

Research Paper Outline Example (for a Psychology paper)

I. Introduction

- A. *Topic*: Prejudice and Social Influence
- B. *Issue*: Social influences affect peoples' view of one another.
- C. *Thesis*: Prejudice is a social condition that can arise as a result of the conformity of people within a social group or society.

II. Prejudice based on stereotypes is a major problem in our society

- A. Comes from social stereotypes that influence a person's attitudes directly.
- B. Is usually used to pass judgment on one person who is considered part of a specific group.
- C. Can occur in any form
 - 1. Race
 - 2. Culture
 - 3. Sex
 - 4. Vocation

III. Prejudice develops early within people, as children are the most likely to begin developing ideas based on what they are exposed to.

A. Children

- 1. Learn quickly and pick up on what is around them easily
- 2. Are impressionable, especially when given specific ideas by adults.
- 3. Bring problems to the next generation, as they will then pass on these attitudes to their children creating a never-ending cycle.
- 4. Social learning theory says that today's children are learning from everything and everyone, making it difficult to weed out and negative issues that they encounter.

IV. Psychodynamic Therapy

- A. Deals with unconscious thought, as this is where many fears and beliefs come from.
- B. Uncovers subconscious memories that can be affecting an individual without their knowledge.
- C. Uncovers repressed trauma, which can also be causing attitudes and thoughts without the individual's knowledge.
- D. Can help locating reasons why prejudice exists, since the attitudes towards others are often pre-standing, without any reason for their existence.

V. Origins

- A. Other people are the base for our actions because they help to set a standard that we subconsciously attempt to meet.
- B. People in position of power have the most influence in our decision making because they are a subconscious role model for the rest of society because of their place within society.

VI. *Conclusion:* Prejudice is what can happen when people are too easy to conform to what the majority, or even a charismatic leader, have to say. This is how cults are started, as a charismatic leader will influence people to share the same beliefs that he or she has. This fear of not fitting in with the group will often cause a person to adopt the same beliefs.