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Perspective Model Approach Part 6: Cognitive, Humanistic, Abraham, Bandura's Model for Competitive Exams

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The Humanistic Approach and the Cognitive Approach

- Faced with a choice between psychoanalysis and behaviorism, many psychologists in the 1950s and 1960s sensed a void in psychology's conception of human nature.

- Freud had drawn attention to the darker forces of the unconscious, and Skinner was interested only in the effects of reinforcement on observable behavior.

- Humanistic psychology emerged out of a desire to understand the conscious mind, free will, human dignity, and the capacity for self-reflection and growth. An alternative to psychoanalysis and behaviorism, humanistic psychology became known as "the third force."

- It is the approach that focused on:
  - The idea that people are in control of their life.
  - The person or the self and personal growth and development are to be emphasized.

- The humanistic approach includes a number of other theories with the same or similar orientation e. g. , 'existential' and 'phenomenological' psychology.

Basic Assumptions of the Humanistic Approach

- In order to understand behavior we must consider the subjective experience of the person.

- Neither past experience nor current circumstances constrain the behavior of the person.

Humanistic vs Psychodynamic & Behaviorist Approaches

- Humanistic approach emphasizes the person, the psychodynamic stresses unconscious determinants, and the behaviorists focus upon external determinants.

- Humanistic approach is more optimistic than the other two in the sense that it believes in the person's ability and will.

- According to the humanistic thinkers, limiting ourselves to observable behavior and external stimuli alone is ignoring the thinking-feeling person, and that is dehumanizing.

- Free will: Humans possess the ability to make decisions about their life

Central Themes of Humanistic Approach

- Human beings are capable of shaping their own destiny.

- They can think and design their course of action and can follow it in the way they like.

- People can overcome or minimize the environmental and intrinsic influences

- "Here and now" is important.

- "Wholeness" or "completeness" of the personality is important rather than its separate, disintegrated, structural parts.

- Humanistic approach emphasizes:
  - Individual's freedom in directing his future
  - Capacity for personal growth
  - Intrinsic worth
  - Potential for self-fulfillment

Emergence of the Humanistic Approach

- Emerged in reaction to the perceived limitations of psychodynamic theories, especially

Psychoanalysis, as well as the staunch behaviorist way of understanding and interpreting behavior.

Individuals like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow strongly felt that the approaches prevalent at that time could not adequately address issues like the meaning of behavior, and the nature of healthy growth.

The founders of humanistic psychology asserted that people need a value system … a system of understanding, or frame of orientation … due to which life gets a meaning and purpose

Carl rogers: (1902 – 1987)

- Born in 1902 in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, he underwent a strict upbringing as a child who later turned out to be rather isolated, independent, and self-disciplined.

- Initially went to the University of Wisconsin for Agriculture major but later became interested in the study of religion. From there he switched on to the clinical psychology program of Columbia University, and received his Ph. D. in 1931.

- One of the founders of the humanistic approach, Rogers was one of the most influential therapists in the 20th century.

- Research, even that conducted after his death, revealed that Rogers was cited by more therapists as a major influence on their thinking and clinical practice than any other

person in psychology … including Freud.

Rogers' Approach

- Primarily a clinical theory, based on years of Rogers' experience dealing with his clients

- In its richness and maturity his theory matches that of Freud; a theory well thought-out and logical having broad application.

- The theory emphasizes on a single factor "force of life" which he calls the actualizing tendency i.e.. built-in motivation present in every life form to develop its potentials to the fullest extent possible.

- Rogers had the person-centered approach since the 'person' was the main figure of importance,

- He believed that the most powerful human drive is the one to become "fully functioning" .

- Fully functioning = a person becomes all that he or she is capable of To be fully functioning means experiencing:

  - Optimal psychological adjustment

  - Optimal psychological maturity

  - Complete congruence (a feeling of integration when the self and the ideal self-match; incongruence is a feeling of conflict or unease experienced in case of a mismatch between the two)

  - Complete openness to experience

Main Concepts

1. Self: a fluid perceptual structure based on one's experience of one's own being,

2. Ideal self: an Individual's goals and aspirations,

3. Phenomenal field: an Individual's unique perception of the world,

4. Actualizing tendency: an innate drive reflecting the desire to grow, to develop, and to enhance one's capacities,

5. Need for positive regard: a need for positive social contacts like love,

6. Conditions of worth: restrictions imposed on self – expression in order to earn positive regard,

Defenses: In case of an incongruity between one's the ideal and the real self-defenses develop. Rogers's talks about only two defenses:

Denial and Perceptual Distortion

1. Denial: Blocking out the threatening situation altogether. Denial also includes what Freud called repression.

2. Perceptual distortion: Reinterpreting the situation so that it appears less threatening, just like Freud's rationalization.

Neurotics: are apart from the real and the ideal. Becoming more incongruous, they find themselves in more and more threatening situations, levels of anxiety become greater, and they use more and more defenses … It becomes a vicious cycle that the person eventually is unable to get out of, at least on his own

Psychosis: Psychosis occurs when a person's defenses are overwhelmed, and their sense of self becomes "shattered" into little disconnected pieces. His behavior lacks consistency.

Carl Roger's Psychotherapy

- Carl Rogers is best known for his contributions to therapy known as ″ person centered/Client- centered therapy/Non- directive therapy.

- Also known as the Rogerian Therapy ″ .

- His main technique is "Reflection" _____ mirroring of emotional experiences.

- Aim of the therapy: to help a person grow and self-actualize.

- Rogers maintained that the therapist must possess the following qualities:

i. Congruence -- genuineness, honesty, with the client

ii. Empathy -- the ability to feel what the client feels.

iii. Respect -- acceptance, unconditional positive regard towards the client.

Abraham Harold Maslow (1908 - 1970)

American psychologist and leading exponent of humanistic approach.

Gave comprehensive theory of motivation.

- Found the prevalent psychology to be too pessimistic and negatively oriented.

Key Points of Maslow's Theory

- Psychology and the psychologist should look at the positive side of the human beings.

- There must be more to living than just being battered by a hostile environment, or by depraved instincts, which may actually be leading to self-destruction.

- People's needs are not low level and base. We have positive needs that may become neutral in the worst cases, but will not turn negative or base.

- Human behavior does respond to needs but we will be wrong in saying that all our needs are only physiological in nature

- Needs motivate human action; such needs are very few in number.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- Basically a stage theory.

- The needs at one level have to be met in order for one to move on to higher order.

- The needs at the lowest/primary/base level are the physiological needs, whereas the highest order needs are the self-actualization needs.

- Interactions and needs of Behavior

- Physiological needs: Fulfilled through = hunger/food: Pathology associated = Over-eating, Anorexia.

- Safety needs: Fulfilled through = profession, job; Pathology associated = Phobias.

- Love and belongingness: Fulfilled through = Marriage, Friendship: Pathology associated = Antisocial personality.

- Esteem needs: Fulfilled through = Awards, Honors, Scholarships; Pathology associated = Depression.

- Self-actualization needs: Fulfilled through = Painting, writing, singing: Pathology associated = Isolation, Alienation, Cynicism.

- Criticism against Maslow's theory

- Although a comprehensive and well-formed theory, it has been criticized at some points

- Can we actually, for all case, distribute and neatly order these needs? There is little empirical evidence to support Maslow's way of ranking needs

Extensions of Humanistic Approach

- Existential Psychology (Jean Paul Sartre, Rollo May)

- Frankl's Logo therapy

- Positive Psychology (Martin Seligman)

Cognitive Approach

- From the 1920s through the 1960s, behaviorism dominated psychology in the United States. Eventually, however, psychologists began to move away from strict behaviorism. Many became increasingly interested in cognition, a term used to describe all the mental processes involved in acquiring, storing, and using knowledge.

- Such processes include perception, memory, thinking, problem solving, imagining, and language. This shift in emphasis toward cognition had such a profound influence on psychology that it has often been called the cognitive revolution. The psychological study of cognition became known as cognitive psychology.

Cognitive Processes vs. Computer

- One reason for psychologists' renewed interest in mental processes was the invention of the computer, which provided an intriguing metaphor for the human mind.

- The hardware of the computer was likened to the brain, and computer programs provided a step-by-step model of how information from the environment is put in, stored, and retrieved to produce a response. Based on the computer metaphor, psychologists began to formulate information-processing models of human thought and behavior.

- The pioneering work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget also inspired psychologists to study cognition. During the 1920s, while administering intelligence tests in schools, Piaget became interested in how children think. He designed various tasks and interview questions to reveal how children of different ages reason about time, nature, numbers, causality, morality, and other concepts. Based on his many studies, Piaget theorized that from infancy to adolescence, children advance through a predictable series of cognitive stages.

- The cognitive revolution also gained momentum from developments in the study of language. Behaviorist B. F. Skinner had claimed that language is acquired according to the laws of operant conditioning, in much the same way that rats learn to press a bar for food pellets.

- In 1959, however, American linguist Noam Chomsky charged that Skinner's account of language development was wrong. Chomsky noted that children all over the world start to speak at roughly the same age and proceed through roughly the same stages without being explicitly taught or rewarded for the effort.

- According to Chomsky, the human capacity for learning language is innate. He theorized that the human brain is "hardwired" for language as a product of evolution. By pointing to the primary importance of biological dispositions in the development of language, Chomsky's theory dealt a serious blow to the behaviorist assumption that all human behaviors are formed and maintained by reinforcement.

Cognition means "the known" , "knowledge" , or "the process of knowing"

Cognitive Approach Emphasizes On

- Thoughts

- Feelings

- Thinking

- Values

- Expectations etc; factors that determine the personality of the individual

Main Emphasis

- For a proper understanding of behavior, the cognitive approach emphasizes the role of mediating processes in human behavior i.e.. , the processes that lie between the Environmental stimuli and the behavioral response

- Focused on how we 'remember' , how information processing takes place, how decision making appraisals are done

- Unlike the behaviorist approach, this theory gives same importance to both the internal state of the person as well as the environmental events

- Internal events are referred as "Mediators" or "Meditation Processes"

Areas of Special Interest

Cognitive approach mainly focuses on:

- Emotions

- Social behavior

- Behavior modification

Cognitive approach includes the elements of psychology, linguistics, computer science and physiology-- thus called a 'hybrid science' .

Experiments on apes by German scientist Wolfgang Kohler discovered the use of insight by them in problem situations.

Tolman talked about the 'cognitive maps' (relationship between stimulus) _____it is not necessary to have an association between stimulus and response, a person can learn without showing any apparent response

Both Kohler and Tolman played a vital role in laying the foundation of cognitive approach

Stanley Schacter (1971)

- According to him, emotions result from the physiological arousal as well as the cognitive appraisal (evaluation) of the situation

- Arousal comes first and is general in nature

- In order to understand what one is feeling i.e.. , the title/label of the emotion, and the meaning of one's reaction in a particular setting the arousal is appraised cognitively Richard Lazarus (1984) maintains that emotional experience cannot be understood unless we understand how what goes on in the environment is be evaluated. Emotion leads to cognition and cognition in turn leads to emotional experience.

Cognitive Approach to Social Behavior

- John Dollard and Neal Miller (1950) first ever emphasized the importance of cognitive processes in determining behavior

Kelly's Personal Construct Theory

- Developed by George Kelly (1955.)

- Emphasis on how a person cognitively constructs his world

- Persons develop their behavior cognitively towards their world and develop attitudes and opinions accordingly known as 'personal constructs' .

- The constructs then develop into a 'belief system' of a person.

- Mischel's Cognitive Social personality Theory

- Walter Mischel was a student of George Kelly.

- According to him, how a person responds to the environmental stimulus depends on the following variables:

- Competencies

  - What the person knows

  - What the person can do

  - How well the person generate the cognitive/behavioral outcome

- Encoding Strategies: Ways of processing information

- Expectations: Anticipating the likely outcome (mainly positive)

- Personal Values: Importance of one's belief, also stimulus, people, events etc

- Self-regulatory system: maintaining rules for better performance

  - Setting goals

  - Evaluating performances

Bandura's Cognitive-Social Learning Theory

- Given by Albert Bandura (1986) .

- By combining the rules of learning, it emphasizes the complex human interactions in social settings.

- Observational Learning

  - Main component of social-learning theory in which the person makes changes in his own behavior by watching/or imitating others i.e.. . , a model/a super star/favorite personality or cartoon character.

  - Effective in acquiring skills, attitudes, beliefs simply by watching others.

  - Cantor's Social Intelligence Theory

  - Given by Nancy Cantor and her colleagues (1987) .

  - Refers to the expertise, which a person uses in different life situations/tasks.

- The theory explains several types of individual differences.
  - Choice of Life Goal: Giving priority/importance to the most important goal at a particular point of life. i.e.. . , student -- 'Good grades'
  - Use of 'knowledge' in social interactions.
    - Use of life experiences and expertise in problem solving.

Cognitive Approach in Behavior Modification

- Negative and unacceptable behavior is modified through constructive strategies.

- According to this approach, person's beliefs and attitudes effect the motivation and behavior of a person

- In order to modify the behavior, reinforcement techniques are used.

- For attaining the desired goal, realistic strategies are used with continuous feedback.

Altering the Belief System

- Psychologists are of the view that psychological problems arise due to the way people perceive themselves in relation with the people they interact with.

- Main focus of the therapist is to alter the irrational belief system of a person.

- Cognitive Theory for Depression

- Aaron Beck formulated the therapy for depression patients.

- Therapist helps the depressive person to change the faulty patterns of thinking through problem- solving techniques

- Believed that depression reoccurs in depressive patients because the negative thoughts occur automatically of which they are not aware.

The Therapist Uses Four Tactics

- Challenging the patient's ill beliefs

- Evaluating the cause of depression

- Attributing the cause to the environmental situation/event not to the person's in competencies

- Finding the alternative and effective solutions for the complex problems

Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy

- Developed by Albert Ellis (1962,1977) .

- Focused on altering the irrational beliefs into more acceptable ways.

- Clients are forbidden to use "should" , "must" , "ought" etc.

- Confrontation techniques are used which focus on changing the attitudes through rational reasoning.

- Task is to protect the self-worth, potential to be self-actualized, by blocking the irrational thinking patterns.

- In short, in the last few decades, researchers have made significant breakthroughs in understanding the brain, nervous system, mental processes such as the nature of consciousness, memory distortions, competence and rationality, genetic influences on behavior, infancy, the nature of intelligence, human motivation, prejudice and discrimination, the benefits of psychotherapy, and the psychological influences on the immune system.

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