

Attitudes and Behaviour
LaPiere (1934)

SMITH & HASLAM (2012)
**** CHAPTER 2 ****

Overview

- Overview

1. Background
2. The studies
 - Hospitality study
3. Debate and controversy
4. Impact



- Reading (📖 = on ELE 🏆 = recommended 🌐 = on Web)

- 📖 LaPiere, R.T. (1934). Attitudes vs. actions. *Social Forces*, 13, 230-237.
- 📖 Dockery, T.M., & Bedeian, A.G. (1982). "Attitudes vs. actions": LaPiere's (1934) classic study revisited. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 17, 9-16
- 📖 Wicker, A.W. (1969). Attitudes versus actions: The relationship of verbal and overt behavioral responses to attitude objects. *Journal of Social Issues*, 25, 41-78.

Learning Goals

1. Understanding how **La Piere's background and his observations** have shaped the research question
2. Appreciation of what makes LaPiere's question about **attitude-behaviour correspondence a 'big question'**
3. Insight into the **demands of LaPiere's study**– for the researcher, the participants and the interpretation of the data
4. Understanding of **LaPiere's findings** – and what makes them challenging
5. Basic knowledge about the **methodological criticisms and theoretical developments** following LaPiere's finding
6. Appreciation of the **impact** of the study

Multiple Choice Question

What did LaPiere's (1934) question "Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?" really measure?

- a) Behavioural intention
- b) Subjective norm
- c) Attitude
- d) Action
- e) Self-efficacy

Background

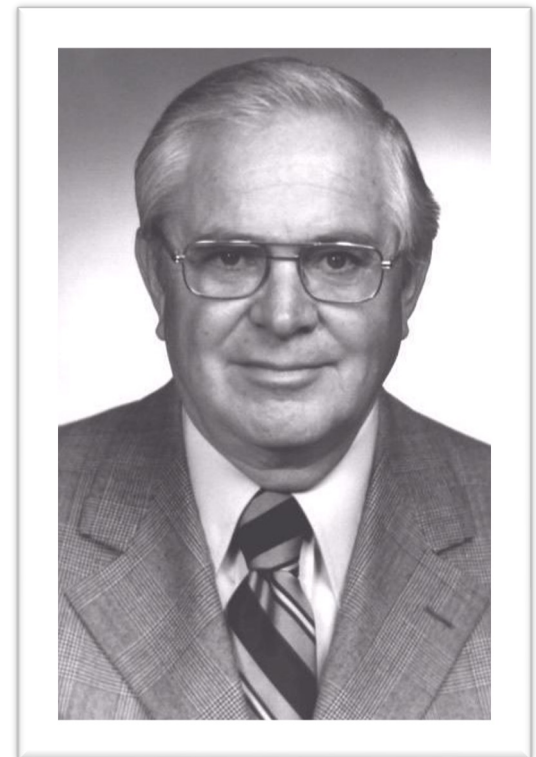
***** RICHARD LAPIERE *****

***** ATTITUDES AS ACTIONS *****

Background

Richard T. LaPiere (1899-1986)

- 1899: Born in Beloit, Wisconsin, USA on 15th September
- Sergeant in WWI
- Runs a garage in California
- 1926: B.A. in Economics, Stanford University
- 1927: M.A. in Sociology, Stanford University
- 1927-28: Studies at LSE
- 1929: Lecturer at Stanford University
- 1930: Ph.D. in Sociology, Stanford University
- 1934: Married to psychologist Helen Halderman
- 1941: California Book Award for fiction work
- 1986: Died of cancer on 2nd February



Background

Attitudes as Actions

- For LaPiere, attitudes *were* actions

“[A] social attitude is a behavior pattern [exhibited in response to]...designated social situations” (LaPiere, 1934, p. 230)

⇒ Does that mean we can measure actions simply by asking people about their attitudes, e.g. in questionnaires?

Class Activity

Do we practice what we preach?



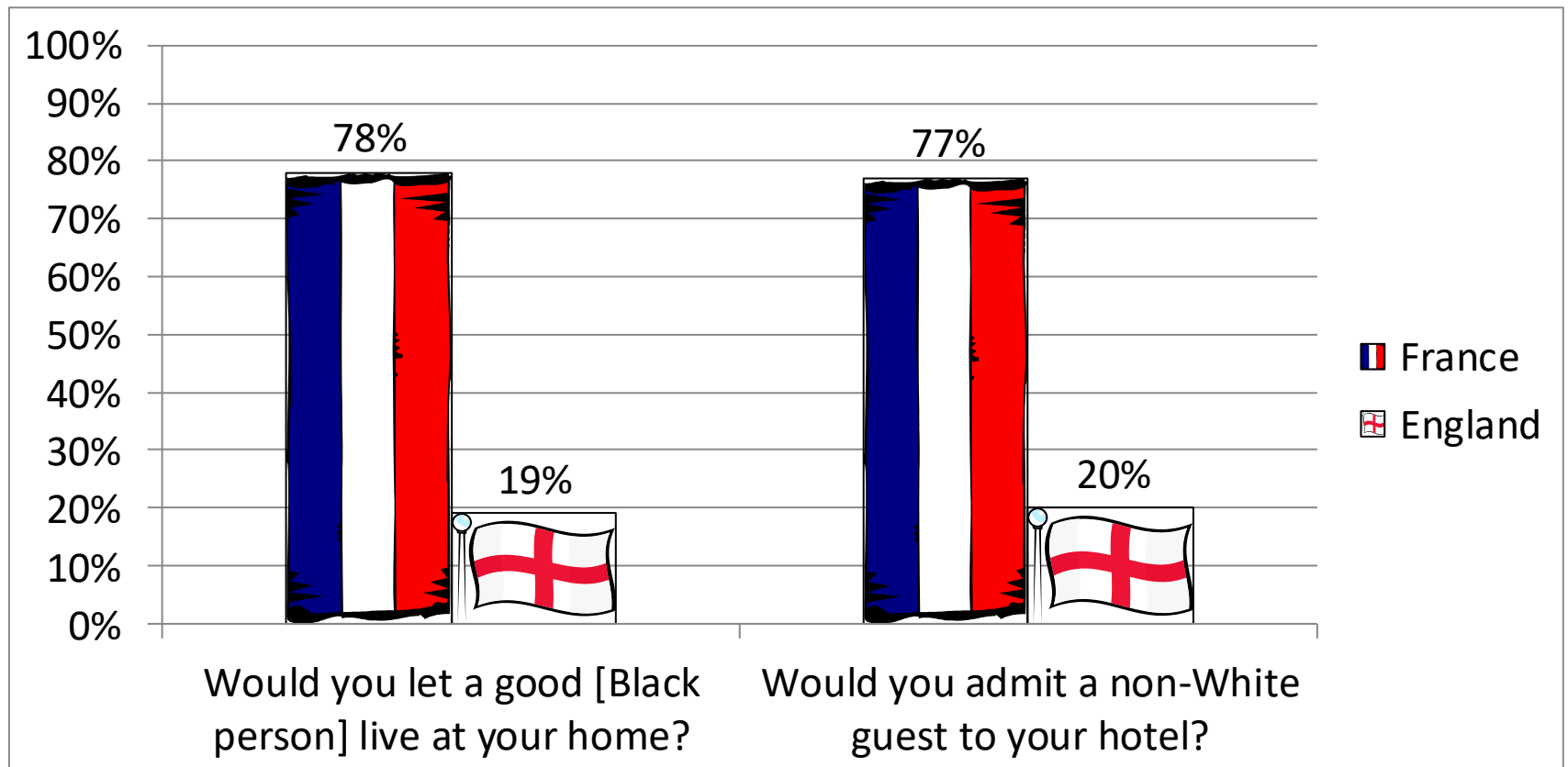
Background

Attitudes as Actions

- Common assumption:
 - Attitudes predict behaviour
 - Otherwise: What is the use of knowing others' attitudes?
- LaPiere disagreed:
 - using questionnaires rests on the (unproven!) assumption of a simple link between the **symbolic (verbal)** and **non-symbolic (behavioral)** response to an attitude object

Background

- LaPiere (1928) asked people in everyday conversation:



Background

Would these different attitudes in France and the UK align with hotel policies?

Assumption: Hotel policies tend to reflect public opinion of the majority as it is bad for business to offend the majority

Finding: Yes, more policies in the UK excluded non-Whites than in France.

Criticism: Policies are still verbal responses.



The Study

HOSPITALITY STUDY

The Study

Background: US attitudes to Chinese in 1930s

- Chinese immigration restricted
- Chinese are barred from landownership
- Intermarriage with other races such as Chinese forbidden
- Strong stereotypes against Chinese immigrants



The Study

- 1930-1932: LaPiere travelled extensively across the US with a young Chinese couple
 - visited 251 establishments: 67 hotels/ auto-camps/tourist homes and 184 restaurants/cafes
- LaPiere was concerned about the group's treatment, but...
 - They were only refused service once: at a “rather inferior auto-camp” (LaPiere, 1934, p. 232)
 - They received “more than ordinary consideration” in 72 out of 184 restaurants/cafes



The Study

- LaPiere sent a questionnaire to the 250 establishments 6 months after it had been visited by the group
 - received 128 responses (51% response rate)
- He also received answers to his questionnaire from 128 establishments not visited by the group

“Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?”

The Study

“Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?”

Response	Establishments visited	Establishments not visited
No	118	113
Not sure	9	14
Yes	1	1
Total	128	128

Note: When Chinese guests actually visited the establishments, they were only refused service once

Why the discrepancy?

The Study

“Only a verbal reaction to an entirely symbolic situation can be secured by the questionnaire. It may indicate what the responder would actually do when confronted with the situation symbolized in the question, but there is no assurance that it will “ (LaPiere, 1934, p. 236).

⇒ Should we use questionnaire measures to understand human behaviour at all?

The Study

Interpretation

The answers reflected prejudiced attitudes of the time but not actual behaviour

⇒ **But why would they behave less prejudiced?**

The Study

Interpretation

The answers reflected prejudiced attitudes of the time but not actual behaviour

⇒ **But why would they behave less prejudiced?**

⇒ Behaviour driven by the economic self-interest of hotel and restaurant owners?

⇒ **What would we expect to find nowadays?**

The Study

Research from the 1980s to 2020s shows that:

- **Prejudice:** Many White people say that they are not prejudiced against people from other races
- **Discrimination** of other racial groups by White people is still very much evident
- **Example:** Discrimination against people with Arab or Black names in the rental market (Capusor & Loges, 2006; Rosen et al., 2021 – see the research discussed in the social psychology lecture Klink & Wagner, 1999; Kauff & Wagner, 2012; Schott et al., 2018)

14 field experiments on subtle discrimination of minorities – excerpt.

<u>Ss: Germans</u>	<u>Manipulation</u>	<u>Results</u>
Helping behavior (4 studies, 4 significant)		
E1 80 passers-by (Duisburg)	Oriental vs. European dressed woman	Rejection: F > G
Forwarding lost letters (2 studies, 2 significant)		
E6 passers-by (Marburg)	letter of foreign or German sender	Ignorance: F > G
Offer to have a look at a flat for rent (3 studies, 2 significant)		
E8 40 landlords (Ruhr-area)	person interested speaking foreign vs. German accents	offer: F < G
Acceptance of lift home (1 study, 1 significant)		
E14 Students (Marburg)	offer by foreign vs. German name.	acceptance: F < G

Klink, A., & Wagner, U. (1999). Discrimination Against Ethnic Minorities in Germany: Going Back to the Field 1. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 29(2), 402-423. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.1999.tb01394.x>

see also:

Kauff, M., & Wagner, U. (2012). Valuable therefore not threatening: The influence of diversity beliefs on discrimination against immigrants. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(6), 714-721.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611435942>

Schott, M., Martin, P., & Bluemke, M. (2018).

Diskriminierung Türkischstämmiger auf dem Kölner Wohnungsmarkt: Effektivität von Gegenmaßnahmen. *Politische Psychologie*, 6(2), 311-331. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-69258-1>



Debate & Controversy

***** METHODOLOGICAL,
CONCEPTUAL &
ETHICAL ISSUES *****

Debate and Controversy

Methodological criticism

1. Six month gap between observed actions and reported attitudes
 - Attitudes may change over time (but usually not this fast)
2. Did attitudes and action come from the same person?
 - Behavior = desk clerk/waiter; Attitude = manager/owner
3. LaPiere's presence
 - Couple was served 31 times in LaPiere's absence
4. Chinese couple don't conform to stereotype
 - Couple was personable and charming, well-dressed, spoke in unaccented English, and were "skillful smilers" (LaPiere, 1932, p. 232)

Debate and Controversy

Methodological criticism

5. Survey and observed “attitudes” were different
 - Survey: *“Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?”*
 - Observed: *Did establishment accept a “young, well-dressed, well-spoken, pleasant, self-confident, well-to-do Chinese couple accompanied by a mature, well-dressed, educated European American gentleman as guests in your establishment”*

(Ajzen et al., 1970, p. 270)

Debate and Controversy

Conceptual criticism

1. Did LaPiere really measure an attitude in his survey?
⇒ **Attitude = positive or negative evaluation of an attitude object**
⇒ No. He didn't ask for a positive or negative evaluation of a Chinese couple as hotel/restaurant guests. He measured a **BEHAVIOURAL INTENTION** instead.
2. **Social norms**
 - Do norms of politeness in face-to-face interactions outweigh social norms to express societal prejudice?
 - Were norms of politeness salient when the letter was answered?

Debate and Controversy

Ethical criticism

Lack of informed consent by

- the Chinese couple
- the service providers

The Impact

***** ATTITUDE - BEHAVIOUR
RELATIONSHIP *****

Impact

Are attitudes related to action?

- LaPiere's (1934) study led to more research testing the attitude-behaviour relationship
- Wicker (1969): average correlation between attitudes and behavior is very low ($r \approx .15$)

“It is considerably more likely that attitudes will be unrelated or only slightly related to overt behavior than that attitudes will be related to actions” (Wicker, 1969, p. 65)

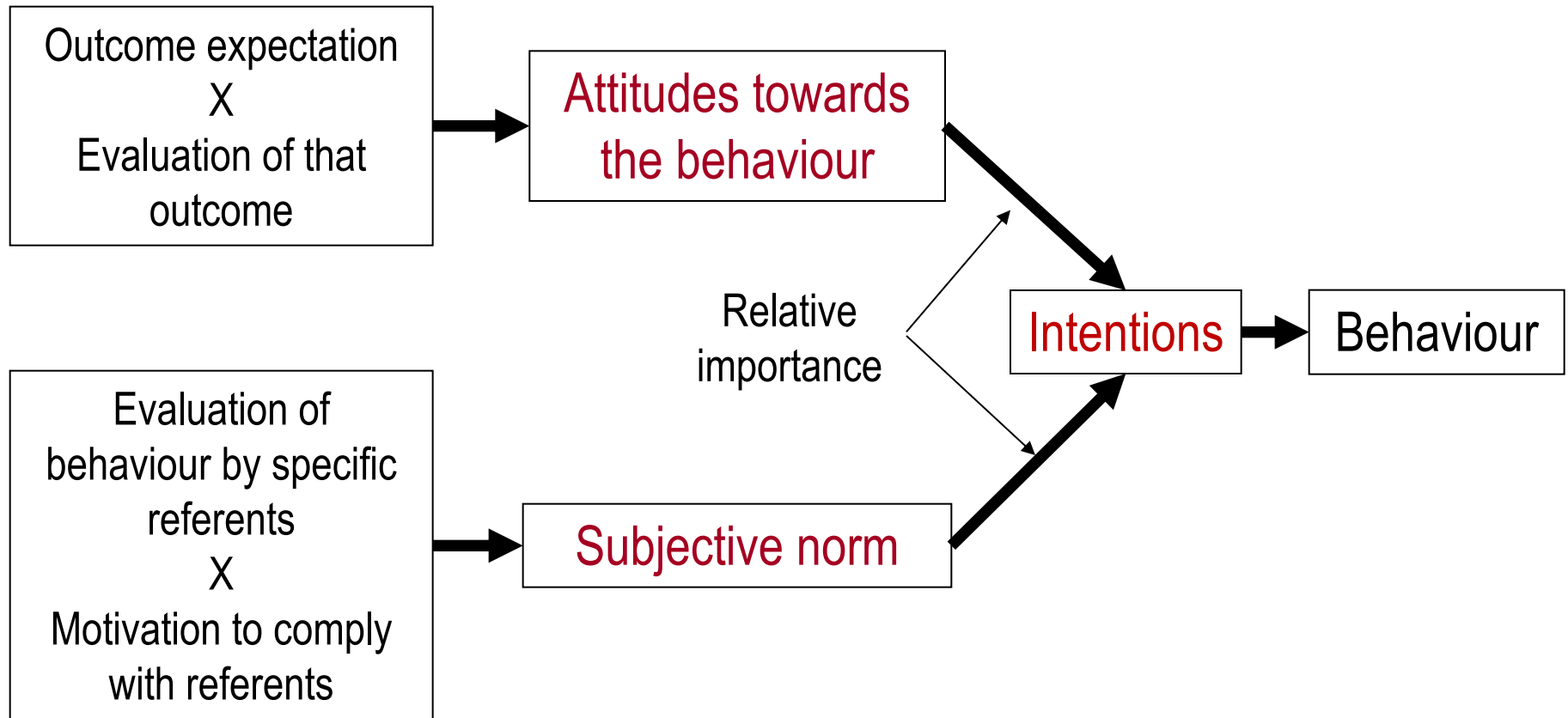
Impact

Are attitudes related to action?

- Attitude-behaviour relationship is not a simple one
- Other variables influence the relationship between attitudes and behaviour (moderator variables)
 - a. **Theory of Reasoned Action** (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)
 - b. **Theory of Planned Behavior** (Ajzen & Madden, 1986)

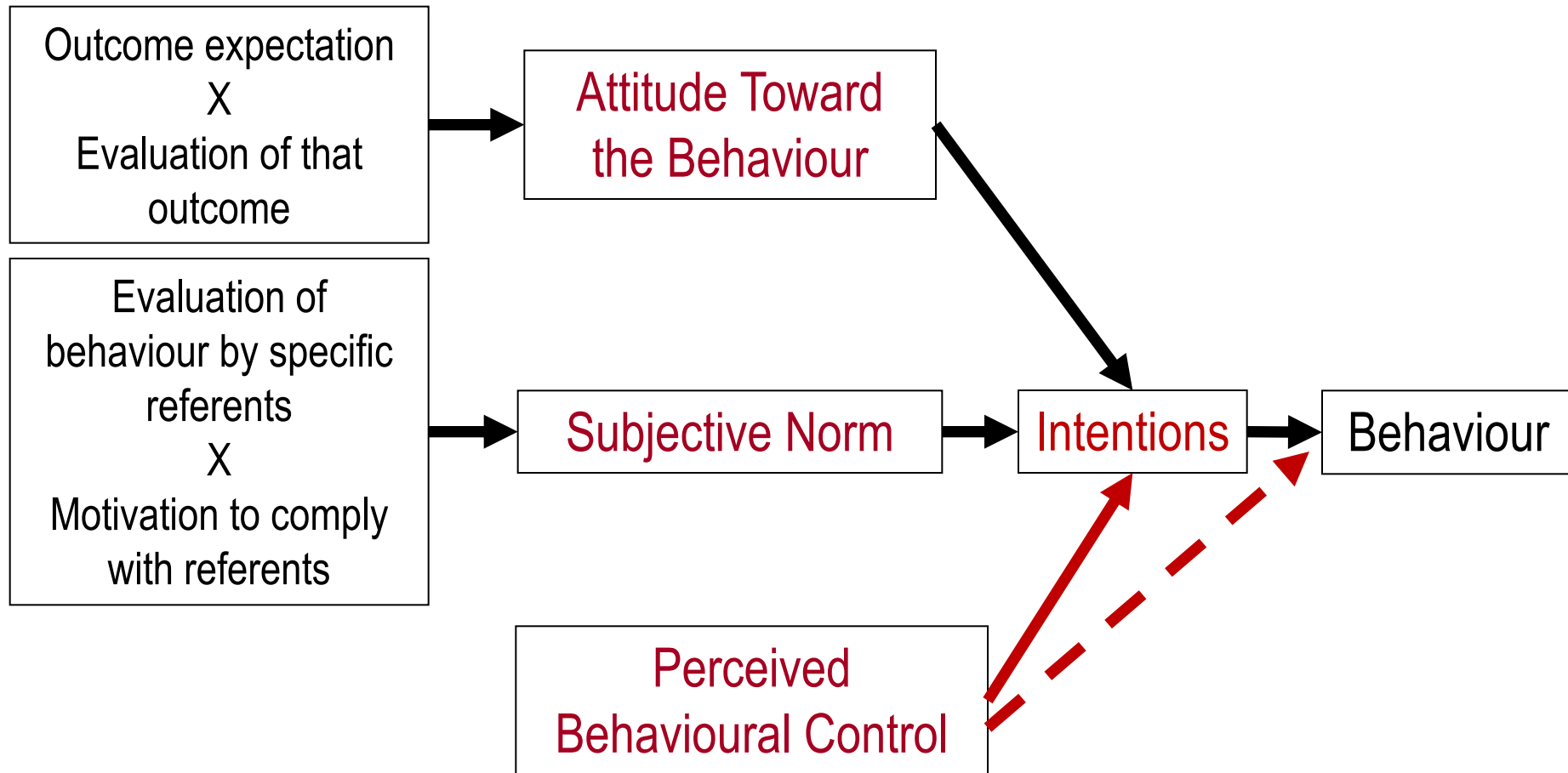
Theory of Reasoned Action

(Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)



Theory of Planned Behaviour

(Ajzen & Madden, 1986)

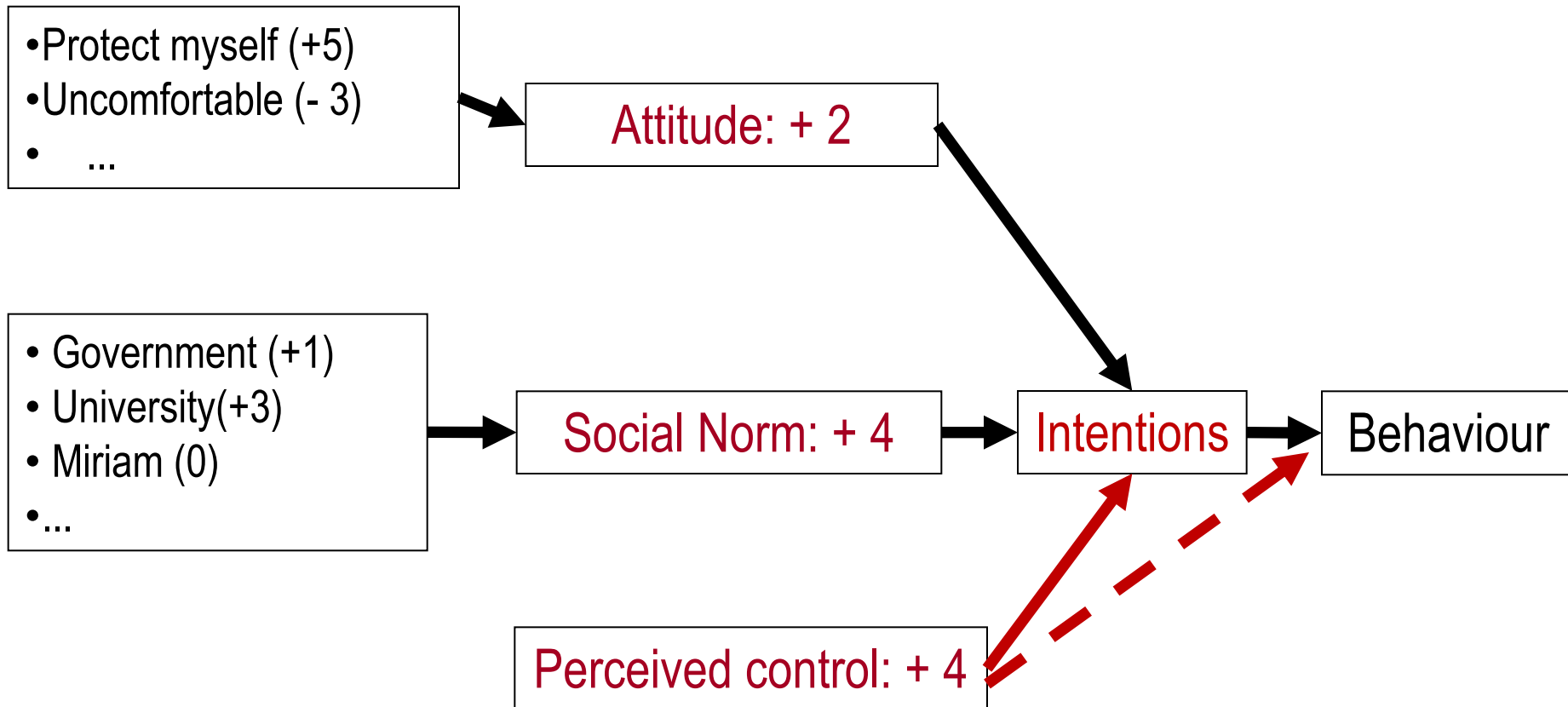


Class Activity

- Calculate your attitude and behavioural intention regarding face mask wearing:
 1. Write down 2 positive and 2 negative outcomes of wearing a face mask/covering
 2. Rate each outcome on a scale from 0 (= unimportant to me) to 5 (= very important to me)
 3. Name 3 other parties that affect your decision to wear a face mask/covering
 4. Rate each party's importance (0 to 5)
 5. Rate your perceived control over being able to wear a face mask (0 = no control, 5 = entirely in my control)

Theory of Planned Behaviour

(Ajzen & Madden, 1986)



Impact

How should we measure attitudes?

1. The Principle of Compatibility or Correspondence

(Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977)

a) Action: What?

b) Target: Who?

c) Context: In which situation?

d) Time: When?

⇒ Attitude and behaviour need to be measured at the same level of specificity or generality

“.. the extent that the beliefs salient at the time of attitude assessment are also salient when plans are formulated or executed, strong attitude-behaviour correlations are expected.” (Ajzen, 1996)

Impact

How should we measure attitudes?

1. The Principle of Compatibility or Correspondence

Davidson & Jaccard (1979): Analysis of the correlation between married women's attitudes towards birth control and their actual use of oral contraceptives during the two years following the study.

- 'Attitude towards birth control': $r = .08$.
- 'Attitudes towards oral contraceptives': $r = .32$
- 'Attitudes towards using oral contraceptives': $r = .53$
- 'Attitudes towards using oral contraceptives during the next two years': $r = .57$

Impact

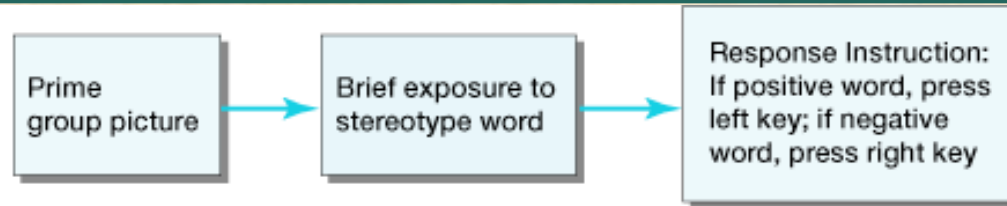
How should we measure attitudes?

2. Explicit versus implicit attitudes

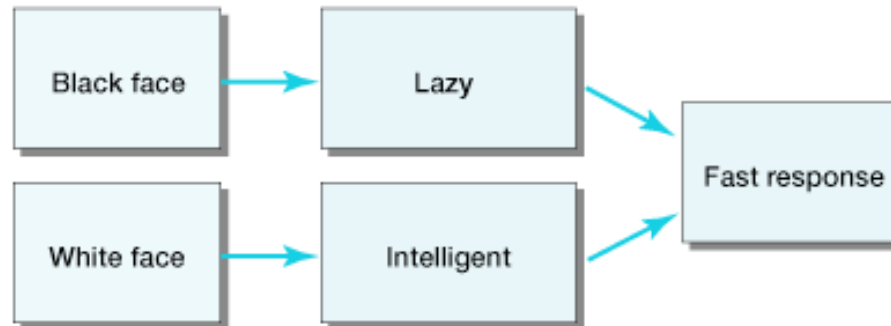
Explicit attitudes	Implicit attitudes
“what people state out loud”	“what people feel inside”
Thought to be in conscious awareness and under conscious control	Thought to be outside of conscious awareness and conscious control
Assessed directly via surveys	Assessed indirectly via reaction time tasks (e.g., Implicit Association Test (IAT))

⇒ Moderatly correlated ($r = .24$; Hoffman et al., 2005)

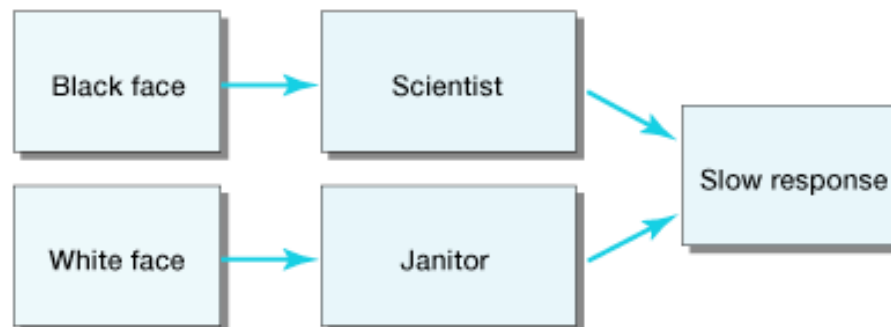
Implicit Attitude Test



Stereotype-Consistent Combination



Stereotype-Inconsistent Combination



<https://implicit.harvard.edu/>

Arab-Muslim ('Arab Muslim - Other People' IAT)

Disability ('Disabled - Abled' IAT).

Presidents ('Presidential Popularity' IAT).

Weight ('Fat - Thin' IAT).

Asian American ('Asian - European American' IAT).

Native American ('Native - White American' IAT).

Gender - Career.

Sexuality ('Gay - Straight' IAT).

Age ('Young - Old' IAT).

Religion ('Judaism - Other Religions' IAT).

Gender - Science.

Race ('Black - White' IAT).

Weapons ('Weapons - Harmless Objects' IAT).

Skin-tone ('Light Skin - Dark Skin' IAT).

Conclusion

LaPiere was disappointed by what he saw as the lack of impact of his research:

“[My study] did nothing to discourage the development of the paper-and-pencil tests as the primary instrument of social investigation” (LaPiere, 1969, p. 41).

Conclusion

His key message that we should not take anything about attitudes or behavior – or their relationship – for granted endures and continues to shape the field today

- Development of measures that capture attitudes more fully
- Models that predict when attitudes predict behavior and why
- Emphasis on behavioural measures remains

Revision

***** MCQ *****

Multiple Choice Question

What did LaPiere's (1934) question "Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?" really measure?

- a) Behavioural intention
- b) Subjective norm
- c) Attitude
- d) Action
- e) Self-efficacy

Multiple Choice Question

What did LaPiere's (1934) question "Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?" really measure?

- a) **Behavioural intention**
- b) Subjective norm
- c) Attitude
- d) Action
- e) Self-efficacy

Q&A

