In this thesis, pre-school teachers' perceived control is examined in relation to problem behaviours of children and the actions of teachers in the classroom. In addition, other factors that are thought to relate to teachers' perceived control were studied.

The results of Study I indicate that pre-school teachers' high perceived control was related to high intentions to act in the event of child behaviour problems. Teachers' high satisfaction with their work was also related to high perceived control. Study II showed that low perceived control was associated with having a high proportion of children with a high level of externalizing behaviours and of boys in the classroom. Study III shows that children who had a high level of externalizing behaviours at the beginning and throughout the school year had teachers with low perceived control. Teachers' perceived control was not related to their perception of internalizing behaviours in the same way as to externalizing behaviours and it was unrelated to a change in any direction of problem behaviours. Concerning changes in problem behaviours, no other factor was found, except a low child to adult ratio for a positive change of internalizing behaviours. In Study IV, the aim was to examine naturally occurring child–teacher interactions. Teachers' responding with commands to children was associated with teachers' low perceived control, whereas restrictive teacher responses were not related to teachers' perceived control.

The present study indicates that teachers' perceptions of children are important for their perceived control. It provides evidence that teachers' low perceived control is associated with their difficulties in handling externalizing behaviours and the behaviour of the boys in the classroom. Responding to problem behaviours can be explained by teachers' perceived control, and their perception of a child's sex and externalizing behaviours.

Stereotypes: Suppression, forgetting, and false memory

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Doctoral dissertation, Department of Psychology, Uppsala University, Sweden, 2003. ISSN 0282-7492; 122, ISBN: 91-554-5526-3

This thesis presents four studies investigating: 1) whether incidentally primed control-related words can attenuate the impact of activated stereotypes on subsequent evaluation of a target person, 2) the impact of motivated forgetting on the recall of stereotypically congruent and incongruent information, and 3) the impact of a directed forgetting instruction on the false recall and recognition of nonpresented stereotypical information.

In three experiments, Study I showed that participants initially primed with the social category, immigrant, and subsequently primed with words that were evocative of control or self-control, made less negative impression of a target displaying ambiguous behaviors than participants not exposed to such words.

Study II, using a directed-forgetting paradigm, demonstrated in two experiments that participants subliminally primed with Swedish facial photographs who later studied stereotypically incongruent words roughly recalled an equal number of items regardless of the “forget” or “remember” instructions.

Study III showed that participants primed with the social category, immigrant and then studied a list of stereotypically related and unrelated words falsely recognized more non-presented stereotypical words when they were furnished with a “forget” than a “remember” instruction. Similarly, Study IV (Experiment 2) demonstrated that participants primed with the social category, immigrant, but not with a neutral category, falsely recalled more non-presented stereotypical words when their cognitive capacity was depleted through a concurrent memory load task.

The thesis presents a review and a discussion of some of the theoretical underpinnings of the extant literature on stereotyping and intergroup relations and of the social implications of the present findings.

Recurrent headache among Swedish adolescents: Psychosocial factors, coping and effects of relaxation treatment

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Doctoral dissertation, Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences, Uppsala University, Sweden, 2003. ISSN 0282-7492; 119, ISBN: 91-554-5504-2

Overall aims of the present thesis were to study the prevalence and psychosocial impact of recurrent headache within a school population in comparison with other types of pain and to examine the use and efficacy of various coping strategies. Further aims were to compare the effects of relaxation treatment among adolescents with recurrent headache to a waiting-list control group, and finally to examine the efficacy of relaxation training administered in a school setting.