

Modern Development

Prof. Riyadh Al_Azzawi

F.R.C.Psych

Modern development:

- Gestalt psychology and psychoanalysis has important contributions ;
- until world war II psychology was dominated by behaviorism particularly in U.S.A.
- after world war II interest in psychology increased.
- sophisticated instruments and electronics became available ;especially the development of computer since 1950's ;they offered psychologists a powerful tool for theorizing about psychological process.
- Another important development in 1950's was the development of modern linguistics.
- At this time important advances were occurring in neuropsychology. Psychologists became able to investigate the overt and covert aspects of the mind.

Contemporary Psychological Perspectives:

- A perspective is an approach; a way of looking at a topic.
- Any topic can be approached from a variety of perspectives e.g. crossing the street.
- Biological: nerve and muscle.
- Behavioral: S-R.
- Cognitive: a plan to visit a friend.

1-The biological perspective:

- Research from this perspective seeks to specify the neurological process that underlie behavior and mental processes e.g. the biological approach to depression seeks to understand it in terms of abnormal neurotransmitter levels.
- In localization in RT. Handed's the speech center is localized in the left hemisphere while special interpretation is in the Rt.
- In memory the hippocampus has a role in consolidating memories so childhood amnesia may be due to immature hippocampus.

2-The Behavioral Perspective:

- It focuses on stimuli and responses e.g. analysis of social life).
- People interact with the social stimuli and their responses (like dislike or neutral) and their type of response lead to sustain or disrupt of interaction.
- In obesity may be a specific situation that lead to overeating ;avoiding these situations help wt.reduction.
- Aggression between children if a child hit another one if rewarded i.e. by withdrawal he will repeat that behavior; if punished by counterattack he will stop.
- Classical conditioning _Pavlov S-R
CS-CR
- Operant conditioning _Skinner response _reward.

3-The cognitive perspective:

- It is concerned with mental processes as perceiving ;remembering;reasoning;deciding and problem solving.
- **Modern cognitivism** is not based on introspection. it assumes that
 - 1) only by studying mental processes we can fully understand what organisms do.
 - 2) we can study mental processes in our objective fashion by
 - 1) focusing on specific behaviors and interpreting them in terms of underlying mental processes ;in this they rely on an analogy between the mind and the computer.
 - 2) incoming information is processed in various ways ;selected;compared;and combined with other information already in memory; transformed ;rearranged and so on.e.g. in childhood amnesia this is developmental issue when we reach 3 yrs there is major increase in our language abilities and this offers us a new way of organizing our memories.

4-The Psychoanalytic Perspective:

- Developed by Sigmund Freud.
- In some respects it was a blend of the 19th century version of cognition and physiology.
- Freud combined cognitive notions of consciousness ;perception and memory with the ideas about biologically based instincts to bring out a new theory of human behavior .
- The basic assumption of Freud's theory is that much of our behaviors stems from unconscious processes ;beliefs; fears and desires that a person is unaware of but they influence his behaviors.
- He believed that many of the impulses that are forbidden or punished by parents and society during childhood are derived from innate instincts.

4-The Psychoanalytic Perspective:

- Because each of us is born with these impulses ;they exert a pervasive influence that must be dealt with in some way.
- forbidding them forces them out of awareness into the unconscious.
- They do not disappear ;they may manifest as emotional problems ;symptoms of mental illness or may be socially approved behavior such as artistic and literary activity .
- Freud believed that we are driven by the same basic instinct of animals (sex and aggression).
- And that we are continually struggling against society that stresses on the control of these impulses .
- Freud claimed that aggression behavior stems from an innate instinct.

5-The Phenomenological Perspective:

- It has been associated with social psychologists who are interested in how we perceive; understand and interpret our social worlds.
- This is favored by humanistic psychologists. they emphasize the unique human qualities that distinguish healthy people from distorted people and animals.e.g. according to them an individual 's principal motivational force is a tendency towards growth and self actualization .
- All of us have a basic need to develop our potential to the fullest to progress beyond where we are now in spite of environmental and social obstacles our nature of tendency is toward actualizing our potential.
- They contributed most to the study of personality.

Relationships Between Psychological and Biological Perspectives:

- The behaviorists; cognitive; psychoanalytic; and phenomenological perspectives all rely on concepts that are purely psychological.
- The biological perspective is different ;in addition to using psychological concepts it employs concepts drawn from biology.
- The attempts of biological researchers to explain psychological notions on biologic base and reducing them to the biological explanation only ,the view is termed reductionism.
- Is psychology just something to do until the biologist figure everything out!
- the answer is no; first psychologists find up concepts and principals direct biological researchers in their work. Second our biology always acts in concert with our past circumstances and current environment. For example obesity can be the result of both a genetic predisposition to gain weight and the learning of bad eating habits.