

Psychology Course

Social Identity Theory and Skill Development

Understanding the theory

The original theory of Social Identity proposed by Tajfel & Turner identified four psychological mechanisms:

- Social Categorization
- Social identification
- Social comparison
- Positive distinctiveness

Social categorization is the process by which we identify which groups we belong to and which groups we do not. The groups we belong to and identify with are referred to as our "**in-groups**." When referring to our in-group, we often use the words "we" and "us". The groups that we do not belong to, are referred to as "**out-groups**." When referring to our out-groups, we often use the words "they" and "them."

Social identification takes place after deciding to belong to the group. This is the process of adopting the norms of the group and taking on the characteristics of the group.

After identifying one's in-group, individuals then engage in "**social comparison**" which is a means of justifying their group membership. Finally, we seek to achieve positive self-esteem by positively comparing our in-group to an out-group on some valued dimension to achieve **positive distinctiveness**. We favor the traits of our in-group, even if we did not necessarily choose to be a part of the group ourselves.

Task 1: research: Chen et al (2005)

1. After reading the study describe how social identity (or cultural identity) affected behavior in the subjects studied. Then list one strength and one limitation of the study.



The concept of in-groups and out-group identities affect our behavior is a key aspect of how the theory is applied. When one of our social identities becomes salient, it affects our behavior. In many studies of social identity theory, one social identity is primed to see if it has an effect on an individual's behavior.

The following study is by Chen et al (2005). The goal was to see if priming one's social identity - in this case, belonging to a specific cultural group - could affect one's behavior.

The sample was made up of 149 bi-cultural participants from a Singaporean university. The study was conducted online. The participants were randomly assigned to conditions.

First, the participants were primed in order to make either their Singaporean or their American identity more salient - that is, to make them more aware of that part of their identity. This was done by first showing them a collage of 12 photos that were representative of the culture. The images included famous buildings, brand names, the flag and celebrities. After looking at the collage they were then asked to write down as many of the items as they could remember.

After completing the priming task, the participants were given a shopping scenario to buy a novel online. They were told the standard delivery cost was 2.99 Singaporean dollars. They were then told that it would take five business days to receive the delivery, but that they could pay extra to get the book in one day. Participants were asked how much they were willing to pay to receive the book in one day.

Finally, the participants were asked to list the first three politicians that came to mind.

People whose Western cultural values were made more salient through priming placed a higher value on immediate consumption than the people whose Eastern cultural values were made salient. It appears that the priming of a specific social identity played a role in their online shopping behavior.

In both cases, the participants listed politicians that were relevant to the culture that they had been primed for. This indicates that the priming had remained throughout the study and should discount individual differences between the groups.

Task II. Reflection: “Shopping While Black”

The following video is not a psychological study - but a television show which looks at the phenomenon known as "Shopping while black."

Watch the video twice. After you have watched it once and understand what is happening, watch it again. This time write one paragraph explaining the behaviors of people in the video based on your understanding of social identity theory so far.

<https://youtu.be/yAkDHuimJRc>

Task III: Skill Development: Command terms and candy

Task: Gather 2-3 different types of candy. The quality of the candy is not important - it could be fantastic or very ordinary. If you don't have access to candy you can do this with cars, different types of food (Thai, Italian, Mexican), or television shows

Use the command terms below to describe, explain, contrast, discuss, and evaluate your candy. Type your answers out or write them on a piece of paper. I have included some examples for each command term to help get you started.

Describe

Describe requires you to identify the characteristics of the candy. This candy is....

Explain

Explain is the "why" question. This is more difficult. Why is the candy the way it is? This is dark chocolate (description). Dark chocolate is loaded with nutrients that can positively affect your health. Made from the seed of the cocoa tree, it is one of the best sources of antioxidants on the planet. Studies show that dark chocolate can lower the risk of heart disease

Contrast

Contrast looks at differences between two or more types of candy.

Discuss

A **discussion** of candy goes away from looking at individual examples of candy and looks at the question of "candy" as a whole. Why do we like it so much? How does it affect our health? What are the difficulties in deciding which candy is better? What are the cultural differences in the choice of candy?

Evaluate

Evaluation would point out both the good things about the candy (strengths) and the limitations of the candy.

Elective Collaboration Economics and African American History

Enrichment Activities

Mr. Palmer and Mr. Hazelwood

Resources that have relevance to the Brockton community:

NPR - "Planet Money" podcast <https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510289/planet-money> (episodes on high unemployment rate, scarcity of masks and hospital beds, how to pay for the stimulus, etc.)

YOUTUBE - "Economics Explained" channel - episodes on the economies of various countries and other relevant topics. One episode is on the "Economics of Poverty" and discusses the Democratic Republic of Congo. Another discusses extreme economic inequality in South Africa.

The Enterprise- "**New Vicente's an oasis in food desert**" 2015 article on the opening of Vicente's supermarket. The article talks about the importance of supermarkets in communities that are "food deserts," the entrepreneurial spirit and "dreams" of immigrants making a life in the United States.

<https://www.enterpriseneews.com/article/20150628/NEWS/150626871>

Optional activities/guided questions:

1. **How does Vicente benefit the Cape Verdean community/entire Brockton community?**
2. **What is the definition of a food desert? Find other examples in Massachusetts/United States and what individuals are doing about it?**
3. **Go to the Mattapan Food and Fitness website and write about their efforts and community activism**
<https://www.mattapanfoodandfit.org/>

Podcast- "Sisters **Inc. Podcast**" Black women are the fastest-growing group of entrepreneurs in America. On every episode the hosts sit down with one successful CEO to share how she "slays" the challenges of being a black woman in business.

Optional Activities/guided questions:

- 1. Choose 3 of the podcast and write down information about the business and additional information not found on the podcast about the specific guest.**
- 2. ***Use the podcast model and “create your own.” It could be with friends, family, etc. it can be about what the individual enjoys doing or use the podcast themes about business aspirations.**

<https://www.blackenterprise.com/sistersinc-podcast/>

African American Individuals and Entrepreneurship

Essay on Madame CJ Walker and Annie Turnbo Malone from National Museum of African American Culture and History: Students can “research” the importance of Poro College and Leila College (beyond just selling hair products) research the political, social and economic ramifications of “Hair” in the African American community in the United States. Just like people of African descent in the United States, “Hair” is not a monolith (natural, weave, textures, hair as a form of activism (locks), etc. At the end of the article there are numerous sources for further analysis

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/collection/sizzle>

Optional Activities/guided questions:

- 1. Compare/Contrast the lives of Madame CJ Walker and Annie Turnbo Malone.**
- 2. What were the importance of Poro College and Leila College? (Goal of the schools, the legacy today-you can use the internet to find more details)**
- 3. Using the article what are the critiques/debate about black women and “Hair” (examples, natural hair movement, other products and companies in the tradition of Walker and Malone)**

Supplementary materials connected to African Americans and Entrepreneurship

Madame C.J. Walker:

Netflix (an option for those with streaming access to Netflix)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYDJvnDfB2w> Trailer for the series

- 1. After viewing the film what are 10 lessons, we can learn from Madame C.J. Walkers' life that could benefit people today.**
- 2. ****Using the information provided (above/below documentaries on her life etc.) did you find any "historical inaccuracies?" explain**

Op-Ed on the Film where students could start the inquiry on her life and some of the other voices. This article can get you to think about sources/who tells the story?

<https://thegrio.com/2020/03/30/netflix-madam-cj-walker-self-made-review/>

- 1. What does the article tell us about checking sources and who tells the story of someone's life? (think a person's life and what people may or may not want you to know? Think about historical events and the idea of analyzing "Points of View")**