

# Ib psychology essay; bioa ethics

Science



**ASSIGN  
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Discuss ethical considerations related to research studies at the biological level of analysis. As with any aspect of Psychology that uses research studies, studies in the Biological Level of Analysis require the researcher to follow main ethical guidelines. While all the guidelines should be followed and respected, there are quite a few of which should be taken into extra careful consideration, although so is not always the case. To keep the research in ethical bounds, most psychologists agree to follow a certain code of ethics in order to abstain from inhumane experiments and studies.

Deception, debriefing, and exploitation of animals in the use of invasive techniques, all come into play as significant considerations at this level. Sometimes, however, it is not possible for researchers to always follow that code as it may affect their studies' results. For example in a Schachter and Singer (1962) experimental study -intending to challenge several theories of emotion- volunteers were recruited to receive a vitamin injection and informed that they would be participating in vision experiments.

In reality, three groups received an injection of adrenaline, and those of a fourth were given placebo injections. Even worse, one of the groups was not told about even a single possible side effect. Despite a safe amount of adrenalin, fully informed consent could not be obtained since it could influence and alter the overall results, attributing to in fact a characteristic placebo effect. This gives researchers justification of their use of deception in an attempt to keep their work valid and controversy-free.

Researchers use placebos during studies to help them understand the effectiveness of a new drug or some other treatment on a certain condition. A placebo is a seemingly legitimate medical treatment that is in fact fake

and has no physical affect whatsoever on an individual; a response to which can be positive or negative. The relationship between the mind and body has been the focus of research on the placebo effect.

One of its most common theories is that the effect is due to the individual's expectations: anticipating a particular outcome from, for example, a pill can actually lead to the body's own chemical makeup carrying that out to some extent if not exactly. The third principle of the biological level of analysis states that animal research may inform our understanding of behavior; suggesting that we share a common ancestor, we can therefore make human inferences based on that. There is significant controversy concerning the use of animals in such acts and the understanding of its advantages and namely disadvantages. And so, another group of studies to consider in terms of ethical issues is research involving animals. It is an obvious solution to quite a number of researchers' problems to simply harm animals rather than resort to humans. However, it is widely believed that all animal research is unethical primarily due to the lack of ability to obtain informed consent on behalf of the animals. In addition to this, it is not possible for researchers to predict the amount of harm or pain that the animal will undergo - if any.

In specific, numerous experiments comprising of animals to study brain correlations have been conducted. Hetherington and Ranson were in charge of such an experimental study, in 1942, in testing the function of the hypothalamus. Upon the lesioning of the hypothalamus, the rats' appetites were distorted which resulted in a doubling of their weight. From this, researchers concluded the belief that the hypothalamus is indeed

responsible for the regulation of appetite or hunger. The damage done however was not reversible in any sense.

This again is a question of ethics. Thus, there is a range of ethical issues that researchers working at The Biological Level of Analysis must have in mind at all times, ready to look through rather than looking past. Never-ending debates present for almost every topic, study, or discovery, may never really cease to exist. Nonetheless, this just emphasizes the need for extra effort to be put in... People define ethics in the way that personally suits them, and this in its own way is a perfect example of lack of ethics, as well as decorum.