



# SCOPE, GOAL AND RELATIONSHIPS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY WITH OTHER DISCIPLINES

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# Scope of Social Psychology

It studies human behavior **in** groups and that how human behavior is influenced by others. It attempts to understand **the socio-psychological** causes and motives of human behavior **in** groups. Social psychology attempts to understand the relationship between minds, groups, and behaviors in three general ways:

- (I) It tries to see how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of other(s). This includes social perception, social interaction, and the many kinds of social influence (like trust, power, and persuasion). It deals with questions like: How do small group dynamics impact cognition and emotional states?
  - How do social groups control or contribute to behaviour, emotion, or attitudes of the individual members?
  - How does the group impact the individual?
  - How does the individual operate within the social group?

**Individual**



**Others/group**

## Conti...

- (2) Second, it tries to understand the influence that individual perceptions and behaviours have upon the behaviour of groups. This includes looking at things like group productivity in the workplace and group decision making. It looks at questions like:

**What are the reasons behind consistency, diversity, and deviance?**

**Individual**



**Group**

## Conti...

(3) Third, and finally, social psychology tries to understand groups themselves as behavioural entities, and the relationships and influences that one group has upon another group. It asks questions like:

- What makes some groups hostile to one another, and others neutral or civil?
- Do groups behave in a different way than an individual outside the group?

**Group**



**Group**

# Goal of Social Psychology

The goal of social psychology is to understand **cognition and behavior as they naturally occur in a social context**, but the very act of observing people can influence and alter their behavior. For this reason, many **social psychology** experiments utilize deception to conceal or distort certain aspects of the study.

**Example: Participant Observation**



# Social Psychology and other social sciences

1. Social Psychology and Sociology
2. Social Psychology and Anthropology
3. Social Psychology and Sociolinguistics

# 1. Social Psychology and Sociology

Sociology is defined as the study of society. Sociology is the social science dealing with social system and structures, relationships, institutes and entire societies. The emergence of sociology in the nineteenth century greatly contributed to the development of social psychology. John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte and others laid the foundation for social psychology by asserting that human social cognition and behaviour could and should be studied scientifically like any other natural science. A sociologist begins with the domain of society and works towards the individual while the social psychologist reverses the order.

As far as social psychology is concerned it is sometimes difficult to demarcate it from social psychology with a sharp line as both the disciplines invest most of their resources in the ambiguous middle ground. Social psychology exchanges freely ideas, methods and models with sociology. In fact this exchange is so rich and ubiquitous that it is often difficult to distinguish the two fields. Being the study of individual in a society, the vantage point of social psychology is more prone to the individual and the experimental method. But with the expanding application, social psychology is adopting the other methods like ethnography and qualitative research more popular with the domain of sociology.



## 2. Social Psychology and Anthropology

Broadly considered as to be the scientific study of human beings, Anthropology originated as a discipline in the Darwinian revolution of the middle of the nineteenth century. Underpinning all the anthropological works is the concern of mapping human variation (biological, behavioural and cultural) and to explain, interpret and understand the directions in the development of human behaviour. The main topics of investigation are primitive societies, cultural relativism, unity of human species, human diversity and human evolution. Social psychology can make good use of the theories about cultures and societies which might assist in the explanation of the individual behaviour in a particular society. Anthropology can give a clear picture of the cultural and social context to a social psychologist.

### 3. Social Psychology and Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to social factors, including differences of regional, class, and occupational dialect, gender differences, and bilingualism.

Sociolinguistics includes the areas of study which connects language with society. The discipline uses theories and methods from diverse field like psychology, sociology and anthropology to understand language in societies. Sociolinguistics is centrally concerned with methodology. It is firmly based on the observation of actual, preferably spontaneous speech behaviour. The studies within this field have contributed in terms of understanding language uses and behaviours of peoples in society. The study of language contributes not only in terms of language behaviours but the rich data helps in building theories. The field of sociolinguistics equally borrows theories from social psychology to draw inferences about behaviours from the linguistic data.



Thank You