

## **Explain and assess the mind and body debate in relation to two branches of psychology**

This essay will explain and assess the mind and body debate. The first question I will address is why the debate is important. Then I will explain the Monism position and then the dualist position. I will then conclude and will offer my own theory based on an interacting dualist position.

This debate is important because it will tell us what needs to be studied either the physiology as in the human brain or the biological side of the debate. Or mental process as in what is inside the brain or the cognitive side of the debate. It may also tell us how the two biological and cognitive interact.

Monism or materialism argues that the brain or physical matter is the only realism.

This view suggests that everything cognitive can be explained in terms of the physical brain. So according to this view nothing exists apart from the biological side. Any talk of cognitive skills would therefore be irrelevant as biology is the only reality.

The dualist side of the argument says that the mind and brain are separate. There are different types of dualism. The first is known as Descartes dualism. This says that the mind and body function as two separate entities. Cartesian dualism states that there is a constant two way relation between the cognitive and biological substances.

Behaviourism argues that stimulus and response is all that occurs in the brain and that there is no such thing as the "mind". Skinner was less radical in his approach and said that there were other forces such as free will and other mental processes. But he maintained that this behaviour was a consequence of punishment, reward and reinforcement. The biological approach would argue that it is all down to biology and

that any talk of the cognitive side of psychology is unscientific. The cognitive is within the brain and cannot be studied scientifically.

Behaviourism has famously given to us the Pavlov experiments and the theory of stimulus and response and is to be taken seriously. Although it has gained criticism because it advocates that behaviour is only learnt from classical and operant conditioning. This view is clearly incorrect as there is an element of freewill within us that helps us make correct decisions.

The humanistic approach would argue in favour of the cognitive side and the information processing approach would too argue in favour of the cognitive side. It states that the cognitive should be studied as it is more important in every day functioning. The humanism approach believes we as humans strive towards goals and therefore it attempts to direct our attention to these goals.

In conclusion there are many different theories and approaches towards the mind and body debate. Both gain backing from scientific corners and are still conflicting in today's scientific literature. I myself would argue that in fact both the mind and the body interact and would adopt an interacting dualist position. That both biology and cognitive functions play a role.