

Social Identity Theory

Psychology

Why merely being sorted into a group produces favouritism.

Tajfel's three processes.

1

Categorisation

Sorting people, including yourself, into groups.

2

Identification

Adopting the group's identity as part of the self.

3

Comparison

Comparing your group favourably against others, to maintain self-esteem.

MINIMAL GROUP PARADIGM

Participants assigned by a coin toss

No contact, no history, no stake

They still allocated more to their own group

Because group membership feeds self-esteem, threats to the group are experienced as threats to the self.