

# UNIT - I

## CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

1) Historical preview of Environmental Psychology: The Historical development of environmental Psychology and to highlight the major areas of research in which the role of

physical environment and its impact on human behavior us examined.

2) Origin and Roots: Environmental psychology has its origin in biological sciences like zoology and botany. 1940s the predominant orientation of psychology was looking within the person

rather than what was around as a potential source of explanation for behaviour.

3) Salient Predominant Trends: in a capsule form a brief presentation is made regarding predominant trends that facilitated the rapid growth and expansion of the emerging and independent field of environmental psychology.

- The Animal and Ethological Tradition

- Research on Personal Space
- Studies on Behavioural Settings
- The Growth of Environmental Psychology
- Partnership between professionals and Psychologists

4) Man-Environment Relationship: the basic nature and distinctive features of human being and

environment some pertinent questions require serious debate and discussion. 1) Affective and

attitudinal responses to environmental features, 2) Approach and avoidance response to various characteristics of the environment 3) Adaptive processes to environmental attributes.

5) As a consequence, several changes can be noted in environmental psychology over the past 10 to

15 years. First, increasing attention has been given to the physical-biological aspects or processes

of the natural physical environment, in addition to the built, architectural and technological ones.

This tendency can be noted also in the numerous proposals for new names or subnames

in

environmental psychology to mark the presence of these specific interests. Some examples are “green psychology” (Pol, 1993), “natural psychology” (Gifford, 1995), “psychology of global

environmental change”(Pawlik, 1991; Stern, 1992), “eco-psychology” and “ecological psychology” (Howard, 1997; Kruse & Graumann, 1987; Roszak, 1992; Winter, 1996), “psychology of sustainability” (Bonnes, 1998; Kruse, 1996; Winter, 2000).

6) Recent Trends and Future Directions: In a recent Evans (1996) has recapitulated the current trends in environmental psychology. The popularity of environmental psychology can be inferred

from various vantage points. The Cambridge and Gower’s Ethnoscape series on environment and

behavior have received overwhelming support from readers and each series are having several

volumes in the pipeline (Evans, 1996).

7) Methodological Issues and Theoretical Perspectives: The nature and functions of theories in

environmental psychology will be discussed. Theoretical perspective developed to explain the

links between environment and behavior would be examined.

- Methodological Issues in Environmental Psychology
  
- Internal Validity
  
- Construct Validity
  
- External Validity
  
- Statistical Validity

- Research Methods in Environmental Psychology
- Non-Experimental Research versus Experimental Research
- Non-Experimental Research
- Descriptive Method
- Relational Method
- Field Studies
- Observational Research
- Experimental Research
- Laboratory Experiments
- Field Experiments
- Simulation

8) Measurement Techniques: In the preceding section methodological issues and methods for

collecting information about behavior in the major measurement techniques frequently used in

environmental psychology is presented.

- Self-Report Measures
  
- Questionnaires
  
- Rating Scales

9) Ways of Knowing about Environmental: Empirical methods used to obtain information about

environment links are primarily based on experience. Philosophers of science have argued that the

method of science is actually one of the methods to gain knowledge (Reilly 1970).

- Non-empirical Methods

Empirical Methods

Nature and Function of Theories in Environmental psychology

The Arousal Approach

10) Behaviour Relationships: Empirical methods used to obtain information about environment-

behaviour relationship links are primarily based on experience. The Behavioural constraint

perspective is derived largely from Brehm's theory of psychological reactance and

Sommer's

conceptualization of personal space. When Plenum stopped publishing its edited series—Human

Behavior and Environment and Advances in Environment, Behavior and Design—the field of

environmental psychology suffered a loss. Scholars could go to one of the edited Plenum books to

find state-of-the-art reviews on existing and emerging areas of research. When Behavioral

Sciences approached me to guest edit a Special Issue on Advances in Environmental Psychology,

I saw it as a chance to revive the lost resource. I checked with Behavioral Sciences to ensure that

I would have complete control over the editing process (meaning that I would invite individuals to

write reviews and those invited authors would not have any publication charges, that I would set deadlines, select reviewers, read and decide how to proceed based on the reviews, and if

uninvited people submitted manuscripts, I would control the review process on their papers as

well). Behavioral Sciences agreed, I contacted potential authors, and the Behavioral Sciences

website posted my call for papers, which stated: "Environmental psychology is an



interdisciplinary and international field that views persons and their physical surroundings as

interdependent. It uses social science methods to study those person–environment relations, and

recognizes the value of a multi-level, multi-disciplinary, social-ecological approach to such

questions. This Special Issue explores the connections between the environment (at different

scales, ranging from a room to a city) and the range of human responses addressed in the field.

These connections and related responses include, but are not limited to, environmental perception

and cognition; environmental attitudes and appraisals; environmental stress, noise, and crowding;

responses to disasters, settings, personal space, territoriality, and privacy; crime and fear of crime;

behavioral change; home, neighborhood, work, and educational environments; and facility planning and evaluation.

- Stimulus Overload Theory

- Adaptation Theory

- Ecological Theory