**Unit 3 Written Assignment - Sensation and Perception**

Student Name (Omitted for peer review)

University of the People

PSYC 1504: Introduction to Psychology

Tiffany Lubken, Instructor

September 22, 2021

**Part I - The most commonly known and labeled senses are sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.  Considering this, please address the following**

Do you think that there may be senses which do not necessarily receive information only from the environment, but rather from within us as well?  (For example, how do you sense that you are hungry?  If you hold your breath, which sense ‘senses’ that you need air? How do you sense the need for belonging?)

Of course I agree that there may be senses that do not receive information only from the environment. The examples listed in the question are enough to make a student accept the premise. Some other examples could be, but not limited to, our sense of balance, “(the vestibular sense)” (Spielman. R., Dumper. K., Jenkins. W., Lacombe. A., Lovett. M., & Perlmutter. M., 2017, p150), proprioception, and kinesthesia (movement), as these senses detect changes in the body itself, relative to itself.

Though sight is a sense which is stimulated, in most normal cases, by the external environment, much of our perceptions are constructed internally from the information gathered. Our depth perception is one example which uses Binocular Disparity, “the slightly different view of the world that each of our eyes receives” (Spielman. R., Dumper. K., Jenkins. W., Lacombe. A., Lovett. M., & Perlmutter. M., 2017, p162), as a way to determine how far, or near, an object is relative to us.

In response to the sub-question, “How do you sense the need for belonging?”; I would argue that this certain “sense” would be more accurately defined as a perception, based on the information collected from multiple sources (senses). Or perhaps an unlearned instinct which is necessary, if not only useful, in the finding of a mate and the bearing of children. This instinct may have also played a big part in the survival and triumph of the human species, as the security gained from travelling in large groups (compared to going it alone) is unquestionable.

If you think that we may have more senses than the 5 noted above, would you provide your opinion on why you think the dominant scientific community may not have considered more than the typical 5 senses?  If you wish, you may use other references to strengthen or support your discussion.

When Aristotle wrote “One might be confident that there is not another sense beside the five” (c. 350BC/2010, p74), he linked them to the visible sense organs (Vox, 2017).

The famousness, of the five senses’, link to the visibility of their organs is likely not coincidental. The visibility and touch-ability of these senses make for easy demonstration and recall, aiding in its teaching to young children, which likely contributes to the five senses being common knowledge today, outside of higher education.

In modern times, these categories have expanded along with the discovery of hidden sensors inside the body, or in some cases the categories are expanded into subcategories like we have with taste (Vox, 2017).

How does a “definition”  (for example, how we define the 5 senses) help or hinder us in knowing the parameters of a concept, think about a concept’s potential for expansion, or keep a concept within known boundaries?

An exact definition is something that can be continually referred to during the processes of obtaining or expanding our universal understanding of a concept. A definition is traditionally written down, and the language chosen helps to provide a set of criteria that an object, construct, or idea must meet to be considered to be a member of the category/concept being defined. This aids in the transferability, accuracy, and consistency of knowledge.

A definition, in this case, is supposed to be both inclusive and exclusive. However, the subjectivity of the language chosen, when defining a concept, can create blurry, unclear boundaries as to what the concept is, and isn’t. These grey areas can impact the accuracy of what we know, and what is understood from experiments and discoveries due to the involuntary biases of those conducting the experiments and writing the reports.

Do you think that the definition of sensation needs to be expanded? Why?

“” (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

**Part II**

What is the role of operant conditioning in our development of reading skills?

How do these skills become stronger and more “automatic”?

Do you think that many of our “skills” follow the same path of development, and why?

**References**:

* Aristotle. (2010). *De Anima: One the Soul* (M. Shiffman, Trans.). Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, R. Pullins Co. Free to Download at <https://b-ok.xyz/book/2295591/3cc443?id=2295591&secret=3cc443>
* Vox (2017). *You have more than five senses* [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9W0WPPpCFaM>
* Merriam-Webster. (2021).Sensation. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sensation>