

PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

Humans are social animals dependent on others for their well-being. This social psychology option focuses on human relationships between individuals in personal relationships or in groups. The three topics in this option are:

- Personal relationships
- Group dynamics
- Social responsibility

Each of these topics should use the learning from the biological, cognitive and sociocultural approaches to behavior where appropriate. In addition, students should have the opportunity to explore the different approaches taken in the research and should be made aware of the ethical considerations and sensitivity required in a discussion of this subject.

Studying human relationships has its challenges and it is tempting to oversimplify complex social and psychological issues. One approach to the study of human relationships concentrates on the role of hormones and genetics. However, this gives a limited understanding of how relationships develop.

Cognitive theorists have also contributed to the understanding of relationships by applying schema theory, while social psychologists have focused on beliefs, social identity theory and the role of culture. However, key goals of social psychologists are to understand the complexities of relationships, improve interpersonal relationships, promote social responsibility and reduce violence.

As such, in the research of human relationships, credibility and trustworthiness of a study as well as ethical considerations are important throughout.

IB LEARNING OUTCOMES
(Personal Relationships)

1. To what extent do biological, cognitive and sociocultural factors influence human relationships?
2. Discuss biological, cognitive and sociocultural origins of attraction.
3. Discuss the role of communication in maintaining relationships.
4. Discuss why relationships may change or end.