

Define the biological influences of psychology

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Motivation is behind every behavior. The principle of cause-effect is apparent in the study of motivation and behavior: motivation is the cause or the “why”, and behavior is the effect. Thus it is motivation that gives direction and thrust to our behavior. Without motivation, behavior may not occur (Atkinson et al, 1983).

Need Theory - A need is defined as a specific state within the organism that may activate behavior to satisfy the need; they are often related to the depletion of essential body substances; a state or condition which indicates the lack of something vital or desired which the organism will strive to obtain; it can also mean the existence of an unpleasant condition, which has to be relieved or eliminated (Atkinson et al, 1983).

Learning Theory - Observational or Social Learning

Social learning theorist Albert Bandura has run experiments that show we acquire operants by observing the behavior of others. We may need some practice to refine the skills we acquire by observation. We may choose to allow these skills to lie latent. For example, we may not imitate aggressive behavior unless we are provoked and believe that we are more likely to be rewarded than punished for it. Observational learning may account for most human learning.

It is not mechanically acquired through reinforcement. We can learn by observation without engaging in overt responses at all. It appears sufficient to pay attention to the behavior of others. To explain how this occurs, Bandura suggests that four mental processes must be in operation; these processes are necessary for observation learning (Morris & Maisto, 1999).

Motives, according to Marx, originate either from a biological or a physiological source, or from an environmental influence.

A motive may arise from a biological need for food or water which will drive an individual to seek food when hungry or drink when thirsty. The tissues of the human body need these to function continuously. It will cease to live without sufficient nourishment. The hormonal substances in the blood which activate certain parts of the nervous system are other biological sources, for instance, the sex drive which is due to the presence of hormones secreted by the reproductive glands, the ovaries (in the female), and the testes present in the male (1976).