

History and Methods

Greek origins of Western thought

- Establishment of rigour in analytical thinking, critical evaluation of arguments.
- Pythagoras → numbers explained the universe, first with the mind-body dualism.
- Plato → math, theory of forms, knowledge is brought into the body with the soul ∴ introspection is the way to truth.
- Aristotle → first to examine such topics as memory, sensation, sleep, dreams, geriatrics and learning. The mind must analyse information from the senses to produce knowledge (rational empiricism).

Dark to Middle Ages

- This period effectively put a stop to open inquiry concerning the nature of human beings.
- The role of human reason was down played in favour of adherence to faith as espoused by the Church.

Renaissance Humanism

- A period of intellectualism, dogma was no longer unchallenged.
- Beginnings of modern science.

Rationalism, empiricism and synthesis

- Rationalism in Descartes
 - Reductionism → divide complex situations into simple components and solve.
 - Subjectivity was regarded as respectable, paved the way for scientific study of consciousness.
- Empiricism in Locke and Hume
 - The science of human beings must be founded on experience and observation.
 - “Tabula rasa” → people are blank slates, but experiences are central.
- Synthesis in Kant
 - Raised the problem of subject/object in study of humans – can we be both?

Structuralism

- Attempted to use introspection to uncover the basic elements of consciousness.

Functionalism

- Looked for explanations of psychological processes in their role in helping the individual adapt to the environment.

Psychodynamic perspective

- Sigmund Freud
- Behaviour is the result of unconscious processes, motivation, and early experiences.
- Methods → interpretation of verbal discourse, dreams, fantasies, slips of the tongue.
- Problems → Too deterministic, difficult to objectively test the theory.

Behaviourist perspective

- John Watson (founder), BF Skinner (very prominent)
- Psychology is a science ∴ should be the study of observational behaviour only.
- Behaviour is learned and selected by its environmental consequences.

Humanistic perspective

- Carl Rogers
- Emphasis on self-actualisation, people are unique, person-centric.

- Behaviour and experience are shaped by the need to self-actualise.
- Problems → very vague and not scientifically based.

Cognitive perspective

- Interested in how people perceive, process, retrieve and utilise information.
- The methods used are experimental but done in such a way as to infer mental processes which themselves are not observed.

Evolutionary perspective

- Charles Darwin
- Asserts that human psychological traits and characteristics exist because they enable survival.
- Acknowledges the role of genetics, human and social processes must take into account of evolutionary origins, e.g. mating, aggression.

Biological perspective

- Biological processes underlying behaviour.

Motivation – Overview and Appetite

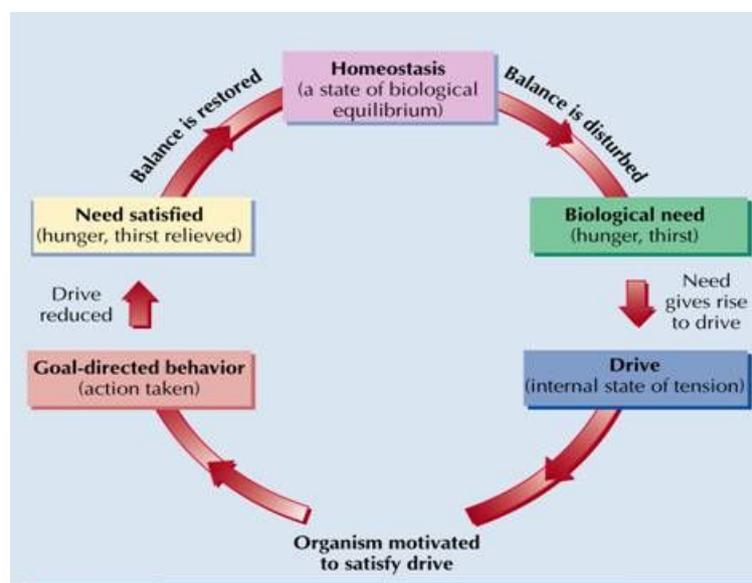
Overview

What is motivation?

- Motivation is the driver of directed behaviours → particularly our needs and wants.
- It involved both biological (primary) and social (secondary) motives.
- Approach motivation → drive propels engagement in some behaviours.
- Avoidance motivation → drive repels engagement in other behaviours.
- The psychodynamic perspective → behaviours are motivated by conscious and unconscious desires, which are not in unison.

Drive Reduction Theories

- Thirst, hunger and sexual frustration drive us to reduce the averseness of such states.
- Some drives are hierarchical → thirst satisfaction > hunger satisfaction.
- Motivated to maintain psychological homeostasis.



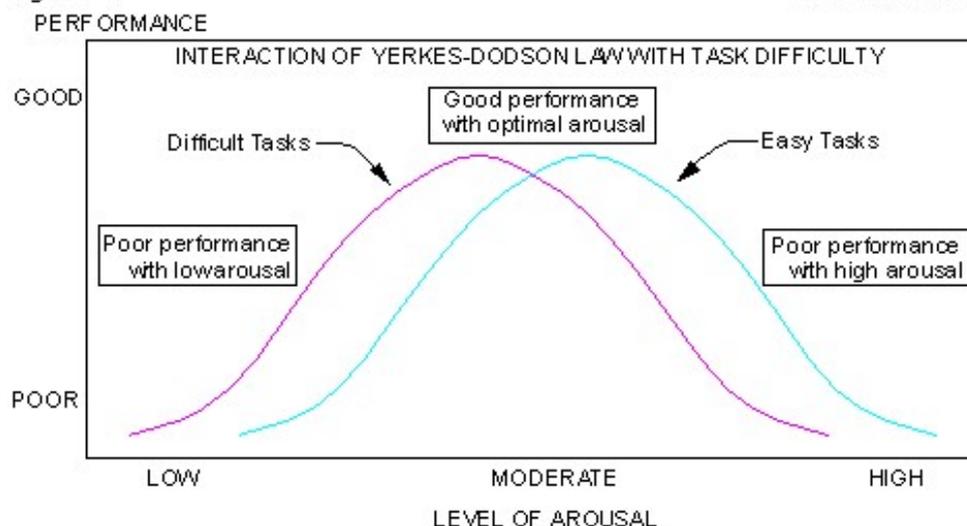
- Homeostasis → Biological need → Drive → Goal-oriented behaviour → Need satisfied → Homeostasis.

Yerkes-Dodson Law

- Arousal affects the strength of drives.
- Under-arousal causes a “stimulus hunger” → a drive of stimulation, can increase curiosity.

Figure 8 - 7

Hamilton - Timmons



Clashing desires

- Approach-approach conflict → two attractive alternatives, both which are desirable.
- Avoidance-avoidance conflict → two unattractive alternatives (failing an exam vs studying for it)
- Approach-avoidance conflict → the same goal pulls you to engage in it but also makes you want to avoid it (approaching an attractive person vs fear of rejection).

Incentive Theories

- Drive reduction theories are inadequate → people repeatedly engage in behaviour despite satisfaction of drives.
- Incentive theories build of DRT → driven by positive goals.
- Differentiate between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation → intrinsic motivation can be devalued by extrinsic reinforcements.

Sexual motivation

- Human sexual desire, drive for sexual activity and pleasure.
- Libido needs NT dopamine (testosterone and protein DRD4).
- Strong genetic influence, as well as culture and society.
- Sexual motivation cycle → desire, excitement, orgasm, resolution.

Appetite

Body

Energy Levels

- 2 types of energy storage modes → short term using glucose, long term using fat.
- Changes in body fat affect appetite → fat cells secrete a hormone 'leptin'.
- More fat cells → more leptin ∴ suppresses appetite.
- Less fat cells → less leptin ∴ allows food intake to increase.

Sensation

- Food flavour drives intake
- Sensory specific satiety slows intake of a meal → the more we eat a specific food, the more our liking for it declines.

Digestive organs

- Signals sent by muscles to the brain about the status of digestion
 - Stomach is distended or empty
 - Gut and stomach taste receptors
 - Gut bacterial signals of fat content
- These signals are communicated through nerves, hormones, nutrients.

Brain

Neurochemicals

- Dopamine and serotonin → 2 important chemicals in modulating eating.
- Increased levels of both suppress appetite.
- Leptin stimulates corticotrophin releasing hormone in the brain ∴ suppressing appetite.
- Ghrelin stimulates release of NY in the brain ∴ increasing appetite.

Locations

- Hypothalamus
 - Ventromedial nucleus → stop eating
 - Lateral hypothalamus → start eating.