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 exposes 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 leaders 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.