

2025-26 FALL TERM PSY 231 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY COURSE GROUP PRESENTATION ASSIGNMENT DIRECTIONS

Sustainable Development Goals Through a Social Psychological Lens

Purpose of the Assignment: This assignment aims to help students analyze global sustainability problems through key theories and concepts in social psychology. Students will connect the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with human behavior, attitudes, social influence, group dynamics, identity, prejudice, social norms, and behavior change.

Presentation Topics for 13 Groups: Each topic integrates a specific SDG with a social psychological framework.

1. Social Norms and Climate Action/SDG 13: Climate Action
Focus: What social norms, conformity, descriptive/injunctive norms influence pro-environmental behavior.
2. Group Identity and Reducing Poverty/SDG 1: No Poverty
Focus: Social identity, in-group/out-group perceptions, stereotypes about low-income groups.
3. Gender Roles, Bias, and Empowering Women/SDG 5: Gender Equality
Focus: Gender stereotypes, role expectations, implicit bias, system justification.
4. Health Communication and Behavior Change/SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being
Focus: Attitude change, persuasion, fear appeals, social influence for public health behavior.
5. Prejudice Reduction and Quality Education/SDG 4: Quality Education
Focus: Reducing prejudice in schools, contact hypothesis, inclusive classroom environments.
6. Intergroup Cooperation for Clean Water/SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
Focus: Cooperation vs. competition, commons dilemma, social dilemmas in resource sharing.
7. Prosocial Behavior and Sustainable Cities/SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
Focus: Altruism, helping behavior, bystander effect in urban settings.
8. Leadership, Power, and Responsible Consumption/SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
Focus: Social power, compliance, obedience, leadership styles in shaping consumption habits.
9. Cultural Values and Reducing Inequalities/SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
Focus: Individualism/collectivism, social dominance orientation, system justification.
10. Social Trust, Fairness, and Institutional Legitimacy/SDG 16: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions
Focus: Social trust, fairness perceptions, procedural justice, legitimacy of institutions, social cohesion, conflict reduction and moral psychology in justice and governance
11. Cooperation and Sustainable Energy Use/SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
Focus: Public goods dilemma, social identity and community energy projects.
12. Behavioral Change Techniques for Healthy Oceans/SDG 14: Life Below Water
Focus: Nudging, motivational interventions, commitment strategies to protect marine resources.
13. Intergroup Contact and Global Partnerships/SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals
Focus: Reducing intergroup bias, forming trust, social cohesion across nations.

A. Your Task: Each group will prepare a 12-minute presentation connecting one SDG with social psychological theories, concepts, or research findings.

B. Your presentation should include:

1. Brief introduction of the SDG
 - What the SDG aims to solve
 - Key global/local challenges
2. Social psychological analysis

- Identify 3–4 concepts (e.g., conformity, social norms, attitude change, group identity).
 - Explain how these concepts relate to the SDG.
3. Empirical research
 - Include at least 2 scientific studies supporting your explanations.
 - Studies can come from textbook, lecture notes, or academic sources.
 4. Application / Intervention
 - Propose an intervention, campaign, or policy informed by social psychology.
 - Example: Using injunctive norms to reduce waste.
 5. Real-world examples
 - Past or current events, global issues, or community-based examples.
 6. Visuals
 - Use slides with clear visuals, charts, or infographics (no heavy text).
 - Each student must speak for ~2 minutes.
 7. Conclusion
 - What have we learned?
 - Why is a social-psychological approach necessary for achieving this SDG?

C. Presentation Structure (12 minutes):

Time	Content
0–1 min.	Opening + Goal of the presentation
1–3 min.	Explain the SDG (global & local context)
3–7 min.	Apply social psychology concepts (3–4 concepts)
7–9 min.	Present empirical research examples
9–11 min.	Proposed intervention/campaign
11–12 min.	Final summary + group reflection

D. Requirements:

- One PowerPoint file per group (submitted before class).
- Each student must speak (2 minutes).
- Cite all sources in APA 7.
- Creativity, clarity, and use of social psychology terminology are encouraged.

E. Submission Requirements:

- Upload your PowerPoint to the computer before your presentation.
- All group members must be present unless excused.
- Citations must be in APA 7 format.

F. Academic Integrity Note:

- AI tools may be used **only for editing or translation, not for creating the entire content.**

- All sources must be cited.
- Plagiarism will result in score deduction as per university policy.

G. Evaluation Rubric (100 Points Total)

Category	Criteria	Points
A. Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate explanation of SDG (5) • Local/global context explained (5) • Clear relevance to social psychology (10) 	/20
B. Social Psychology Theory Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 3 concepts used correctly (10) • Clear links between SDG and theory (10) 	/20
C. Research Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 empirical studies included (5) • Studies clearly explained (10) 	/15
D. Application / Intervention Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory-based intervention proposed (10) • Intervention is realistic, creative, practical (5) 	/15
E. Presentation Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear structure & logical flow (5) • Slide design & visual quality (5) 	/10
F. Speaking Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal participation among members (5) • Clear speaking, confidence, timing (5) 	/10
G. APA Style & Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct APA 7 citations and references (5) • Professionalism & organization (5) 	/10

H. MODEL SAMPLE PRESENTATION

SDG 2: ZERO HUNGER — A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE (12 minutes — 6 speakers)

Slide 1 — Title Slide- Speaker 1 (1 min — Introduction)

SDG 2: No Hunger – How Social Psychology Can Reduce Food Insecurity

“Today our group will examine SDG 2: No Hunger through a social psychology lens. SDG 2 aims to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.

Although hunger is often framed as an economic or agricultural problem, it also has deep psychological and behavioral roots—including social norms, group identity, stigma, and cooperation. Today, we will explore how social psychology helps us understand and reduce food insecurity.”

Slide 2 — Global Overview of Hunger- Speaker 1 (continued — 1 min)

“Globally, around 735 million people face chronic hunger.

But hunger also affects developed countries: food waste, stigma around food assistance, and uneven distribution of resources worsen the issue.

Since hunger results partly from human behavior—such as wasteful consumption, unequal sharing, stigma, and lack of cooperation—social psychology can help create behavior-based solutions.”

Slide 3 — Social Norms and Food Waste- Speaker 2 (2 min)

“One major contributor to global hunger is food waste, driven by social norms.

Descriptive norms guide what people typically do.

Injunctive norms guide what people believe they should do.

Research by Cialdini (2003) shows that people adjust their behavior to match perceived norms.

If people believe that ‘everyone wastes food,’ they waste more.

Examples:

- Restaurants over-serve portions because it is the norm.
- Households throw away edible food because others do.
- Students waste cafeteria food because it looks socially acceptable.

Changing norms—such as posters stating “Most students finish their meals”—can reduce waste.”

Slide 4 — Social Identity and Stigma Around Food Aid- Speaker 3 (2 min)

“Another social psychological factor influencing hunger is stigma.

People in need often avoid food banks or assistance programs because of fear of judgment.

This relates to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner).

People protect their self-image and avoid being stereotyped as:

- “poor,”
- “dependent,”
- or “incompetent.”

A study by van der Horst et al. (2014) found that stigma reduces people’s willingness to access food assistance, even when they are hungry.

Psychological insight:

Reducing stigma increases program participation.

Programs framed as community sharing instead of “help for the needy” improve acceptance.”

Slide 5 — Cooperation & the Commons Dilemma in Agriculture- Speaker 3 (continued — 1 min)

“Hunger also results from failures in cooperation.

Overuse of land, water, and fisheries creates a commons dilemma, where individual short-term gains harm long-term shared resources.

According to Ostrom (2009), cooperation increases when:

People feel part of a shared identity

Rules are fair

Communication occurs

Trust is built

Social psychology shows that hunger can be reduced when communities cooperate in resource management.”

Slide 6 — Attitude Change & Nutrition Behavior- Speaker 4 (2 min)

“Nutrition-related problems, especially in developing regions, also involve attitudes and beliefs. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) shows that:

- Logical, informative messages change attitudes via the central route
- Emotional visuals change attitudes via the peripheral route

For example:

Campaigns about childhood malnutrition work better when they combine facts (central route) with emotional stories of affected families (peripheral route).

Parents’ feeding behaviors can also be changed by framing healthy eating as a social norm within the community.”

Slide 7 — Behavioral Barriers: Present Bias & Scarcity Mindset- Speaker 5 (2 min)

“Scarcity changes decision-making.

According to Mullainathan & Shafir (2013), scarcity mindset narrows attention, increasing short-term thinking.

People facing food scarcity may:

- Make impulsive choices
- Buy cheaper unhealthy food
- Skip long-term planning

This connects to present bias, the tendency to prioritize immediate needs.

Understanding these psychological barriers helps design better food assistance programs.”

Slide 8 — Our Proposed Intervention: “Community Plate Project”- Speaker 6 (2 min)

“We propose a social-psychology–based intervention called Community Plate Project.

1. Norm-Based Messaging (Cialdini)

Signs in cafeterias or markets:

‘Most families in our community choose to reduce food waste.’

2. Identity Framing

Situation: Many avoid food banks due to stigma.

Solution: Rebrand food banks as “Community Sharing Centers” emphasizing community support rather than charity.

3. Commitment Strategy

Community members sign a public pledge to reduce waste or donate excess food.

4. Behavioral Nudges

Smaller plates → reduced waste

Simplified donation boxes → higher participation

5. Social Media Descriptive Norms

Hashtags like #ShareToSustain show local families participating.

Together, these strategies use psychological principles to reduce waste, increase sharing, and fight hunger.”

Slide 9 — Real-World Examples- Speaker 6 (continued)

South Korea cut food waste by 30% using weight-based fees and norm messaging.

France outlawed supermarket food waste and reframed donation as a social responsibility.

The Netherlands increased food-sharing through identity-based community fridge projects.

These examples show how behavior + policy reduces hunger.

Slide 10 — Conclusion- Speaker 1 (Final 1 min)

“In conclusion, SDG 2 cannot be achieved through agriculture alone. Social psychology offers tools to understand:

- why people waste food
- why stigma prevents people from accessing help
- how groups cooperate
- how attitudes toward nutrition form
- how identity and norms shape food-related behaviors
- Ending hunger requires combining scientific knowledge with an understanding of human behavior.”

Slide 11- References (APA 7)

Cialdini, R. B. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(4), 105–109.

Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2013). *Scarcity: Why having too little means so much*. Times Books.

Ostrom, E. (2009). *Governing the commons*. Cambridge University Press.

Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). *The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion*. Academic Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In *The social psychology of intergroup relations*.

van der Horst, H., Pascucci, S., & Bol, W. (2014). The “dark side” of food banks? *British Food Journal*, 116(9), 1506–1520.