Analysis of the Hatred Mood Related to Social Psychological and Evolutionary Factors

Libei Zhu*

BASIS International School Hangzhou, Yulin Road, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China

1013967070@qq.com

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Hatred, Stereotype, Cognitive Bias, False Consensus Effect, Evolution

Abstract: The essay examines the more profound factors of hatred mood when confronting different opinions from social psychology and evolutionary perspectives. Hatred can be easily evoked from another's perspective and can be aroused when someone is distrusted or disgraced, or impeded by others' intentional actions. In this essay, I briefly analyze the factors contributing to hatred mood. Psychological factors are related to stereotypes, cognitive bias, and false consensus effect in the cause of hate. In most situations, malice is absent in the communication process. When we hear hurtful or insulting opinions, we need to remind ourselves to keep our distance from the aggressive ones and that we do not need to hate them because negative emotions are mutually detrimental.

1. Introduction

In daily life, it is common for someone to be heavily criticized due to their opinion posted on social media, even though it is possibly a rational analysis. This phenomenon even happens to celebrities who are much loved by the public. For instance, JK Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter novels, was subjected to online abuse and hatred due to an opinion stating that she didn't need to use the cryptic phrase 'people who menstruate' and could call them women. She was accused of being transgender insensitive and discriminatory and even shut away from the Harry Potter film anniversary. Thus, hatred can be easily evoked from another's perspective.

Aumer-Ryan & Hatfield [1] proposed that hatred develops when someone is distrusted or disgraced, or impeded by others' intentional actions. In other words, when someone's opinion is perceived as hostile, deliberate, unethical, or offensive, we will quickly generate negative feelings such as anger, hatred, or aggression. Although it is typically considered a destructive evaluation, or generalized anger [2], hate also has positive functions in our lives. For example, hatred can cause us to act with motivation if we turn all the so-called positive emotions or so-called negative emotions into good behaviors. We can keep moving closer to the goal. Using hatred as fuel instead of confrontation can also increase energy for achieving one's goals.

2. Analysis of the Crucial Factors of Hatred Mood from Social and Evolutionary Perspectives

First, this hate can be understood from an evolutionary point of view. Using the angry feeling involved in hatred, people could survive better. In the past, people in tribes hated those who threatened their habitat to protect what they had. For Lorenz, the aggressive drive makes sense evolutionarily, as it forces animals to maximize their habitat, increasing foraging possibilities. Our ancestors had to compete with and were conditioned to be hostile to the outer groups.

Those more aggressive towards others were more likely to secure more food and resources and survive. As their genes pass down, we inherit this behavior, naturally becoming more prone to prejudice and hatred of others [3]. We usually expect our ideas to be accepted by more people. More often than not, we have to fight with people with different opinions to defend our own opinions' authenticity so that our views can continue to grow and not be discarded by society. As a

result, we consider the people who have different opinions as invaders who might threaten our habitat of values and ideas. It triggers anger and hates among people since we need to protect the correctness of our statement.

3. Analysis of the Crucial Factors of Hatred Mood from Social Psychological Perspectives

3.1. Hatred Mood and Stereotype

Sometimes people generate negative feelings not for one's opinion but because of the Stereotype accountable to that person. The Stereotype is described as a bias caused by group classification, which affects the interpretation of the situation, especially when it involves strangers. According to Stephan and Stephan, negative stereotypes toward certain people will lead to negative evaluations and adverse emotions. Stereotypes are hard to change.

Adults are unlikely to listen to their children when making important decisions, even making fun of their child's opinions for being 'silly and naive' because that is how they view children in general. If the exact words come from an authority figure, we tend to see it as 'wise and deep.' Similarly, if we dislike someone from the bottom of our hearts, we consider their opinions idiotic and hateful.

It can be seen that, influenced by such stereotypes, when we face a person, no matter what that person does, what happens in our mind for the first time is not rational analysis but personal evaluation with hatred.

3.2. Hatred Mood and Cognitive Bias

Another reason opinions can elicit hate is a cognitive bias named false explanation. Heider proposed that we as humans usually have consistent motivation to explore and control our surroundings and that we tend to make interpretations of others' behaviors occurring around them, either situational or dispositional. We prefer to consciously attribute one's behaviors to dispositional characteristics so that we can satisfy our need for control. During our explanation process about one's opinion, the influence of personal traits will usually be overestimated, while situational factors are underestimated [4].

This tendency is known as fundamental attribution error. Fischer, Halperin, Canetti, and Janis suggested that we feel offended and unsupported when someone's opinion is malicious to us and beyond our control. We are particularly prone to hate and attribute this person's opinion to their problems. For example, back in 2020, when Covid outbreaks first exploded in the U.S, Donald Trump called the coronavirus 'China virus' and claimed China invented it.

According to fundamental attribution error, people in China attributed this behavior to Trump's personality and saw him as incompetent and evil. Consequently, hatred towards him was ignited among Chinese people, as Chinese people perceived Donald Trump as hostile yet could do nothing to him. That is to say, we hate others for their opinions simply because we believe that people holding that opinion are inherently immoral or malicious, then generate loathing towards them.

Holding these stereotypes in mind, we will intensify the negative emotions, especially after being presented with an opinion different from ours.

3.3. Hatred Mood and False Consensus Effect

The false consensus effect is another irrational thought when we hate others for their opinions [5]. We usually expect our own opinion or value to be aligned with social norms or rules and overestimate the number of people holding the same idea as us, known as the 'false consensus effect' [6]. This bias makes us presume others' performances and behaviors align with ours. Hence, when we discover that their opinion is different from what we expect, hatred forms as we believe they deviate from social norms and could bring potential hazards to society. One typical example is when some people justify cheating behaviors, we reckon it a danger to the justice system and rise against such opinion [7]. However, because everyone is an independent individual, and everyone holds independent thinking. As one of the fundamental causes of hatred, the false consensus effect needs our attention.

3.4. Hatred Mood and Scapegoat Theory

People need a scapegoat when encountering problems. A sense of failure when failing a task can generate hostility, this kind of aggression will be transferred to a less threatening minority group, blaming them for all the unsuccessful events [8]. An example of hatred using scapegoat theory in history was the anti-Roma violence in the towns of Konin and Oswiecim. Romania at that time was a convenient and weak scapegoat blamed for the instability in the economy and insecurity of society. With this in mind, a violent movement similar to the holocaust soon started [9].

From the historical situation, we can see that it is easy to exhibit hate and lash out at scapegoats. Likewise, women who advocate for gender equality are an easy target, a scapegoat, for those who feel entitled to their patriarchal privileges to accuse them of increasing competition in education, work, and society [10]. In this way, they do not have to take accountability for their failures. As a result, some men started hating women for gender equality opinions and ideas, secretly or blatantly. For instance, some declare they would not date a feminist, and some stigmatize the word 'feminist' so people stop calling themselves 'feminist.'

3.5. Hatred Mood and Group Cohesion

Expressing hatred has the power to form connections among people. Hating the same person is one of the most straightforward and convenient ways to stay in a group. Hatred-sharing performs as a tool to strengthen the bond of the group [11]. A study showed participants a video of a man abusing a woman. Their opinions were collected, and they would be placed with someone either sharing the same opinion or holding a different one.

The participants were also asked to estimate the extent to which they thought they and the people they were placed with could get along. Results showed that people who shared the same opinion about the man were likelier to say that they would get along very well than the one who shared a positive feeling [12]. The study again reflects people's innate feelings of closeness to others who share hatred. Another study showed that ingroup love frequently motivates outgroup hate [13]. Take bullying as an example. It is easier for people to stay in the bully group, avoid being bullied by hating an outsider or comply with others' opinions to prove that they are one of the ingroup members. Consequently, we might hate people's opinions under pressure to establish or stay in a social group.

3.6. Hatred Mood and the Political Economy

Stories about an outgroup's crimes can incite hatred, but their power comes from repetition rather than actuality. Politicians provide hate-inspiring reports when such behaviors help discredit opponents whose policies favor an outgroup. Egalitarians incite animosity toward a wealthy minority, whereas opponents of redistribution incite hostility toward poor minorities. Hatred depends on people believing hate-inspiring stories without questioning them. When there is a personal motive to discover the truth, hatred decreases [14].

People often claim that they hate because the target is evil. After all, hatred is internally consistent. Some observers interpret this fact to mean that the crimes of the target of hatred are to blame for the hatred. Politicians can promote lies about the precarious nature of a minority or outgroup and differ in their approaches to economic redistribution.

Voters who hear these rumors believe them to be authentic and will only look into them if doing so will personally benefit them. Politicians contribute to the spread of hate by disseminating stories that incite it. The demand side of hatred can be observed in the voters' readiness to believe these lies without question. The degree to which hatred grows will depend on political circumstances [14]. Hatred is a normal emotion of human beings. We should accept it reasonably. The political economy will influence hatred, and we should face it rationally.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it does make sense to hate someone for their opinions. However, like the lines in

Gone Girl, 'All we did was to resent each other and to try to control each other. ' Hatred has few benefits but hurts. Everyone has the right to express their views.

The collision of different opinions is the prerequisite for new ideas. Several factors contribute to the hatred mood. An evolutionary count as well. Stereotypes, cognitive bias, and false consensus make great sense in their causes. Utilizing the enraged emotion associated with hatred, people could fare better. Hatred is a self-protection mechanism that evolved in the long-term human evolution, which is conducive to escape from danger and sets social lines at the fastest speed. We will quickly feel less supported when presented with deliberate, unethical, or offensive opinions. When we face such emotions as hatred, we must first keep a calm mind. Because we know this emotion is reasonable, the reasons for this emotion will also be affected by various factors, so we have to accept this emotion and rational response reasonably. We should not just blame others. We need to adjust our own emotions in time. Let yourself be able to come out of the negative emotions in time. It is more acceptable to diminish our negative energy into blaming someone else than to confront our role in this plight.

References

[1] Aumer-Ryan, K. and Hatfield, E. (2007) The Design of Everyday Hate: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis. Interpersona, 1(2), 143-172.

[2] Fischer, A., Halperin, E., Canetti, D. and Jasini, A. (2018) Why We Hate. Emotion Review, 10(4), 309-320. https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073917751229.

[3] Fishbein, H. D. (2003) The Genetic/Evolutionary Basis of Prejudice and Hatred. Journal of Hate Studies, 3(1), 113-119. https://doi.org/10.33972/jhs.24.

[4] Harvey, J.H., Town, J.P. and Yarkin, K.L. (1981) How Fundamental is "The Fundamental Attribution Error"? Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 40(2), 346.

[5] Solan, L., Rosenblatt, T. and Osherson, D. (2008) False Consensus Bias in Contract Interpretation. Colum. L. Rev., 108, 1268.

[6] Krueger, J. and Clement, R.W. (1994) The Truly False Consensus Effect: An Ineradicable and Egocentric Bias in Social Perception. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67(4), 596-610. https://doi.org/10. 1037/0022-3514.67.4.596.

[7] Sullivan, Ong, A.C.H., La Macchia, S.T. and Louis, W.R. (2016) The Impact of Unpunished Hate Crimes: When Derogating the Victim Extends into Derogating the Group. Social Justice Research, 29(3), 310-330.

[8] Zawadzki, B. (1948) Limitations of the Scapegoat Theory of Prejudice. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 43(2), 127-141. https://doi.org/10. 1037/h0063279.

[9] Kapralski, S. (2016) The Evolution of Anti-Gypsyism in Poland: From Ritual Scapegoat to Surrogate Victims to Racial Hate Speech? Polish Sociological Review, 193(1), 101-117.

[10] Cramer, P. (2008) Seven Pillars of Defense Mechanism Theory: Supporting Defense Mechanism Theory. Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2(5), 1963- 1981. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2008.00135.x.

[11] Vitz, P.C. and Mango, P. (1997) Kleinian Psychodynamics and Religious Aspects of Hatred as a Defense Mechanism. Journal of Psychology and Theology, 25(1), 64-71. https://doi.org/10.1177/009164719702500106.

[12] Retica, A. (2006) Negativity Friendships. The New York Times Magazine, 62(L). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A155705021/AONE?u=ucl_ttda&sid=bookmark-AON E&xid=642addb5.

[13] Brewer, M.B. (1999) The Psychology of Prejudice: Ingroup Llove and Outgroup Hate? Journal of Social Issues, 55(3), 429-444.

[14] GLAESER, E.L. (2005). The Political Economy of Hatred. Technology, 45.