



Sample: Psychology - The Last Chance to Save Humanity

The Last Chance to Save Humanity

It goes without saying that humanity has a strong connection with the ecological environment. Rapid environmental changes occurred at the beginning of the 21st century. This is what caused the appearance of the environmental psychology. One of the founders of this comparatively new science is considered to be Egon Brunswik, who was first to mention that physical environment subconsciously affects psychological processes. In other words, there is a definite dependence of humanity on the environment and recent global changes.

Kurt Lewin argued that human behavior and psychology in general have a direct connection to environmental problems. According to Lewin, environment is the main determinant of behavior. The objective of the environmental psychology is focused on changing people's behavior, which will stop them polluting and damaging the environment. According to the resolution of World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, the concept of sustainability, which includes environmental, social and economic aspects, has become the central principle for research in environmental psychology. (L. Steg, A. van den Berg, J. de Groot, 2012). As a matter of fact, the concept of sustainability can be clearly seen in Fairfield Osborn's book "Our Plundered Planet".

"We must temper our demands, and conserve the natural living resources of this earth in a manner that alone can provide for the continuation of...civilization" (Osborn, 201). If people do not follow the ideology of a sustainable planet, they will have to migrate from their homeland, just like people did in ancient times.

Finally, there is a definite interdependence and quite a strong connection between human behavior and environmental conditions. This is why the objective of environmental psychology is to apply the concept of sustainability in practice.



2.4. What is meant by protected values and deontological reasoning?

Regarding protected values, one should think about the valuable and sacred notions and things that can never be sold or betrayed. Protected values are goods, which one is unwilling to destroy despite possible compensation or profit. Moreover, a lot of such values encompass morality, religion, family and other values. Paradoxically as it may seem, protected values also include disputable matters, such as cloning people or destroying the environment.

According to Baron and Spranca, protected values can resist trade-offs with other valuable issues and economic benefits. As a matter of fact, such values come from deontological (ethic) rules. People care not only about the results of their actions, but also about the process of acting they are involved in. Moreover, while talking about protected values, one should take into consideration the fact that they display trade-off resistance, quantity insensitivity, agent relativity and moral obligation (Baron, Spranca, 1997).

Protected values are linked with moral principles that are applied for justifying actions. This is the main element of deontological reasoning. According to deontological reasoning, real or hypothetical present instance must fall under the duty and derive the obligation.

For example, a student with low grades is always tempted to cheat on exams. However, there is a clear duty:

Major premise – lying is wrong

Minor premise – to use a crib is considered cheating and lying. Conclusion – I may use cribs on exam.

The interesting fact about deontological reasoning is that people believe it is their obligation to do what is right (Newton, 1998). Moreover, moral laws indicate what is right and what is wrong.

3.5. Describe an example of a spillover effect. How might this phenomenon relate to coping with stressors?



Today many research works and studies are focused on the spillover effect. Why is it so important? Adults usually have two main aspects of life where they spend lots of their time. These are family and work. As a matter of fact, this work/family spillover is quite reciprocal, as work affects family life, whereas family life has an impact on work. It is important to mention that spillover effects can be either positive or negative. Positive spillover results in a better outcome at work and family life, while negative spillover is characterized by depression, stress, health issues and other problems (Stevanovic, 2011).

Michael P. Leiter and Marie Josette Durup in the research “Work, Home and In-Between: A Longitudinal Study of Spillover” claim that emotional exhaustion is one of the factors that contribute to an employee’s perception of work conditions and environment and sooner or later lead to family conflicts. It is quite understandable that daily stress and constant work overload have negative impact not only on the person, but also on his or her family. This is how work interferes with family. Quite often people who experience emotional exhaustion cannot overcome spillover from work to family. If nothing changes, the emotional exhaustion develops further. According to the results of the mentioned research work, emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishments are two main components of spillover stress (M.P. Leiter, M. J. Durup, 1996).

Negative spillover is nicely demonstrated in the movie called “Hesher” (Portman, N. Sussner, S., 2010). A twelve-year-old boy T.J. lost his mother in a car crash. The atmosphere at home was extremely depressing, which made T.J. feel miserable and lonely. One trouble brought on another. At school, T.J. had a constant problem with an older boy who severely humiliated and bullied him. The spillover effect was so strong that T.J. had a huge scandal with his father. As a result, he ignored everyone and tried to stay alone. The spillover effect here looks more like an endless circle – Family-School-Family. However, only T.J.’s new friend Hesher with his anarchic methods could help the boy and his father get out of this



circle of problems and misery. Probably, sometimes stress can help overcome the spillover effect.

Works Cited

- Baron, J. Ritov I. Protected Values and Omission Bias as Deontological Judgments. *Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, 50, 2009.
- Baron J. Spranca M. Protected Values. *Virology*, 70 (1), 1997.
- Gifford, R. Environmental Psychology and Sustainable Development: Expansion, Maturation and Challenges. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63(1), 2007.
- Kumar S.,Yadav S. Positive Psychology. Delhi, 2011.
- Newton, L. Doing Good and Avoiding Evil Part I. Principles and Reasoning. 1998. Retrieved from <http://www.rit.edu/~w-ethics/resources/manuals/dgae1p10.html>
- Osborn, F. Our Plundered Planet. Boston: Little, Brown. 1948.
- Steg L., Van den Berg, A. de Groot, J. Environmental Psychology: An Introduction. John Wiley & Sons, 2012.
- Stevanovic, P. Professional and Personal Lives of Psychologists: spillover, Family functioning and Life Satisfaction. Loyola University Chicago, 2011.
- Portman, N. Susser, S. 2010. Heshner. United States.