

Human emotion and motivation

Psychology



Human Emotion and Motivation

A particular definition of emotion is hard to come by but the general direction given by scientists such as Cornelius (1996) comes across as a mental state which is affected by changes in the environment or the nervous system and creates a psychological response for the person going through that emotion.

Emotions may have several components such as genetics, physiology, cultural and social background as well as individual thinking about certain events or situations that cause people to react differently to the same event.

The genetic component of emotion is a rather recent discovery although genetic links between emotional states or mental conditions which ran in a family had been known for years. However, recent studies have shown that things such as being emotionally depressed or even having aggressive emotions can be connected with the genes of an individual. The same emotions can be linked to personal motivation since a clinically depressed person would be motivated to do very little in his/her life (Angst and Cassano, 2005).

Similarly, the physiology of a person can be an influence on both motivation and the emotional state of the person. For example, a person who has been given an injection of adrenaline to their bloodstream would likely feel more aroused emotionally with a stimulus than a person who has not received the same injection. Such chemicals can also be produced by the body in response to external factors such as the fight or flee response (Cornelius, 1996). A person who tends to think aggressively about situations may be

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more influenced by emotions which lead to conflicts while a person seeking to avoid conflict would focus his/her emotions on thinking more positively. At the same time, culture can also influence emotions that a person has especially when it comes to things which have been made a part of the culture with its traditions and teachings. For instance, seeing the national team lose a match or a game may make a person quite sad and even cause them to be depressed for while if the culture is deeply connected with the game. In the same manner, certain emotional responses can be learned as a matter of course with education and training. Greif is one such emotion which may depend on how public a person can make their display of grief and how the culture reacts to displays of personal grief (Cornelius, 1996). Emotions are still not fully understood by science and even though a lot of progress has been made in terms of how emotions and emotional states can be controlled to some extent through medical means, a lot remains to be done (Angst and Cassano, 2005). As scientist better understand human emotion and motivation they can create tools which allow people to control their reactions and emotions to the betterment of individuals. I feel that in and of themselves, emotions are simply reactions which are created within us and are neither good nor bad, it is our reaction to these emotions which can have a negative or positive effect on us.

Works Cited

Cornelius, R. (1996). *The science of emotion*. Prentice Hall.

Angst, J. and Cassano, G. (2005). The mood spectrum: improving the diagnosis of bipolar disorder. *Bipolar Disorders*, 4(7), 4-12.