



Sociocultural approach to
understanding behaviour

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The sociocultural approach to behaviour investigates the role of social and cultural influences in shaping thinking and human behaviour. An increasing body of culturally informed research has made **cross-cultural** psychology, as well as cultural psychology, a contemporary topic of debate among psychologists working in the field. Theories, concepts, and research studies provide the background for a more nuanced understanding of the variety and complexity of human behaviour. This is important in the modern globalized world where issues related to migration and integration are on the rise.

Key figures in the field of modern social psychology have often favoured experimental methods to understand how social context influences behaviours, identities, attitudes, and **cognitions**. However, by studying **acculturation** in terms of intergroup relations, we can start to understand that the same processes may be seen in the interaction between cultural groups. Social and cultural psychologists now also use **qualitative** research methods to get a better understanding of intergroup relations as well as the process of acculturation.

The sociocultural approach to behaviour looks at:

- the individual and the group (SL and HL)
- cultural origins of behaviour (SL and HL)
- cultural influences on individual attitudes, identities, and behaviours (SL and HL)
- the influence of globalization on individual attitudes, identities, and behaviours (HL only).

13 The individual and the group

Topic focus

To what extent is a person's behaviour affected by membership of a group?

13.1 Social identity theory

Content focus

Evaluate social identity theory (SIT) as an explanation of human behaviour.

Tajfel and Turner (1979) proposed **social identity theory** (SIT) to explain that people's concept of **self-identity** is derived, at least in part, from the groups they belong to. People belong to many groups, such as their family, school community, workplace and sports teams. SIT proposes that people derive much of their identity from the behaviour of other people within these groups.

When people consider themselves a member of one group and not a member of another similar group, their group becomes an ingroup for them. The other, similar groups become their outgroups. Ingroups and outgroups are defined in terms of

The strength and relevance of social identity theory may depend on individuals' cultures.



People belong to many groups and derive much of their identity from the behaviour of other people within these groups.



comparisons and contrasts (Yuki, 2003). This ingroup/outgroup, or 'us' versus 'them' situation, is derived from SIT's three basic assumptions: social categorization, social identification, and social comparison.

Social categorization

People categorize others in order to easily identify them and to begin to understand them. By understanding the categories others belong to, they can better understand themselves and begin to develop a sense of identity. People tend to define behaviour as 'right' according to their group's behaviour. Individuals usually belong to many groups at the same time and depending on the group they are with, their behaviour is likely to change to match the group's behaviour.

Social identification

People tend to assimilate into their group by behaving in ways that the group members behave and therefore taking on the group's identity. The group becomes the person's ingroup.

Social comparison

Once people have categorized themselves within a group and identified themselves as members of that group, they tend to compare their ingroup with respect to their outgroups. To improve their **self-esteem**, group members see their ingroup in a positive light and their outgroups in a negative light. This is not just true for the groups as a whole – people also tend to perceive the individuals within their outgroups negatively.

13.1.1 Ingroup bias

According to the theory, people's **biased** evaluations of their outgroups are a result of their need to feel good about themselves. People seem to improve their perception of themselves after discriminating against their outgroups (Lemmyre and Smith, 1985).

Struch and Schwartz (1989) found that conflict between religiously defined groups in Israel was due to outgroup aggression and that this perception was strongest for those who identified most strongly with their ingroup. Brown et al. (2001) observed the same effect between passengers on a UK–France ferry (ingroup) and French fishermen (outgroup). The passengers had been prevented from travelling because of a blockade by French fishermen. The ingroup had significantly less favourable attitudes toward French people in general than those who were not affected by the French fishermen's behaviour. This negative attitude among the ingroup was stronger for those who identified most strongly with their English nationality. Identification of a person's nationality was the most consistent predictor of negative attitudes toward those of other nationalities. The strength of ingroup identification is a powerful predictor of intergroup attitudes.

13.1.2 Responses to intergroup inequality

SIT has shown how collective protest can sometimes be predicted by people's level of identification with their ingroups. Participation in trade union, gay, and elderly people's protests was generally predicted by the strength of people's identification with their ingroups (Kelly and Breinlinger, 1995). Wright et al. (1990) unjustly deprived a



Interview three people from your class by just asking them who they are. To what extent did they define themselves by identifying groups they belong to?



SIT is based on three assumptions: social categorization, social identification, and social comparison.



According to SIT, people's biased evaluations of their outgroups are a result of their need to feel good about themselves.

To what extent does social identity theory predict intergroup behaviour such as disputes between different political groups, different nationalities, and supporters of different sports teams?

EE

Stereotypes may not be reliable mental tools for decision making.



group of people and then offered individuals the possibility of leaving the group. The study found that collective protest only occurred when people felt they could not leave their group and concluded that even when just a few from the deprived group could join a more privileged group, collective protest was unlikely to occur.

13.1.3 Stereotyping

SIT affects the way psychologists think about **stereotyping** and the perception of ingroups and outgroups. Stereotypes may not be reliable mental tools for decision making. The categorization process that underlies stereotyping implies members of an outgroup share common attributes, i.e they are seen as more similar to each other than they are to members of other groups. SIT shows that perceptions of group **homogeneity**, of both ingroups and outgroups, are linked to social identity processes. Stereotypes, then, cannot be understood by considering them solely as cognitive devices to simplify thinking.

Key study: Yuki (2003)

Aim: To investigate the extent to which social identity theory is applicable within US and Japanese contexts.

Procedure: One hundred and twenty-two Japanese (72 men and 50 women, mean age 19.7 years old) and 126 Americans (62 men and 64 women, mean age 19.3 years old) completed a questionnaire (presented in each group's own language).

Findings: (1) Loyalty to and identification with their ingroup was greater with American participants than with Japanese participants; (2) evidence suggests that discrimination against outgroups is more pronounced in individualistic cultures; and (3) there is no evidence to support the theory that there is ingroup favouritism.

Conclusion: SIT 'may not accurately represent group behaviours among East Asians' and therefore is not a cross-cultural phenomenon.

13.1.4 Limitations of SIT

Research supporting SIT theory is limited.

- SIT assumes that a positive social identity is based on favourable intergroup comparisons. There should, therefore, be a positive correlation between strength of group identification and the amount of positive ingroup bias, but research shows only modest support for this (Yuki, 2003).
- SIT assumes that ingroup bias is driven by the desire to perceive one's ingroup, and oneself, positively. There should, therefore, be a causal relationship between intergroup **differentiation** and self-esteem, i.e. positive intergroup differentiation should cause people to feel better about themselves when they judge or treat their ingroup better than their outgroup. Yuki (2003) has not supported this claim.
- SIT is a theory of how people make their ingroups different from and better than outgroups. Therefore, groups that find they are similar should be motivated to demonstrate intergroup differences. Yuki (2003) does not support this.

To what extent do schema theory and social identity theory lead to stereotyping?

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SIT was largely developed within 'Western' contexts. Yuki (2003) suggests SIT is less reliable in explaining behaviour in 'non-Western' communities. Yuki (2003) investigated the extent to which SIT is applicable within US and Japanese contexts and found:

- loyalty to and identification with their ingroup was greater with American participants than with Japanese participants
- evidence suggests that discrimination against outgroups is more pronounced in individualistic cultures
- there is no evidence to support the theory that there is ingroup favouritism.

Yuki (2003) concluded that SIT 'may not accurately represent group behaviours among East Asians'.

Stewart et al. (1998) found that Chinese students living in Hong Kong perceived intergroup differentiation to be less important than British students living in Hong Kong did. The British students felt that their group membership was more important and that it generated more positive images of their group than the Chinese students did. Although the results did not contradict SIT, they did suggest that differentiation among the Chinese students is weaker than among the British students. This study focused only on students and so its findings cannot be **generalized** to the wider Western and Eastern populations.

EE

To what extent does the lack of supporting empirical evidence weaken SIT as an explanation of human behaviour?

Key study: Howarth (2002)

Aim: To examine 'how the struggle for recognition and esteem permeates everyday experiences in the contexts of young people living in Brixton (South London, UK)'.

Procedure: Eight focus groups with a total of 44 teenagers (12–16 years old) separated into friendship groups, and interviews with the three head teachers of Brixton's secondary schools. Questions and discussion prompts included, 'Tell me about Brixton. What it is like for you to live here and how do people outside Brixton think about Brixton?' (Howarth, 2002, p.4).

Follow-up interviews were conducted a short while later to clarify and expand on several themes.

Findings: The study found that many, but not all, of the young participants held positive perceptions of living in Brixton but believed people who did not live in Brixton did not think highly of it.

Conclusion: At least some adolescents develop social and psychological ways to protect themselves from others' perceptions and judgements about them. The study showed how teenagers' relationships and the cultures of the institutions to which they belong are able to empower them in respect to their identity. The young participants created a positive identity because of the sense of belonging they felt to their group, i.e. to Brixton residents.

Evaluation:

Strengths: Interviews can gather rich and varied qualitative information and focus groups have particular strengths, as participants can be prompted to discuss

issues that other group members think of. Interviews can be flexible, allowing the interviewer to delve into themes by developing questions into discussions. The focus group interviews were followed with one-to-one interviews with the heads of the three schools in the area as a means of triangulation, or at least to gather information from a different perspective. The study was gender-balanced and focused on a specific age range that was consistent with its aim and conclusion.

Limitations: Qualitative research such as focus group interviews is usually difficult to replicate with the same results. As the essence of the study was about the teenagers' perceptions of their ingroup, interviewing the participants in small friendship-based focus groups rather than conducting individual interviews raises the possibility of peer pressure compromising the authenticity of the teenagers' responses.

13.2 Social cognitive theory

Content focus

Evaluate social cognitive theory (SCT) as an explanation of human behaviour.

Social cognitive theory (SCT) is a learning theory: it attempts to explain how people learn new behaviours. SCT suggests behaviour is acquired through observation or imitation of others. The theory proposes that when a learner observes another person's behaviour and sees the consequences of that behaviour (rewards or punishments), they remember and use this information with respect to their own behaviour.

The model whose behaviour is mimicked or learned can be real (e.g. a family member, school teacher, or sports player) or fictional (e.g. a movie or television character).

Bandura et al. (1961) argued that people's behaviour is caused by personal, behavioural, and environmental influences. Whether a learner reproduces a behaviour that has been modelled or demonstrated is influenced by:

- personal factors: the extent to which the learner has low or high **self-efficacy** (their belief that they will succeed)
- behavioural factors: the extent to which the learner is rewarded after performing the behaviour correctly
- environmental factors: external barriers or supports that affect the learner's ability to reproduce the behaviour.

13.2.1 Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to a person's perception of the likelihood that they will succeed. It relates to SCT in that if learners do not think they can succeed, they are less likely to try to replicate a model's behaviour.

White et al. (2012) tested whether SCT could affect physical activity participation in middle-aged and older adults. Participants' self-efficacy level, ability limitations, goals,

Theories and models are simplified explanations of human behaviour. These theories are often adapted over time as research attempts more detailed explanations. Being simplifications, they come with limitations as well as strengths. Always offer balanced discussions of theories and models.



Can you identify five things that you do that you have learned by observing others, perhaps family members or school friends? It may be a way of thinking, talking, or walking. It may be the way you tie your shoelaces or eat your breakfast.



SCT's basic hypothesis is that people learn some behaviours by observing others' behaviours and the consequences of those behaviours.



outcome expectations, and physical activity were measured at the beginning and end of an 18-month period. Self-efficacy was thought to influence the participants' level of physical activity directly, but also indirectly by affecting the participants' goals and expectations. The researchers found that participants with higher levels of self-efficacy participated in greater levels of physical activity and had fewer disability limitations impeding their participation.

SCT has been applied to health psychology to help people stop cigarette smoking by increasing smoker's self-efficacy (their belief that they will be able to quit). Smokers were shown ways of experiencing success through role-playing and imagination. Smokers were also shown models who had successfully quit smoking, i.e. behaviour they could mimic. This method was effective in helping smokers to stop smoking.

Stajkovic and Luthans (1979) clarified self-efficacy in the workplace by stating that unless employees believe they can bring together required behavioural, cognitive, and motivational resources needed to execute a task, they will most likely focus on the most difficult aspects of a task and apply insufficient effort (Stajkovic et al., 1979).

Ahmed and Sands (2009) aimed to determine if more mothers of pre-term infants breastfed their babies after a SCT-influenced breastfeeding education programme. Sixty Egyptian mothers were randomly assigned to groups: (1) participating in the programme, or (2) routine care. The education programme was made up of SCT strategies: (1) showing role models who breastfed correctly to improve the participants' self-efficacy; (2) weekly check-ups over the course of three months to reinforce the participants' breastfeeding skills; and (3) a self-report checklist for the participants to encourage the breastfeeding. The study found that mothers in the education programme showed significant improvement in breastfeeding and were more likely to only breastfeed their babies, i.e. no bottle feeding. These mothers also had significantly fewer breastfeeding issues than the mothers who were not in the education programme.

13.2.2 Social cognitive theory and aggression

Bandura et al. (1961) aimed to find out when and why children display aggressive behaviours. They conducted a study where adults demonstrated verbal and physical aggression toward an inflatable doll (called a Bobo doll) in the presence of preschool-aged children, many of whom subsequently reproduced the aggressive behaviour.

Key study: Bandura et al. (1961)

Aim: To find out why and when children display aggressive behaviours.

Procedure: An experiment was conducted with 72 children (36 boys and 36 girls) aged 3–6, all of whom were enrolled in Stanford University's day-care programme. While the participants (children) played with books and stickers, an aggressive adult model (sometimes a male model, sometimes a female model) played briefly but shortly afterwards spent the rest of the time behaving aggressively (both physically and verbally) toward the Bobo doll, in a standardized way that would be used with each of the children. At the same time another (adult) model played in a subdued, non-aggressive way.

To what extent can social cognitive theory help to explain unhealthy behaviours such as cigarette smoking, misuse of alcohol, and eating disorders?

To what extent has the use of social cognitive theory in fictional television programmes been effective in modifying individuals' behaviour?

EE

The children were then taken to another room where they played with some toys for about two minutes. A researcher then took these toys away, but the children were left with other toys they could play with.

The children were then taken (individually) into another room that contained toys that were considered aggressive or non-aggressive. The aggressive toys were a Bobo doll, a mallet, and dart-guns. The non-aggressive toys were a tea set, cars, and dolls. Several researchers observed the children and recorded details of their behaviour.

Findings: Of the children who were exposed to the aggressive adult model, the boys showed an average of 38.2 physically aggressive acts and the girls showed 12.7 physically aggressive acts.

Boys and girls imitated the male models more than the female models with respect to physical aggression but imitated the model of their gender more with respect to verbal aggression.

Conclusion: The study concluded that children can learn behaviour by observing an adult's behaviour. The study also concluded that boys are more likely to mimic the behaviour of men, and girls are more likely to mimic the behaviour of women, and females tend to be less aggressive than males.

Evaluation: The study was conducted under laboratory conditions and so the procedure was controlled, as were environmental **variables**. Although the group of participants was gender balanced they were of a relatively homogeneous **socioeconomic** background. The study's dependent variable (acts of aggression) was subjectively measured, with all acts of aggression treated as equal in value, i.e. each act was simply counted and not measured for intensity. More research is needed before the study's conclusions can be generalized to wider populations. The study was conducted on very young children and so further research is needed to determine whether the study's conclusions can be generalized to people of older ages.

13.2.3 Social cognitive theory and mass influence

SCT has been used by governments to influence social behaviour. For example, in 1975 a soap opera, *Ven Conmigo (Come with Me)*, was created in Mexico to entertain, but primarily to promote adult literacy. The soap opera centred on the lives of adults in a literacy class and captured large viewing audiences. The soap opera generated a 900 per cent increase in enrollments in adult literacy classes compared to the previous year. After an episode that mentioned how to access free literacy booklets, 25 000 people approached the organization to get copies of the same booklet.

13.2.4 Evaluation of social cognitive theory

SCT is derived from studies that have been replicated. While the original studies lacked ecological validity and were conducted with a group of participants who limited the study's ability to be generalized, SCT has been studied with broader ranges of participants and the conclusions support SCT's basic hypothesis that people learn some behaviours by observing others' behaviours.

SCT is a broad and ill-defined theory of learning or **behaviour-acquisition** that is still evolving. It neglects the role of emotions and cognitive learning in explaining behaviour. SCT does not explain why some people replicate or mimic behaviour that has been modelled and some do not.

13.3 Stereotypes

Content focus

Discuss the formation of stereotypes.



When discussing stereotypes, use at least one example to clarify your answer.

13.3.1 Development of stereotypes

One theory of stereotype development is that stereotypes are the cognitive component of people's attitudes toward other people or groups (Harding et al., 1969). Others suggest that stereotypes are functional, allowing rationalization of people's **prejudice** with respect to a group (Allport, 1954). Others still suggest that prejudice is an inevitable consequence of the simple categorization processes inherent in stereotype formation (Tajfel, 1981).

Stereotypes appear to be heuristically applied to members of a stereotyped group, meaning people use them as a simple decision making technique that may not lead to an accurate or correct conclusion.

Key study: Katz and Braly (1933)

Aim: To determine whether stereotypes were 'not based upon **animosity** toward a member of a proscribed group' because of individual characteristics, but rather because of attitudes against 'race names'.

Procedure: One hundred Princeton undergraduates (age and gender unknown) completed a self-report questionnaire in which they were asked to identify the attributes of ten social groups that were prominent in the US at the time of the study, including Germans, Italians, Jews, Americans, Chinese, and Japanese, and then check the five traits from a list of 84 (such as happy, lazy, superstitious, and hard-working) they considered most typical of each group.

Findings: The students showed a range of agreement about the attributes given to different ethnic groups, from 84 per cent of participants who said African Americans were superstitious to 11 per cent who said Germans were practical.

Conclusion: The study concluded that actual contact with individual members of groups was not a requirement for people to form racial/ethnic stereotypes.

To what extent does television perpetuate, or even create, stereotypes? Think about television programmes that are watched in countries different to the country they were created in.



Evaluation: The study was based on verbal reports from the participants, so the responses required little effort. The study only aimed to investigate stereotypes held by US students, so the study's conclusion is of limited value with regards to stereotypes held by wider populations. The study does not explain why the stereotypes exist, just that they do. The study was conducted in 1933, at a time when prejudices were strongly held and widespread, so the study's findings simply gave confirmation to widely known information. The study was conducted on participants at a prestigious university, so it is likely that the participants were mostly young, Caucasian males from a relatively upper socioeconomic sector of US society, meaning the conclusion cannot be generalized to wider populations. There is no evidence of attempting to correct the participants' stereotypes.

In a follow-up study, Gilbert (1951) found the same stereotypes still existed but the extent of consensus was lower. Devine and Elliott (1995) modified Katz and Braley's (1933) attribute list with new attributes, such as ostentatious and pleasure-seeking. There was low consensus for Katz and Braley's attributes, and high consensus for the new ones, suggesting Katz and Braley's attribute list may be outdated and current beliefs are less negative. An inherent weakness of self-report questionnaires is that participants may not report accurately.

To what extent did your responses in the previous activity include stereotypes of people living in Pakistan, Germany, and Russia?



Once stereotypes have been formed they tend to persist because of correspondence bias, the illusory correlation, upbringing, and ingroup and outgroup relations.

13.3.2 Correspondence bias and stereotype formation

Correspondence bias can play an important role in stereotype formation. Correspondence bias is the tendency to over-attribute a person's behaviour to their personality (**dispositional**) factors, and to under-attribute the extent to which external (**situational**) factors caused the behaviour. Nier and Gaertner (2012) found that people who display correspondence bias tend to stereotype high-status groups as competent and low-status groups as incompetent. Participants who scored highly on correspondence bias assessment stereotyped the poor, women, and a fictitious group of low-status Pacific Islanders as incompetent. The same participants stereotyped the rich, men, and the fictitious group of high-status Pacific Islanders as competent. After controlling for other variables, correspondence bias was the most significant predictor of stereotyping by the participants.

Research successful entrepreneurs or sportspeople and look for examples of correspondence bias.



13.3.3 Illusory correlation and stereotype formation

An illusory correlation is a simple error of association: the incorrect conclusion that two events that occur at the same time are related. For example, if someone breaks a mirror and the same day breaks their arm, they may correlate the two events and conclude that the broken mirror caused the broken arm, when in fact the two events are unrelated.

An illusory correlation is a simple error of association. It is the incorrect conclusion that two events that occur at the same time are related.



Unusual events are distinctive and so people notice them more than mundane, normal events. The increased attention leads to stronger or more effective encoding, which strengthens the perception that the events are associated. In an intergroup context, illusory correlations cause people to wrongly attribute uncommon behaviours to minority groups or outgroups.

Hamilton and Gifford (1976) tested the extent to which illusory correlation leads to stereotype formation. The study found illusory correlation is stronger when the infrequent and distinctive information is negative.

Key Study: Hamilton and Gifford (1976)

Aim: To investigate the illusory correlation of group size and negative behaviour.

Procedure: Researchers asked 114 university students from the US to read descriptions and then make conclusions about two made-up groups, Group A and Group B. The descriptions were based on a number of positive and negative behaviours. Group A, the larger group with 26 members, performed 18 positive and 8 negative behaviours. Group B, the smaller group with 13 members, performed 9 positive and 4 negative behaviours.

	Group A	Group B
Number of members in the group	26	13
Number of positive behaviours	18	9
Number of negative behaviours	8	4

Findings: Although there was no correlation between group membership and the types of behaviours exhibited by the groups (the proportion of negative and positive behaviours was the same for both groups) the participants did seem to make an illusory correlation because more of the undesirable/negative behaviours were attributed to the minority Group B, than the majority Group A.

Conclusion: The findings support the theory that distinctive information draws attention. The number of Group B members and negative behaviours are both numerically fewer than those of Group A and therefore more distinctive than Group A's. The participants' responses were not logically correct and so showed an illusory correlation.

Evaluation: The study concludes that the illusory correlation exists because people's attention is drawn to distinctive or unusual phenomena, such as the small number of people in Group B. This is the explanation given for some people making an illusory correlation relating to minority groups and their behaviour, such as Aboriginal Australians and alcohol abuse. This illusory correlation could also be called a failure of understanding simple statistics. The study was conducted under partially controlled conditions, but the most significant variable, the participants' level of understanding of mathematics and statistics, is not considered.

McConnell et al. (1994) found that people formed stereotypes based on information that was considered distinctive at the time of judgement rather than when the information was first encountered. Consistent with Bartlett's (1932) cognitive concept of 'effort after meaning', when a person decides that previously non-distinctive information already encoded into memory is distinctive, that information is re-encoded as if it were distinctive when it was first noticed.

EE

To what extent are superstitions formed because of illusory correlations?

13.3.4 Upbringing and stereotype formation

Stereotypes may also be the consequence of a person's upbringing. Some stereotypes may develop in early childhood because they are presented to children by parents, teachers, friends, and the media.

Bar-Tal (1996) investigated the role of upbringing in the formation of a stereotype of Arabs in Jewish children in Israel. Two hundred and fourteen children (102 boys and 112 girls, aged 2–6 years) from two socioeconomically different Tel-Aviv neighbourhoods were individually shown a photograph of an Arab man wearing the traditional kaffia. Each child was then asked to rate him against four traits (good/bad, dirty/clean, handsome/ugly, and weak/strong). The results showed that almost all the children had already developed a negative stereotype of Arabs.

The study concluded that children acquire or develop some stereotypes from their environmental experiences, i.e. from parents, media, peers, and teachers, as well as direct contact with the outgroup members.

13.3.5 Ingroup and outgroup relations and stereotype formation

The ingroup-outgroup explanation of stereotypes suggests that stereotypes are formed and shared because group members are motivated to strengthen their perceived similarities with their ingroup and strengthen their perceived differences with their outgroups. This means the stereotypes are a consequence, not a cause, of intergroup relationships.

In the same way that research shows that intergroup problems based on perceived ingroup-outgroup differences can be overcome by merging the groups and initiating contact and communication between group members, stereotypes can also be overcome.



RESEARCHING AN EXTENDED ESSAY ON IN GROUPS AND OUTGROUPS ... OR MAYBE IT WILL BE ON STEREOTYPES.



People acquire or develop some stereotypes from their environmental experiences, i.e. from parents, the media, peers, and teachers, as well as direct contact with the outgroup members.

TOK

If stereotype formation is a normal human behaviour, are discriminatory practices such as ageism, sexism, and racism also normal human behaviour?

EE

To what extent do the cultural aspects of a study's participant sample hinder the ability to generalize that study's results?

Can studies of human behaviour conducted more than ten years ago apply to behaviour now?

To what extent can a study of young children in one country or culture conclude that all people form stereotypes from their environment?

13.3.6 Stereotype threat

Stereotype threat occurs when people know about a negative stereotype associated with them or their ingroup and develop anxiety that they might confirm the stereotype. Stereotype threat is not a universally accepted concept, and some consider it to be the subject of publication bias.

Publication bias is the idea that some research is more likely to be published simply because its findings are interesting. Although there have been many studies relating to stereotype threat, this may be because researchers know that studies into the phenomenon will be published, so pursue this research over other, less publisher-friendly, topics.

Steele (1988) conducted experiments to show that stereotype threat can have a negative effect on performance in standardized tests. The study found that African American college students performed worse than white students when a task was presented as an intelligence test, but when it was not presented as an intelligence test the African American students performed better.

An essential aspect of reliable research is **replicability**.

For a theory to be widely accepted it is usually supported by empirical evidence that has been achieved in replications of original research. While stereotype threat is a widely cited psychological phenomenon with apparently real-world consequences, after allowing for publication bias there is little evidence that it has any significant effect on, for example, women's performance in mathematics (Flore and Wicherts, 2014). Zigerell's (2017) meta-analysis concluded that the evidence for stereotype threat was inconclusive.

EE

To what extent does stereotype threat affect the behaviour of some elderly people?

14

Cultural origins of behaviour and cognition

Topic focus

Discuss the cultural origins of behaviour.

14.1 Culture and its influence on behaviour

Content focus

To what extent does culture affect one cognitive process?

A group's culture is its generally agreed beliefs, norms, and conventions and is made up of its shared attitudes, behaviours, and symbols. Culture is learnt by instruction and observation, and is passed down through generations.

Until relatively recently, the psychology community considered human behaviour to be the product of human biology, i.e. physiology, genes, and hormones. The role of culture in explaining behaviour in general and cognition in particular has become more prominent in recent decades.



Take care not to confuse culture with ethnicity and nationality. A person with Australian nationality but who has lived in Pakistan for most of her life is more likely to be of the Pakistani culture than the Australian culture. A person of Tongan ethnicity who was born and raised in France is more likely to behave according to French cultural norms.

Ask your friends what they understand by the expression, 'lost in translation'. Have they or you experienced situations where language or a culture-specific behaviour has caused some confusion?



Discuss with your friends the different ways they speak to each other, their parents, their grandparents, and perhaps people in positions of authority. Do they use the same language (vocabulary) and paralanguage (such as tone of voice, slang, and body language) with all people? To what extent does their culture determine this behaviour? Remember that culture is not the same as ethnicity or nationality.



People's perceptions of themselves are affected by the culture in which they live, and this self-perception affects cognitive processes. The way people think (and therefore make decisions), and the way they count and manipulate numbers are all now known to be affected by their culture.

Derry (1996) argued that there is a degree of 'cultural-boundness' to cognitive processes such as memory, language, and thinking. For example, Bartlett (1932) showed that the participants' British-English language (compared to American-English) affected the way they remembered the Native American story, 'The War of the Ghosts'.

A cultural group's language serves to interpret, classify, and structure perception of external reality. There are many instances of a person's beliefs or values affecting what they observe empirically, for example explanations of illness/disease, weather events, and earthquakes, and the meaning of people's facial expressions, body language, and hand gestures.

14.1.1 Role of culture in behaviour

Wong and Hong (2005) investigated the role of culture in behaviour by priming Chinese-American participants with cultural icons (either a Chinese dragon or an image of Mickey Mouse) before asking them to participate in the Prisoner's Dilemma game with friends and strangers. The bicultural participants showed higher levels of cooperation with friends after they had been shown icons from their Chinese culture than when primed with icons from their American culture. Similarly, they showed lower levels of cooperation with strangers when primed with Chinese-culture symbols than American-culture symbols. The study concluded that a person's culture affects interpersonal decision making.

Culture affects judgements and decision making, including the extent to which the fundamental attribution error (FAE) applies (Kashima, 2001, cited in Wong and Hong, 2005). The FAE is the theory that people overstate dispositional factors (factors about themselves) in their successes and understate the role of situational factors (factors that are external to them), such as the weather or other people's behaviour. There is evidence to suggest the FAE is less powerful in some cultures, such as Russian and Indian.

14.1.2 Social class and behaviour

Grossmann and Varnum (2010) investigated the extent to which social class affects cognition by examining the role of American (independent) culture and Russian (interdependent) social class, on people's dispositional and situational bias. The study found a positive correlation between lower social class, **holistic** cognition, and interdependent self-views (i.e. **self-inflation**) in both the USA and Russia. Participants from lower social class American backgrounds and Russians (who were considered to be less class-distinct) demonstrated less dispositional bias. These people attributed fewer outcomes to themselves or their own behaviour. People from lower social class backgrounds and Russians demonstrated more contextual attention, more non-linear reasoning about change, and more interdependent self-views (less self-inflation).

EE

Can any generalizations be made about people based on their cultures that are not stereotypes? To what extent are some emotions culture-bound?

TOK

Investigate different cultural interpretations of weather events. Can we say that some cultures' explanations of weather events are incorrect?

The FAE is altered in the Indian context to the extent that dispositional factors tend to be more interpersonal rather than purely personal (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). For example, Indian people tend to understate the role of situational factors such as the weather in their successes and overstate the role of factors such as the effect of their friends and family members as well as their own dispositional factors (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).

These studies showed that FAE is less of a universal human behaviour than previously thought, and that it is instead affected by a person's culture.



GRIMACING MOUSE DISCOVERS FAE.

14.1.3 Counting and arithmetic

Saxe (2015) demonstrated that the cognitive processes of counting and arithmetic are affected by culture. For example, the body-part counting system used by the Oksapmin people in Papua New Guinea is the 27-number equivalent of the 'Western' ten-number counting system based on counting with fingers and thumbs (Saxe, 2015).

Reed and Lave (1979) conducted a natural experiment, which was supplemented with observations and interviews, involving tailors from the Vai and Gola tribes in Monrovia (Liberia) to investigate the effect of culture on arithmetic thinking. The study found that the tailors who used the Vai/Gola numerical system had a very different cognitive process for counting and conducting arithmetic problem solving.

Beller and Bender (2008) used examples from Melanesian and Polynesian culture to show the cultural origins of their unique arithmetic problem-solving skill: adding and subtracting the large numbers required by large-scale and long-distance trading systems. In the High Fijian language, a different word is used to count 100 (bolu) canoes and 100 (koro) coconuts. In Managreva (French Polynesia) different number sequences are used for counting tools, breadfruit, and octopus. (Beller and Bender, 2008).

Oksapmin 27-body-part counting system

The Oksapmin 27-body-part counting system uses body parts' names, starting with the thumb of one hand as 1, moving around the fingers to 5, up the arm and to the shoulder, 10, up the neck and across the ears, eyes, nose and down to the neck, 17, and then down the other arm, hand, and to the other thumb, 27. When shown a group of five piles of ten sticks, teachers will teach children that this is a little finger (representing 5) followed by a shoulder (representing 10) (Saxe, 2015).

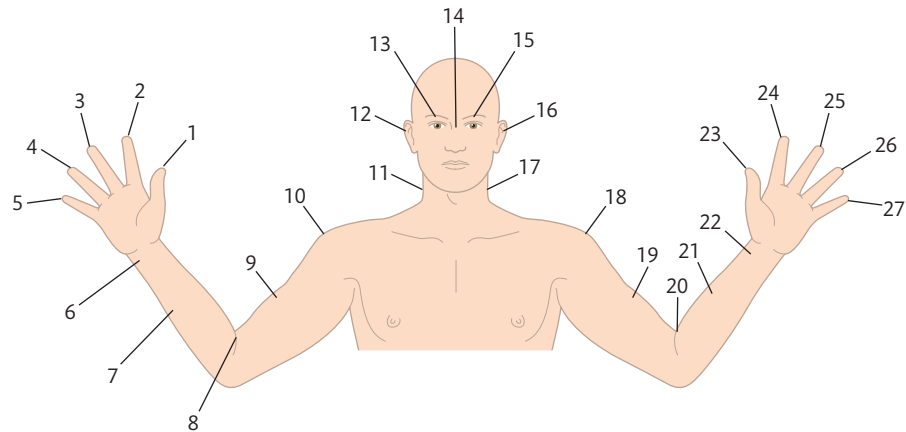


Figure 14.1 The Oksapmin 27-body-part counting system

If you know people from other countries, or perhaps from earlier generations, ask them to explain the way they add, subtract, multiply, or divide.



Key study: Reed and Lave (1979)

Aim: To investigate the role of culture on counting and arithmetic problem solving.

Procedure: The research was based on participant observation and informal interviews with 140 males of the Vai and Gola tribes working as tailors in shops of Tailors' Alley in Monrovia, Liberia. The interviews covered apprentices' personal history, family background, and beliefs about teaching and learning. Some tasks were aimed at understanding arithmetic skills.

Tailors used either the apprenticed Vai/Gola arithmetic system or the school-taught Western arithmetic system to solve a series of arithmetic problems. The Vai/Gola arithmetic is a spoken numeration system (i.e. it's not written) and seldom uses numbers larger than 20. Vai/Gola arithmetic operations are done either 'in the head' or by manipulating sets of markers.

Findings: The study demonstrated consistent differences in the methods employed by tailors who had learned arithmetic in the tailor shop as apprentices and in school. Problem-solving procedures were closely related to the tailors' culture-dependent learning experiences.

The traditionally taught (apprenticed) Vai/Gola tailors used counters, such as pebbles, or marks on paper, to count and conduct arithmetic problem solving, as well as mental arithmetic problem solving. The tailors trained in the Western school system used algorithmic manipulations learnt in school and strategies using number names. Using data based on arithmetic problem solving, observations and recordings of **verbal protocols**, and interviews about the apprenticeship and schooling experiences, the study showed that the 'folk arithmetic system' was as systematic as the Western, school-taught system.

There was strong evidence to show that all except the least experienced apprentices had a clear understanding of the general idea of arithmetic problem solving consistent with their arithmetic system.

Conclusion: The study found that there is an arithmetic problem-solving system unique to the Vai and Gola tribes and that this is used by tailors trained through traditional apprenticeship methods, i.e. not in school, and that there is another, different system used by those with five or more years of schooling. The tailors who used the Vai/Gola numerical system had a very different cognitive process for counting and conducting arithmetic problem solving. Instead of re-coding quantities as words or numerals, apprentices using the Vai/Gola counting system simply used pebbles or counters, one for each unit counted.

Evaluation: The study has high ecological validity as it was conducted in context. The tailors were observed while they were using their arithmetic systems, not in a laboratory setting. This meant that other variables were not controlled. Interviews and experiments supported the researchers' numerous observations.



Investigate counting systems such as the Oksapmin 27-body-part counting system and the Vai/Gola system. To what extent does culture affect people's system of counting and arithmetic?



14.1.4 Surface and deep culture

Surface culture refers to the obvious or readily discernible differences between a person's **indigenous** and host countries, for example language, gestures, diet, clothing, and interpersonal behaviour. Deep culture refers to more profound cultural norms; those that are considerably less obvious and therefore less accessible to newcomers, such as social hierarchies, interpretations of dignity and respect, religion, and humour.

Individuals who have a low level of acculturation with respect to a dominant culture are more likely to retain the cultural values of their indigenous community and therefore behave less in response to their new culture's norms (Betancourt and Lopez, 1993).

14.2 Cultural dimensions

Content focus

To what extent do cultural values affect human behaviour?

Discuss with your friends or family members their attitude toward honesty.

Are there any situations where it is acceptable to be dishonest?

Discuss the attitude toward punctuality – why do you think some people think and behave as if absolute punctuality is essential for respectful living while others have a more casual attitude toward arriving at events on time. To what extent does the discussion reveal cultural attitudes toward some values?



A value is a subjective belief relating to a desirable outcome or behaviour, and one that transcends specific situations.



A value is a subjective belief relating to a desirable outcome or a behaviour that transcends specific situations. A value guides a person's choice of behaviour (Schwartz, 1992). **Cultural dimensions** are the commonly held values of a group that affect behaviour, for example reliability and trustworthiness, the attitude toward truthfulness, the extent to which punctuality is considered important, and the attitude toward planning. They can be thought of as **continuums**. For example, the 'truth dimension' continuum would have a total expectation of truthfulness at one extreme and no sense of honesty at the other.

Key study: Schwartz (1992)

Aim: To determine the existence of a universal set of cultural dimensions or values.

Procedure: 25 863 participants in 44 countries (school teachers, university teachers, and adolescents) participated in a survey and identified the following cultural dimensions or values:

- power (social status, prestige, control/dominance)
- achievement (personal success)
- hedonism (pleasure and gratification)
- stimulation (excitement, novelty, challenge)
- self-direction (independent thinking, self-determinism, free will)
- universalism (appreciating, tolerating, and protecting all people and nature)
- benevolence (protecting and enhancing the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent contact)
- tradition (respect, commitment, and acceptance of one's traditions and culture)
- conformity (restraining oneself to not harm or offend others)
- security (safety and stability of self, society, and relationships).

Fifty-six values were included in a core survey. The values were presented as nouns (e.g. security) or adjectives (e.g. helpful), each with a short explanation. The researchers' colleagues in the countries that were surveyed were encouraged to add any values from their cultures that they felt were missing from the survey. The participants were asked to rate each value with the statement, 'As a guiding principle in my life.' The rating was made on a 9-point scale from 7 'supreme importance', 6 'very important', to 3 'important', 0 'not important', to -1 'opposed to my values'. Prior to rating the values, respondents chose and rated their most and least important values. This anchored their use of the scale.

Findings: The study found that cultural dimensions of countries in Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the Far East, USA/Canada, and countries influenced by Islam each show uniquely different patterns. These cultural dimensions support the continuums such as Triandis' (1990) individualism/collectivism, and Markus and Kitayama's

(1991) independent/interdependent selves. Profiles from Japan and the US suggest distinctive cultures, but neither occupies an extreme position on any dimension.

Conclusion: The study concluded that there is not a universal set of cultural dimensions. However, there is wide acceptance of the following ten cultural dimensions or values: universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, tradition, conformity, and benevolence.

Evaluation: The study included a very large sample of participants from 44 countries from a wide age range. However, participants were only drawn from modern and well-educated countries (e.g. UK, Singapore, and New Zealand), which is relatively inconsistent with the study's aim of determining whether there are universal cultural dimensions. The study used a self-report questionnaire, which can be unreliable because of demand characteristics or simply because respondents do not respond accurately.

14.2.1 Chinese cultural values

Yau (1988) investigated the dimensions of Chinese culture that have formed a consistent values system for many generations. Reflecting Confucianism as the basic pillar of Chinese life, Chinese cultural values are largely formed and created from interpersonal relationships and social orientations. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) described Chinese culture with a model using five dimensions or orientations:

- man-to-nature orientation (harmony with nature)
- man-to-himself orientation (modesty)
- relational orientation (interdependence; group orientation, face, and respect for authority)
- time orientation (continuity and past/historical orientation)
- personal-activity orientation (harmony with others).

While the classical value system was disrupted during the Cultural Revolution, the values are still evident (Yau, 1988). The man-to-nature orientation is founded on the belief that Chinese people regard humans as a part of nature and that humans should not try to control or overrule nature, but should instead adapt to it and so be in harmony with nature.

The man-to-himself orientation assumes abasement or self-degradation. By studying Chinese families' child-rearing practices, it is clear that from an early stage, a Chinese child is brought up to understand his or her role with respect to others. Modesty and self-effacement are expected of children (and subordinates). When praised, Westerners say, 'Thank you', but Chinese people often say, 'No, I am not worthy'. Chinese people try to avoid saying, 'no' because they do not want to embarrass or offend (Yau, 1988).

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) proposed that Chinese people value family traditions and their cultural history and so proposed a past-time orientation.

The personal-activity orientation implies that the strongest value is to live properly, i.e. being polite and obeying the rules makes social transactions supremely important. In Chinese culture, being considerate to others is a salient aspect of living properly.



Create an interactive wall chart or classroom display that shows Schwartz's cultural dimensions and encourages those looking at the chart to place themselves on each dimension's continuum.

TOK

To what extent is the IB Learner Profile a set of cultural dimensions?

EE

To what extent does the concept of cultural dimensions of values reinforce stereotypes?



Use the five dimensions to Chinese culture as described and place yourself on the continuum. To what extent does each dimension influence your behaviour?

Can you think of any practical applications of cultural dimensions?

These five orientations combine to create a set of cultural dimensions, each of which can be considered a continuum on which a person can be placed in answer to the question, 'To what extent do you value this orientation in your daily life decisions?'

14.2.2 Cultural dimensions

Hofstede (1984) proposed four cultural dimensions:

- power distance
- individualism
- masculinity
- uncertainty avoidance.

Power distance refers to the extent to which less powerful individuals accept inequality as the norm. Inequality exists in all cultures, but individuals' acceptance of it varies across cultures.

Individualist societies are those in which people place the greatest focus on themselves and their immediate family and friends while collectivist societies are made up of people who place greater value on wider, extended family groups from which they have great difficulty separating themselves. These extended families can be considered an individual's 'ingroup'.

The masculinity dimension refers to individuals' expectation that men will be assertive, ambitious, and competitive and to respect things that are big, strong, and fast. Masculine cultures expect women to care for children and others who cannot care for themselves, while feminine cultures expect men and women to be equally ambitious and caring.

Uncertainty avoidance, according to Hofstede (1984), refers to the extent to which individuals are tolerant of uncertainty. Cultures with a strong tolerance of uncertainty are active, emotional and tolerant while those with a low tolerance of uncertainty are less aggressive, more accepting of personal risk, and relatively intolerant.

15

Cultural influences on individual attitudes, identity, and behaviours

Topic focus

Discuss cultural influences on individual attitudes, identity, and behaviour.

15.1 Enculturation

Content focus

Using one or more examples, discuss the role enculturation plays in one behaviour.

Enculturation is the process of acquiring a culture's norms. At its simplest level, it is the way people learn the 'rules' of their culture or what is expected by a group of its

To what extent might the concept of cultural dimensions contribute to stereotypes of nationalities or cultures?

TOK

Do you think cultural dimensions might change over time, perhaps due to globalization or technology use?

A person's values are described as cultural dimensions and are measured or quantified on a continuum, i.e. to what extent is a particular value a strong force in a person's decisions about behaviour.



Culture is not the same as ethnicity or nationality. Use specific language to be clear about this, for example, 'the way children of the Samoan culture learn the nuances of their language is affected by the way they are "encultured", i.e. by the way they acquire the norms and expectations of their Samoan culture'.



members. For example, learning the unwritten rules when starting at a new school, or how to behave appropriately when joining a new workplace, sports team, or group of friends is done through enculturation.

People teach their group's norms and expected behaviour, i.e. their group's culture, to new members of the group. People can learn from each other because of social cognition. People take others' perspectives to an extent that allows them to experience the group's behaviour (Tomasello et al., 1993).

At the simplest level, enculturation occurs through direct instruction. Parents teach their children the appropriate way to behave by telling them what is right and wrong, for example they tell them to speak quietly in restaurants. New workers to an organization are instructed by supervisors during orientation about how and when to carry out their assigned duties, how to dress, and which communication protocols to follow. Teaching culture this way occurs because it is direct, deliberate, and effective.

Enculturation can also occur through social learning, i.e. learning by an individual who is influenced by the social environment (Bandura et al., 1961). This influence may be minimal or superficial, for example parents or teachers may simply give young children objects such as a ball, which they explore or play with to discover new behaviour. In such cases the social environment only exposes the culture's new member to the object; the actual learning process is individual.

New students often learn the social rules of their new school (expected norms such as popular hairstyles), in-class behaviours (such as hand raising), and the accepted way to greet classmates and teachers by observing other students' behaviour. This is possible because of social cognition.

People can also learn cultural expectations through cultural learning. New group members do not just observe and then mimic others' behaviour (as with social cognition), they try to see a situation the way other group members see it. This learning is social; the new group member tries to learn the group's norms by empathizing with or imagining another person's perspective or point of view.

15.1.1 Enculturation's effect on language

Enculturation affects the way one learns language. Pinker (1994) proposes children begin life being aware, to some extent, that the sounds their mother produces are elements of a language and that those sounds have meaning, as compared to sounds such as a door closing, which does not have meaning. Others, however, believe that language is a cognitive consequence of enculturation.

Tomasello and Rakoczy (2003) propose that while children's understanding of language occurs **ontogenetically** in all cultural settings at about 1 year old, the understanding of beliefs occurs some years later, and at different ages in different cultural settings. There is strong evidence that participating in language-based communication with other people is a necessary condition for a child's development (Tomasello and Rakoczy, 2003).

Ochs (1982) showed that Samoan culture places great emphasis on learning by observation and so the cognitive process of language acquisition by Samoan children is affected significantly by their families' cultures. For example, as Samoan children



Enculturation is the process of acquiring or learning what is expected by a group of its members.



Discuss with three or four others in your class the process of enculturation when a new student starts in your school. Write down ten 'rules' or expectations imposed by the school, some of which are formal and overt (known to all) and some which are covert (known only to the students). How do students learn these rules or expectations of behaving in the school?



How did you learn the rules of your school? What were the five most important rules that you were not told about?

learn to become members of their society or culture, they also learn to become competent users of their language, meaning enculturation and language acquisition occur simultaneously. A significant part of their enculturation is the way they use their language.

Key study: Ochs (1982)

Aim: To investigate language development and language socialization in traditional Samoan households.

Procedure: A **longitudinal** case study observed 23 children (under 6 years old) from different households every five weeks over a period of ten months. Recordings were transcribed by the children's households and checked by the researchers.

Findings: The study found that language instruction is conducted by a child's caregiver, who is most often an older sibling, and that language instruction is characterized by three culture-laden features: (1) decentring, (2) a lack of expansion by caregivers, and (3) elicited imitation. Higher status people, such as parents, do not lower their perspective to communicate with lower status people, such as children.

Conclusion: Traditional Samoan culture places great emphasis on learning by observation and so the cognitive process of language acquisition by Samoan children is significantly affected by their families' and community's cultures and by the process of learning that culture, i.e. enculturation. The way the children's caregivers use language while being observed by the children affects the way the children learn about their culture's norms. This means that child-parent communication is often 'child-to-parent-to-caregiver-to-child' so that children observe the cultural status of their parent but observe the language of their caregiver, most likely a slightly older sibling.

Within Samoan culture, people believe they have little control over their own actions. For example, they tend to say 'legs walk', 'hands write', 'mouths eat', and 'the head is dizzy', and they have no vocabulary for 'individual' or 'personality' (Ochs, 1982). This means that Samoans are less inclined to communicate with their children. Children are not treated as socially responsive beings, i.e. not cooperative, and they are not considered to be in control of themselves and their actions. The vocal utterances of Samoan children are treated as sounds rather than the beginnings of language.

The social stratification of Samoan society, as well as the emphasis Samoan society places on observational learning, determines the ways children learn and use their language (Ochs 1982). Higher status Samoans, including those caring for children, are not expected to adjust their perspective to that of lower status people. Higher status Samoans are allowed to express their opinions while lower status Samoans are expected to speak about the collective rather than themselves. The children learn their language because they are cared for by a broad range of relatives; initially their mother and then by male and female grandparents and older siblings. Often several older siblings are responsible for caring for and teaching younger children. Samoan society is status-oriented and those of high status are not involved in child-rearing.

Three consequences of Samoan culture are seen in the cognitive process of language acquisition by Samoan children: (1) decentring, (2) a lack of expansion by caregivers, and (3) elicited imitation. Decentring means the child's language learning is predominantly about other people, for example, 'Who is that?' and 'Where are they going?' Expansion occurs when a caregiver expands and so corrects a child's attempts at language, for example may say, 'That my grandfather' and the caregiver expands with, 'He is my grandfather'. Elicited imitation occurs when a caregiver urges a child to repeat or imitate the caregiver's language.

The enculturation, i.e. the process of children learning Samoan norms and expectations such as hierarchy and social status, has a direct effect on the children's cognitive process of language acquisition because the cultural expectations are fundamental to the way children are taught language.

Evaluation: The study has strong ecological validity because it was conducted in the children's home setting and over a significant time period. Both genders were included in the study and the age range of the children was appropriate for the study of language acquisition. There were, however, just a small number of participants and they were all of the same culture, so caution is required in generalizing the study's findings.

15.2 Acculturation

Content focus

Explain how people may change as a result of contact with other cultures in order to assimilate with a new culture.

Acculturation is the process people go through as they adapt to a new culture. It is the socialization process by which outsiders adopt the values of their new culture, affecting a person's attitudes, identity, and behaviour.

Acculturation occurs at many levels, including when:

- people move to a new country to work or to seek refuge from intolerable circumstances in their home country
- people move from one workplace to another
- children start a new school
- children move into a new family situation, perhaps due to foster care or adoption
- a person marries and becomes a member of another extended family.

In each of these situations, the people enduring the acculturation process learn the accepted norms and behaviour of the group in which they have become a new member.

Sam and Berry (2010) state that Tajfel and Turner's (1979, 1986) social identity theory (SIT) explains how people define their identity within their original culture and within the culture to which they are acculturating, and therefore their national identity. SIT



Acculturation occurs at many levels and in many situations.



Do all people think about colour in the same way? Do you think all people 'like' or think positively about colours such as green, yellow, and blue? Discuss with your friends whether a person's culture affects the way they think about, or like or dislike, colours. Do you think people from cultures around the Mediterranean coast think about colours in the same way as people from Patagonia or Scandinavia or the Yukon? To what extent does this discussion reveal a person's assumptions about culture's effect on behaviour, i.e. whether people adopt a universalist or relativist perspective to studying behaviour?

explains that while people tend to identify with their ingroup, they may attempt to move out of their ingroup if the outgroup is perceived to be more successful.

Sam and Berry (2010) take a universalist approach, by assuming there are shared psychological processes in all human behaviour.

Berry et al. (2006) showed strong relationships between how young people acculturate and how well they adapt: those who applied integration strategies such as learning the host country's language and maintaining friendships or peer contacts with those in the host culture achieved the best psychological and sociocultural adaptations. The study also showed that those who had poor host country language skills and few host country relationships also had the worst adaptation outcomes (Berry et al., 2006). Those who used ethnic-group strategies developed good psychological adaptation, but relatively poor sociocultural adaptation, and those who used national-group strategies achieved relatively poor psychological adaptation and slightly negative sociocultural adaptation (Berry et al., 2006).

Key study: Berry et al. (2006)

Aim: To determine how **immigrant** youth acculturate compared to how well they adapt to their new cultures.

Procedure: A questionnaire was given to 7997 adolescents, aged 13–18 years, of whom 5366 were immigrants and 2631 were nationals living in 13 host countries. The sample included both first generation (34.7 per cent) and second generation (65.3 per cent) immigrants. The female-to-male ratio was 52:48. The questionnaire assessed the participants' acculturation attitudes, cultural identity, language proficiency, degree of contact with ethnic and national peers, family relationship values, perceived discrimination, and psychological and sociocultural adaptation.

Findings: The study revealed four acculturation profiles: (1) integration, (2) ethnic, (3) national, and (4) diffuse. 36.4% of the immigrant youth sought to acculturate by being involved with both their original culture and that of their host country; 22.5 per cent tried to acculturate, orienting toward their own culture and with limited involvement in the host country's culture; 18.7 per cent of the participants tried to acculturate by being primarily with the host country's culture; 22.4 per cent of the participants lacked a clear orientation and appeared to be marginalized and confused regarding which culture they identified with most.

The Integration group (1576 participants)

Indicated relatively high involvement and identity with both their own and host countries' cultures.

Strongly supported integration.

Had strong proficiency in their host country's language, with proficiency in their own language; typically used both languages. Maintained friendships/peer contacts with people from their own and their host groups.

Maintained 'average' family values and felt comfortable in both their own and the host country contexts, with respect to identity, language ability and language use, peer contacts, and family values.

Consider the consequences of large groups of people simultaneously moving to another culture in another location and the effect of the two cultures merging. Recent history provides examples of large numbers of refugees moving from one country to another.

TOK

Consider the situation an immigrant family from a specific country faces when arriving into your neighbourhood. Give three reasons why they might move to your area. List ten things that the family would find familiar and ten that would be unfamiliar. How can people in the host country help newcomers adapt and assimilate?



The Ethnic group (975 participants)	<p>Showed a strong identity with their own culture and a strong proficiency and usage in their own language as well as maintaining strong relationships with those from their own culture.</p> <p>Supported the separation attitude.</p> <p>Support for family values was high.</p> <p>Remained embedded in their own culture and demonstrated little involvement in their host country's culture.</p>
The National group (810 participants)	<p>Demonstrated a relatively strong orientation toward their new culture.</p> <p>Identified with their host country and demonstrated low identity with respect to their original culture.</p> <p>Proficient in the host country's language and used it most often.</p> <p>Friendships/peer contacts were mostly with people from their host country.</p> <p>Demonstrated relatively low support for family obligations.</p> <p>In general, retained little of their own culture and their original identity.</p>
The Diffuse group (973 participants)	<p>Reported high ability and usage of their own language, but low identity with regards to their original culture.</p> <p>Reported low proficiency in the language of their host country and low identity with respect to their host country.</p> <p>Had few peer contacts outside their own cultural group.</p> <p>Appeared to want to be part of the larger society but lacked the language and social skills or opportunities to make contacts.</p>

Conclusion: Involvement and engagement in both their host country's and their ethnic cultures are associated with better adaptation for immigrant youth than a preference for either their original or their new culture alone. Integration had a positive effect on the immigrants' adaptation. Adolescents' attitude and engagement with respect to their own cultural group is more important for their psychological well-being than their sociocultural adaptation.

Evaluation: The study was conducted with a very large number of participants in 13 host countries. The study was based on self-report questionnaires that are subject to demand characteristics and a possible lack of honesty. The host countries in the study (Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, UK and USA) are all loosely described as Judeo-Christian. Berry et al. (2006) found that participants in the study who also identified with Judeo-Christian belief systems or with Eastern religions integrated better than those who did not. Participants from a Muslim background integrated least well although this may have been distorted by the large number of Turkish immigrants to Europe who were expected to return to Turkey and therefore were less inclined to integrate with their host country's culture.

EE

To what extent do the circumstances prompting emigration from a country affect the extent to which an immigrant adapts and assimilates into a new culture?

To what extent does acculturation promote or overcome nationality-based stereotypes?



Try to meet someone who came into your cultural group some time ago and discuss with them the process they went through to adapt/assimilate. (This may not necessarily be an immigrant to your country.) What did they find most difficult about their acculturation process? What was not difficult? Did they have to learn a new language? How do they feel they have changed as a result of their acculturation?



The text refers to geographical mobility as a motivation for acculturation. To what extent can acculturation theory be applied to other situations, such as moving to a new sports club?

16

Research methods: sociocultural approach

Learning focus

Explain the contribution of one research method to the sociocultural approach to understanding human behaviour.

Social and cultural psychologists use both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gain an understanding of intergroup relations as well as the process of acculturation.

16.1 Quasi-experiments

A **quasi-experiment** studies variables that are inherent to the participants, for example the participants' height, handedness, nationality or ethnicity. This means the participants are not allocated by the experimenter to the **Independent variable's** (IV) different conditions. Typically, cross-cultural studies are quasi-experiments, using participants' cultures as the IV and a behaviour as the **dependent variable** (DV). Quasi-experiments tend to be conducted outside 'laboratory conditions' and so other variables are less likely to be controlled. This means the studies are difficult to replicate.

Cross-cultural studies can be used to determine whether a behaviour is unique to some cultures, i.e. culture-bound, or whether it is cross-cultural, i.e. observed in all cultures.

Yuki (2003) conducted a cross-cultural study using quasi-experiments to investigate the extent to which SIT is applicable within US and Japanese contexts, i.e. to determine whether it is a culture-bound or cross-cultural phenomenon. In this study the IV is the participants' culture (Japanese or American). The DV is the extent to which SIT applies to each context. Questionnaires were used to gather data relating to the participants' attitudes toward groups and their behaviour within groups. The study found (1) loyalty to and identification with their ingroup was greater with American participants than with Japanese participants; (2) evidence suggests that discrimination against outgroups is more pronounced in individualistic cultures; and (3) there is no evidence to support the theory that there is ingroup favouritism. Yuki (2003) concluded that SIT 'may not accurately represent group behaviours among East Asians' and therefore is not a cross-cultural phenomenon.

16.2 Correlation study using a self-report questionnaire

A correlation study focuses on variables to determine if they are co-variables, i.e. if they co-occur. Correlation means two variables occur together or are related. Berry et al. (2006) focused on the variables of acculturation strategies and the success of adaptation and assimilation to determine a correlation. The study found that acculturation strategies that included involvement and engagement with the host culture (such as high language proficiency and peer contact with those from the host culture) was a co-variable with successful adaptation and assimilation. The study

Be clear to distinguish between research methods, such as natural experiments, and data-collection techniques, such as self-report questionnaires.



List ten naturally occurring phenomena in humans that could be used as the IV in a quasi-experiment.



A correlation study focuses on variables to determine if they are co-variables, i.e. if they co-occur. The experimental method tests for a cause-effect link between co-variables.



did not show a **cause-effect** link between the variables. Further study, using the experimental method, is needed to test for a cause-effect link between variables.

Self-report questionnaires are a simple, relatively quick, and inexpensive way to collect data and are easy to replicate. Questionnaires, however, rely on participants' honesty. Participants may unwittingly give inaccurate responses out of a desire to please the researchers, or to appear to be better than they really are. The reliability of questionnaires is dependent on participants' ability to understand the questions. Berry et al. (2006) used responses to self-report questionnaires to gather data relating to acculturation despite a significant number of participants not having strong language proficiency.

16.3 Emic and etic approaches to research

Cultures can be studied by an insider or by an outsider. When research is conducted by an insider, it is considered **emic**. In emic studies, the researcher has first-hand experience, often acquired over a sustained period. The disadvantage is that the researcher lacks a professional distance, the necessary separation to be objective about the research.

When research is conducted by an outsider, it is considered **etic**. Ochs (1982) studied the enculturation process of Samoan children's language acquisition using an etic approach. The behaviour was observed by outsiders, i.e. non-Samoan researchers lived within the culture, but were of another culture. Howarth's (2002) study of teenagers living in Brixton was also etic, because the researcher was an outsider.

Malhotra et al. (1996) stated that the emic approach examines phenomena from within, investigates just one culture, and the criteria adopted are relative; while the etic approach examines phenomena from outside the system, investigates many cultures, and the criteria adopted are universal. The **universalist** approach assumes there are psychological processes shared in all human cultures, for example the language acquisition process. By contrast, the **relativist** approach assumes cultural groups' psychological processes, for example the perception of beauty and intelligence, are different, and so they cannot be compared. Yuki (2003) examined the extent to which social identity theory is cross-cultural, adopting an emic approach when studying Japanese participants and an etic approach when studying American participants.

17 Ethical considerations: sociocultural approach

Learning focus

To what extent are ethical considerations necessary in the investigation of the sociocultural approach to understanding human behaviour?

17.1 Studies involving children

A fundamental rule of most ethical systems is to do no harm. Bandura et al. (1961) was unethical because it exposed young children to aggressive behaviour and taught



When conducted by an insider, the research is emic and when studied by an outsider it is etic.



List some strengths and weaknesses of both etic and emic research into people's attitudes toward time.



The universalist approach assumes there are shared psychological processes in all human behaviour (including the acculturation process). The relativist approach assumes cultural groups' psychological processes are different and so the groups cannot be compared.



Show that ethical considerations are the right thing to do for everyone involved in research, supporting your claims with examples of good or bad practice.

A fundamental rule of most ethical systems is to do no harm.



Describe Bandura et al. (1961) to several of your friends and ask, 'Would you allow your 3 or 4-year-old son or daughter (or brother or sister) to be exposed to aggressive behaviour as was done in the study?' Ask them to give reasons for their responses.



There is an ethical obligation to use research with integrity.



If it is unethical to use children as participants is it also unethical to make use of research that uses children as participants?

TOK

Can there be fundamental, universally held ethics?

TOK

them to be physically and verbally aggressive. The study's aim was to find out why and when children display aggressive behaviour, so there was reasonable expectation that exposing children to aggressive behaviour would mean the children would mimic aggression. Of the children who were exposed to the aggressive adult model, the boys showed an average of 38.2 physically aggressive acts and the girls showed 12.7 physically aggressive acts. The study concluded that children can learn behaviour by observing an adult's behaviour. The study also concluded that boys are more likely to mimic the behaviour of men, and girls are more likely to mimic women's behaviour, and females tend to be less aggressive than males.

Children, especially very young children, cannot give informed consent because they cannot comprehend the implications of being involved in research. There is no indication that the researchers attempted to address any aggressive behaviour that the study had created in the participants by debriefing the children and by 'undoing' in some way the harm that had been done by teaching them aggressive behaviour.

There is an ethical obligation to use research with integrity. Bandura et al. (1961) made use of a relatively homogeneous and monocultural group of participants, all of a very young age, and yet the study's conclusion (that people learn by observation) has often been applied to adults from other socioeconomic groups and cultures. This is a misuse of research and therefore is unethical.

Some ethical systems may adopt an alternative to 'do no harm'. One alternative is to consider the costs and benefits of research to society. Some may feel that the harm done to a small number of children is outweighed by the benefit to many others as a result of the research, the findings of which may be used, for example, as evidence to support laws prohibiting aggressive behaviour in children's television programmes and video games.

17.2 Cross-cultural studies and stereotypes

There is a risk that conclusions relating to cultural dimensions are misinterpreted as descriptors of all people from a particular culture or nationality. This becomes a generalization about people from a particular country or ethnic group and then this becomes a stereotype. Once a person has formed stereotypes, they tend to persist because people are cognitive misers, meaning less effort is involved in allowing stereotypes to persist than to challenge and change them.

Researchers have an ethical obligation to present their results in such a way as to minimize the risk of misunderstanding and misuse. This often means simply writing the report in language that is unambiguous.

The traditional Western Samoan culture described in Ochs (1982) is likely to be different to the culture of families living in the capital city Apia and the relatively large Western Samoan communities living in New Zealand. The expression 'American culture' occurs frequently in the literature, yet even the casual observer will understand profound differences in the accepted norms and behaviour of people living in New York, New Orleans, and New Hampshire.

17.3 Cross-cultural studies and researcher effect

Researchers have an ethical obligation not to 'disturb' the culture and participants being studied. Ochs (1982) was a longitudinal observation study of children and their families in traditional Western Samoan households. The researchers were of the American-European culture, which tends to be relatively **egalitarian** and responsive to the needs of others. Western Samoan culture, in contrast, is hierarchical with higher status people remaining aloof and unresponsive to the needs of lower status people. 'If a young child begins to fret, the high status party will act in such a way as not to acknowledge these situations' (Ochs, 1982). One can imagine that researchers would find it difficult not to intervene in such a situation, to help a child in distress, but to do so would be to impose their culture onto that which they are studying, and therefore 'disturb' the subject of the research.

17.4 Unethical use of research

The Fundamental Attribution Error that people tend to overstate dispositional (internal/personal) factors and understate situational (external/environmental) factors in their successes, which had previously been assumed to apply to all people, was found by Grossmann and Varnum (2010) to apply less to Russian people than to American people. To assume that the FAE applies to people of all cultures is an unethical use of research. Students should take care when generalising the results of culture-bound studies to people from other cultures.



Dr Edmond Locard (who became known as the real-life Sherlock Holmes of France) proposed that a criminal always brings something into a crime scene and leaves with something from it. To what extent does Locard's principle add to your understanding of the effect of cross-cultural research methods? To what extent do studies like Ochs (1982) have a similar effect: taking something from the study's culture as well as leaving something from the researcher's culture behind?

EE

To what extent are ethical considerations, such as 'do no harm', hindering our understanding of human behaviour?

18 The influence of globalization on individual behaviour (HL)

General focus

Discuss the influence of globalization on individual behaviour.

18.1 Globalization may influence culture

Learning focus

Discuss how globalization may influence behaviour.

Present balanced discussions and arguments. Be careful to avoid unwarranted generalizations and stereotypes.



Discuss globalization with your classmates. The word is used frequently in many school subjects, but what does it mean? What causes it? Is it a good thing? Or a bad thing? How does it manifest in you and your classmates' lives?



Books, theatre, cinema, and television have all played a significant role in developing people's global identities because they have exposed people to the rest of the world, although mostly to the dominant Western world.



Create an interactive wall chart that invites passers-by to write comments on it about what they value, and why. You should begin with some examples such as, 'I value honesty because it means I can trust and rely on others', or 'I value my family and friends because . . .' After one week, replace the wall chart with a summary of the values and value statements.



People who acculturate with bicultural identity show the best psychological adaptation.



Arnett (2002) states that the most salient psychological consequence of globalization is the effect on people's identity, i.e. how people perceive themselves with respect to the social environment in which they live. Two aspects of identity are affected by globalization: (1) because of globalization many people in the world develop a **bicultural** identity – part of their identity comes from their local or indigenous culture and another part comes from their relationship with the global culture; and (2) there are people who purposefully form themselves into self-selected cultures that are 'pure of infection' from the global culture (Arnett, 2002).

18.1.1 Bicultural identities

Young people develop a global identity that gives them a sense of belonging to a worldwide culture as well as their local identity. Books, theatre, cinema, and television have all played a significant role in developing people's global identities because they have exposed people to the rest of the world, although mostly to the dominant Western world. The internet is likely to play an even more important role in people's global identity, because it allows direct, instant, and two-way communication with other people anywhere in the world.

While most people develop a global identity that allows them to interact with people from all over the world, people still develop their local identities based on their local culture; and this is their 'default' identity (Arnett, 2002).

A bicultural identity is found among many young 'middle-class' Indians; young, Western-educated Indians. While they are active participants in the globalized world, they still generally prefer an arranged marriage and expect to care for their elderly parents, as is the Indian tradition (Verma and Saraswathi, 2002). These young, globalized people retain their traditional Indian identity while also developing a global identity.

Immigration promotes globalization (Hermans and Kempen, 1998). The identities of immigrants and, to a lesser extent, those from the host country's culture incorporate aspects of each other's culture. Berry (1997) found that people who acculturate with bicultural identity show the best psychological adaptation.

18.1.2 Self-selected cultures

Core values of the global culture are: individual/personal rights; the freedom of choice for individuals; open-mindedness to change, and tolerance of differences. These values are prevalent and dominant in the global culture because they are the generally held values of people within the cultures that power globalization, i.e. the wealthy and 'the West'.

For most people these values are appealing, but some people choose to reject them and join a culture that provides a more personalized identity, as they refuse to be one of the global crowd.

The global culture is, in general, **secular** and often the self-selected cultures of people who shun the global culture have a religious basis. For example, when some women who grew up in secular Jewish homes in the US reached adulthood they decided that the secular values their families raised them with provided an inadequate foundation for their lives and they embraced Orthodox Judaism (Arnett, 2002). Despite the strict gender roles and limitations on women, Orthodox Judaism gave the women the structure and meaning of Orthodox Jewish theology, and a sense of belonging to an enduring tradition (Arnett, 2002). Similarly, Samoans have recently revived their practice of tattooing adolescent males' bodies; traditionally, this was considered essential for achieving adult status, but now seems to be a part of an attempt to resist the loss of their indigenous culture (Arnett, 2002). The revival of interest in indigenous languages is also likely to be a consequence of people rejecting, at least in part, the global culture and the strengthening of one's local culture and therefore local culture-based identity.

18.2 The effect of the interaction of local and global influences on behaviour

Learning focus

Discuss the interaction of local and global influences on behaviour.

Arnett (2002) highlights another psychological consequence of globalization: the effect of the interaction of local and global influences on behaviour. This shows in two ways: (1) the pervasiveness of identity confusion among young people who find themselves identifying with neither their local culture nor the global culture; and (2) people's pre-adulthood discovery process regarding their identity in work and in relationships increases in duration, going beyond the adolescent period (10–18 years old) into the emerging adulthood period (18–25 years old).

Berry (1997) proposed the term 'acculturative stress' to describe the conflict between one's original culture and a new culture, and the effect they have on a person's identity. The stress is greatest when the values of the indigenous culture are incompatible with those of the global culture. This acculturative stress contributes to identity confusion, so the greater the acculturative stress the greater the identity confusion (Berry, 1997).

EE

To what extent do students in Aotearoa/ New Zealand feel their indigenous identity is being protected from the global culture through the teaching and learning of te reo Maori (the Maori language)?



Find and interview someone who remembers life before the internet. Interview them to determine what behaviours may have changed for this person since the internet's creation.



The terms global and local are relative. Local, for example, can refer to family, region, country, as well as social groups.



Can you describe two cultures with values that are compatible? And then two cultures with values that are incompatible?

A hybrid identity is an identity that forms on the basis of the local and global culture.



18.2.1 Identity hybridisation

Having a bicultural identity means that a person adopts a local identity as well as a distinct and separate global identity. In some cases, globalization alters a person's indigenous beliefs and values to the extent that the local and global cultures are blended, generating a hybrid identity (Arnett, 2002). As globalization causes local cultures to develop, most people's identities also adapt to either become a bicultural or a hybrid identity, which allows them to live in their indigenous culture as well as engage with their global culture (Arnett, 2002).

18.2.2 Identity confusion

Some people, however, experience identity confusion because they lose contact with their indigenous culture but are also unable or unwilling to engage with the global culture. Berry (1997) identified marginalization: an acculturation pattern in which people have little interest or an inability to maintain their indigenous culture, but also reject the global culture.

Globalization seems to have the greatest effect on young people's identity. Where a child lives is now less important than it was in the past, with respect to what he or she understands of the world, because of the extent to which young people learn the global culture through television, cinema, and the internet (Arnett, 2002).

Globalization leads to culture shedding, as the global culture affects indigenous cultures. For example, traditionally paternal or patriarchal cultures that are exposed to 'Western' family structures are becoming more egalitarian as a consequence of exposure to the global culture through television, cinema, and the internet (Nsamenang, 2002).

The people most likely to suffer identity confusion because of globalization are those living in cultures that have the greatest cultural distance between them and the global culture. Some cultures have experienced an increase in social problems, especially in young people, likely to be due to identity confusion arising from globalization. Using interviews with young people, supported by data from police and social workers, Delafosse et al. (1993) studied changes in problems among young people aged 16–20 years in Côte d'Ivoire from 1980 to 1991 and found 'an increase over this period in suicide, drug abuse, armed aggression, and male and female prostitution'. Researchers attributed these behaviours to globalization.

18.2.3 Postponed adulthood

Another worldwide psychological consequence of globalization is the timing of the transition into adulthood, with more young people choosing to postpone work, marriage, and parenthood. This is occurring in every part of the world because of a global trend of people spending more time in education, meaning the transition into adulthood roles is delayed (Arnett, 2000). As traditional family structures change through exposure to the global culture on television, cinema, books, magazines, and the internet, all of which are dominated by 'Western values', young people tend to take more control over their lives and, although not universal, the median ages for the transition to adulthood is rising rapidly in all countries (Arnett, 2000).

This postponed adulthood is often associated with self-focused exploration and investigation and is possible only if the person's socioeconomic circumstances are such that their labour is not needed, i.e. relatively well-off young people are able to delay their entry to adulthood because they or their families can afford it.

Economic growth and development gives young people the luxury to choose a career and an adulthood they believe fits their identity, as above. In some regions however, young people's expectations, based on the global culture, are unrealistic for their local situation and the number of university graduates, and the specialisms of their education are often such that they are unable to find work in their chosen field and so many find themselves unemployed, resulting in identity stress (Nsamenang, 2002).

In most developing countries, this postponed adulthood only exists for the relatively rich; the poor, typically those with little or no ability to engage with the world culture, still begin adulthood roles (work, marriage and parenthood) at a relatively young age, as above.

18.3 Methods used to study the influence of globalization on behaviour

Learning focus

To what extent can research methods explain the influence of globalization on behaviour?

As globalization is a process over time, a longitudinal study is a useful research method to study the influence of globalization on behaviour. A longitudinal study involves repeated observations of the same people and a specific behaviour over long periods of time and so they can show trends. Examples of longitudinal studies include looking at methods of language acquisition or identity formation.

Longitudinal studies are observational, so they may show correlations, but they cannot reach cause-effect conclusions. Longitudinal studies are usually done in the participants' environment, so they usually have high ecological validity, but can be expensive and take a long time to complete. Ochs (1982) was a longitudinal observation study of children and their families in traditional Western Samoan households.

A cross-cultural study is typically a quasi-experiment in which the independent variable (IV) is the participants' culture and the dependent variable (DV) is the behaviour being studied, for example identity formation. Chen et al. (2008) used two cultural groups (Mainland Chinese and domestic workers from the Philippines) as their study's IV to examine the impact of different bicultural identities and bilingualism on the psychological adjustment of the two groups living Hong Kong. A common fault with cross-cultural studies is that people of the same nationality are assumed to be of the same culture.



Economic growth and development gives young people the luxury to choose a career and an adulthood they believe fits their identity.



There are weaknesses to all research methods, but these do not necessarily make a study's conclusions wrong or unusable.



A longitudinal study involves repeated observations of the same people and a specific behaviour.



A cross-cultural study is typically a quasi-experiment in which the IV is the participants' culture and the DV is the behaviour being studied.

Key study: Chen et al. (2008)

Aim: To examine the impact of different bicultural identities and bilingualism on the psychological adjustment of two groups living in Hong Kong.

Procedure: The participants completed questionnaires presented in their own language.

Findings: (1) Psychological acculturation factors are significant to the adaptation of migrants; (2) objective environmental factors, e.g. income, housing, work conditions, and language proficiency are also significant, and (3) the strength of first- and second-culture identification, and proficiency in the host language are associated with psychological well-being.

Conclusion: (1) Stress associated with globalization with respect to language proficiency, employment, and intercultural relations have a negative effect on psychological adjustment. For example, poor second-language skills are likely to have a negative effect on work performance; and (2) acculturative stress, e.g. discrimination, language and interpersonal difficulties, and feelings of isolation, are negatively associated with well-being.

Evaluation: The study involved a significant number of participants from clearly different groups and used self-report questionnaires in the participants' own languages with support to complete the questionnaires. This means that the data has a high degree of reliability. The main limitation of the study is that it showed only correlational results and so no conclusions about cause-and-effect directionality between bicultural identity, bilingualism, and well-being can be made.

To what extent do cross-cultural studies perpetuate nationality or cultural stereotypes?

EE

Activity

Find all of the new words or expressions from this chapter and write them into a document with their definitions and explanations next to them. Be creative and use diagrams or boxes to help make your personal glossary unique and effective.