

Candidate Name:



St Swithun's
WINCHESTER

Psychology

Sixth Form Academic Assessment

Sample paper

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions to Candidates

Candidates should answer all questions.

Task: Read the article 'Prejudice' and answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

Questions: (total 40 marks)

1. Social psychology is the scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others. Social psychologists use the intergroup approach.
Describe with your own words the intergroup approach. (2 marks)
2. *Kapantai* outlines the key assumptions of realistic conflict theory. Read the paragraph about the *Faulkner et al. (2004)* study completed in Canada.
Can you suggest how the Brexit decision for the UK to leave the European Union may lead to prejudice and conflict against minority groups living and working in the UK?
Give specific examples to justify your answer. (6 marks)
3. In the section headed 'Explaining Trump's America', the author cites research by *Ehrenfreund (2015)*. *Ehrenfreund* showed how American President Trump used realistic and symbolic threats to American jobs and values respectively to bolster his election performance by saying how he would deal with both threats.
How may these threats be perceived and dealt by the American public if he is unable to tackle these issues?
How may minority groups themselves (e.g. Mexicans, Muslims) react to being labelled or stigmatised in this way? (4 marks)
4. As described in *Box I*, the *Robbers Cave study* (*Sherif et al. 1961*) is one of the most wellknown classic studies of inter-group conflict research.
Can you suggest how *Tajfel's (1972)* classic social identity theory – as described in *Box II* – can explain the inter-group conflict observed by *Sherif*? Which explanation is more plausible here? Justify your answer. (6 marks)
5. Social identity theory has been successfully applied to reducing conflicts through well-designed interventions using the following methods: de-categorisation, recategorisation, cross-categorisation and integration. Re-read the section on 'Interventions' in the article.
Can you give your own applied example for each of the four techniques for reducing prejudice and discrimination in your school, your home, your parents' workplace or even in the wider society?
Which of the techniques are most likely to be effective and why? Justify your answer. (10 marks)
6. According to the author, attempts to reduce prejudice and discrimination have only had mixed success in terms of their effectiveness. The main reasons given are the complex nature of prejudice itself as a construct and also the need for future research to focus on the twin goal of reducing in-group bias and tackling out-group prejudice. Design an intervention aimed at reducing prejudice in your local community (e.g. school/ college) showing good awareness and understanding of the key issues involved (e.g. contextualise your issue within the theories outlined in the article).
Are there other/ wider issues that would need to be considered for your intervention that are not considered in the article?
How might your intervention be evaluated? (12 marks)

Prejudice

Explanations and examples

Ioanna Kapantai looks at some real-world examples of realistic conflict and social identity, such as Trump's America, and considers interventions to reduce prejudice and conflict in society

PsychologyReviewExtras



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Over the last few decades, psychological research seeking to understand and remedy social problems associated with prejudice (such as discrimination, inequality and violence) has gained considerable attention. Policymakers often devote money and time to find ways to reduce prejudice in situations such as schools, workplaces, neighbourhoods and regions that face problems of conflict between groups (i.e. inter-group conflict). What has been learned, from psychological evidence, about the origins of prejudice and the most effective ways to reduce it?

Research on prejudice that takes an inter-group approach is generally based on the idea that once people view themselves as belonging to particular groups, they are likely to develop perceptions and behaviours that favour their own groups relative

to others. The key theories that follow this line of thought are realistic conflict theory (Sherif 1966) and social identity theory (Tajfel 1970).

Realistic conflict theory

Realistic conflict theory (RCT) initially proposed that inter-group prejudice arises as the result of competition over resources — realistic conflict. That initial definition has now been expanded. The threat can also be psychological, reflecting a *perceived*

competition for resources — realistic threat. Alternatively, the perceived threat can be to a group's values and ways of life — symbolic threat.

See Box 1 for the classic research used to support realistic conflict theory.

Symbolic threat

Faulkner et al. (2004) showed that Canadian participants were more likely to be afraid of becoming ill when in contact with foreign populations and this result was associated with more prejudice towards these groups. This is a clear case of symbolic threat affecting attitudes towards minority groups.

One interesting recent finding, especially with regard to the current state of political

Box 1 Classic realistic conflict research

A classic piece of research that demonstrated realistic conflict is the Robbers Cave study (Sherif et al. 1961). It involved 22 well-adjusted 12-year-old boys attending a summer camp at Robbers Cave State Park in America. The boys were assigned to one of two groups and encouraged to identify strongly with their group through a series of activities. The Eagles and The Rattlers chose their names and embroidered these onto their shirts and flags.

Sherif then arranged the Competition Stage where conflict between the groups was created. At first, prejudice was only verbally expressed, but it became more open. The Eagles burned the Rattlers flag, then the Rattlers ransacked The Eagles' cabin and stole private property.

During the subsequent 2-day cooling off period, the boys were asked to list features of the two groups — they tended to characterise their ingroup in very favourable terms, and the outgroup in very unfavorable terms. This study clearly shows that conflict between groups can trigger prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviour. This experiment confirmed Sherif's realistic conflict theory.

Read a detailed article on this study in *Psychology Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2 ('Making psychology social: the many achievements of Muzafer Sherif').

Signposts



realistic conflict theory, social identity theory

Box 2 Classic social identity theory research

Social identity theory research often uses the minimal group paradigm to explain prejudice in minimal groups. The basic principle of the minimal group paradigm is that participants are allocated into arbitrary groups based on an insignificant characteristic.

For example, in one of the early studies described by Tajfel and Turner (1979), schoolboys were asked to view a series of paintings and say which they preferred. They were then told that they belonged either to the group who preferred Kandinsky or Klee (in fact they had been assigned randomly to their group).

The members of each group were given the task to allocate rewards between pairs of members of their own group (ingroup) or the other group (outgroup). The researchers observed that people followed two strategies. When possible they would maximise the profit for their own groups, but if faced with a choice of more money in total versus more money than the outgroup, they would tend to choose the latter.

In other words, winning was more important than just gaining money. These findings show that, once people feel they belong to a group, their self-esteem and identity becomes linked to their sense that their group is different from and better than others.

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affairs, is a study that showed that when American people thought of minority groups as psychologically threatening to their traditional way of life, they became more prejudiced towards other races (Greenberg and Kosloff 2008).

Explaining Trump's America

A recent article in the *Washington Post* looked at the psychological reasons for being a Trump supporter. It suggested that the success of Trump's presidential campaign can be traced back to the emphasis he put not only on the ways in which immigration can reduce

resources for white Americans (e.g. jobs), but also on the ways in which immigration threatens American values and the nation's safety (Ehrenfreund 2015). So, much of the support Trump attracted seems likely to be because he claimed he would deal with the threats he associated with immigrants and minority groups including both the realistic threats (to jobs and security) and the symbolic threats (to American values and 'greatness').

Social identity theory

Social identity theory (SIT) has been developed based on two main principles:

- People naturally categorise the social world in order to process it more easily.
- People are naturally inclined to view themselves in a positive light so that they can maintain good self-esteem.

See Box 2 for the classic research used to support social identity theory.

Social categories can include nationality, gender, political affiliation, sports teams and other types of groups. Each person inherently identifies with some of these social categories (e.g. English/French/American, liberal/conservative, etc.) and these memberships create our social identity.

However, because we try to maintain a positive view of ourselves, when group competition arises (such as that between national sports teams) there is an inherent tendency to want to support our own group (ingroup) and show prejudice and discrimination towards the other group (outgroup). Either 'ingroup love' or 'outgroup hate' can lead us to show a preference for our own group when facing a choice between it and an outgroup.

Conditions at the Robbers Cave camp were manipulated by the researchers in order to create, and then resolve, conflict





President Trump's election campaign can be analysed using realistic conflict theory

Explaining prejudice towards immigrants

A recent application of SIT by Sniderman et al. (2004) examined the reasons guiding prejudice towards immigrants in Western Europe, and particularly the Netherlands. The authors found that citizens' concerns about threats to their national identity, and values associated with that identity and culture, were more highly predictive of anti-immigrant and exclusionary attitudes compared to economic concerns. In such a way, their findings support the theoretical underpinnings of SIT in that group membership (in this case national identity) can engender outgroup discrimination and prejudice, even with a lack of realistic/tangible concerns.

Interventions to reduce prejudice

Research into interventions typically involves researchers highlighting an already existing identity in their participants, such as a school, a sports team or common nationality. Once battle lines are drawn, reducing prejudice can be achieved through a range of different strategies.

De-categorisation

In the de-categorisation method, researchers generally instruct or encourage participants to focus on their individual identity instead of a group identity. For example, Battencourt et al. (1992) showed that instructing participants to focus on individual identity in a task that required two randomly assigned groups (minimal group paradigm — see Box 2) working together, resulted in a lower tendency for them to favour their group (ingroup) over the other group (outgroup).

However, despite some positive findings, the de-categorisation model has received considerable criticism insofar as it fails to provide ways in which prejudice can be reduced between entire groups (as compared to between individuals) and for submerging meaningful subgroup identities.

Re-categorisation

In the re-categorisation method, participants are reminded that while they all belong to different social groups, they are at the same time part of one group that is the same for everyone (e.g. their nationality). This overarching common group is called a 'superordinate group'. Shifting participants' focus to the superordinate group can be achieved in many ways, such as integrated seating, shirts of the same colour or shared prizes.

Studies that use the re-categorisation method have been generally successful in reducing biased evaluations of ingroup members and also increasing cooperation between groups.

Cross-categorisation

In the cross-categorisation method, researchers attempt to reduce prejudice by highlighting that members of two opposing groups share membership in a third group. Most commonly, prejudice against a novel group is diminished when it is crossed with another novel group category using the minimal group paradigm. For example, in a café, a Spurs fan and an Arsenal fan may find it harder to dislike one another if they notice that they are both vegetarian and everyone else is a meat eater.

Integration

Interventions using integration follow the main principles of the cross-categorisation method in that researchers highlight a common superordinate identity while maintaining other group differences. For example, in one study, experimenters asked students of the same university to work together in planning the construction of a local park (e.g. artificial beach, childcare facilities). The participants were either studying maths or

Key references



Ehrenfreund, M. (15 October 2015) 'I asked psychologists to analyse Trump supporters. This is what I learned', *The Washington Post*. Available at: www.tinyurl.com/yacmyepb.

Sherif, M., Harvey, O. J., White, B. J., Hood, W. R. and Sherif, C. W. (1961) *Intergroup Cooperation and Conflict: The Robbers Cave Experiment*, University of Oklahoma Press.

Tajfel, H. and Turner, J. C. (1979) 'An integrative theory of intergroup conflict', *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, Vol. 33, No. 47, pp. 74.

humanities. During this task, the researchers either encouraged participants to think of the importance of their field of study (maths vs humanities — subordinate identity) or reminded them of their common identity as students of the same university (their superordinate identity). The researchers observed that when participants focused on their superordinate identity, they cooperated more and were less likely to favour their subordinate

category (maths vs humanities) (Hornsey and Hogg 2000).

Conclusion

The interventions above, each aimed at reducing prejudice and discrimination, have had mixed success in terms of their effectiveness. This could be due, in part at least, to the complex nature of prejudice which exists at different levels in society

(e.g. intra-individual, inter-individual, inter-group etc.) as well as the various ways that prejudice can manifest itself within an individual's perception and behaviour. Nevertheless, future research in psychology should focus on establishing both individual and group practices and interventions where the primary focus is not merely reducing ingroup bias but also addressing outgroup prejudice.

Ioanna Kapantai is associate lecturer in the Department of Psychology at the University of Kent. She is involved in a collaborative research project between the University of Kent and the charity organisation 'People United', which looks at the role of arts in pro-social behaviour and prejudice reduction.