

Biological Basis of Human Behavior

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Abstract: the article discusses in detail the basics of human behavior from different points of view, it must also be remembered that the social aspects of human behavior are based on biological processes. In addition to this, a definition is given about behaviorism and its founder about J. Watson.

Keywords: behavior, human, Freud, taxis, reflex, Darwin, J. Watson, behaviorism.

What is a person: an animal created by the process of evolution, or a social being founded by society? In the book: *The Origin of Man and Sexual Selection*, Darwin writes: “We observed that reason and intuition, various feelings and abilities, such as love, memory, attention, curiosity, imitation, quick wit, etc., which a person is proud of, can be found in a rudimentary, and sometimes even in a well-developed state in animals.

The behavior of animals is expressed in taxis, reflexes, instincts. Taxis – motor reactions in response to a unilaterally acting stimulus, characteristic of freely moving organisms (moving a hand from a hot object, closing the eyes in a sudden bright light). Reflex – a stereotyped reaction of a living organism to a certain impact, occurring with the participation of the nervous system (saliva at the sight of food). Instinct – a set of hereditarily determined acts of behavior (the instinct of self-preservation). Instinct is usually opposed to reason, learning, as innate behavior – acquired. They are recommended to be hidden and suppressed. They are opposed to morality and reason. But in biology, instincts are innate programs of behavior. Animals are born with these programs, in the process of evolution these programs are improved.

Ancient Greek philosophers believed that a person is free to choose any path of action that dictates their mind. This approach is called rationalism, which still exists today. Thomas Aquinas believed that the behavior of an animal is strictly dictated by sensual desires, in contrast to a rational person. Rene Descartes in his *Passions of the Soul* (1649) wrote that animals are mechanical automata, while human behavior is influenced by a mechanical body and a rational mind. The concept of instinct as the prime mover of behavior was used by psychologists such as Freud (1915) and McDougall (1908).

Freud believed that behavior is based on the interaction of two energies: the force of life and the force of death. The first is aimed at self-preservation and the continuation of life, the second determines the aggressive actions of a person. Freud viewed them as instincts requiring external expression. According to McDougall, instincts are irrational and irresistible principles of behavior that direct the organism to achieve its goals. He singled out several instincts, and the emotions that accompany them: flight (fear), rejection (disgust), curiosity (surprise), pugnacity (anger).

Darwin considered instincts as complex reflexes formed from individual behavioral acts that are products of natural selection. Darwin's ideas served as the basis for the ideas of classical ethology, which were formulated by Lawrence and Tinbergen.

The data accumulated by ethology and genetics of behavior led to the rejection of the opposition between instinct and reason and to the creation of the modern concept of genetic behavior. All types of behavior are the result of genetic and environmental interactions. Instinctive behavior is formed on the basis of complexes of fixed actions that are triggered by specific signal stimuli (sign stimuli). Complexes of fixed actions are the object of research by ethologists. Fixed action complexes are stereotyped, rigid, predictable and highly organized sequences of actions that are manifested in all representatives of the same animal species.

Man inherited many instincts from his living ancestors. Many of them will never disappear, because they are needed, they still serve, forming the foundation of new rational activity.

Watson John (1878-1958) – American psychologist, founder of behaviorism, author of works on animal and human behavior, comparative psychology, popular science books on parenting, etc.

Behaviorism is a special direction in the psychology of humans and animals, literally – the science of behavior. In England in the 1990s, Lloyd Morgan began experimenting on animal behavior. He put the observed animals in such conditions under which they had to solve a certain problem, for example, to lift the latch in order to leave the fenced area. In all cases, he found that the solution of a problem began with a chaotic activity, with trial and error, which accidentally led to the right solution. If the animals were given the same problem again and again, then, in the end, they learned to solve it without errors: the animals developed a more or less perfect habit. In other words, Morgan's method was truly genetic. Morgan's experiments prompted Thorndike in America to do his work (1898). During the next decade, the question of «consciousness» in animals was raised. Watson, in his article «Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It», was the first to point out the possibility of a new human and animal psychology.

In its original form, behaviorism was based on an insufficiently rigorous theory of habit formation. But soon he was influenced by the work of Pavlov and Bekhterev on conditioned secretory and motor reflexes. These works provided a scientific basis for behaviorism.

From the point of view of behaviorism, the true subject of psychology is human behavior from birth to death. In an objective study of man, the behaviorist does not observe anything that he could call consciousness, feeling, will, imagination. He comes to the conclusion that all these terms can be excluded from the description of human activity. These terms were used because the whole of psychology at the time of the emergence of behaviorism was vitalistic. Consciousness and its subdivisions are therefore terms enabling psychology to retain the old religious concept of «soul».

Observation of human behavior can be represented in the form of stimuli and responses. A simple stimulus-response scheme is quite suitable in this case. The task of the psychology of behavior is solved if the stimulus and response are known. Let us substitute, for example, in the above formula, instead of a stimulus, a touch on the cornea of the eye, and instead of a reaction, blinking. The task of the behaviorist is solved if the data are the result of carefully verified experiments. When behavioral phenomena are precisely formulated in terms of stimuli and responses, behaviorism is able to predict and direct these phenomena. Suppose our task is to make a person sneeze: we resolve it by spraying crushed pepper in the air. The relationship between stimulus and result in "social" behavior is not so easily resolved. Suppose that in society there is an incentive "prohibition" in the form of law, what will be the answer? It will take years to determine the result exhaustively.

The main task of behaviorism is, therefore, to accumulate observations on human behavior in such a way that in each given case - in a given situation - the behaviorist can say in advance what the reaction will be, or, if a reaction is given, what situation this reaction is caused by.

All questions to which a person tries to find answers are somehow connected with the person himself, who is the crown of the creation of nature. After all, it is a person who is the subject and bearer of culture, it he who integrates and encloses in himself all forms and levels of organization of matter, being both a biological and social being, and most importantly, having reason - the highest result of the development of the world. To understand the essence of man, an integrated approach is required, which can only be developed on the combined basis of various sciences. But the main thing is to what extent and to what extent the influence of the biological on the social is recognized. Biology, genes determine human behavior, he cannot break out of his biological nature, even if he really wanted to. There is also an evolutionary connection between man and animals, and certain analogies between their behavior. Thus, there are biological foundations of human sociality. However, it would be wrong to explain the development of human behavior mainly within the framework of biology, as representatives of sociobiology do.

In fact, the biological and social in man is in close relationship. A baby who has fallen into the condition of the existence of animals, even if he survives physically under favorable circumstances, however, will not become a person, in any case a full-fledged member of society. To do this, the individual needs to go through a certain period of socialization. It is impossible not to join the opinion that a child at the moment of birth is only a candidate for a person, but cannot become one in isolation: he needs to learn to be a person in communication with people. In other words, outside of social conditions, nature alone does not yet make a person a person. Another aspect of the influence of the social on the biological in man is that the biological in man is realized and satisfied in a social form. The natural-biological side of human existence is overgrown and “humanized” by socio-cultural factors: the satisfaction of such purely biological needs as procreation, food, drink, etc. True, it should be noted that the «humanization» of nature in practice does not always mean its improvement, ennoblement.

Sometimes an individual with inadequate actions and behavior can inflict damage on his own nature, health. The entire society is capable of adversely affecting its natural environment. Such influence is evident today and represents the most important environmental problem, the solution of which is connected both with physical survival and with human development.

Thus, when considering the role of biological and social factors in human development, the extremes of both panbiologism and pansociologism should be avoided. In the first case, a person is reduced to the level of an animal, in the second he appears as a tabula rasa (blank slate), on which the environment writes his development.

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