

Perceived Control

Various studies show that a perceived lack of control over events exacerbates the harmful effects of stress. Rats given control over the duration of electric shocks are less likely to get ulcers than rats without this control even if both groups of rats receive the same amount of shock overall. A patient given control over the flow of morphine will report better pain control than a patient given mandated levels of morphine even though both patients get the same amount of morphine overall. Control over events tends to lessen stress, while a perceived lack of control generally makes the event more stressful.

Practice Questions

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. How would drive reduction theory explain a person accepting a new job with a higher salary but that requires more work and responsibility?
 - (A) Money is a more powerful incentive for this individual than free time.
 - (B) This person seeks a higher activity level and takes the job in order to satisfy this drive.
 - (C) For this person, money is a higher-level need than free time.
 - (D) The person takes the job to satisfy the secondary drive of increased salary.
 - (E) Humans instinctively seek greater resources and control over their environment.

2. Which aspects of hunger are controlled by the lateral and ventromedial hypothalamus?
 - (A) Contraction and expansion of the stomach, indicating too much or too little food.
 - (B) Body temperature and desire to eat.
 - (C) Desire to eat and physiological processes needed for eating and digestion (such as salivation).
 - (D) The binge and purge cycle in bulimics.
 - (E) The desire to eat and the feeling of satiety, or fullness, that makes us stop eating.

3. All of the following are identified by researchers as important factors in the causes of eating disorders EXCEPT
- (A) cultural attitude toward weight.
 - (B) lack of willpower.
 - (C) genetic tendencies.
 - (D) family history of eating disorders.
 - (E) food obsessions.
4. The Yerkes-Dodson law predicts that most people would perform an easy task best if they are at
- (A) a high level of arousal.
 - (B) a low level of arousal.
 - (C) a baseline state.
 - (D) a level of self-actualization.
 - (E) a state of homeostasis.
5. What is the principle difference between how achievement motivation theory and arousal theory explain human motivation?
- (A) Achievement motivation is a specific example of arousal motivation.
 - (B) Arousal theory describes the optimum level of general arousal an individual seeks, while achievement motivation describes what type of goals the individual is motivated to achieve.
 - (C) Arousal theory describes motivation by referring to stages in our responses to stress (the general adaptation syndrome). Achievement motivation is not used to describe motivation due to stress.
 - (D) A person with a low optimum level of arousal according to arousal theory would have a high achievement motivation.
 - (E) Arousal theory is an older, outdated precursor to achievement motivation theory.
6. Which of the following are reasons why intrinsic motivation might be more advantageous than extrinsic motivation?
- (A) Intrinsic motivation might be more enduring since extrinsic motivations are usually temporary.
 - (B) Intrinsic motivations are easier and more convenient to provide.
 - (C) Intrinsic motivations are higher on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, so we are motivated to meet them before extrinsic needs.
 - (D) Intrinsic motivations are more likely to be primary drives. Extrinsic motivations are secondary drives.
 - (E) Intrinsic motivations are more effective with a wider range of individuals.

7. Which sentence most closely describes the difference between theory X and theory Y types of management?
- (A) Theory X managers are more active in work groups. Theory Y managers are more hands-off, letting groups work out problems on their own.
 - (B) The management theories differ in regard to what tasks they delegate to workers.
 - (C) Theory Y managers regard employees as intrinsically motivated. Theory X managers see them as extrinsically motivated.
 - (D) Management theory X is dominant in collectivist cultures. Theory Y is more prevalent in individualist cultures.
 - (E) Theory Y is used with workers who have high optimum levels of arousal. Theory X is used with those whose arousal levels are low.
8. What does Schachter's two-factor theory state about the relationship between emotion and physiological reaction?
- (A) Emotions are caused by physiological reactions. For example, we feel excited because our heart begins to race.
 - (B) Physiological reactions are caused by emotions. For example, our experience of fear causes our breathing rate to increase.
 - (C) A combination of physiological reactions and our cognitive interpretation of an event produces emotion.
 - (D) Physiological reactions and emotional response occur simultaneously.
 - (E) Cognitive emotions occur independently of physiological states and are unrelated.
9. Excessive time spent in the resistance phase of Seyle's general adaptation syndrome can contribute to
- (A) increased time needed to adapt to new emotional situations.
 - (B) decreased motivation to perform novel tasks.
 - (C) stress-related diseases like ulcers or heart conditions.
 - (D) a reduction in the drive to achieve goals.
 - (E) resistance to learning skills needed for novel tasks.
10. Perceived control over a stressful event tends to result in
- (A) less reported stress.
 - (B) more frustration regarding the stressful event.
 - (C) more motivation to solve the stressful problem.
 - (D) increased arousal.
 - (E) higher heart and respiration rates.

11. The balanced physiological state we are driven to attain by satisfying our needs is called
- (A) equilibrium.
 - (B) homeostasis.
 - (C) self-actualization.
 - (D) primary satisfaction.
 - (E) secondary satisfaction.
12. The Garcia effect describes
- (A) the increased motivation felt by individuals with high levels of arousal.
 - (B) the increased susceptibility to illness experienced in the exhaustion phase of the stress response.
 - (C) classical conditioning associating nausea with food or drink.
 - (D) the effect of a theory Y management style.
 - (E) the effect the hypothalamus has on perceiving hunger.
13. Which of the following factors does research indicate may influence sexual orientation?
- (A) parenting styles
 - (B) degree of masculinity or femininity expressed in childhood
 - (C) traumatic childhood experiences
 - (D) genetic influences
 - (E) being raised by homosexual parents
14. Seyle's general adaptation syndrome describes
- (A) how the central nervous system processes emotions.
 - (B) the effect of low levels of arousal on emotion.
 - (C) our reactions to stress.
 - (D) our reactions to the different levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
 - (E) the sexual response cycle in humans.
15. A high score on Holmes and Rahe's social readjustment rating scale correlates with
- (A) high optimum levels of arousal.
 - (B) level of need reduction.
 - (C) incidence of eating disorders.
 - (D) incidence of stress-related illness.
 - (E) levels of perceived control.

ANSWERS TO PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. (D) Money is a secondary drive people learn to associate with primary drives. Answer A refers to incentive theory, answer B refers to arousal theory, and answer C refers to the hierarchy of needs. Not all psychologists agree that humans are born with instincts, so answer E is incorrect.

2. **(E)** The lateral part of the hypothalamus causes animals to eat when stimulated. The ventromedial hypothalamus causes animals to stop eating. The aspects described in the other answers are not controlled by these parts of the hypothalamus.
3. **(B)** All the other factors can be risk factors for the development of eating disorders, except for lack of willpower. As with most psychological disorders, the behaviors associated with eating disorders cannot be controlled by a sufferer through an act of will or by just trying harder. Most people suffering from an eating disorder need therapy, psychological help, and possible medication in order to stop their harmful behaviors.
4. **(A)** The Yerkes-Dodson law predicts that most people perform easy tasks best at high levels of arousal and difficult tasks best at low levels of arousal. The term baseline state applies best to the opponent-process theory of motivation. Self-actualization is a term used in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and homeostasis is a term that describes a state of equilibrium in drive-reduction theory.
5. **(B)** Arousal theory says humans are motivated to seek a certain level of arousal. Achievement motivation theory describes how we are motivated to meet goals and master our environment. The rest of the answers describe the theories incorrectly.
6. **(A)** An intrinsically motivated person motivates himself or herself with internal rewards like satisfaction. Extrinsic motivators like money are usually temporary, and the individual may lose motivation for the task when the motivator stops or does not increase. Intrinsic motivations are not easier to provide. In fact, inspiring people to become intrinsically motivated may be more difficult. Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation does not relate to Maslow's hierarchy or primary and secondary drives. Both types of motivation are effective with a wide range of individuals.
7. **(C)** Theory Y managers believe workers are internally motivated. Theory X managers think workers must have external rewards in order to motivate work. Both types of managers might be equally active in work groups and might ask workers to do similar tasks. The theories might relate to types of cultures, but not the way described in answer D. Theory X and Y do not relate to optimum levels of arousal.
8. **(C)** Schachter said the cognitive label we apply to an event combined with our body's reaction creates emotion. James-Lange said biological changes cause emotion, and Cannon-Bard states that emotional reactions occur at the same time as physiological changes. No theory maintains that emotions are unrelated to biological changes.

9. (C) If individuals spend an excessive amount of time in the resistance phase, it may deplete their bodies' resources. They become more vulnerable to diseases in the exhaustion phase. The other answers do not relate to Seyle's general adaptation syndrome.
10. (A) Studies show that if people think they are in control of an event, they report the event is less stressful. Frustration might decrease, but perceived control would not increase the feeling of frustration (answer B). Perceived control does not necessarily relate to motivation, arousal, or our heart/respiration rates.
11. (B) Homeostasis is a balanced internal state we seek by satisfying our drives. The word equilibrium does indicate balance but is not the most correct term in this context. Self-actualization is the highest need in Maslow's hierarchy. Primary and secondary refer to drives, but the terms primary and secondary satisfaction are made-up distractions.
12. (C) The Garcia effect occurs when an organism associates nausea with food or drink through classical conditioning. This is a powerful form of learning that takes only one trial to establish. Pairing illness with food and drink is an adaptive response that may be hardwired in order to create a survival advantage. The other choices incorrectly describe the Garcia effect.
13. (D) Twin studies indicate a possible genetic influence on sexual orientation. A person whose identical twin is homosexual is more likely to be homosexual than is a member of the general population. Research indicates the other factors mentioned are not environmental factors correlated with homosexuality.
14. (C) The GAS describes different stages in reactions to stress. The other choices do not relate to Seyle's general adaptation syndrome.
15. (D) The social readjustment rating scale is designed to measure stress. A high score on this instrument indicates the test taker experiences a high amount of stress, and this correlates with stress-related illnesses. The factors described in the other choices are not correlated with this test.