

THEORIES OF INTERGROUP RELATIONS

REFERENCES

- Tajfel, H., and J. Turner: The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior, *The Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. S. Worchel and W. Austin, Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall: (1986) 7-24.
- Ioannou, C., A. Rustichini and S. Qi: Group Payoffs as Public Signals, *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 48 (2015), 89-105.

TERMS

- In-group: The social group to which an individual perceives herself or himself as belonging.
- Out-group: Any group other than the one to which individuals perceive themselves as belonging.

AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY THEORY

Authoritarian personality is a state of mind or attitude characterized by belief in absolute obedience or submission to someone else's authority, as well as the administration of that belief through the oppression of one's subordinates. It usually applies to individuals who are known or viewed as having an authoritarian, strict, or oppressive personality towards subordinates. The theory consists of three components.

- ① Authoritarian submission: A high degree of submission to authorities who are perceived to be established and legitimate in the society in which one lives.
- ② Authoritarian aggression: A general aggressiveness, directed against various persons, that is perceived to be sanctioned by established authorities.

AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY THEORY (CONT.)

- ③ Conventionalism: A high degree of adherence to the social conventions that are perceived to be endorsed by society and its established authorities.
- See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICng-KRxXJ8>
- See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJpnhb1TiNY>

THE F-SCALE

- The most noteworthy measurement for authoritarianism is the F-scale, designed to tap on a set of beliefs thought to be associated with authoritarianism without the need for specific out-groups.
- The F-scale has two principal purposes: it aims to measure prejudice and anti-democratic tendencies at the personality level.
- However, a lot of researchers have criticized the inadequacies of the F-scale. Among the criticisms of the F-scale is its sensitivity to respondents with an acquiescent response style due to being worded so that agreement always indicates an authoritarian response.
- *Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.*

REALISTIC CONFLICT THEORY

- The theory explains how intergroup hostility can arise as a result of conflicting goals and competition over limited resources, and it also offers an explanation for the feelings of prejudice and discrimination toward the out-group that accompany the intergroup hostility.
- The 1954 Robbers Cave Experiment by Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Wood Sherif represents one of the most widely known demonstrations of RCT.
- The Sherifs' study was conducted over three weeks in a 200-acre summer camp in Robbers Cave State Park, Oklahoma, focusing on intergroup behavior.
- In this study, researchers posed as camp personnel, observing 22 eleven- and twelve-year-old boys who had never previously met but had comparable backgrounds.

REALISTIC CONFLICT THEORY (CONT.)

- The experiment was divided into three stages.
- The first stage was the in-group formation stage, where, upon arrival, boys were split into two approximately-equal groups based on similarities. Each group was unaware of the other group's presence.
- The second stage was the friction phase, wherein the groups were entered in competition with one another in various camp games. Valued prizes were awarded to the winners. This caused both groups to develop negative attitudes and behaviors towards the out-group.
- The third and final stage was the integration stage. During this stage, tensions between the groups were reduced through teamwork-driven tasks that required intergroup cooperation.

REALISTIC CONFLICT THEORY

CONCLUSIONS

- Individual differences are not necessary or responsible for intergroup conflict to occur.
- Hostile and aggressive attitudes toward an out-group arise when groups compete for resources that only one group can attain.
- Contact with an out-group is insufficient, by itself, to reduce negative attitudes.
- Friction between groups can be reduced along with positive intergroup relations only in the presence of superordinate goals that promote united, cooperative actions.
- See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PRuxMprSDQ>

SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

- The Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner (1979) argues that individuals have a desire for positive self-identity. This positive image may derive, in part, from one's own qualities, but, also, from membership to one's group. In this latter case, a positive image of the group induces a positive image of the individual member.
- Esteem for one's group may be positive or negative depending on how well the in-group members compare to relevant out-groups. Thus, in-group members gain if the comparison with other groups is more favorable because their self-image improves.

SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY (CONT.)

Social Identity Theory consists of three steps.

- ① **Categorization** looks at the way in which people put others (and ourselves) into categories. We label one another based on interest, ethnicity, gender, occupation and other factors.
- ② **Identification** looks at the way individuals choose their groups. Your collective identity then becomes your in-group. This could be your family, a friendship group, even your class. This closeness functions to boost our self-esteem and to create a sense of belonging. A group or individual that poses as a threat to your in-group is called the out-group.
- ③ **Comparison** looks at the way individuals compare themselves and their groups with other groups, seeing a favorable bias towards the group in which they belong.

CATEGORIZATION

- The tendency to measure the appropriateness of behavior in terms of one's own cultural standards and to derogate the behavior of other groups precisely because they are not those of the in-group.
- Calling someone a Muslim, footballer, student, emo, mother are examples of categorization.
- This categorization gives rise to ethnocentrism. Abundant research supports the idea that ethnocentrism is universal across cultures and that it increases during times of group conflict.

IDENTIFICATION

- Once your social identity has been identified, people will choose to associate with certain groups and behave in accordance to this identity.
- An example is buying a house at Notting Hill once you established the group of people you would like to identify with.

COMPARISON

- We tend to exaggerate the similarities of those in the same group (i.e., in-groups) and exaggerate the differences between those in different groups (i.e., out-groups).
- An example is the Hutu and Tutsi.



HUTU AND TUTSI

In Rwanda, the Tutsi and the Hutu are the same people. They are all people with the same culture coming from communities which go from seven regions of Cameroon to Uganda all the way to South Africa. People used to be Tutsi or Hutu, depending on the proximity to the king. If you were close to the king, you owned wealth, you owned a lot of cattle, you are a Tutsi. If you are far away from the king, you are a cultivator, you don't own much cattle, you are a Hutu. Following independence in 1962, Ruanda-Urundi split into two countries: Rwanda and Burundi. In Rwanda, the Hutu majority lashed out at the minority Tutsis. In Burundi, the minority Tutsis maintained their control of the military and government through a campaign of violence against the Hutus.

- See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TOSq9a8Hc8>

STRENGTHS OF THE SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

- Helps us understand behaviors like ethnocentrism, in-group favoritism, conformity, stereotyping.
- Assumes that intergroup conflict is not required for discrimination to occur, which is confirmed empirically.

LIMITATIONS OF THE SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

- Does not accurately predict human behavior because in some cases our personal identity is stronger than our group identity.
- Fails to address the environment, focusing on behavior in isolation. Culture, rewards, social constraints (poverty) can play a greater role than simply a sense of in-group identity.

IOANNOU, RUSTICHINI AND QI (2015)

- Recent experimental literature has shown that information on groups' performance promotes intergroup competition, which, in turn, induces improved group cooperation. This research has been noticeably restricted to payment schemes where group members' payoffs are contingent on the group's performance relative to that of the other group(s). In light of the relatively recent (but not group-based) literature on the impact of social comparison on decision making, it is, thus, not clear whether the improved group cooperation is an outcome of the payoff consequences or the comparative information provided.

IOANNOU, RUSTICHINI AND QI (2015)

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- Our primary objective in this study is to determine experimentally the effect on individual behavior of comparative, but payoff-irrelevant, information in a near-minimal group setting.
- A near-minimal group setting is one with (a) a trivial group assignment, (b) no social interaction, and (c) anonymity. Groups are considered minimal if, in addition to these three conditions, the condition that there is no trade-off between the decision-maker's payoff and others' payoffs is also satisfied.

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- In the first stage, participants are divided equally into two groups on the basis of a trivial criterion. In the second stage, participants play either the Dictator game or the Trust game. In the last stage, participants complete a questionnaire, which consists of explicit statements to measure their group attachment and some questions of demographic nature.
- An important design decision is the type of social information provided in the experiment. Based on the findings in other studies and our choice of games, we choose to display the groups' cumulative payoffs in the round; the latter consist of an aggregation of the earnings of each member of the group in the round.

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- It is important to note that our design is symmetric in that groups' payoffs consist of an equal number of subjects with equivalent roles round after round; that is, there are as many second movers/dictators in one group as there are in the other group in any given round.
- Crucially, the display of group payoffs has no effect on agents' earnings, but provides information on other players' behavior albeit in different ways.

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- In the Dictator game, an endowment \tilde{x} to be allocated by a dictator to an in-group member will increase the group's payoffs by \tilde{x} regardless of the allocation; thus, no information is revealed on the generosity between in-group members. However, when a dictator allocates an amount to an out-group member, then, information is revealed on the generosity to out-group members as the payoffs of both groups are affected.

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- Conversely, the display of group payoffs in the Trust game provides information on, both, the generosity between in-group members and the generosity to out-group members. On one hand, larger generosity of first movers to in-group second movers unambiguously increases the payoff of the group because of the multiplier on the initial transfer. The decision of the second mover, in this case, is of no consequence to the group's payoffs. On the other hand, any generosity to out-group first movers unambiguously reduces the group's payoffs.

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RESULTS

- ① The display of group payoffs is sufficient to invoke an in-group bias in both games. We say there is an in-group bias if the payoff of an allocator who is matched with an out-group member is significantly different (larger) than the allocator's payoff when matched with an in-group member.
- ② We find that the in-group bias can neither be attributed to mere categorization of subjects into groups nor to a stronger sense of group identity as a result of the display. We propose instead that the display of group payoffs acts as a public signal that makes groups salient, and this, in turn, produces the in-group bias.

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RESULTS (CONT.)

- ③ Controlling for the level of transfer/endowment and group identity, when comparing the allocators' decisions across the two games, we find that second movers return to first movers significantly more compared to what dictators give to passive participants.
- ④ The extent of reciprocation depends on the identity of the first mover, only, when group payoffs are displayed; that is, in the baseline, second movers make statistically similar returns regardless of the first mover's identity.