

SEVEN PERSPECTIVES IN MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

What are the most exciting and yet frustrating things about psychology is that you might come up with a great question about why this disorder exists or how do we stop this behavior. But the answer might depend on who you are talking to. Throughout the history of psychology there has been a debate, there has been a disagreement about what should constitute, what should compose psychology. And even today there are a lot of different perspectives that people will choose from when they are giving therapy or when they are doing research.

So, this learning outcome will talk about the seven modern psychological perspectives and you will definitely want to do more than just memorize these. You will definitely want to know what they are. But you will also want to know at the major names associated with several of them. You also won't be able to pick out someone who is using this perspective, so we'll get these one at a time and again your textbook will give you a great deal of information about all of them.

The first perspective is **the psychodynamic perspective**. Now, this is based on the work of Sigmund Freud and the controversial he had a very lasting impact on psychology. You have probably heard of his name before. But Sigmund Freud believed that much of psychology, much of who we are, comes from our unconscious. Now when I say the word consciousness you are thinking about all the things you are aware of. But Freud thought your unconscious, dreams, feelings and memories that you have oppressed, that you are aware of. Freud thought that those actually drove your personality, drove you to do the things that you do. So, the psychodynamic perspective is all about helping you express your own consciousness, helping you resolve conflicts that may exist there.

The second perspective is **behaviorism**. The behaviorism is based on the work of many prominent theorists: Pavlov, Watson, Skinner. These are all famous behaviorists. And behaviorists are only really interested in what is directly observable, what can I see, what can I measure. Because you can't really measure the unconsciousness you are not even aware of it, so a behaviorist wants to look exactly at that, at behavior, what we can observe and what we can measure.

The third perspective is based on the work of Rogers and Maslow and that is **humanism**. The humanism says that we are all unique individuals and that we can not look at animal research to understand human beings because we are different. We have free will. Human being can make choices about our experiences and will make different experiences because we are all unique, we are all individuals. So, that is humanism, the third perspective.

The fourth perspective is **the cognitive perspective**. The cognitive perspective deals with thoughts, it deals with memory, it deals with intelligence, all those things that are conscious but we can not really see them. You can not see a memory but you can not touch intelligence. We can measure those things but they are not directly observable. So, that is the cognitive perspective.

The fifth perspective is **the biopsychological perspective**. Any time we talk about structures in the brain or parts of your nervous system, neuro transmitters, hormones, anything that has to do with your body, is going to be tied to this perspective and, especially, in the last few decades technology has really improved the way we are able to understand how our body, how our brain operates.

The sixth perspective is **the socio-cultural perspective**. This perspective looks at the groups that you are identified with. I mean you identify with a group based on your race, your religion, your

sexual identity, your nationality, any characteristic about you that has some identity with a separate group of people. The socio-cultural perspective looks at differences between groups and also looks at similarities. But it is all about the group identity, the group membership and how it affects this.

The final perspective is **the evolutionary perspective**. This is also based on the work of Charles Darwin but specifically evolutionary psychology will look at why human beings do the things that we do, why we stopped doing things that we used to do, that no longer serve the purpose. So, the idea is all those universal human characteristics that all human beings have in common, there is a reason behind them. The evolutionary psychology will try to explore what those reasons are as well as try to figure out why we stopped, for a while we don't do the things we are up to do.

So, those are the seven major perspectives. Again: **psychodynamic, behaviorism, humanism, cognitive, biopsychological, socio-cultural and evolutionary**. Definitely, we know the major names for those that have them, definitely, we worked as practice questions until you can tell those apart, these seven perspectives will play a huge role in every module from here on out. So, you definitely want to get a firm grasp of these now, so you can apply them to all the concepts we shall learn in the remainder of the course.