Analyzing Social Interaction

Lecture 28
Human Nature

• Intelligent Creatures
  – Not Just Reflex, Taxis, Instinct, Conditioning
  – Behavior Reflects “Effort After Meaning”

• Social Creatures
  – Experience, Thought, Action in Social Context
  – Cooperation, Competition, Social Exchange

What is the relation between mental processes within the individual and social processes impinging from outside?
Analyzing Social Interaction
Lewin (1933/1935)

\[ B = f(P,E) \]

- **B** = Behavior
  - Overt Action
- **P** = Personal Determinants
  - Internal States and Dispositions
    - Cognitions, Emotions, Motivations
- **E** = Environmental Determinants
  - Physical Ecology
  - Social Ecology
Traditional Personality Psychology
\[ B = f(P) \]

- Emphasizes Personal Factors
  - Beliefs
  - Attitudes
  - Traits
  - Emotions
  - Motives
  - Values
- Situational Factors
  Largely Irrelevant

![Graph showing the probability of smiling (p(Smiling)) for High and Low friendliness. The graph indicates that High friendliness has a significantly higher probability of smiling compared to Low friendliness.](image)
Canonical Method for Personality Psychology

• Measure Some Personality Variable
  – Predictor Variable
    • Self-Report Questionnaire
    • Rating Scale
    • General Behavioral Observations

• Correlate “Individual Differences” with Behavior in Specific Situation
  – Criterion Variable
Conscientiousness and Punctuality
Ware & John (1995)

- UCB MBA Students
- Measure Trait of Conscientiousness
  - NEO-PI
- Punctuality at Scheduled Appointments

![Bar Chart]
- Conscientiousness vs. Arrival Time
  - High
  - Low

[Graph showing the relationship between Conscientiousness and Arrival Time]
The Doctrine of Traits
After Allport (1937)

Behavior varies as a function of internal dispositions that render it coherent, stable, consistent, and predictable.

- Traits
- Attitudes
- Moods
- Motives
- Values
- Beliefs
Traditional Social Psychology
$B = f(E)$

- Emphasizes Situational Factors
  - Physical
  - Social
    - Interpersonal
    - Organizational
    - Cultural
- Personal Factors
  Largely Irrelevant

![Bar chart](image-url)
Canonical Method for Social Psychology

• Manipulate Some Feature of the External Environment
  – Independent Variable
    • Expose Subjects to All Conditions or
    • Random Assignment of Subjects to Conditions

• Determine Effect of Manipulation on Behavior in Specific Situation
  – Dependent Variable
Appointment Time and Punctuality
Ware & John (1995)

- UCB MBA Students
- Appointment in Morning or Afternoon
- Punctuality at Scheduled Appointments
The Doctrine of Situationism
After Watson (1917); B.F. Skinner (1953)
[Often wrongly ascribed to Lewin (1938)]

Behavior varies as a function of features of the external environment, particularly the social situation.

“A person does not act upon the world, the world acts upon him.”
Personal and Environmental Factors Are *Independent*

\[ B = f(P, E) \]
Independence

\[ B = f(P, E) = f(P + E) \]

- Behavior is Predicted by Personality Trait
- Behavior is Affected by Situational Manipulation
- These Effects are Independent of Each Other

![Graph showing the independence of behavior on personality and situational factors.](image-url)
Conscientiousness, Appointment Time, and Punctuality
Ware & John (1995)

- UCB MBA Students
- Measure Trait of Conscientiousness
  - NEO-PI
- Appointment in Morning or Afternoon
- Punctuality at Scheduled Appointments
The Trait-Situation Debate

- The effect of the personality variable is the same, regardless of the situation the person is in.
- The effect of the situational variable is the same, regardless of the person in it.

Which effect is more powerful -- the person or the situation?
Neither traits nor situations are the primary determinants of behavior, because...

Situations are as much a function of the person as the person’s behavior is a function of the situation.
Personal and Environmental Factors Interact

People Influence the Situations in which their Behavior Occurs.
The Person-by-Situation Interaction

\[ B = f(P, E) = f(P \times E) \]

- Behavior is Predicted by Personality Trait
- Behavior is Affected by Situational Manipulation
- These Effects are *Not* Independent of Each Other
Features of P/E Interaction

• The effect of a personality variable depends on the situation the person is in.
• The effect of a situation depends on the kind of person in it.
Other Forms of Interaction

\[ B = f(P \times E) \]

**Crossover**

- **Situation**
  - **p(Behavior)**
  - **Trait**: High, Low

**Fan**

- **Situation**
  - **p(Behavior)**
  - **Trait**: High, Low
Unidirectional Causation in the Person-Environment Interaction

People Influence the Situations in which their Behavior Occurs.
Feedback Relations in the Person - Environment Interaction (1)

If the Person can Affect the Environment...

Why Shouldn’t the Environment Influence the Person In Turn?
Feedback Relations in the Person - Environment Interaction (2)

Why Shouldn’t Behavior Influence the Person as Well?

If Personal Dispositions can Affect a Person’s Behavior...
Feedback Relations in the Person - Environment Interaction (3)

Doesn’t Behavior Also Affect the Environment?

If the Environment Can Affect the Behavior that Occurs In It...
The person, the environment, and behavior constitute a dynamic, complex system in which each element is both a cause and an effect of the others.
Interactionism and Reciprocal Determinism
After Bowers (1973), Bandura (1978)

Triadic Reciprocality

P

E

B
Properties of Reciprocal Determinism
After Bandura (1978)

• Triadic Reciprocality
  
P ↔ B
  
E ↔ B
  
P ↔ E

• Not Necessarily Symmetry
  – Bidirectional Influences Not Necessarily Co-Equal

• Not Necessary Simultaneity
  – Bidirectional Influences Unfold Over Time
Analytic Decomposition of Reciprocal Determinism

Three Dialectics in Social Behavior

Between the Person and the Environment

Between the Person and Behavior

Between the Environment and Behavior
The Dialectic Between the Person and Behavior

Three Dialectics in Social Behavior
Personal Determinants of Behavior

**Internal States and Dispositions**

- Traits (Behavioral Dispositions)
- Attitudes (Evaluative Dispositions)
- Emotions (Feeling States)
- Motives (Drive States)
- Values (Priorities)
- Beliefs (Personal Convictions)
Measuring the Personal Determinants of Behavior

• **Self-Reports**
  – Questionnaires
  – Rating Scales

• **Objective Behavioral Observations**
  – Record Behavioral Frequencies
  – Rate Behaviors
The Problem of Trait-Names
Allport & Odbert (1936)

17,953 (or 17,954) different words
Describe psychological differences between people

Absent-minded  Bashful  Calculating
Dainty  Eager  Facetious  Gallant
Haughty  Idealistic  Jaunty  Kind
Laconic  Majestic  Narcissistic
Outgoing  Picky  Quarrelsome  Rash
Sagacious  Taciturn  Urbane
Vainglorious  Wanton  Xenophobic
Yappish  Zealous
The Structure of Personality

What are the Basic Dimensions of Individual Differences in Personality?

• Factor Analysis
  – Summarizes Patterns of Correlations Between Variables
  – Reveals Underlying Basic Dimensions
The “Big Five” Personality Traits

Costa & McCrae (1992), after Norman (1968)
also Goldberg (1990); Wiggins (1990); John (1990)

• Extraversion
  – Sociable, Forceful, Energetic, Adventurous, Enthusiastic, Outgoing

• Neuroticism
  – Tense, Irritable, Discontented, Shy, Moody, Un-Self-Confident

• Agreeableness
  – Forgiving, Undemanding, Warm, Not Stubborn, Not a Show-Off,
    Sympathetic

• Conscientiousness
  – Efficient, Organized, Not Careless, Thorough, Not Lazy, Not Impulsive

• Openness to Experience
  – Curious, Imaginative, Artistic, Wide Interests, Excitable, Unconventional
The Big Five:
A Universally Applicable Structure of Personality

Is s/he \textit{Outgoing}? \hspace{2cm} \begin{itemize} \item Extraversion \end{itemize}
Is s/he \textit{Crazy}? \hspace{2cm} \begin{itemize} \item Neuroticism \end{itemize}
Is s/he \textit{Friendly}? \hspace{2cm} \begin{itemize} \item Agreeableness \end{itemize}
Is s/he \textit{Reliable}? \hspace{2cm} \begin{itemize} \item Conscientiousness \end{itemize}
Is s/he \textit{Interesting}? \hspace{2cm} \begin{itemize} \item Openness to Experience \end{itemize}
The Structure of Attitudes
Judd & Milburn (1980); Button et al. (1993)

Traditional Morality

Liberalism-------------------------Conservatism

Radical/Amoral
Hierarchical Structure of Attitudes

Hicks & Wright (1970), after Kerr (1946)

Liberalism—Conservatism

Political
Economic
Religious
Social
Esthetic

The “Big One” – Or Maybe Another “Big Five”?