**Human relationships**

**General framework**

* To what extent do biological, cognitive and sociocultural factors influence human relationships (2012-biological factors) (May 2011-biological factors)
* Evaluate psychological research (that is, theories and/or studies) relevant to the study of human relationships

Evaluate psychological research relevant to the study of human relationships

**Introduction**

-    Introduce human relationship: altruism & bystanderism (definition&example)

-    There are strengths and limitations of psychological researches

**Piliavin et al--The arousal cost reward model of pro-social behavior**

-    People tend to weigh the costs (humiliation) against the benefits (financial)

-    Social exchange theory: human relationships are based on a subjective cost – benefit analysis – rational

-    Model covers both emergency and non-emergency

-    Emphasize the interaction of mood and cognition in determining behavior

-    Arousal is seen as motivational factor → reduce unpleasant

-    Agrees with Negative-state Relief Model

-    Assessing possible costs and rewards associated with helping or not helping

-    Observation of an emergency situation always creates an emotional arousal in bystanders → fear, sympathy

-    Arousal can be influenced: proximity, time length

-    Can be reduced: helping, leaving

-    Motivated to reduce unpleasant feelings

-    Chosen response depends on a cost-reward analysis by the individual:

-    1) cost of helping (effort, embarrassment

-    2) cost of not helping (self-blame, perceived censure from others

-    3) rewards of helping (praise

-    4) rewards of not helping (incurring the possible costs of helping

**Evaluation**

-    Supported by empirical evidence

-    Support → people do become aroused by the distress of others at young age and is found cross culturally indicating that it may be a biologically inherited capacity (Manstead et al 1995)

-    Batson et al (1981): when bystanders believe they are similar to the victim, and identify with them → more likely to help out empathic concern rather than the egoistic need to reduce their own distress

**Latane and Darley--The decision model of bystander intervention**

-    Before someone helps another, that person must:

-    Notice something is wrong

-    Define it is a situation requiring help

-    Decide whether to take personal responsibility

-    Decide what kind of help to give

-    Implement the decision to intervene

-    Negative response → bystander won’t intervene

**Evaluation**

-    Provides a valuable broad framework for understanding bystander intervention

-    Although originally designed to explain helping in emergency situations, aspects of the model have been applied to many other situations

-    Does not explain why “NO” decisions are taken at any of the 5 steps.

-    Dovidio (1995) points out that the model focuses on why people don't help others → reasons?

**Axlrod and Hamliton--Prison’s dilemma**

-   Individual A and B can choose either to “cooperate” or to “defect”. Both cooperate → both gain reward; both defect → no pay-off. Each player’s reward depends on his own strategy, as well as that of other player. If the players only pay against each other once, the best strategy is to defect, so that there is a chance that one’s own gain is maximized.

-    No chance that cooperate behavior can evolve, so natural selection will favor the defectors, and a cooperator will eventually eliminated from the population.

-    2 players meet each other many times → can adjust their strategy, fits with their opponent’s last move (“tit-for-tat” strategy, and a player following it will initially cooperate and then respond with the same move as their opponent’s previous action.  If the opponent was defective (cooperative), then the other player is defective (cooperative).

-    Argue that cooperation of this nature → evolutionary stable strategy

-    Shows how actions determined by self-interest are not necessarily in the group’s interest. Thomas Hobbes argued that it must be taken into account that people are motivated by self-interest. Believed that uncontrolled pursuit of self-interest would result in chaos and that governments have the responsibility of preventing this chaos

-    Theory is questionable: whether animal behavior can be generalized to that of humans. Human behavior is influenced by culture to a far greater extent that that of other animals, and is often the product of conscious beliefs and desires.

**Latane and Rodin--Pluralistic ignorance**

Informational social influence→ when in a group people often look to others to know how to react.

-    Method: participants were asked to sit in a waiting room before participating in an experiment → hear the female experimenter fall and cry out and moan in the next room

-    Results: more quickly and more often → alone(75% in 65 sec), compare to when they were sitting with a confederate who showed no reaction and did not offer assistance. Two friends responded more quickly than two strangers

-    Conclusion: interview → participants felt anxious when they heard the experimenter fall but concluded that it was not an emergency, as the others appeared calm. To help → need to understand that help is needed

•    Lab expt. Well controlled and reliable (can be repeated). It did attempt to create a ‘real’ situation.

•    Ethical issues, may have cause psychological stress hearing someone fall, and not helping. Also Deception but justifiable. Also could be explained in de-brief.

•    Not a real life situation. Not face to face. Results may differ.

•    Participant’s knew they were taking part in an experiment, may have caused differences in their behavior, they knew they were being observed in some way. Participant effects even stretch to demand characteristics. Interestingly, two friends responded quickly showing that it more about being with a confederate/stranger.

•    It is supported by Shotland and Straw-Social norm of not interfering in people’s domestic rows.

•    Supports informational social influence in that we often look to others to know how to behave in ambiguous situations.

Conclusion:

* These studies and theories from altruism and bystanderism are all relevant to the study of human relationships.

**Social responsibility**

* Distinguish between altruism and prosocial behavior

Prosocial behaviour: (opposite of anti-social)

Staub defined this as, behaviour that benefits another person or has positive social consequences. Example? This is sometimes considered too vague and does not include the *motivation* of behaviour.

Intentional prosocial behaviour is often called *helping behaviour*. Example?

* Altruism: Behaviour that benefits another person, for no reward and sometimes at cost to oneself. Examples?
* Contrast two theories explaining altruism in humans (May 2011)

See powerpoint

* Using one or more research studies, explain cross-cultural differences in prosocial behavior

Introduction

Define Prosocial behavior.

Define culture. Matsumoto (2004). Culture can be defined as a dynamic system of rules, explicit and implicit, established by groups in order to ensure their survival, involving attitudes, values, beliefs, norms and behaviours.

Below I will examine cross cultural differences in prosocial behavior and whether culture does play a role in one’s likelihood to help in some situations.

Main Body

Differences in child rearing practices- can cause cross cultural differences in prosocial behavior.

Whiting and Whiting (1975)

A naturalistic observation. Observed children between the ages of 3-11.Compared six different cultures as a result of child rearing practices. Kenya, Philippines, Japan, India, Mexico, USA.

Results:

Children from Mexico and the Philippines generally acted more prosocially than those from Japan, India and USA. The most prosocial children were from Kenya (a traditional society). The most egoistic children came from the USA.

An important factor was how much children helped with household chores and care of younger children. Prosocial children tended to live in extended families, the female role was important (economically). In the USA children were paid for chores.

Conclusion:

Degree of modernization seem to influence behavior and also individualism and collectivism. Collectivist cultures value helping family members (think about subsistence farmers). Individualistic cultures encourage competitiveness and personal achievement for future success. This does not seem to promote prosocial behavior.

Supported by **Graves and Graves**

Caring for younger children provides considerable opportunities to learn to behave in a social manner.

Cultural Norms

**Miller et al** – Interviewed 400 individuals on what to do in hypothetical situations where a person had failed to help someone in need. The situations involved parent’s obligation to help children, friend’s obligation to help a friend and people’s obligation to help a stranger. The situations also varied from life threatening to minor threat.

Hindu Indians tended to see it as a moral duty to help in ALL situations. North Americans saw it as more personal choice. They were influenced by factors like if they knew the person, if they liked the person and how much danger they were in.

Social Identity Theory **–** we favour our in-group.

**Katz**

Help members of own ethnic group (our in group) rather than another.

**Bond and Leung**

Chinese and Japanese had a strong in-group perception and offered more help than Americans. However, they are less likely than Americans to help out group.

Conclusion: We seem to help those we perceive as similar but more research is needed. It may be difficult to measure in some places that are very multi-cultural.

Population density

**Levine et al** throughout 1990’s investigated helpfulness towards strangers.

Independent field experiments into simple helpful acts. For example, a pen dropping, letter dropping, exchange money, blind person across the road.

Results for 36 large cities around the USA of all different sizes.

Small/medium cities in SE most helpful

Large cites in NE least helpful

Conclusion: The research indicated that the best predictor of helping behavior was population density

Results for 23 large cities around the world

In the blind person experiment. Most helpful (on every occasion): Rio de Janeiro, San Jose, Lilongwe, Madrid, Prague

But in Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok help was offered less than half of the time.

In pen dropping, the chance of being helped in one third in New Yourk compared to Rio.

Conclusion: Helping was high in countries with low economic productivity

Helping was also higher in cities with a slow pace of life. Walking speed measured to access pace of life. However this trend was not found in all cases. Fast paced pedestrians in Vienna were very helpful but slow paced Kuala Lumpurians were not.

Interestingly, where people were raised had LESS effect than where they lived. Therefore helping may be due to the ‘norms’ of a place.

Evaluation:

Methodological limitations:

Levine’s tasks were different and cannot compare easily but are all helping but not demanding.

Do the tasks translate across cultures?

Can we generalize about an entire culture? Vienna does not follow the trend

Can we attribute meaning to a person’s refusal to help?

Ecological validity. Yes but many confounding variables.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

Prosocial behavior is the result of a complex interaction between environmental and social factors. It is not possible to isolate individual variables (such as culture) to determine which play the most significant role in whether an individual helps or not. Cross cultural research is difficult due to the bias of researchers in defining, observing and interpreting helping behavior.

* Examine factors influencing bystanderism (2012) (Nov 2011)

**Interpersonal relationships**

* Examine biological, psychological and social origins of attraction (Nov 2011 biological with psychological/social)

See below- can’t correct formatting

* + Anecdotal introduction regarding how cognitive and social cultural factors affect attraction in everyday life
* **Cognitive**
* Introduction Paragraph
* Morry (2007)
  + Similarity attraction hypothesis
    - Perceived similarity is the main factor in attraction
  + This is due to shared attitude and value = self validations and boosting of self-esteem
* Dijkstra & Barleds (2010)
  + Supporting of Morry (2007)
  + People generally perceive their ideal partners as being similar to themselves
  + While people tend to perceive former partners as different from themselves
* Evidence Paragraph
* Markey & Markey (2007)
  + Demonstrated how single people looking for romance tended to describe their ideal partners as similar
    - Warm - warm, dominate – dominate
  + Follow up study with couples however showed those in relationships that consisted of opposites (submissive/dominant) were the most harmonious
  + Contradicts the maxim of “opposites attract”
* Alternate Cognitive
* Kiesler and Baral (1970)
  + Personal self esteem effecting relationship formation
  + Fake IQ test, half of men were told to have high IQ, other half told low IQ
  + Those given a high IQ engaged in a conversation with an attractive female quicker than those given a low IQ
  + Evaluations
* **Sociocultural**
* Proximity and Familiarity Paragraph
  + Proximity; physical closeness is important in the formation attraction
* Festinger et al (1950)
  + Investigating the formation of friendship formation in Westgate housing
  + Found that the more exposure to proximity there was, the more likely that residents would become friends
  + Most neighbour developed strong friendships
* --------------------------
  + Familiarity; as a result of proximity is the cause of attraction
  + Links back with Morry’s theory as greater familiarity will lead to greater awareness of potential similarities
* Zajonc et al (1971)
  + Showed familiarity leads to attraction
  + Participants shown photos of strangers then asked to rate them
  + Those whom appeared more frequent were rated more positively
* Evaluation of P+F
  + + Proximity and familiarity are becoming more relevant and easily achieved with the introduction of the internet and social media
  + - Doesn't explain on its own why attraction occurs but rather indicates factors which increase the likely hood of them
* Cultural Paragraph
  + Culture plays a strong role in attraction as it determines what attraction is
    - E.g. food binding for small feet used to considered attractive in imperial China
* Buss et al (1990)
  + International Mate selection Project with over 9000 participants from 33 countries with a mean age of 23
  + Found some characteristics as a prerequisite for love were universal across cultures
  + However found other factors such as chastity was valued differently amongst cultures
  + Also highlighted differences between what men and women found attractive
* Evaluation
  + + Wide sampling
  + + Strong support from empirical observations
  + - Potentially deterministic
  + - Doesn't account for personal variations in what is found to be attractive

Conclusion

* + Attraction and its origins is complex and to even begin to comprehend it, we need to look at all 3 approaches
  + Love and attraction are such processes which are unique to the individual that perhaps its is not possible to use approaches and make broad generalisations about it
  + With so many divorces occurring today, perhaps the maintenance of a relationship is just as important as the attraction that causes it
* Discuss the role of communication in maintaining relationships

 Role of attribution

• Dispositional Attributions: personal attributions, behaviours as a result of themselves

• Situational Attributions: environmental attributions, behaviours are a result of factors external to themselves

 Fletcher et al (1987)

 Aim

• Investigate if patterns of attribution effected relationship satisfaction (happiness, commitment, love)

 Method

• 100 female and 31 male US students who were in relationships but not living with their SO were used as participants

• Participants initially completed a number of questionnaires

• 2 months later, 95% of participants were still in their relationships

• These participants asked to write a free-response description of their relationship and fill out another questionnaire

 Results

• Those with the highest relationship satisfaction after 2 months, attributed positive behaviour as being dispositional and negative behaviour as being situational

• Those in happy relationships tended to use more interpersonal terms (we) in the free response

• Participants who made situational attributions to relationship maintenance reported significantly less happiness, commitment and love

 Evaluation

• - Sampling bias, a lot more females than males

• - Culture bias, US only thus hard to generalise results

• - Data was self-reported; possibly not accurate

• - Participants were all students, hard to generalise results

 Bradbury and Fincham (1990)

• Conducted a meta-analysis of research on attributions in married couples

• Spouses in happy relationships

o Linked positive events to dispositional factors in the partner

o Linked negative events to situational factors

• While spouses in unhappy relationships tended to make the opposite attributions

 Duck (1988)

• Conflict is an evitable part of a relationship

• The handling of conflicts either promote the growth of a relationship or end it

• Thus the important part of a relationship is not the presence of conflict but rather how it is solved

 Role of Communication

• Gottman (1979) – Dissatisfied couples displayed more negative affects were more likely to return negative affects

• Known as negative reciprocity, it is easy to predict how these couples would interact in conflict situations based on the spouse’s behaviour

 Levenson and Gottman (1983)

• 30 couples were observed in a lab setting

• They were given a low-conflict discussion and a high-conflict discussion regarding their relationship

• These discussions were taped and spouses afterwards returned to made individual self-evaluations regarding their communication

• Physiological measures were also conducted during the sessions such as heart rate, skin conductor.

• Results showed that marital dissatisfaction was associated with high levels of expressed negative emotions and the resulting return of negative emotions

• Unhappy couples displayed similar physiological arousals (stress response)

• Concluded that unhappy couples experienced a negative spiral that leads to stress and mutual unhappiness

 Gottman and Krokoff (1989)

• Compared data from two longitudinal observational studies of couples

• Couples were observed both at home and in a lab setting to solve either low or high conflict issue

• Conflict was only seen as a negative sign if couples could not resolve it constructively

• Results showed that expression of anger and disagreement did not necessarily lead to marital dissatisfaction

• Rather couples who solved the conflict with mutual satisfaction were happier with their relationship

• While couples who avoided conflict were less happy

• Dysfunctional communication patterns (defensiveness, stubbornness and withdrawal from interactions) reliably lead to marital dissatisfaction however

 Gottman

• Theory of the Four Horsemen of Apocalypse, factors that predict marital dissatisfactions

• Criticism: making dispositional attributions e.g. ad hominem attacks on the partner

• Contempt: attacking the partner’s self of self with intention to insult or abuse e.g. sarcasm or mockery

• Defensiveness: seeing yourself as the victim e.g. listening to a partner’s compliant but returning it with your own

• Stonewalling: Withdrawing from the relationship as a way to avoid e.g. silent treatment, changins subject

* Explain the role that culture plays in the formation and maintenance of relationships

**Explain the role that culture plays in the formation and maintenance of relationships**

Introduction (definition):

Duck: individualistic cultures assume: free choice of a spouse – based on love, but may be arranged in reality, by social position, religion, wealth, class

Point 1: Western vs Non-western cultures

Moghaddam et al argues interpersonal relationships

* In Western cultures tend to be individualistic, voluntary, temporary
* In non-western – collectivist, involuntary, permanent
* In col cultures: social networks motivate marriages
* Families play an active role in choosing marriage partners for young
* Bellur: love is supposed to be discovered after marriage

Supporting study

Levine et al asked college students from 11 countries

* If they would marry someone who had all qualities they desired even if they didn’t love the person
* USA: 4%
* Australia: 5%
* UK: 8%
* These are individualistic countries
* India: 49%, Pakistan: 51%; collectivist countries

Major supporting study

Buss et al: cross-cultural factors in attraction

Aim: identify characteristics that individualistic value in potential mates worldwide

Method:

1. Ps – 9474 individuals from 37 cross-cultural samples
2. 33 countries
3. 5 islands on 6 continents
4. Mean age 23
5. Data collected thru 2 questionnaires developed in US & translated

Results:

* All cultures rated “mutual attraction as love” most important
* Chastity: showed largest effect for culture; valued in China, India, Taiwan, Israel, Iran
* Good financial prospects & earning capacity: consistently valued more in women
* Youth: valued more by men – prefer younger wives

Evaluation:

* Problems of translation 🡪 decrease validity
* Unrepresentative samples for each country 🡪 can’t generalize

Point 2: Maintenance of relationships

* A large proportion of marriages in Western cultures end in divorce
* In some cultures, divorce is non-existent (China)
* Fiske: arranged marriages usually last longer than romantic
* Marriage in traditional societies = a contract btw families
* Often involves economic & social engagements that create bonds
* 🡪 divorce impossible 🡪 a reason for stability

Name dropping supporting studies

Gupta & Singh

* Interviewed 50 Indian couples who married for loved or lived in arranged marriage
* Couples who married for love: diminished feelings
* Arranged: high levels of love

Yelsma & Athappilly

* Compared 28 Indian couples in arranged marriages, 25 Indian couples in love marriages, 31 US couples

Xiaohe & Whyte:

* Investigated prediction of defenders of arranged marriages that “love matches start hot grow cold, while arranged marriages start cold grow hot”
* Role of parents had declined
* Young people were more involved in matchmaking
* Wives in love marriages were more satisfied with marital relationships
* This was found regardless of marriage length

Conclusion:

* Data doesn’t support idea that arranged marriages are happier than love

Overall Conclusion

Hogg & Vaughn:

* In spite of the focus on love in relationships in West,
* There’s general agreement: a relationship that survives over time is when partners change with respect to what they expect of each other
* Love that involves friendship, caring, respect, mutual sharing 🡪 powerful bonding of lasting relationships
* Analyse why relationships may change or end (2012)

**Violence**

* Evaluate sociocultural explanations of the origins of violence (Nov 2011) DO NOT ATTEMPT
* Discuss the relative effectiveness of two strategies for reducing violence (May 2011) DO NOT ATTEMPT
* Discuss the effects of short term and long term exposure to violence DO NOT ATTEMPT

**Never been used**

* Evaluate psychological research (that is, theories and/or studies) relevant to the study of human relationships
* Distinguish between altruism and prosocial behavior
* Using one or more research studies, explain cross-cultural differences in prosocial behavior
* Discuss the role of communication in maintaining relationships
* Explain the role that culture plays in the formation and maintenance of relationships
* Discuss the effects of short term and long term exposure to violence DO NOT ATTEMPT