**16 Motivation**

Defining motivation

* Motivations are mental states which lead us to engage in purposive activity.
* Some motives are unconscious and some are hard to comprehend. Motives can conflict with one another.
* As an internal state motivation is inherently difficult to study.

Motives as instincts

* Early psychologists conceived of motives as instincts. Instincts are innate behaviour triggered by releasing stimuli.
* Instinct as it was originally conceived raises issues of circular logic; however, the ideas of fixed-action patterns and adaptation are still part of contemporary psychology.

Drives

* Hull developed the idea of drives as an alternative to instincts. Drives are desires to reduce unpleasant physiological sensations.
* Drives can explain some simple motives like hunger but not more complex motives nor individual preferences.

Incentives

* We are motivated by external incentives as well as internal drives/instincts. This gives rise to the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motives.
* Intrinsic motives involve an action being rewarding in itself. Extrinsic motives are based on some external reward.
* The relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is complex. Under some circumstances extrinsic motives appear to undermine intrinsic motives; however, most behaviour is guided by both.
* Frequency of behaviour can be manipulated by extrinsic motives; however, its quality is usually more influenced by intrinsic motives. Fulfilling intrinsic motives is generally more satisfying.

Needs

* Needs differ from drives in that they can be social, cognitive, and emotional as well as physiological.
* Maslow conceived of a hierarchy of needs in which we are motivated to first satisfy physiological needs, then social needs, the cognitive needs, and finally to self-actualize.
* Most of the time people generally satisfy needs in this order of priority. There are exceptions, however.
* Kenrick et al have reconceived of Maslow’s hierarchy as not a linear hierarchy but a set of three overlapping domains: evolutionary needs, developmental needs, and cognitive needs.

Cognitive approaches to motivation

* In keeping with the dominance of the cognitive paradigm cognitive theories of motivation dominate current psychology.
* Bandura proposed self-efficacy—the idea that we are motivated to do things we believe we are capable of.
* Locke’s goal-setting theory sets out the idea that we are motivated by specific and difficult-to-achieve goals.
* Doran proposed the related idea of SMART goals. SMART goals have become very popular in education and management; however, they are probably not uniquely motivating in most circumstances.
* Dweck proposed the idea of growth mindsets, in which the main determinant of motivation is belief in the mutability of intelligence.

Personality and motivation

* Some personality traits, such as conscientiousness, appear to be associated with motivation.

We also differ in locus of control. Generally an internal locus of control is associated with higher levels of motivation.