

SYMPOSIUM

The Legacy of Social Identity Theory: Emerging Issues & Challenges

Symposium Organizer:

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&

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In the today's globalized digital world, where we are a click away from almost everyone in the world, even more so often we struggle to reflect on our own multiple identities we carry. This exposure is leading to flexibility, fluency and elaboration of social identities or withholding our boundaries much more rigid and restricted. Research on social categorization may provide a valid answer to these questions. The outcomes of social identity have been widely discussed in the literature though a lot more can be gained by exploring psychological and cognitive correlates of social identification. Numerous studies have shown social identity can have a pivotal impact on people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. What needs further exploration is the psychological mechanisms which are underlying these impacts. All the papers included in this symposium attempt to throw light on some of the challenges and issues related to social identity in the contemporary India.

Discussant: Kavita Pandey

Social Identity Theory: Expanding the horizon

Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a powerful prism through which some of the major phenomena in social psychology have been explained. SIT was introduced to account for intergroup-relations in 1970s and since then it has significantly expanded to explain general group processes and categorization. This symposium is an effort to put together some current parameters of SIT like dual identity, affective correlates of in group vs. out group, identity process on social media platforms and identity overlaps. Direct measures such as EEG, cardiovascular measures etc., for measuring of core constructs of SIT can give stronger evidence for ways in which identity shapes individual and society. More specifically, direct measures can refine our understanding of SIT and neural processing by providing a much robust and elaborate way of measuring constructs that are otherwise difficult to measure through self-report measures.

Presentation 1

ID 467

Standing Together or Falling Apart: Dual Identities and their recognition in Kashmiri People

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Every individual possess multiple identities and recognition of those identities are crucial for their better self-esteem. Non-recognition of a valued identity creates certain kind of psychological distress in individual (Hopkins & Blackwood, 2001). This distress may lead individual to resist any forms of influence from others. The present research paper discusses the decades old Kashmiri conflict in the light of identity crisis of Kashmiri people. This paper seeks to elucidate how social psychology can contribute to an analysis of Kashmiris' accounts of their superordinate and subordinate identity and how others orient to these identities. A qualitative approach was adopted to discern the existence of duality in the identity possessed by Kashmiri people living in India. In depth interviews were conducted to collect data. The analysis of data shows that for Kashmiris, their Kashmiri identity is the most valued identity irrespective of their citizenship. The study proposes that considering the current scenarios in Kashmir there is an urgent need to study the behaviour of Kashmiri people on the basis of identity crisis, which will help to understand the root cause of their resistance.

Key words: Dual identity, Kashmiri people, Recognition

Presentation 2

ID 468

Shifting identities of women: Challenges, expectations and coping with the demands of higher education

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ABSTRACT

In India, the social change and the fast developing knowledge economy has led to greater influx of women in higher education. Modern women are now armed with knowledge and skills but they also have to sustain an active engagement in their family life. The family roles of women often are incongruent with those of the academic life. As a result, they experience distress, loneliness and depression. This study explored how graduate women shift their identity to cope up with the conflicting educational and familial role demands and to understand the coping strategies used by them in order to deal with these role conflicts. In a pre- post design 40 previous year postgraduate female students were administered the Adult Source of Self Esteem Inventory (Elovson and Fleming, 1989), Primary-Secondary Control Scale (Wrosch, Heckhausen & Lachman, 2000), the Brief Screen for Depression (Hakstian & McLean, 1989), the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell et al 1980, Russell, 1996), the Relational Self-Construal Scale (Cross, Bacon & Morris, 2000) and the coping scale, initially in the beginning of the session followed by a re administration in the end of their academic session. The findings indicate that women alter their interdependent self construal to an independent self and as a result aggravate their feelings of depression and loneliness which drives them towards a secondary coping strategy of lowering aspirations.

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Presentation 3

ID 469

Does identity shapes our cognition? Exploring the effect of social meaning and affective valance of the stimulus on time perception

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Recent studies have shown that social factors such as identification with a stimulus affect our experience of time. Building on a recent research which has shown that an ambiguous stimulus if perceived as socially significant meaning results in higher duration estimation the present study was conducted to examine the perception of time as determined by the social meaning and affect associated to the stimulus. Eighty adults listen to an ambiguous noise stimulus under various experimental conditions (as having socially significant/neutral meaning and has been experienced as being positive/negative/neutral) and their task was to reproduce the time duration for the stimulus. The study was conducted in both prospective as well as retrospective conditions. The findings show that the estimation of the time duration was significantly influenced by the assigned social meaning and perceived affective valence of the ambiguous noise and such influence of the nature of stimuli on time perception were more apparent under retrospective paradigm as compare to the prospective paradigm.

Keywords: Social Meaning, Affective Valance, Time Perception

Presentation 4

ID 470

Unfolding group biases: Attention & group bias

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Current socio-political scenario represents prototypical case of group biases pertaining social identities. Identity shapes our preferences in a significant way starting from selection of breakfast to electing leaders in democratic world. Recent researches have extended impact of social groups to basic cognitive processes such as time perception, joint action task and emotional experience. An eye tracking experiment was conducted to investigate the effect of ingroup-outgroup membership (gender identity) on perception of the affective scenes (pleasant and unpleasant) in terms of differences in saccadic latencies. 63 participants (38 females) were shown series of neutral faces (21 male/female faces for 1 sec); each face was followed by a pleasant or unpleasant scene (21 pleasant/unpleasant IAPS scenes for 1 sec). To ensure the gender identification, they were instructed to press 'z' for in-group faces (male-male, female-female) and press 'x' for out-group faces (male-female, female-male). After this, the participants were asked to make an eye movement towards up/down for pleasant/unpleasant scenes. Key press and eye movement responses were counter-balanced across participants. To make the gender identity salient, a 5 items gender identity scale was administered prior to the experiment. The result showed faster saccadic latencies for pleasant scenes as compared to unpleasant scenes. The saccadic latency for unpleasant scenes was faster when preceded by ingroup faces as compared to outgroup faces. The RT was shortest for in-group pleasant condition and longest for out-group-unpleasant condition. These preliminary evidences suggest that group membership moderates perception of pleasant and unpleasant scenes. Group membership is critical in directing our responses to scenes. Our group membership not only shaped our subjective experience but also shaped social realities. It is crucial to unfold the basic cognitive process accountable for generation of these categories and to investigate the cognitive mechanisms behind our social behaviour. Yet if one wishes to investigate underlying cognitive processes behind the identification of group membership, there is much to be gained. Such an investigation will allow a better understanding of how specific attentional processes affect our group perception and will allow us to think about interventions to resolve devaluation of out-group members resulting from mere avoiding them.

Key words: Group Categorization, Valence (pleasant / unpleasant), Saccadic latency, Scene perception

Presentation 5

ID 471

The role of Socialization and Justice perception among Majority and Minority Identities

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Social psychological investigations indicate that preference for justice perception is influenced by several situational, resource and cultural characteristics. This study is part of a larger project undertaken to investigate some specific issues such as socialization pattern, values which may effect on justice perception among Hindus and Muslims (majority and minority identities) of India. Four Hundred and Two Hindus and Muslims (Age 17-35 years, M= 22.81, and SD= 2.91) participants have participated in this study. Results show no effect of socialization on justice perception among the majority and minority. However, a significant difference was found for procedural and interactional justice among Muslims over the Hindus. The role of socialization on

justice types were more evident than their religious identities and gender identity. The findings are discussed in the light of the importance of culturally relevant situational determinants and socialization patterns that make individual's identity that plays a special role for shaping justice perception.

Key Words: Socialization, Minority and Majority Identity, Procedural Justice, Interactional Justice.