The Lecture Contains:

📄 The role of social events or agents in shaping aggression

📄 Frustration-aggression hypothesis

📄 Significance of Elliot and Devine's (1994) experiment

📄 Criticism of frustration-aggression hypothesis

📄 Berkowitz's (1989) revised frustration-aggression hypothesis

📄 Social learning theory

The role of social events or agents in shaping aggression

- As per the basic nature of social psychology, many social psychologists have been interested in knowing the social situations, events or persons that might lead to the experience of anger and the behaviour of aggression. There have been two such important approaches to explain agression :

- Frustration-aggression hypothesis
- Social learning theory

◀❙❙❙ Previous   Next ❙❙❙▶

Frustration-aggression hypothesis

- One of the most famous and debatable explanations of aggression in social psychology has been frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al. 1939). It is very much in line with a layperson's explanation of aggressive behaviour. Many a time, the causes of an aggressive behaviour may be traced back to the person's desires or expectations not being met successfully. The basic tenets of the classical frustration-aggression hypothesis are:

    – Frustration always leads to aggression of some kind, and

    – Aggression always stems from some kind of frusration

Criticism of frustration-aggression hypothesis

- It is important to note that the hypothesis holds true to some extent but in its classical form, it has been posed with some criticisms too :

  - It is not uncommon to find many different reactions to getting frustrated. One may be more motivated to reach the goal or one may do an analysis of what went wrong rather than directing one's anger towards another person.

  - Similarly, not all events of aggression results from frustration. There can be direct provocation by others into aggressive behaviour.

Berkowitz's (1989) revised frustration-aggression hypothesis

- Berkowitz (1989) revised the classical frustration-aggression hypothesis in the following manner :

- Classical frustration-aggression hypothesis :

  – Frustration -> aggression

- Revised frustration-aggression hypothesis :

  – Frustration -> unpleasant experience (negative affect) -> aggression

Berkowitz's (1989) revised frustration-aggression hypothesis (continued…)

- Berkowitz's revision of the hypothesis emphasizes that frustration may sometimes lead to aggressive behaviour because it is an unpleasant experience and this experience or negative emotion, if not regulated, may result in aggressive behaviour.

- This revision has been supported by several empirical studies showing the association of negative affect of frustration with aggressive behaviour.

- The revised hypothesis also tends to bridge the limitations of the classical hypothesis that didn't provide much insight into the reasons for frustration leading to aggression.

◀❘❘❘ Previous   Next ❘❘❘▶

Social learning theory

- The social learning theory of aggression provides insights into the causes of aggressive behaviour as it posits that the such behaviour is learnt through direct observations in the social settings. Many aspects of aggressive behaviour are learnt through observation :

  - The persons or group that could be appropriate to aggress

  - The actions that can retaliated justifiably

  - The situations or contexts in which the aggressive behaviours are justified.

◀❚❚ Previous   Next ❚❚▶