

Review of the Field of Environmental Psychology, Focusing on Its Scope and Challenges

Dr. Rinki

Assistant Professor of Psychology
Pt. J.L.N. Govt College Faridabad

Abstract

The English term environment comes from the French words Environ or environner is an Old English word that means around, round about, to surround, or to embrace. All of these words come from the ancient French words Virer and Viron, which both indicate to fight. a ring that goes all the way around an entity, including people. Environment is a broad concept that encompasses the whole range of diverse surroundings in which humans perceive, experience, and react to events and changes. In common usage, environ refers only to the surrounding neighbourhood of a specific place, the neighbourhood or vicinity. However, environment refers to a much broader range of settings. “It encompasses not just the land but also the water, the plants, the air, and the social structure. In addition to that, it encompasses the natural and biological surroundings. It is about how well humans can adjust, intellectually as well as physically, to the constantly shifting conditions of their surroundings. The environment is not a fixed entity, but rather a dynamic system, and changes may take place in it even in the absence of direct human influence. Any area's ecosystem may be thought of as being in a state of dynamic equilibrium. This phenomenon is referred to be the equilibrium of nature.

Key words: humans, equilibrium, environment, psychology etc

Introduction

Environmental psychology is an interdisciplinary topic that examines the dynamic relationship that exists between people and the environments in which they find themselves. The word environment has a very wide meaning in this discipline, and it may refer to a variety of different things, including natural habitats, social settings, constructed environments, learning environments, and informational environments. There is also the question of what the boundaries of environmental psychology are. Environmental psychology is an interdisciplinary discipline that focuses on the dynamic relationship that exists between people and the environments in which they live. The word environment has a very wide meaning in this discipline, and it may refer to a variety of different places, including natural settings, social settings, constructed environments, learning environments, and informational environments.

Impacts of the Environment on Humans

It is thought or expected that human beings would experience a variety of psychological and other impacts as a result of their physical settings, and these effects have been objectively verified. Some of these impacts are quite direct, whilst others are affected by individual traits and are mediated by intrapersonal psychological processes. Another factor that might moderate the impact of factors in the physical environment is the social environment. The detrimental effects of environmental stressors such as noise, crowding, and extreme temperatures as well as threats of natural disasters, technological catastrophes, or accidents are a primary focus of research in the field of environmental psychology. This is due in large part to the fact that these stressors may have an impact on an individual's health. These effects have been well studied, with a lot of evidence coming from self-reports as well as physiological and performance tests. The study of positive impacts of surroundings, such as the restorative and stress-reducing potentials of natural habitats, is a supplementary research emphasis that has lately received attention. This is a relatively new area of interest for the field of research. The recurring discovery that sensory deprivation may have beneficial benefits has theoretical relevance on this present study, with

substantial implications for practical application. Another area of concentration for research is the study of how groups of people behave and communicate in different environments (see Community Environmental Psychology). Sometimes the influence of the physical environment is moderated by the influence of the social environment. This might happen, for example, when a lack of space results in an excessive amount of social engagement that has negative implications. In other circumstances, the physical environment makes social interaction easier, which has a number of beneficial impacts, such as increased levels of home satisfaction.

Scope

In spite of the fact that environmental psychology is arguably the most well-known and comprehensive description of the field, it is also known as environmental social sciences, architectural psychology, socio-architecture, ecological psychology, ecopsychology, behavioural geography, environment-behavior studies, person-environment studies, environmental sociology, social ecology, and environmental design research; each of these names was developed by a different researcher, but they are sometimes used interchangeably. This interdisciplinary topic relies on the research conducted in a variety of other fields, including anthropology, geography, sociology, psychology, history, political science, engineering, planning, architecture, urban design, and, of course, aesthetics.

There is a continuing dispute over the appropriate scope of the discipline, such as whether or not it encompasses the study of human interaction with the natural environment. These several titles for the field appropriately represent this ongoing argument. The term environmental design is commonly used to refer to design activities that are centred on the natural environment and sustainability. Additionally, environmental design refers to a concern with the planned environment that humans build, also known as the artificial or designed physical environment, and its capacity to meet the requirements of a community. Because architects are only responsible for a tiny part of the physical environment, a concentration on architectural psychology is seen to be too specific and limited. People that are involved in the area, in general, have an interest in developing a deeper comprehension of the connections that exist between people and the settings in which they live so that this information may be used to address challenging issues that occur in the real world”.

Applied Environmental Psychology

Applied The study of environmental psychology seeks to improve people's lives and mental development through enhancing environmental management practises. It investigates efficient strategies for preserving the natural environment, enhancing the design of towns and communities, and developing methods for raising environmental consciousness among the general populace.

The field of urban planning makes extensive use of psychological principles. When planning the expansion of towns, it is important to take into account the findings of studies on how communities function, the psychological requirements of the populace, as well as their likes and dislikes. “Because of the way the environment influences and constrains behaviour, careful planning is required to assure the highest possible levels of happiness, productivity, and expansion.

The study of how various architectural styles reflect the wants and desires of individuals, as well as how different designs mould and shape behaviour, is referred to as the Psychology of Architecture. Before an appropriate design can be created, it is necessary to do an adequate assessment of the cultural, social, and personal requirements of possible prisoners. A successful design should provide for the greatest amount of behavioural freedom, mobility, and adaptability. Other factors to take into account include the many ways in which space might be used, including both its intended and unintended purposes, as well as the conflicting need of solitude and interaction. It is essential to educate people on how to make efficient use of space and to do follow-up research on the efficacy of a variety of different design approaches. It is vital, while constructing a design for a certain purpose, to have knowledge of current

points of view about how the functions of an office, school, or hospital should be carried out. For effective architectural design, it is vital to have in-depth understanding of the sorts of activities and programmes as well as the patterns of human interaction that are anticipated to take place in the kind of structure being designed.

It has been shown that being in close proximity to natural features, such as pools, plants, and trees, may help individuals feel more calm. Therefore, one of the primary concerns of urban planners and architects is the manner in which natural features might be incorporated into their respective designs.

Challenges in Environmental Psychology

Environmental psychology is a subfield of psychological research that examines the psychological interactions that take place when individuals interact with their natural and manmade environments. It examines all aspects of human behaviour and mental life in relation to the sociophysical environment, whether those aspects are considered to be ambient environmental factors, specific behaviour settings, the fundamental infrastructure of everyday life, or, in a broader sense, with regard to landscape and the relationship between built and natural components of human environments. The mental life and conduct of humans include, but are not limited to, perception and cognition, emotion, stress and mental exhaustion, decision making, and social relationships, which present themselves in both covert and overt behaviour. In a nutshell, environmental psychology is concerned with the realities of bi-directional impact in people-environment interactions. More specifically, environmental psychology examines how the sociophysical environment affects individuals as well as how people influence the environment. Adapting to a changing environment is now one of the most significant issues that civilization faces. However, psychology can explain why people sometimes engage in pro-environmental behaviour that can mitigate climate change, and it can help citizens overcome the psychological barriers of sustainable behaviour. Although psychology cannot slow or stop global warming on its own, it can explain why people sometimes engage in such behaviour. Studying, explaining, and predicting how people's behaviours might be altered to promote ecologically sustainable behaviour, environmentalism, and conservation is a significant issue for environmental psychologists. However, this is also an exciting opportunity. The employment of normative messages, framings, social norms, and educational programmes as a means of reducing people's environmental footprint via communication and information interventions is one strategy for addressing this enormous problem. Even though the social psychological point of view has undeniable benefits, I believe that a workable path toward a scientific breakthrough would be to revive the traditional ecological approach in environmental psychology and apply it to the contemporary issues that face society. This is what I have in mind when I say this.

The present anthropogenic warming of the planet is occurring at the same time as an exponential increase in the human population, which is imposing enormous demands on the world's food supply and natural resources. Environmental psychologists will play an important role in providing society with needed insights in several areas, including how to handle the social dilemmas of sharing resources in ways that are sustainable, how to implement techniques to mitigate the effects of increased energy demand, and how to understand the psychological consequences of scarcity. Environmental psychologists will play an important role in providing society with needed insights in several areas, including how to handle the social dilemmas of sharing resources in sustainable ways. Building megacities with high residential densities is one way to deal with the consequences of population growth. This is because there are gains to be made in energy and transportation efficiency that can help to mitigate the negative effects that human activity has on the environment. Megacities are also a way to deal with the consequences of population growth.

Understanding Climate and Environmental Psychology

At first look, it could seem as if climate and environmental psychologists are working to halt the progression of global warming, save endangered species, and preserve sources of clean water.

Climate and environmental psychologists focus their research and work on better understanding how human behaviour affects our world. While these psychologists are concerned with environmental protection and conservation, climate and environmental psychologists focus their research and work on this topic. They investigate how people react to both natural and man-made dangers, and they look into how diverse surroundings, such as workplaces, residences, and metropolitan regions, affect things like loneliness and stress.

Conclusion

Environmental psychology is an interdisciplinary discipline that examines the dynamic relationship between people and their environments, including natural habitats, social settings, constructed environments, learning environments, and informational environments. Environmental psychology focuses on the detrimental effects of environmental stressors such as noise, crowding, and extreme temperatures, as well as the restorative and stress-reducing potentials of natural habitats". Environmental psychology seeks to improve people's lives and mental development through enhancing environmental management, urban planning, and the Psychology of Architecture. Environmental psychology is a subfield of psychological research that examines the psychological interactions that take place when individuals interact with their natural and manmade environments. It examines how the sociophysical environment affects individuals and how people influence the environment. Climate and environmental psychologists focus on better understanding how human behaviour affects our world, such as how people react to natural and man-made dangers, and how diverse surroundings affect loneliness and stress.

Reference

- [1] American Psychological Association (2008). Society's Grand Challenges: Insights from Psychological Science. Downloaded on March 7th 2016.
- [2] Anderies, J. M., Janssen, M. A., Lee, A., and Wasserman, H. (2013). Environmental variability and collective action: experimental insights from an irrigation game. *Ecol. Econ.* 93, 166–176.
- [3] Bell, P. A., Greene, T. C., Fisher, J. D., & Baum, A. (2001). *Environmental Psychology Orlando (US):* Harcourt.
- [4] Basner, M., Brink, M., Bristow, A., de Kluizenaar, Y., Finegold, L., Hong, J., et al. (2015). ICBEN review of research on the biological effects of noise 2011-2014.
- [5] Bertoldo, R., Castro, P., and Bousfield, A. B. S. (2013). Pro-environmental beliefs and behaviors: two levels of response to environmental social norms. *Rev. Latinoam. Psicol.*
- [6] Bechtel, R. B. (1997). *Environment and Behaviour: An Introduction.* New Delhi: Sage
- [7] Biel, A., and Gärling, T. (1995). The role of uncertainty in resource dilemmas. *J. Environ. Psychol.* 15, 221–233.
- [8] Cialdini, R. B. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Curr. Dir. Psychol. Sci.* 12, 105–109.
- [9] Clark, C., Head, J., and Stansfeld, S. A. (2013). Longitudinal effects of aircraft noise exposure on children's health and cognition: a six-year follow-up of the UK RANCH cohort. *J. Environ. Psychol.*
- [10] Veitch, R., & Arkkelin, D. (1995). *Environmental Psychology: An Interdisciplinary Perspective.* USA: Practice-Hall.