

## PSY1022 NOTES

### WEEK 1 – SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY 1

#### Introduction

- **Social psychology:** study of how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour influence and are influenced by behaviour of others.
- **Social cognition:** mental processes associated with ways in which people perceive and react to other individuals and groups.
- **Social influence:** process whereby one person's behaviour is affected by words or actions of others.

#### Social influences on the self

- **Self-concept:** thoughts, feelings and beliefs we hold about who we are and our characteristics.
- **Self-esteem:** evaluations we make about how worthy we are as human beings.

#### Social comparisons

- Self-evaluation involves 2 types of questions: those that can be answered by taking objective measurements and those that cannot.
- 2 types of comparisons:
  - o Temporal comparison: consider what we are now in relation to how we are in the past.
  - o Social comparison: evaluate us in relation to others.
- **Reference groups:** categories of people to which you see yourself belonging to and to which we compare ourselves.
- Performance of people in a reference group influences self-esteem.
- **Relative deprivation:** belief that, in comparison to a reference group, one is getting less than deserved.

#### Social comparison theory

- Upward: we compare ourselves to people superior to us
  - o Highly motivated people: upward communication
- Downward: we compare ourselves to people inferior to us
  - o Active: demeaning others, causing harm
  - o Passive: comparing with someone worse off.

#### Social norms

- **Social norms:** learned, social based rules that prescribe what people should or shouldn't do in various situations.
- Learned from teachers, clergy, peers, and other agents of culture.
- Not always universal across cultures.
- **Deindividuation:** person becomes 'submerged in a group' and loses sense of individuality; feelings of anonymity; lack of individual responsibility
- They become emotionally aroused and feel intense closeness with the group.
  - o Creates greater adherence to group norms.
  - o Become a part of herd.