Consciousness versus Unconsciousness

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**Introduction**

The psychology terms consciousness and unconsciousness have been studied around for quite some time. Both terms are used in the field of psychology time and time again. The importance of consciousness and unconsciousness becomes evident when a psychologist is dealing with a patient. That is the time when these terms are used the most. By looking into both the terms from a psychologist’s perspective, the difference of both consciousness and unconsciousness can be recognized. Consciousness is mainly a psychological form that is best defined by John Locke the English philosopher as "The perception of what passes in a man's own mind." On the other hand, unconsciousness in psychology is deemed as the feature of the mental life, which is separate from the current consciousness. It is something that is not subjected to recall at one’s will. There are many times that people cannot recall what they did unconsciously. This paper will reflect on the importance and stark difference between consciousness and unconsciousness thoroughly from a psychology perspective.

**Discussion**

Consciousness can be deemed as a type of behavior, it cannot be categorized as a process. This behavior is controlled by the brain as well, like any other conduct that is shown by human being. Consciousness is mainly having an awareness of certain things. The consciousness of the human mind is mainly inclusive of the simple events and actions that are carried out regularly. Over time, consciousness is said to be "the hard problem." There is no doubt in the fact that both consciousness and unconsciousness are still a baffling phenomenon even today. It is safe to say that even the world’s most significant scientists could not get behind the mysteries of these notions (Cuéllar, 2018). These facts make the terms even more interesting to look into. Consciousness is mainly the personal perception of one's self. Through this phenomenon people can do things like solving a problem, being happy and creating memories.

The concept of consciousness is something that has been outside the boundaries of science throughout the nineteenth century. Later a French Philosopher by the name of Rene Descartes sheds light on what it is like to be conscious. The foundation of Cartesian Dualism was first given by Descartes. She represented the notion that the body and the mind are separate, and this concept is now known as Cartesian Dualism. The theories that were given by Descartes became the center of many controversies regarding consciousness (Greenwald & Banaji, 2017). Then came the twentieth century, in which the word consciousness became taboo and there was a ban put on the usage of this word. Older times deemed the things forbidden based on the understanding factor. Since consciousness could not be described or defined, it was made forbidden.

There is a reason that consciousness was psychologically constructed. This term is quite difficult to understand and view, that is why it was easy to put it under the off-limits category. Nowadays, consciousness is given acceptance and it also helps address and understand some of the most thought-provoking issues and questions of the contemporary world. The concept of consciousness has become a pivotal part of neuroscientific research. Now scientists can address various serious issues like the “vegetative state.”

Now coming to unconsciousness, which will be explained under the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud. The human unconsciousness is where all the past experiences and memories are stored (Talvitie, 2018). Sigmund Freud believed the fact that the personalities and behaviors of individuals are derived from the unique yet constant connections between the contradictory psychological forces. These forces function on three various stages of awareness: subconscious, consciousness and unconsciousness. In accordance with him, these three portions of the human mind play a significant role in inducing various behaviors. Freud divided the human mind into three different levels:

**Consciousness**

This term can be best understood by affiliating with having awareness. As mentioned above, the main things that are in human consciousness are simple. The events which qualify are mainly inclusive of the actions and proceedings that we can recall as the human mind activities. This view is faced with two challenges. The first challenge is that around 10% of the mind's work consists of conscious thoughts. The second challenge is that this notion does not explain the unsystematic events that are formed inside the human mind (Rothkirch, Overgaard & Hesselmann, 2018). However, the two processes that the conscious mind can explain are inclusive of directing the focus and imagining the unreal. It is safe to say that the conscious mind works like a scanner. It scans a particular event and makes a person react based on self-perception. Lastly, based on the importance of the event, it is stored in either the subconscious or unconscious part.

**Subconscious**

This is the part where the recent memories are kept that may require to be recalled. In short, the memories that are for quick recalls are kept in the human subconscious. A common example would be the phone number of a person who you just crossed paths with. This part also keeps in check the regular and recurring activities that a person keeps on doing for the rest of the day. These activities can be inclusive of various feelings, frequent views, and certain behavioral patterns. So, in accordance with Freud, the subconscious of the human mind is like the RAM (random access memory).

**Unconsciousness**

This is the part of the human mind where the past experiences and memories are stored. The memories that are present in the unconsciousness of the human mind are mainly events that are repressed due to the trauma associated with them (Allen & Reber, 2017). Further, some consciously overlooked unimportant memories are present in the unconscious part of the human mind. It is said that these memories that most people carry unconsciously form our habits, behaviors, and beliefs. It is safe to say that it is the warehouse of all the emotions and memories that a person has been carrying by birth. For instance, if a person has suffered great trauma as a child their consciousness might forget it but the unconsciousness part will not. If for instance, a person was locked in a dark room as a child, they might forget it but as an adult, they will feel afraid or uncomfortable in the dark. The reason behind this will be the repressed memory that is stored in the unconscious part of the mind. This is just one example of how the unconscious mind functions.

**Conclusion**

There is no doubt in the fact that the human mind is very complex. There are certain aspects of it, which are still alien to contemporary science. A lot of scientists have tried tapping into the human mind, but they have merely dabbled in the area. Both human consciousness and unconsciousness are quite complex in their own way. There is a reason that the idea of these concepts was deemed forbidden back in the day, because both the phenomenon were and still are quite complex to understand. The conscious part of the human mind works as a scanner and captures the simpler details. It is interesting how every individual’s consciousness will look at one single action differently and react to it contrarily as well. It is also quite interesting that how an individual can have a plethora of memories in their unconsciousness and never know about them. However, emotions that we are conditioned to feel from our childhood, stay with us unconsciously. The human mind is still a mystery and the concepts of unconsciousness and consciousness help prove it even more.

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