

Social Psychology Research Topics

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Are you looking for a good idea for a research project for your [social psychology](#) class? Social behavior is a rich topic with plenty of fun and fascinating areas to explore. Here are just a few different social [psychology topics](#) and research questions that you might want to investigate further:

- How do implicit [attitudes](#) influence how we respond to other people?
- People sometimes mistakenly believe that social psychology is simply demonstrating things that are common sense. Find examples of [social psychology research](#) that reveals how social behavior isn't always as we expect it to be. [Milgram's obedience experiment](#) is one good example.
- How do people respond when [nonverbal communication](#) does not match up to verbal behavior (for example, saying you feel great when your facial expressions and tone of voice indicate otherwise). Which signal do people respond to most strongly?
- How good are people at [detecting lies](#)? Have participants tell a group of people about themselves, but make sure some of the things are true while others are not. Ask members of the group which statements they thought were true and which they thought were false.
- Collect a wide variety of print advertisements and analyze how [persuasion](#) is used. What types of cognitive and affective techniques are utilized? Do certain types of advertisements tend to use specific kinds of [persuasive techniques](#)?
- Analyze and apply social psychology theory to a real-life situation. Start by selecting a theory that you find particularly interesting. Spend some time assessing the theory, then look for examples of the theory at work in the world around you.
- How do people react when social norms are violated? This might involve acting in a way that is outside the norm in a particular situation, or enlisting friends to act out the behaviors while you observe. Some examples that you might try include wearing unusual clothing, applauding inappropriately at the end of a class lecture, cutting in line in front of other people, or some other mildly inappropriate behavior. Keep track of your own thoughts as you are performing the [experiment](#) and also observe how people around you respond.
- Does online social networking make people more or less likely to interact with people

in "real life"? Create a questionnaire to assess how often people participate in social networking versus how much time they spend interacting with their friends in real-world settings.

- How does our appearance impact how people respond to us? Ask some friends to help you by having two people dress up in dramatically different ways, one in a professional manner and one in a less conventional manner. Have each person engage in a particular action, then observe how they are treated and how other people's responses differ.
- [Social psychologists](#) have found that attractiveness can produce what is known as a [halo effect](#). Essentially, we tend to assume that people who are physically attractive are also friendly, intelligent, pleasant, and likable. Have participants look at photographs of people of varying degrees of physical attractiveness, then ask them to rate each person based on a variety of traits including social competence, kindness, intellect, and overall likeability. Write a paper or develop a presentation based on your results. Think about how this might affect a variety of social situations, including how employees are selected or how jurors in a criminal case might respond.

Consult Your Instructor

Before you decide to tackle a project for your social psychology class, you should always clear your idea with your instructor. This initial step can save you a lot of time and hassle later on. Your instructor can offer clear feedback on things you should and should not do while conducting your research and might be able to offer some helpful tips. Also, your school might require you to present and gain permission from an institutional review board.

Understand the Research Process

Even if you are really excited to dive right in and start working on your project, there are some important preliminary steps you need to take. First, you need to spend a little time investigating your topic. If you are going to be writing a paper or creating a presentation, you are going to need this background information. Plus, it's an excellent way to gain further insight into your topic and maybe pick up a few more ideas for your own research.

A Word From Verywell

Social psychology topics can provide a great deal of inspiration for further research, whether you are [writing a psychology paper](#) or [conducting your own psychology experiment](#). In addition to some of the social psychology topics above, you can also draw inspiration by considering your own questions about social behavior or even looking at social issues that you see taking place in the world around you.