

Cultural Differences in Social Perception

There has been quite a bit of research carried out with regards to differences between cultures, and how we perceive other people.

Argyle (1978) discovered that Japanese people were more prone to explain the behaviours of others in terms of situational factors, where as others, such as the English used dispositional explanations which related to personal characteristics (personality and habits)

Fundamental Attribution Error - The tendency to use dispositional rather than contextual explanations.

Korten (1974) Carried out a study with 39 Ethiopian students and 47 American Students. They were asked to describe fellow students.

Korten found that, while both groups talked about the interests and activities of other students, Ethiopians focused more on interpersonal interactions and beliefs, whereas American students directed themselves to talk about personality, ability and knowledge more.

In conclusion, while there are some cross-cultural similarities in interpersonal perception, there are also differences between people of different cultures in their perception of others.