Humanist, Behavioral and Sociocultural Personality Perspectives
Learning Targets

1. To identify the Humanist Personality perspective
2. To define the behaviorist personality perspective
3. To apply Rogers’ & Maslow’s theories to real life.
Behaviorist Theory of Personality

- The way most people think of personality is meaningless.
- Personality changes according to the environment (reinforcers and punishments).
- If you change environment then you change the personality.
Behaviorist Theory

- Watson claimed that external forces/influence shape our preferences and behavior, not internal traits.
- Skinner said that you should only study what you can observe. Environmental influences like parental approval and social custom shape us into wanting some things and not others.
- socialization is how we learn the socially desirable behaviors and adopt as our personalities.
Problems with the Behavioral Approach

- Doesn’t describe, explain, or even suggest the richness of inner human experience

- Does not deal with thoughts, feelings, and people’s complex inner maps of the world.
Social Learning Theory

- Albert Bandura (Mr. BoBo Doll)
- Focuses on the importance of learning by observation
- Argue that people can act intentionally to influence the environment
internal factors influence how we act:

- **Skills**: include physical and social abilities
- **Values**: the value we put on the outcome of a certain behavior affects how we act. If you value $, you will work a lot and work hard
- **Goals**: we regulate ourselves by setting goals, we then plan the most effective way to reach it
- **Expectations**: predictions of what will happen in certain situations
- **Self-efficacy expectations**: if you believe yourself to be good at something, you will seek opportunities to do things you are good at
Problems with Social Learning

- no satisfying explanation for the development of traits
- doesn’t pay enough attention to the role of genetic variation in determining individual differences
Humanistic Psychology

- Perspective that focuses on the study of conscious experience, the individual’s freedom to choose, and capacity for personal growth
- Studies fulfilled and healthy individuals rather than troubled people
Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

- Humanistic psychologist who proposed the hierarchy of needs
- Believed self-actualization is the ultimate psychological need
Hierarchy of Needs

- Maslow’s pyramid of human needs, beginning at the base with physiological needs, proceeding through safety needs and then to psychological needs
- Higher-level needs won’t become active until lower-level needs have been satisfied.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- **Physiological needs**: Need to satisfy hunger, thirst, and other survival needs.
- **Safety needs**: Need to feel that the world is organized and predictable; need to feel safe, secure, and stable.
- **Belongingness and love needs**: Need to love and be loved, to belong and be accepted; need to avoid loneliness and alienation.
- **Esteem needs**: Need for self-esteem, achievement, competence, and independence; need for recognition and respect from others.
- **Self-actualization needs**: Need to live up to one’s fullest and unique potential.
Adapted 8 level Hierarchy of Needs diagram, based on Maslow's theory

- **Biological and Physiological needs**
  - Basic life needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.

- **Safety needs**
  - Protection, security, order, law, limits, stability, etc.

- **Belongingness and Love needs**
  - Family, affection, relationships, work group, etc.

- **Esteem needs**
  - Achievement, status, responsibility, reputation

- **Cognitive needs**
  - Knowledge, meaning, self-awareness

- **Aesthetic needs**
  - Beauty, balance, form, etc.

- **Self-actualization**
  - Personal growth, self-fulfilment

- **Transcendence**
  - Helping others to self-actualize
Carl Rogers (1902-1987)

- Humanistic psychologist who stressed the importance of acceptance, genuineness, and empathy in fostering human growth
Roger’s Theories

- Unconditional Positive Regard
  - According to Rogers, an attitude of total acceptance toward another person

- Genuineness
  - Freely expressing one’s feelings and not being afraid to disclose details about oneself

- Empathy
  - Sharing thoughts and understanding
  - Listening and reflecting the other person’s feelings
Be careful of the Barnum Effect!!!

- People have the tendency to see themselves in vague, stock descriptions of personality.
- Horoscopes, astrologers and psychics all use this concept.
Social Cognitive Perspective

also called cognitive-behavioral approach
Albert Bandura

Theorized that we learn by observing and modeling the behaviors of others by having certain behaviors rewarded or reinforced to understand personality, we have to understand the situation the person is in, how the person thinks and how the person interacts socially.
Interacting with our environment

- **reciprocal determinism** - personality and environmental factors mutually influence one another
  - your thoughts/cognitions
  - your environment
  - your behaviors
Personal control factors

- **external locus of control** - perception that chance or outside forces determines your fate
- **internal locus of control** - perception that you control your own fate

Those with an internal locus of control are: less depressed, more likely to be healthy, achieve more in school and act more independently, cope better with stress
Learned Helplessness

- hopeless feeling that one experiences when you can’t avoid repeated bad events

If we have an **optimistic explanatory style** we look for more positive explanations of temporary nature when something goes wrong, a **pessimistic explanatory style** would blame themselves, or see the problem as beyond their control, or as a permanent situation
Strengths of Social Cognitive Perspective

- examines learning and cognition research
- it is objective and scientific
- it makes researchers aware of the importance of considering a situation in the assessment of personality
Criticisms of the Social Cognitive Perspective

- it ignores the role of emotions in guiding our behavior
- it discounts the role of unseen motives, like guilt, on our behavior
- it doesn’t fully consider the existence of consistent personality traits