Introduction to Motivation

Module 34

Motivation

Introduction to Motivation

- Instincts and Evolutionary Psychology
- Drives and Incentives
- Optimum Arousal
- A Hierarchy of Motivations
Motivation

Motivation is a need or desire that energizes behavior and directs it towards a goal.

Alan Ralston was motivated to cut his arm to free himself from a rock that pinned him down.

Perspectives on Motivation

Four perspectives to explain motivation include:

1. Instinct Theory.
2. Drive-Reduction Theory.
3. Arousal Theory.
4. Hierarchy of Motives.

Instincts & Evolutionary Psychology

Instincts are complex behaviors that have fixed patterns throughout species and are unlearnt (Tinbergen, 1951).

Where the woman can build different kinds of houses the bird builds only one kind of nest.

OBJECTIVE 34-1 | Define motivation as psychologists use the term today, and name four perspectives useful for studying motivated behaviors.

OBJECTIVE 34-2 | Discuss the similarities and differences between instinct theory and evolutionary perspective.
Drive-Reduction Theory

When the instinct theory of motivation failed it was replaced by drive-reduction theory. Physiological need creates an aroused tension state (a drive) that motivates an organism to satisfy the need (Hull, 1951).

Drive Reduction

Physiological aim of drive reduction is homeostasis – maintenance of steady internal state, e.g., maintenance of steady body temperature.

Incentive

Where our needs _push_, _incentives_ (positive or negative stimuli) _pull_ us in reducing our drives.

A food-deprived person who smells baking bread (incentive) feels strong hunger drive.
Optimum Arousal

Human motivation aims not to eliminate arousal but to seek optimum levels of arousal. Young monkeys and children are known to explore environment in the absence of a need-based drive.

Hierarch of Needs

Abraham Maslow (1970) suggested some needs have priority over others. Physiological needs like breathing, thirst and hunger come before psychological needs like achievement, self-esteem and need for recognition.

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OBJECTIVE 34-4 | Discuss the contribution of arousal theory to the study of motivation.

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OBJECTIVE 34-5 | Describe Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

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[Diagram of Maslow's hierarchy of needs]

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Hurricane Survivors