Your notes

GCSE Psychology: revision notes

Prosocial behaviour and crowd behaviour

Contents

1. Prosocial behaviour and bystander intervention
2. Crowd and collective behaviour
3. What affects collective behaviour
4. Key terms
5. Quick questions
6. What to do next

Prosocial behaviour and bystander intervention

- **Prosocial behaviour** is helping others, such as helping someone who has fallen.
- Piliavin's subway study (1969) staged a man collapsing on a New York subway train. He was helped far more often when he carried a cane (seeming ill) than when he smelt of alcohol (seeming drunk).
- There was little sign of **diffusion of responsibility** on the busy train, perhaps because people couldn't easily leave.
- Factors: the presence of others (**diffusion of responsibility**), the cost of helping, similarity to the victim, and expertise (such as first-aid training).

Crowd and collective behaviour

- **Collective behaviour** is how people act in groups and crowds. It can be prosocial (such as crowds helping at a disaster) or antisocial (such as rioting).
- **Social loafing**: people put in less effort when working in a group.
- **Deindividuation**: losing a sense of personal identity in a crowd, which can make people act in ways they normally wouldn't.

What affects collective behaviour

- Culture affects **collective behaviour**: people from collectivist cultures may be less likely to social loaf.
- Dispositional factors, such as personality and morality, affect whether individuals follow the crowd.

Key terms

Prosocial behaviour	Behaviour that helps others.
Bystander intervention	When a bystander helps someone in need.

Diffusion of responsibility	Feeling less responsible to help when others are present.
Social loafing	Putting in less effort when working in a group.
Deindividuation	Losing a sense of personal identity in a crowd.
Collective behaviour	How people act in groups and crowds.

Your notes

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is prosocial behaviour?
2. What did Piliavin's subway study find?
3. What is diffusion of responsibility?
4. What is social loafing?
5. What is deindividuation?
6. Which factor makes helping more likely?
7. Why might Piliavin have found little diffusion of responsibility?
8. What is an example of prosocial crowd behaviour?

Answers

1. Behaviour that helps others
2. The victim with a cane was helped more than the drunk victim
3. Feeling less responsible to help when others are present
4. Putting in less effort when working in a group
5. Losing a sense of personal identity in a crowd
6. Having first-aid expertise
7. People on the train couldn't easily leave
8. Crowds helping at a disaster

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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