PYSC 333 Psychology of Personality

Session 5– Humanistic Theory of Personality- Part 1

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Session Overview

- The humanistic viewpoint holds that people are inherently good, and strive to achieve higher levels of functioning

- This session focuses on Abraham Maslow, one of the pioneering
humanistic theorists

- Maslow identified and ranked five innate human needs

- The basic assumptions of his motivational theory are discussed in this session

- The characteristics and categories of these needs are discussed

- Finally, the hierarchy of the needs he identified will also be discussed

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Session Goals and Objectives

At the end of this session, you should be able to

- Outline the basic tenets of the humanistic theory

- OutliῨe the ďasiÐ assuŵptioῨs of Maslow's motivational theory

- List aῨd edžplaiῨ the Ðategories of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs

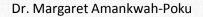- Discuss the characteristics of these hierarchy of needs

Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as
follows:

• Humanistic Theory

• Maslow's theorLJ- basic assumptions

• Categorization and characteristics of needs

• Hierarchy of needs

• Conclusion

Reading List

- Carducci, B. J. (2009). *The Psychology of personality*
(2nd ed.). Chichester: John Riley & Sons Ltd (Ch 6)

- Larsen, R. J., & Buss, D. M. (2008). *Personality psychology: Domain of knowledge about human nature* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill. (Ch 11)

- Schultz, D. P., & Schultz, S. E. (2005). *Theories of personality*. Belmont: Wadsworth. (Ch 11)

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Topic One

HUMANISTIC THEORY

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Humanistic theory of personality

- According to humanistic theorists, all other theories of personality share a fundamental misperception in their view of human nature

- They emphasized people's basic goodness and their tendency to grow to higher ~~level~~ (levels) of functioning

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Humanistic theory of personality

- They believed that human nature is good

- They also stress the uniqueness of the individual and his/her freedom to make choices

- Focus on a person's own subjective interpretation of what happens around him/her

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Humanistic theory of personality

- Human beings strive for personal development and growth and not merely to satisfy their biological needs

- Schultz & Schultz (2005)- humanistic psychologist

"explored human behaviour at its best" not worse (p. 305)

Humanistic theory of personality

- These emphasize on positive human potential as illustrated in viewpoints of two pioneering theorist

- Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

- Carl R. Rogers (1902-1987)

MASLOW'S THEORY- BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

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Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

- Maslow was of the view that psychologists like Freud ignored positive human qualities such as happiness, peace of mind etc. (Shultz & Schultz, 2005)

- *"The study of crippled, stunted, immature and unhealthy specimen can yield only a cripple psychology* (Maslow, 1970b, p. 180)

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Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

- Maslow conducted research on creative independent, self-sufficient and fulfilled adults

- He proposed that each individual is born with the same instinctive needs (Schultz & Schultz, 2005)

- Proposed a positive aspect of personality development which became known as the third force in psychology

Maslow- basic assumptions

- For Maslow, individuals are basically good and consciously strive for self-enhancement

- But because they are also weak, they can easily get distracted from this self-enhancement

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Maslow- basic assumptions

- According to Barone & Kominars (1998) and Moss (2001) (in Carducci, 2009), Maslow emphasised studying individuals with emotionally healthy personality

- Maslow identified 5 innate needs- individuals are constantly motivated to meet these biological and psychological needs

Maslow- basic assumptions

- This needs satisfaction is a dynamic process

- However, individuals will seek to attain lower need (at least partially) before striving to achieve higher needs- e.g. hunger

Maslow- basic assumptions

- Needs satisfaction can be affected by learning, social expectations and fear of disapproval

- Needs satisfaction behaviours are learned and thus needs satisfaction may vary from person to person e.g. working or stealing

Topic Three

CATEGORIZATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF NEEDS

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Categorisation of needs

- Maslow distinguished between deficiency needs and being needs

  1. Deficiency needs

The lower more basic needs that the individual has to satisfy in order to survive ie.   hunger, thirst and safety

Categorisation of needs

2. Growth or Being needs

•Higher needs which motivate individuals to engage in behaviours that will bring self-fulfilment or self-enhancement (Carducci, 2009)

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Characteristics of needs

- The lower the need on the hierarchy, the greater its strength, potency, priority and influence on behaviours, than higher needs

- Higher/ growth needs are weaker needs while lower/ deficiency   needs (physiological and safety needs) are stronger needs

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Characteristics of needs

- Lower need arise in infancy while growth needs appear later in life

- Unlike deficiency needs, growth needs are not necessary for survival

Characteristics of needs

- Failure to satisfy deficiency needs can produce a crises or a deficit hence the name deficiency needs

- Being needs are not necessary for survival but fulfilling them can improve health and longevity, hence the name growth needs

Topic Three

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow categorised human needs into five levels

- 1. Physiological needs

- 2. Safety needs

- 3. Belongingness and Love

- 4. Esteem needs

- 5. Self-actualization

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

1. <u>Physiological need</u>

- Directly related to survival

- Includes the need for food, water, sleep

- When physiological needs are not fulfilled, they can dominate a person's life

- E.g. constantly working to feed yourself rather than saving up to get married

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- For a person who cannot satisfy these needs, issues such as democracy and justice, self-enhancement etc. may not mean much

- Once a physiological need (e.g. hunger), is satisfied, that need no longer directs or controls one's behaviour

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

2. <u>Safety needs</u>

• Relates to shelter and security as well as the need for order, stability, and predictability, freedom from fear and structure or routine

• Examples- having a place to live and being free from the fear and threat of danger

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- Knowing one can settle into a routine, adds a sense of stability and security to one's ~~live~~ (life) (Carducci, 2009)

- Changes such as burglary, terrorists attack (e.g. 9/11), the threat of contracting Ebola etc. violates one's sense of security as they disrupt the person's familiar routine

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- Having a sense of control and predictability therefore adds to our feeling of safety and security (Carducci, 2009)

- That is why an individual will save towards the future, buy insurance or be in a secured job

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

3. <u>Belongingness and Love Needs</u>

- Relates to the desire to feel accepted by others and have meaningful interpersonal relationship

- Includes the need to feel part of a reference group (family, religious group) and to be able to give and receive love (friendship formation)
(Carducci, 2009)

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- These needs can be expressed through a close relationship with a lover, a friend, a roommate or through other social relationships

- Loneliness and alienation is a sign that this need for belongingness and love has not been met

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- Unfortunately, researchers believe that the need to belong has become more difficult with

❑ the changing nature of the social structure of our society and

❑ growth and development in technology (e.g. Kraut et al, 1998, Putman 1996, 2000)

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

4. <u>Esteem Needs</u>

•This need comes in two forms-

•1. Esteem from others in the form of

❑achieving status and recognition or social success in a group and

❑being perceived as a worthy and able person/ member e.g. holding a position and executing your duties well

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- 2. Esteem and respect from oneself

- This is having a self- esteem or self-worth that reflects the individual's confidence in his/ her own abilities to perform

- When an individual satisfies self-esteem needs he/ she feels confident

- Lack of self-esteem results in feeling inferior, less confident in one's abilities and discouraged (Schultz & Schultz, 2005)

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- Of the two types of esteem, the latter depends ~~of~~ (on) the former- self-esteem depends on esteem from others.

- For instance, individuals want to be seen by others as competent, capable, able to achieve, and also feel respected etc.

- This when achieved translates into self-esteem where they , worthwhile, valuable and competent (Larsen & Buss, 2008)

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Maslow's hierarchy of needs

5. <u>Self-actualization Needs</u>

• The highest on the hierarchy of needs

• The individual strives to attain maximum realisation of his/ her potentials, talents and abilities

• According to Maslow, if an individual satisfies the first four needs but does not self- actualize, that person will feel frustrated and discontent

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

- When Maslow first discussed the concept, he used it to describe just a few well-known ~~individual~~ (individuals) such as Lincoln and Einstein,

- However, self-actualisation is not limited to the famous

- The important thing is that people feel at ease with themselves and satisfied that they are using their talents to the fullest

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CONCLUSION

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Conclusion

- Although Maslow's needs are hierarchical, it does not mean that an individual has to completely satisfy one before moving to the rest

- The more relief one has from lower needs the more attention he/ she will devote to higher needs

- E.g. satisfying your hunger and studying

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Conclusion

- Sometimes an individual may be working at satisfying multiple needs at a time

- E.g. eating and fixing a light bulb or an electrical problem, going out with friends and studying for exams

- E.g. President of neighbourhood watch – i.e. esteem and safety needs

- Thus, it is possible to satisfy more than one need at a time

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Conclusion

- However, one need will dominate a person's personality at one time (Schultz & Schultz, 2005)

- E.g. if you are unable to fix the electrical problem, you may give up going out with friends

Conclusion

- Finally, though lower needs are more potent, they can be superseded by higher needs

- E.g. when you skip dinner to go for a meeting – physiological and belongingness needs

END OF SESSION 5 PART 1

References

- Carducci, B. J. (2009). *The Psychology of personality* (2nd ed.). Chichester: John Riley & Sons Ltd

- Larsen, R. J., & Buss, D. M. (2008). *Personality psychology: Domain of knowledge about human nature* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

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