Psychiatry 2020: A Theoretical approach to Define and Analyze Emotions

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Background: This study endeavours to define and analyze one of the most important faculty of human mind 'emotion'. The 'emotion' is a specific sensation or feeling in the mind that provides directional drive to the other faculties of the mind - memory, intelligence, and physical activities - for their actions to be performed to pursue a specific goal. It should be astutely differentiated from 'mood', as 'mood' is the 'energy level' of the mind at a given particular moment. As a power house of the mind, the centers for 'mood' not only stimulate the activities of the faculty of emotion, but activities of other mental faculties -'memory', 'intelligence', and 'physical activities' also. Emotion can be logically represented on 'Pleasure and Pain' or 'Positive and Negative' scale. That means every emotion has both these two ends. That is true for the emotion like, 'anger', 'fear' also. The concept of primary and secondary emotions does not exist. Every emotion has been developed as a trait in the process of 'biological evolution', and they all have survival roles. Thus all emotions are physiologically distinct, different, and could be both qualitatively and quantitatively determined.

There is no consensus on the definition of 'emotion'. Considering so many definitions of 'emotion', Kleinginnas attempted to arrive at a comprehensive definition of 'emotion'. They stated, 'emotion' should (1) say something about the way we feel when we are emotional; (2) mention the physiological, or bodily, basis of emotional feelings; (3) include the effects of emotion on perception, thinking, and behaviour; (4) point out the driving, or motivational properties of certain emotions such as fear and anger; and (5) refer to the ways in which emotions are expressed in language, facial expressions, and gestures (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981).

Charles Darwin in his book 'The Expression of the emotions in Man and Animals' claimed that 'emotion' acts as a trait to help in the purpose of communication, thus aids in the survival of species. In his work, Darwin tried to explain how some expressions of the emotion evolved into serviceable habits to man and animals, as he said, "raising of eyebrows serves to increase the field of vision". Some expressions act out in behaviours which are opposite in habits in two different ends. Like, a dog shows joy by elevating and wagging his tail. And inverse occurs when his tail droops in dejection. Darwin called them antithesis. And there is a third principle in his work, where expression of certain states of mind is the direct result of the constitution of the nervous system, independent of the will of the organism.

'Emotion' has often been intertwined with 'mood' in literature, as 'mood' has been defined as a "sustained emotion or feeling tone that colors a person's perception of being in the world" (Saddock & Ruiz, 2015). Alternatively it has been defined as "feelings that tend to be less intense than emotions and that often (though not always) lack a contextual stimulus" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996); or "longer term affective states that do not have unique facial signature or eliciting conditions" (Ekman, 1994).

In 1920, another theory involving relationship between physical changes and emotion was proposed by Walter Cannon based upon researches done by Philip Bard, which is known as Cannon-Bard theory. It states that physical changes and emotional feel-

2020 Vol. 1, Iss. 2

ings are independent to each other, and they are triggered by stimuli simultaneously. According to this theory (1) we detect what will be an emotion-arousing event through any of our senses. (2) that detection is relayed to the lower brain areas e.g. the hypothalamus - where the signal is spilt. (3) one signal goes to the cerebral cortex where it is perceived as felt emotion. (4) another signal causes appropriate bodily reactions expressing the emotion. However, not universally all adhered to this theory. Other investigators also argued that there is nothing specific in emotional experience. Hebb quoted, "emotional experience is a highly variable state and often partakes of the complicated nature of a judgement" (Hebb, 1949).

Traditionally, emotion and cognition have been con-

sidered two different faculties and have been put to correspond 'feeling' and 'thinking'. This distinction is however thought orthogonal (Clore et al., 2005). Richard Lazarus and his co-workers forwarded their cognitive appraisal theory of emotion. They state, the emotions we feel result from appraisals or evaluation of information. This appraisal involves processing of information coming from the environment, the body and memory (Lazarus et al., 1970, 1984). According to Aaron T Beck's cognitive model, 'emotion' is an integral part of the triad of 'thoughts', 'emotions' and 'behaviour'. The cognitive appraisal of internal or external stimuli influences the other systems also (Beck, 1976). Cognitive therapy, which developed upon this theory, targets to correct the distortion of this triad to obtain a more adaptive and sustainable form.