

PILIAVIN ET AL (1969) GOOD SAMARITANISM: AN UNDERGROUND PHENONMENON?

TOPIC: PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

HELPING BEHAVIOUR
(ALTRUISM)

Issues to learn about;

1. Theories of helping behaviour
2. Past research about helping behaviour

3. Concepts:

'pluralistic ignorance'

'diffusion of responsibility'



WHY DO WE HELP OR NOT HELP OTHERS?

The case of Kitty Genovese; stabbed to death over a 35 minute period, 35 witnesses but no help given, and no reports to police.



The cost of helping:

Social Exchange Theory - Thibaut & Kelley
(1959)

We help if there is a 'profit'; calculated by looking at rewards minus cost of helping.

- Rewards =

- Costs =

Research - Darley & Batson (1973) assisting collapsed person.

The Nature of the victim

Who would/wouldn't you help?

Research by **Wiener (1992)** - rating conditions in people (e.g.; Alzheimer's, blindness, cancer, heart disease, AIDS, drug addiction, obesity, child-abusers)

If thought responsible for condition - less likeable, less help given.



Key study - **Piliavin et al (1969)**

Nature of helper??

SOME EXPLANATIONS TO CONSIDER:

The nature of the situation

Latane and Darley (1968):

Male college students in waiting rooms, completing questionnaires. Smoke pumped through grill. Action??

Results; - alone 50% (2mins), 75% (6mins)

- Groups of 3 - 12%, & 38%



'Pluralistic ignorance' = redefining situation according to others' interpretations, even if this contradicts own thoughts.

Darley & Latane (1968):

More people present, the more likely helping behaviour will decrease. Research with students; personal problem discussions.



'Diffusion of responsibility' = when responsibility is shared amongst all observers.