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Social Psychology

28 March 2022

Article Deconstruction

Sympathy and Social Order Article

This article's deconstruction is about "Sympathy and Social Order." This article was written by Kyle Irwin, Tucker McGrimmon, and Brent Simpson. This article came from the *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 2008, Vol.71 No.4, 379-397. This deconstruction will focus on the definition, example, and explanation of sympathy and social order within our society. Social order is the set or system of linked social structures, institutions, relations, values, and ethics. The research hypothesis is that perceived interdependence increases sympathy towards strangers. Sympathy is when a person has feelings of sorrow for someone else's misfortune. Sympathy plays a considerable role in migrating self-interest and the interest of others as well. The article talks about how sympathy produces corporations (Kyle et al.). This suggests that there is an increase in sympathy from established relationships. Nonetheless, this does not explain how compassion may arise in specific interactions between strangers. Throughout the article, they discuss the experiment they are going to present. They developed and tested a structural argument to examine what leads to increases in sympathy?

The article has and explains two of the studies that they conducted. The first study confirmed their claim that interdependent situations acquire greater sympathy for strangers. The first study showed that an increase in compassion among interactants does depend on the case on.

Previous studies have shown that two characteristics predict cooperation: social value orientations and generalized trust. This study indicates that sympathy towards strangers can be increased due to interdependence and self-interest. Their second study focused on the individual characteristics and situation-specific empathy interacting to affect cooperation in interdependent settings. (Kyle et al.) That study asks, Does sympathy mediate the relationship between trust and collaboration or social values and cooperation in interdependent situations?

In the article, they mention the definition of cooperation. *Cooperation* is defined as "Behavior that benefits the group or collective, often at the cost of the individual's self." Social dilemmas are used to study social order because they capture the true nature of the problems related to cooperation in the social field. They pulled from an excerpt (Macy 1998; Gurek, Irlenbusch, and Rockenbach 2006), and they asked the question, "What is best for self or what is next for all?". This concludes that collectively oriented behavior generates social order, whereas self-interested behavior precipitates a breakdown in order.

Nonetheless, social order does have a problematic sense to it. Social order is only plausible when individuals make a sacrifice of one-self for the great good of others in the community. This can include getting rid of selfish tendencies and behaviors and having more sympathy towards others. Throughout the study, they experimented. It measured social value, trust, sympathy, and cooperation on a scale. A total of 88 participants were in the study. Towards the end of the article, they used an experiment to carry out their examination of the study. They carried out the first study, which suggested increases in sympathy from the structural condition of interdependence. Next, in study two, they designed their hypothesis to address whether either of these operates through situational sympathy. Specifically, they predicted that

sympathy mediates the relationship between trust and cooperation and social values and cooperation in Hypothesis 3. Their results ran true to their hypothesis but very cautiously. The results showed that sympathy mediates the generalized trust—cooperation link and the relationship between social values and cooperation.

There were a few limitations present in the study. One limitation is the measurements involved in Studies one and two. They admitted it was a straightforward measurement system. Their measurements showed a lack of precise measurement needed for the accurate examination. Due to this challenging occurrence, the researchers must work on making the measurement system more accurate. The second limitation is that the Study two sample is tiny and homogenous. A sample with a larger participant group is needed. (Kyle et al.)

At the end of the article, they talked about future research opportunities. They mentioned a few questions that will need to be answered. Those questions are, First, how do we generate more significant levels of sympathy? Moreover, the second is whether sympathy mediates other predictors of cooperation? These are the few questions that extend the opportunity for future research. There was not enough information regarding those questions to answer them from this particular study. However, future research is shown to already be in the works.

In conclusion, sympathy is genuinely impacted by the social order. The research that was presented in the article is an essential first step toward a better understanding of the role of sympathy within the social order. Further work is needed to understand the relationship between the different social structures and sympathy. The authors brought in very great points regarding the studies, hypothesis, experiment, and results. The research hypothesis was that perceived interdependence increases sympathy Towards strangers, and that hypothesis is deemed to be true.

Nonetheless, more research will need to be done to minimize the limitations and maximize an accurate result. Throughout the article, it was a nice summarization and examination to learn, study and write about.

Works Cited

Kyle Iwrin, Tucker Mcgrimmen, Brent Simpson, “Sympathy and Social Order” *Social Psychology Quarterly*
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