

# CROWD PSYCHOLOGY

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## Crowd Psychology: An Overview

Crowd psychology is a branch of psychology that studies the behavior of people in large groups, including their reactions to different stimuli. It is an interdisciplinary field that combines elements of sociology, psychology, anthropology, and neuroscience to better understand how people interact within large groups. Crowd psychology is particularly useful in understanding how people behave in situations where their individual decisions are influenced by their fellow group members. This can include situations such as riots, demonstrations, and sporting events. In this article, we will provide an overview of crowd psychology and discuss some of its key concepts.

Crowds are typically characterized by two distinct features: anonymity and contagion. Anonymity means that individuals feel less accountable for their behavior within the group, allowing them to act differently than if they were alone. Contagion refers to the idea that certain behaviors can spread quickly through the crowd, causing group members to act in unison. This phenomenon is known as "crowd contagion" and is often used to explain why large groups of people behave differently than individuals.

One of the most important concepts in crowd psychology is the notion of deindividuation. Deindividuation is a psychological state in which people become less aware of individual identity and become part of the collective group. This can lead to a decrease in self-awareness and an increase in responsiveness to the emotions and behaviors of others. Deindividuation can lead to an increase in aggression and risk-taking behaviors, as well as a decrease in impulse control and moral reasoning.

In addition to deindividuation, crowd psychology also examines the role of emotion in collective behavior. Emotions can be contagious and can lead to the formation of shared mental states within a group. This can result in an "emotional contagion" in which members of a group experience the same emotions. Emotional contagion can have a profound effect on group behavior, influencing how people interact and behave in a crowd.

Finally, crowd psychology is also concerned with the effects of crowd size on behavior. Studies have shown that larger crowds tend to be more volatile than smaller ones, leading to an increase in risk-taking and aggressive behavior. Crowd size can also affect the spread of contagion, as larger crowds are more likely to experience the same emotions and behaviors.

In conclusion, crowd psychology is an interdisciplinary field that examines the behavior of people in large groups. It is particularly useful in understanding how individuals are influenced by their fellow group members and how collective behavior is shaped by anonymity, contagion, deindividuation, emotion, and crowd size. This knowledge can help inform public policy decisions and can help prevent the formation of dangerous crowds.

## References

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