

Week 1: Introduction to Motivation

Defining Motivation

- Difficult to define.
- Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981): gathered 102 defining/criticizing statements regarding motivation.
- Motivation = the “why” of behaviour.
- Deckers (2010) says that “motivation refers to the “why” of behaviour, not the “how”. Why do we engage in certain behaviours and have certain feelings and thoughts but not others?”
- Reeve (2009) says that “the study of motivation concerns those processes that give behaviour its energy and direction”.

Reeve (2009)

- To understand behaviour, we firstly need to understand what causes and directs it (the function of the behaviour).

1. **Direction/Cause.**

- **Initiation:** why does behaviour start?
- **Persistence:** once begun, why is behaviour sustained over time?
- **Goal-directedness:** why is behaviour directed towards some goals yet away from others?
- **Change:** why does behaviour change its direction?
- **Termination:** why does behaviour stop?

- ### 2. **Energy:** why is desire strong and resilient at one time yet weak and fragile at another time?

Kinds of Behaviour

- Our own behaviour:

- Feeling motivated or unmotivated.
 - Striving to achieve our goals.
 - Overcoming motivational difficulties.
- Unusual behaviours:
 - People do weird stuff.
 - Behaviours we may class as weird or extreme i.e. criminal behaviour.
 - Everyday behaviours:
 - Psychology is interested in understanding those things that we take for granted.
 - We don't think about general motivation very often, or the everyday behaviours that are guided by motivations.

Motivation Theory Prior To 20th Century

The Source of Behavioural Motivation

- Three general types of historical theories regarding the source of behavioural motivation.

Mechanistic	Appetitive	Rational
Behaviour is hard-wired/fixed. This is the idea that we do a behaviour because we have evolved to do so.	Behaviour is driven by desires and needs.	Behaviour is driven by rational/ conscious thought.
Genetically determined.	Rewards and punishment - energy determined by consequence.	Intellect and rationality.
Examples: reflexes and instincts.	Examples: hunger, sex, pleasure/pain.	Example: our knowledge of right and wrong.

Ancient Greeks

Socrates

- Socrates believed in rational human beings.

- We are not mindlessly driven by our passions. As our intellect develops, it learns to control our passion.
- What we desire to do is based upon what our intellect tells us is the right thing to do.
- Rational > appetitive.

Plato's Tripartite Theory

- The 'soul' (or mind or psyche) is composed of three hierarchically arranged parts:
 - **Appetitive aspect:** bodily appetites and desires (hunger, sex, etc).
 - **Competitive aspect:** socially referenced standards (honour, shame, etc).
 - **Calculating aspect:** decision-making capacities (reason, choosing).
- Each controls different aspects of behaviour.
- Higher aspects can regulate lower aspects or overcome them.

Aristotle's Tripartite Theory

- Agreed with Plato but named them differently:
 - **Nutritive:** impulsive, irrational, animal-like ("bodily urges necessary for the maintenance of life").
 - **Sensitive:** still 'bodily', but regulated pleasure and pain.
 - **Rational:** unique to humans - intellectual abilities and volitional control (the will).
- Rationality > desires or emotions.
- Core point is that the 'calculating' or 'rational' aspects can control the lower elements. Rationality trumps desires or emotions.

Hedonism (Democritus and Epicurus)

- Our desires/emotions drive us - we are motivated to seek pleasure and avoid pain.
- We behave so as to obtain the greatest amount of pleasure.
- Appetitive > rationality.

- Our thoughts are subservient to our desires.

Medieval (Middle Ages): The Rise of Dualism

- Thomas-Aquinas (and other theologians).
3. Idea that there were two core aspects to behaviour - bodily (animal-like) and soul.
 4. Wishes to firmly differentiate humans and animals.
 5. Dualist theory.
 - Body (animal): irrational, impulsive, biologically-driven.
 - Motivations arising from drives, desires, pleasure/pain.
 - Soul/mind (uniquely human): rational, intelligent, spiritual.
 - Motivations arising from rational thought.

1600's: Descartes' Dualism

- Passive and active aspects of motivation.
- Body = motivationally **passive**.
 - Physical (follows law of physics) - motivated by satisfying nutritive needs.
 - Responds mechanistically to the environment through senses, reflexes, and physiology.
 - **Hydraulic mechanism**: cerebrospinal fluid from the ventricles flowing through nerves controls actions.
- Mind/soul = motivationally **active**: non-physical (not subject to physical laws) - motivated by 'the will'.
- 300 years of impact, investigations separated into:
 - Understanding of the **reactive** mechanisms of the body (physiology).
 - Understanding of the **purposive**, intentional thoughts of the mind (philosophy).

Early/Mid 1800's

1800's PHYSIOLOGY

- Explosion of interest in automatic/mechanistic approaches to behaviour.
- Nervous system physiology (electrophysiology).
- Rise of science:
 - Galvani (1780's): electrical stimulation causes frog leg to twitch ('electricity' is a fluid flowing through the veins - similar to Descartes).
 - DuBois-Reymond (1849): confirmed electrical nature of nerve impulse using a galvanometer.
 - Helmholtz (1852): measured speed of nerve impulse for the first time.

1800's ANATOMY

- Nervous system anatomy: Bell (1811) and Magendie (1822)
 - Sensory and motor nerves are separate (sensory nerves enter spinal cord on posterior side, motor nerves exit on anterior side).
 - Foundation for sense-response approaches to behaviour.
- However, dualism still ruled until Darwinian evolution in the mid-1800's.

Darwinian Evolution

- Challenged dualism.
- Evolution applies to humans as well as animals, and mind as well as body.
- Long-standing separation of animals (automatons) and humans (rational) was questioned.
- Instincts as a theoretical bridge between humans and animals.

20th Century Themes

Motivation Theory Post-Darwin

Original Debate	Mechanistic	Appetitive	Rational
Post-Darwinian Fields of Study	Instinct theories and ethology.	Behaviourism.	Structuralism, critics of behaviourism.
Current Fields of Study	Cognitive ethology, neuro-ethology, evolutionary psychology, behavioural ecology.	Learning theory.	Cognitive and humanistic psychology.
Typically described as...	Physiological/biological/evolutionary approaches to motivation.	Behavioural/learning approaches to motivation.	Cognitive/humanistic approaches to motivation.
Investigate	The role of genetics in behaviour.	The role of learning in behaviour.	The role of cognition and/or agency (humanism) in behaviour.
Core concept	Genetics.	Learning.	Cognition.

[A Disunited Legacy of 'Different Perspectives'](#)

- The real question we will be exploring is how do we identify what is causing a behaviour whether it be innate or conscious? Is it genetic, learning, or cognitive?
- Incorrect to take any one side on these debates as:
 - Some behaviours are best explained one way, others another way.
 - Many behaviours require an understanding of all three to fully explain.
- Psychology is:
 - **Traditional definition:** science of the body and mind.
 - This is disjointed as it leaves out important aspects.
 - 'Mind' is not adequately defined.
 - Poor definition because it makes them seem separate. Also, psychology studies other things than just the mind i.e. interaction with the environment.
 - **Martin's definition:** the study of the functional interaction between nervous systems and their environment.

[Nervous Systems and Environment](#)

- Nervous system refers to the central and peripheral.
- Two kinds of environments the nervous system interacts with.
- **Exogenous (external) environment:**
 - Activation of sensory mechanisms by forces/chemicals external to the body (vision, audition, olfaction, somatosensory, taste).
 - Activation of muscles (includes verbal/visual communication).
 - Exogenous responses include responses from or with the outside world.
- **Endogenous (internal, bodily, somatic) environment:**
 - Activation of internal sensory mechanisms (glucoreceptors, proprioceptive receptors, etc).
 - Alteration of internal bodily states through release of hormones and regulation of internal organs (heart rate, respiration, etc).
- **Functional 'psychological' process:** mapping the flow of information -
 - Sense → internal physiological mechanism → response.
 - From sensory mechanisms through internal mechanisms which lead to responses.
 - Study of psychology is about trying to understand the nervous system.
 - Endogenous stimuli stimulate exogenous response. Both are interactional and support survival (highly functional).

Motivation

- Understanding motivation requires us to understand three things:
 6. The nature of the mechanisms we have (the ways in which things can be important to us).
 7. The way in which things gain relevance. That is how relevance becomes associated.
 8. The way particular responses become associated with drives or emotions.

- Motivational mechanisms: intervening processes which represent the 'relevance' of sensory information to the organism - sensations, emotions, drives, etc.
- Thus, relevance is the key factor that determines behaviour (concept-relevance association, relevance-repose association).