- **Social Cognitive Theory:** people learn how to behave and shape attitudes by observing the behaviors of others.
 - Behavior is not learned by trial and error. But develops through direct observation and replication of the actions of others, and in tandem with the influence of personal factors and the environment in which the behavior is observed.
 - Behavior, personal factors (thoughts) and environment influence each other.



- E.g. – work ethic of employees in a company (behavior) is affected by how hard their colleagues work, their previous attitude towards hard work (personal), and the systems and infrastructure of the company (environment)
 - Behavior may create a change in the employees attitude towards work and the systems within the company.