Humanistic Holistic Theories

The humanistic theories form part of the personality theories. These are theories whose emphasis is on how important individual experience and free will are in the personality development of an individual. These are theories that were discovered by the humanistic theories Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. These humanistic theorists put emphasis on the self actualization concept.

This is a concept that is motivatory in terms of behavior and thus is needed for the personal growth of individuals. The humanistic theories are studied in human psychology. This strongly reacts to behaviorism and psychodynamics. This shows that human beings are the ones who decide on the directions that their lives take. Further, these are conscious decisions. The humanistic holistic theories are important since they give a way in which human development is understood in terms of realizing individual potentials.

Discussion

In humanistic psychology, human beings are viewed as fundamental beings and the living process is fundamentally creative. The lives that human beings lead can be characterized by behaviors, feelings and thoughts. These can be characteristics which have been consciously or unconsciously developed following different experiences. However, the humanistic theory cites that people should use their potentials. This can be achieved by being active towards their process of growth.

It is by realizing their potentials and making good use of what people are capable of doing that they are able to individually develop as human beings. The humanistic approach to life is holistic. Human beings also have a spiritual nature (Ryckman, 2007). It is holistic because in it, the spiritual nature of individual human beings is recognized. Further, this humanistic holistic approach is essential in integrating all the experiences of human beings. This means that the humanistic holistic approach studies the body, the feelings and thoughts, soul and spirit.

Application of the humanistic holistic theories on skills and development
Abraham Maslow in his development of the humanistic theories looked at people in a general way. This means that human beings can be seen as whole organisms that function in various ways. Human beings are motivated to progress towards fulfillment. Though there is this motivation, they never get everything that they need. That is why human beings will always work to make more development in their lives. Different individuals have got different skills. It is the behavior of human beings to want to work more so as to improve on their skills. This is thus the essence of development.

When one improves on their skills, then it is expected that their actions will result to more personal as well as external development. Further, people have holistic thoughts. As human beings, they recognize that they also have a spiritual being in them. It is also through personal development that people will have personal centered therapies. The functioning of human beings is usually seen as directly resulting from the individual’s internal world.

For instance, the skills that one holds can be naturally held or even if they are learned, then they are internally held. For human experience, it is important to have relationships with the external environment and this is most probably with other people. By so doing, an individual learns the behaviors of others, their opinions and is thus able to develop their internal skills. Human beings also have responsibilities and choices to make. In this case, human development can be seen as the ability to choose between different aspects.

It is the skills that they hold that enable them to make the best choices. This is best achieved in their pursuit for meaning, creativity and value. When they make new observations, human beings will tend to find ways through which they can make what they observe better and this is achieved by making creative and innovative thoughts (Sharma, 2011). These are facilitated by the need to create meaning and thus develop the skills that they hold.

**Application of the humanistic holistic theories on communication**

Human beings do not live in a world of their own. Rather, they exist as part of a larger community. It is essential that people live well in a community and thus communication is key to this. Through communication, people exhibit various emotional skills. There exists a relationship between the way people think and their emotional skills. When communicating, human beings will express their different thoughts and thus feelings and emotions. Humanistic theorists have seen the need for interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships.

For instance, human theorists argue that when people are highly emotional, they think in a personalized way (Cox & Darwin, 2008). Therefore, this will manipulate the way in which they communicate with others. The interactions that people have will also shape their communication skills. Further, their personal experiences also determine ways in which people communicate.
with each other. Thus, one can say that in humanistic psychology, human experience is very important.

This is especially the focus on the experiences that people have actually lived. For example, this can be observed in the nursing experience. The nurses will deal with people who need their utmost care. Therefore, they have to communicate to them well and be empathetic of their situations. It is through their profession that nurses will develop the habit of good communication. This eventually becomes like an intrinsic part of them. Thus, with their experience, their lives are generally transformed and the same communication behavior is exhibited even in areas outside their profession of experience.

Application of humanistic holistic theories in problem solving

Human beings should have a holistic framework for solving of problems and managing them. To solve problems needs skills and good communication. Problem solving is both at individual level and counseling level. It is common for people to experience internal problems. This for example is shown by having conflicting ideas. As spiritual beings for instance, the spirit and the body will at times conflict. The body may want something that the spirit does not deem necessary.

To solve this then requires the internal problem solving. It is engaging the mind that human beings will be able to overcome these conflicts. This then results to following the correct direction. Counseling is also part of problem solving. Thus, the humanistic holistic theories focus on counseling. Humanistic theories emphasize on free will. This is also important in counseling. Counseling is done to relieve the individual of some problems by offering personalized advice. However, this is done if one is willing to have it. Humanistic approaches also reject what is considered as the science positivism (Friedman, 2008).

This means that humanistic theories do not investigate other people as observers detached from the real situation but rather advocates for involvement. In decision making, where more than one person will be affected, then it is important to involve all other people and this is according to the humanistic approach. Holism means that the whole person is studied. When making decisions that will affect other people, it is important to study them. For example, their behaviors and how the made decision will affect them, that is, if it will be positive or negative effect. Thus, decisions should be made after the people have been studied and should also be informative and involving.
Application of humanistic holistic theory in ethnic diversity

Humanistic theory encourages as well as supports racial, life style and ethic diversities. It recognizes that people have diverse natures. In both sociology and humanistic psychology, there is deep commitment to diversification. Though it may be challenging to achieve ethnic diversity, humanistic theories handle this. In this, the theories state that people should define their heritages for ethnicity. In the contemporary world, the values of democracy, personal worth equality, social justice as well as political participation are transcultural appealing.

This is where the humanistic theories come in. For instance, in humanistic approach, one has to understand the ethnic roots and thus make efforts to separate the individual cultural values from these values that are appealing to the contemporary world. However, despite the fact that human beings hold different ethnic values, humanist theorists argue that they should be rational. Humanistic theories also argue that democracy to some extend has been invented from cultural histories.

This then shows that culture is very important and thus should be respected. Rationality comes in because people of different ethnic beliefs will live together as a community. Therefore, some ethnic beliefs will have to be dropped or integrated to ensure that there is commonness and oneness in the areas of existence. This is executed in the people’s behaviors and the behaviors are learned following the peoples experiences. For instance, when they relate with other people, human beings are able to learn their different behaviors and know how to live with people of different believes and behaviors.

This does not however imply that individualism, romantism, and intellectualism are bad. It only means that there are certain characteristics that are considered to have specific associations with specified ethnic histories. According to the humanistic theories, people should own these histories and in a conscious way. This will help in finding the right place that the humanistic social sciences would hold in the modern world which is polycultural (Warmoth, 1998).

Establishing and using helping relationships

One of the humanistic theorists is Carl Rogers. He developed the person centered approach which is unique in giving an understanding to human relationships and personalities. According to Rogers, there is a self concept which is made up of the ideal self and the perceived self. A match of the two selves then results to an individual being psychologically healthy. This psychological health is essential in helping other people. For instance, in counseling, the counselor has to be psychologically healthy so as to be able to counsel other people.
Counseling is one of the ways that people are led towards psychological health. By counseling, it becomes easier to balance between the ideal and the perceived self. People suffer from psychological torture for different reasons for example fear and self denial. Thus, help is needed for them to get over these psychological tortures. That is where counseling comes in. This further establishes not only a relationship for oneself but human relationship with other individuals.

Humanistic psychology begins with the formation of a helping relationship with individual self. This can be referred to as self acceptance. Therefore, as Rogers cites, each individual is their own therapist in making a helping relationship. It is from this helping relationship with oneself that an individual can transfer it to other people. For instance, the other person has to perceive them as trustworthy and dependable. However, this also begins at individual level. To form a relationship with other people, one has to develop trust in them first and that the help that they give will be accepted and taken positively.

By doing so, it is easier to form helping relationships with other people and thus the other people will develop trust. However, when offering help, one has to ensure that the other person recognizes that the responsibility and ultimate decision lies with them (American psychological association, 2010). For example, in counseling, the therapist only offers help but the final decision lies with the person being counseled. Maslow defines humanistic holistic theory in terms of the hierarchy of needs. This means that the objective of psychological growth is to ensure that needs are met and thus people reach self actualization. These needs have a relationship with the motivation of human beings.

Maslow categorized these needs into two. These are growth needs and deficiency needs. The deficiency needs are physiological, security, love and belongings and finally esteem. It is only by meeting these deficiency needs that one can act on the growth needs. These growth needs are cognitive, aesthetic, self actualization and self transcendence (Huitt, 2007). The argument in Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is that when an individual meets the growth needs, they become better in the sense that they know how well to act in various situations. This then shows that they meet self acceptance and thus can also extend help to other people.

Conclusion

The humanistic holistic theories are important since they give a way in which human development is understood in terms of realizing individual potentials. Humanistic holistic theories emphasize on free will and the experiences that individual human beings have. These are very essential in creating helping relationships, problem solving and decision making, communication as well as in personal and community development.
Humanistic psychology discusses the need to have ethnic diversity since to some extend democracy is created from cultural histories. Humanistic holistic theories also recognize that human beings are spiritual beings. These are thus theories which are applicable in the day to day lives of human beings.

References


