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# Various Layers in Social Psychology

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Abstract. Understanding humans through social influence is always needed. Through an analysis of specific topics of social psychology, a bridge between issues can be created. This research aims to understand the various layers in social psychology using secondary data. The methodology used in this study is qualitative research, particularly literature review. The subject of this study is some literatures in databases, and other scholarly articles to use as supporting evidence for this work about the study of social psychology. The results provide understanding of layers on social psychology including how individuals interact and function in the day-to-day lives. Human can learn how to better recognize the information process happening in their brains and how to manipulate it in different social situations. The depth of how human relate to each other, and their surroundings is seen through social psychology's "social" aspect. Individuals thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are unique and influenced by social norms' real or imagined presence. This study has theoretical implication on how social psychology has layers to explain how human interact in social context.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence (EI), Happiness, Prejudice, Social cognition, Social influence, Social psychology

Abstrak. Pemahaman tentang manusia melalui pengaruh sosial selalu dibutuhkan. Melalui analisis topik-topik tertentu psikologi sosial, jembatan antar permasalahan dapat diciptakan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami berbagai lapisan dalam psikologi sosial dengan menggunakan data sekunder. Metodologi yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif khususnya tinjauan pustaka. Subyek penelitian ini adalah beberapa literatur dalam database, dan artikel ilmiah lainnya yang digunakan sebagai bukti pendukung karya tentang studi psikologi sosial ini. Hasilnya memberikan pemahaman tentang lapisan psikologi sosial termasuk bagaimana individu berinteraksi dan berfungsi dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Manusia dapat belajar bagaimana mengenali dengan lebih baik proses informasi yang terjadi di otaknya dan bagaimana memanipulasinya dalam berbagai situasi sosial. Kedalaman hubungan manusia satu sama lain, dan lingkungannya dilihat melalui aspek "sosial" psikologi sosial. Pikiran, perasaan, dan perilaku individu bersifat unik dan dipengaruhi oleh kehadiran norma-norma sosial yang nyata atau yang dibayangkan. Kajian ini mempunyai implikasi teoritis mengenai bagaimana psikologi sosial mempunyai lapisan-lapisan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana manusia berinteraksi dalam konteks sosial.

Kata kunci: Kecerdasan emosional, Kebahagiaan, Prasangka, Kognisi sosial, Pengaruh sosial, Psikologi sosial

Social psychology is grounded in the conception of cognition, emotion, and behavior. Individuals' social psychology is primarily based on their social group and community. Within these communities, collective thoughts, emotions, and behavior are representative of a collective identity. These collective identities and social reference groups constitute a significant aspect of understanding social psychology. Understanding the root of social psychology is recognizing that socially "anchored" beliefs and certain social rituals are determined by how individuals process themselves and others. Everyday social interaction is a critical aspect of human life and how personality and behavior are displayed. There are two critical distinctions when discussing social groups: (1) intrinsically social groups are people who share socially engaged beliefs, attitudes, emotions, and behavior, like the subscription to a particular religion, while (2) derivatively social groups have members with socially significant properties, like being a woman. These two distinctions allow us to understand further how the different communities around us shape our paradigms. Without these groups, our identities and beliefs would be incredibly different. When people are in the presence of their social reference groups, they show their emotions and behavior based on all the people around them.

Many different theoretical traditions have been claimed, such as social representation theory, social identity, cultural psychology, and social constructionism (Greenwood, 2014). Although all these theories have different approaches to psychology, social cognition is the dominant theory focused on and practiced. Even though discoveries and perspectives have changed ideas and theories about social psychology, interpretations of original social psychology have not been forgotten and have only been added to the modern understanding of social psychology (Duarte et al., 2014; Weick, 2015).

When it comes to mental representation, people make judgments and assumptions based on specific memories that they may have and try to connect them. When people are introduced to new information, they try to pull it from their memory to see if they can trace it with anything they already know about it. As people, we make observations and then formulate judgments from social information that our brains receive. This influences our perception of someone solely from our memory and an experience that was either good or bad that stuck with us.

Generally, people are aware of cognitive processes. Humans may make judgments sooner than we should, but we still process things the way we do and often make premature judgments. Although we can control some mental processes, many are uncontrollable to us as humans. In a

sense, specific cognitive processes for humans seem automatic regarding social judgments or thoughts. Stereotypes are one example of how humans process certain things and may judge others and have certain opinions about something or someone without consciously thinking about it. This theory, called 'ironic' mental control, focuses on the idea that there is a way to suppress unwanted thoughts actively and successfully. Automatic processes cannot be suppressed in the way that controlled processes are. However, if there are enough intentional distractors, there may be a way to fight off automatic thoughts, such as judgments or stereotypes that people have. That said, suppressing automatic thoughts may not work because it can lead the perceiver to rely more on a stereotype than they would otherwise.

The intersection of motivation and cognition focuses on feeling and even potentially what mood we are in. For instance, if we are in a good mood, we may have a positive reaction and mental process to anything we are thinking about or reacting to, or vice versa. That is how motivational factors are connected to social cognition, as it may have to do with how we feel, whether good or bad. Our judgment and social cognition, whether conscious or unconscious, can amplify how we view and react to any situation or information at any given moment and impact how we perceive things. If we can be aware of this, we can use this proficiency in our everyday lives. Whenever something happens, we can actively think and react positively regarding how we process things.

The current mood states that people are in can significantly impact perceivers' ability to remember information if it matches up. How you remember things can have a lot to do with your current mood if you are trying to remember a past event. Your mood can also effectively help us remember things in the past and impact how we remember certain events. If we are in a bad mood, we may stereotype much more than in a good mood.

This review will uncover the numerous fascinating elements of social psychology. The complexity of social psychology is to be considered, as it studies and focuses on unique aspects of human thinking, influence, and behavior through various topics and theories. The multiple layers of social psychology and cognition attempt to explain an individual's unique interpretation of the world and those around them. Overall, this literature review will evaluate the different aspects of social psychology and elaborate on the connection between them and how they apply to humans in our everyday lives.

## Method

This study was designed based on a qualitative research method/literature review that collected second-hand data according to earlier quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies and research articles, preferably most recently published. The study's researchers are profoundly focused and search papers discussed in social psychology and related topics; then, by finding more related papers or research studies, they endeavor to develop and investigate them based on their understanding and analysis of different processes. Correspondingly, the researchers focused significantly on the articles and research that discussed the importance and role of social psychology in the context of behavior and performance. Additionally, the researchers of this study analyzed the studies based on the research acquaintance, prerequisites, and perspective on this subject.

## Discussion

*Social Cognition* is shaped by one person's understanding of the world around them. There is a direct link between social cognition and the mental processing by our interactions, whether real or in our mind. Social information processing explains how there are two positions in every social interaction: the perceiver and the target. First, the perceiver identifies the attributes of the target, then picks the category they fit into and draws conclusions on that target, and lastly, stores that information in their brain. Our brains automatically make judgments and assumptions that we have no control over. Often, people are unaware that they are concluding that they are not consciously aware of. Motivation and cognition go hand in hand. How you perceive someone is based on your feelings and motivation. Your goals and motivation could be opposing, so you will have a negative cognition interpreting your target. We perceive information about groups differently than we perceive information about one person. We conclude that one person is faster than one group. It is easier for the perceiver to focus on one target at a time. One can tell if this group is open and what their attitudes are. Creating a clear and concise definition of social cognition can take time and effort. However, focusing on how perceivers can act toward their target in different scenarios can simplify it. Many of our reactions are unconscious, but focusing on this will help us progress in our relationships (Quinn et al., 2006).

The article *Prejudice and Discrimination* Toward Immigrants by Victoria M. Esses (Esses, 2021) essentially reviews the current literature on the origins of prejudice and

discrimination and their effects. The growing number of immigrants each year only emphasizes the relevance of this topic. The treatment of immigrants is correlated to their success in their new country. People's attitudes and beliefs about immigration will also affect "immigration policies, the life outcomes of immigrants, and, ultimately, the degree of harmony or discord within a nation." (Esses, 2021). Nevertheless, not only non-immigrant beliefs have these effects but also intragroup beliefs. Attitudes about national identity are a driving force behind ideas about immigration. Two forms of these attitudes are nationalism and patriotism, with people who align more with nationalism tend to see immigrants as competition. Those who align with patriotism tend to have more favorable views of immigration. However, patriotism also has divides: blind and constructive patriotism. Blind patriotism does not involve any criticism of one's country, while constructive patriotism still maintains pride but with some criticism.

Additionally, someone's attitudes toward life, in general, might also be reflected in their beliefs towards immigration. A more open personality that goes with the flow tends to make the researchers more open and accepting toward immigration. Furthermore, someone thinking heavily about economic competition might be more critical of immigration.

*Happiness and Satisfaction* are two concepts that we typically pair together and view as very similar. Although they are connected, they are not the same thing. Happiness is the process of getting satisfaction (Celestine, 2017; Eli, n. d). We have the feeling of joy, which is happiness, at any time, but satisfaction is typically at the end. When one is happy or joyful, their body releases dopamine and serotonin (Murphy, 2018). These chemicals are linked with happiness. The Harvard Study of Adult Development started in 1938 and found that our relationships are directly linked to happiness and life satisfaction. Relationships do not have to mean marital relationships; these involve friends or anyone people surround themselves with. Good relationships make people happy, making our bodies and brains healthier.

Many studies have concluded that women are more satisfied in life than men, but Malloy Montgomery conducted a study on how men and women differ in how they use response scales. The study concluded that women's life satisfaction was, on average, lower than men's when comparing satisfaction ratings on response scales (Ray, 2022; Todd, 2022). We also learned that the happiest age range is 60-70; they say they have a greater sense of well-being than younger people. In 2022, Daly reported Finland's happiest country, with Denmark and London taking second and third place, which was additionally confirmed by Helliwell et al., 2022. We also

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concluded that the income level that is the happiest is not the wealthiest. The happiest people are within the $60,000-$75,000 yearly income bracket (Bronner, 2020). The last happiness statistic we looked at was what generation so far has been the happiest. It was concluded that Millennials are currently the happiest generation. Millennials were born between 1980-1994. The "gloomy" generation tends to be the Baby Boomers who were born between 1946 and 1964.

There are also many different foods linked with happiness. One can eat these foods to strive for better mental health, which is directly linked to physical health. Seven main foods are linked with mental happiness. The first one is quinoa. This is packed with much protein and has a distinct flavonoid that is said to have an antidepressant effect. The next is salmon. Salmon has a lot of omega-3 fatty acids, which improve people's moods. Omega 3 in our body helps our skin and hair appear shiny and gives us the appearance of happiness. Mushrooms have a lot of vitamin D, which boosts people's mood and has many antidepressant qualities. Dark chocolate is expressed to increase endorphin levels and help ease emotional stress. Yogurt is packed with probiotics that help us with the health of our gut, which is directly linked to our brain. Grapes contain resveratrol, an antioxidant proven to boost one's mood. Last is vitamin C, found in many foods, including oranges. Vitamin C is a perfect way to boost your immune system, which is also connected to your brain. Vitamin C is also found in broccoli, kale, strawberries, mangos, and kiwis (Rossman, 2017).

Another thing we link happiness and satisfaction with is exercise. The American Journal of Psychiatry found that active people are less likely to develop anxiety or depression (Schuch et al., 2018). Even just 20 minutes a day of physical exercise can aid boost your mood instantly. Moving your body is not as simple as it may seem though many things are happening inside that work to impact our mood. When exercising, our body releases mood-boosting chemicals like endorphins and serotonin. These chemicals are proven to enhance self-esteem and increase pleasure. Exercise is also linked with improving one's quality of sleep. Sleep is a significant factor in improving one's mood (Zhang & Chen, 2018).

***Belonging and Dependence*** are different, although understanding the importance of both concepts is essential to living a fulfilling life. Belonging is "the feeling of safety and support when there is a sense of approval, inclusion, and uniqueness for a member of a particular group. It is when an individual can obtain their genuine self to perform" (Cornell University, 2023). To simplify this, when individuals feel they belong, they will likely be more authentic, engaged, and

connected to everything around them. People who feel a sense of belonging will ultimately bring the best out of themselves and others as they will be comfortable with who they are. The importance of belonging goes well beyond belonging with family or friends, for example, as there are many dimensions to it, one of which is the importance of belonging in the workplace as a Cornell University study finds that "When employees feel like they do not belong at work, their interpretation and their personal lives suffer. Creating genuine feelings of belonging for all is critical in improving engagement and performance" (Cornell University, 2023). A sense of belonging translates into all areas of our lives and impacts us in many ways. It is imperative not to underestimate its power over us; as mentioned above, if individuals feel that they belong at work, this often impacts their relationships and connections beyond the workplace in other aspects of their lives. Dr. Allen, the Australian Psychological Society writer, "It is our understanding of belonging and its significance to us as a species that shapes the manner of our connections with others, groups, and even whole society's function" (2019). This affirms everything explained above regarding the importance of belonging for all individuals and how it immensely impacts our happiness, satisfaction, and well-being. Dr. Allen further states, "A sense of belonging does not rely on participation with, or closeness to, others or groups. Rather, belonging comes from a perception of quality, meaning, and satisfaction with social connections. Belonging may also relate to belonging to a place or an event. It is, therefore, a complex and dynamic process unique to each person" (2019). How it applies uniquely to every individual makes belonging complex yet fascinating. This is because belonging, to an extent, depends on the quality of relationships between individuals, which can determine the level of belonging we feel. If people can feel and be genuine in relationships, they will likely be fulfilled and happy. A tremendous part of belonging focuses on an individual's ability to be authentic and engaged in relationships, ultimately creating strong, lasting, and fulfilling connections with others.

In contrast, "psychological dependence guides to the conditioned reactions – triggered by events or feelings – that compel an individual to use a substance, such as drugs or alcohol. Triggers can be anything a person associated with using a drug of choice and can cause strong emotions that influence their addictive behavior" (Baum, 2023). Psychological dependence, in a sense, is when someone has a firm reliance on substances that are addictive. Dependence strongly connects with belonging because frequently, individuals who lack a robust support system and community that cares for them, resulting in not having a sense of belonging,

unfortunately, are the people who are at the highest risk of feeling the need to depend on substances. This proves that it is crucial for all humans to feel that they belong and are accepted for who they are in fullness. A strong sense of belonging can make waves in someone's life by helping people better manage stress and everything that life throws at them because they have a community to fall back on. However, without a strong sense of belonging, people may have a much more difficult time coping with specific events that happen in life, which can, unfortunately, lead to a dependence on substances such as drugs and alcohol. Ultimately, belonging and dependence go hand in hand, showing that a strong sense of belonging and quality relationships, family, and friends, are almost essential to living a fulfilling life.

Experiencing *Adversity* and hardship are two unavoidable aspects of life. When one dives into the specifics within the overall scope of Adversity, a better understanding of these experiences is reached. Adversity is the state of continued struggle, hardship, and difficulty that causes prolonged stress, constantly caused by a principal or a series of miserable circumstances outside your control (Davis, 2020). Two people's adverse experiences are not necessarily equivalent or comparable. Adversity does not purely fall into one category but many different subsections. Physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, and financial Adversity can be experienced anywhere in life. Frequently, these various categories are experienced concerning one another. For example, if one loses a limb in a traumatic accident, their mental health is likely to suffer as well. In this instance, physical and mental Adversity is being experienced simultaneously.

While there are different levels of hardship and Adversity, 50% of all children in the US have experienced some trauma in the form of abuse, neglect, violence, or challenging household circumstances ("Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences, 2021). Experiencing childhood trauma is expected, which, if not dealt with, further affects adult life. ACEs mean adverse childhood experience/s that create high levels of stress and have impacts that last far beyond childhood. Long-lasting physical, behavioral, and mental consequences are seen by those who have gone through adverse childhood experiences. 61% of adults have had at least one ACE, and 16% have had four or more ACEs (Gourani, 2019). Females and racial/ethnic minority groups are at a higher risk for having four or more ACEs. Continuous exposure to such experiences increases the risk of health problems throughout one's life. Although some traumatic experiences

are unavoidable, limiting ACEs in a child's life is shown to lower the risk of depression, asthma, cancer, and diabetes and improve education and employment potential.

Fortunately, there are ways to overcome Adversity and methods to cope with trauma. Journaling, meditation, prayer, therapy, exercise, rest, and practicing positivity are all methods for overcoming hardship (Fletcher, 2022). Adverse experiences are defined by negativity and the lasting effects of trauma; however, there is good that comes from living through hardship. Increased empathy, personal growth, stronger relationships, spiritual growth, and reframing stress through a new perspective are positive effects that can be learned through overcoming Adversity. Adversity, hardship, and trauma are not always avoidable but widespread. Spreading awareness for and advocating for those who have experienced or are currently experiencing hardship is critical to overcoming the adverse physical and mental effects that could last a lifetime.

The study of *Attitude* in social psychology and how we discuss it today has changed drastically. As explained in the research essay, "Attitudes and Social Cognition as Social Psychological Siblings," by Duane Wegener and Richard Petty, "We continue to compare the development of attitudes and social cognition research development during the past 30 to 40 years. We compare prominent dual and multiple process theories of attitude change and impression formation". The most notable change in how attitude is discussed and perceived is that while culture has remained relatively similar over the years, attitudes change and develop as time goes on. For instance, as society has evolved, there are new norms that were not previously acceptable today. Frequently, attitudes change for the better because researchers are more knowledgeable and aware than ever.

What is so great about attitude is that it is something we can control, and it is a choice we get the privilege to make every day. You cannot always control your circumstances, but your attitude is. Your attitude is how you think and perceive people, events, and things around you. In a sense, an attitude has everything to do with how mentally and how we think about things. Our attitudes can be shaped by experiences with people that lead us to have a confident attitude and think a certain way about others. In their research, Wegener and Petty (2013) thoroughly elaborate on how our attitudes influence how quickly we make judgments, as they explain, "As described in more detail shortly, a core idea in these models was that sometimes people engage in little thought prior to making judgments, in which case simple and quick inferences and cues

determine evaluations, whereas at other times people engage in much thought, in which case deliberative processes and careful analysis of information determine judgments." Our attitude is imperative in our judgments and how quickly we make them. Behavior goes hand in hand with attitude, as our attitude often directly affects our behavior in different situations, whether we are happy or stressed. For instance, if we are stressed, many of us may tend to overreact to little things and change our attitudes, and if we are happy, we may be more patient and forgiving than we would be otherwise. Our behavior and actions depend significantly on our attitude at any given moment. The three dimensions of attitude are affective, behavioral, and cognitive. Affective includes feelings and emotions, behavioral includes past and future activity, and cognitive includes thoughts, beliefs, and ideas about something.

The role of attitudes in social psychology is that they show up in our response to things that happen to us. Attitude is significant in social psychology because our attitude helps us better understand our behavior and other people's behavior. As Kendra Cherry puts it, "Psychologists describe *perspectives* as a learned propensity to estimate things in a specific manner. This can contain evaluations of individuals, issues, objects, or circumstances. Such evaluations are constantly positive or negative but can also be uncertain (2023). Our upbringing can often shape our attitudes, but we can also change them and our perspective on the abovementioned things. An important part of learning and growing is "Comprehending where these attitudes come from and how they occasionally switch can assist you in looking for ways to enhance your attitudes, whether it means embracing a more positive outlook on life or changing your opinion based on new knowledge" (Cherry, 2023). Regarding attitudes in social psychology, our ability to adjust, develop, and improve our attitudes will ultimately resolve how far we will go.

With over half the world having a *Social Media* account, around 59% as of 2023 (Chaffey, 2023), social media is a significant component of our social world. Social media allows people to manage their social relationships, whether weak or strong. These applications also give people an outlet to create a social identity to put out to their followers. Social media offers users five opportunities within the apps. Each user goes through five phases when using new social networking sites: awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. First is awareness, which explains the process of discovering a new platform but needing to learn about it. Next, we have the process of interest, which pushes you to investigate this specific platform more to learn how it functions. Evaluation is the beginning stage of understanding the effects of

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social media sites. The fourth process is trial, when users start trying the application and taking in more information. Lastly, we have adopted when people use and interact with the platform entirely (Riva et al., 2016).

Through our research, we also found three paradoxes of digital identities. These three paradoxes show that social media cannot be concluded as a positive or negative resource and depends on the user and their experiences with the platform. Social media creates problems for some but creates opportunities for others. The first paradox explains how we use social media to create new social identities for ourselves. When we connect with people through social media, we lose the ability to react to someone by their physical body. When you interact with someone in person, you pick up on social cues, such as how they are sitting, their facial expressions, Etc. We can tell if someone is tired by how they hold themselves, and we can tell if someone is mad by their facial expressions. When connections are moved online, we lose all these cues and must fill in the blanks ourselves. The cues we receive in person from natural bodies are now switched to virtual bodies over social media. Depending on which picture or video they post, we may only see part of the picture of someone's body (Riva et al., 2016).

The second paradox focuses on how many people use multiple different platforms. Today, users have Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, BeReal, Etc. These platforms call for different content, allowing users to create a new character or version of themselves from platform to platform. Some platforms will show the professional side of one's life, and others will show the social and raw aspects of one's life. With multiple platforms, users can choose what they show about themselves and to whom they show it. This is called "personal branding." Because we choose to share such different content from platform to platform, our followers get different narratives of who we are. On one platform, you might share your favorite food, another could be your travels, and the next could be your data. This allows our followers to create multiple and different identities and assumptions about us. It is easy to create an identity for someone by just typing their name into a social media account (Riva et al., 2016).

The third and final paradox concerns strong vs. weak bonds and the effort we put into them. When one looks at their friends around them, most conclude that they have only a couple of solid and authentic friendships and many weak friendships and acquaintances. In the real world, we focus on our strong ties and put effort into those friendships. These people usually

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play a role in our everyday lives and know our social identity. We do not spend much time with the weak bonds we have because they might not know or fully understand our social identity.

Nevertheless, when things are moved online, we focus more on our weak bonds than the real world. It is hard to put our weak online bonds into groups to know where we stand and how we are represented within each group. In the real world, we know what categories we fall into: student, teacher, doctor, patient, Etc. However, when social media comes into play, some lines blur, and everyone becomes on the same level. In turn, weak bonds are as powerful as solid bonds (Riva et al., 2016).

***Emotional Intelligence*** examines how humans respond through our internal systems to the outside world. This includes expressing emotion, relating to others, understanding the people around us, Etc. Our "emotional and social competencies" (Furnham, 2012) are essential for emotional Intelligence. Many factors determine them, including socioeconomic status, family history, culture, personality, health, Etc. According to Mehrad et al. (2023), emotions are the combination of feelings considered by different groups of psychologists, sociologists, and researchers because they acknowledge that emotions, most of the time, are practical and transform individuals' approach, reactions, and feelings based on their activities and day-to-day lifestyle.

We can compare social and emotional Intelligence and sometimes group them as similar. One example of emotional Intelligence is the Baron model. This explains how they are interconnected because our skills and facilitators help us understand ourselves and others. These two theories go hand in hand.

Emotional competencies have four different categories. These include self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management, each uniquely contributing to a person's emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is something that we all can get better at and grow in because each of the four aspects is uniquely complex, and it is rare to find someone that excels in every one of these areas.

There are often different ways to distinguish emotional intelligence. Knowing this opinion can be helpful, and in 2020, Mehrad reported emotional intelligence, defined as the capacity to discern, evaluate, and adjust the emotions of self and others in intimate and social vitality to determine individuals' performance. Cognitive ability and intelligence have historically been separated. Other examples of intelligence types include analytical, bodily-

kinesthetic, creative, musical, mathematical, Etc. Emotional competence is also essential in understanding emotional intelligence. According to Furnham, there exist four different categories of emotional competence: social awareness, self-awareness, self-management, and relationship management. Self-awareness includes emotional self-awareness and self-confidence, whereas social awareness includes empathy for others. Self-management includes the ability to adjust to new settings and regulate personal feelings, while relationship management includes conflict management and the ability to work well with others.

*Social Psychology* aims to understand and explore the "why" behind an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Within this continuous exploration, various theories help define the complexities of human behavior. These theories help us understand why people's unique emotional, social, and behavioral responses affect how we relate to those around us. The theories discussed in this section are only a few of the many that attempt to define social psychology.

The Social Learning Theory, created by Albert Bandera in 1963, is the idea that new behaviors can be learned and acquired by observing and imitating others (Jadhav, 2018). This theory also determines how we relate to those around us. Relationships with others are unique; no one relationship is the same. How people interact with coworkers, family, friends, and strangers on the street will differ. Even relationships within these confines are different. For example, how an individual interacts with their mother might be utterly different from how that same individual interacts with their sister. This theory affects how we see ourselves as well. For example, one might feel increased pressure to perform better at the gym while surrounded by others than working out alone. We as humans put pressure on ourselves to perform in a certain way when we feel we are being watched or judged.

On the other hand, some may only work if they feel others can take on the entire workload. This is known as social loafing. *Social loafing* is relying on others to complete the work rather than pulling one's weight (Jadhav, 2018). Adapting to one's surroundings and respecting the surrounding people is essential. We, as humans, learn from observing others' behaviors and attitudes. Our instinct is to adapt, imitate, and blend in with the people around us. This is especially prevalent in children, as they observe what influential adults such as parents and teachers do. Children learn what is acceptable and what is not from a young age. To

summarize, one's environment and surroundings greatly influence how someone thinks, feels, and behaves, but it ultimately comes down to how an individual can adapt.

It is essential to understand the variety of opinions and feelings of others, even when they may not match our own. The Cognitive Dissonance Theory, founded by Leon Festinger in 1957, aims to describe the behavior of people when two opposing opinions are forced together in the mind (Jadhav, 2018). When uncomfortable, someone is caught between two ideas and behavior changes. This theory describes the change in one's thoughts, behaviors, and feelings when someone has a different opinion. Both sides should provide information in hopes that their attitude may change rather than forcing someone to think the same way.

The Social Identity Theory generated by Henri Tajfel in the 1970s and 1980s explains the intergroup behavioral patterns that individuals perceive. Naturally, people want to find identity in groups; therefore, once someone finds value and significance in a respective group, that person will try to promote group superiority, which can lead to discrimination (Jadhav, 2018). We, as humans, are programmed to categorize and make sense of our surroundings. However, categorizing people into groups to create a sense of order leads to judgment and comparison against others. Ultimately, we are more likely to react positively to our "ingroups" than our "outgroups." The Attribution Theory deals with interpreting certain events by individuals and how the individual's behaviors and feelings affect the explanation. Attribution is a three-step process dependent on whether a situation is going well or poorly (Jadhav, 2018). The key is to remember that we cannot always control our situation, but we can choose how we react.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, although there is a lot to unpack within social psychology, they all intertwine. We learned the process our brain goes through when storing information about the people we perceive. We learned that we might have less control when making these judgments and assumptions. Our mind perceives people and groups differently and can quickly conclude about one person. Prejudice and discrimination play a considerable role in our mental processing. If a person has encountered or suffered discrimination, their personality will reflect this. Happiness and satisfaction are broad topics, but we focused on what makes people happy and how it may be easier than getting rich. Human connection was a prevalent theme throughout our research, and we see that relationships make our bodies and brains healthier. Moving on to

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belonging and dependence, this is a human need that many strive for. The feeling of belonging in multiple aspects of life goes beyond just feeling included. The sense of belonging is a critical factor in all aspects of life. Attitude is a trait that we can easily control and becomes a choice from day to day. We learn that we cannot control what surrounds us. Instead, we can control how we react to it. Social media plays a huge role in psychology today. Over half the world uses social media, and we have learned how much it affects our perception of ourselves and others. Emotional intelligence explains our understanding of how we express our emotions and relate them to the people around us. We must know how to express and communicate our feelings to connect with others. Lastly, social psychology theories help us understand the crazy and unique emotional, social, and behavioral responses each person has. No two people are the same, and everyone's social psychology represents this.

*Limitations & Recommendations for the Future Studies*

Our study has a few limitations. First, our sample was small because only a few pieces of literature were reviewed. It is challenging to generalize the findings in this paper or apply them to any significant population due to the smaller sample. Another limitation is the possibility of an ecological fallacy, in which information about smaller groups is applied to macro-analyses. Additionally, due to a limited amount of time, there were fewer opportunities to find more information and literature that would be relevant to the topics at hand. As the researchers picked the articles that became the sample, there could be a potential for researcher bias in the actual information reviewed.

For future studies, reviewing a large amount of work would provide a better view of the topics discussed. Conducting a literature review for a more extended period than three months would allow researchers to discover more material and draw more and deeper connections between topics. Finally, ensuring that many different sources of the literature reviewed might remove the potential for researcher bias.

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become more knowledgeable about social psychology concepts and social science. This outstanding educational support and assistance is always appreciated.

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