

# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## L1: Early Environment

### What is developmental psychology?

- The discipline that seeks to identify and explain the changes (in behaviour) that individuals undergo from the moment of conception until they die
- Seek to not only catalogue the sequence of changes that people undergo, but also talk about the mechanism of change – how does one stage lead to the next etc.

### IMPOVERISHED EARLY ENVIRONMENTS

#### 1. Monkey experiments

Harlow (1959) – study of mother-infant bonds in monkeys

- Use of cloth and wire surrogate mothers, the infant always chose cloth ones for comfort even though the other one had good

Suomi and Harlow (1972) – social rehabilitation of monkeys reared in isolation

- Concluded: Severity of behavioural disruption depends on duration of isolation and the age at which it begins

Experiment:

- Isolation for first 3 months – “emotional shock”, self-clutching, biting
  - Within a month of return to group cage behaved normally
- Isolation for first 6 months – similar effect but persisted
  - Not reversed by peer housing
- Isolation for second 6 months – (initial normal development) became aggressive and fearful
  - But quickly recovered when returned to group cage
- Isolation for 12 months – social misfits, lifelong effects
  - No sign of recovery

#### 2. Orphanage Studies

Goldfarb (1955)

- Experiment: In 1940s foster homes, compared early (<3 months – almost average IQ); with late (>3 years – very low IQs) placement of children
- Results at aged 12: Mean IQ 95 for early placement, mean IQ 72 for late placement
  - No reason to presume underlying genetic difference
- Concluded: When institutional effects go on for >3 years, the effects are long lasting and probably irreversible
- Effects/disabilities:
  - Cognitive disabilities of late placement – lower ability to conceptualise, poorer speech development, inability to concentrate, poorer school achievement
  - Social-emotional problems – social immaturity, aggression, insatiable need for affection but unable to form secure bonds, inability to adhere to rules and failure to show guilt when broke rules

English-Romanian Adoption Study

- Conditions of Romanian orphanages – children mainly confined to cots, few toys, little talk from caregivers, no personalised caregiving, harsh physical environments, impersonal cleaning and feeding
- Experiment: Measured physical and cognitive abilities at entry to UK and at 4 years of children who spent <6 months (in Ro.), 6-24 months (in Ro.), 12-24 months (in Ro.), <6 months (in UK)
- Results:
  - At entry to UK, many were below 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile
  - 4 years old – considerable catch up (greatest for those adopted before 6 months)
  - IQ dropped for children who were adopted between 12-24 months
  - 6 years old – catch up in weight but significant head-circumference deficits
    - More Romanian adoptees with cognitive impairment
- Concluded: Children who spent their first period of life in deprive environments suffer lasting cognitive and social/emotional deficits. These effects can be overcome by moving to stimulating environments. The degree to which they can overcome the effect is related to the period of time spent in the deprived environment.

### 3. Postnatal Depression

- PND occurs in 20-40% of mothers and they tend to be more irritable and hostile, exhibit less emotion and warmth and are less engaged/lower rates of play
- At 13 years old, children from PND mothers during infancy (no depression after 5 years old) had increased cortisol levels (stress hormone predictive of anxiety disorders)
- Conclusion: contact with caregiver as an infant affects gene expression later in life

### 4. Socio-economic Status (SES) & Disadvantaged Children

Heckman (2006)

- Differences across SES affects every area of development – cognitive, social, emotional
- Lower SES children are behind in entering school and don't improve
- Heckman made economic argument for pre-school investment
  - This is cheaper and more effective compared to investments in later education, job training, police forces and prisons
- Concluded: Best use of government funds is to invest earlier in life

### **PRESCHOOL INTERVENTIONS TO ENRICH EARLY ENVIRONMENTS**

#### 1. Head Start (introduced in 1964)

- Children at risk given special early education programs, 8 weeks prior to primary school
- Goals of improving physical and mental health, enhance cognitive skills, fostering social and emotional development
- Components – early childhood education, health screening and referral, mental health services, nutrition education and meals, social services for child and family, parental involvement
- Children in Head Start vs Children with no treatment
  - Immediate cognitive (IQ) gains but these 'washed' out over follow up period (Year 2)
  - Gains in non-cognitive areas (e.g. social competence) persisted to follow up period
  - Head Start children coped better with school and were more likely to complete high school
- Recent Head Start programs
  - Same goal and elements but started 3 years prior to primary school and focused on training mothers/caregivers to become more emotionally supportive and to provide more language and learning stimulation for their kids. These parents were also less aggressive and spanked their children less.

#### 2. Abecedarian Project (2004)

Experiment:

- Random assignment of infants from low income families to intervention and control conditions
- No initial differences on infant mental and motor tests
- 5 years of exposure to early education in high quality setting – emphasis on language and learning games with specific hidden goals

Results

- 4 years – benefits in language, social interaction, IQ
- 12, 15, 21 years – benefits in IQ, reading and maths
- Enhanced language skills were a major factor in enhancing cognitive skills
- 21 years – intervention group had higher education level and lower unemployment

Conclusion

- Early high quality childhood education significantly improves the scholastic success and educational achievements of children from low economic backgrounds

# SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

## L1: Introduction to Social Psychology

### WHAT IS SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY?

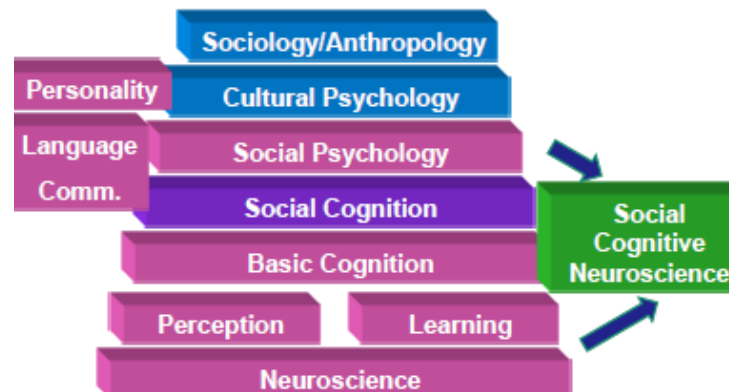
- Study of how people think, feel and act in the social setting
- People in groups or in general rather than single person (clinical)
- Look at cases and try to determine whether it was the individual or the social situation that led to particular behaviour
- Social phenomena like deception, attraction, tactics of manipulation, aggression, stereotypes and prejudice

### Definitions

- “The scientific investigation of how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others” –Allport (1935)
- The branch of psychology that studies the effect of social variables on individual behaviour, attitudes, perceptions and motives
- Also the study of group and intergroup phenomena
- Social psychology links ordinary people’s affective states (feelings and emotions), behaviour (the way they act), and their cognition (their thought processes) to their social world
- Social psychology researchers want to predict what people will do and when, but also why they do it (i.e. causation)
- **Social cognition:** process by which people select, interpret, and remember social information
- **Social perception:** process by which people come to understand and categorise the behaviours of others, judgements and decisions based on this information
- **Social interaction:** process by which people interact with each other i.e. prosocial behaviour

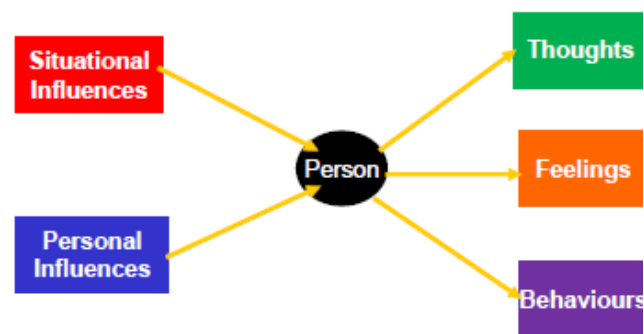
### History

- 1899 Norman Triplett – paper on social facilitation
- 1924 Floyd Henry Allport – helped define the field
- 1930s-1940s Kurt Lewin – person by situation interaction
- 1951 Solomon Asch – conformity studies
- 1963 Stanley Milgram – obedience to authority
- 1968 Darley and Latane – bystander effect
  - People are less likely to help in the presence of others than when alone



### Studying Social Behaviour

- Represents a continual interaction between the person and situation (bidirectional influence)
- Person perspective
  - Features or characteristics that individuals carry into social situations
- Situational perspective
  - Environmental events or circumstances outside the person
- Interaction between the person and the situation
  - Different people respond differently to same situation
  - Situations choose the person (situation can be confined by individual limits or characteristics)
  - People choose their situation
  - Different situations bring out different parts of the person (act in different ways in different social contexts)
  - People change the situation (e.g. just by being present)
  - Situations change the person (e.g. perception of things in real life and thought processes, or physical changes)
- Situational and personal influences act on the person, leading to particular thoughts, feelings and behaviours



## RESEARCH METHODS USED IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

- Observation → theory → predictions → research design (design a study) → data
- 2 main research methods:
  - **Descriptive (non-experimental):** attempts to measure or record thoughts, feelings, or behaviours in their natural state
    - Useful in determining the association between variables (i.e. correlation)
  - **Experimental methods:** attempt to manipulate social processes by varying and controlling some aspects of the situation
    - Useful in determining the causal relation between variables

### Descriptive Methods

Type	Description	Example
Naturalistic observation	Involves observing behaviour as it unfolds in its natural setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How many drivers stop at a given stop sign?</li><li>- How many people hold open the door for others in a busy shopping centre etc.</li></ul>
Archival studies	Involves examining archives or public records of social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Membership lists at exclusive country clubs to determine proportion of non-W.A.S.P. members</li><li>- Media studies (public speeches, images)</li></ul>
Surveys	Involves asking people questions about their beliefs, thoughts, feelings and behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Public opinion polls</li><li>- Attitudes towards various issues</li></ul>
Pros	Good for determining association (correlation) between variables	
Cons	Doesn't take into account that there could be an overall cause for both variables	

### Experimental Methods

Field experiments	Involves the manipulation of variables using unknowing participants in natural settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Effects of guilt on subsequent helping behaviour in a shopping centre</li><li>- Mindless compliance with a request at a photocopier</li></ul>
Laboratory experiments	Involves the direct manipulation of variables and the observation of their effects on other variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Many of the studies we'll be discussing are laboratory experiments</li></ul>

## L2: Social Perception I: Attributions & Attitudes

### Definitions

- **Attribution theory:** We tend to give a casual explanation for someone's behaviour, often crediting either internal dispositions or external situations
- **Internal attribution:** Explaining behaviour as due to dispositional factors i.e. personality
- **External attribution:** Explaining behaviour as due to situational factors

### Person vs. situation attributions: Covariation Model – Kelly (1967)

In order for a factor to be the cause of behaviour, it must be present when the behaviour occurs and absent when not occurring. There are 3 types of information that we consider when making an attribution.

- Consistency – does the actor behave the same toward the stimulus in different situations?
  - If consistent → need to ask more questions
  - If inconsistent → just an unusual situation, neither about the person or situation
- Consensus information – do other people behave the same toward the stimulus?
- Distinctiveness – does the actor behave the same toward different stimuli?

These factors come together to determine whether we should attribute the behaviour dispositionally, situationally or to an interaction

Consistency	Consensus	Distinctive	Attribution
high	high	high	external (stimulus or situation)
high	low	low	internal (person)
high	low	high	interaction