Hormones and Sex

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Abstract

- Men and women tend to develop different sexual desires and reproduction-related sexual behaviors.
- However, this sexual dimorphism is widely contributed by the difference in development of sex hormones between male and female mammals.
- It is in this regard that this presentation tends to discuss the influence of hormones on sexual desire and behavior exhibited by males and females.

- *Key words*: hormones, sexual desire, testosterone, estrogen, sexual behaviors, males, females

Introduction

- Human beings have been often illustrated as showing sexual dimorphism which establishes males and females as mutually exclusive.
- The nature of sexual dimorphism which tends to contribute to sexual desire has been influenced by a number of factors.
- We will thus examine a number of factors especially how hormones contribute to sexual development and desire of both sexes.

Definitions of hormone, sex, sexual dimorphism and sexual orientation

- Hormones are chemically secreted substances that are produced by a given cell or gland to affect another cell in the body.
- Sex is the biological and physiological characteristics that define and differentiate men and women.
- Sexual dimorphism is the establishment of men and women as two discrete and distinct sexes.
- Sexual orientation is an urge for sexual desire that exhibits a person's direction towards sexual interest.

Continuation

- The genetic factor
- The hormonal factor

The developmental and activational effects of sex hormones

- Developmental means the organization of sex hormones to influence the development of physiological, anatomical, and behavioral characteristics that actually differentiate males from females.
- Activational effect is where sex hormones activate the reproductive-related behaviors especially among mature individuals.

Sex and Brain Hormones differences between males and females

- Male brain hormones are 15% larger than female brain hormones.
- This has effects on the sex-typical behaviors inherent in males and females.

Continuation

- Occasionally, males tend to adopt a submissive sexual posture unlike females who often attempt to mount other females.
- Some sexual behaviors are much more likely to be in one sex but not absolutely confined to one sex.
- All these are contributed by the role being played by steroid hormone that triggers specific brain hormones which are instrumental in establishing gender-specific differences especially between males and females

The role of brain hormones towards sexual behaviors

- Normally, the neuroendoctrine system primarily works to release some hormones into the organs; endocrine glands.
- Through the general circulation of neuroendoctrine system, glands normally release chemical substance that includes steroids.
- Steroids normally disrupt the hypothalamus region in the brain which prevents adult male from displaying normal copulatory behavior

Continuations

The high prenatal testosterone exposure especially during critical periods of developments can be associated with heterosexuality in men and homosexuality in women.

On the other hand, low testorone exposure can be associated with homosexuality in men and heterosexuality in women.

The relationship between male reproduction-related behavior (drive) and testosterone

- The level of male sexuality is not correlated with the testosterone levels.
- This means that increasing the male testosterone level does not necessary increase the sexual desire among men.
- This only contributes to their receptiveness towards their partners or competitors.

The relationship between female reproduction-related behavior and Gonad Hormones

- The estrogen and progesterone hormones in females only initiate estrus, a period associated with fertility and receptivity.
- The female sexual motivation and behavior is not based on the above cycle, but may be as a result of undergoing androgenic control.

Conclusion

- It is clear that sexual dimorphism between males and females is contributed by their hormones and brain structures.
- The desire to have sex and reproductive-related behaviors is more aggressive and copulated among men than women because men have testosterone hormones that influence their desire.
- The fact that females have less testosterone as compared to estrogen and progesterone make them inhibit more receptive sexual relationship.

References

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