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Sem IV

MJC-7

Kalidasa
College

HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

Humanistic psychology is one of the three distinct psychological revolutions that have dominated psychological thought, has given rise to an image of humanity in psychology radically different from that of either psychoanalysis or behaviourism, the two other psychology revolutions of 20th century. Also known as "third force movement", it was heavily influenced by existential philosophy, as its basic tenets: the individual as an integrated whole, the irrelevance of animal research, the perception of the person as a basically good creative being and an emphasis on the study of physiological health.

The members of this new force feel that behaviourism is a narrow, artificial and relatively sterile approach to the understanding of man. The behaviourists approach on studying only overt behaviour tends to dehumanize man and "reduce him" to a large white rat or a slower computer. However humanists argue that man is much more than an "Orwellian" robot and cannot be objectified, quantified and reduced to S-R units."

These strong words of protest leave no doubt about the humanists perception of behaviourism. However, this ~~opposed~~ approach was not a new ~~school~~ school of thought but it was movement which suggests that the quality of human-ness is lacking in behaviourism.

James R. T. Beeghly, the first president of the American Association for Humanistic Psychology describes the movement as: "Humanistic Psychology has as its ultimate goal the preparation

of a complex description of what it means to be alive as a human being". However, the basic tenets of Humanistic Psychology as compiled by Maslow are following.

One of the most fundamental aspects of humanistic psychology is that each individual must be studied as an integrated, unique organized whole. Maslow and to some extent Rogers felt that for too long psychologists had concentrated upon minute analysis of separate events neglecting the basic aspects of the whole person and his or her nature. For Maslow, then the central characteristic of personality is its unity and totality.

Advocates of humanistic psychology recognized a profound irrelevance of animal research. They say that human beings are much more than "a large white rat". Maslow says that animal research is irrelevant to the understanding of human behaviour because it ignores those characteristics that are uniquely human such as ideals, values, shame, courage, art, jealousy and equally important, what it takes to produce poetry, music, sciences and other works of the mind. Highly significant from a humanistic perspective, there is the fact that, "there are no rats, pigeons, monkeys or even dolphins, personologists - only humans have the capacity to theorize about humans."

It has been rightly said for the humanists that "they saved the dignity of man which was sold at the hands of Freud." Freud placed little faith in human virtues,

whereas as Maslow and Rogers said that human nature is essentially good. Roger hold that "the inner most core of human nature is benevolent, propensive and trustworthy. Maslow's humanistic theory reflect ① a strong commitment to the assumptions of freedom, rationality, holism, changeability, subjectivity, proactivity, heterostasis and unfavourability and ② a slight commitment to the constitutionalism assumption. Although humanists are well aware of the evil character of humanity, they argue that the evil, the destructive and violent forces in people arise from a bad environment rather than from any inherent rottenness of on their part.

Humanistic psychology give ample emphasis of creativeness of humans. The primacy of human creativity is perhaps the most significant concept of humanistic psychology. Maslow (1970) described creativity as a characteristic ~~prop~~ potentially present in all people at birth. Maslow theorized that since creativity is potential in anyone, it requires no special talents or capacities.

Humanistic approach, furthermore emphasize on psychological health. Maslow argued that none of the previous approaches to the study of human behaviour does justice to the healthy human beings functioning, mode of living or life goals. In particular he criticized Freud and said that he concentrated on the negative side of human nature ignoring humanity strength and virtues. In short it was Maslow's belief that one cannot understand human

~~illness~~ ~~and~~ illness, until one understands mental health and argued that "the study of crippled, stunted, immature and unhealthy specimens can yield only a crippled psychology." He strongly argued the study of self actualizing, psychologically healthy persons as the basis for a more universal science of psychology.

Now we come to the most important statement of humanistic psychology which depicts human beings as self actualizers. Maslow depicts human motivation in terms of hierarchy of ascending priorities. In order of potency, Maslow's hierarchy of human needs is (a) Physiological (b) safety, (c) belongingness or love (d) self esteem and (e) self actualization. He said that love needs must be fulfilled before higher level needs emerge and in this process the level of self actualization comes which is the most important of all needs. However, in Roger's system, all human motives are subsumed under a single master motive - the actualizing tendency.

Self actualization is the innate tendency of the individual to actualize, maintain and enhance himself ~~to~~ or herself. Maslow characterized self actualization as the desire to become everything that one is capable of becoming. Thus the primary motive in people's lives is to actualize, maintain or enhance themselves to become the best self that their inherited nature will allow them to be.

Thus these are the basic tenets and contributions of humanistic psychology to

personological construct. The main contribution is that they gave a new life and force to psychology by criticising behaviorism and Freud's assumption regarding human nature and claiming human beings as much more than a machine. In contrast to destructive, humanist seen human beings as a constructive, creative and always striving for healthy assumption has not been proved it is certain that humanistic approach gave a fresh air and life to psychology.

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Books

- Hollis and Ligher - Personality
- Hull and Lindzey - Personality
- Maslow at Hittler - System and ...
- Schultz - Hist. of Psy.