

# SCHOOLS OF THOUGHTS

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# Definition

- ▶ A particular idea or set of ideas held by a specific group
- ▶ Any idea that a group strongly believes in, be it through practicing this idea in their every day life or thought fighting for its adoption, can be considered a school of thought.

# Different School of Thoughts

- ▶ Structuralism
- ▶ Functionalism
- ▶ Psychodynamics
- ▶ Behaviorism
- ▶ Humanism
- ▶ Biological
- ▶ Cognitive

# Structuralism

- ▶ The first school of thought is structuralism advocated by the founder of the first psychology lab (1879, Leipzig University), William Wundt. Almost immediately after structuralism, other theories began to emerge in psychology.
- ▶ Edward Titchner: Student of Wundt took the concept of mind forming in structuring to America and named it structuralism.

# Structuralism

- ▶ Structuralism was based on the notion that the task of Psychology is to analyze consciousness into its basic elements and investigate how these elements are related.
- ▶ Consciousness: The awareness of immediate experience.

# Example

- ▶ As physicists study how matter is made up of basic particles, structuralism wanted to identify and examine the fundamental components of conscious experience such as sensation, feeling, and images.
- ▶ INTROSPECTION.
- ▶ Carefull, systematic self observation of ones own conscious experience

# Structuralism—Wilhelm Wundt

- ▶ Physiologist and Philosopher
- ▶ Founded the first experimental psychology laboratory in 1879—Leipzig Lab.
- ▶ Argued that the mind must be studied objectively and scientifically.

# Structuralism--Titchener

- ▶ Student of the Leipzig lab
- ▶ Viewed that human conscious experience could be understood by breaking it down into components:
  - ✓ Physical sensations (lights & sounds)
  - ✓ Affections of feelings
  - ✓ Images (memory and dreams)
- ▶ Psychology's role is to identify these elements and show how they are combined within the conscious mind.



# Structuralism--Titchener

▶ Titchener's approach:

1. Train subjects in introspection and reporting techniques
2. INTROSPECTION: looking inside oneself and try to describe what's going on— understanding oneself.
3. Trained observers introspected and reported what they experienced
4. Try to formulate general theories based on their subjects' reports.

# William James: Functionalism

- ▶ First American psychologist
- ▶ Author of the first psychology textbook
- ▶ Founder of Functionalism
  - Studied chemistry, physiology, anatomy, biology and medicine.
  - Combined his studies of physiology and philosophy to create psychology.

# Functionalism

- ▶ Functionalism was based on the belief that psychology should investigate the function and purpose of consciousness, rather than its structure.
- ▶ Influenced by Charles Darwin and his theory of natural selection
- ▶ Natural Selection: Which proposed that the physical characteristics of animal and human evolved because they were useful or functional

# Behaviorism

# Main point

- ▶ The theory that psychology should only study observable behaviors, not mental processes.
- ▶ Behavior refer to any overt response or activity
- ▶ Emphasized the importance of the environment over heredity,the behaviorist began to explore stimulus response relationship,often used animals for experimentation

# John B. Watson

- ▶ Founder of behaviorism
- ▶ Studied only observable and objectively described acts
- ▶ Emphasized objective and scientific methodology
- ▶ Watson asserted that psychologist could study anything that they say or do like playing, eating, meeting etc. but they cant study scientifically thoughts wishes and feeling.

# B.F. Skinner

- ▶ American psychologist whose brand of behaviorism focused on the role of responses in learning.
- ▶ Focused on learning through rewards

# B.F. Skinner

- ▶ Agreed with Watson that psychology should be only observable and measurable behavior
- ▶ BIG DIFFERENCE: He used reinforcement
- ▶ **Reinforcement:** anything that follows a response and makes that response more likely to occur.
- ▶ **Example:**
  - ❑ *Behavior:* you get an “A” on the first Psych test
  - ❑ *Reinforcer:* Your parents give you \$100
  - ❑ *Result:* You strive to get an “A” on all other Psych tests, hoping for the same reinforcer.

# Psychoanalysis—Sigmund Freud

- ▶ Founder of the psychoanalytic perspective
- ▶ Believed that abnormal behavior originated from unconscious drives and conflicts
- ▶ Childhood experiences are very important
- ▶ Believed that childhood experiences determined adult personality



# Sigmund Freud

- ▶ Focuses on the importance of the unconscious mind (not the conscious mind). In other words, psychoanalytic perspective dictates that behavior is determined by your past experiences that are left in the Unconscious Mind (people are unaware of them). This perspective is still based on Freud's psychoanalytic perspective about early experiences being so influential on current behavior

# Humanistic Psychology

- ▶ School of thought that focuses on the study of conscious experience, the individual's freedom to choose, and the capacity for personal growth
- ▶ Stressed the study of conscious experience and an individual's free will
- ▶ Healthy individuals strive to reach their potential.

# Carl Rogers

- ▶ Prominent Humanists
- ▶ Rejected idea that behavior is controlled by rewards and punishments
- ▶ Stressed free will in decision making

# Maslow

- ▶ Behavior is explained as being motivated by satisfying needs (safety, hunger, thirst, etc.), with the goal of reaching one's full potential once basic needs are met

# Cognitive Psychology

Goal: To explore the mental processes involved in judgment, decision making, and other aspects of complex thought.

- ▶ School of thought that focuses on how people think – how we take in, process, store, and retrieve information
- ▶ Focus: On how people think and process information
- ▶ Behavior is explained by how a person interprets the situation

# Biological

- ▶ Focuses on how our biology and biochemistry influences behavior
- ▶ Neurobiology is essential- study the brain!
- ▶ The field contributes to the understanding of many medical disorders as well
  - Parkinson's, Huntington's and Alzheimer's disease, Autism, substance abuse