A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING: THE DYNAMIC SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAINING FRAMEWORK (DSTF)

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Abstract. In this paper, we provide a unifying and comprehensive framework for social-psychological training by systematically organizing the underlying goals, outcomes, and overarching focus of various training types. A structured taxonomy is, therefore, practical, and examining six areas of social psychology training serves this need. A classification called the Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF) aims to maximize the impact of such training by offering comprehensive perspectives on how they are supposed to work and what distinguishes one training from another. The framework guides the fundamental scope of training in social psychology, focusing on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to apply social-psychological principles successfully in real-world situations.

Keywords: social-psychological training; behavior change; group dynamics; classification; soft skills

Social-psychological training improves behavior in individuals and groups across a variety of fields, such as education, healthcare, organizations, and community development (Makhmutova, Andreeva & Dmitrenko, 2018; Goldstein, 1980; Larsson, 2021; Garzonis, 2015; Eklof, 2014). These trainings cover a wide range of psychological and social issues, including enhancing communication and collaboration skills and building resilience, emotional intelligence, and mental health. It has thus been increasingly recognized that training programs are not equally valid – what works in one society may not work in another. The techniques needed will always be influenced by the socio-psychological landscape of the country the people live in, which is constantly changing.

1. Developing a Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF): A Framework for Enhancing Behavior

Although many social-psychological training programs have been developed, there has been no systematic classification of these programs, leaving a lack of a structured understanding of their central goals, expected outcomes, and core focus areas (Smith et al., 2024). The challenge comes from the wide variety of these programs, which can target several aspects of human functioning, such as interpersonal communication (or lack thereof), collective problem-solving, and emotional regulation techniques, each posing a separate challenge. Moreover, without a common structure, it has not been possible to compare, judge, and change these programs to improve them (Pepitone et al., 1987; Cikara et al., 2022). Recent studies highlighted the importance of defining clear typologies to evaluate the efficacy of social-psychological interventions in different fields of application (González et al., 2022; Burke, 2006).

In this paper, we aim to provide a structured framework for understanding and categorizing the different forms of social-psychological training and their applications, grounded in the so-called Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF). The architecture of this framework draws on a rich body of existing literature and theoretical frameworks, making it highly relevant for practical implementation and scholarly research.

The DSTF incorporates social-psychological theory and recent findings on change behaviors, emotion regulation, and social influence. It helps practitioners to select, adapt, and implement appropriate training interventions for specific needs, contexts, and expected outcomes. The DSTF combines existing theoretical models with contemporary findings to better understand how social-psychological interventions can increase individual growth, collective resilience, and organizational success.

2. Methodology

A qualitative classification approach structured into four primary steps is the research methodology employed in this study to develop a well-founded and orderly understanding of social-psychological training programs. It enables a profound exploration of the various social-psychological interventions, their underlying frameworks, and their impact on behavior at the individual and group levels. The methodology fills gaps in the existing literature by offering a precisely organized classification of these training programs, thereby enhancing the existing body of knowledge at both practical and theoretical levels.

Literature Review: The first task is to perform a comprehensive literature review to identify the extant research on social-psychological training programs. Different types of programs and their various foci are among the results the review aims to focus on and develop. The most fundamental social-psychological theories, newer concepts, and studies are included to create a complete view. This review covers

material on the development of emotional intelligence, resilience, communication skills, and collaborative behaviors. It further reviews the different types of programs available for delivery in that area, from educational settings to the corporate and healthcare sectors, to develop a nuanced contextual understanding of the program's implementation setting.

Categorization: Step two involves grouping social-psychological training programs. Based on the literature review, programs fall into specific categories based on their general or primary goals, expected outcomes, and foci. This categorization is then further refined theoretically and empirically through existing studies (Smith, 2010; Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Common themes and patterns from the programs at different levels of self-regulation, individual communication, and teamwork were then considered. The categorization process is done through several iterations as new insights are also gained.

Analysis: The third step is to thoroughly analyze the major principles, techniques, and psychological theories of training. The theoretical understanding that the postulation and implementation of social-psychological interventions are premised on was this stage's most significant outcome. The analysis uses well-established theories of behavior change, such as Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1985, 1991), Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), Deci & Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1985,2000), Perkins & Berkowitz's Social Norms Theory (1986), and more contemporary psychological frameworks. The main focus areas include cognitive-behavioral strategies, motivational techniques, and models of emotional regulation that are now somewhat standard in such programs. Much of this research bases its analysis on the theoretical underpinnings of each training type and on how different psychological concepts enhance the effectiveness of social-psychological interventions. A study also provides insight into how different approaches support personal development and group cohesion simultaneously.

Synthesis: Categorized programs and theoretical analyses are synthesized in the last step. It is the framework that shows how every program and analysis type contributes to enhancing development in that part of the context. The synthesis aims to present a unified treatment for social-psychological training programs in different settings, with broad implications for personal growth, interpersonal relations, and organizational effectiveness. It helps relate the programs' impacts as diverse findings and, at the same time, links different training types that will complement each other in working toward behavioral development that is both inclusive and adaptive.

Based on a multi-level approach, the authors intend to carefully derive an empirically grounded classification of social-psychological training programs, supportive of method development in practice and research in this field. The mechanisms of such social-psychological interventions are better understood, along with general strategies for applying them in practice across a wide range of settings.

3. Contextualized The Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF)

We designed the Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF) to provide a model-structured framework that systematizes training interventions according to clearly defined five key parameters:

– Purpose/Outcome
– Context of Application
– Psychological Focus
– Methods and Techniques
– Target Audience

The choice of DSTF to categorize social psychological training is justified by the need for a structured, flexible, and contextually relevant framework that:

– Facilitates understanding of different approaches according to their purposes and applications;

– Supports adaptability to different social, organizational, and personal environments;

– Guides practice and research through empirically grounded categories that can be applied in real-world settings.

DSTF does not simply group programs thematically, but analyzes them through a functional prism, making it applicable to the development of new interventions and the evaluation of existing ones. The framework allows for the simultaneous integration of Individual Development (e.g., emotional intelligence), Group Dynamics (e.g., team building, mediation), and Societal Goals (e.g., inclusion, cultural sensitivity).

The DSTF (Table 1) offers a functionally valid and logically coherent architecture framework for social-psychological training based on an integrated approach. Through clearly defined parameters, it provides a framework for the effective design, analysis, and implementation of training programs while maintaining the flexibility needed to respond to a variety of social challenges. Ultimately, the DSTF offers a flexible tool for designing social-psychological training that meets individual and organizational needs and leads to enhanced behavior and outcomes.

4. Key Characteristics of the DSTF

The Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF) is built around fundamental characteristics that distinguish each social-psychological training program from the others. These characteristics help create a framework for understanding which training interventions would match specific goals and contexts. Focusing on the purpose and outcome of the training (i.e., why the training is done: what changes in society we are aiming with the training), on the context (where and when it is implemented), on the psychological focus (what behavior is applied in the intervention), on the methods and techniques used, and on the

target audience (who is the original target of the training) the DSTF emphasizes a contextual understanding of the training intervention, including social and psychological aspects, which can determine the success of the social-psychological intervention. All of these are crucial for delivering compelling, purposeful, and unique training programs that improve the attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups alike across various situations.

Purpose/Outcome: Each type of training is guided by its primary goal(s), such as improving communication skills, conflict resolution, and group dynamics. For example, social skills training (SST) enhances interpersonal skills among individuals with mental disorders or developmental disabilities (Gresham et al., 2004).

Context of application: This characteristic describes the location and form of training, specifically in interpersonal settings, group dynamics, organizational contexts, or conflict mediation. Knowing the context is essential because it can affect the benefits of the training program. Utilizing social psychology best practices and frameworks can help organizational behavior define the goal and target behaviors, and determine which metrics to measure to monitor (Luthans, 2002; Podsakoff, 2016; Ireland, 2025).

Psychological focus: Training programs are categorized as individual-focused, group-focused (e.g., training facilitators), or community/organization-based (i.e., training receiving organizations). Dynamic social impact theory, for example, suggests that locally relevant social instructions will structure culture, thereby requiring social systems to play a role in training (Rana, 2024).

Methods and Techniques: Each intervention typology inherently involves specific interventions that the DSTF considers (e.g., cognitive-behavioral techniques, social learning techniques, conflict mediation, or cultural sensitivity training). These methods are chosen based on their relevance to the training goals and the audience's needs. For instance, the ACCESS model incorporates concepts and findings from the adult education and training literature to offer actionable recommendations for training in evidence-based psychosocial treatments (Stirman et al., 2010).

Table 1. The Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF)

Training Category	Types of Trainings	Key Characteristics
Interpersonal & Communication Skills	Interpersonal Skills, Assertiveness, Nonverbal Communication, Digital Communications, Impression Management, Motivational Interviewing, EQ.	**Goals:** Effective communication and emotional understanding. **Outcomes:** Improved interactions and empathy. **Focus:** Active listening, EQ, conflict resolution.
Group & Team Dynamics	Team Building, Leadership & Influence, Social Support Systems, Group Facilitation, Psychological Safety & Trust Building, Crisis Intervention & Trauma-Informed.	**Goals:** Optimize collaboration and trust. **Outcomes:** Better teamwork and effective leadership. **Focus:** Group behavior, cooperation, teamwork.
Conflict Management & Resolution	Conflict Resolution & Negotiation, Mediation, Restorative Justice, Behavioral Modification, Risk & Decision-making in Social Context.	**Goals:** Strategies to manage and resolve conflicts. **Outcomes:** Reduced tension, constructive resolution. **Focus:** Negotiation, pressure decision-making.
Diversity, Inclusion & Social Awareness	Diversity & Inclusion, Cross-Cultural Communication, Social Identity, Cultural Competency, Empathy Development.	**Goals:** Respect for diverse social identities. **Outcomes:** Increased inclusivity and reduced bias. **Focus:** Cultural competency, bias reduction.
Behavioral Change & Psych. Development	Attitude Modification, Social Perception & Cognitive Bias, Social Learning, Persuasion, Influence, Ethical Decision-Making, Power & Status Awareness.	**Goals:** Foster positive behavioral changes. **Outcomes:** Altered attitudes, enhanced personal growth. **Focus:** Social influence, cognitive biases.
Support, Well-Being & Resilience	Stress Management, Behavioral Economics, Social Support & Community Building, Adaptive Skills for Specific Populations.	**Goals:** Build mental resilience and social support. **Outcomes:** Greater psychological safety, better coping. **Focus:** Mental health, crisis intervention.

Target Audience: The intended participants of a training program are an essential distinction: Teaching leaders is very different from teaching employees; self-improvement training is not the same as training for people locked in trauma or stress. Tailoring training to the audience is vital to ensure it is relevant and practical. Psychology plays a key role in the workplace by helping managers select, support, motivate, and train employees, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness.

The DSTF offers a clear, understandable taxonomy by centering on these principles. These serve different roles in laboring the particular social-psychological characteristics of behavior, interaction, and social dynamics. This framework integrates the development of the individual (for instance, emotional intelligence and communication skills) and the group (for example, conflict resolution and team building). It recognizes, however, that broader societal issues (for instance, diversity, inclusion, and community building) are also critical to the success of training programs. The DSTF clusters' training programs are logical, goal-oriented blocks that follow general social-psychological patterns, thereby improving effectiveness and relevance. Based on this framework, the following section provides an overview of how the different types of social-psychological training relate to one another, dividing them into six specific categories. Based on their central goals, expected outcomes, and focus areas, this classification provides structured guidance for understanding and implementing these training programs.

5. Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF): Results and Implications

This topic presents the results of classifying social-psycho into six social-psycho training types using the Dynamic Social-Psychological Training Framework (DSTF). These categories reflect the much larger mission, expected impacts, and foci of the training programs.

Results demonstrate that the typology provides an overarching framework for synthesizing diverse social-psychological training interventions applicable across settings and populations.

5.1. Training in Interpersonal and Communication Skills

The first category focuses on improving social interactions and skills. The objective is to develop skills in effective communication (self-expression) and emotional awareness (Goleman, 2006). Working in the PR/Communications/Marketing domain emphasizes skills in other areas, including active listening, verbal and nonverbal communication, self-presentation, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution (Kidwell, 2014). Such training is expected to enhance personal interactions and increase empathy, thereby strengthening interpersonal relationships (Deveugele, 2015). These outcomes are essential for building more cohesive and constructive relationships in both personal and professional contexts. The training types on social and emotional intelligence highlight the significance

of these skills in developing practical communication skills and mediating conflict within social dynamics.

5.2. Group and Team Dynamics Training

The second category maximizes group or team collaboration, trust, and performance. Such training enhances collaboration, fosters group solidarity, and provides a realistic leadership experience (Tuckman, 1965; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Forsyth, 2014). Based on our reading on group behavior, leadership, trust-building, coopetition, and teamwork, the goal is to improve group dynamics. Synchronized and positive group dynamics are among the main factors contributing to the demonstrated organizational effectiveness across all its dimensions (Kalinov, 2016). Much depends on the training results regarding group and team dynamics for teams to work together effectively, so that a team can successfully share work. Such training creates an environment of positive collaboration and productivity when undertaken across these central themes.

5.3. Conflict Management and Resolution

Conflict management and resolution programs provide individuals with strategies for addressing and resolving conflicts between two people or groups. Therefore, the objectives of this training category are to equip participants with tools to handle disputes constructively and manage disagreements to achieve positive outcomes (Deutsch & Fritz, 2006). Training in this aspect usually hinges on relevant skills such as conflict mediation, negotiation, pressure decision-making, and restorative justice practices (Moore, 2014). These programs are expected to lead to more constructive ways of resolving conflict, reducing team tension, and enabling better decision-making in moments of distress. Conflict management is critical to healthy interpersonal and group relationships -especially in high-pressure environments.

5.4. Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Awareness

The 4th training category, Understanding Cultural Competence, encourages understanding, empathy, and respect for diverse social identities and cultural diversity. Incorporating or practicing these principles provides a greater sense of inclusion, mitigates bias, and promotes intercultural relations among different organizations or social enterprises (Cox & Blake, 1991). Diversity, inclusion, and social awareness training goals focus on improving cultural competency, increasing social awareness, and developing bias-reduction strategies (Sue et al., 2009). The results of such training are critical for creating a more harmonious and inclusive environment. Such participants exhibit higher empathic concern, greater awareness of pluralistic social identities, and more effective communication across cultural boundaries (Dovidio et al., 2010).

5.5. Behavioral Change

The behavioral change and psychological development programs encourage desirable behaviors and choices among people. The goal of this type of training is to promote more adaptive and effective cognitive strategies, leading to a significant

and permanent behavioral transformation (Ajzen et al., 2018). Using the broader notion of behaviorism, several concepts have entered the lexicon of psychology, motivation, education, and the general vernacular. The most common concepts are stimulus and response, including conditional (controlled) and unconditional (random or uncontrolled) stimuli (Heimlich & Ardoin, 2008). Across domains, interventions designed to change individual determinants can be ordered by increasing impact as those targeting knowledge, general skills, general attitudes, beliefs, emotions, behavioural skills, behavioural attitudes, and habits (Albarracin et al., 2024).

5.6. Support, wellness and resilience

The last category emphasizes human psychological resilience and emotional and social well-being. These types of training are intended to improve individuals' capacity to handle pressure, demonstrate emotional resilience, and tap into support from networks (Kaur, 2024). These centers usually focus on stress management, mental health, resilience-building, and crisis intervention techniques.

Such programs have also been shown to foster high psychological safety among participants and to be perceived as increasing coping and support within their community or team (Bonanno, 2004).

Conclusion

The division of training approaches into six categories, in an extensive and structured manner, provides a taxonomy that facilitates their description and implementation across a wide range of real-life situations. Success criteria and outcomes for each category are designed to enhance key social and psychological skills.

Simply put, the DSTF examines social-psychological training as much more than just being able to articulate oneself or work better with others. It touches on greater resilience and well-being. Through the framework's scalability lens, this provides a framework for understanding both personal development and group success across social, organizational, and relational contexts. This aims to systematically explain the different types of training available and illustrate how each addresses various aspects of human behavior and social interaction. For instance, interpersonal skills and communication training emphasize communication, emotional training, interaction with people, and the development of empathy (Goleman, 2006).

In addition, the construction of group dynamics and teams fosters collaboration, and the opportunity to improve teamwork and leadership is one of the aspects of structure formation in Group and Team Dynamics Training. Both the personal and work aspects need to evolve into a flow of categorized skills, emphasizing the importance of the social fundamentals.

It further enhances this model's applicability by incorporating well-established social-psychological theories into practical training. An example is Ajzen's

Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), which explains the links between beliefs and behavior. It is crucial to shape programs that change behavior and resolve conflicts. Theoretical foundations inform evidence- and context-based solutions to real-world problems through training interventions.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Awareness Training have become of utmost importance in the current globalized society. Nevertheless, established research on actionable, culturally responsible interventions that lessen bias and create inclusive spaces is well worth the investment (Sue et al., 2009; Dovidio et al., 2010). This results in a better understanding of identity and social relations, particularly in multiethnic environments, ultimately fostering overall social harmony and workplace cohesion (Cox & Blake, 1991).

In addition, social-psychological training is an effective means of building resilience and mental health. With organizational settings increasingly challenged by Stress and Burnout, Support, Well-being, and Resilience, training is paramount. Such training is very contemporary in organizations at present, as Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory (2001) holds that positive emotions broaden a person's capabilities and resources, enabling them to cope better and build psychological resilience over time.

This framework is essential in the long term and can help practitioners, educators, and organizations with specialized training interventions focused on specific learning outcomes. The DSTF offers an active and flexible framework to inform the development of evidence-based interventions, as the social-psychological needs of people and networks are in continuous flux.

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