

Effects of Popularity and Outcome Dependency on Impression Formation in Children

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Peer Relations in Children

- Peer interactions affect
 - How children interact with each other and their popularity with their peers
 - Self esteem (Ladd & Troop-Gordon, 2003)
 - Outcomes later in life (Pelham & Bucler, 1982; as cited in Krehbiel & Milich, 1986)
- Peer status (Dodge, 1983; as cited in Krehbiel & Milich, 1986)

Peer Rejection

- Rejected children have
 - More aggressive acts towards their peers (Dodge, 1982; as cited in Krehbiel & Milich, 1986)
 - Worse outcomes later in life (Parker et al., 1995; as cited in Bierman, 2004).
- Rejected status is stable into high school. (Coie & Dodge, 1983; Coie & Kupersmidt, 1993; as cited in Krehbiel & Milich, 1986)

Impression Formation

- There are 2 styles of cognitive processes for impression formation: (Neuberg & Fiske, 1987)
 - Categorical Based
 - Use pre-existing schemas for that category
 - Attribute Based
 - Use the unique qualities of the individual

Outcome Dependency

- In outcome independent situations
 - Efficiency is the goal
 - More attention is given to consistent information
- In outcome dependent situations
 - Accuracy is the goal
 - Attention is given to both consistent and inconsistent information

(Neuberg & Fiske, 1987; Erber & Fiske, 1984; Fiske, 1993)

Summary of Study

- Manipulations
 - Outcome dependency x popularity

Methods

- 44 children ages 7 to 12 (mean= 9 years 9 months, SD= 14.52)
 - 19 boys, 23 girls
- 4 participants were excluded from the study because of suspicion
- 1 participant was excluded because of difficulty reading
- Recruited through word of mouth & a newspaper advertisement

Methods

- All participants were assigned randomly to
 - Outcome dependency: Dependent vs. independent on partner
 - Popularity of their partner: Popular vs. unpopular

Methods

- Partner
- Self-Description form & cards
- Read partner self-description
- Read partner's note cards
- Ratings
- Free Recall

Methods

- Timing
- Timing data
- Recall

Methods

- Paid \$15
- Debriefed

Hypotheses

- Main effects of popularity
- Main effects of outcome dependency

Hypotheses

- Main effects of age
- Interactions: dependency x popularity

Previous Research

- Previous research on 124 students at Wofford College
- Results:
 - Participants rated popular partners more positively
 - Unpopular partners were rated more positively in the outcome dependent condition
 - Participants in the unpopular dependent condition recalled less unpopular information

(McAninch, Downs, Ramsey, & Wise, 2003)

Inter-rater reliability

Spearman Brown prophecy formula

- total recall $r = .98$
- popular recall $r = .97$
- unpopular recall $r = .98$
- total errors $r = .86$
- popular errors $r = .74$
- unpopular errors $r = .68$
- total intrusions $r = .93$
- popular intrusions $r = .94$
- unpopular intrusions $r = .88$

Unaware of condition

Results

- Significant main effects:
- ($F [1, 38] = 4.116, p < .05, \eta^2 = .099$) for the expectancy of popularity on the time it took to read unpopular cards
- ($F [1, 35] = 20.866, p < .05, \eta^2 = .374$) for the of expectancy of popularity on partner's popularity ratings
- ($F [1, 35] = 8.543, p < .05, \eta^2 = .196$) for the expectancy of popularity on the amount of items recalled describing the partner as popular

Discussion

- Expectations of popular partner led to longer reading times for unpopular information
- Expectations of popular partner led to more popular ratings of partner
- Expectations of popular partner led to more popular items recalled

Limitations of this Study

- Small sample size reduced power
- Popularity level of participant was not assessed
- Some of the words were hard for participants to comprehend

Directions for Future Research

- Study true child interactions with actual partners
- Repeat with more subjects

Applications of this Study

- Intervention program for socially rejected children

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