

Individual vs Group Behaviour

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Agenda

- Why does an individual behave differently alone vs in a group?
- Do more people/heads always lead to good decisions?

Social Roles

We wear many hats in our life and this is always in relation to a social situation (what roles do you currently play?)

Social roles refer to shared expectations in a group about how particular people are supposed to behave

Often times, “expectations” are not always explicitly stated but sometimes they are (eg., in organizations*). Regardless, these “expectations” *moderate* who we are as an individual

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

1. Social Facilitation

When people are in the presence of others and their individual performance can be evaluated, our behaviour can change for better or worse. Why?

- Presence of others makes us alert
- Evaluation apprehension develops
- Others distract us with their own characteristics (conflicts with our personal plans/goals)

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

2. Social Loafing

When people are in the presence of others and their individual performance cannot be evaluated (or it is difficult to spot discrepancies)- a tendency to not perform on simple tasks and better on complex tasks develops.

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

2. Social Loafing

There are gender and cultural differences reported in social loafing such that men engage in social loafing more than women (because the latter values *relational interdependence* more- a tendency to focus on and care about personal relationships with other individuals).

The tendency to engage in social loafing is reported to be stronger in western cultures compared to Asian cultures

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

3. Deindividuation

The loosening of normal constraints on behaviour when people can't be identified (such as when they are in a crowd – mob mentality OR online trolling).

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

Do you see a link between social facilitation x social loafing x deindividuation? What is that?

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

4. Group Polarization

The tendency for groups to make decisions that are more extreme than the initial inclinations of their members

Here, *social comparison* plays a strong role. We take extreme positions that we would like (as an individual) to prove our loyalty to the group, hence wanting to be “liked”

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

Deindividuation has some *terrible consequences*- it can increase obedience to the group norms and sometimes can lead to violent behaviors.

Deindividuation *thrives with less physical interaction* – therefore- online spaces are more vulnerable to abuse.

However, it is important to note that it does not always lead to violent behaviour- what factors differentiate according to you?

Why do individuals behave differently in groups?

Do two or more heads make better decisions?

Process Loss: Any aspect of group interaction that inhibits good problem solving

Happens due to many reasons:

- Incompetence
- Poor communication
- Too much cohesiveness that builds normative pressure (group think)

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Transactive Memory: The combined memory of a group that is more efficient than the memory of the individual members

For example: if you *<can learn>* rely on your partner's memory for different kinds of information (can be on the basis of individual strengths)- the group memory* is more efficient than individual memory

*memory is not to be understood literally. Our individual skills involve memory – what are you good at?! All that is in part memory.

Summary

In conclusion, we understand the following:

- Individuals behave differently in groups because the presence of other people (or social situations) makes them act differently
- There are several psychological processes that underlie such choices
- This means our one-to-one and group-level interactions will differ and lead to different consequences*

* Expect to lose some of your voice in a group. And sometimes, there is no space for individual stories when decisions are being made for groups.