**Reconstructing the Study of Human Cognition by Abandoning Cognitive Universalism**

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**Abstract**

The study of human cognition is a prominent part of psychology and related disciplines. While the modern approach begun during the Cognitive Revolution has been seemingly successful, it is not without its problems . I address five concerns with how human cognition is studied: (1) reliance on homogenous population samples; (2) focus on controlling for or ignoring "extraneous" variables; (3) generalization of behavior on artificial lab-based tasks and homogenous samples to real-world contexts; (4) assumption of a generic human actor instead of a focus on individual variation; (5) insufficient cumulative theory building.

            I contend that these concerns are deeply connected and that the solution is a significant change in how we study human cognition, similar in scope to the Cognitive Revolution. We need to reconsider the assumption of cognitive universals and how that assumption is built into the norms of the discipline. I propose a reconstruction of how researchers study human cognition by implementing a combination of methodological approaches and theoretical positions. These combined approaches (1) integrate human heterogeneity, (2) consider human behavior in context, (3) incorporate multiple levels of analysis and non-cognitive factors, (4) focus on individual differences, not only averaged behavior, (5) create theory that combines cognition and context.