

Compare and contrast two psychological perspectives

I am going to research the psychodynamic and Cognitive theory thoroughly, using different resources with this I will compare their strengths and weaknesses of each.

The psychodynamic approach includes all theories in psychology that see human functioning based upon the interaction of drives and forces within the person, particularly unconscious between the structures of personality. Freud's psychoanalytic was the original psychodynamic theory.

Sigmund Freud's Theory is quite complex. He believed that different driving forces develop during these stages which play an important role in how we interact with the world. In *An Outline of Psychoanalysis*, Freud (1949) explains the principal tenets on which psychoanalytic theory is based.

According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, personality is composed of three elements, these three elements of personality is known as the id, the ego, and the superego which work together to create complex human behaviors.

The id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. This aspect of personality is entirely unconscious and includes of the instinctive and primitive behaviors. According to Freud, the id is the source of all psychic energy, making it the primary component of personality.

The id is driven by the [pleasure principle](#), which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants, and needs. If these needs are not satisfied immediately, the result is a state anxiety or tension. The id is very important early in life, because it ensures that an infant's needs are met. If the infant is hungry or uncomfortable, he or she will cry until the demands of the id are met.

According to Freud, the id tries to resolve the tension created by the pleasure principle through the primary process, which involves forming a mental image of the desired object as a way of satisfying the need.

The ego is the component of personality that is responsible for dealing with reality. According to Freud, the ego develops from the id and ensures that the impulses of the id can be expressed in a manner acceptable in the real world. The ego functions in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mind. (Freud, 1949, p. 14).

The ego operates based on the reality principle, which strives to satisfy the id's desires in realistic and socially appropriate ways. The reality principle weighs the costs and benefits of an action before deciding to act upon or abandon impulses. In many cases, the id's impulses can be satisfied through a process of delayed gratification the ego will eventually allow the behavior, but only in the appropriate time and place.

The last stage of personality to develop is the superego. The superego is the aspect of personality that holds all of our internalized moral standards and ideals that we acquire from both parents and society (our sense of right and wrong.) The superego and provides guidelines for making judgments. According to Freud, the superego begins to emerge at around age five.

There are two parts of the superego; the ego ideal includes the rules and standards for good behaviors. These behaviors include those which are approved of by parental and other authority figures. Obeying these rules leads to feelings of pride, value, and accomplishment.

The conscience includes information about things that are viewed as bad by parents and society. These behaviors are often forbidden and lead to bad consequences, punishments, or feelings of guilt and remorse.

The superego acts to perfect and civilize our behavior. It works to suppress all unacceptable urges of the id and struggles to make the ego act upon idealistic standards rather than upon realistic principles. The superego is present in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious.

Freud believed that with so many fighting forces, it is easy to see how conflict might arise between the id, ego, and superego. Freud used the term ego strength to refer to the ego's ability to function despite these dueling forces. A person with good ego strength is able to effectively manage these pressures, while those with too much or too little ego strength can become too unyielding or too disrupting.

Sigmund Freud also believed that people go through five stages of child development. During the first stage Freud called this the Oral stage which takes place from birth to 18 months. During the oral stage, the child is focused on oral pleasures. Too much or too little gratification can result in an oral fixation or oral personality, which is evidenced by a preoccupation with oral activities. This type of personality may have a stronger desire to smoke, drink alcohol, over eat or bite their nails. Freud believed that these people may become overly independent upon others and gullible. On the other hand they may also fight these urges and develop aggression towards others.

The second stage he called the anal stage which starts from the 18 months and lasts to three years. The child focus during this stage is pleasure on holding and letting go feces. Through society and parents pressure, the child has to learn to control anal stimulation. In terms of personality, after affects of an anal fixation during this stage can result in an obsession with cleanliness, perfection and control (anal retentive). On the opposite behavior they may become messy and disorganized, this is called Anal expulsive.

At three to six years the child goes through the phallic stage where the pleasure zone switches to the genitals. Freud believed that during this stage boys develop unconscious sexual desires for their mother. Because of this, he becomes rivals with his father and sees him as competition for the mother affection. During this time, boys also develop a fear that their father will punish them for their feelings, such as castrating them. Out of

fear they become to identify with their father and repress his feeling toward other women in his adulthood.

Latency stage starts from six to puberty it's during this stage that sexual urges remain repressed and children interact and play mostly with same sex peers. This is the quiet stage, until the genital stage which starts during a child goes through puberty. This is known as the final stage of the psychosexual development begins at the start of puberty when sexual urges are once again open. Though the lessons learned during the previous stages, adolescents direct their sexual urges onto the opposite sex peers, with the primary focus of pleasure is the genitals. (Freud, 1949, p. 52).

In contrast to the psychodynamic theory, the cognitive perspective to psychology began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but it only became clear and important for research in the 1970s.

Cognitive psychology is used to study the mental processes of a person. The idea is that the mind has a sort of mental state which makes it able to believe desire and intent. It is like comparing a human mind to a computer by saying that we are also information processors and that we can study the internal mental processes that are in the stimuli and the responses we make. The word "Cognition" means "the process of knowing" so therefore the cognitive process is associated to the ways, in which knowledge is used, retained and gained. Cognitive psychologists have researched and studied attention, perception, thinking, language, memory, attention and problem solving. Emotion was not considered a cognitive process. All in all, the cognitive psychology studies to understand the thinking process that influence our actions and behavior.

"...cognition refers to all those processes by which sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered and used...cognition is involved in everything a human being might possibly do." Neisser (1966)

Cognitive psychology is fundamentally different from the other psychological approaches in two ways:

(1) Unlike the phenomenological methods such as the Freudian theory, Cognitive Psychology admits the use of the scientific method and denies introspection as a suitable method of investigation.

(2) It considers the existence of inner mental states such as beliefs, desires and motivations unlike behaviorist psychology. The school that studies the cognitive approach is called "Cognitivism".

The methods of investigation used by the cognitive psychologists are:

Experimentation: this is usually performed in the laboratory. For an example the memory experiments are carried out under strictly controlled circumstances where the independent variables are manoeuvred to look for the effect on the number of information sustained.

Case studies: for an example the research of the brain damaged patients like those diagnosed with anterograde amnesia in memory study.

With the study and use of cognitive perspective, scientists were able to analyze memory, attention, perception, social cognition, artificial intelligence and abnormality.

As strength the cognitive perspective provided to the world with improvement with memory through methods such as mnemonics and also helped the police with eyewitness testimonies.

The information processing argument has been utilized to help in education. More effectiveness in therapy when using the cognitive behavioral approach, It also helped promote health with the health belief model and the pursued health advice. Some of the important cognitive psychologists should be mentioned. They include Atkinson and Shrifin, Gregory, Broedbent and Rumelhart and McClelland.

According to critics on the weaknesses on Freud theory is that it is lacking evidence. His theory is defiantly not scientific, which can be determined by other scientists as inaccurate. However Cognitive psychology has much strength as it is said to be the dominant approach these days. In comparison it researches them by using allegedly more accurate scientific methods. Many powerful criticisms about Freud's inaccurate and subsequently flawed evidence have been published. These critics contend that Freud's evidence is flawed due to the lack of an experiment, the lack of a control group, and the lack of observations that went unrecorded (Colby, 1960, p. 54). In addition, critics find fault with the demographically restricted sample of individuals on which Freud based the majority of his data and theory

According to A. H. Almaas, It could be argued that using "free association" talking out methods using his theory on the tripartite theory that a patient may bring up imagined memory's that may be made up due to his influence on Freud's leading questions. Also not everybody has suffered and repressed a trauma, so this might not apply to everybody. But also his theory on a patient's situation can be a lot different, to another psychoanalyst as he might interpret it in a different way.

According to Dr Christopher L. Heffner 2001, his strengths with these two theories are that it is highly recognized today after he invented it in 1856, which means it withstood the test of time.

Understanding people cannot be scientifically proven; as the brain would be too complex and diverse to test.

In addition, a good theory, according to many philosophers of science, is falsifiable, able to be generalized, leads to new theories and ideas, and is recognized by others in the field. Clearly psychoanalysis meets many of these criteria. But Freud coined the term "psychoanalysis" in 1856. Even today, as we are rapidly approaching the twenty-first century, psychoanalysis remains as a valid option for patients suffering from mental illnesses. The acceptance and popularity of psychoanalysis is apparent through the

existence of numerous institutes, organizations, and conferences established around the world with psychoanalysis as their focus. The theory of psychoanalysis was innovative and revolutionary, and clearly has withstood the test of time.

Psychodynamic approach has been accused to be the stereotypical psychology - looking into your past, discovering desires and rummaging through the unconscious. It was what started it all, but it is also the most radical of the five theories, and by far the most criticized - accused of being sexist, seeing the human population as ill, and considering sex and hostility as the only motivation for human actions.

In contrast the Cognitive approach has given explanations of a lot of features on human behavior. But there are also some weaknesses that cognitive examples have been blamed for such as too simple, unrealistic, over hypothetical and too cold". M. Deric Bownds. Critics say the Cognitive approach is too simplistic because it ignores the very complicated human actions compared to computer actions. They also say that it is too cold, meaning they are ignoring the emotional side of humans, their consciousness and free will. But just as all the other psychology approaches, it will be argued forever, but still used. Some like it and some do not, but in the end, it is a very important part of psychology. (Farrell, 1981, p. 195).

In conclusion to this the psychodynamic approach concentrates on the human personality which according to Freud has three distinctive and interacting parts and he used thermodynamics as an extended metaphor to explain this. Using this tripartite division the ego and the id in which he named these three distinctive parts, the id, the ego, and the superego. He also believed that much of one's personalities are shaped from one's childhood experiences. He theorized that from a child's birth until the child has gone through puberty, he or she goes through psychosexual stages of development. In comparison to this the Cognitive theory was used by psychologists to explain how people could act as information transmission devices.

Cognitive psychology makes a number of assumptions:

Humans are seen as active information processors

Mental processes exist and these processes are linked to observable behaviors - e.g. how long people take to do things, what sort of mistakes people make.

These assumptions are used to develop theories via the use of the information processing approach and by computer modeling.

Bibliography

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Internet resources

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