



# TRENDS AND SCOPE OF ENVIORNMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

FOR M.PHIL PSYCHOLOGY BY DR  
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# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Origin, Principles, Interdisciplinary Orientation and Scope Of Environmental Psychology.
- Influence Of Environment On Human Behavior.
- Applied Environmental Psychology.
- Challenges
- Conclusion

# ORIGIN OF ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY



- A new area developed within the field of psychology at the end of the 1950s and during the 1960s which was termed Environmental Psychology in the U.S.
- Although the field is now most frequently identified as Environmental Psychology there are still other designations that remain, such as— Ecological Psychology and Architectural Psychology.
- One of the most important initiatives was taken in 1958 with the formation of a research group by William Ittelson and Harold Proshansky at the City University of New York. The purpose of this group was to study how the spatial or architectural setting of a psychiatric hospital can affect the patient's behavior.

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- Ittelson introduced the term Environmental Psychology for the first time in New York in 1964 at the conference of the American Hospital Association On Hospital Planning.

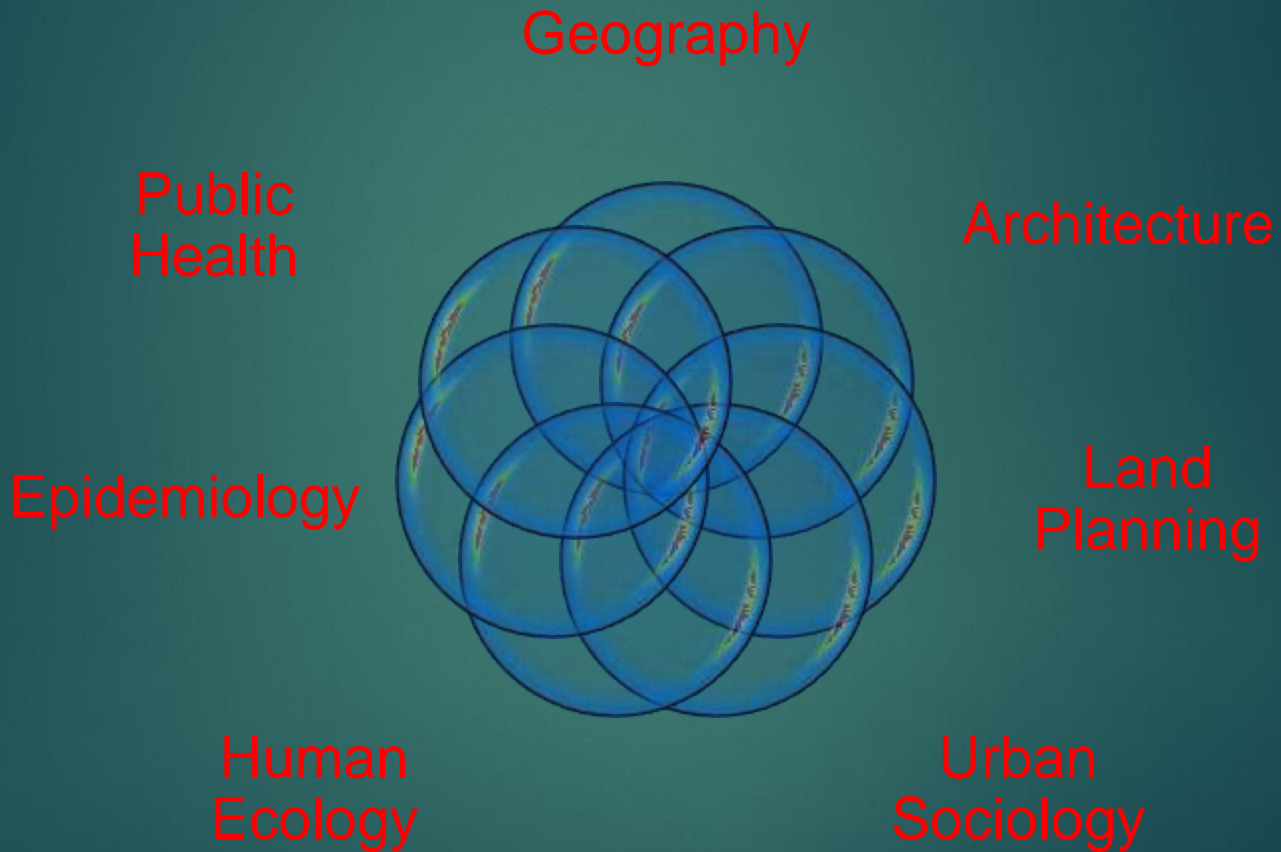
## DEFINITION:

- **ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY** studies the relationship between environments and human behavior as well as how they affect one another. These environments include social settings, built environments, learning environments and informational environments.

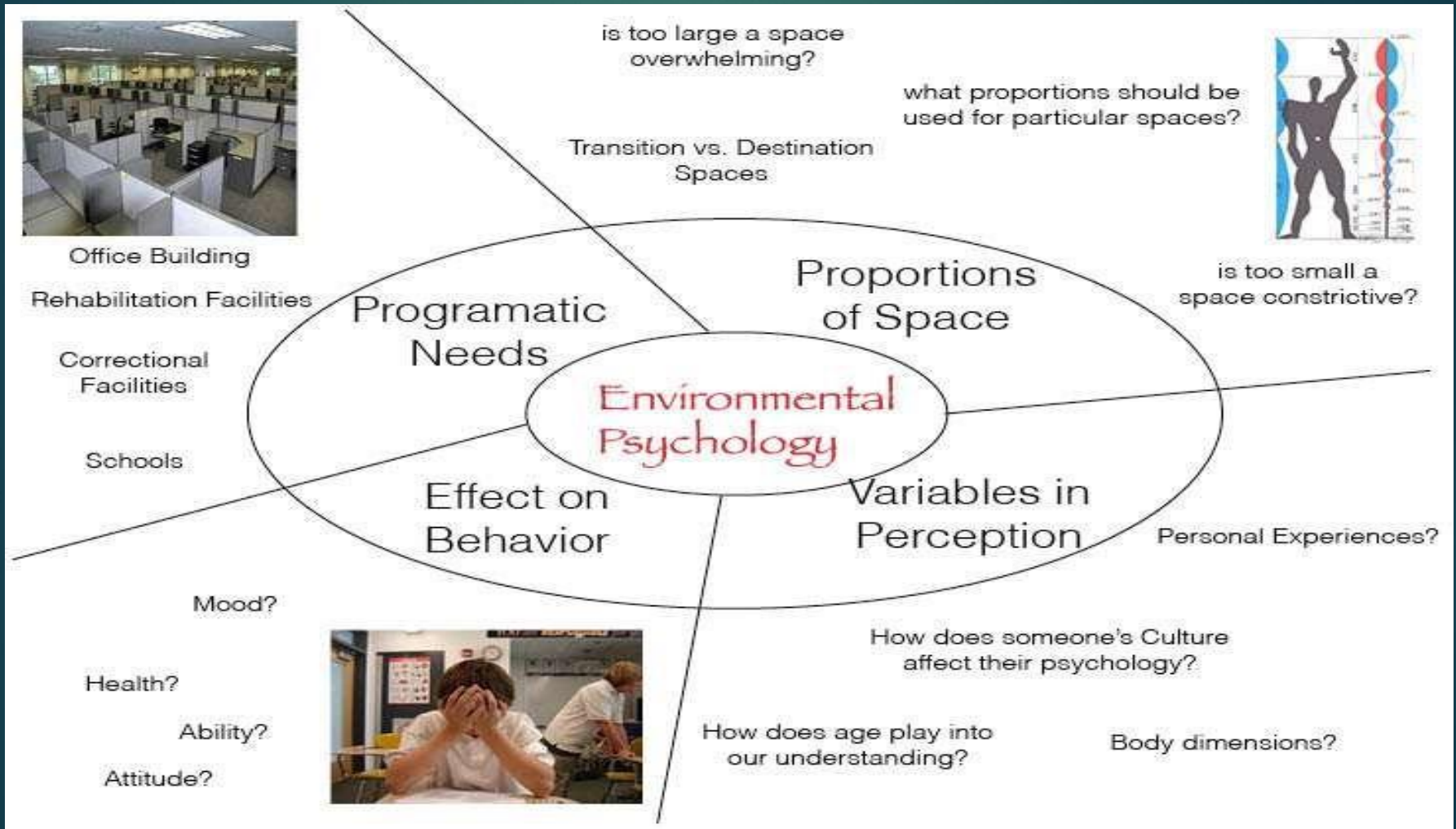
# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

1. Interactional Perspective : where  $B = f(P, E)$
2. A field Applied Research where focus is on the integration of theory and practice.
3. Multiple levels of analysis – from individual to societal.
4. Interdisciplinary Perspective.
5. Multi-method Approach : Qualitative as well as Quantitative.
6. Holistic Approach.
7. Systems Model
8. A research based in the field / natural environment.

# INTERDISCIPLINARY ORIENTATION

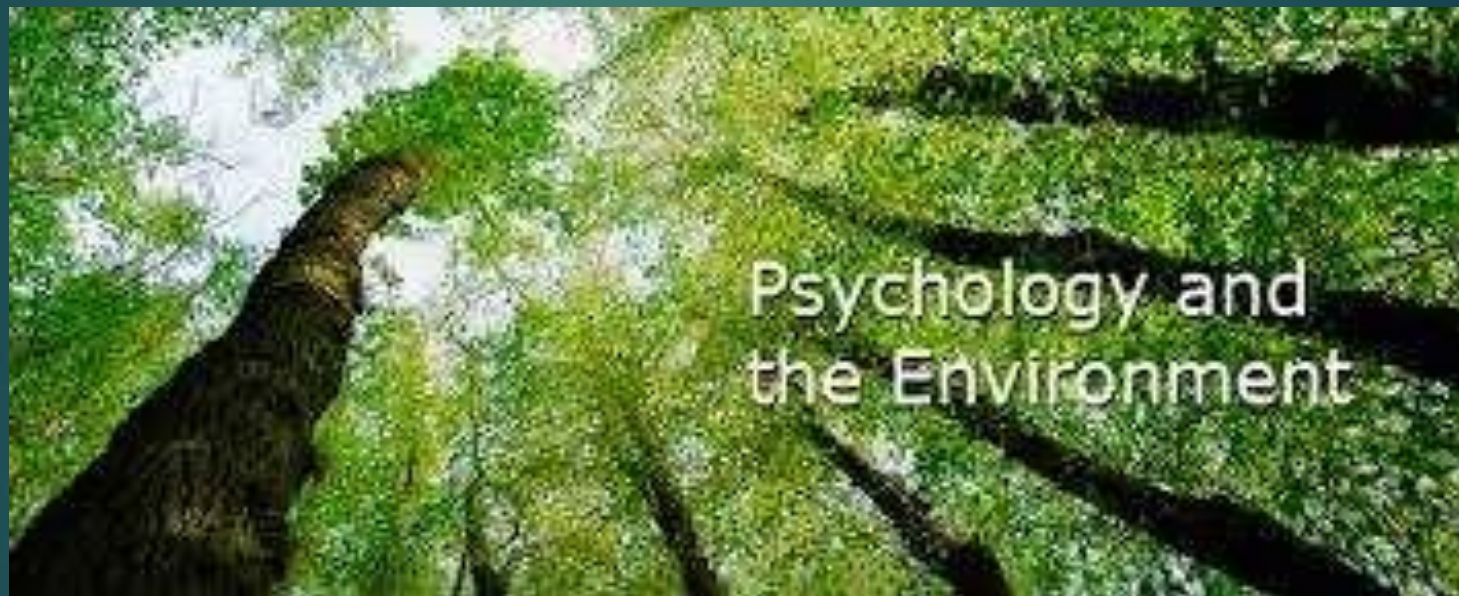


# SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY





# INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT ON HUMAN BEHAVIOR





The environment is taken to refer to anything external to the perceiver which influences or might influence the perception process.

Environments influence the behavior through their **symbolic meaning**. The symbolic meanings and motivational messages emitted by an environment are integral to our perception of it. **Environmental perception** involves activity on our part, especially in terms of exploring the environment to determine what needs it meets.

Every environmental setting induces feelings, associations and attitudes in the perceiver that can be described as its **ambience**. Another important characteristic of the environment which influences the human behavior is its **aesthetic quality**.

Another important environmental factor influencing man is the **weather**. It has an impact on health related variables.

For example : 1. There is a relationship between good health and high / rising **barometric pressure** and bad health and low/ falling pressure.

2. Most **accidents** occur during phases of deteriorating or storming weather.

3. Seasonal pattern of **suicide** occurs during the three summer months in most of the countries studied.

4. Weather variables is also related to pattern of admission to mental hospitals.


**Natural disasters** also have an impact on human behavior and mental well – being , especially of the survivors and the family members of the deceased.

They result in stress, anxiety, depression , unfocussed anger, nightmares and a range of other mood/perceptual disturbances including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) that may lead to continuous emotional problems.


Humans react both consciously and unconsciously to the area in which they live and work. Their environment, whether it be natural or man made, has a profound effect on:

- feelings,
- behaviors,
- general health issues, and
- productivity.

# APPLIED ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY



- Applied Environmental psychology aims at better management of the environment for better life and psychological growth. It studies effective ways of conserving the natural environment, better ways of designing towns and cities and means of promoting environmental awareness among people.
- **The goal of the field** is to solve problems involving human-environmental interactions and to create, manage, protect, and restore environments that promote proper behavior.

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- Researchers diagnose problem situations and recommend solutions.
  - A great majority of research in Environmental Psychology is done in the field rather than in the lab.
  - Environmental psychologists assess, analyze, and advise on personal space and environments in general.
  - They usually work in teams with other professionals such as urban and city planners, architects, economists, engineers, and designers, etc.

# CHALLENGES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH




**Further integration** - within and between the different sub-domains that study environmental influences on behavior and human influences on the environment .

**Further development of theories and methods.**

**Further engagement** - A final and perhaps most urgent challenge for environmental psychology is to move towards a greater engagement with the problems that are studied (Gifford, 2007b, 2008).



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- Another line of action for environmental psychologists is to further increase the political relevance and applicability of their work. For example, by modeling the outcomes of different policy choices, environmental psychologists can directly inform policy makers of the effectiveness of environmental policies, thereby increasing the chances that the most effective and sustainable policies are implemented.

# CONCLUSION

Environmental Psychology has an important role to play in providing conceptual guidelines of how to look and analyze a given setting with reference to its contextual framework. ***The essence of environmental psychology is the context.***

In the context of contemporary society where environmental problems are increasing and threatening the sustainability of human existence it is crucial that Environmental Psychology be given its due importance.