

CHAPTER 14

PERSONALITY IN PERSPECTIVE: OVERLAP AND INTEGRATION

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Similarities Among Perspectives

- Psychoanalysis and Evolutionary Psychology: The Structural Model
- Psychoanalysis and Evolutionary Psychology: Fixations and Mating Patterns
- Psychoanalysis and Self-Regulation: Hierarchy and the Structural Model
- Psychoanalysis and Cognitive Processes
- Social Learning, Cognitive, and Self-Regulation Views
- Maslow's Hierarchy and Hierarchies of Self-Regulation
- Self-Actualization and Self-Regulation
- Traits and Their Equivalents in Other Models

Recurrent Themes, Viewed from Different Angles

- Impulse and Restraint
- Individual versus Group Needs

Combining Perspectives

- Eclecticism
- An Example: Biology and Learning as Complementary Influences on Personality

Which Theory is Best?

Summary

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Although various perspectives on personality differ from one another in important ways, they also resemble one another in important ways. The psychoanalytic perspective is similar to at least three alternative views. First, ideas about evolution in the species parallel Freud's ideas about the evolution of personality in the individual. That is, in each case, a primitive force (the genes, the id) needs another force to help it deal with reality (the cortex, the ego), and eventually it also needs a force to keep it in contact with the social world (inherited sensitivity to social influence, the superego). There are also similarities between Freud's picture of fixations from the Oedipal crisis and the mating tactics that evolutionary theorists posit for males and females. Second, the psychoanalytic view and the self-regulation view resemble each other in that the notion of a hierarchy of control echoes psychoanalytic theory's three components of personality. Third, work from the cognition viewpoint on unconscious influences has resulted in concepts that resemble, in some ways, those postulated years earlier by Freud.

A substantial overlap exists between the social learning, the cognitive, and the self-regulation viewpoints. They share an emphasis on mental representations of the world, although the theories have somewhat different rationales for the emphasis. They also have similar views of the importance of people's expectancies and similar views on the basic structure of behavior.

A similarity also exists between the notion of a hierarchy in self-regulation and Maslow's ideas about motives. Although the lower levels of Maslow's motive hierarchy deal with motives that are ignored in the control hierarchy, at their upper levels, the models resemble each other more closely. The principle of self-actualization also resembles the self-regulation model in the concepts of ideal and actual self and the desire for congruity between them.

Another similarity among approaches concerns the notion of disposition. This construct is central to the trait perspective. It's also important in the psychoanalytic and social views. In all these cases (and by implication in others as well), the assumption is made that people have qualities that endure over time and circumstances and that influence their behaviors, thoughts, and feelings.

Although the various theories differ in their focus, certain issues do seem to recur across many of them. This represents another kind of similarity among the theories. One issue that many different theories address is the polarity between impulse versus restraint. Indeed, this issue has become increasingly prominent in recent years. Another is the competing pressures of individual self-interest and communal interest.

Thus, there are areas of overlap among theories. Yet the theories also differ. Which theory, then, is right? One answer is that *all* the perspectives seem to have something of value to offer. Maybe the value of each viewpoint depends on what part of the person's life you are focusing on. Many psychologists prefer an *eclectic position*, taking elements and ideas from several views, rather than just one. At a minimum, people who operate within the framework of a given theory must take into account limitations imposed by evidence generated by other views. For example, temperament theorists believe much of personality is determined by genetics, but they also understand that temperaments are modified by learning. Learning theorists believe that personality is a product of a learning history, but it's clear that some kinds of learning are easier than others. Perhaps the future will see greater emphasis on this eclecticism, the sharing of ideas from one perspective to another.

KEY TERMS

Perceptual defense: Screening out a threatening stimulus before it enters awareness.

Preparedness: The idea that some conditioning is easy because the animal is biologically prepared for it to happen.

TEST ITEMS

Multiple Choice

- (b/344) 1. The _____ perspective is regarded by many as the only comprehensive theory of personality.
- learning
 - psychoanalytic
 - cognitive self-regulation
 - none of the above
- (d/345) 2. Parallels have been suggested between psychoanalysis and the:
- evolutionary perspective.
 - cognitive perspective.
 - self-regulation perspective.
 - all of the above
- (c/345) 3. Leak and Christopher interpreted Freud's ideas through the framework of:
- humanistic psychology.
 - the neoanalytic perspective.
 - evolutionary psychology.
 - the conditioning approach.
- (b/345) 4. According to Leak and Christopher, what idea was required to understand the superego through an evolutionary perspective?
- that the superego leads to better health practices
 - that survival is not only an individual matter
 - that the superego is a behavioral management system
 - none of the above
- (a/345) 5. The _____ is primitive and single-minded about its desires.
- id
 - ego
 - superego
 - hydraulic drive
- (c/345) 6. Ego is to Freud as _____ is (are) to sociobiology.
- genes
 - survival of the fittest
 - the cortex of the brain
 - reciprocal altruism

- (d/345) 7. Leak and Christopher have suggested that having a superego may:
- confer an evolutionary advantage.
 - influence whether others feel compelled to take care of someone.
 - increase the likelihood that someone is accepted as a group member.
 - all of the above
- (d/345) 8. Leak and Christopher argue that reciprocal altruism is the reason for the:
- existence of anticathexis.
 - idea of preparedness.
 - importance of self-relevant motivation.
 - development of the superego.
- (a/346) 9. Freud's description of the fixations that arise as a result of the Oedipal conflict bears a resemblance to:
- the gender differences in the mating strategies that are described by evolutionary psychologists.
 - the constraints imposed by the development of the cortex.
 - Dollard and Miller's description of approach-avoidance conflicts.
 - none of the above
- (b/346) 10. When attention is diverted from higher levels, behavior is more:
- in tune with the ideal self.
 - responsive to situational cues.
 - carefully managed.
 - easily reinforced.
- (c/346) 11. Structural links exist between psychoanalysis and self-regulation with respect to similarities between:
- principle control and id functioning.
 - principle control and ego functioning.
 - program control and ego functioning.
 - all of the above
- (c/347) 12. Erdelyi suggests that Freud's theory was a theory of:
- social learning.
 - behavior management.
 - cognition.
 - hydraulic energy.

- (b/347) 13. _____ is the process whereby an idea, thought, or perception is prevented from gaining access to conscious awareness before the threatening stimulus is experienced.
- Suppression
 - Perceptual defense
 - Denial
 - Bias in processing
- (d/347) 14. An event may receive little attention in consciousness because:
- it may be tagged as having too much potential for anxiety.
 - the information is available but not retrievable.
 - behaviors are highly automatic.
 - all of the above
- (c/348) 15. Erdelyi proposes a sequence in information processing, which is similar to repression and denial. Which of the following represents the correct sequence of events?
- discomfort criterion--preattentive analysis--suppression
 - preattentive analysis--suppression--discomfort criterion
 - preattentive analysis--discomfort criterion--suppression
 - discomfort criterion--unbearability criterion--suppression
- (b/349) 16. The concept of transference can be explained in terms of:
- preattentive processing.
 - schema activation.
 - feedback loops.
 - all of the above
- (c/349) 17. Schemas of close others are:
- active only in the presence of those others.
 - chronically partially active but generally inaccessible.
 - chronically partially active and accessible.
 - chronically completely active and accessible.
- (a/349) 18. To accurately understand the processes of learning, Mischel says we must focus on:
- people's cognitive representations of stimuli.
 - the actual stimuli represented in the learning situation.
 - the underlying drive states which motivate the learning process.
 - the environment in which the learning process takes place.
- (d/350) 19. Expectancies are discussed in the following approaches to personality psychology:
- psychodynamic; personal constructs
 - psychodynamic; ego psychology
 - neoanalytic; conditioning
 - social learning; self-regulation

- (c/350) 20. An important difference in emphasis between the learning and self-regulation views concerns the concept of:
- a. expectancy.
 - b. inhibition.
 - c. reinforcement.
 - d. hierarchical organization.
- (d/351) 21. Maslow's hierarchy is an analysis of _____, whereas the control hierarchy (from the self-regulation perspective) focuses on _____:
- a. thought, behavior
 - b. behavior, meaning
 - c. action, motive
 - d. motive, action
- (c/351) 22. The notion of a hierarchy of motives and action suggests a similarity between which two approaches?
- a. social learning and self-regulation
 - b. social learning and self-actualization
 - c. self-regulation and self-actualization
 - d. self-actualization and sociobiological
- (d/351) 23. Which of the following is NOT a similarity between the self-actualization and self-regulation approaches?
- a. Both emphasize the importance of goals.
 - b. Both use concepts referring to an idealized self.
 - c. Both emphasize the fact that people compare different elements of the self to each other.
 - d. Both involve hierarchies with similar low-level needs.

- (a/352) 24. Which perspective is appropriately matched with the way in which it relates to the trait perspective?
- a. psychoanalytic, in that people derive stable personality traits from childhood crises
 - b. learning, in that people's traits influence how well they learn
 - c. self-regulation, in that people vary in terms of how well they self-regulate behavior
 - d. none of the above
- (d/353) 25. Issues involving acting versus restraint are important in the _____ perspective.
- a. psychoanalytic
 - b. social learning
 - c. cognitive
 - d. all of the above
- (d/354) 26. Within the motive approach to personality, the distinction between individual and group needs is best captured in the difference between:
- a. intimacy motives and affiliation motives.
 - b. the need for positive regard and the self-actualizing tendency.
 - c. separation-individuation and merger.
 - d. none of the above
- (c/355) 27. Eclecticism suggests that:
- a. some groups of theories are better than others.
 - b. some levels of analysis are better than others.
 - c. different perspectives may be mutually supportive.
 - d. none of the above
- (b/355) 28. Most personality psychologists would agree that:
- a. personality is nothing more than the sum of one's experiences.
 - b. personality was shaped by evolutionary pressures.
 - c. temperaments are not learned; they are completely inborn.
 - d. none of the above
- (b/355) 29. The idea that some associations are learned more easily than others is called:
- a. receptivity.
 - b. preparedness.
 - c. associative learning.
 - d. preattentive analysis.
- (d/357) 30. According to William James, Edward Tolman, and the authors of your textbook, a good theory must account for data and:
- a. have few explanatory elements.
 - b. have many explanatory elements.
 - c. be different from common sense.
 - d. must appeal to one's senses.

True and False

- (F/344) 1. The question of which perspective on personality is the most correct is easy to answer.
- (T/344) 2. Theories that derive from psychoanalysis don't seem to share much with it.
- (F/345) 3. The extent to which Freud was influenced by Darwin is generally overstated.
- (T/344) 4. Many people regard psychoanalysis as the only comprehensive theory of personality.
- (F/345) 5. The ego represents the self-interested animal that our genes lead us to be.
- (F/345) 6. According to Leak and Christopher, the evolution of the cortex in the species parallels the evolution of the superego in the person.
- (T/345) 7. Leak and Christopher suggest that the ego is a behavioral management system which receives input from the id and the superego.
- (T/345) 8. Understanding the superego from an evolutionary perspective suggests that survival involves surviving in groups.
- (T/346) 9. The reproductive strategies that men and women have evolved are similar in some respects to the fixations that Freud saw as evolving during the phallic stage of development.
- (F/346) 10. Freud's notion of the Oedipal conflict has clear links to evolutionary explanations of mating patterns.
- (F/346) 11. Levels of control higher than the program level resemble the functioning of the id.
- (F/346) 12. The self-regulation perspective makes the assumption that impulses are primarily aggressive or sexual.
- (T/347) 13. Erdelyi suggests that Freud's theory was essentially a theory of cognition.
- (T/347) 14. Erdelyi argued that cognitive psychologists reinvented many psychodynamic concepts.
- (F/347) 15. Perceptual defense deals only with incoming information and does not involve forgetting after an event has already been experienced.
- (T/348) 16. The nervous system is capable of picking up on stimuli and initiating automated sequences of behavior, without conscious awareness.
- (T/349) 17. The psychoanalytic concept of transference can be explained in terms of schema activation.
- (F/349) 18. To accurately understand the process of learning, Mischel says we must focus on the actual stimuli involved.
- (F/350) 19. An important difference between the learning and the self-regulation views is an emphasis on expectancies.

- (T/350) 20. The social learning concept of incentives is similar to the cognitive self-regulation concept of goals.
- (T/350) 21. To Bandura, reinforcers do not directly increase tendencies to perform acts that preceded them.
- (F/351) 22. Self-regulation theorists who began in the learning perspective are more likely to talk about external reinforcers than self-reinforcers.
- (F/351) 23. Maslow considered the motive qualities at the bottom of his hierarchy as most integrative.
- (F/351) 24. According to Maslow, motive qualities at the top of the hierarchy are the most demanding and overt in their influence.
- (T/351) 25. Maslow's analysis of hierarchical perspectives focuses on motives rather than actions.
- (T/351) 26. One similarity of the self-actualization and self-regulation viewpoints is that both use concepts approximating "ideal" and "actual" or "real" self.
- (F/352) 27. The idea of dispositions is not found in the genetic approach to personality.
- (T/352) 28. The concept of disposition has a place in both the learning and self-regulation approaches.
- (F/352) 29. The learning perspective is the only one discussed in the book that does not use the concept of dispositions.
- (T/352) 30. The issue of impulse vs. restraint shows up in psychoanalysis, the cognitive perspective, and the social learning perspective.
- (T/353) 31. The concept of delay of gratification captures the theme of impulse and restraint.
- (F/354) 32. Within trait psychology, tension between individual and group needs appears in the trait of *conscientiousness*.
- (T/354) 33. In evolutionary psychology, needs are distinguished on the basis of whether they are individualistic or group-based.
- (T/355) 34. Eclecticism suggests that no single approach to personality is the best for all purposes.
- (F/355) 35. The idea that personality was shaped by evolutionary pressures is controversial to many psychologists.
- (F/355) 36. Preparedness is the idea that organisms are prepared to learn all things in their environment equally well.
- (F/355) 37. Preparedness is an all-or-nothing phenomenon.
- (T/357) 38. The authors of your text suggest that the best theory of personality is the one that is most appealing to you.

Short Essay

- (345) 1. Summarize how Leak and Christopher interpret the id, ego, and superego within the evolutionary framework.

Leak and Christopher suggest that the *ego* (consciousness) is the behavioral management system for which the *id* and *superego* provide motivation. There are two types of motivation: Selfish and group-relevant; both have had adaptive value for the species. The *id* reflects adaptation to the nonsocial environment, where competition for resources is intense and individualistic; the *superego* represents tendencies that evolved in response to selection pressures that developed when our ancestors took up group living.

- (346) 2. What fixations from psychoanalytic theory map onto sex differences in mating patterns?

Fixations resulting from the Oedipal conflict can result in men making an exaggerated attempt to demonstrate that they have not been castrated by having sex with as many women as possible. Fixations resulting from the Electra conflict can result in women appearing to be available while at the same time waiting for the best match. These tactics are similar to mating strategies identified within the evolutionary perspective.

- (349-351) 3. Identify three conceptual resemblances between the social-cognitive learning approach to personality and the cognitive self-regulation approach to personality.

(1) The importance ascribed to cognitive processes in creating and organizing mental representations of the world and of the self; (2) Expectancies are important determinants of whether people exert efforts to attain goals they have set for themselves; (3) Assumptions about the structure of behavior.

- (351) 4. Identify three similarities between the phenomenological perspective (e.g., Maslow's hierarchy) and the cognitive self-regulation perspective.

First, both perspectives use concepts that refer to idealized qualities of the self. Second, both perspectives emphasize the fact that people make comparisons between where they are and where they want (or ought) to be. Finally, both perspectives discuss the importance of conscious experience.

- (353) 5. Explain how traits are viewed from at least three different perspectives (besides the trait perspective).

(1) Motive perspective – assumes enduring motive dispositions.

(2) Psychoanalytic perspective – people derive stable personality qualities from childhood crises.

(3) Biological perspective – people inherit temperaments which form the basis of traits.

(4) Self-regulation perspective – people have individual differences (traits) that influence how well they self-regulate.

- (355) 6. Briefly describe the concept of *preparedness*.

PREPAREDNESS: Refers to the idea that organisms are somehow biologically prepared so that certain types of learning or associations are more likely to occur or to occur more easily than others.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

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Leak, G. K., & Christopher, S. B. (1982). Freudian psychoanalysis and sociobiology. *American Psychologist*, 37, 313-332.