

Social Psychology Study Notes

Sample: Weeks 1–12 Overview

Comprehensive, Concise, and Exam-Ready

Perfect for students preparing for assignments and exams in Social Psychology. Get the full 12-week notes for a complete course companion!

Why Choose These Notes?

Clear structure, highlighted key terms, and concise summaries make studying easier and more effective. Ideal for quick revision and deep understanding.

1 Week 1: Social Psychology & Research Methods

1.1 Defining Social Psychology

Social Psychology (SP): Scientific study of how individuals *think, feel, and behave* in a social context, influenced by the presence or actions of others.

- Must involve other people or their influence.
- Differs from *sociology*, which focuses on groups, while SP examines *individual behaviors*.

1.2 Key Questions in SP

Area	Description	Example
Social Perception	How we form opinions about ourselves and others.	Judging someone's character based on first impressions.
Social Influence	How we influence each other's behaviors.	A salesman persuading a customer.
Social Relations	What causes love, hate, or harm.	Bystander effect in emergencies.
Applying SP	Using SP to understand life domains.	Addressing climate change behaviors.

1.3 History of SP

- **Lewin's Interactionist Perspective:** Behavior results from the interaction of personality and environmental characteristics.
- **Modern SP:** Explores *emotions, motivations, cognition* (hot vs. cold perspectives), *genetics, evolutionary*, and *cultural* influences.
- **Behavioral Economics:** Links SP to decision-making processes.

1.4 Research Methods

Key Variables:

- **Conceptual Variable:** Abstract concepts (e.g., love, prejudice) made measurable.
- **Basic Research:** Tests hypotheses about human behavior.
- **Applied Research:** Solves practical problems using naturally occurring events.
- **Confederate:** Undercover experimenter in studies.

Testing Methods:

- **Signal-Contingent:** Reporting feelings at a signal (e.g., SMS).

- **Interval-Contingent:** Self-reports after a time period.
- **Bogus Pipeline:** Pretending a lie detector is used in self-reports.
- **Event-Contingent:** Self-reports after specific events.

Research Design Steps:

1. Develop a research question.
2. Review existing literature to refine the question.