

Biological Point of View

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, we'll discuss one of the three aspects of the biopsychosocial approach, which is a contemporary approach to psychology.

The specific areas of focus include:

1. Biological Perspective
2. Evolutionary View
 - a. Genetic
 - b. Natural Selection
3. Biopsychological View

1. Biological Perspective

Unlike a lot of the historical perspectives on psychology, the new perspectives are more of a blend of different theoretical approaches. Instead of taking one avenue toward understanding psychology, they try to blend two or more.

One of these is the **biological perspective**. Looking at the word biological, you can see the word biology, which is the focus of this approach.

A biological perspective psychologist tries to understand behavior as a result of the internal physical, chemical, and biological processes that occur in human beings.

These psychologists try to relate things like thinking, feeling, and perceiving to different physical occurrences, such as what's going on inside of the brain, what chemicals are being sent, or what kind of genetic code allows those sorts of things to happen.

The biological perspective blends different classical approaches, like behaviorism, which looks at the mechanical processes of behavior, and structuralism, which tries to break things down into their component parts.

This perspective is also very deterministic, stating that there are certain physical occurrences that cause particular mental occurrences or behavior.

In this way, the biological perspective is opposed to humanism, which considers the human to be the agent or the actor that causes things to happen.



TERM TO KNOW

Biological Perspective

Emphasis on explaining human behavior in terms of underlying physical, chemical and biological principles

2. Evolutionary View

The biological perspective has two subcategories of thought, the first of which is the evolutionary approach to psychology.

The **evolutionary view** states that human mental processes and behaviors are the results of gradual changes over the entire history of the human species.

This approach looks at two specific forces that interact with humans to cause them to behave in the way they do:

- Genetics
- Natural Selection



TERM TO KNOW

Evolutionary View

Looks at the ways our evolution has impacted our thinking, ability, and behaviors

2a. Genetics

The genetic force in the evolutionary perspective states that human beings are a product of their own genes; a lot of human behavior and mental states occur as a result of those genes.

➦ **EXAMPLE** Many studies have been done with twins to see how they act similarly in certain ways because of their genetic background.

2b. Natural Selection

The other force that interacts with people under the evolutionary school of thought is natural selection.

Going back to other approaches to evolution (e.g., Darwinism), natural selection says that there are certain developments in different brain structures that occurred over time as a result of selections, or what improved humanity in different cases.

This natural selection approach to psychology allowed the integration of animal studies and the study of animal behaviors, since a lot of those behaviors, under natural selection, can be seen as the result of mutations over time.

This led to the study of rats in mazes, as you may see in classical psychology, as well as the study of monkeys, which are very similar to humans in a lot of their behaviors.

3. Biopsychological View

The second subcategory of the biological perspective is the biopsychological view of psychology, which states that a lot of behavior and mental processes like thinking, feeling, and perceiving are the results of the internal workings of the physical aspects of our brain and nervous system.

Thus, a lot of abnormal behavior is the result of abnormal structures that are occurring inside of the body.

➦ **EXAMPLE** Small changes in the frontal lobes, hippocampus, and temporal lobes have been present in over half of patients with schizophrenia. In this way, schizophrenia can be understood as having a biological basis.

Biopsychology is part of the larger, overarching field of neuroscience, which includes professions like biologists and biochemists, who are attempting to uncover other physical processes that impact behavior. These professions also study the physical body and the different diseases that can occur within it.



TERM TO KNOW

Biopsychology

Relates behavior and mental processes like thinking, feeling, and perceiving to physical factors



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about the **biological perspective** of psychology, which aims to understand behavior as a result of the physical, chemical, and biological processes that occur inside the human body.

You now understand that there are two subcategories of the biological perspective. One is the **evolutionary view**, which studies the impact of evolution on human behavior in relation to the forces of **genetics** and **natural selection**. The second subcategory is the **biopsychological view**, which connects behavior and mental processes to physical occurrences. Biopsychology is also part of the larger field of neuroscience.

Good luck!

Source: Adapted from Sophia tutorial by Erick Taggart.



TERMS TO KNOW

Biological Perspective

Emphasis on explaining human behavior in terms of underlying physical, chemical and biological principles.

Biopsychology

Relates behavior and mental processes like thinking, feeling, and perceiving to physical factors.

Evolutionary View

Looks at the ways our evolution has impacted our thinking ability and behaviors.