Manipulating Attitude Change Toward Michigan Fans by Using Facial Expressions in Evaluative Conditioning

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Method

Participants: 109 undergraduate students (64 female) from The Ohio State University.

Task: “Surveillance”

- Cover story: Attention study. Participants were responsible for responding to specific target school fans (Minnesota and Iowa fans) while watching a visual stream of photos and words, including images of other Big Ten team fans.
- Embedded in the stream are paired US’s (Michigan fans) and CS’s (positive stimuli).

CS-US Pairing Examples

- Control: Equal exposure to smiling/frowning Michigan fans paired with no/neutral stimuli.

Measure:


Results

- Participants exposed to smiling Michigan fan images paired with positive US had a smaller difference between their “I Like” + Michigan times and their “I Don’t Like” + Michigan times compared to the other two conditions.
- Incompatible – Compatible = pIAT Score
  - Higher pIAT Score implies more dislike towards Michigan.

Implicty Measured Negativity Towards Michigan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Difference Score (ms)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSC</td>
<td>60</td>
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</tbody>
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F(1, 109) = 3.91, p = .02

Conclusions

- Because the data supports our hypothesis, this means that individuals may have less negative attitudes towards outgroup members when they appear friendlier and are paired with pleasant objects and words.
- Applying this knowledge could potentially lower discrimination and prejudice toward outgroup members.

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