

Social Cognition

What it is?	Example
An approach of social behaviour which assumes cognitive process influence and are influenced by social factors.	Facial expressions, such as fear and disgust, which warn us of danger, and eye gaze direction, which indicate where interesting things can be found. Such signals are particularly important in infant development. Social referencing, for example, refers to the phenomenon in which infants refer to their mothers' facial expressions to determine whether or not to approach a novel object. We can learn a great deal simply by observing others.

Social psychology examines how people affect one another, and it looks at the power of the situation.

Social psychologists assert that an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are very much influenced by social situations. Essentially, people will change their behaviour to align with the social situation at hand.

If we are in a new situation or are unsure how to behave, we will take our cues from other individuals. (ROSIE M. SPIELMAN 2017)

Harlow's Monkey Experiment

Raised using an artificial terry towelling mother. Monkeys who were reared in isolation from birth turned out to be incapable of communicating with or learning from others of their kind, unlike those reared with their natural mothers

Attraction

What Is It? Social Exchange Theory

People who have a higher need for affiliation tend to be very active in pursuing social contacts and place a high premium on positive outcomes in such pursuit.

Desire to gain knowledge about ourselves and the world through social comparisons

Those who are with low need for affiliation are less likely to respond negatively when their social interactions becomes less reward.

Desire to secure psychological and material rewards through social exchange.

Why?

Information (Information Dependence)

Attraction (cont)

Positive Outcome Dependence (Outcome Dependence)

People seek out and maintain those relationships in which reward exceeds cost, and they avoid or terminate relationships when cost is greater than rewards. People seek out to maximise pleasure and minimise pain and be attracted to those people who will reward them. - Lopes 1997

Some people may remain in dissatisfying relationships as they would rather receive rewards than run the risk of receiving none at all. - Martin 1995

Development of Friendships

Schacter et. al (1950)

Student couples living in student housing at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Uni randomly assigned available apartments in 17 different buildings.

At the end of year, students were asked to name their 3 closest friends

The study concluded that two thirds close friends reside in the same apartment building/ same floor proving proximity theory. It was found out that couples were most likely to get married the closer they live to each other.

Matching Hypothesis

Stiles et al., 1996

Physically similar couples are more intimate in public settings and report greater love for one another than physically mismatched.

Matched couples are more likely to get married and stay married than those who are physically mismatched.

Matching Hypothesis (cont)

Similarity in age and family background not only influence affiliation rates, but similarity in attitudes also - Newcombs 1961

Schacter on Attraction 2016

Mere Exposure Effect the tendency for liking increase with the frequency of exposure.

Proximity not only provides opportunity for attraction but it also provides the motivation

The mere act of being exposed to same things in the environment led to increased liking for those things.

Biological Factors

Physical attractiveness was the only factor that predicted the online dating choices of women and men.

Beautiful people have more friends, more dates, more sex and more fun than the rest of us (Curran and Lippold, 1975), and they can even expect to earn 10% more money over the course of their lives (Hamermesh and Biddle, 1994).

You know from experience that a person's appearance influences your attraction towards them, but research suggests that this influence is stronger than most of us might suspect.



Psychological Factors

Why Similarity so Attractive?

People's inner qualities – personalities, points of view, attitudes, beliefs, values, ambitions and abilities – play an important role in determining their sustained interest in each other, and there isn't much mystery about the kinds

Research suggests that we typically interact with people whose standing on these dimensions is roughly similar to our own

When someone shares our attitudes and beliefs, we feel a bit more confident that those attitudes and beliefs are correct (Byrne and Clore, 1970). Indeed, research shows that when the accuracy of a person's attitudes and beliefs is challenged, similarity becomes an even more important determinant of their attraction to others (Greenberg et al., 1990; Hirschberger et al., 2002).

Psychological Factors (cont)

For example, intelligence, sense of humour, sensitivity and ambition are high on just about everybody's list (Daniel et al., 1985)

If we like people who share our attitudes and beliefs, we can reasonably expect them to like us for the same reason, and being liked is a powerful source of attraction

we are generally attracted to competent people who, just like us, have small pockets of incompetence. Why? It seems that people who are annoyingly perfect are perfectly annoying. Having a flaw or two 'humanizes' people and makes them seem more accessible – and similar – to us (Aronson et al., 1966).

Attitude

Attitudes draw lines about and segregate an otherwise chaotic environment

Methods for finding our way about in an ambiguous universe

Attitudes are presumed to influence behaviours.

Attitude is more likely to be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of an object

Mere Exposure Effect

By exposing people repeatedly to a particular object will often lead them to develop a more positive attitude towards the object.

It Does not require any action towards that object, nor does it require the development of any beliefs about the object.

Classical (evaluative) Conditioning

Dislike of specific racial groups can develop for children from listening to parents and other adults continuously use negatively evaluated words such as stupid, crazy, dishonest and dirty in referring to minority members.

A previously neutral attitude object can come to evoke an attitude response by being paired with some other object that naturally evokes the attitude response.

Stats and Statts (1958)

Demonstrated how easy it is to make subject like or dislike Dutch or Swedish people.

One group = word "Dutch" was associated with positive word.

Second group = word "Swedish" was associated with negative word.

At the end, participants were asked to rate how they actually felt about various nationalities (pleasant - unpleasant)



Reinforcement and Punishment

When action towards the object is rewarded or reinforced, the action will probably be repeated in the future.

Attitudes can also be developed through the indirect means of observational learning = by observing how other people are rewarded or punished when interacting with the attitude object.

Self-perception Theory

Daryl Bem
Feelings and attitudes can be result rather than the cause of our behaviour.

Instead of attitudes causing behaviour, it is behaviour that causes attitudes.

We watch our behaviour and then attribute it to either an external (situation) or internal (attitude) source.

Body Feedback

Form of self-perception

Attitudes can be manipulated by changing facial expression, body posture or other motor responses.

Schacter (2016) on Attitude

Attitude is positive or negative evaluation of an object or event.

When we are hungry, we open the fridge and grab an apple because our attitudes tell us that apples taste good and our beliefs tell us that those tasty apples are to be found in the fridge. In a sense, attitudes tell us what we should do ('Eat an apple') and beliefs tell us how we should do it ('Start by opening the fridge')

Schacter (2016) on Attitude (cont)

If attitudes or beliefs are inaccurate, that is, if we don't know what is good and we don't know what is true, then our actions are fruitless. Because we rely so heavily on our attitudes and beliefs to guide our actions, it isn't surprising that we want to have the right ones. We are motivated to be accurate, and like any motive, this one leaves us vulnerable to social influence

Schacter (2016) on Attitude (cont)

For example, in one study, university students heard a speech that contained either strong or weak arguments in favour of instituting comprehensive exams at their school (Petty et al., 1981). Some students were told that the speaker was a university professor, and others were told that the speaker was a secondary school student. Some students were told that their university was considering implementing these exams right away, whereas others were told that their university was considering implementing these exams in 10 years. As figure 15.10 shows, when students thought the new exams might affect them personally, they were motivated to consider the evidence, and they were systematically persuaded. . That is, their attitudes and beliefs were influenced by the strength of the arguments and not by the status of the speaker. But when students thought the new exams would not affect them personally, they were not motivated to consider the evidence, and thus they were heuristically persuaded. That is, their attitudes and beliefs were influenced by the status of the speaker but not by the strength of the arguments

When people experience the unpleasant state of cognitive dissonance, they naturally try to alleviate it to change one's action, attitude or beliefs.

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Not published yet.
Last updated 25th July, 2022.
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