

UNIT II

ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTION AND COGNITION

Human behavior is strongly embedded in the ecological context.

1) Conventional Approaches to Perception: The constructivist Perspective emphasizes that perceptions are constructed from sensations and from long-term memory with similar sensations.

This viewpoint is criticized because it fails to incorporate the cognitive processes that are involved in perception.

2) Concept, Nature and Characteristics of Environmental Perception: Environmental perception is a unique, complex and dynamic process. Understanding the processes involved in environmental perception may enable the architects and planners to design offices, factories to residential areas which are congruent with the occupants needs desires and aspirations.

The work of Ittelson (1976) provides valuable insights into the unique nature of environmental perception. The emphasis of environmental perception is on questions dealing with how people perceive a complex array of many objects or molar environment.

3) Adaptation and Perception of Change: Considering times as variable in environment perception two important phenomena related to adaptation and changes needs mention.

- Adaptation

- Perception of Change
- Perception of Natural Hazards

4) Environmental Assessment: There one major issue of environmental perception with regard to

environmental assessment is to explore ways of determining the components of scenic quality.

Greene (1983) has advocated three broad approaches for assessing the scenic quality.

- o Descriptive Approach
- o Physical-Perceptual Approach

o The Psychological Approach

5) Link between Environmental Cognition, Perception and Evaluation: Have many researchers

used the term perception and cognition interchangeably. Perception deals with the direct sensory

experiences of a situation or an environment.

- Environmental Cognition and Cognitive Mapping

- Perspectives and Theoretical Orientation of Environmental Cognition Research

- I. Positivism

- II. Interactional

- III. Concepts and Theories

- IV. Role of Development

- V. Information Processing

6) Cognitive Mapping and Cognitive Maps: Research studies are conducted in diverse areas of

environmental cognition. It is difficult to review all areas of environmental cognition.

The concept of cognitive maps has been documented in the literature in the earlier phases of the

last century (Trowbridge, 1948; Tolman, 1932).

- Components of Cognitive Maps
- Functions and Properties of Cognitive Maps

7) Factors Influencing Cognitive Maps:

One of the major factor influencing cognitive maps is familiarity. A number of studies have

reported positive relationship between length of residence and environmental familiarity.

This relationship is influenced by a variety of psychological and geographical features.

(Golledge,

1978; Milgram, 1970; Moore, 1979).

- Errors in Cognitive Maps

- Methodological Issues

8) Recent Trends in Environmental Cognitive Research:

In the field of environmental psychology perceptual processes occupies central position for

explaining person-environmental transactions and gaining adequate knowledge about various aspects

of environment behavior.