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Psychology

WORLD'S #1 ACADEMIC OUTLINE

PSYCHOLOGY

Essential principles, theories & concepts for developing a strong foundation in the study of human behavior & mental processes

INTRODUCTION

Experimental error or mistake is something that develops when experimental results cannot be reproduced as expected; experimental results must establish whether there is an error in the experimental methodology or whether the experimental design is flawed; all relevant confounding variables, which would threaten the effect of the independent variable.

PSYCHOLOGY AS A SCIENCE

- Experiment:** A process in which a researcher controls one or more variables to discover the effect on other variables.
- Independent variable:** Manipulated and controlled by the researcher.
- Experimental and control groups:** The experimental group is exposed to the independent variable; otherwise, both groups are treated the same; this will show whether the change in the dependent variable is caused by the independent variable.
- Confounding variable:** An observed effect that may be due to an interesting third variable between the independent and dependent variables; the confounding variable must be experimentally controlled or, if possible, eliminated; otherwise, the observed results are flawed.
- Latent variable:** An unobservable variable that is inferred as the mediator between two observed events (e.g., inferring the experience of fear from certain measurable physiological activity responses); it is often difficult to avoid circular explanations when positing a latent variable.
- Subject variable:** A condition that is part of the subject's makeup and cannot be assigned randomly (e.g., sex, height, hair color); because these conditions cannot be randomized, causal conclusions cannot be derived from subject variable experiments.
- Quasi-experiment variable:** A characteristic that is not part of a subject's makeup and thus can be randomly assigned (e.g., whether the subject received a certain drug or a placebo).

TYPES OF STUDIES

- Descriptive studies:** Useful for describing behavior.
 - Case history:** A description of one individual.
 - Observation:**
 - Naturalistic:** The observation is done in the subject's natural environment.
 - Laboratory:** The observational setting is controlled by the researcher.
 - Surveys:** Include questionnaires and interviews.
- Basic research:**
 - The **reliability** of a test reflects the extent to which fluctuations in results are due to fluctuations in the underlying measured reality or are characteristic of the measuring device (the test) that should be improved.
 - Validity** refers to the extent to which a test measures what it purports to measure; the validity of a test must be empirically established.
- Cross-sectional studies** are **descriptive studies** that observe a single section of a population in order to detect various statistically significant tendencies (e.g., parenting tendencies in single-parent vs. the rest of the population).
- Longitudinal studies:** Studies in which the same variables on individuals are studied over a prolonged period in order to observe how the variables or patterns of interest may undergo change (e.g., the IQ of gifted children may be studied from infancy to old age to see how IQ changes and how it may correlate with learning ability over time).

LEARNING

CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

- Pavlov's studies:**
 - Unconditioned stimulus (UCS):** that is linked with an **unconditioned response (UR)** - salivation.
 - Neutral stimulus (NS):** paired to then paired with the UCS.
 - Conditioned stimulus (CS):** which elicits a **conditioned response (CR)** - salivation.
- Principles of classical conditioning:**
 - Extinction:** When the CS is not paired with the UCS, the CR will diminish.
 - Stimulus generalization:** Similar stimuli will elicit a response similar to the response to the CS.
 - Stimulus discrimination:** Similar stimuli will elicit a response different from the response to the CS.

OPERANT CONDITIONING

- Reinforcement (overall):** Any stimulus that follows a response and increases response probability.
 - Positive reinforcement:** The response is followed by the presentation of a reinforcing stimulus.
 - Negative reinforcement:** The response is followed by the removal of an aversive stimulus.
 - Punishment:** Any stimulus that follows a response and decreases response probability.
 - Primary of operant conditioning:**
 - Extinction:** The CS is no longer reinforced.
 - Stimulus generalization:** The response will occur to similar stimuli.
 - Stimulus discrimination:** The response does not occur to different stimuli.
 - Timing of reinforcers:** The manner in which an antecedent follows an action, the greater its effect.
 - Schedule of reinforcement:**
 - Continuous reinforcement:** a particular response is always reinforced.
 - Intermittent reinforcement:** a particular response is reinforced only some of the time.
 - Fixed-ratio (FR):** The response is reinforced after a fixed number of responses, which leads to a high response rate.
 - Variable-ratio (VR):** The response is reinforced after an average number of responses, which leads to a very high, steady response rate.
- Fixed interval (FI):** The response is reinforced after a fixed amount of time, which leads to a scalloped response pattern.
- Variable interval (VI):** The response is reinforced after a variable amount of time, which leads to a low, steady response rate.
- Shaping:** A method of reinforcing successive approximations to the desired response (e.g., rewarding a subject for standing in the general direction of a reward corner) path, and then successively rewarding the subject for corrections within the area.
- Chaining:** A method of connecting responses in a sequence of behaviors; at the end of the chain, there must always be a reinforcer and all behaviors must be previously conditioned into the organism's repertoire; the chain is constructed by beginning at the end and working backward.
- Cognitive behavior modification:** the principles of learning theory are applied to alter undesirable thoughts rather than only observable behaviors.
 - Social learning theory (Bandura):** The **five processes** that influence learning are attention, memory, behavior, and motivation, and the specific cognitive processes recognized are attraction, expectation, logical, verbal, and imagination.
 - Behavioral therapy (B.F. Skinner):** Behavioral behavior is due to a natural tendency; therapy focuses on the alteration of these learned habits.
 - Problem solving therapy:** Focuses on enhancing the patient's ability to make decisions and solve problems in stressful or difficult situations.
 - Behavioral reinforcement:** Patients are instructed to purposely perform undesirable symptomatic behaviors on command in an effort to decrease their ability to gain control over these behaviors.
 - Attentional therapy:** Attempts to facilitate the patient's ability to redistribute undesirable feelings and symptoms to something less threatening and more acceptable.

BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF PSYCHOLOGY

STRUCTURE OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Central nervous system (CNS):** brain and spinal cord.
- Peripheral nervous system (PNS):** sensory and motor nerves that transmit information and control the CNS with organs and limbs.
- Neurons:** transmit electrical messages.
 - Axon:** carries electrical signals and glands.
 - Parasympathetic:** Controls energy primarily responsible for maintaining passive metabolic processes (digestion, cell repair, heart rate, etc.).
 - Sympathetic:** Signals energy controls active processes, such as the "fight or flight" response.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Neurons** have cell bodies in the nervous system, made up of the following:
 - Cell body (soma):** large nucleus area.
 - Dendrites:** Receive information from other neurons.
 - Axon:** Sends information to other neurons.
 - Myelin sheath:** Insulates axons to enable faster transmission of information.
- Communication between neurons occurs at the synapse, the place where nerve impulses are transmitted from one neuron to another.**
 - The message travels through the axon to the **axon terminal** on the axon tip.
 - Neurotransmitters enter and release neurotransmitters into the **synaptic cleft**.
 - Neurotransmitters bind to receptor sites on the receiving dendrite, causing it to be either more or less likely to fire.

THE BRAIN

- Brainstem:**
 - Includes the medulla oblongata, pons, and reticular activating system, and cerebellum.
 - Responsible for reflexes, automatic behaviors.
- Midbrain:** Information center.
- Forebrain:** Includes the following:
 - Hypothalamus:** Controls sensory messages.
 - Hypothalamus:** Controls emotion and survival.
 - Pituitary gland:** Controls many other endocrine glands.
 - Cerebral cortex of the cerebrum:** which includes the:
 - Thoughtful lobe:** Controls visual information.
 - Visual lobe:** Controls sensory information.
 - Temporal lobe:** Controls auditory information.
 - Frontal lobe:** Controls motor information.
- Two brain hemispheres:**
 - Each one controls the opposite side of the body.
 - The left hemisphere is dominant for most people.



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Synopsis

The mind is more than just the brain, and its complexities still stump scientists. However, for students of introductory psychology, or those in advanced courses who would like a quick refresher, core psychological concepts are made clear in BarCharts[™] best-selling Psychology guide, which has been newly updated and expanded for this edition. Updated information and an additional panel, including new tables and illustrations, concisely explain concepts from basic brain anatomy to social roles and emotions.

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Customer Reviews

This chart is perfect for quick tips and explanations and makes for a perfect reference guide. The laminated pamphlet is perfect for a binder and can be reviewed without removal. I recommend this for anyone who loves Psychology or who is majoring in the course.

Extremely useful for someone in an introductory course in this subject. I keep it in the front of my binder, so it's on hand and easily accessible. Essentially contains the bare minimum must know facts for Psychology in general.

For a psych major, this is invaluable to have in my backpack for any time I need to jog my memory when I think something like "What's that mental disorder called?" Truly handy as an all purpose reference sheet.

This is a great source of information when you don't necessarily want to look through chapter to find something in your textbook. It is full of detail and great for Introductory Psychology students.

The chart has all the theories I was looking for to assist me as a counselor. The chart would be helpful for a student on graduate school.

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