

# HPS204 Exam Notes

What is Social psychology?

A sub-discipline of psychology that investigates **social** and **human interaction**.

**Social psychology** can be defined as

“The scientific investigation of how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the **actual, imagined** or **implied** presence of others”.

- Actual presence: physically present e.g. talking face to face
- Imagined presence: imagining yourself being in the presence of others e.g. thinking about giving a class presentation
- Implied presence: the way we assign ‘social meaning’ to things that have arisen as a result of human interaction e.g. following the norm of not dropping litter

There are **two major research methodologies**

<b>Experimental</b>	<b>Non-experimental</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Involves independent variables being manipulated against the background of participants random assignment to different conditions</li><li>➤ Important to have conditions identical except for the IV manipulated</li><li>➤ Try to avoid <b>confounding</b>.</li><li>➤ Allows conclusions about cause</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Not all proposed IV's can be manipulated</li><li>➤ These methods <b>don't</b> involve the manipulation of IV's</li><li>➤ Usually correlational</li><li>➤ Can't make causal conclusions</li></ul>

## **EXPERIMENTAL METHODS**

### **1. Laboratory experiment**

- Tests theories under artificial conditions to control for confounding variables
- Intentionally low on mundane realism/external validity
- Should always be high on experimental realism/internal validity

### **2. The field experiments**

- Conduct experiment in more naturalistic setting
- High external validity, less experimental control
- Random assignment can be difficult and can be hard to get more accurate measures

## **NON- EXPERIMENTAL METHODS**

### **1. Archival research**

- Involves analysis of data collected
- Useful for investigating large scale phenomena
- Can compare different cultures or nations

### **2. Case Studies**

- In-depth analysis of a single case/event
- Useful for study of rare or unusual behaviour & generating hypothesis
- Hard to generalize
- Can have experimenter and participant bias

### **3. Survey Research**

- Large sample of people answer questions about their attitudes and behaviour
- Often anonymous and confidential
- Can be hard to generalize results

### **4. Field Studies**

- Observed behaviour in field
- Naturalistic, examine spontaneous behaviour
- Lack of objectivity and poor
- Experimenter presence can impact results

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES IN RESEARCH**

1. Protect from harm – emotional, physical, reputational
2. Respect privacy – usually remove identifying information from data
3. Minimize deception
4. Obtain informed consent
5. Debriefing

## **SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND COGNITION**

**Social cognition:** cognitive processes & structures that affect & are affected by social context & behaviour

- Primary automatic and only inferred from people's actions and expressions