Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

Social Categorisation
This is the process of simplifying the environment by creating categories on the basis of a groups commonalities.

Schemas These are cognitive representations that characterise a persons knowledge and beliefs about a particular object or social group. They influence how people pay attention to and organise information as well as what they remember.

Contemporary Prejudice
The advocation of egalitarian values has meant that people are now motivated to act in non-prejudiced ways. Contemporarily prejudiced people are more likely to endorse equality of opportunity.

Aversive Racism/Prejudice
This is a form of contemporary prejudice where people feel uncomfortable interacting with members of minority groups.

Gaertner, 2000 Hiring Tyrone Sent off identical job applications to companies either under the name of 'Tyrone' or 'Scott'. Tyrone was more likely to be hired when he was particularly good or particularly bad, but was under represented when qualifications were ambiguous.

Trawalter et al. (2005) Executive Control Found decreased executive control (i.e. cognitive resource depletion) after a brief interview-like interaction with a Black experimenter compared to when there was a white experimenter, as measured by a Stroop test.

Hostile and Benevolent Sexism The former is a negative belief that punishes non-traditional women, whereas the latter is a more positive belief that rewards traditional women.

Types of Categorisation

Processes of Social Categorisation

Basic (Primitive) Categories There can be basic categories such as Gender, Race and Age.

Others include sexual orientation, religion and physical appearance.

Stereotypes These are beliefs and opinions about the characteristics, attributes and behaviours of members of a particular social group.

Automatic Activation Category-stereotype links are learnt so thoroughly that they become an unthinking mental response. However, this process can be influenced by prototypicality (which facilitates activation), context, prejudice (facilitates activation) and cognitive load.

Stereotype Activation The more strongly a stereotype is activate, the more likely it is to be applied. They can be inhibited but a person must be motivated and able to do this (Devine). **Devine** found that high prejudice and low prejudice people have the same stereotypes, they just differ in their personal beliefs. Stereotypes are not bad, they are a product of our social cognition.

Self Image Threat (Spencer, 1997) Self image is the very essence of one's individuality and people promote a positive self image.

Cloutier et al. (2005) Found that participants were more accurate at identifying a person and their sex if they were upright and not blurred.

MacRae et al 1995 Primitive Categories First Participants were either shown pictures of chinese woman doing typically chinese or typically female. Participants shown chinese picture were quicker to identify chinese related words in lexical decision task and vice versa, suggesting **categorisation is context dependent.**

Gilbert & Hixon (1991) Sign Holding & Cognitive Load Video of Asian vs. Caucasian assistants with signs. Their main task was to complete words the assistants were holding up but they were ambiguous and allowed for racial stereotyping (Asian=S_Y=Shy). One group were under high load (memorising 8 digit number) others were under low load. Those under high load **did not make more stereotypical associations.** The use of videos heightens the ecological validity.

MacRae et al. (1993) Cognitive Load Showed participants a video of two women interacting, they were either hairdressers or doctors. Participants were also performing high load task with a distractor. They found that under low load, participants remembered more stereotype inconsistent information.

Spencer et al. (1998) Sign Holding Replication Replicated Gilbert & Hixon but introduced self-threatening feedback. This activated higher stereotype activation. People stereotype more when their self-image is threatened.