NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND HUMAN RESOURCE

COURSE CODE: ENT 351

COURSE TITLE: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

ENT 351   **INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

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INTRODUCTION

The Course Introduction to Social Psychology (ENT 351) is a two credit unit course prepared for the 300 level Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) students in the Entrepreneurial and Small Business Management program for the National Open University of Nigeria.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE

As you begin this course, keep in mind the following questions, see if you can provide answers for them as you make progress in the course of your work. You are likely going to solve some personal problems as a result of mastering this course.

- How do people form impressions about others?
- Is Impression Management likely to improve relationships?
- What are the major issues in conformity?
- How will attitudes influence people's behaviors?
- What is the major difference between Compliance and Obedience?
- What factors encourage aggressive behavior?
- Is man or woman in control of what he/she does? If yes to what extent?

This course will answer these and many more questions and equip you for effective social interaction.

This course guide is meant to take you through the design of the course. It is strongly recommended that you take your time and read through this guide before beginning the course. I have given a detailed account of what the course entails. These include aims, objectives, content, self-assessment and tutor-marked assignments, and the period within which you are expected to master the course.

COURSE CONTENT

The course will cover the areas of social influence and attribution with the following themes: Impression formation and management, conformity, compliance and obedience, then the attributional processes. Attitudes and Persuasion; covering attitude formation, attitude change, prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination and persuasion. Finally we will look at aggression, interpersonal attraction and prosocial behavior. "How good are we at helping others".

COURSE AIM

The main aim of this course is to introduce you to the basic concepts in Social Psychology and help you understand the behavior of the individual in the society. It also aims at giving you a better understanding of how the society influences us and how we in turn translate these influences and act on them in relation to the people around us.

OTHER AIMS

The aims of this course will be achieved by:

- Describe the field of Social Psychology

- Explaining the processes we go through to form impressions about others and how we strive to maintain the impressions that others have about us.

- Discussing the biases and theories of attribution

- Identifying and explaining the processes involved in attitude formation, change and persuasion.

- Describing Prejudice and Discrimination, the feeling and acting components of attitudes, their origin and how they affect our evaluation of social groups and the rationale behind the attempts to reduce prejudice and discrimination.

- Discussing the causes of aggressionand how to manage aggression.

- Describe the process of interpersonal attraction.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Define Social Psychology and related constructs.
- Identify factors that influence impressions formation.
- Discover how we arrive at conclusions about the behaviors of others.
- Explain the process of conformity to group pressure.
- Describe the process involved in attitude formation and attitude change.
- Explain why we form prejudices and discriminate.
- Discover the major determinants of Aggression and how to manage this behavior.
- Discuss factors and reasons for Interpersonal Attraction.

COURSE MATERIALS

The materials to be used for this course are
- Course Guide
- Study Units
- Assignments
- Recommended study materials and textbooks

STUDY UNITS

There are fifteen study units in this course as follow:

Module 1 Social Influence and the attribution Process

Unit 1   Impression Formation
Unit 2   Impression Management
Unit 3   Theories of Attribution
Unit 4   Biases in Attribution
Unit 5   Conformity
Unit 6   Compliance
Unit 7   Obedience

Module 2 Attitudes and persuasion

Unit 8   Attitudes Formation and Attitude Change
Unit 9   Prejudice
Unit 10   Stereotypes
Unit 11   Persuasion

Module 3 Aggression and Interpersonal Attraction

Unit 12   Theories of Aggression
Unit 13   Reducing Aggression
Unit 14   Pro-social Behavior
Unit 15   Interpersonal Attraction

The units in the first module will focus on how we form impressions and manage them, the processes involved in making attributions about people. Why we conform even when there is no

compulsion from groups. The importance of belonging to groups, compliance and obedience, could they in anyway be destructive?

Module two will dwell on attitudes, how they are formed and how to change them, how prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination affect our behaviors. The act of persuasion, how easily can people be persuaded?

Finally, module three will look at aggression, its causes and why we engage in aggressive behavior. And with all that we learn as people, can we really interact positively with others? What factors are responsible, how can we improve from where we are?

The table below is a guide that will help you organize your time better. Study it and plan appropriately.

Unit	Title of Study Unit	Weeks/Activity	Assignment
	Course Guide	1	
Module 1	**Social Influence and the attribution Process**		
1	Impression Formation	2	Assignment
2	Impression Management	3	Assignment
3	Theories of Attribution	4	Assignment
4	Biases in Attribution	5	Assignment
5	Conformity	6	Assignment
6	Compliance	7	Assignment
7	Obedience	8	TMA1 to be submitted
Module 2	**Attitudes and persuasion**		
8	Attitudes Formation and Attitude Change	9	Assignment
9	Persuasion	10	Assignment
10	Prejudice	11	Assignment
11	Stereotypes	12	TMA2 to be submitted
Module 3	**Aggression and Interpersonal Attraction**		
12	Theories of Aggression	13	Assignment
13	Reducing Aggression	14	Assignment
14	Prosocial Behavior	15	Assignment
15	Interpersonal Attraction	16	TMA3 to be submitted
	Revision	17	
	Examination	18	
	TOTAL	18	

ASSIGNMENT: TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT

There are fifteen study units in this course. Each unit should be completed in a week and it is expected that it will take you two hours to cover the material. A time table has been designed for you indicating the required weeks to complete the course. The recommended textbooks and study materials in the references section of each unit are meant to give you more information if you can find the materials.

There are self-assessment exercises as you go through each sub unit, and at the end of the unit is the tutor-marked assignment which is meant to help you evaluate your understanding of the material. Answer and submit as indicated on the time table.

MAIN CONTENT

Each unit contains self-assessment exercises ranging from 3 to 4 depending on the sub units in each unit. These exercises are meant to help you assess your understanding of the material in each sub unit and the unit in general. At the end of each unit, there is a tutor-marked section that contains two questions which cover the material studied in the unit. These assignments should be submitted to the tutor for marking. These Tutor-Marked Assignments constitutes 30 percent of the total score of the course.

FINAL WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

After successfully going through the course work, you will be examined. The written exams will make up 70 percent of the total score, while your continuous assessment through tutor marked assignment will cover the remaining 30 percent.

CONCLUSION

This course introduces the students to Social Psychology (ENT 351) and attempts to bring to their knowledge current and relevant information in this field. The course covers diverse topics from social influence and attributions, Attitudes and Persuasion, to aggression, prosocial behavior and interpersonal attraction. After completing this course it will give the student the additional skills required to interact in and with her/his environment effectively. Their understanding of the course is vital towards enhancing interpersonal interactions in diverse

cultures and countries. the application of these principles to real life situations is the desired end results of this course.

REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

In addition to your course material which is the main text, the following listed sources in the References/Further readings are required. Also make good use of the internet websites provided.

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COURSE CONTENT

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ENT 351 – INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Social psychology is a broad and complex field that focuses on how the individual's behavior (thoughts, feelings and actions) is influenced by other people. Some of the areas in Social Psychology include: Social influence, Social cognition, Social perception, Attitudes, Attribution, Prejudice, Stereotypes and discrimination, Aggression, Group processes, Altruism, Interpersonal attraction, pro social behavior among others.

Social psychology as a science seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behavior and thought in social situations. Social psychologists focus on the factors that help shape social behavior and thought of individuals. They are interested in the actions, feelings, beliefs, values, memories, ideas about other people, the interpretation of behavior as observed in social settings.

Introduction to Social Psychology (ENT 351) is focused on some aspects of this broad field. The area of social influence will help us understand the effect that society and culture has on the individual and how behavior is influenced by what we learn through our cultures. We will look at some forms of Social Influence like Impression formation and management, conformity, real or imagined change in behavior due to group pressure, Compliance – requests by others to change our behavior, obedience – demand or command from authority figures or institutions to behave in certain ways. Some of the principles we use in making judgment about our behavior, the behaviors of others and about the causes of events known as Attribution will be examined.

Issues that concern Attributional errors, Attributional biases and how they influence us and our understanding of behavior will also be studied. Why do we make attributions and who benefits most from these attributes? The first seven units in this course will cover social influence and Attribution.   The next areas of concern for us in this course will be those of Attitudes and Persuasion. Factors that help in attitude formation, types of attitudes – Prejudice, Stereotypes and Discrimination, how similar or different are they from each other and how they interact to influence the behavior of the individual will be studied. Most of the attempt to change someone's behavior is done through persuasion. Are we all good at persuasion? How easily can we persuade others or be persuaded? These and many more will be learned as we focus on the act of Persuasion. This segment will be covered in four units.

The last four units will be dedicated to the issues of Aggressive, Pro social behavior – helping behavior and Interpersonal attraction. While the issue of aggression is of concern to society, what is society doing to reduce or aggravate aggression? Can aggression be controlled and who should be responsible? How is reward or punishment used to control or reduce aggression? Have we been successful? If human survival requires some amount of aggression, are we by nature able to offer such help to distressed persons? What will ensure that we offer help? Are there instances

when it is almost impossible for us to offer help? The course will not be complete if Interpersonal attraction is not studied. What, for instance, draws us towards certain people and keeps us away from others? What is the place of proximity, similarity and physical attractiveness in Interpersonal Attraction?

Interpersonal Attraction is a degree of positive or negative feelings toward another. It is a factor that requires society to play her role towards improving positive feelings and minimizing negative feelings for effective contacts to be made and sustained.

If my assumption about human behavior is correct, then I will not be wrong to say that this introduction has aroused your curiosity to discover what is behind this course material. The journey will be an eventful one, and I assure you that there will be no dull moments once you commence the study of this material.

It is hoped that you will make it a point of duty to apply the lessons you learn through the pages of this book. You will be richly blessed and so will all those who come in contact with you. While you work hard on this course, ensure you come out with a renewed zeal to make an impact in your place of work or neighborhood. Remember we can re-brand each other as we learn through the pages of this book. Good luck, Good people of this Great nation.

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ENT 351: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

MODULE 1: SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND THE ATTRIBUTION PROCESS

Unit 1   Impression formation
Unit 2   Impression management
Unit 3   Theories of attribution
Unit 4   Biases in attribution
Unit 5   Conformity
Unit 6   Compliance
Unit 7   Obedience

UNIT   1   IMPRESSION FORMATION

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main content
       3.1 The nature of impression formation
       3.2 First impression – lasting impression
       3.3 Theories of Impression Formation
            3.3.1   Cognitive Theory
            3.3.2   Central peripheral Traits theory
            3.3.3   Implicit personality theories
            3.3.4   Expectancy Theory
            3.3.5   Primacy and Recency Effect
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor – marked Assignment
7.0   References / Further Readings

1.0   Introduction

Have you ever wondered why people think about you or about others the way they do? And why you think about other people the way you do? Well, we all cannot help but think in certain ways because we all need to form impressions about others. That is how we get to know them, and how others get to know about us. But are these opinions always right?

Impression formation is a process that explains how we form or develop opinions about other people. How other people look like, how they behave, and the way we see and interpret their behaviour helps us to form opinions about them.

In this unit you will learn about how impressions are formed, the importance of first impressions in impression formation and the theories that explain how and why impressions are formed.

2.0   Objectives

It is expected that at the end of this unit, you should be able to;

1.   Define Impression Formation and first Impressions.
2.   Discuss the process of impression formation
3.   Appreciate the importance of first time impressions
4.   Explain why people form impressions.

3.0   Main content

3.1   The nature of impression formation

How one develops an opinion or an image of another person is very complicated. Sometimes opinion can be formed by observing the behaviour of an individual. This means that most of the times we form opinions about other people with little information about them. (Smith and Queller 2001; 499 - 517)

Usually the information about other people comes from our experiences of the people. When we meet people for the first time, we begin to asses them to form our opinion about them. It is this process of assessing them that result in forming impression about them. Thus it is assumed that forming impressions about other people does not happen at once, "immediately or automatically" (fiske 2004).

We form impressions about others in three ways

1.   through the process of **selection.** Here we pay attention to physical appearances or focus on just one aspect of their behaviour.
2.   through the process of **organization.** In this case, we try to form a complete, acceptable impression of a person.
3.   through the process of **inference.** We attribute characteristics to people with no direct or immediate evidence, but might be based on stereotypes (Gross 2005; 376)

Self - Assessment Exercise 1

List the three processes involved in impression formation?

3.2   First and lasting impressions

First impressions are usually lasting impressions because they are formed quickly and are very difficult and slow to change. These impressions affect how we perceive or see people's behaviours and how we react to these behaviours. Our first impressions about people usually guide our future interactions with them, which is very important in developing social relation. (Brehm et al 2005)

First impressions are slow because we hold on to existing impressions to preserve a reality that agrees with our expectations. We are likely going to give meaning to new information concerning people based on our expectations of them.

When forming first impressions, we are likely going to be influenced by the following;

1. Our assumptions that people we meet are going to have attitudes and values similar to our own (Hoyle 1993)

2. Our expectations of positive or favourable information from others. This is important because negative behaviours capture our attention because we are not expecting people to act negative towards us. (Taylor, Peplau and Sears, 2003).

3. Negative behaviours carry more weight in shaping first impressions than positive information (Smith and Mackie, 2000)

Self Assessment Exercise 2

What factors influence forming first impressions about people?

3.3   Theories of impressions formation.

Scientists have used theories to answer the question of why certain events or processes occur as they do. Social Psychologists have also used theories to understand why impressions are formed.

3.3.1 Cognitive Theory

This theory uses basic cognitive process in explaining impression formation, and states that;

1. When we meet people for the first time, we do not pay equal attention to all the information about them, but focus on what we view as most useful.(DeBrium and Van Lange, 2000; 1188-1205).

2. That we enter various information into memory to be recalled at a later time, this helps us form lasting impressions.

3. Also, that our first impressions of other people depends to some extent on our own characteristics. We see others through the "lens of our own traits, motives and desires"

(vinokur and Schull, 2000). Traits are lasting personal qualities or attributes, which influence behaviour across situations.

4. We tend to rely on information about traits, values and principles more than ability or competence. However, the context of meeting is important. For instance, if one is meeting a medical doctor when sick, or an employer meeting an individual for a job interview, might rely more or pay more attention on information about competence and ability of the individual.

3.3.2 Central and Peripheral Traits Theory.

This theory is based on Solomon Ach's Research of 1946, and has the following views;

1.   Believe that there is a central and peripheral trait.

2.   That the central trait if seen as important, can influence our perceptions of a person and can generate inferences about more traits.

3.   That the peripheral traits have very little influence or none at all on other traits, but they help in understanding the central trait.

Ach's example below should help us understand the points above better.

Intelligent - Skilful - Industrious – WARM (central trait) – Determined – practical – Cautions

Intelligent - Skilful - Industrious – COLD (central trait) – Determined – practical – Cautions

If strangers are seen as WARM – this trait can generate additional traits like generous, happy, good – natured, sociable, and popular among others.

Other more recent views have shown that the meaning of our central trait can change depending on the context within which it is used. The central trait can also be affected by what we already know about the individual. Positive or Negative traits can also affect the meaning of the central trait.

3.3.3 Implicit Personality Theories

The implicit Personality theories focus on the beliefs about what traits or characteristics tend to go together. These theories are of the view that:-

1.   When people possess certain traits, they are likely to possess others too.
2.   That the culture of the people can shape these beliefs or expectations.
3.   There is a general tendency for people to assume that some traits or characteristics go together and can be observed in social situations.
4.   Our impressions of others are based mostly on our implicit beliefs more than the actual traits of these people.

5.   We all have implicit ideas about names, birth order and physical appearance. Sometimes, just by introducing someone, by name, or birth order whether first, last, or only child is enough for us to assume some traits that agree with these.
6.   We can assume what people are like even with little or limited information.

3.3.4 Expectancy theory.

This view suggests that the impression we form about others, and the way we behave based on this impressions is mostly influenced by our expectations. Our expectation on how an individual will be like can influence our behaviour towards that person. When our behaviour towards an individual causes him/her to meet our expectation, the result is a self fulfilling prophesy. Self fulfilling prophecy means behaving in a way that encourages an expected outcome.

It is believed that we usually do things that cause others to conform to our impressions (Madon, Guyll, Spoth, Cross, and Hilbert 2003; 1188 – 1205). When as parents we expect our children to behave in certain ways, they may sense this expectation and act in ways that may likely confirm to our expectation of them.

If they sense these expectations as positive or one that encourages them or make them to excel, they are likely to put in more effort. But if it is sensed as negative or one that expects them not to excel, they may not put in any effort at all.

It has been found that children of mothers who expected their children to abuse alcohol were more likely to abuse alcohol later in life than the children of mothers who did not convey such expectations. (Madon et al 2001).

3.3.5 Primacy and Recency Effect.

This theory relies on the order in which we learn things. Our first impression is affected by what we learned first about a person, which is viewed as the *primacy* effect while what we learn later is referred to as the *recency* effect. For recency effect the following assertions have been made:-

1.   When later information does not agree with earlier information, we tend to place more value on the first information as describing the real person and disregard the later information.
2.   People usually pay more attention to the information that came in first when they are trying to form an impression about someone. Once they have formed an impression, other information becomes irrelevant and they do not pay attention to them.
3.   First information affects the meaning of the later information because this information is made to agree with the first one. If our first impression about a person is a positive one, any later information even if negative will be made to agree with the first positive information.

Generally, it seems that primacy effect is more powerful than the recency effects because impressions are slow to change. Any information about a person is shaped by what we already know or believe about them - our first impression. However, there are certain conditions that are likely to influence this:-

1   It is believed that negative impressions carry more weight because this may reflect socially undesirable behaviours or traits that may be harmful or disastrous. Thus a negative first impression may be more resistant to change than a positive one. (Jones and Davis, 1965)

2.   The primacy effect seems to be stronger especially in relation to strangers while the recency effect may be stronger for friends or people we already know very well. Information of the past concerning people we know well may change our perception of them.

3.   Since primacy effect might remain strong because of decrease attention of the later information, that people can be encouraged to pay attention to both prmacy and recency information, before making any judgment. (Ludin ,1957).

Self – Assessment Exercise 3

1   Summarize the four views of the cognitive theories.
2.   What is Self - fulfilling prophesy according to the expectancy theory.

4.0   Conclusion

The information above has shown the importance of impression formation in developing relations. First impressions form the basis for future interactions with others. While these impressions are important, they however, can be inaccurate as explained by the theories. Care must be taken so that we do not rely too much on first impressions to explain peoples' behaviours. This will ensure that relationships are not destroyed before they mature.

5.0   Summary

This unit has explained how impressions are formed and why they are formed and sustained through the various theories highlighted. The views of Cognitive, Implicit Personality theories, Trait theories Expectancy theories and the Primacy – Recency Effect were all examined.

In the next study unit, we will look at the concept of impression management or self presentation, and how one is likely to behave in order to impress others or present a positive self image.

6.0   Tutor – Marked Assignment

1.   Explain traits in impression formation according to the implicit personality theories.

2.   Give reasons why first impressions are lasting impressions that are difficult to change.

7.0   References/ further Readings

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UNIT 2 - IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

1.0   INTRODUCTION

How others see us, is very important to us. That is why most of the time we behave in a way that they will approve of. In our attempt to impress others, we are likely to manipulate how they see us. Remember that while others are forming impressions about us, we are often consciously or unconsciously also trying to present a good image of ourselves to them. The process we go through in order to present this self image is referred to as Impression Management.

When we are regarded favourably by others it is seen as a prerequisite for many positive life outcomes like respect, friendship, job success and romantic relationships (Learny 2004).

In this unit, we will look at the major components of Impression Management and how self-monitoring and self-disclosure are used in Impression Management.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

After carefully going through this unit, you should be able to:

1.   Define Impression Management
2.   List the major components of Impression Management
3.   Discuss self-monitoring in Impression management.
4.   Explain the concept of self-disclosure in Impression Management

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

Impression Management also known as self-presentation has been an area of interest that enhances social interaction. Impression Management is the process of presenting a public image of the self to others (Turner, 1991). It is believed that we benefit from Impression Management because it increases our personal wellbeing through motivating us in three ways;

1.   By increasing the reward of social relationship that allows us to belong

2.   The Enhancement of our self-esteem. This is an effort to increase our appeal to others. Self-enhancement requires the use of some strategies that might include:

   a.   Style of dressing to boost our physical appearance
   b.   Personal grooming
   c.   Use of positive terms to describe self in favourable manner
   d.   Sometimes going the extra mile to enhance self-appeals.

3.   Establishment of desired identities (self-understanding).

For Impression Management to Succeed, we need to "take the role of others" that is to be able to psychologically step into someone else's shoes, see from their viewpoint and adjust our behaviour accordingly (Fiske & Taylor 1991;).

If we can imagine how others see us or are likely to see us, then we can make adjustments to meet these imagined views. We are always trying to correct our behaviour to be inline with these "other" views.

SELF – ASSESSMENT EXERCISE   1

1   Explain Impression Management and Self-enhancement.
2   List the three ways we are motivated in Impression Management.

3.2   MAJOR COMPONENTS OF IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

We usually take into account other people's viewpoint by adjusting our behaviours. Just how we do this has been explained by Fiske & Taylor (1991) and Fiske (2004) who suggested the following components in Impression Management.

1.   **Behaviour Matching**- Here we act in ways that match the behaviour of our target person

2.   **Conform to Situational Norms** - Every situation has its expected appropriate behaviour – we try to adopt behaviour that identifies with the situation.

3.   **High Self monitors** - Those who present self in a positive way are likely to make a favourable impression.

4.   **Ingratiation** - Ways we appreciate or flatter others can result in favourable responses from them. This has been shown to backfire if not interpreted well by the target person.

5.   **Consistency -** Once our beliefs and behaviours are perceived to be consistent, we are likely to impress others favourably.

6.   **Verbal and Non – verbal behaviours** - What we say and what we do should agree or match. Sometimes the non-verbal, mostly body language will give way or 'leak' revealing our true feelings. If what we say does not match what our body is trying to convey, then the non-verbal is taken seriously as telling the true story (Argyle et al 1972; Mehrabian 1972: 325-402).

7.   **Self-promotion** - This is trying to present self in a way that will be seen by others as competent. This could result in a negative view of self by others if interpreted as being conceited or a fraud.

8.   **Intimidation**- This means conveying the impression that one is dangerous sending a message of "do not come near or you get hurt", "do not go against my wish or you suffer". Most of the times, this may result in loss of credibility if interpreted by others as empty threats.

9.   **Exemplification** - A case of presenting self as worthy, moral and saintly; might not go down well with others who may interpret this as 'holier than thou' among others.

10. **Supplication** - When one wants to be seen as helpless, could also backfire and one might be seen as lazy or manipulative.

SELF - ASSESSMENT EXERCISE   2

List the ten components of Impression Management.

3.2   SELF - MONITORING

Self-monitoring refers to the level at which people rely on social situation to guide their behaviours rather than relying on their own internal states.

We all engage in self-presentation in order to make the right impressions on others. The extent to which we exercise and exact this control will depend on our individual differences.

These individual differences in self monitoring are measured on two levels; High or Low (monitors).

1.   **High–self monitors**.

      These people are interested in behaviours that are socially appropriate and would mostly monitor the social situation in order to know how to behave.

      *   They are also experts in using facial expressions to convey their emotions.
      *   Are usually able to interpret non-verbal communication from others very well and often accurately too.
      *   Because they are likely to behave differently in different situations, the tendency to interpret their behaviours as inconsistent across situations is very high.

2.   **Low Self-monitors.**

      *   These individuals are concerned about socially appropriate behaviours; they focus on themselves, and remain 'themselves'.
      *   They monitor their behaviours in relation to what they need and what they are interested in.
      *   They are likely to be consistent in their behaviours across different situations.
      *   They are seen as more consistent than the high self monitors.

The high and low Self-monitors compliment each other. While the high-monitors are more liable to conform to social norms and adjust to them making room for flexibility, the low self-monitors might not be flexible and will stand up against what others conform to giving room for individual differences which is vital for group survival.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Explain why the high- self monitors are seen as inconsistent compared to the low self-monitors across situations.

3.4   SELF – DISCLOSURE

Self – disclosure refers to how much we are willing to reveal ourselves to others. This is a voluntary decision to make information about ones' self available to others that they ordinarily might not have access to at that point in time. Self-disclosure is possible through what we say and do, and also through what we do not say or do (Wiemann & Giles, 1988; Jourard, 1971).

The choice of what to disclose and what not to disclose is influenced by many factors like:

1.   Reciprocity: The kind of information we disclose to someone will likely result in our getting similar disclosure from them. This agrees with the law of reciprocity which requires equal responses from others.

2.   Norms: Situations do determine to some extent the kind of information and how much of it we are likely going to disclose about ourselves, and might also determine the appropriate information required for disclosure.

The information we are likely going to disclose to our doctors will be different from the information we give our religious leaders or teachers or even our future in-laws etc.

3.   **Trust:** How much we trust someone determines also how much we are likely to disclose.

4.   **Quality of relationship:** We are likely to disclose more in intimate relationships than casual ones. The level of mutual disclosure determines the direction of relationships and the duration of such relationships.

5.   **Gender:** Women have been found to disclose information more than men, which might explain why the relative lack of self-disclosure in men results in stress and prevents healthy self-expression (Jourard, 1971).

SELF- ASSESSMENT EXERCISE   4

Explain the five factors that influence self-disclosure

4.0   CONCLUSION

The information given above highlights the importance of impression management in social interaction. It is necessary for people to know why they are likely to say what they say and behave in certain ways. People need to be aware of the influences exacted by others on their own behaviours.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has defined and explained the concept, "Impression Management". The major components of impression management, Self Monitoring and Self-Disclosure were also discussed in the light of current findings in this area.

In the next unit, you will get to know the causes of people's behaviours in social interaction as you study the concept of Attribution.

6.0   TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Explain the differences between high monitors and low monitors.

2. a)   Why is Gender an important factor in impression management
   b)   List the factors that influence disclosure

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UNIT 3   THEORIES OF ATTRIBUTION

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main content
    3.1 Kelley's theories of covariance and configuration
    3.2 Jones and Davis correspondent inference theory.
    3.3 Weiner's Attributional Theory of Emotion and Motivation.
4.0 Conclusion
5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor – marked assignment
7.0 References / Further readings.

1.0   Introduction.

We are all interested in understanding our own behaviour and the behaviours of others as we interact. Knowing the reasons why we act the way we do or say what we say will help us understand behaviour better.

The process of attribution is the key to explaining the causes of events or behaviours. In attribution, we try to give reasons, explain or make judgment about the causes of events or behaviours. These reasons are mostly attributed to either external or internal causes.

In this unit we will look at the various theories that explain the causes of our behaviour and the behaviours of others.

2.0   Objectives

After carefully studying this unit, you should be able to:

1.   Define Attribution
2.   Explain the process involved in attribution
3.   Discover the causes of your behaviours and the behaviours of others.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

Theories result from researches which provide explanations for the occurrence of events or behaviours. The theories propounded by Kelley, Davis Jones and Weiner will help us understand why we behave the way we do.

3.1   Kelley's models of Co variation and Configuration.

The attribution process in this context assigns causes to our behaviours. Knowing if these causes are due to internal factors or external factors is very important, it affects the process of attribution or the way we assign these causes.

Internal causes are related to our personality traits, while the external causes are seen as environmental, that is, out side the individual. We will look at the Co variation and the Configuration models separately.

1.   Kelley's Co-variation model.

This theory suggests that when we focus on how people behave (actors), we make attributions as observers. In all social interactions there are actors and observers, and we can assume any role as we interact.

The Co variation model believes that once we have the knowledge of how the actor behaves in different situations, and how others also behave in those or similar situations, then we can attribute the causes of present behaviours on the following information:

a)   **Consensus** – This is the extent to which others behave in similar ways with the actor in our present situation. If our actor's present behaviour agrees with other peoples' behaviour, then we can say that there is a high consensus but if others differ in behaviour to the actor's, then there is low consensus. High consensus leads to attributing external causes to behaviours, while low consensus results in attaching internal causes to the behaviour in question.

To illustrate further, let us assume that a student failed a course. Now, if we know that other students also failed the course, then there is high census and we are likely to attribute the behaviour or event to an external cause. Like poor materials or question the competence of the instructors. But if on the other hand, we find out that he/she was the only student that failed the course, then it is a low consensus, and the likely cause will be internal such as student's level of intelligence or inadequate understanding of course content.

b)   **Consistency**. Focus here is on how stable the actor's behaviour is across time or situations. Using the example above, if the said student also fails other courses in the future, there is high consistency. But if s/he passes all future courses, the one course she/he failed is explained by low consistency.

c)   **Distinctiveness** – tells us how actor's present behaviour stands out from other behaviours `in similar situations. If from our example we found that our student also fails other courses in the same semester, then there is low distinctiveness, but if in the same semester he fails only one course then there is high distinctiveness.

Kelley Co-Variation Model Table

Consensus	Distinctiveness	Consistency	Causal Attribution
Low	Low	High	Person, Actor/internal
Low	High	Low	Circumstances/External
High	High	High	Stimulus/Target-External

Source: Kelley (1967)

From the above table, the theory suggests that we would likely make internal or external attributions about the actors' behaviour based on the different combinations of High and Low level of the casual information.

2.   Kelley's configuration model

According to Kelley, there are situations where the observer might not be able to observe several behaviours of the actor or may not have all the three types of information as in the covariance model to use in assessing the actor. In such a case, the observer is expected to explain the behaviour based on single occurrence or based on the present behaviour being observed.

In the case of single event attribution, a causal schema is used. Causal schemata are general ideas or already made beliefs, preconceptions, theories that explain how certain kind of causes interact to produce a specific kind of effect. (Kelley, 1972, 1983, Hewstone and Fincham, 1996). Causal schemata are 'causal shorthand' that enable us make complex inferences easily and within a short time (Fiske and Taylor 1991)

In the face of little information concerning an actor, we rely on past experience or cause effect relationship and what we have learned from others about such relationship.

There are two major causal Schemata, the multiple necessary schemata and the multiple sufficient schemata. According to these two schemata, there are either multiple necessary causes or multiple sufficient causes.

In **multiple necessary causes,** the causes or explanations for certain events or behaviours are many, and the absence of any one of the information could result in that behaviour not occurring. While at the same time the presence of all this causes might not guarantee the occurring of the behaviour too.

For example, let us assume that for a student to pass a course, he must have continuous assessments, attend all lectures and participate actively in class. If he does not meet one of these requirements s/he is likely not going to pass the course, but note also that if s/he meets all the requirements, it is not a guarantee that s/he will pass the course. Meeting all the requirements is necessary but might not guarantee success according to this view.

And for the **multiple sufficient causes,** the causes for certain events or behaviours occurring are many, and each cause is enough to explain the behaviour. The various reasons that explain the behaviour or event are independently sufficient to be accepted. According to this view, each of the three reasons we have in our example that explains why the student failed the course is enough to explain the behaviour. Lack of continuous assessment is enough reason to explain failing the course, just like not attending lectures is enough reason for failing the course etc.

Self Assessment Exercise   1

Explain the difference between the multiple necessary causes and multiple sufficient causes of behaviour.

3.2   Jones and Davis Correspondent Inferences theory (CIT).

This theory suggests that the target of any effective attribution is the ability to make inferences that correspond or are in line with the behaviour, that is, the intention of the behaviour and the underlying disposition of the actor. Both the behaviour and the disposition must be seen and recognized as similar. The behaviour should be made to occur by the actor with no external influence or instructions to do so; this will enable one to make a corresponding inference.

How can we make Inferences?

1. **Analyzing uncommon effects**

   We can infer that intended behaviour agrees with some underlying disposition by **analyzing uncommon effects**. This means looking at what is distinct about the effect of the choice made. Once we have many options and decide on one, then we can compare the consequences of the chosen option to the consequences of the other option not chosen. Then what is common about the effect of the choice becomes very important.

   If there are fewer differences between these comparisons, then we can infer dispositions with confidence. Also the more negative consequences with the chosen option, the more likely we are to attach some importance to the distinctive consequences.

2. We can also look at the **actor's choice**. Was this choice or behaviour influenced by situational or internal (free will) factors?

3. We can also make inferences by concentrating on the **social desirability of the behaviour**. Once there is a deviation from what is desired or accepted, this behaviour catches our attention and hastens our impression formation because of the distinctiveness of the behaviour. We are likely not going to engage in undesirable behaviour that will put us in bad standing with others.

4. We could infer our behaviour based on the **desirability of the behaviour being observed.**

The use of Roles – these are well defined roles that people tend to conform to, if done well their underlying dispositions might not be evident, but if these roles are broken and the actor deviates from them, it is most likely that the actor's underlying disposition will be revealed and corresponding inferences about his behaviour will be made.

Prior expectations based on past experiences with the actor could also help us to decide if present behaviour is in line with other behaviours of the actors. Having the past and present information, will help us decide if present information will become less important or more important depending on whether it is similar or different from past behaviours.

Self Assessment Exercise   2

Briefly explain the five factors that will help us make corresponding inferences about an actor's present behaviour.

3.3   Weiner's Attribution Theories of Emotion and Motivation.

This theory applies the basic principle of attribution to emotions and motivation. The theory posits that our emotions and motivation are affected by the attributions we make. This theory puts forth three dimensions of casualty namely; Locus, stability and controllability. The locus dimension has it that causes of events or behaviours can be internal or external (person/situation).

The stability dimension believes that causes of events or behaviours can be permanent or temporary while the controllability dimension sees causes of events or behaviours in terms of their being either controllable or uncontrollable. (Weiner 1986)

This theory believes causes are multi dimensional and a combination of causes could result in emotions like anger, feelings of disappointment, anxiety, or depression which in turn are likely to affect motivation.

Self -Assessment Exercise 3.

Describe the three dimensions of causality according to this view.

4.0   Conclusion

The above narrations have related the causes of behaviour using the attribution process. Knowing these causes is very important in understanding the Why of behaviour. The general view that the process of attribution involves an actor and an observer and both must come to play during interactions is worth paying attention to. Each theory to some extent, accounts for the various ways we make attributions in the face of information or even limited information.

5.0   Summary

These theories of attribution have shown that the causes of behaviour are many, and through the theories of Kelley, Jones and Davis, and Weiner, we have come to appreciate the place of covariance, configuration, correspondence inference and emotion motivation in explaining behaviour.

6.0 Tutor- marked Assignment.

1. Define Kelley's Covariance and Configuration Models.

2. Explain how emotion and motivation affects interaction according to Weiner.

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UNIT 4   BIASES IN ATTRIBUTION

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Errors do occur in our interpretation of behaviour regardless of whether it is our own behaviour or it is someone else's behaviour that is being interpreted. When this happens it can result in false interpretation of behaviour that might have serious consequences in forming relationships during interactions.

Bias is the tendency to favour one cause over another when explaining some effects. Such favouritism may result in causal attributions that are different from predictions derived from rational attribution principles like those explained in the theories of attribution (Zebrowitz 1990).

In this unit, you will understand the different types of biases in attribution, and how they affect our true assessment of events or behaviours resulting in poor relationships.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of the Unit, you will be able to;

1.   Identify the errors we make due to our own biases
2.   Explain the Actor – Observer effect in interpreting behaviour
3.   Understand self- serving biases and how we use them
4.   Know the difference between self – serving biases and self – centred biases
5.   Differentiate between the Fundamental Errors and Ultimate Errors of Attribution.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   THE FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR (FAE)

The FAE is also referred to as Correspondence bias which is the over estimation of the role of dispositional (internal) causes. This error occurs in situations where people over emphasize the internal rather than the external causes of behaviour. The importance of personal dispositional factors is overestimated, compared to external factors.

The error is strongest in situations where there are low consensus and low distinctiveness and where people focus on predicting the distant or future behaviours of others rather than the present or immediate behaviours (Kelley 1973, Nussbaum, Trope & Liberman 2003)

Using our example of the student who failed a course, if we interpret this behaviour in terms of internal causes, then we are likely going to use explanations like, the student is not bright, or is lazy. We infer external causes when we make references to lack of textbooks, did not attend lectures or even difficult teachers. This is usually so because internal causes are easier to observe than external causes, and we see the Actor not the external factors when we interact.

Cultural studies have revealed that attributional error may not be universal. This view categorizes cultures into two broad groups, the individualistic and collectivistic cultures. While the individualistic cultures support individual freedom and encourage people to accept personal responsibility for the outcome of events, the collectivistic cultures support group membership, conformity and interdependence where personal responsibility is minimal or absent (Jellison & Green 1981).

The Collectivistic cultures are less likely to attribute behaviour to internal causes but might see behaviour as the result of the interface between individual (internal) and situational (external) causes (Letiman, Chiu & Schaller 2004).

Other researchers found that attributional error may not always be an 'error'. This might be in situations where internal attribution occurs because of the availability of information at that point in time.

Social Psychologies believe that sometimes personality traits and other internal factors are indeed a reflection of the true cause of the behaviour, in which case assessment may not be regarded as 'error' (Sabini et al 2001; Funder 2001b).

SELF – ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain why attributional error may not be universal and always an 'error'

3.2   ULTIMATE ATTRIBUTION ERROR (UAE)

Closely related to FAE is the Ultimate Attributional Error (UAE), where we see people as falling into two main groups, the "out-group" those different from us and the "in-group" those similar to us.

This type of error affects the way we attribute positive or negative behaviours to the in-group or out-group. We are likely going to overlook negative causes of behaviour from our in-group than we would from the out-group. Positive causes are usually emphasized more from the in-group than from the out-group.

We may be quick to label negative causes of behaviour for our in-group to external causes and positive causes to internal, while for the out-group negative behaviour will be attributed to internal causes and positive behaviour seen as luck (external) not ability or competence. This is so because little credit is given to positive behaviour for the out-group, while little blame, if any, is given to the members of the in-group for negative behaviour (Pettigrew 1979, Fiske 1998).

SELF – ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Define the Out – group and the In – group.

3.3 ACTOR – OBSERVER EFFECT (AOE)

This is the tendency by actors and observers to give different interpretations concerning the same events or behaviours. When actors explain their behaviours, they tend to lean towards external causes, while observers may explain the actor's behaviours in terms of internal causes (Knobe & Malle 2002).

Actors usually see their behaviours as responding to situations thus they attribute such behaviours to external causes, while the observers see the same behaviours of the actors as intentions and dispositions, thus they attribute internal causes to explaining the behaviours.

Actors are aware of the external factors affecting their own actions more than they are aware of such factors when assessing the actions of others. The individual (actor) is visible to us more than the external factors which are only known to the individual.

This bias occurs because people have different information about their own behaviour and the behaviours of others.

SELF –ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

In your own words, differentiate between the Actors and Observers in an interaction.

3.3 SELF-SERVING BIAS

Sometimes attributing one's behaviour to external causes will depend on the outcome of the behaviour whether positive or negative. We tend to take personal credit for positive outcomes and blame external causes for negative outcomes (Moon 2003).

There is a cognitive and a motivational explanation to Self-serving bias. The cognitive view focuses on the way we process social information. We expect to succeed, thus we are likely to attribute expected outcome to internal causes more than to external causes. While the motivation explanation believes that the need to protect and enhance our self-esteem and the desire to look good to others result in our making attributional errors in this case self-serving bias (Ross 1977; Bron & Rogers 1991).

In Self-serving bias we engage in both Self-protection bias and self-enhancing bias in order to protect our self-esteem. Self protection is seen as unrealistic optimism which is the tendency to believe that positive events will happen to us more than to others, and that negative events are supposed to happen to them not us. This unrealistic optimism distorts reality and increases risky or harmful behaviours. It also encourages one to see self as uniquely invulnerable – nothing could happen to me, I am untouchable.

When we use self-protection bias, we blame our failures to external causes and this protects our self-esteem. When we take credit for positive behaviours or successes we are using self enhancing bias to enhance our self-esteem.

The tendency for self-serving biases is stronger when we are personally involved or when those close to us are involved. This self-serving bias where credit is given (internal factors) for success or positive behaviour and blame (external factors) for failure has been seen in most cultures, but more in individualistic cultures than in collectivist cultures (Mezulis et al 2004).

3.5   SELF - CENTERED BIAS

People are likely going to think of their personal contributions in joint ventures more than others will give them credit for. This happens easily because people are able to remember their own contributions in such group work and interpret their behaviour in line with this assessment, more than their desires to distort the contribution of others (Ross & Sicoly 1979; Fiske 2004)

SELF - ASSESSMENT EXERCISE   4

Describe the relationship between self-protection and self-enhancing bias in explaining self-serving biases.

4.0   CONCLUSION

The above explanation shows that in most interactions the factors that come into place in explaining behaviour are many. Both the actor and observer need to be aware of their biases and be as close to reality as possible when forming impressions or interpreting events and behaviours.

5.0   SUMMARY

This unit has brought to light the various biases involved in interpreting events or behaviours. These include the fundamental attribution error, ultimate error, actor-observer error, self serving and self-centred biases. Reasons for such biases were also enumerated.

6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1.   Describe the major difference between self-serving bias and self-centred bias.

2.   What is the place of culture in both the Fundamental attribution Error and Ultimate attribution error.

3.   Identify the major sources of error in the fundamental attribution errors.

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UNIT 5   CONFORMITY

1.0   Introduction

Individual behaviour is influenced by the group he/she belongs to. Have you ever wondered why you prefer to go along with the group? In conformity, your response to social activity is indirect. The group does not need to ask that you join them, but because every one seems to agree and act in a certain way, you are likely to join them. (Lahley, 1998; 530).

Conformity is yielding to group pressure. This may take different forms and sometimes could be as a result of some motives other than group pressure. Conformity is a change in belief or behaviour in response to real or imagined group pressure. The presence of others whether actual or implied results in conformity. We tend to do in private what we think people should do or the right thing to do.

In conformity, there is the outward expression of the norm and the private acceptance. The two must agree in order for one to feel comfortable. When one outwardly conforms to what she/he does not privately accept, then one is likely to experience dissonance or disagreement.

Sometimes people decide to agree with the group just to reduce dissonance.

In this unit, the factors that influence conformity, the basis for conformity and the group processes involved in conformity will be studied.

2.0   Objectives

I expect that at the end of this unit, you should be able to;

1.   Identify the factors affecting conformity.
2.   Appreciate the power of conformity on conformity.
3.   Explain the place of different groups in conformity.
4.   Discuss the role of values and norms in conformity
5.   Explain the basis for conformity

3.0   Main content

3.1   Factors Affecting Conformity

People tend to conform because factors like Group size, Group Unity (cohesiveness), fear of ridicule, Task difficulty, privacy, group norms among others influence our individual response and behaviour in social situations.

1.   **Group size and Unanimity (Majority)**
        Based on experiments, it was found that the size of the group, and the level of agreement among members affect conformity. When one person tries to influence another, the level of conformity is low, where two try to influence one person, the level of conformity rises, with three people the level rises higher and beyond 5 people conformity levels drops off or even decreases.

        Once the majority is unanimous, the pressure to conform is high, but where one person disagrees within the group, conformity decreases. Recent findings have shown that conformity does increase with group size of up to 8 members or more.

2.   **Minority Influence**
        Though not common, it does happen that the minority in a group can influence the behaviour or the beliefs of the majority. This minority influence is usually indirect, and occurs slowly, and involves only a moderate change in the majority view; it is possible for an individual to resist group pressure. (Peplau & Sears 2002; David & Turner 2000).

        Minority Influence – Minority position must be consistent with current trends of events, and must avoid appearing rigid and dogmatic providing room for some degrees of flexibility, This will help them not to appear hell bent on their ideas and will encourage acceptance by the majority.

        Minorities do hold strong views and are more concerned over being right. As a result, they do overestimate the number of people who share their views which is usually less than they perceive, though in a way this helps them to remain resolute against majority position, which does pay of in most cases.

        The minority views might encourage the majority to access why the minorities are adamant in their views or positions and this might result in change, no matter how small in the majority.

3.   **Fear of Ridicule.**
        Usually wrong answers or inappropriate behaviour is ridiculed by others, such that when the group is wrong, the fear of being ridiculed suppresses the minority view resulting in conformity to the group.

4. **Ambiguity of the situation – Task Difficulty**.

When faced with difficult tasks, people are likely going to yield to majority answer, even if this answer is not correct, especially if the majority feels confident that they are right. In a situation where people become uncertain, they tend to rely more on other people's opinions thus increasing conformity to group norms.

5. **Privacy in Responses.**

In the face of group pressure, it is easier for the individual not to conform if asked to respond privately than when asked to respond publicly. Thus there seems to be less conformity in anonymous responses or where responses are given in private or in writing.

Anonymous responses decrease conformity though it does not remove it or make it disappear.

6. **Group Norms**

Group norms are very powerful in influencing behaviour. People are mostly influenced by three powerful motives like the desire to be liked or accepted by others, the desire to be right and have an accurate understanding of the world knowing what is right and what is wrong, and finally the desire to receive rewards and avoid punishment.

Self Assessment Exercise 1

Briefly describe the six factors affecting conformity.

3.2   Varieties of Conformity.

3.2.1 Normative social influence.

Norms, as defined by a people affect their behaviour. Normative social influence involves altering our behaviour to meet the expectations of others. It is also seen as tactics of getting people to like us. Reasons for normative social influence have been given as follow:

* The need for approval or acceptance by the group.
* The norms guarding the group distaste the behaviour of its individual members.
* Norms are societal standard or what society defines as acceptable and expects members to conform.
* Culture that emphasizes the welfare of the individual over that of the group is likely going to have less conformity in its members than cultures that emphasizes the welfare of the group above that of the individual.
* Some cultures in Nigeria might increase conformity on its members compared to some western cultures. Think of your own culture; is it individualistic or collectivistic in nature?

3.3.**2**   **Informational Social Influence.**

This type of influence is based on our tendency to depend on others as sources of information about the social world. Our behaviour is mostly influenced by the information we receive from others.

The certainty about what is right or wrong reduces our confidence and motivates us towards conformity, while certainty reduces our reliance on our ability to make decision and reduces our likelihood to conform. We are likely to be influenced for the following reasons?

* The belief that others have some information's that we do not have, so we conform or agree to go along.
* If our need for direction and information is met, we are likely to conform.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Give reasons why people are likely going to conform according to the normative social influence view.

3.3   Group Process in Conformity.

Risky Shift – this is the phenomena where the group is likely going to advice the individual to take risks more than the average individual advice of its members. There are factors that might predict how risky or cautious these group advices will be, which include:

Group polarization – it has been found that discussions between group members with similar attitudes in order to reach difficult decisions, strengthens the individual inclinations of the members. (Cooper et al 2004). The group can take extreme decisions than the mean of the individual member's position which could be towards a riskier or more cautious direction. Group polarization could be as a result of:

* Exchange of information – usually relevant information from members might result in supportive arguments beyond what the individual had thought of – example of informational social influence.
* Definition of the identity of the group compared to other groups normative social influence.
* Social categorization process which occurs in three steps:

    - Seeing self as a member of a group (the in group)

    - Identify these in group characteristics as different from the out group.

    - Stereo- typing self as a member of the group (Cooper at al 2004)

Group think – A mode of thinking in which the desire to reach unanimous agreement override the motivation to adopt proper, rational decision making procedures (Janis 1971, 1982). Usually there is a separation of decent from group harmony, excessive cohesion, close knit group and a direction leader to enhance group link.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3.

Describe the steps involved in the social categorization process.

4.0   Conclusion.

The information given above has shown that for the individual to survive in society there is the need to positively conform to some societal norms. The society and the groups must deliberately choose to set standards than are progressive for her members. Norms must be re-evaluated from time to time in order to maintain positive conformity especially for the younger population or members.

5.0   Summary

This unit has shown that individual behaviour is affected by the behaviour of the group. Highlights of group size, unanimous groups, group sanction, social influence and group process as factors that influence conformity were presented.

In the next study unit, we will look at the concept of compliance and how group pressure can affect behaviour of the individual in the society.

6.0   Tutor – marked Assignment.

1. Describe the effect of group polarization in conformity

2. Define and explain the factors involve in normative social influence.

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UNIT 6   COMPLIANCE

1.0   Introduction

Have you ever noticed that people respond to requests better than they do to demands? Compliance involves direct request from one person to another or from a group to another. In compliance, people yield to this request which is different from conformity where there is no request yet one feels the need to conform.

A request places less demand on the individual and allows one the liberty to comply or not. Behaviour comes as a result of compliance to a request, which in most cases is seen as coming from a peer or a friend.

In this unit, you will be able to understand the principles behind compliance and the techniques used in compliance.

2.0   Objectives

At the end of this study unit, you should be able to:

1   Explain the place of friendship in compliance.
2.   Explain the concept of scarcity and reciprocity in terms of compliance
3.   Describe how authority and social validation influences compliance.
4.   Explain the various techniques in compliance.

3.0   Main Content

3.1   Principles of Compliance

There are many techniques for gaining compliance usually through requesting, selling or convincing. These techniques are all based on the following principles.

- **Friendship/Liking**

  There is a higher likelihood of our responding to request from our friends or people we like more than non acquaintance or people we do not like

- **Commitment /Consistency**

  Once we have taken a position or are committed to certain action, it is easier for us to comply with request that agrees with our position.

- **Scarcity**

  We appreciate and value what is scarce or not readily available and are likely going to comply with requests that focus on scarcity than those that make no reference to scarcity. This is seen as a once in life time opportunity.

- **Reciprocity**

  The idea of giving back to those who have given to us is easier than given to those we have no obligation to. We are more likely to comply to request from those groups of persons who have given to us before, agreeing with the notion that "one good turn deserves another" or "treat others the way the treat us". It is assumed that unsolicited gifts force the receiver to reciprocate inline with implied or stated requests. (Tourangeu 2004)

- **Social Validation**

  Request for actions that agree with the norm and accepted by all are likely to be complied with than those that deviate from what is acceptable. What we do and think about must agree with what others are doing or thinking. Knowing that others have done the same or complied spur likelihood to also complied.

- **Authority**

  It is easier to comply with requests from someone that has a higher authority or appears to have authority over us or more than we do.

Self-Assessment Exercise   1

List the five principle of compliance.

3.2   Techniques in compliance

Based on the principles above, the following techniques are used in compliance.

3.2.1   Ingratiation Techniques

This is getting others to like us so that they will be more willing to agree to our request based on the principle of friendship or liking. Impression management techniques are also used here to achieve ingratiation or increase compliance. Some ingratiation techniques include:

- **Flattery** – praising others. This could backfire if taken as insincere by the receiver.
- **Improving Appearance** – physical attractiveness have been shown to succeed as compliance agent
- **Positive non verbal cues** – Smiles, hand shakes, head nods, sitting next to all send signals that are to some positive in nature.
- **Small favours for target persons** – Increases likelihood to comply.
- **Incidental similarity** – similarities in names, birthdays and towns are likely to increase the tendency to comply to the persons requests.
- **Cooperation with others** – showing them that you are on their side might make them comply.

3.2.2   Foot – in – the – door – (FITD) Technique.

In this technique, requests begin with small ones and when granted, move on to make larger ones, usually the desired request. In this case, the chance of compliance is increased after the initial small request for compliance was successful. Most free samples or free trials in commercials for products capitalize on this technique.

The catch word is that once you accept the free sample, it becomes easier to request that you buy the product. This technique induces increased compliance. Because it relies on the principle of consistency, where refusing the larger request will not be consistent with our first behaviour of complying with the small request, it has been found also that when people comply with small request this leads to their complying to larger ones for two reasons:

- People find it easier to comply to requests that cost little in terms of money and input.

- People feel committed to the cause or issues involved when they comply to smaller requests. (Burger and Guadagne 2003)

3.2.3.   Door – in – the – face (DIF) Technique.

Door-in-the-face is another way of obtaining compliance that is almost the opposite of – FITD technique. Here one begins with asking for a big favour or making an almost impossible request that is likely going to be turned down. Once request is denied; the person making the request agrees that it was excessive or asking for too much, and compromises by making a smaller request – usually this smaller request is what the individual really anted initially. Idea is that when this first request is compared with the first one the individual is likely going to comply

with the second partly because there was a promise – middle ground so to speak, and also that seemed more reasonable than the fist (perceptual contrast).

Note that if the second request was presented without the first one, it is more likely that the request will not result in compliance. The approach relies on the reciprocity norm or principle. The first technique slams the door in the face of the person requesting.

Finally, DIF compliance is emotional because when first large request is turned down, we feel "Bad" negative emotions or guilty or "bad" negative emotions, so we look for ways to reduce these negative emotions in order to feel comfortable. Thus the second request provides the opportunity to make "amends" thus we are more likely to make useof the chance to make up and relieve our guilt or negative emotions (miller 2002).

3.2.4   That – is – not – all techniques.

In this form of gaining compliance an initial request is followed by an extra incentive, before the target person is able to make any response. The extra incentive in this technique is an effective means of increasing the chance of others saying "yes" or complying to various requests.

3.2.5 Playing- hard - to – get. Techniques

This technique suggests that a person or object is scarce and hard to obtain. We tend to place more value on what is rare, scarce or not easily available. Thus we are ready to go the extra mile or put in more effort to obtain the items or outcome. This technique is used in the area of romance, job hunting and even marketing.

Playing hard to get increases the desirability of the individual item or request to the point where the receiver's choice of compliance is higher than will be if request or item is available or not scarce.

3.2.6 The fast approaching – Deadline Technique.

Still using the scarcity principle and the fact that we place more value on what is scarce is the deadline technique. Here a time frame is attached to a behaviour or item beyond which it is assumed that it will not be available. This technique increases compliance when the target person is told that he/she has limited time to take advantage of some offer or to obtain some item or agree to some requests.

Usually this is a sales strategy that works well for people in business with the sole intension of busting sales rather than the claimed notion that stock will run out. This message of deadline still has indirect condition that implies a rise in price of deadline is missed which cases are not the case. In fact, most at times the price goes down after enough sales.

3.2.7 Low – Ball (lb) Approach

This technique tries to obtain (one oral/ verbal) commitment to do something, after this commitment has been made; the cost of fulfilling the commitment is increased. This process of gaining compliance has a deal or an offer to make it less attractive to the receiver after he/she has accepted he deal or offer. Success of this technique is dependent on the importance the individual places in the initial commitment, because s/he feels obligated to keep the promise even when conditions that led to the commitment no longer exist or doing so might cost more than it was planned for. (Burger & Cornelius 2003)

Self assessment exercise 2.

- Explain the six ingratiation techniques used in compliance

4.0 Conclusion

The ideas above have shown that for compliance to succeed, the individuals concerned must make the interaction less stressful and allow each other appreciate the quality of the product. Where the need to comply is seen as a must, gives the individual a feeling of insecurity. Society must evaluate what she wants for the group that will be accepted by her individual members with minimal stress.

5.0 Summary.

This unit has helped us to have an insight about the principles and techniques used in compliance. The principles of Friendship/Liking, commitment consistency, Reciprocity, Social validation and Authority have all been incorporated in the techniques used in getting people to comply.

6.0 Tutor marked Assignment

1. Compare playing hard to get technique with the fast – approaching dealing technique.

2. List the six principles and seven techniques used in compliance as explained in this unit.

In the next unit, you will be looking at how obedience which employs the use of demand affects behaviour and how the need to obey places more pressure on the individual than the need for compliance which uses requests.

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UNIT 7   OBEDIENCE

1.0   Introduction

Have you ever wondered what would happen if you disobey those in authority? While we may not think twice disobeying our friends, it is a difficult matter all together dealing with authority figures.

Obedience leads to behaviour change as result of response to a demand usually from those in authority or authority figures (Blass 2004). To what extend can we be affected by demands from others, and can these demands influence us to hurt others?

In this unit, we will try to make sense of why people obey, identify the factors that result in obedience, the destructive aspects of obedience, and how we can resist destructive obedience.

2.0   Objectives

It is expected that at the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1.   Define obedience and Authority figures
2.   Explain the reason behind obedience
3.   Explain destructive obedience
4.   Learn how to resist destructive obedience

3.0   Main Content.

3.1   Reasons for obedience

The Milgram's experiments on obedience where twenty – six of his forty participants obeyed the experimental instruction all the way and supposedly administered up to 450 volt maximum shock (electric) level to the learner was an amazing account of how far people can go, even if reluctantly, to obey those in authority or those seem to have authority despite their own misgivings about the effect of the obedience.

The high rate of obedience noticed by Milgram was attributed to the following factors:

1. **The presence of the perceived authority figure**. This ensured obedience in two ways

    o   **Diffusion of responsibility.** The belief that the authority figure is ultimately in charge relieved the person from following orders from taking personal responsibility for his/her actions.

    o   Serve as **Agents of Force**. They tend to intimidate us into following orders. Fear of the consequences of disobedience may lead us to obey orders.

2. **The timing of the request made**.

    If people are not given time to think through what is being demanded of them, they are most likely to obey more than those who have time to think over the demand. It has been found that once people do not have time to think through a demand, they become more vulnerable to persuasive attempts.

3. **Graduation of demand.**

    This refers to demand from the less stressful to the more stressful one or from a small demand to more demanding one. One is obeying increasing demands.

    In our example, if the demand for 450 volts was made at the onset, not many people would have obeyed. But starting with 15 volts and adding to that gradually narrows the gap between the less to the highest volts making obedience more rational than it would have been.

    Increasing the shock level gradually is a good example of the foot – in – the – door technique in compliance. Once one has committed to administering the lesser shock, then chances of obeying further instructions to administer higher shocks becomes much easier.

4. **Psychological Distance.**

    Our obedience will depend on how we feel between our actions and the result of those actions. It also means the degree to which we can dissociate our selves from the consequences.

5. **Socialization.**
    We learn from significant others like our parents, Teachers, older siblings as we grow up. It is assumed that obedience is also learned and may become a difficult habit to resist. (Brown 1986)

6. **Social situations**
    Social roles place certain individuals at advantage in relationships. The Parent – Child, Teacher – Student, Doctor – Patient, Employer – Employee, roles where the parent, Teacher, Doctor, Employer have power more than the child, Student, Patient and Employee in this relationship or settings respectively. How society empowers these

groups when interacting can increase or reduce the power these authority figures have. If these roles are changed, will the use of power also change? Most likely no.

Self – Assessment Exercise   1

Explain the six reasons why people obey in not more than one sentence each.

3.2   Factors that affect obedience

In addition to the reasons people obey according to Mailgram's experiment, the following factors were also listed as affecting obedience or influencing people to obey.

- **Status and prestige of authority figure.**

  The following forms of social power influences people to obey for the following reasons:

  o **Experts Social Power**

  The authority figure is able to command obedience because it is believed that this person is knowledgeable and is a responsible expert.

  o **Legitimate Social Power**

  This person can influence others to obey because it is assumed that he/she has the right or legal authority to tell them what to do. (Blass & Schmitt, 2001)

  o **Behaviour of others**.

  If other people in a similar situation disobey orders or demands, chances are that others would do likewise. If demands are made to a group and some members do not obey these demands, the level of obedience for the group will drop or decrease.

  o **Personality Characteristics.**

  Not every one is obedient to Authority in the same way. But those with Authoritarianism personalities are prone to follow authority figures without questioning. They also have the tendency to react violently against people identify by authority figures as not for the values of their in – group (Blass 1999) an example is the evident found suggesting that German soldiers who high on authoritanism obeyed orders to all Jews during world war 22 compared to other German men similar in age and background. (Steiner & Fahreberg 2000)

Self – Assessment Exercise   2
Briefly state the three factors that affect obedience.

3.3   Resisting Destructive Obedience

Obeying orders or demands from authority figures have been shown to be very destructive where the recipient is destructive. Where the recipient is expected to "obey before complaining" sometimes they do not have time to reflect on this demands or orders but follow through immediately. Some strategies have been suggested to help people resist the effects of destructive obedience.

- **Personal Responsibility**

Reminder that those exposed to taking commands from authority figures are also responsible for any harm inflicted or produced. This means that there is a shift from those in authority assuming responsibility for those obeying authority figures.

- **Destructive Commands should be seen as inappropriate**

Beyond certain points, total submissions to destructive commands are inappropriate. Here, models acting roles of rejecting commands should be made available and individuals exposed to them.

- **Question Authority Figures**.

When motives, reasons and relational behind certain commands are questioned by those receiving such commands, this reveals a lot that could make these authority figures rethink and re-evaluate their actions.

Know that authority figures have the power to command obedience but that this power is not irresistible.

Though most of those authority figures have the machinery to enforce obedience, and resisting may be very dangerous, it is however not impossible. Most challenges to authority figures cost a lot but people have tried and won and have also changed the course of history and improve the quality of life for their fellow human beings. People like Mahat Magandi of India, Martin Luther king Jr of USA and Nelson Mandela of South Africa among others are examples of people who have dared to challenged authorities in their times and changed the course of history for their people, and for humanity.

- **Know the power authority figures have to command blind obedience.**

  o Knowing that Authority figures can command such blind obedience from subordinates can help people to prepare ahead of time on how to react during such occasions.

  o Individuals can resist blind commands and help others do likewise if armed with the knowledge above.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

List the five strategies people can employ in resisting destructive obedience.

4.0   Conclusion

This study has revealed that authority figure is major factor in obedience and compliance which society also accepts and does little to discourage it so that the individual remain in a subordinated relationship However, he/she must be empowered to use strategies that will help especially in handling destructive obedience, while not underestimating the authority figures.

5.0   Summary

This unit has revealed that authority figures do command obedience and could use their authorities to inflict pains or harm on others through enforcing destructive obedience. The reason why people obey and find it difficult to disobey Authority has been explained, and the strategies for resisting the destructive obedience to harmful commands were also enumerated and discussed.

In the next unit, attitude formation will be looked at including why we form attitudes and the processes involved in attitude formation.

6.0   Tutor – Marked Assignments

1.   Compare the effect of the presence of perceived Authority figures and social situations as factors attributed to high rate of obedience according to Milgram.

2.   What strategies can help the individual resist destructive Obedience?

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MODULE 2 ATTITUDES AND PERSUASION

Unit 8 Attitude Formation and Attitude Change
Unit 9 Persuasion
Unit 10 Prejudice and Discrimination
Unit 11 Stereotypes

Unit 8 Attitude Formation and Attitude Change

1.0 Introduction
2.0 Objective
3.0 Main content
    3.1 Components of Attitudes
    3.2 Attitude Formation
    3.3 Attitude Change
4.0 Conclusion
5.0 Summary
6.0 Tutor - Marked Assignment
7.0 References / Further readings

1.0 Introduction

Attitudes describes our feelings, thinking and Behaviour whether positively or negatively towards objects or certain stimuli, and could be a mixture of beliefs that are informed by the knowledge we have of the world, values of what is good, desirable, worth while and the meaning we attach to events, objects and people.

We are always trying to make sense out of our world through relating with people daily. What informs our choice is usually related to the way we evaluate objects or stimuli. Our evaluation could result in forming attitudes of like or dislike for objects or persons. (Zimberdo &Leippie 1991). We begin to form our attitudes through direct and indirect experiences or listen to the experiences of others as told by them.

In this unit, we will look at the components of attitude, why attitudes are formed and how they can be changed.

2.0 Objectives

After going through the material in this unit, you should be able to:

1.   Explain attitude as described by the three components of attitudes.
2.   Describe how attitudes are formed.
3.   Explain why attitudes are formed.
4.   Explain how attitudes can be changed.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Components of Attitudes

Attitudes have been defined as the evaluation of the various aspects of the social world. It is generally believed that attitudes have three components namely the cognitive, Affective and the Behavioural. The cognitive component is made up of thoughts and beliefs about attitudinal objects. The Affective (emotional) involves our feelings about the objective which could be that of frustration or anger. And the behavioural (Action) reflects a tendency to act in a certain ways towards an attitudinal object.

Attitudes serve the following functions as we continue in our attempt to evaluate and understand the social world.

- **Knowledge function**.

Attitudes aid our interpretations of new information and influence or acceptance or rejection of the attitudinal object based on the favourability of the attitude. If new information agrees with our attitudes (consistent) then it is seen or interpreted as reliable, and if not consistent it is seen or interpreted as unreliable.

- **Identify function (value expressive).**

Attitudes allow us to express our core values and beliefs, enables us to express our selves, and give us a sense of personal integrity.

- **Self Esteem Function.**

Once people are able to maintain particular attitudes, this can help enhance their feelings of self – worth.

- **Ego – Defence Function**

This offer self protection from unwanted information about self, through claiming certain attitudes. It also help protect us from accepting personal deficiencies.

- **Adjustment function**

Favourable responses from others encourage acceptable attitudes and become associated with important rewards like acceptance and approval, this could be expressed publicly.

- **Impression Motivation Function**

Attitude is used to influence others to have a positive view of ourselves. This motivation can result in a shift in the attitude we express. (Katz 1960, Shavitt 1990).

Self Assessment Exercise 1

List the three components of attitudes and the six functions they serve.

3.2   Attitude Formation.

We develop attitudes as we interact with people. Parents and siblings may be our first contact and later Teachers, Peers, Friends, Colleagues among others. They all influence the formation attitudes. The following explanations on how attitudes are formed have been suggested:

- **Direct instruction**

 Reading instructions or information especially from significant others can influence the attitude we form toward an event or an object. If we are told that we will enjoy an event, we may develop a positive attitude towards that event and evaluate it as worthwhile ever before we experience the actual event.

- **Pairing events or objects with positive ones. (classical conditioning)**

Once an object is associated with positive outcome, this object becomes highly rated. Classical conditioning is able to change the way we feel about certain things. This form of learning can result in emotional and psychological responses. It has been noted that association with positive objects reinforce attitude formation more than the association with negative objects. (Olson & Fazio, 2001)

- **Reinforcement of Positive Behaviour (Operant Conditioning)**

Behaviours or events that elicit positive responses or are re-enforced positively are most likely going to be repeated. Operant conditioning is the form of learning where rewards strengthen attitudes, and punishment weakens attitudes. This conditioning requires that the individual comes in contact with the attitudinal object in question, and only after receiving either reward or punishment, will an attitude be formed concerning the event or object.

Most of what we like or dislike is re-enforced by people we meet resulting in forming attitudes towards these events, objects or behaviours. This agrees with the exposure effect view by Zajonc (2001b) where he asserts that frequent exposure to an event or object helps people to form attitudes toward the object or event.

- **Role models by Significant others.**

Usually we prefer to agree with those we like or those we look up to. They could be our parents, siblings, teachers, colleagues, leaders, friends, clergy, and public figures among others. Once they act as models we follow their leading. In the absence of direct contact or experience, we can form attitudes similar to the attitudes of the models. Our attitudes are usually similar to those that are close to us or those we love. (Rohan & Zanna, 1996; Kowalski & Kowalski, 2003).

- **Genetic Influence**

It is believed that genetic potentials inherited from parents are implicated in attitude formation even though what we learn from parents and significant others (environmental) play a more prominent role in attitude formation. Concepts or new words are taught by parents along with explanations or warnings that reflect formed attitudes that are likely going to be passed on to the child. (Rohner Schwarto 2001).

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Briefly describe the five explanations for attitude formation.

3.3   Attitude Change

Based on the explanations on how attitudes are formed, can these developed attitudes be easily changed? The following theories tell us how.

- **Cognitive Consistency Theories**.

Different experiences and additional or new information can influence us to change our attitudes. This is because we like to balance our attitudes and behaviour so that they do not contradict each other. Cognitive consistency is the desire to avoid contradictions between our attitudes and behaviours. (Festinger, 1997)

Consistency is likely when thoughts and feelings are in agreement, or when our behavioural components agree with our subjective norms. Disagreement between attitudes and subjective norms may cause us to behave differently in the way that is inconsistent with our attitudes (Ajzen 2001).

- **Cognitive Distance Theory**.

This view proposes that we are likely going to be motivated to change our attitudes and/or our behaviours once there is an uncomfortable physical state called dissonance. Dissonance is the state of unease or of being anxious due to the fact that our behaviour is contrary to our self concept (who we are). (Aronson, 1998).

Dissonance comes from within, it is how we feel and evaluate our actions and behaviours with what we believe that motivate us to change. This type of attitude change has nothing to do with outside influence. The motivation is to stop this bad or unpleasant feeling leading to attitude and/or behaviour change (Wood 2000).

Inconsistency is removed in three ways –

- o Change the Behaviour
- o Change the Attitudes
- o Bring new beliefs and attitudes to bear on the situations.

Any of these three ways if employed will reduce dissonance and restore a state of consonance, where there will be no contradictions or inconsistency between attitudes and behaviour. When we engage in public behaviour, it is easier to change our attitudes (privately held) to be consistent with these behaviour (Stone & Copper 2001).

- **Self- Perception Theory**.

Daryl Ben (1967) suggests that instead of inconsistency in behaviours, certain situations do arise where people are not really sure of their attitudes. In this case, changing attitudes to be consistent with behaviour is not as a result of inconsistency, discomfort or anxiety, but as a result of reflecting on one's behaviours, and inferring what attitudes must be. Attitudes can be adjusted to match behaviour, sometimes even when there is no reflection on that behaviour.

- **Congruity Theory**

This theory suggests attitude shift within the individual instead of similarities and inferences between people. One may have attitudes that are likely going to shift in the direction of agreement or congruence. Negative attitudes towards drug abuse may shift mildly if those we love are involved. Our attitudes towards our loved ones will be less positive and towards drug abuse less negative. If we do not love them then it might not affect our attitude on drug abuse much. Greater shift is likely towards a milder attitude.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

Compare Cognitive Consistency theory to the Cognitive Dissonance theory.

4.0   Conclusion

The above information have highlighted the process of evaluation of information that help us form or changed attitudes. These formed or changed attitudes are important and usually reflected in behaviours. For an individual to express agreement between behaviour and attitudes, these processes must be experienced either directly or indirectly.

5.0   Summary

This unit has revealed that new information from us is used by the individual to form or change his/her attitudes and also influence behaviour. The various theories explaining these processes of forming and changing attitudes were looked at in-depth.

In the following unit, you will be examining Persuasion, the factors responsible for persuasion, theories and methods of resisting persuasion.

6.0   Tutor Marked Assignment

1.   Explain the six functions of attitudes.

2.   Describe the principles of operant and classical conditioning as they relate to attitude formation and attitude change.

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UNIT 9   PERSUASION

1.0   Introduction

Attitudes are formed from birth and continue to be formed as long as we live. These attitudes are also the target of change. The act of trying to change our attitudes by others is called persuasion. We are faced daily with activities or events by individuals or groups all aimed at persuading us to change our attitudes.

Think of your day today activities. Starting from the morning, how many Bill Boards, Sign Boards, sales men, Hawkers, friends, and Family Members have you come in contact with? These meetings in most cases are all attempts at persuading you to change your attitude towards something or someone.

We are all potential persuaders as long as we have some views and ideas to share with others. The usual intension is to get our audience, to see our point of view, and to agree or accept it. The use of various kinds of messages in an effort to change other people's attitudes is persuasion.

In this unit, you will come to appreciate the power that others have in persuading us to change our attitudes. The factors that affect persuasion, the effectiveness of persuasion, and the processes involved will also be reviewed.

2.0   Objectives

At the end of this study unit, it is expected that you will be able to:

1.   Define the communicators and the Audience in persuasion.
2.   Explain the place of the message in persuasion.
3.   Identify factors that affect persuasion
4.   Describe how we can resist persuasion.
5.   Explain the theories of persuasion.

3.1   Theories of Persuasion

The following theories focus on how messages are processed before persuasion takes place.

1.   Systematic Processing Theories

These theories focus on the detailed processing of the message content by the recipient. Hovland et al (1953) propose that there is a sequence of processes that make messages persuasive, any step missed will result in failure to persuade. They include:

- o Attention to message
- o Comprehension of the content
- o Acceptance of its conclusion

Mc Guire (1969) lists a chain of processes as follows:

- o If recipient attained to the message
- o If recipient comprehended the message
- o If recipient yielded or accepted the message
- o If recipient retained the message
- o If recipient acted as a result of message

If any of the above steps is missing, the sequence will be broken making persuasion attempt ineffective.

2.   Elaborate Likelihood Model (ECM)

This model proposes that if one is able to critically evaluate the logic of persuasive arguments, and if able to also generate counter arguments, then the less likely he will be persuaded. The ability to access and generate counter arguments will depend on the type of thinking one is engaged in. When presented with persuasive arguments, we process them using any of these Routes to persuasion

- o **Central Route to Persuasion**.

    One must have both the motivation and time to think critically about the logic of the argument. Make us less susceptible to persuasion.

- o **Peripheral route to persuasion**

    When we are motivated and/or do not have time to evaluate critically the arguments presented to us, especially when we are listening and doing another thing at the time. This route does not allow us to generate effective counterargument which makes us susceptible to persuasion. (Petty and Cacioppo 1986; Stephenson, Benoit & Tshida 2001).

3. **Heuristic – Systematic Persuasion Model (Chaiken 1987)**

Heuristics are shortcuts to problem solving that do not always lead to the right answers. The above theory states that people who process on the peripheral route often use heuristics as logical thought (Drake et al 1998). The use of heuristics can result in people using superficial aspects of the argument that is not related to the logic of the argument to be persuaded.

The audience might allow things like physical beauty, popularity of the communicator rather than the quality of argument to persuade them. The attitude formed using peripheral route does not last and do not predict behavior like those formed during the central route. (Chaiken 1987, Fazio 1990).

Self Assessment Exercise 1

Describe the sequences of processing persuasive messages according to Hovland & Co 1953 and McGuire 1969.

3.2   Factors that affect Persuasion.

In persuasion we have the source (communicator) and the Recipient or Receiver (Audience) using the message as the tool (what). Usually if one can answer the question "WHO said WHAT to WHOM with WHAT effect?" then persuasion has been effective or successful. For communicators, the following factors will be considered in persuasion.

- o **Credibility of the communicators.**
  Experts and people who seem to know what they are talking about are likely to be more persuasive than non experts. And members of our in – group are usually assessed as more credible than those of the out group.

- o **Physical Attractiveness of the Communicators**
  Once the source of the message is from an attractive communicator, the product or object of persuasion becomes associated with the attractiveness portrayed. Advertisers use attractive model to associate their products with such beauty. It is implied that the use of such products will result in same physical attractiveness of the models.

  Attractive people are likely going to persuade us, especially if we are processing information using the peripheral route where we are likely going to concentrate on the superficial qualities of the speakers rather than actually evaluate the quality of the arguments. (Eagly & chaiken 1975 petty, cacioppo & Goldman 1981).

- o **Appearance of the message.**
  When messages appear as design to change our attitudes, they might not succeed compared to those that do not have the appearance. When messages or arguments

presented do not look like attempts to persuade us we are likely going to be persuaded by them . (petty & cacioppo 1986). Prior warnings help build our resistance to persuasion.

- o **Use of distraction in persuasion.**

  Distractions may make the Audience more susceptible to persuasion than having the audience pay full attention to the message.

- o **Adoption of a two –sided approach by the communicator.**

  This approach is effective where the Audience holds contrary views or attitudes to persuasion. Here both sides of the arguments are presented with emphasis on refuting the side opposed to by the speaker, this gives the audience a sense of satisfaction and still allow the speaker to present more support for his/her position and persuade the audience.

- o **Fast and Slow Communicators.**

  The audience is likely to perceive the credibility of the speaker better if he/she speaks rapidly because it is believed that those who speak rapidly are good at persuasion than slow speakers (Miller et al 1976).

- o **Confidence of the communicators.**

  If the speaker appears to be very confident as he/she speaks regardless of the validity of what is said, he/she is likely to persuade the audience more than less a confident communicators.

- o **Age and Persuasion.**

  Younger people are likely going to be persuaded to change their attitudes easier than the older ones, because adults are more resistant to change their attitudes.

- o **The Audience.**

Some people can easily be persuaded than others.

The Young can be easily persuaded compared to the Adult.

Those who use the **Peripheral route** for processing information might be easily persuaded   than the users of the **Central route.**

Females may be persuaded more than males etc. Knowing your audience is important in Persuasion.

Intelligent Quotient (IQ)

People low in IQ might be easily persuaded compared to those with moderate to high IQ because they lack the cognitive ability to critically analyze messages and generate counterarguments. In some cases, people with high IQ might be easily persuaded than those with low IQ especially if the persuasive message requires complex analysis which those with high IQ can easily appreciate and be persuaded (Rhodes & Wood 1992).

Self – esteem is another for the audience where those with moderate self esteem are easily persuaded than those with either low or high esteem (Rhodes &wood 1992). While those with low self – esteem are easily distracted and not able to concentrate on the persuasive message may end up not processing the arguments well, thus not likely to be persuaded, those with high self – esteem have a lot of confidence in their own opinions and even when they appreciate and comprehend the arguments, are not likely going to yield to persuasive arguments.

Age - The Young people are trying to develop attitudes they will hold on to as Adults, so while trying to develop their own attitudes, they become vulnerable to persuasive attempts. The older we are, the less vulnerable we become to persuasive attempts. (Krosnick & Alwin 1989).

Mood - The mood of the audience will determine if they can easily be persuaded. People will always want to maintain happy mood, thus will not likely critically analyze persuasive messages, and may use the peripheral route and analyze messages based on superficial qualities of the speaker. People who are good looking or smart, but not in a happy mood will use the central route to analyze persuasive messages. They might be easily persuaded because the message must be logical for them to appreciate. (Bless, Bohner, Schwarz & Strack 1990).

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Summarize all the factors that affect persuasion for the Audience.

3.3   Resisting persuasion

Why do most attempts at persuasion fail? Because of our attitudes concerning the issues that have been formed, we are more likely to resist any attempt at persuading us to change these attitudes. The following factors explain why we are able to resist most systematic efforts to persuade us.

- o **Reactance.**
  Here we react in the face of mounting pressure to persuade us to change our attitudes on some issues. We do so in order to protect our personal freedom. As the pressure to persuade us rises, we begin to experience some degree of resentment and anger that is likely to influence us to take the opposite views to those the speaker presents or is attempting to persuade us to adopt. The effect is a negative attitude change. It is believed that in an attempt to change our selves, strong persuasive messages in favour of attitude

change might produce greater opposition than when moderate or weak persuasive messages are presented (Fuegen & Brehm 2004). The strong motivation to react comes to play when the individual pereives that the persuasive message is a direct threat to his/her freedom.

o **Forewarning**
This is the advantaged knowledge we have that the persuasive message is targeted to change our attitudes towards certain issues. Do you think that knowing ahead of time that your Parent, Sibling or Friend is coming to convince you on an issue prepares you to resist? In a way, yes, because it gives you the chance to be armed in the following ways:

1. **Opportunities to formulate counter arguments.**

   Our counter arguments lessens the effect of the messages on us, and gives us time recall facts that may come to disprove some aspects of the persuasive message, thus reducing our likelihood to be persuaded.

2. **Opportunity to make positive attitude change**.

   Here, if the individuals have the fore knowledge of the speaker intent it may help them to make a shift in the positive direction before they receive the persuasive message. This way they can convince themselves that they change not because they wanted to, but allow it to show themselves as not gullible or easily influenced (Quinn & Wood 2004)

3. **Selective Avoidance**.

   This is a tendency to direct attention away from information that has the potential to changesexisting attitudes. Such avoidance increases resistance to persuasion. People can decide to ignore or avoid information that does not agree with their views, and these include persuasive messages. If they do not pay attention to the message, their chances of analyzing and becoming persuaded by the message is reduced.

   This also means that we are likely going to pay full attention to persuasive messages that agree with our views. When we ignore certain messages and pay attention to others we are engaging in selective exposure. When we select what to focus our attention on, our attitude is likely to remain mostly intact for long periods of time.

4. **Defending our attitudes**.

   People usually provide their own defence against attempts to persuade them by counter arguing against views that contradicts their own (Eagly et al 199). People do also carefully process counter attitudinal inputs and argue actively against them rather than ignore them. This helps in resisting persuasion.

5.   Inoculation against "Bad Ideas"

People can be inoculated against persuasion by presenting to them views that opposed their own along side arguments that refuted these counter attitudinal positions. When counterarguments against opposing views are presented, people become motivated to generate additional counterarguments of their own which will make them more resistant to attitude change.

Self - Assessment Exercise   3.

Explain in not more than two sentences the first theory of persuasion discussed.

4.0   Conclusion

It has been revealed through this study that the act of persuasion is complex and unique. The actors are all expected to actively participate if persuasion is to succeed. Sincerity and integrity of both the givers and the receivers of the persuasive messages goes along way in helping this process. Attention must therefore be given to details with a focus on increasing the ability to persuade on our social world, towards improving it positively.

5.0   Summary.

This unit has described in a nutshell the factors involved in persuasion. The various theories and reasons why persuasions could be successful or resisted by the recipients have also been highlighted.

In the next unit, you will be studying different types of information processing known as Prejudice; Especially the role it plays in identifying the groups we belong to and those we do not belong to. We will also study how prejudice affects our behaviours towards these groups.

6.0   Tutor – Marked Assignment

1.   How is the elaborate likelihood model different from the heuristic systematic
       model of persuasion?

2.   Explain the first six factors that affect persuasion.

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Unit 10   PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION.

1.0   Introduction

We all want to belong to one group or another or be identified with certain groups and not others. Does belonging to groups have consequences other than just being part of them? We belong to certain groups not by choice, while we have the choice to belong to others. To be born white, or black or Caucasian, male or female does not give you any choice, you find yourself there.

One is likely to feel favourable toward the group she/he belongs to (in-group) and feel otherwise for grou he/she does not belong to (out group). The feeling component of this attitude is **Prejudice**, and is usually directed to specific out- groups or social groups. The negative or positive attitude towards members of specific out-groups results in our interpreting or processing information about the groups differently.

The way we treat people because they belong to certain groups and have become targets of prejudice is termed **Discrimination.**

In this unit, our focus will be on Prejudice and Discrimination, the feeling and acting components of attitudes, their origins and how they affect our evaluation of social groups, and the rationale behind the attempts to reduce prejudice and discrimination will all be examined.

2.0   Objectives

It is hoped that at the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1.   Define prejudice and discrimination
2.   List the causes of prejudice
3.   Explain the influence of Gender on prejudice
4.   Appreciate the concept of discrimination

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Definition of Prejudice

Prejudice means pre-judgment usually based on limited knowledge and little contact. Prejudice is a negative attitude towards an individual simply because she/he is a member of some group. (Brislin 1993; Dion 2003). Prejudice is largely negative attitude that is formed and unfairly applied to all members of a group regardless of the member's individual characteristics or uniqueness.

Allport (1954) defines prejudice as "An antipathy based on faculty and inflexible generalization directed towards a group as a whole or towards an individual because he is a member of that group. It may be felt or expressed"

Another, definition by Baron and Byrne (1991) states that "Prejudice is an attitude,(usually negative) toward the members of some groups based solely on their membership in such group.

Zimberdo and Leippe (1991) define prejudice as "…a learned attitude towards a target object that typically involves negative affects, dislikes or fear, a set of negative beliefs that support the attitude and a behavioural intention to avoid, or to control or dominate, those in the target group.."

Prejudice is seen as an extreme attitude comprising of cognitive, affective and Behavioural components, with prejudice further denoting the cognitive and affective components while discrimination denotes the behavioural component.

Allport (1954) proposed the following five steps in the components of prejudice.

1   Anti-location – Hostile talk, verbal denigration, results and racial jokes.
2   Avoidance – keeping a distance without actively inflicting harm.
3   Discrimination – Exclusion which could be from basic necessities like housing, employment, civil rights etc.
4   Physical attack – violence against these person and property.
5   Extermination – indiscriminate violence against an entire group which could include (genocide).

Prejudice is not personal and not directed to the individual based on his characteristics but solely bassed on his membership of the specific group.

Information that concerns targets of Prejudice is mostly given more attention or is processed more carefully than the information gotten that is not related to the target of Prejudice. (Blascovich et al 1997; Hugenberg & Bodenhausen 2003).

When prejudiced persons are in the presence of the individual or when they are thinking of the members of the group they dislike, Prejudice as an attitude is reflected in the negative feelings or emotions experience (Brewer & BROWN 1978; Vanman et al 1997).

Prejudice may be associated with specific inter-group emotions like fear, anger, envy, guilt or disgust, and the discriminatory action that is likely to follow will depend on what emotion underlies the Prejudice.

Anger for instance, might result in an attempt to harm, while Guilt and disgust might lead to avoidance directed at the out-group, and fear and envy might result in defensive reaction to protect the in-group. (Glick, 2002; Mackie & Smith 2002; Branscombe & Miron 2004; Newbers & Cottrel 2002).

Self Assessment Exercise 1.

Identify the five components of Prejudice as proposed by Allport.

3.2 Theories of Prejudice

The reasons for Prejudice and its sustenance have been explained by the following theories. Remember, theories are the answers to our questions on issues that concern the why of Behaviour and in this case, Prejudice based on research evidence.

1. **Social Identity Theory**

   This view is concerned with the consequences of seeing the self as a member of a social group and identifying with it. This tendency to divide the social world in terms of "us" (in-group) and "them" (out-group) affects the way we passive groups in general. Thus this theory suggests that people like to feel positively about their in-group and their self-esteem depends on their ability to identify these groups and belong to them.

   It is believed that the value we place on our in-group and the bias towards the out-group have bearings on Prejudice, since we are most likely to think favourably of our in-group and not mostly so about our out-group. (Tojfel & Tuner 1986; Oakes et al 1994; Spears, Doosje & Ellemers 1999).

   It is possible for groups to feel favourably towards other groups rather than their own, and reduce Prejudice especially if they feel secure in their groups and the superiority of the group is not threatened. (Hornesy & Hogg 2000).

2. **Cognitive Theories.**

   The social cognitive processes that people use in dealing with and explaining their understanding of the world may lead to Prejudice. This is because we meet many people in various situations that result in diverse behaviours, and we are not likely going to remember all of them, so we use cognitive short cuts to organize and make sense of these experiences that try to explain our social world. (Fiske 1998)

We are likely to begin the cognitive process by grouping all people we meet into social categories or groups. This is followed by perceiving members of each group as possessing similar characteristics. Any distinct behaviour from the individual members of the group might lead to attributing or generalizing this behaviour to the group, which might lead to developing Prejudice towards the group.

The feeling is that all members of the same group share the same beliefs and values differently from members of other groups (Dovadio, Kawakami & Gaertner 2000; Anthony, Cooper & Mullen, 1992; Dion 2004; Hamilton Sherman 1994).

3. Learning Theories

Prejudice can be learned just like we learn other attitudes. This learning could come from Parents, Peers, Siblings or Popular people we admire as we listen to them. In this kind of learning, negative attitudes towards people or groups we have not met or met briefly can occur. (Rohan & Zanna 1996; Smith & Mackie 2000).

4. Authoritarian Personality Theory.

The motivation to enhance self-esteem, sense of security and meet certain personal needs has encouraged and exposed people to Prejudice. According to Theodore Adomo et al (1950) and Attemeye (1996), People with the personality trait known as Authoritarianism are likely to exhibit Prejudice more. The authoritarianism trait has three elements:

- o Acceptance of conventional or traditional values.
- o Willingness to unquestioningly follow orders from Authority figures.
- o The inclination to act aggressively towards individuals or groups identify by authority figures as threatening to the values held by their in-group.

It is believed that those with the authoritarian personality become prejudiced as a result of the frustration they experienced as children which must have mostly been harsh, punitive, disciplinary, and with little affection.

They usually have high opinions of their parents but harbour unconscious hostility that may be displayed unto minority groups which are likely to become the target of authoritarian hostility.

They have very little insight and generally feel threatened by other groups and may project unto them their own unacceptable and anti social impulses which their Prejudice serves as ego defence.

5 Realistic Conflict Theory.

This theory is of the view that prejudice comes from competition for scarce resources that results in conflict, and proposes that this conflicts among groups motivate the development of Prejudice (Levine & Camphell 1972).

When competing for jobs which are usually few, for instance, issues like gender, race, class, and ethnicity may come into play, and biases coming from our perception of these groups may affect selection and encourage Prejudice.

6   Motivational theory.

This motivational theory has it that most people whether authoritarian or not are motivated to identify with their own group (in-group), which they are likely going to see as better than other groups (out-group). Because of this, members of the in-group mostly see all members of other groups as less in other qualities than their in-group members and sometimes treat them badly. (Prentice & Miller 2002; Jackson 2000)

7   Relative deprivation Theory.

Based on the frustration aggression hypothesis, the theory postulates that when there is discrepancy between actual attainment and expectations which is referred to as relative deprivation, this falling short of expectations leading to acute deprivation, is usually what the people believed they are entitled to.

The right to shelter, food, employment, better wages and safety among others, have been issues that have caused friction between leaders and their followers. Most aggression towards the authority has been as a result of the perceived deprivation of what the citizens see as their entitlement.

8   Social Identity Theory (SIT).

The focus of this theory is the minimal group effect in developing Prejudice. The suggestion is that individuals seek to achieve or maintain a positive self-image through personal identity and social identity.

While personal identity includes those unique personal characteristics and attributes, the social identity revolves around the group, giving the individuals a sense of who they are based on the group they belong to.

These social identities are mainly based on the number of groups we belong to. If the image of the group is positive, it might result in their positive social image and by and large positive self – image.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Describe the Authoritarian Personality Theory.

3.3 Discrimination – Prejudice in action.

Just like attitude Prejudice may not always be reflected in overt behaviours. Most negative attitudes arising from Prejudice are not expressed publicly perhaps due to social pressure, laws, fear of retaliation. However discrimination is still being expressed in subtle or disguised forms "old fashioned racism", which (blatant feelings of superiority for old fashion) has now been replaced with racism, a more subtle form of discrimination or prejudice in action.

This racism is Prejudice concealed from others in public places but is expressed when the opportunity is right or when it is safe to do so which is Discrimination.

The important difference between Prejudice and discrimination is that while Prejudice is an attitude, discrimination is a negative behaviour directed at members of a group usually out-groups and mostly results from Prejudice.

Self - Assessment Exercise   3.

Explain the major different between Prejudice and Discrimination

3.4 Reducing Prejudice

Prejudice seems to cut across cultures and even continents, thus, the need to tackle Prejudice headlong and reduce its effects on society becomes every body's concern, and lies squarely on all interested parties to find out ways of reducing Prejudice. Some strategies have been suggested to this effect.

o   **Learn not to Hate**.

From the theory on learning, Prejudice is acquired through learning from significant others in the society. What we learn is often based on ignorance or misinformation about the characteristics of the people in the out-group. (Davidio, Gaertner & Kawaskami 2003).

It is also believed that what is learned can also be unlearned, prejudice inclusive. Most of the learning on the negative attitudes is rewarded with approval, love and praise and even acceptance. This strategy requires parents or significant others to teach their children less biased views.

Because Parents and Elders are highly prejudiced themselves, the first step is to direct attention at their own prejudice before they teach the children or younger ones. A reminder of the high cost of holding these attitudes to these parents can also help modify their views on Prejudice.

Parents and significant others are interested in impacting positively on their children, and focusing on this issues can discourage them from insisting on such harmful attitudes and also help them shift from transmitting Prejudiced views to their children. Teachers, leaders and others can be effective in influencing those under them using this technique.

- **Jigsaw Technique** –

  A teaching strategy by Elliot Aronson (1995) requires children from different ethnic groups to work as a team to complete a task like reporting about a famous person in history. Each child is asked to learned and provide a separate piece of information about the person. Result showed a marked Prejudice towards other group by children involved in this Jigsaw and other cooperative learning experiences (Aronson 1997).

- **Encourage contact**

  The contact hypothesis by Allport (1954) suggests that Prejudice can be reduced substantially by increasing the degree of contact between different groups as supported by the following facts:

  a) Contact helps in recognizing similarities between the groups and if increased or done frequently, can change the categorization of "us" verses "them"

  b) Contact between groups or knowing that there is contact can provide signal that the group is not an "anti out-group" as initially viewed.

  c) Friendship is likely to develop which will make it explicit that members of the out-group do not
  dislike members of our in-group which reduces inter group anxiety.

  d) Anxiety generated when out group is thought of is also reduced by contact between the groups. (Pettigues & Tropp 2003)

- **Re-categorization**

  This is a strategy that results in a shift in the boundaries between the individual's in- group "us" and some out-group "them". This shift or re-categorization now places individuals from the out-group to be viewed as belonging to the in-group which means they will begin to be viewed positively.

  Imagine a situation were a competition between departments begin with the six departments in the faculty of social sciences namely; Psychology, Sociology, Political Science, Economics, Accounting and Management. Assume that at the end of the competition one of the departments will represent the faculty against other faculties in the University. At the beginning of the competition individuals will see their team as an in-group "us" and other departments as the out-group "them". If Psychology department, for instance, emerges the winner and moves to represent the faculty, the departmental boundaries will now shift to the faculty and it is likely that the six departments will see themselves as the in-group "us" which will smoothen the relationship between these groups.

  Gradually if the department wins at the faculty level and will now represent the University, the boundary will shift further to include the whole of the University as the in-group "us".

- **Common- in-group model.**

  According to this idea of categorization, the experience of distinct groups working together towards achieving shared goals will help this group see themselves as a single social entity or unit, and feelings of bias or dislike towards former out-group is likely to fade away along with prejudice.

- **Use of Guilt in Prejudice Reduction**

  The idea is that individuals who belong to groups be made to share in the guilt of their group's action even where the individuals did not participate. Collective guilt as a result of actions of other members of the group can be used as a means to reduce Prejudice. Once it is assumed to be effective, the individuals are confronted with the harm that their in-group's Prejudice towards an out-group has produced. (Branscombe, Doosje & McGarty 2002)

Self Assessment Exercise 4

Mention the five strategies one is likely to employ in reducing Prejudice.

4.0   Conclusion

The concerned of society is peaceful coexistence, and Prejudice in most cases has been used negatively to cause disunity or encourage group distinction. Our focus therefore, should be on mastering the technique on reducing prejudice and discrimination and redirecting our present generation to a future that has less prejudice.

5.0   Summary

You have learned that Prejudice and Discrimination are attitudes that can and should be changed. Reasons for why we form Prejudice and Discrimination have been revealed along with the strategies you can employ to reduce them.

In the next unit, a related attitude, stereotypes that develops as a result of prejudice will be examined.

6.0 Tutor – Marked Assignment

1.   Define Prejudice and Discrimination

2.   Compare the in-group to the out-group as stated by the social identity theory of prejudice.

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UNIT 11   STEREOTYPES

1.0 Introduction

Think of the groups you have joined. As a member, do you think you are like other members of your group? Most, likely not. No two people are exactly alike, not even identical twins. So why do people make assumptions and generalizations about whole groups just from the little they know about the individuals in that group? These over simplified perceptions, are called Stereotypes.

The word Stereotypes was coined by Lippman (1922) and he defines Stereotypes as "picture in our head" Stereotypes are considered the cognitive (thinking) components of attitudes toward a social group which consists of beliefs about what the group is like.

Stereotypes come from the word "Stereos" which means "solid or hard" and also refer to a metal plate used in printing. Things printed from the same mould can be said to be stereotypes. Since it is not possible to have people coming from the same mould, we can assume that stereotypes about people means we are ignoring individual differences and environmental influences as we try to understand the individual in the group or see the individual as distinct from the group he belongs to. Stereotypes act as theories guiding or selecting what to attend to and influences how we process social information.

In this unit, a clearer distinction between stereotypes and prejudice will be explained; reasons for stereotypes and how we can reduce stereotyping will also be explained.

2.0   Objectives

It is expected that as you complete the of study this unit, you will be able to;

1   Define Stereotypes
2   Explain reasons for Stereotypes
3   Explain the relationship between Stereotypes and Gender
4   Describe the strategies of reducing Stereotypes.

3.0   Main Content

3.1 Definition of Stereotypes

In dealing with people it is difficult not to make generalizations mostly because the demand on us will be more in each new situation without generalization. Though accurate generalization helps us to save time and enables us make informed judgments or take decisions about the individual or group, inaccurate generalization will affect us and our relationships negatively.

Forming impressions of strangers based on Stereotypes uses the category – driven method of processing which is the easiest, least strenuous route, but to rely on their unique characteristics is a more strenuous route that uses the attribute driven processing method. (Fiske & Neuberg 1990).

Stereotypes involve assigning someone to a particular group, bringing into play the belief that all members of the group share certain characteristics (Stereotypes) and inferring that this particular individual must possess these characteristics. While Stereotypes may be valid for the group, it may not be applicable to a given individual. Most Stereotypes involve ethnocentrism - the belief that other cultures may be inferior to one's culture.

Lippman (1992) described Stereotypes as selective, self fulfilling and ethno centric, made up of "very partial and inadequate way of representing the world". But he went further to argue that stereotypes serve an important practical function. He said, "The real environment is altogether too big, too complex and too fleeting for direct acquaintance. We are not equipped to deal with such subtlety, so much variety, so much permutations and combinations. And although we have to act in that environment, we have to reconstruct it on a simpler model before we can mange it".

The above views also agree with those of Allport (1954) and Brislin (1981). They believe that Stereotypes are "categories about people" and that "categories and Stereotypes are shortcuts to thinking" respectively. Stereotypes are also seen as resource saving devices simplifying the processing of information about other people.

Brislin (1993) suggests further that "Stereotypes should not be seen as a sign of abnormality, but that they reflect people's need to organize, remember and retrieve information that might be useful to them as they attempt to achieve their goals and meet life's demands".

Other definitions seem to imply that Stereotypes could have both positive and negative attributes about social groups, See table below.

Tagiuiri 1969	The general inclination to place a person in categories according to some easily and quickly identifiable characteristics such as age, sex, ethnic membership, nationality or occupation, and then to attribute to him qualities believed to be typical to members of that category.
Brown 1986	A shared conception of the characters of a group.
Oakes et al 1994	The process of attributing characteristics to people on the basis of their group membership
Hogg & Voughan 1995	Wildly shared assumptions about the personalities, attitudes and behavior of people based on group membership, for example, ethnicity, nationality, sex, race and class
Fiske (2004)	'. . .Applying to an individual, one's cognitive expectances and associations about the group. As such stereotypes represent one specific kind of Schema . . . '

(Gross R 2005; P 384 & 386)

Self Assessment Exercise   1

Identify the importance of Stereotypes according to Lippman, Allport and Brislin.

3.2   Stereotypes and Gender

Issues on gender are frequently encountered because these groups have been here with us since man and woman came into existence. That there are differences is not in doubt, but to what extent are we willing to go to encourage even assumed differences. We have come to agree that Stereotypes are traits, but could include other variables like physical appearance, activity preferences and likely behaviour.

These traits or characteristics could be either negative or positive attributes, accurate or inaccurate assumptions, and could be agreed with or rejected by members of the stereotyped group.

Gender Stereotypes are Stereotypes that are beliefs which concern the characteristics of women and men that contain both positive and negative traits.

Some common traits (Stereotypes) associated with women and men.

Female Traits	Male Traits
Warm	Competent
Emotional	Stable
Kind/Positive	Tough/Coarse
Sensitive	Self-Confident
Follower	Leader
Weak	Strong
Friendly	Accomplished
Fashionable	Non Conforming
Gentle	Aggressive

(Source: Based on Deaux & kite, 1993; Eagly & Mladinic, 1994; Fiske et al 2002).

Women are viewed as kind, nurturing and considerate on the positive side while on the negative side they are viewed as dependent, weak and emotional. Men also have both positive and negative traits and are viewed as decisive, assertive and accomplished on the positive side, and aggressive, insensitive and arrogant on the negative side.

Generally the use of warm for women gives people a positive feeling about women. This positive feeling however is not enough when it comes to women in positions of Authority. Any violation of these Stereotypes is suffered more by women than men.

All over the world women are making positive impact in various areas of life, but the struggle for women to survive in a male dominated world is still attributable to Stereotypes and the generalizations we make about women that affect them and their struggles in society.

Self Assessment Exercise   2

List five stereotype traits attributed to women and men

3.3   Reducing Stereotypes

Stereotypes of certain groups are so negative, pervasive, and have existed for so many generations that they can be considered part of the culture into which most children are socialized (Brislin 1993)

Suppressing Stereotypes may not be an effective means of reducing Stereotypes, but getting people to have insight into their Stereotypes, see through them and understand them. This is an effective means of reducing stereotypes in adults, who are expected to relate this new perception to their children or to younger people under their care.

Note also that Stereotypes differ from in-groups to out-groups. There is the tendency to see members of our in-group as being different from one another or more heterogeneous known as in-group differentiation, and see members of the out-group as all alike or more homogenous

known as out-group homogeneity. So changing or reducing Stereotypes will largely depend on whether we are dealing with members of an in-group or those of the out-group.

Two methods employed in reducing Stereotypes have been suggested as follow:

1   Learn to "just-say-no"

It is believed that we acquire stereotypes through learning by association between certain characteristics and various racial or ethnic groups. This view suggests that it is possible to break the stereotype habit by learning to say "no" to the stereotype trait associated with specific groups. If the process of saying "no" to stereotype traits is repeated, the reliance on stereotypes can be reduced. (Kawakami et al 2000)

2   Social Influence

Social norms suggest that attitude expression is supported by the rule guiding the group or society. Stereotypes that seem to be wildly shared within members of the group influence the expression of prejudice. Thus reducing Stereotypes must target members of the in-group.

In addition, Stereotype attitudes held by individuals are influenced by early experiences and current information, so it is expected that part of the current view will reflect the view of other members of their group who are mostly respected or admired by the individual.

It is assumed that if the view of the individual is very far from those of the group, and that the group represents what the individual likes, and is made up of people admired and respected by the individual, then these Stereotypes can be reduced as the individual makes allowances to accommodate the popular views thus reducing Stereotypes.

Self -Assessment Exercise   3.

Give three reasons why reducing Stereotype is likely going to be difficult.

4.0   Conclusion

Stereotypes as attitudes are formed through experiences that results in our defining the social world according to these Stereotypes. Our relationships can be destroyed, if destructive stereotypes are allowed to guide the individuals. What the individual accepts as the norm is largely passed on to him/her by the group. It is hope that society will focus on reducing stereotypes by re-evaluating their views from time to time and teaching the younger ones to form attitudes that are not loaded with Stereotypes.

5.0 Summary

This unit has dealt squarely with the issues of stereotypes, how they are formed and sustained. The influence of culture and gender in stereotyping and strategies required to reduce stereotypes were also explained.

In the next unit, issues of aggression and how they affect our interaction in the social world will be examined.

6.0   Tutor Marked Assignment

1   Define stereotypes according to Lippman, Brislin, Oakes & co and Fiske.

2   Describe how you can reduce stereotypes in your people.

7.0   References/Further Reading.

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MODULE 3 AGGRESSION, PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

Unit 12   Causes of Aggression

1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
         3.1 Social Causes of Aggression
         3.2 Personal causes of Aggression
         3.3 Environmental and situational causes of Aggression
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0   References/Further Readings

1.0   Introduction

Think back to the things that get you really angry. You will be surprised to note that it is not really the big or major things or issues that annoy you. It is mostly the minor, small, sometimes irrelevant things that get on your nerves. How you react to such provocations whether minor or major will determine the extent to which you are likely going to express your aggression.

Aggression is seen always as involving physical or symbolic behaviour with the intention of harming someone. The intention or reasons for being Aggressive are many, but usually focus on either of the following two goals. One of the intentions for being Aggressive could be to satisfy some needs known as **Instrumental aggression**, while the second goal or reason could be from a desire to hurt someone known as **Hostile aggression** – usually directed at the object of Aggression which could be an individual or a group.

Aggression could also be natural or pathological. The natural aggression sometimes known as Positive Aggression is mostly directed at self-defence or other form of social injustice, while the Pathological Aggression comes from within as a result of frustration which is mostly hostile in nature, and comes with the intention to harm someone all the time.

In this unit, we will focus on the first part of aggression that deals with the many causes of aggression which will include, Social, Personal and Environmental/Structural causes.

2.0   Objectives

After going through the material in this unit, you will be expected to;

1   Define Aggression
2   Identify the personal causes of Aggression
3   Explain the Environmental causes of Aggression
4   Describe the social causes of Aggression.

3.0   Main Content

3.1   Social Causes of Aggression

Most of the time the actions of others or what they say result in arousing aggressive feelings from us. Similarly, some happenings or events that do not give us the freedom to act the way we want might lead to Aggression. Some of the major social causes are as follow:

1   Frustration

The view that aggression is always a consequence of frustration and that frustration always leads to some form of aggression has been aired by Neal Miller, John Dollard et al (1939) in their popular frustration – aggression hypothesis. Frustration leading to some form of aggression does not always find release at the source of frustration. Sometimes the aggression is redirected, transferred or displayed to a lower target or another target at an opportune time.

2   Direct Provocation

Physical or verbal provocation is a strong cause of human aggression. Provocation is actions by others that tend to trigger attention from the recipient, often because these actions are perceived as stemming from malicious intent. Once people are at the receiving end of Aggression, the tendency is to return as much Aggression as was received or more, especially if we are sure that the other party meant to harm us in the first place. There are three types of provocation;

       i.   Condescension – involves the Expression of arrogance or disdain by others (Harris 1993)
       ii.   Harsh and unjustified criticism; if criticism is directed at attacking the person not the behaviour, can provoke aggression (Baron, 1993)
       iii.   Derogatory statements about families. Most people might tolerate attack on their persons, but might not stand insults or attacks directed at members of their families.

3   Heightened Arousal.

Heightened arousal in the form of emotions could result in the expression of aggression in response to provocation, frustration or other factors. According to the Excitatory Transfer Theory, physiological arousal tends to die slowly, and a portion may persist, continue and be carried from one situation to another.

Usually the presence of this stored or repressed emotional arousals termed residual arousal, may not be noticed by the individual or might be noticed, but is likely going too be attributed to present source of irritation (Zillman, 1983, 1988,1994, Tayler et al, 1991).

4   Exposure to media violence.

Media violence is the depictions of violent actions in the mass media. Exposure to, or witnessing aggression, results in the expression of aggression and violent behaviour by viewers. The exposure to violence by the media seems to strengthened beliefs, expectations and other cognitive processes related to aggression.

The effect of media violence is real, lasting and important, and has implications on the society in terms of her safety and well being of victims of aggressive actions. High levels of aggression, was formed among people who viewed violent films or programmes. (Bandura, Ross & Ross 1963; Busshman & Huesman 2001)

Other findings reveal that the more violent films or television programs people watched as children, the higher the rate or level of their Aggression as Teenagers or Adults, and also the more they are likely to be arrested for violent crimes. These findings were replicated (repeated) in other countries like Australia, Findland, Israel, Poland and South Africa with similar results.

This means that violence as viewed through the media results in Aggression, and this cuts across cultures. Recent works reveal aggression was not only as a result of violent films, but also could come from news programs, violent lyrics in popular music, and violent video games among others. (Anderson, Carnegey & Eubanks 2003; Anderson et al 2004)

5.   Pornography and Aggression

Pornography is erotic material viewed in any of the media. The association between the viewing of pornographic films or erotic materials and several forms of anti-social behaviour that includes sexual relation to violent crimes has been established.

Most child molesters and rapists confirm that these crimes were committed immediately after viewing erotic materials (Silbert & Pines 1984; Marshal 1989).

Men high in promiscuity and hostility who view pornography are associated with sexual Aggression more than men low in promiscuity and hostility who viewed pornographic materials. (Malamouth et al 2000).

Aggressive pornography is associated with violence against women. Most men who are likely to abuse and exploit women may also be those who view a lot of pornography.

6. Sexual Jealousy

Real or imagined infidelity occurs across societies. These cultures of honour view such behaviours by women as threatening male honour and do lead to drastic responses. Cultures where daughters are found not be virgins result in violence to protect the family honour. In cultures of honour, jealousy becomes a very powerful cause for aggression than on other cultures (Blass et al 1992; Vandello & Cohen 2003; Puente & Cohen 220, Packer 2004).

7   Cultural factors in Aggression

Cultural beliefs, norms and expectations in a given culture suggest that aggression is appropriate or even required under certain circumstances. Some cultures emphasize what is called "Cultures of Honour" where there are strong norms, suggesting that aggression is an appropriate response to insults to one's honour. Sexual jealousy is another avenue where the norm of one's honour comes to play.

Self – Assessment Exercise   1

Define in one sentence each, the seven causes of aggression.

3.2   Personal Causes of Aggression

Some personal characteristics make certain people more vulnerable than others in the expression of aggression. While some may remain calm in the presence of provocation and frustration, others easily react aggressively to the slightest provocation or frustrations. Some of the traits or personal characteristics likely to play key roles in explaining aggression are as follow:

1   The Type A behaviour pattern.

People exhibiting the type A behaviour pattern usually have high levels of competitiveness, time urgency and hostility. When you meet people who are extremely competitive, always in a hurry and especially irritable and aggressive, then you are interacting with people with the type A behaviour pattern (Glass 1977; Strube 1989).

The type A behaviour pattern persons are the opposite of the type B behaviour pattern group. The type B group are usually not competitive, not always "fighting the clock", and do not easily lose their tempers. The type A group are usually aggressive compared to the type B groups in most situations. (Baron, Russel & Arms, 1985; Carver & Glass 1978).

The type A behaviour pattern individuals engage in hostile aggression with the intention of inflicting harm or injury on their victims, and are more likely to be engaged in child abuse, spouse abuse while the type B individuals are more likely to engage in instrumental aggression and their goal usually is not to cause harm but achieve other goals like praise or gain control.

2   Hostile Attributional Bias

This is perceiving evil intend in others. Hostile attributional bias refers to the tendency to perceive hostile intentions or motives in the actions of others when these actions are ambiguous. How we evaluate and interpret the cause for other people's behaviours determine our reaction. If their behaviours are perceived as hostile and intentional or provocative, then it is likely that these will result in Aggression. Actions are usually dependent on our attributions concerning the exhibited behaviour.

People high in hostile attributional bias mostly do not give people the benefit of the doubt, and they are likely to assume that any provocative behaviour by others are intentional and react aggressively.

3   Narcissism and Aggression

Narcissism refers to excessive self-love, which means holding an over inflated or exaggerated view of one's own qualities or achievements. Persons high in Narcissism do react to slights of others or from feedbacks that attack their self image or ego.

The opinion the narcissist have for themselves are unrealistically high, and any attempt at building the self esteem of young people to the point where they develop this unrealistic high opinion of themselves increase their potential for violence.

4 Sensation seeking and Aggression

Sensation seeking and impulsivity are likely to go together for one who likes taking risks and looking for excitement. Such people might be higher than others in exhibiting aggression for the following reasons.
i.   People high in sensation seeking and impulsiveness experience anger and hostile feelings more than others.
ii.   May have low threshold for anger and their emotions are easily aroused.
iii.   Might view Aggressive exchange with others as exciting and dangerous, and
        when bored, might seek new experiences that may lead them to entertain hostile thoughts. (Zuckerman 1994).

In addition to the points above, Joireman, Anderson and Strathman (2003) suggested the following tendencies related to aggression for people high in sensation seeking.

i.   Attraction to Aggression – Eliciting situations.
ii.   Are more likely to experience anger and hostility.
iii.   Likely to focus on the immediate rather than the delayed consequences of their behaviour
iv.   Tend to show both physical and verbal aggression at a higher level compared to others.

5.   Gender and Aggression

 Like all other issues, are there any gender differences in aggression? To some extent yes, there is research support that males are more aggressive than females, they do engage in higher incidence of many aggressive behaviours than females. (Harris 1994)

Males are likely to perform aggressive actions and serve as target for such behaviour, which usually continues across life span, though it may vary in size and across situations as follows

- There is a gender difference in the absence of provocation than in its presence, with the males more likely to be aggressive against others even when not provoked in any way, but in the presence of provocation gender differences disappear. Once provoked, we assume that men and women respond in similar ways.

- Size and direction of gender differences vary with types of aggression. The males for instance, engage more in direct aggression, like physical assault, pushing, shoving, shouting, and insults. While females engage more in in-direct aggression where their actions are concealed from the victims and might come in form of gossiping, spreading rumours, telling others not to associate with intended victims and making up stories.

Self Assessment Exercise   2.

What are the major differences between the type A behaviour pattern and narcissism in the expression of aggression.

3.3 Environmental/Situational Cause of Aggression.

Factors relating to the environment or situations within certain contexts do result in aggression are as follow:

1   Climate and Aggression

The relationship between climate and aggression has been studied extensively. Findings are that heat increases aggression but beyond some level the reverse may be the case, with aggression decreasing as temperature rises. High temperature makes people very uncomfortable and tired, or fatigued and not likely to engage in aggressive behaviour for the following additional reasons.

- High temperature reduces aggression for both provoked and unprovoked persons, because for one who is hot, focus will be on reducing this discomfort rather engaging in fights with others.

- Hotter years were associated with higher rates of violent crimes. Heat has been linked to aggression in these ways:
    o People get hot and become irritable and may lash out at others
    o But exposure to high temperature for long makes people become uncomfortable and focus shifts on making self comfortable.

2   Air Pollution and Aggression

Chemical changes in the air are likely to result in aggression if inhaled in large quantities.

o **Ethyl Mercaplan**

A mild unpleasant smelling pollutant common in the urban areas, has been associated with aggression, where people have been found to be more aggressive when breathing air that contains this chemical. (Rothan et al, 1979).

o **Ozone** and level in the air increases the frequency of aggressive family disturbances.

i. Non smokers have been found to be more Aggressive breathing **smoke – filled - air** compare to clean air (Zillman, Baron & Tambori 1981).

ii. **Lead.** Association between long term exposures to toxins like lead resulting in aggression has established (Needleman 1996)

3   Noise

An unwanted and uncontrollable sound has been associated with the display of aggression especially when the noise is unpredictable and irregular (Bell et al, 2000; Grein & Mc, 1984).

4   Living Arrangements.

Buildings with few tenants or residents are less likely to provoke aggressive behaviours from tenants compared to tenants of crowded apartment or buildings. This is because crowding tends to result in physiological arousal which might make people tense, uncomfortable and likely to report negative feelings. This tension or arousal can make people like each other less and become more aggressive.

Behaviour problems among juvenile delinquents have been shown to have direct bearing on crowding for these young ones related to their living condition. (Ray et al 1982; Bell et al 2000)

5   Alcohol and Aggression.

Alcohol consumption especially in large quantities was found to make users behave more aggressively and respond to provocations more strongly than non users. This effect of alcohol on users has been attributed to reduced cognitive functioning and social perception. Alcohol has been found to impair or distort higher order cognitive functions like the evaluation of stimuli and memory.

Alcohol also has the effect of reducing the user's ability to process positive information about some one he/she does not liked in the first instance or one that is viewed in negative terms. (Bartholow et al 2003).

Alcohol also results in disinhibition by the user which allows one to take unreasonable risks, which might result in aggressive behaviour at the slightest provocation.

Self Assessment Exercise 3.

Describe briefly the four chemicals can induce aggression due to air pollution.

4.0 Conclusion

The causes of aggression are as many as the different types of aggression that are even known. Understanding aggression and their causes should be the focus of society and those in the helm of affairs in any nation. While aggression might be positive and desirable in some instances, the negative and undesirable aggression that seems to rear its head in most interactions should be tackled and society made to emphasize positive aggression.

5.0 Summary

This unit has examined the many causes of aggression. Views of the social, personal, environmental/situational factors in aggression were extensively explained.

In the next unit, Theories that explain aggression and how to reduce aggression will be our focus.

6.0   Tutor – Marked Assignment.

1. Describe the three types of direct provocations one is likely to experience during an interaction.

2. Contrast the type A and the Type B pattern found in people who engage in or experience aggression.

7.0   Reference/Further Readings.

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UNIT 13 THEORIES AND CONTROL OF AGGRESSION

1.0   Introduction

The study of aggression continues with the review of literature on the theories of aggression and techniques for controlling or reducing aggression.

Our understanding of the reason perfectly normal human beings could turn into destructive machines through the expression of aggression, and the ability of these knowledge to provide guides into how to prevent or reduce these tendency is the greatest service to humanity that social psychologist have done through various researches.

The fact that aggression in any form is usually directed toward harming or causing injury to another person, who in turn is motivated to avoid such treatment, means aggression is not desirable. There is an innate aggressive response to provocation or frustration that is expressed or released only in the presence of an appropriate target.

If aggression is not expressed or released it could be displaced on undeserving or inappropriate victim who is likely going to result in further aggression by the new target. This circle should be broken and aggression reduced to the minimum.

In this unit, all that you need to know concerning aggression and the necessary steps required in preventing or reducing aggression will be revealed and explained.

2.0   Objectives

At the end of this study unit, you will be expected to:

1   Define Aggression
2   Explain Aggression in the light of the Biological Theories.
3   Explain Aggression in the light of the Drive Theories.
4   Explain Aggression in the light of the Modern Theories.
5   Describe the process involved in controlling Aggression.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Genetic/Biological Theories of Aggression.

Are we by nature programmed to react aggressively to frustrations or provocations from others? Are there genes responsible for aggression in humans? The struggle to survive requires to some extent that humans are aggressive and able to defend themselves. Perhaps the following biological theories will throw more light.

1   Instinct Theories

- **Freud's Psychoanalytic Approach (Freud,1923)**

    Freud was able to distinguish between his earlier instinct view on life instinct (errors), like sexuality (libido) and the death instinct (thanados). The death instinct (thanados) is in-bornand destructive tendency is directed against the self. This self directed aggression conflict with the self preservative need of the life instinct.

    According to Freud, this self destructive instinct (which is innate) is so strong that it has to be redirected toward some outward object or another person rather than self. This aggressive energy could also be redirected positively into activities like sport, or physical occupations.

- **Instinct Theories -Lorenz Ethological approach (Lorenz, 1996)**

    Lorenz defines aggression as "….the fighting instinct in beast and man which is directed against members of the same species…" This approach views aggression as instinctive in all species. In the face of scarce resources for survival like food and shelter, aggressiveness becomes necessary and important in competing for these limited resources towards basic survival.

    Lorenz also believes that aggressive energy builds up and must find some outlet to be discharged.

    In line with the evolution view, aggression comes from inherited fighting instinct which means that only strong males will have mates and pass their genes onto the next generation. (Lorenz 1966, 1974).

2   Brain and Aggression

People may inherit certain temperaments like impulsiveness that might make aggression likely (Rowe, Almeda & Jacobson,1999). The following areas of the brain have been associated with aggression.

- **Limbic System**

The Amygdala, hypothalamus and related areas; Damage to these parts could result in defensive aggression that might include heightened aggressiveness to non threatening stimuli or decrease responses that would inhibit aggression. (Anderson & Bushman 2002a; Coccaro 1989; Eichelman ,1983)

1. **Cerebral Cortex** – the pre frontal area of the cortex responsible for the metabolism of glucose does so more slowly in murderers (violent aggressors) than non murderers. (Raine et al 1994)

2. **Hormones -** Testosterone – masculine hormone present in both males and females, but more in the male. Aggression increases depending on the level of testosterone in the blood stream

   - High levels of testosterone have been found in criminals who commit violent crimes than those who commit non-violent crimes.
   - High levels of testosterone are also found in murderers who knew their victims and plan their crimes before hand.
   - Exposure to high levels of testosterone during prenatal development (pregnant mother given testosterone to prevent miscarriage) show more aggression compared to those who where not exposed. (Dabbs & Dabbs 2000; Pope, Kouri & Hudson 2000; Yates 2000; Dabbs, Raid & Chancc 2001; Ziema – Davis & Sanders 1991).

Self - Assessment Exercise   1

Describe the major differences between Freud and Lorenz theories of instincts in explaining aggression.

3.2   Drive Theories

Drive theories suggest that aggression comes from external conditions that arouse the motive to harm or injure others. External conditions especially frustration is believed to arouse strong motives to harm others. These perspectives rejected the views proposed by theories on instincts by Freud and Lorenz, and came up with the drive theories which include:

- **The frustration – Aggression Hypothesis (FAH).**

Dollard et al (1939) suggest that frustration leads to the arousal of a drive with the goal of causing harm to some person or object. This theory claims that "aggression is always a consequence of frustration and, the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression.

Dollard agrees with Freud that aggression is an innate response, but adds that aggression is triggered only by frustrating situations and events.

Berkowitz (1998) modified this hypothesis. He proposed that stress in general rather than frustration in particular may be responsible in accounting for the readiness to act aggressively by the individual. With this readiness in place, cues in the environment associated with aggression can result in aggressive behaviour. Things like Guns, Knives, Television scenes, People arguing could become cues that trigger aggressive response.

Also that Negative effect or unpleasant emotion is the direct course of aggression. The stronger the negative affect the stronger the readiness to act or behave aggressively.

Finally that negative affect can be aroused by pain. He found that pain can result in more aggression toward others.

Marcus – Newhall et al (2004) and Fiske (2004) are of the views that displaced aggression is usually directed at an innocent weaker target or third party, especially where the frustrating agent or provoking person cannot be attacked directed. It is also seen as an attempt to have control over some one in a weaker position.

The FAH has been rejected by social psychologists as false, but still enjoyed wide spread acceptance outside the field.

- **Aggressive – Cue Theory (ACT)**

Berkowitz (1966) – argues that frustration results in anger rather than aggression. According to this cue – arousing theory, frustration is psychologically and physically painful, and what is painful can lead to aggression. Certain cues are needed in-order for this anger or psychological pain to be converted into actual aggression. These cues are environmental stimuli that involve the aggressive behaviour or the frustrating object or person. These environmental cues could result in aggression or in the aggressor's mind, when they are associated with aggression or they remind the aggressor of the unpleasant experiences.

This view assumes that the mere physical presence of weapons may result in increase aggressive action even when the weapon is not used to perform the aggressive actions. Both Berkowitz (1968) and Fiske (2004) all agree that guns can stimulate violence and provoke aggression simply by being there.

- **Zilman's Excitation transfer theory (ETT)**

Zilman (1982) proposed that arousal from one source can be transferred in and result to some other responses. When aroused, aggression may be heightened if the aroused person is exposed

to react aggressively. The arousal is usually wrongly attributed to the aggression provoking event and not to the correct source.

Self - Assessment Exercise   2

Briefly explain the two views in the frustration aggression hypothesis model.

3.3   Modern Theories of Aggression

Earlier theories focus on either instincts or drives as the motives for aggression. The modern theories look at the diverse areas of psychology in order to comprehend this complex human behaviour. Social learning theories ranging from observation to rewards and punishment all contribute to the development of aggression modelling.

1   Social learning theories (SLT)

Inline with what obtains in other forms of behaviours; aggressive responses are also learned either through direct experiences or the observation of modelled behaviour. People who behave aggressively, like characters on the television, in movies, videos games, news papers and the like, model aggressive behaviour and also provide the material required for learning.

This theory is of the view that the individual;s past experiences and current rewards are related to past or present aggressive behaviour, attitudes and values, mostly cultural, that shapes thoughts concerning aggressive behaviour and its acceptance which results in learning, (Bandura 1965, 1973 & 1993) Part of what is learned include;

- Ways of seeking to harm others
- Identifying which persons or groups are appropriate targets for aggression
- Types of actions by others that justify aggressive responses
- The situation or context in which aggression is permitted or approved.

Some examples of learning theories applicable here include;

1. **Observational learning** – which uses imitations, is known as the reproduction of learning through observations.
2. **Vicarious Reinforcement** – learning that takes place through our seeing others being rewarded by aggressive behaviours.

2.   General Aggression Model (GAM)

A newer perspective that builds on the learning theory, a modern theory of aggression that suggests that aggression is triggered by a wide range of input variables that influence arousal, affective states and cognition (Gross R 2005). There are two major types of input variables that explain the chain of events that occurs which eventually leads to aggression, situational and personal factors.

Situational factors could include variables like frustration, insults from others, exposure to aggressive modelling, any events or persons that cause discomfort like temperature, air pollution

among others. And the person factors include individual differences, traits and characteristics, attitudes and beliefs about violence.

These variables can result in aggression through their impact on the following three basic processes.

- Arousal – Possible increase in physiological arousal or excitement.
- Affective States – Possible arousal resulting in hostile feelings and their outward signs.
- Cognitions. Include hostile thoughts and bring to mind beliefs and attitudes about aggression.

This theory provides evidence to support the view that the individual is "primed" for aggression through repeated exposure to aggressive stimuli that strengthen beliefs, attitudes, schemas, and scripts associated with aggression. This could result in aggressive response from the individual, through the activation of either the situational or person variable.

3. Cognitive Nero-association Theory.

This view proposes that cues present during aggressive events may become associated in memory with thoughts and emotions experienced during the event. If in real life or through films, one witness violence like shooting scenes and guns, might be associated with emotions like anger, fear, hurt and humiliation. This could become cues (physical or pictures) later for the memory to remember the violent scenes and for aggressive behaviour to be activated (Anderson, Benjamin & Bartholw 1998).

Self - Assessment Exercise   3

Discuss the roles of observational and vicarious reinforcement in learning and aggression.

3.4   Reducing Aggression

We all do not like pain, and aggression usually inflict physical or emotional pain on the victim, and even the aggressor in some cases. This pain can also be shared or felt by distant relatives of both parties involved in aggressive behaviours. Some of these negative responses to frustrations or provocations are associated with many causative factors; reducing aggression will also require strategies that are unique to these factors.

1   Punishment

Punishment is the delivery of aversive consequences in order to reduce aggression. Usually society, group or even individuals decide what punishment is appropriate for any aggressive behaviour, which could be inform of fines, imprisonment (execution).

The following reasons have been stated as ton why punishment seems to work.

- **Punishment is supposed to make amends for harm caused**. Society or group determines what the standard should be, and when individuals violate these standards they are punished accordingly. The Punishment receive should be enough and match the harm caused. It is advice that the reason for aggressive behaviour should be determined, so that Punishment is

not mated to a justified or "justifiable" aggression like self – defence or saving family honour.

- **Punishment should deter future occurrence of such aggression.** Punishment must be strong, timely and related to the offence. When there is time lapse between the aggression committed and the Punishment mated out, the behaviour might not be corrected because the aggressor might not associate the behaviour with the present punishment.

In most cases, punishment has been shown to be effective and should be used more than private Punishment. And for Punishment to reduce aggressive behaviour, four basic requirements most be met.

i. Punishment must be prompt
ii. Punishment must follow the aggressive behaviour
iii. Punishment must be strong
iv. Punishment must be perceived by one being punished as justified or deserved.

- **Reduce aggressive behaviour when aggressive offenders are put in prison.** This helps reduce aggressive behaviour in the following ways.
    i. Dangerous people are removed from the society, future victims are protected from possible harm.
    ii. Additional act of aggression is also reduced. Most crimes are likely to be repeated, so putting aggressor in prison removes the opportunity to repeat the crime, and reduces another aggression on the same or other victim.

2.   Cognitive Intervention.

Both aggressors and victims are required to make efforts at reducing aggression, and some ways that have been suggested are as follow:

- Use of Apologies - the admission of wrong doing by the aggressor has been shown to diffuse aggression.

- Use of Pre-attribution – attributing annoying actions from others to un intentional causes before the occurrence of the actions or provocation, can held protect the victim of aggression, and reduce aggression through likely retaliation.

- Prevent self or others from dwelling on past real or imagined wrongs. Use distracters like reading, playing, watching television, exercise etc.

3.   Forgiveness

In most cases of aggressive behaviour towards us, revenge seems to be the appropriate response. But usually, revenge results in retaliation which encourages a vicious circle of aggression.

Forgiveness – giving up the desire to punish or seek revenge from those who have hurt us, and act kindly and be helpful to them reduces aggression. The act of given up the desire to punish others alone reduces aggression, and even physical well – being. The closer we are to our offenders, the more beneficial it is for us to forgive them. (Karremans et al, 2002)

Some personal traits like agreeableness and emotional stability have been used to explain why other people are able to forgive more easily than others. These individual differences suggest that people higher in agreeableness have a tendency to trust others and want to help them, while people higher in emotional stability show low vulnerability to negative moods or emotions. To be able to forgive, the following techniques have been used.

- **Empathy – Putting self in other person's place.**

  Try to understand the feelings, emotions and circumstances that warranted the offender to harm you.

- **Make generous attributions** about the causes of the enemies or offender's behaviour. Agree that they had a good reason for doing what they did, even though it hurts.

- **Avoid Ruminating.** Once you have dealt with past problems, they are over. Do not bring them to beer on present issues or persons, and focus on other important issues (Mc Cullagh et al 2001).

Self-Assessment Exercise   4

List the four basic requirements that must be met for punishment to be effective as a means of reducing aggression.

4.0   Conclusion

Aggression is a way of expressing stored up frustrations or provocations that has the usual goal of harming the victim. This second and final unit of aggression has related aggression to the findings in the literature and came up with possible theoretical explanations for aggressive behaviour, and also ways of reducing aggression. Agencies and institutions charged with the duty of reducing aggression in the society will require lessons like this one to improve their skills to be effective. This unit and related ones have tried to bring to society through her student all that will require being effective in understanding and reducing aggression.

5.0 Summary

This unit has exposed you the current focus on aggression using the theories of aggression. And you have studied the drive, modern, genetic/biological theories of aggression. Ways of reducing aggression were also highlighted.

In the next unit, we will look at prosaical behaviour or helping behaviour, why we do or do not help people.

6.0   Tutor – Marked Assignment

1   Briefly describe the two major areas in the brain that could result in aggression if damaged.

2   Identify the three reasons imprisonment as a form of punishment can reduce aggression

7.0   References/Further Readings.

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UNIT 14   PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – HELPING BEHAVIOUR

1.0   Introduction

Now we turn to helping behaviour, a major form of prosocial behaviour. This is a welcome change from aggression, at least knowing that humans posses some qualities that aim at helping rather than harming others is refreshing.

Prosocial behaviour focuses on behaviours that are intended to be of benefit to others, which might include helping, comforting, cooperating, sharing, showing concern, defending, donating, and reassuring. What benefits others could change with time and place, and will depend also on our definition. This action might not provide any direct benefit to the person helping, and might require the individual to make some sacrifice. Any act intended to benefit another person is helping behaviour.

Are we by nature programmed to help? What are some of the reasons that might influence our behaviour? Can we help strangers and those who are familiar to us equally? Are there individual differences in helping behaviour? Why are some prone to help while others remain apathetic in similar situations?

The material in this unit will answer these questions and more, as we focus on issues like bystander intervention, factors in helping behaviour and the motivation behind helping behaviour.

2.0 Objectives

After completing this unit, it is expected that you will be able to;

1.   Define Prosocial and helping behaviour.
2.   Explain the reasoning behind bystander intervention.
3.   Explain the factors that are associated with helping behaviour.

4. Describe the motivation behind helping behaviour.

3.0   Main Content

3.1   Bystander Intervention.

We learn early in life to help others. These might vary from culture to culture, where some cultures might support rewards for helping others while some might encourage the behaviour without the expectation of any reward. The presence of others when help is required may affect the individual willingness to help in emergency situation.

Latene' and Darley (1970) are of the view that the chances for people to engage in the Prosocial act of helping others requires series of decision by them as they witness emergence , which must include the following:

1. Notice that something is wrong.

2. Define it as a situation that requires help.

3. Decide on whether to take personal responsibility.

4. Implement the decision to intervene.

1.   Notice that something is wrong or unusual.

Emergencies usually occur when we least expect them. This means that we are mostly not prepared to respond immediately partly because we are not sure of what to do, or we have not fully appreciated the extent of the emergency. Because there are so many activities going on around us, we may not pay attention to all of them, this might include emergencies.

Our mood affects how we notice events in our surrounding. People in good moods pay attention to others which makes them more likely to help.(Dovidio and penner 2004). People in deep thought or not in good moods may not be able to concentrate or pay attention to events or others and may just be unable to notice when anything unusual happens and might not be able to help.

People who are too busy may be preoccupied with what they are doing, that they may not be able to notice any unusual things happening around them. Milgram(1970) found that urban dwellers may restrict attention to personally relevant events, and may not notice strangers and their needs as way of coping with stimulus overload in their environment.

This view was supported by the works of Heade and Yousif (1992) & Yousif and korte (1995) who found urban dwellers to be less likely to help compared to rural dwellers .We can infer from their study of different countries that, urban centres are made up of more strangers than the rural settlements. People in rural areas are few and know themselves better.

2.   Define what is happening as a situation that requires help.

Even when we are able to notice that something is not right or is unusual, we may not be able to help if our definition of the event is not associated with an emergency. Interpreting the event as an emergency requires that we have all the information we need to evaluate the situation. In most cases we are left with little information, or distorted information that leaves us confused about what is happening and this reduces our willingness to help.

Our ability to interpret emergencies correctly helps us to respond quickly and decisively to them. The presence of others, have been found to affect the individual's willingness to help, due to what is referred to as pluralistic ignorance. This is the tendency of the individual surrounded by strangers to hesitate and not help in emergency, but rely on these bystanders for information (which in most cases is not accurate)and uses this to justify his/her failure to offer help. But if these individual is surrounded by friends, may communicate more and the inhibiting effect will be less.(Latene' and Darley 1968, Rutkowski,Gruder and Romer,1983)

Evidence has shown that when people are alone they may be able to define events as emergency faster, and even respond or decide to help immediately. Two friends may also respond faster while two strangers may not respond at all or do so slowly.(Latane'and Rodin 1969).

3.   Deciding whether to take personal responsibility.

Accepting personal responsibility by any individual will be less likely in the presence of many bystanders. The phenomena is also known as bystander effect which means diffusion of responsibility- which is the denial of personal responsibility believing that someone else might do what is necessary or right. Individuals when alone as bystander take responsibility, and act because the options are few or none at all.

4.   Deciding on the type of help to give.

The bystander's competence to help in a given situation can go a long way in deciding to help, whether alone or in the presence of other bystanders. When we know that some bystanders are competent to help more than ourselves, the more likely for diffusion of responsibility to increase. But if the individual bystander believes he/she is more equipped to help, the chances of helping will increase, and will likely do so immediately regardless of other bystanders.

Sometimes, it is not apathy that inhibits bystanders from helping, it may be the issues of competence as discussed where he/she, may sincerely want to help but is not competent to do so.

5.   Implementing the decision to intervene.

This is the point at which the bystander decides to finally engage in a helping act. Once all the hurdles from the four steps have been crossed, this remaining step might be hindered by our fear of the potential consequences of our behaviour if we fail. Here one must weigh the positive against the negative effects of helping ,and depending on the outcome, could result in our helping or not helping at this final stage.(Fritzche,Finkelstein and penner.2000).

Self-Assessment Exercise   1

List the four steps or series of decisions that must be taken by the bystander before help could be given during emergency.

3.2   Factors in Helping Behaviour.

In addition to the bystander effect, some situational, emotional and personality factors among others will be looked at as they either enhance or inhibit our helping behaviours.

1.   Situational Factors.

- **Helping those we like**

Those we like are mostly family members or friends, and most of what we have discussed so far centred on helping strangers. The following reasons have been given for why we tend to help generally.

      i.   Age and Race – Similarity of a stranger to you in terms of age and race may increase your likelihood to offer help.

      ii.   Physically attractive victims receive more help compared to unattractive ones.

      iii.   Women in distress are more likely to be helped by men. This could be due to gender difference, sexual attraction or because women are more willing to ask for help more than men.

      iv.   Holding similar values encourages helping behaviour.

The evolutionary theory is of the view that we are likely to help family members because this behaviour will contribute to the survival of our prehistoric ancestors (Buss 2003).

Family ties, evidence show that people are likely to donate organs to family members than to strangers. While some views may see this behaviour in terms of greater attachment or a stronger sense of social obligation to relatives than to strangers or others, the evolutionary view will see the case of one donating to a family member to save life, as helping to ensure the survival of the genes shared with the family member who receives the organ.

- **Helping those who mimic us.**

Mimicry is the automatic tendency to imitate the behaviour of those we come in contact with. This tendency could also be unconscious. Mimicry has been seen to enhance liking and results in increased helping behaviour by those who have been mimicked. This helping behaviour is not only offered to those who mimicked them but extended to others too.(Van Baaren et al 2004).

- **Helping those who are not responsible for their problem.**

We may find that it is easier for people to help accident victims and people we evaluate as victims of brutal attacks, because our attribution to their problems will be that they were not responsible for these problems. To the accident victims we may attribute their problem to rough driving, bad car or bad road, thus not their fault. Generally people are less likely to help those they believe to have caused their problems or are responsible for their problems (Higgins and Shaw. 1999; Weiner, 1980).

- **Exposure to Prosocial models**

The bystander who offers to help provides a model for other bystanders, and is likely to increase helping behaviour in these bystanders. Other findings are that modelled helping behaviour on television, unlike the modelling of negative behaviour such as aggression on television has increase the helping behaviour of the viewers.

2. Emotional factors

Emotional states have been associated with helping behaviour just like any other form of behaviour. Positive or negative emotions have their effects on the helping behaviour of the individual.

- Positive emotions

People are likely to help when in a good mood rather than a bad one. Pleasant fragrance makes people feel better and improve helping behaviour. Lemon or floral odour have been found to increase the willingness to help. Other findings are that people in good moods may not engaged in helping behaviour especially if it means doing something difficult and unpleasant (Rosenhan, Salovey and Hargis 1981).

- Negative emotions

An individual in a negative mood is less likely to help others. Because unhappy people are pre-occupied with their own problems, they are less likely to engage in any helping behaviour. But in cases where helping is likely to improve one's mood and make him feel better, helping behaviour is more likely when one is in a bad mood compared to a neutral mood. This negative emotion must not be too intense, the emergency not complicated, and if helping will be interesting and satisfying not dull and unrewarding (Amato 1986; Cialdini, kenrick and bowman 1982 cunningham et al 1990).

3   Personality and Prosocial Behaviour

- Altruistic Personality

Multiple aspect of the personality is necessary for prosocial behaviour, and altruistic personality is high on five dimensions found mostly in people who engage in Prosocial behaviour during emergencies. The personality characteristic or disposition includes empathy, belief in a just

world, and acceptance of social responsibility, having an internal locus of control and not being egocentric. These five dispositions are as follow:

i.   **Empathy**
     Empathy is rare among people high in aggressiveness but people who engage in helping behaviour are higher in empathy than those who do not. Empathic people are usually described as responsible, socialized, conforming, tolerant, self-controlled, and highly motivated - make good impressions.

ii. **Belief in a just world**
     People high in helping behaviour believe the world to be fair and behavior is rewarded if good, and punished if bad. They also believe that helping others is the right thing to do and not expect anything in return; but that helping also results in benefits for the helper for his/her good work.

iii. **Social Responsibility**
     Those who help also believe that each person is responsible for doing his/her best in helping people in need.

iv. **Internal Locus of Control**
     We have a choice of which way to behave, either to maximize good outcomes or minimize bad outcomes. People who do not help have external locus of control and see outcomes in terms of pure luck, fate or people in high places.

v.   **Low egocentrism**
     Altruistic people tend not to be self-absorbed and competitive.

Self – Assessment Exercise   3

List all the five dispositions that are likely to be shown by people with the Altruistic personality.

3.2   Basic motivation in helping behaviour

The reasons people could be motivated to engage in prosocial behaviour are many and most theories focus on the people's desire for rewards and the avoidance of punishment. Is it then rewarding to help, and does punishment follow the lack of engagement in helping behaviour? The following views were put forth to explain why people are motivated to help.

- **Empathy – Altruism hypothesis**

This view proposes that some prosocial behaviour are motivated mainly by the desire to help someone in need and by the fact that it feels good to help. Altruistic – unselfish helping people are willing to help even when the cost is high because have empathy for the individual in need. Increased information or additional information increases empathy which influences helping

behaviour. Another view is that the desire to help could also come from our need to relieve ourselves from the additional information received which is seen as a selfish reason.

When many people need help, it is not possible to feel empathy for all of them. In some cases empathy reduces with large numbers of people. The individual usually will decide on helping one person from the group known as selective altruism. Most Organizations involved in charity work use photograph of one person or child to arouse empathy so that help can be directed towards this individual. Generally altruistic behaviour results in positive emotions. Helping make us feel good.

- **Negative – State Relief Model**

Here altruistic behaviour could result in the individual feeling bad after perceiving a person in need, and will want to help just to relief this bad feeling. Improving negative mood becomes the reason for wanting to help someone in need. One might not need to feel empathy before helping.

- **Empathic Joy Hypothesis**

The view here suggests that the individual is likely to help because the reward of accomplishing something is expected. The individual will feel joy and have a sense of satisfaction for making some positive impact on the lives of people. The motivation to help is really the positive emotion anticipated at the end by the helper. This requires feedback from the victim who has been helped. The combination of empathy and expected feedback increased helping behaviour more than either empathy or expected feedback alone.

- **Arousal – Cost – Reward (ACR) model**

This model was introduced and revised by Piliavan et al (1969, 1981) to cover emergency and non-emergency helping behaviours. This mode identified two distinct concepts;

  o Arousal as the basic motivational construct which is an emotional response to the need of others. The motivation is to relieve unpleasant experiences that come from the distress aroused by the victim's need for help.

  o The cost-reward involves the cognitive processes used to assess the cost of helping or not helping. Cost for helping might include time lost, effort, risk or danger to self, embarrassment, interference with ongoing activity, mental stress. The cost for not helping might be guilt feelings, blame from others, self-blame from knowing that another is suffering. Rewards here for helping might include fame, gratitude from victim and relatives, self satisfaction, avoiding guilt, money. This cost-reward may vary from person to person, and even from situation to situation for the same person.

Self – Assessment Exercise   4

Explain in not more than two sentences the basic difference between the empathy – altruism hypothesis and the empathy joy models in helping behaviour.

4.0 Conclusion

The information here have explained the reasons and motivation behind bystander's prosocial behaviours. We will always come across people in need, and or decision to help or not to help will have to be made on a daily basis. Society must make prosocial behaviour rewarding and less tasking for people, so that relief for those in dire need will be available. Activities aimed at motivating and increasing empathy should be the focus of society, and prosocial behaviour encouraged by all.

5.0   Summary

The unit has shared with you the reasons for prosocial behaviour, factors responsible in enhancing and motivating prosocial behaviour and the basic components of prosocial behaviour.

In the next unit, you will look at the final topic for this course and an interpreting one for that matter. Interpersonal Attraction – what it is, why we are attracted or not attracted to each other and how we can improve in this aspect of social interaction.

6.0   TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Give four reasons why people are likely to help according to the situational factors in helping behaviour.

2. What decisions must the bystanders make before they are able to help during emergencies

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UNIT 15   INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

1.0   Introduction

What a journey! You will agree with me that we have come a long way. After studying concepts or constructs like Impression Formation, Impression Management, Attitude Formation, Attitude change, Conformity, Compliance, Obedience, Prejudice, Aggression among others, and also focusing on the group, our reasons for joining or not joining certain groups, what ensures that we remain in certain groups and are certain to leave others?

We now turn to the interaction that takes place among group members. What attracts them to each other and how these attractions influence behaviours and aid in social interaction – within groups?

Interpersonal attraction relies on our ability to make accurate judgment about the people we are attracted to. Given the complex nature of man, to understand an individual, we must look at various attributes of man, like physical, psychological, emotional attributes and even the influence of Environment among others.

Positive attraction is assumed to pave way for increased interaction between people which is expected to bring them closer to each other, and even graduate to a lasting relationship. What makes us feel good about another person is very important in attraction.

Are the popular sayings that "Birds of the same feather flock together" or "Opposites attract" true? In this unit, we will look at these sayings closely, and also examine the factors that determine interpersonal attraction. Reasons why we are likely to perceive others favourably or unfavourably, and remain drawn to them or withdrawn from them will also be studied.

2.0   Objectives

At the end of this study unit, I am expecting that you will be able to:

1   Define Interpersonal Attraction
2   Asses the Internal determinants of attraction
3   Explain the External determinants of attraction
4   Discuss the interactive determinants of attraction

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Internal determinants of attraction.

We are always interacting with other people. It is almost as if our lives depend on these interactions. Our psychological well-being will be enhanced if the need for affiliation and emotional needs (affect) are met. Some internal determinants of attraction are:

1   Need for Affiliation

Defined as the basic motive to seek and maintain interpersonal relationship, affiliation is seen as an adaptive response that increases the chances of survival and reproduction. Infants are born with this desire that motivates them to seek contact with their interpersonal worlds, and are predisposed to prefer focusing on faces compared to other stimuli (Baldwin, 2000; Mandloch et al, 1999).

* **Individual differences**

People differ in the strength of their need for affiliation. These needs could either be explicit or implicit need to affiliate. Those high on explicit need to affiliate are usually more sociable and affiliate with many people while those high on implicit need do withdraw or interact in limited close two person situations. Generally the difference in the need to affiliate results in individuals seeking social contact that is unique and optimal for them, which means they may prefer to be alone some of the time and be with people at other times(O'conner & Rosenblood 1996).

* **Situational influences**

External events are likely to elicit an increased need to affiliate though on a temporary basis. During disasters, it has been noticed that people prefer to be together and comfort one another, even if they are strangers. Because they share a common problem, the need for contact is likely with this group than with others, (Schachter, 1959). "Misery doesn't just love any kind of company, it loves only miserable company".

For people in need of affiliation, their main reason for this need is that affiliation provides the opportunity for social comparison. There is the need for "cognitive clarity" and "Emotional Clarity" that is aroused in these situations that will require the individuals want to know what is going on and make sense of their current feelings (Gump & Kulik 1997; Kulik, Mahler & Moore 1996).

2   Affect and Attribution

Affect reflects a person's emotional state, either positive or negative feelings and moods. Emotional states influence what we perceive, our thought processes, our motivation, decision making, interpersonal attraction. Affect has two characteristics

- Intensity (strength of the emotion)
- Direction (positive or negative)

We can feel both positive and negative affect simultaneously which has significance because we can be motivated by positive affect to explore and discover our environment while the negative affect at the same time will warn us to be cautious, vigilant, alert and watch out for danger which helps us to prepare for retreat (Cacippo & Bernstein 1999). Both positive and negative affect are important in our evaluations with either dominating in different settings or situations (Eiser et al 2003; Gable, Reis & Elliot 2000).

- **Effect of emotions on attraction**

Direct effect of emotions on attraction is seen when what people say or do makes you feel good or bad. The tendency is to like those who make us feel good and dislike those who make us feel bad (Ben-Porath 2002; Shapiro, Baumeister & Kessler 1991).

Associated effect of emotions on attraction refers to when an individual is present at the time that one's emotional state is aroused by an event or someone. This individual is likely going to be associated with this feeling state and is likely going to be evaluated positively or negatively based on the dominant emotion. This is in line with the principle of classical conditioning which proposes that neutral stimulus when paired with a positive stimulus, is evaluated positively compared to when this neutral stimulus is paired with a negative stimulus (Olsen & Fazio 2001).

Laughter and liking. When people laugh together interaction is smoothened. Humor is pleasant and provides a safe avenue for people to deal with each other. Laughter strengthens social bonds and serves as a social "lubricant" that softens interpersonal behaviour (Johnson 2003; Selim 2003). Laughter, according to Fraley & Aron (2004), is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship, and in addition, among strangers, laughter serves as a distraction from the discomfort of the interaction and creates a perception of new perspective on the situation (self - expansion).

Manipulation of Affect. When the right emotions are aroused, people can be influenced to behave in certain ways. In fact, to get people to do most things will require some amount or doses of manipulation. In an attempt to make us buy a product, there is an indirect attempt to make us dislike the alternative or other options. Even though these manipulations are often subtle, they are nevertheless effective. People use smiles, positive words or even negative words among others to manipulate others and influence their behaviour. Usually relatively uninformed audience can easily be manipulated.

Self – Assessment Exercise 1

Summarize the Direct and Associated effects of Emotions and Attraction.

3.2   External determinants of Attraction

Our physical environment presents us with planned or accidental opportunity to come into contact with one another. Physical proximity increases chances for contact, and first impressions of each other is mostly determined by already formed beliefs, attitudes or stereotypes about observable factors like race, gender, physical appearance, accent, height among others. We will look closely at some of these physical factors.

- **Proximity – Physical Closeness**.

Contact allows us become acquainted with someone and this enables us to decide who to like or dislike. Physical distance or proximity exposes individuals to repeated contact and the possibility of developing mutual attraction. Repeated exposure to a new stimulus results in an increased positive evaluation of the stimulus (Zajone 1968).

New or first contact is met with mild discomfort, but repeated exposure reduces negative emotions and increases positive emotions especially if there is no harmful consequence as a result of the exposures.

Familiarity increases while uncertainty reduces indicating that these repeated contacts are safe (Zajoine 2001; Lee 2001). Familiar face elicits positive effect, evaluates positively and activates facial muscles and brain activity in ways that are associated with positive emotions. Positive emotion (Affect) in turn elicits perception of familiarity (Harmon – Jones & Allen 2001; Monin 2003). Once you do not dislike an individual from the onset, liking for that person will increase with more contacts (Brehm et al 2005).

- **Physical Attractiveness**

Physical characteristics are important factors in attraction, especially during the early stages of a relationship. Similarity in physical attractiveness results in committed relationships that might lead to a permanent arrangement like marriage, according to the matching hypothesis (Yela & Sangrader 2001). Physical appearance is very vivid and easily seen compared to attitudes and values.

The definition of physical beauty differs from culture to culture and from one individual to another. Men generally emphasize physical attractiveness, facial beauty more than women while women are more concerned with, stature, height, muscular body among others in judging physical appearance in men.

Positive stereotypes about attractiveness are universal but the specific content of these stereotypes depends on what is valued most by the culture. It is believed that attractive people are more confident, interesting, sociable, exciting, and sexy, well adjusted, more successful, masculine (men), feminine (female) than unattractive people. Most of the above stereotypes are incorrect.

Physical appearance has also been associated with being popular, having high self-esteem probably due to the fact that people tend to act favourably towards attractive people which in turn affects them positively.

A few negative assumptions about attractive people also exist. Females are sometimes seen as vain and materialistic if physically attractive and the political ambitions of females have been affected because these women are seen as "too feminine" while the too "masculine" males are accepted politically into various offices.

- **Mode of dressing**

The way people dress as well as choice of colour affects attraction. Bright colours have been associated with what is "good" while dark colours are associated with what is "bad" (Meier, Robinson & Clore 2004).

- **Perceived age.**

Perceived age also has an effect on attraction. Youthful appearance is associated with immature characteristics, though associated with some positive characteristics like honest, sincere and trustworthy, some negative like submissive, naïve, not mature masculine ones (Zebrowitz et al 2003). Handsome, or Beautiful people with what is termed "baby faces" might be at a disadvantage regardless of their actual ages, and might be seen as youthful in appearance – known as the baby-face-effect. They are usually assessed as immature and not likely to be trusted with responsibilities or even be seen as leaders.

A youthful walking style attracts more positive response than elderly style regardless of gender and actual age (Montepare & Zebrowits – Mc Arthur 1988).

- **First names**

What is in a name? You may ask. The answer is - a lot. Names share a wide range of positive and negative stereotypes. A first name that is attached to a popular individual becomes associated with that popular individual's characteristics, and this stereotype is transferred to all those who share that name. Initial or first impressions are sometimes based on a person's first name.

Assume that you have just been asked to choose a name for your nephew or nieces, which of these names are you likely to choose.

Nephew – John, Musa, Kanu, Olusegun, Yakubu, Yunasa, Bode, Okoro, Oladimeji,   David

Niece --   Gloria, Asabe, Kande, Tolu, Dora, Turai, Nneka, Yemisi, Patricia

Now ask yourself why you made these choices? Maybe some of these names remind you of some popular people, or are used by some certain ethnic groups to which you belong.

Stereotypes – First Names

Male name	Female name	Attribute about the individual
Alexander Otis	Elizabeth Mildred	Successful Unsuccessful
Joshua Roscoe	Mary Tracey	Moral Immoral
Mark Norbert	Jessica Harriet	Popular Unpopular
Henry Ogden	Ann Freida	Warm Cold
Scott Willard	Brittany Agatha	Cheerful Not cheerful
Taylor Eugene	Rosalyn Isabella	Masculine Feminine

(Source: Based on Information in Mehrabian & Piercy, 1993).

Self – Assessment Exercise   2

List the five external determinants of attraction

3.3   Interactive Determinants of Attraction

The need for affiliation, positive affect and Physical proximity all help in forming interpersonal relationships. Once we have been drawn to the individual using the above parameters, we now turn to communication in interpersonal relation. Through communication, we will most likely discover our degree of similarity and how far we are willing to show mutual liking by what is said and what is done.

- **Similarity:**

Are birds of the same feathers likely to flock together? Sir Francis Galton(1870 , 1952) suggests so through his work on married couples. He found that spouses resemble each other in many ways. Friends and spouses were more similar not by chance (Hunt 1935).

People who discover that they are similar will like each other, because of this similarity. Similar attitudes increase attraction which may also include similarity in beliefs, values and interests. True, for male and female regardless of age, educational, cultural differences (Byrne 1971).

Proportion of similarity – The number of the specific topics two people may express similar views on, are divided by the total number of topics shared, can now be used to determine or predict their attraction to each other. The higher the proportion of similarity, the more the chance for liking. People have over and over again shown a preference for people they are similar to than those they are not similar to (dissimilar).

Similarity results in positive effect while dissimilarity results in negative effect. According to Newcomb (1961) and Heider's (1958) balance theory, a state of balance which is emotionally pleasant results when two individuals like each other and discover that they are similar. A state of imbalance results when two people like each other and discover they are dissimilar in some ways. Imbalance is emotionally unpleasant. In this case they are likely going to

- o Induce one of them to change
- o Misperceive the dissimilarity
- o Decide to dislike each other

And non balance results when two people dislike each other. They become indifferent to the similarities or dissimilarity between them.

- **Mutual liking**

This is the intermediate step between initial attraction and establishing an interpersonal relationship. When positive evaluation is communicated through what is said or done by each interacting party, this results in an added mutual experience through the realization of mutual liking by them.

Positive Experience: Sometimes the first sign of attraction may be non-verbal. Just sitting next to someone in class, in a hall or an open space might convey liking which is a positive indicator of the person's feeling about the individual. This liking leads to proximity.

We all appreciate positive feedbacks, so when we meet people who genuinely share our likes and dislikes and can communicate same, it becomes very easy for us to like them and they in turn like us – so that the liking becomes mutual.

In a sense the dislike could be mutual if people do not seem to agree on anything and do have more diverse views on a wide range of subjects, topics or issues. Negative feedbacks in this case will result in less contact or staying apart – thus reducing the possibility of developing a lasting relationship.

Self – Assessment Exercise   3

How does the proportion of Similarity affect interactive attraction?

4.0   Conclusion

The possibility of forming lasting relationships has been highlighted in this unit. Society and cultures should focus on the factors that have positive impact on interpersonal attraction and encourage repeated contact among her members so that social interaction will improve and negative stereotypes and prejudices are reduced to the barest if not eliminated.

5.0   Summary

This unit has taught us all we need to know in effective social interaction that has to do with interpersonal attraction. Without positive interpersonal attraction, other forms of social interaction may be adversely affected. The factors responsible for increase or decrease in interpersonal attraction have also been dealt with extensively.

It is believed that these fifteen units have answered most of your questions on how the individual should function in society, and how mutual coexistence is possible. It is expected that you put to practice in your own little way all that you have come to appreciate in the course of this study and our society will be better than it is now.

6.0   Tutor – Marked Assignment

1. Briefly explain the effectof Affect on Attraction.

2. How is the need for affiliation important in explaining attraction?

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