



Department of
Education

Year 11 ATAR Psychology

Determinants of Liking and Adolescence



OTHERS –
Relational Influences

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Year 11 ATAR Psychology

OTHERS – Relational Influences

Determinants of Liking and Adolescence

Instructions to Students

This resource package provides you with learning materials for the Psychology ATAR Year 11 course. The package focuses on the **Topic OTHERS – Relational Influences – Determinants of Liking and Adolescence**.

This package is designed to support the program you are completing at your school. If feedback is required when completing this package, you should consult your teacher.

CONTENTS

Learning Content and Activities	2
This section is designed to develop the knowledge component of the syllabus. It also includes focus questions and activities to support your understanding.	
Additional resources to support your learning	12
Answers	13

It is recommended that students further investigate concepts covered in this resource package by conducting their own research using the text/s that they use at school or the internet.

Syllabus Points Covered

- *determinants of liking*
 - *proximity*
 - *similarity*
 - *reciprocity*
- *relationship development in adolescent groups*
 - *changing structure of adolescent groups – Dunphy*

Learning Content and Activities

ATTRACTION

Friendships and close relationships are at or near the top of the list of what people say makes them happy; people desire to be liked by even the most casual of acquaintances. In general, we like people:

- who like us
- who satisfy our needs
- when the rewards they provide outweigh the costs (social exchange theory).

THREE DETERMINANTS OF LIKING

Proximity

The best single predictor of whether two people will be friends is how far apart they live. The closer in distance we are the more likely we are to like each other. Three important factors that contribute to this are:

- **familiarity** comes from repeated meetings where you come to know more about the person and become comfortable in their company
- **availability** from living close, means it makes friendship easier. If person moves to another state or overseas, although relationship can be continued contact is less frequent
- there is an **expectation** of continued social interaction when a person lives close by.

The proximity effect can work because of **mere exposure effect** (increased familiarity). The finding is that the more exposure we have to a stimulus, the more apt we are to like it (Moreland & Beach, 1992 classroom study).

A classic study by Festinger, Schachter and Black (1950) showed that students who lived close together on campus were more likely to be friends.

Unless exposure creates an initial negative impression (for example, the guy's an obnoxious jerk), greater exposure leads to greater liking.

Similarity

Proximity increases familiarity, which leads to liking, but something more is needed to fuel a growing friendship or a romantic relationship. (Otherwise, every pair of roommates would be best friends!) That "fuel" for a relationship is similarity. Similarity is when there is a match between our interests, attitudes, values, background, or personality and those of another person. For example, adolescents are attracted to others who like the same pop group or dress similarly or adults like others who have the same views about work, movies or politics.

Why is similarity so important in attraction? There are 3 possibilities:

- we assume that people who are similar to us will like us
- people who are similar provide us with important social validation for our characteristics and beliefs. That is, they provide us with a feeling that we are right
- we assume that people who are similar to us on important characteristics are people that we would like to interact with.

Reciprocity (Reciprocal liking)

One of the strongest determinants of our liking someone is if we believe that person likes us. If we believe somebody else likes us, we will be a more likable person in their presence; this will lead them to actually like us more, which leads to a **self-fulfilling prophecy**. Our level of self-esteem moderates how we are affected by other people liking us. Swann and colleagues (1992) have shown that people with high self-esteem like and interact with those who like them, but people with low self-esteem prefer to interact with somebody who criticized them

ACTIVITY ONE

1. Identify which of the three determinants is most demonstrated by the reasons given for a friendship or lack of friendship below.
 - a) A man and a woman become friends at church

 - b) Two boys have been friends since the first day of school when they sat together in class

 - c) Two girls who met at a Taylor Swift concert are best friends

 - d) One girl dislikes another girl because she has never spoken to her

2. Two popular sayings about relationships are “birds of a feather flock together” and “opposites attract”. Based on the determinants of liking, which one should be true? Justify your answer.

3. Arranged marriages are usually defined as one where parents of the partners make the choice of husband or wife for their children. In some cultures, these types of relationships can be commonplace and are often very successful.

Read about it here <https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/the-science-behind-behavior/201511/why-are-so-many-indian-arranged-marriages-successful>.

Can arranged marriage be seen as still meeting one or more of the criteria for the determinants of liking? Explain your answer.

PHYSICAL ATTRACTION

In addition to proximity, similarity, and reciprocal liking, physical attractiveness is a major factor in determining liking in studies of first impressions (Walster and colleagues, 1966). There is a bit of a dilemma here. When people are asked about the qualities they desire in a dating partner or a mate, physical attractiveness is not at the top of the list. Yet, when it comes to their actual behaviour (e.g., choosing a date) appearance often seems to be the only thing that matters.

THEORIES OF ATTRACTION

There are several broad theories on where attraction comes from. These include:

- **balance theory** - We like people who are similar to us because they affirm our own views and attitudes. Disagreement over a view unbalances an established positive relationship, to restore balance one or other must change their view or agree to disagree.
- **reinforcement theories** - We like people who are present when we experience a good feeling or when we receive rewards.
- **social exchange theory** - (Thibaut & Kelly 1959) one of the most popular theories about attraction and liking. It considers both parties in the relationship and how they exchange rewards. It is economic theory applied to social relationships. It states that relationships have a **cost- benefit ratio**. We like people when the rewards they provide outweigh the costs. A relationship where the effort exceeds the benefits will be seen as unsatisfactory and the other person regarded as unattractive. A positive relationship is satisfying, and the other person is regarded as attractive. The most satisfying relationship for both parties is one where both make a profit.

ACTIVITY TWO

1. Dating guru and internet sensation Michael Hussey has a four step plan to get someone to like you (romantically of course). Watch one of his videos here www.youtube.com/embed/TmPFpBvDIkQ and comment below on the four steps he outlines. Do the four steps match the determinants of liking or theories of attraction? Explain how.

ADOLESCENCE

During adolescence, young people move away from their strong connections with their family to form new outside connections with their peers. Time spent with the family decreases, while time spent with friends increases.

Adolescents – teenagers, in transition from a child to an adult.

Peers - people who are about the same age

Friends - people with whom you develop a valued, mutual relationship.

ACTIVITY THREE

1. Complete a brainstorm below about why friends are so important to adolescents.

Why are friends so important?

PEER GROUPS IN ADOLESCENCE

In modern cultures, society changes from generation to generation. That is, children and adolescents need to teach each other some things that adults cannot teach them. Children also need to teach adults many things, as society changes even more rapidly.

Types of peer groups in adolescence include dyads, cliques and crowds.

ACTIVITY FOUR

1. Complete the table below summarising types of relationships.

Relationship	Name of type of relationship	Range of number of people involved	Description
Two people/one relationship			
Four people/six relationships			
Seven people/twenty one relationships			

DUNPHY

In Sydney during the 1960s Dexter Dunphy engaged in participant observation of adolescent groups. He devised rules that govern the stages and evolution of social relationships in adolescent groups.

Dunphy's theory focuses on the importance of cliques and crowds during the different stages of adolescence.

Important characteristics of adolescent cliques are:

- typically, members share many similarities like being the same age, race, socio-economic background and same sex (during early adolescence)
- members share similar attitudes towards school, teen culture and acceptable behaviour
- members share common interests.

Crowds during adolescence are **reference groups**. They contribute to the definition of norms and standards about things such as clothing, interests and likes/dislikes.

5 Stages of Dunphy's Theory

Stage 1 – Young people form same-sex cliques

- Each clique is relatively isolated from others
- Tight structure, with an authority leader
- Acceptance requires conformity with dress, interests and attitudes

Stage 2 – Unisex cliques interact with one another cliques to form crowds

- Boys and girls start interacting more in a “safety in numbers” environment

Stage 3 – Crowd structures change, and higher-ranking clique members form heterosexual cliques

- This is the start of dating, with informal (often short lived) dating couples within the clique

Stage 4 – Fully formed crowds develops with a number of close dating couples

Stage 5 – Serious dating couples go their separate ways from the crowd

ACTIVITY FIVE

1. Explain in your own words each of the 5 stages of Dunphy's theory.

Dunphy's model enables the development of opposite-sex relationships from a safe zone of larger groupings. The crowd provides the means of transitioning from same-sex to opposite-sex relationships. (NB – Dunphy did not consider homosexual relationships in his study.)

The peer group an adolescent is in is obviously hugely important to the development of socialisation outside the family unit. Through the stages, individuals develop their own identity, learn how to develop intimacy with others and deal with the emotional and social side effects of the forming (and un-forming) of sexual relationships.

ACTIVITY SIX

1. If you are able to watch *The Breakfast Club* (1985) movie.

Use the textbook and the movie to answer the following questions.

a) The five main characters in the movie come from different cliques and peer groups that have nothing in common. List the name of each character, the group they are identified with and briefly describe the activities each group is involved in.

b) Rate each of the characters on the following scale

Character name and group type	Highly anti-social				Highly pro-social
	1	2	3	4	5

c) Briefly describe the characters' perceptions of each other at the beginning of the day. What is it about their past relationships that may influence their attitudes and behaviour?

d) What do the characters find that they have in common?

e) These perceptions gradually change during the Saturday detention hours spent together. Use the three determinants of liking to help explain these changes.

Additional Resources

Textbook

If you have a copy of *Nelson Psychology WA ATAR Unit 1&2*:

- read 59-65
- complete end of chapter questions on page 67 - Terminology 2, MCQ 4-5 and SAQ 5.

If you have a copy of *Nelson Psychology WA ATAR Unit 1&2 Student Workbook*

- read and complete pages 77-83.

Additional reading/Weblinks

Check out the additional reading in the following links to help you clarify your understanding.

- Attraction theories outline <http://www.europeanmedical.info/psychology-basics/attraction-theories.html>
- Attraction Determinants
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVxC7j0P1Tk&feature=emb_title
- Attraction_Cliques_Crowds_Conformity
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFt8IBwcNTg&feature=emb_title
- Why can't we be friends?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBoOEbwgStw&feature=emb_title

Answers

ACTIVITY ONE

1. Identify which of the three determinants is most demonstrated by the reasons given for a friendship or lack of friendship below.

e) A man and a woman become friends at church

Similarity

f) Two boys have been friends since the first day of school when they sat together in class

Proximity

g) Two girls who met at a Taylor Swift concert are best friends

Similarity

h) One girl dislikes another girl because she has never spoken to her

Reciprocity

2. Two popular sayings about relationships are “birds of a feather flock together” and “opposites attract”. Based on the determinants of liking, which one should be true? Justify your answer.

Birds of a feather flock together – means that people with similar traits will be friends or stay together, supports similarity criteria. Opposites attract does not support any of the criteria.

3. Arranged marriages are usually defined as one where parents of the partners make the choice of husband or wife for their children. In some cultures these types of relationships can be common place and are often very successful.

Read about it here <https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/the-science-behind-behavior/201511/why-are-so-many-indian-arranged-marriages-successful>. Can arranged marriage be seen as still meeting one or more of the criteria for the determinants of liking? Explain your answer.

Yes it can. In an arranged marriage people are selected from a small group of people, who are like minded on marriage. This means that they are most likely to be highly similar.

ACTIVITY TWO

1. Dating guru and internet sensation Michael Hussey has a 4 step plan to get someone to like you (romantically of course). Watch one of his videos here www.youtube.com/embed/TmPFpBvDIkQ and comment below on the 4 steps he outlines. Do the four steps match the determinants of liking or theories of attraction? Explain how.

Visual chemistry – yes, he is talking about the importance of liking someone physically.

Perceived value – yes, he is talking about social exchange theory and showing someone that they will get something out of the relationship

Perceived challenge – no, this doesn't really match any of the theories. In fact it might go against social exchange theory where it is too much work or too hard (too much cost).

Connection – yes, he is talking about finding the similarities and possibly developing the reciprocal liking needed for attraction to form.

ACTIVITY THREE

1. Complete a brainstorm below about why friends are so important to adolescences.

a sense of belonging, a feeling of being valued and help with developing confidence

a way to experiment with different values, roles, identities and ideas

experience in getting along with people of the opposite sex

the sense of security and comfort that comes from being with others going through similar experiences

Why are friends so important?

a chance to experience early romantic and sexual relationships

People to discuss information about the changes that puberty brings, and what's going on physically and emotionally

a social group to do new things with, especially things that are different from what families do

ACTIVITY FOUR

1. Complete the table below summarizing types of relationships.

Relationship diagram	Name of type of relationship	Range of number of people involved	Description
Two people/one relationship	Dyad	Pairs only	Pairs of close friends or lovers
Four people/six relationships	Cliques	3-6 people (can be up to 10)	Small groups of friends who know each other well, do things together, and form a regular social group
Seven people/twenty-one relationships	Crowds	10+ people	Larger, reputation-based groups of adolescents who share similar identifies or affiliations

ACTIVITY FIVE

1. Explain in your own words each of the 5 stages of Dunphy's theory shown in the diagram

- Stage 1: Same-sex cliques
- Stage 2: Boys' and Girls' cliques start to form crowds
- Stage 3: Gender cliques break down as clique leaders form romantic relationships
- Stage 4: Crowd with dating couples
- Stage 5: Males and females pair off and break away from the crowd in more serious relationships

ACTIVITY SIX

- If you are able to watch *The Breakfast Club* (1985) movie.

Use the textbook and the movie to answer the following questions.

- The five main characters in the movie come from different cliques and peer groups that have nothing in common. List the name of each character, the group they are identified with and briefly describe the activities each group is involved in.

Andrew Clark (Athlete/**Jock**): state champion wrestler involved in sports, can't easily think for himself

John Bender (Delinquent/**Criminal**): Rebellious, involved in non-academic pursuits and some sports, comes from an abusive home

Claire Standish **Princess**: Beautiful and pampered, but feels pressure from her friends, involved in school activities (such as school council and cheerleading) and the performing arts.

Brian Johnson (**Brain**): Studious, articulate, so wants to do well academically that he has attempted suicide due to a bad grade, is involved in pro-social activities.

Allison Reynolds (**Basket Case**): Reclusive outcast, compulsive liar, involved in performing arts.

- Rate each of the characters on the following scale

Character name and group type	Highly anti-social				Highly pro-social
	1	2	3	4	5
Andrew (Jock)				✓	
John (Criminal)	✓				
Claire (Princess)					✓
Brian (Brain)					✓
Allison (Basket Case)			✓		

- c) Briefly describe the characters perceptions of each other at the beginning of the day. What is it about their past relationships that may influence their attitudes and behaviour?

They believe that they have nothing in common and they believe that the other students have the stereotypical attitudes and behaviours attributes to each group.

To be part of a particular clique or crowd each student needs to have similar identities and shared values. This is demonstrated by dressing and behaving in a particular way that allows them to have group membership

- d) What do the characters find that they have in common?

The students realize that even with their differences, they face similar pressures and complications in their lives.

They discover that they all have strained relationships with their parents

- Allison's parents ignore her due to their own problems
- Andrew's father constantly criticizes his efforts at wrestling and pushes him as hard as possible
- John's father verbally and physically abuses both John and his mother
- Brian's parents put immense pressure on him to get good grades and keep it that way
- Claire's parents use her to get back at each other during frequent arguments.

- e) These perceptions gradually change during the Saturday detention hours spent together. Use the three determinants of liking to help explain these changes.

Proximity – by being in the same room for a full day they are forced to interact with each other which provides the opportunity to find out about the others as individuals rather than the stereotype they hold of each other

Similarity – they realise that they all face similar pressures from parents and peers – when someone expresses a view or attitude that is shared, they are more likely to be attracted to or like that person

Reciprocity –they realise that they may actually be able to like each other, that the other person may like them