

What is Social Psychology?

- Explores how we interact with the world around us and how this influences our lives
- How our actions influence the world around us
- According to the British Psychological Society (BPS), social psychology is the study of how people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others. It explores the social aspects of human behaviour—how individuals perceive, influence, and relate to one another within a societal context

Real-world application

Health Campaigns

Education

Marketing and Advertising

Law and Criminal Justice

Environmental Action

Workplace Dynamics

Why are cultural differences important to recognise?

We are individuals, but we also are part of a wider society

A major criticism not just of social psychology, but of all psychology, is that it focuses too much on what is called WEIRD research

Most research comes from the USA with some European countries. The U.K. included providing much of the rest of the research.

There are billions of people in the world from different countries and different cultural background, each individual, but also sharing many common psychological mechanisms and traits.

And so, it is vitally important for us to attempt to understand not just individual behaviour, but also the context of the social world around us

Social Cognition

Social Cognition refers to the mental processes we use to perceive, interpret, and respond to social information.

This includes how we:

- think about ourselves and others,
- form impressions,
- understand social cues like facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language.

In essence, it's how we make sense of the social world—drawing on memory, attention, and perception to navigate interactions and relationships.

TASK 1: Schemas



mental framework or cognitive structure that helps us organise and interpret information



Schemas allow us to make sense of the world efficiently by guiding our attention, memory, and expectations in social situations.



develop through experience and can influence how we perceive others, form judgments, and behave in social contexts



Schemas are central to social cognition and can be adaptive, but they may also lead to biases or stereotypes if applied rigidly.



- Who do you think this person is?
- What type of personality traits do you think they have?
- What type of job do you think they have?
- What details lead you to these conclusion?
- What do you think influenced your assumptions? (e.g., media, personal experience, cultural norms, etc)



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22 May 2023

Graffiti Art project used to prevent anti-social behaviour

A new community art project at Conwy Railway Station has engaged local students to help reduce trespassing on the lines.

Prosiect Celf Graffiti a ddefnyddir i atal ymddygiad gwrthgymdeithasol. 

22 May 2023

A new community art project at Conwy Railway Station has engaged local students to help reduce trespassing on the lines.

In March, two new art pieces at Conwy station were completed by local graffiti artist Andy Birch in collaboration with students from Ysgol Aberconwy. The pieces cover the inside of two shelters at the station and are inspired by local heritage and culture.

The project was developed to encourage a sense of ownership of the station in the local community and respond to recent trespassing events. Conwy station was a hotspot for anti-social behaviour last year and a decrease in the amount of trespass has already been noticed.

Claire Williams, Community Rail Officer at Conwy Valley Railway Partnership, said: "The young people have

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The rise of the Muslim female entrepreneur

28 October 2016



MUSLIM LIFESTYLE EXPO

Sabah Nazir's firm Islamic Moments sells its products in 20 countries

Business is often said to be a male-dominated world, and in the Muslim community - where female modesty is held at a premium - one might think that was doubly the case.

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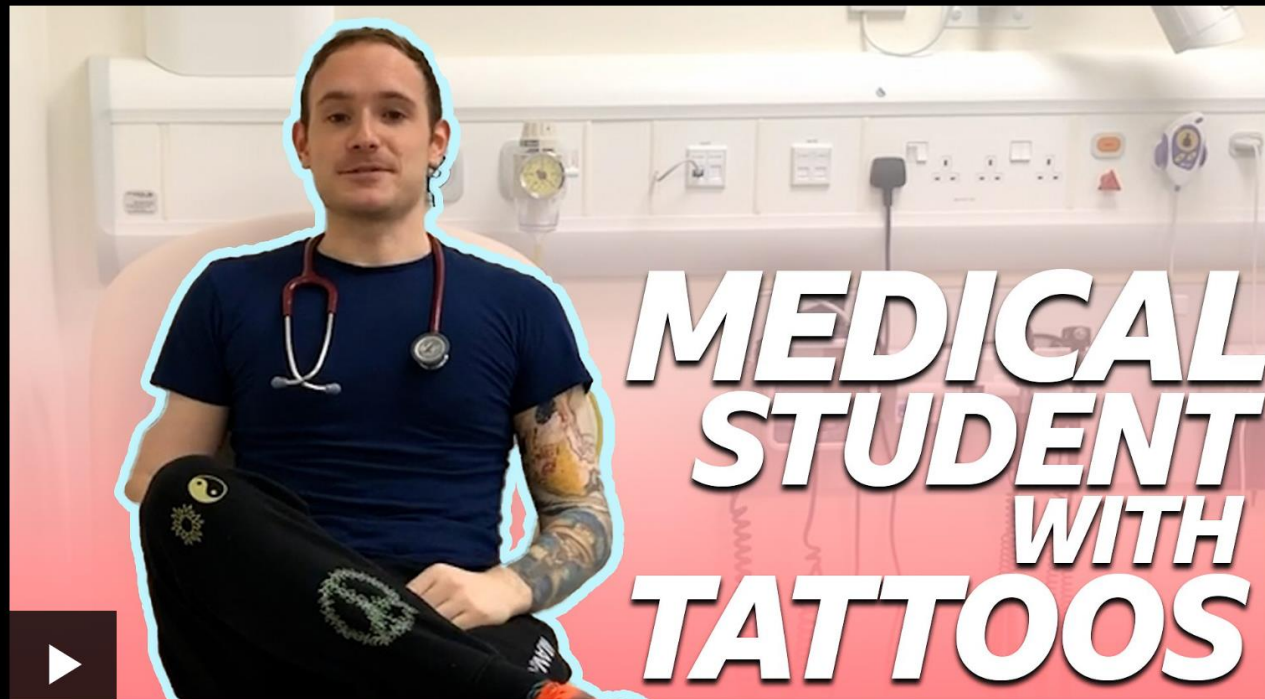


'My tattoos shouldn't stop me from becoming a surgeon'

By [Scott Redmond](#) // BBC The Social contributor // 18 February 2021

I am a heavily tattooed man. I got my first tattoo at 19. It was 'Tom Jones' written in Chinese on my ankle. Since then, I have added more than twenty other tats. They range from a tapir on my thigh to tattooed brain scans on my right arm. And I have big plans for my future ink work, including a full sleeve tattoo on my left arm, made up of artworks by Vincent van Gogh, Salvador Dali, Andy Warhol, Picasso and others.

Aside from my love for tattoos, I am also a medical student. One day, I want to be a surgeon.



Heuristics

- mental shortcuts or simple rules of thumb that people use to make quick judgments and decisions, especially under conditions of uncertainty or limited information.
- They help us navigate complex social environments efficiently—but they can also lead to systematic errors or biases in thinking.
- Examples of Heuristics:
 - *availability heuristic* (judging likelihood based on how easily examples come to mind)
 - *representativeness heuristic* (judging based on how much something fits a stereotype).

TASK 2: Heuristics

- The class will be split into small groups – each group will have a different country with different cultural profiles:
 - Japan,
 - the U.S.,
 - Sweden
- How would your groups cultural profile react in the following social situation?
 - A stranger asking for help in public
 - Making hiring decisions based on limited CVs
 - Choosing a gift for a formal occasion
 - Responding to a sudden emergency (e.g. someone collapsing in the street)



Japan



Collectivism: Moderately collectivist. Group harmony, loyalty, and consensus are highly valued, especially in social and work settings.



Group harmony, loyalty, and consensus are **highly valued**, especially in social and work settings.



Power Distance: Medium. Hierarchies are respected, particularly in business, but not as rigid as in some other Asian cultures.



Uncertainty Avoidance: Very high. Japan has a strong preference for structure, rules, and predictability—reflected in meticulous planning and risk aversion.



Long-Term Orientation: Very high. Emphasizes perseverance, thrift, and future-oriented thinking.



Masculine Traits: Very high. Achievement, competition, and success are culturally emphasized, especially in professional life.



United States



Collectivism: Extremely Low. The US is highly individualistic - Independence, personal achievement, and self-expression are core values.



Group harmony, loyalty, and consensus are **not** highly valued, especially in social and work settings.



Power Distance: Low. Society values equality and informality; authority is often challenged or questioned.



Uncertainty Avoidance: Low to moderate. Americans are generally comfortable with ambiguity and change, and value innovation.



Long-Term Orientation: Low. Focus is often on quick results, efficiency, and immediate gratification.



Masculine Traits: High. Success and assertiveness are culturally rewarded, especially in business and media.



Sweden



Individualism: High. Personal autonomy is important, but balanced with a strong social welfare ethos.



Group harmony, loyalty, and consensus are **highly valued**, especially in social and work settings.



Power Distance: Very low. Swedish culture emphasizes egalitarianism, consensus, and flat hierarchies.



Uncertainty Avoidance: Low. Swedes are generally comfortable with ambiguity and flexible rules.



Long-Term Orientation: Moderate to high. Sustainability, planning, and pragmatism are culturally embedded.



Masculine Traits: Low. Nurturing, cooperation, and quality of life are prioritized over competition.