Axiological Aspects of Humanistic Psychology

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Abstract

Humanistic psychology, often referred to as the "third force" in psychology, emerged as a response to the reductionism of behaviourism and psychoanalysis. It sought to emphasise the uniqueness, dignity, and potential of human beings. According to Kurt Goldstein, one very basic human motivation is directed toward unity and wholeness. A similar idea was embodied in the work of other phenomenologically and humanistically oriented personality theorists such as Gordon Allport, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. According to them, the striving for unity embodies a search for 'self-actualisation', a process wherein individuals attempt to realise some of their unfulfilled potentials, to be something more than they presently are, and in so doing, become more complete. The axiological dimensions of humanistic psychology explore the study of values embedded in this psychological framework. This article delves into these axiological aspects, examining how they shape and are shaped by humanistic principles.

Keywords: *Values, Humanistic Psychology, Self-Actualization, Axiology*

Understanding Axiology in Humanistic Psychology

Axiology, derived from the Greek word 'Axios' meaning 'worthy,' refers to the study of values—their origin, nature, and application. In the context of humanistic psychology, axiology is concerned with understanding what is valued and deemed desirable in human behaviour and experiences. It emphasises the intrinsic worth of individual experiences, fostering a holistic approach to understanding human nature.

Humanistic psychology emphasises subjective values, which stem from individual experiences and perceptions. This orientation aligns with existentialist and phenomenological standpoints, which emphasise the centrality of individual choice and authenticity in determining behaviour and evaluating life situations.

Humanistic Psychology–Its Basic Premises

Humanistic Psychology is primarily an orientation toward the whole of psychology rather than a distinct area or school. It was introduced as early as the nineteenth century by William James and G. Stanley Hall, both of whom advocated a psychology that would leave the wholeness, passion and uniqueness of the individual intact. Personality theorists such as Goldstein, Allport, and Maslow renewed this emphasis. It was after 1958 that 'humanistic psychology' as a specific term acquired appreciable existence. In 1958, Maslow called this movement 'The Third Force'. He was called the founder of humanistic psychology. However, he said in 1970 that Humanistic psychology is the work of many men and that it has no single leader, no one great name by which to characterise it.

In the 1960s and 1970s, it came to be strongly identified with the human potential movement, which was directed toward liberating people from a dehumanising culture through a series of specific techniques. At approximately the same time, reacting to the 'deadening alienation' in society (Fromm, 1955; Kenry, 1963; Keniston, 1965; and Reich, 1970) rose a parallel prominent movement called the 'counterculture' movement (Reich, 1970; Roszak, 1969). The common points between the two movements may be briefly summarised as: (a)urge towards rebellion and change; (b) freedom and rejection of the idea of 'role-appropriate behaviour'; (c) need to expand one's consciousness; (d) avoidance of the western tendency to view polarities in a dichotomous, either-or fashion in favour of more Eastern conceptions in which each pole dynamically relates to and interpenetrates another. The two came to represent a set of

values among which freedom, authenticity and openness to experience were significant.

The human potential movement in psychology found expression in humanistic psychology, which thus became the 'third force' in psychology. It went beyond psychoanalysis and behaviourism and therefore discarded the notion that the human personality is shaped by determining influences from within (the biological drives) as held by the psychoanalytic school or without (stimuli or reinforcers) as upheld by the behaviouristic school of psychology. As a 'third force' in contemporary psychology, it is concerned with "love, creativity, self, growth, organism, basic need gratification, self-actualisation, higher values, being, becoming, spontaneity, play, humour, affection, naturalness, warmth, ego-transcendence, objectivity, autonomy, responsibility, meaning, fair play, transcendental experience, peak experience, courage and related concepts." (Shaffer, 1978, p. 2). This reflects the humanistic attention on the phenomenological and existential approaches to the study of man.

Before looking closely into various aspects and characteristic formulations of Humanistic psychology, it is necessary to take stock of what Humanism stands for. Humanism connotes a wide spectrum of meanings. In the academic world, 'humanism' implies 'having to do with the humanities or what refers to the studies which promote human culture'. In philosophical terminology, Humanism, as opposed to absolutism, is best described in the words of Protagoras: 'Man is the measure of all things and that all beings and truth are related to man.' According to Good, "Humanism, in general, means any philosophy that emphasises the dignity or interests of human beings or the importance of man in relation to the cosmic order." (Good, 1950, p.274). According to Chamber's dictionary, "Humanism means literary culture or any system which puts human interests as paramount" (Kirkpatrick, 1983). In Machan's words, "Humanism is the view in terms of which the ideals to pursue are identified by reference to human potential either individual or collective". (Machan, 1977, p. 338). Another

definition of Humanism expresses it as "a quest for the ethical and spiritual values of life through philosophy, science, the arts and literature" (Titus, 1968, p. 216). It becomes evident that despite a few literary variations in meaning as given by various dictionaries, the philosophical connotation is common to all, i.e. emphasising man's central position in matters concerning his existence.

In the field of psychology, humanistic psychology has no conclusive definition. The movement can be viewed as both a protest and a new program, even as a new school and a system. "Its protest is directed against the entire orientation of psychology since Hobbes and Locke, against its Newtonian and Darwinian models of man, against its mechanistic, deterministic and reductionistic character" (Donald, 1986). "While both Freudianism and Behaviourism emphasise Man's continuity with the animal world, Humanistic psychology pays special attention to characteristics which make man uniquely different from the animal" (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). Focusing human behaviour and not rat behaviour; it is humanistic and not "rodentistic" (Roberts, 1975. p.291). Thus Maslow, who is honoured as the father of this psychology describes the humanist field of exploration as "the prime reality human experience itself - and starting from there to derive the concepts, the necessary abstractions and the definitions of real human experience and human needs, goals and values" (Roberts, 1975. p.291).

There is an impressive array of psychologists whose names are irrevocably associated with Humanism, such as Maslow, Erich Fromm, and Rogers. They all emphasised human potential in the context of human existence. Their stereoscopic vision examines the prevailing conditions of human existence and simultaneously attempts to gain insight into the perspectives that man would acquire if he realised his potential. Erich Fromm comments, "Man is the only animal for whom his own existence is a problem…. he cannot go back to the prehuman state of harmony with nature; he must proceed to develop his reason until he

becomes the master of nature and himself. (Singh, 1979, p. 77)".

Maslow (1954) expresses his humanistic concern in his formulation of need hierarchy. He recognises five levels of need that motivate human nature or conduct. At the apex of this hierarchy is the overarching need for self-actualisation, which refers to man's tendency to become actualised in what he is potentially.

Rogers' humanistic orientation is more inclined towards the existentialist position. His focus is an individual's awareness of his existence, and his philosophy is that "when awareness of experience, that peculiarly human attribute, is most fully operating, then he is to be trusted, then his behaviour is Constructive" (Rogers in Roberts, 1975). This philosophy is well reflected in his client-centred therapy, in which the major concepts are congruence, empathy, and unconditional positive regard.

In summary, these psychologists' primary concern is the peculiar state of human existence, man's uniqueness, and his helplessness in the existential dilemma. This line of thought threads together the five central principles of Humanistic psychology identified by Shaffer (1978).

Humanism is Strongly Phenomenological or Experiential

Its starting point is conscious experience. Humanistic psychology holds consciousness to be sacred and inviolable, and each person has an unassailable right to their unique feelings and point of view. However, this respect for each person's beliefs does not align with moral or intellectual relativism, wherein all viewpoints are seen as equally valid. The humanist, however, is fully aware of an 'empathic realisation that his particular stance is not the only possible one and that the world or 'reality' is not so much objectively given as it is 'personalised' and individual, somewhat different for each perceiver. Thus, humanistic psychology shows a strong interest in subjective psychological 'events'. This interest is co-existent with the interest in building a 'science of human experience' for the sake of which it insists on its rightful place within psychology as well as within philosophy.

With regard to consciousness, the behaviourist position is that it is an 'epiphenomenon', and the psychoanalysts regard it as a 'manifest event' derived from the 'latent' (Unconscious). The Humanists, however, insist that consciousness is the 'causa sui' and not the result of more fundamental causes. They 'remain true to their phenomenological heritage and avoid the error of reductionism'. Thus, they have become strongly identified with an emphasis on living in the 'here and now', i.e. in the immediate experience of the present moment.

Man's Essential Wholeness and Integrity

This holistic emphasis recapitulates the level of personality theory, an earlier movement in the development of perceptual theory. Kurt Goldstein (1940), who had been strongly influenced by Gestalt-Perceptual theory, applied similar holistic notions to personality and motivation. He concluded that one very basic human motivation is directed toward unity and wholeness. A similar idea was embodied in the work of other phenomenologically and humanistically oriented personality theorists such as Gordon Allport, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. According to them, the striving for unity embodies a search for 'self-actualisation', a process wherein individuals attempt to realise some of their unfulfilled potentials, to be something more than they presently are, and in so doing, become more complete.

Their main contention is that human beings have an essential core or being that integrates their seemingly isolated traits into a unique, patterned whole, which gives each of them their own, never-to-be-repeated character. Their attention is equally focused on the essential unity of body and mind.

Existential Concept of Freedom and Autonomy

Strongly anchored in existential philosophy, humanistic psychology acknowledges that while there are clear-cut limits inherent in human existence, nevertheless, human beings retain a seemingly essential freedom and autonomy. The

situation, though seemingly paradoxical, is truly representative of existential thought. It describes the parameters of the field, wherein the individual gets the opportunity to exercise his choice. 'Choice is a central idea in existentialist philosophy, which underscores an individual's responsibility for his or her own decisions and which, like phenomenology, provides crucial philosophic underpinnings to humanistic emphases.'

Humanists do not disagree with the fact that each of us is, to a great extent, affected by heredity, the constitution and the very limitations of existence itself. What they see as crucial, however, is the thin margin of freedom we have when we react to and attempt to exploit the given, usually unalterable conditions of our lives. These conditions, in the words of Martin Heidegger (1962), constitute our 'thrownness' (Donald, 1985)

Antireductionist Orientation

Rollo May, who introduced existential concepts into American psychology, expressed (the existential humanists) stand against splitting the being into parts. What is called unconscious, they hold is still part of this given person; being in any living sense is at its core indivisible" (Shaffer, 1978, p.16).

However, these reservations notwithstanding, most existential and humanistic psychologists do not reject Freud's notion of the unconscious in spirit. They tend to agree that Freud's development of the idea of the unconscious helped reveal the darker, irrational aspects of human nature. Existentialism strives to emphasise this darker aspect, particularly as it is exemplified in feelings of dread, fear, and anxiety.

Indefinability if Human Nature

Humanistic Psychology, consistent with its strong grounding in existentialism, believes that human nature can never be fully defined. The limits of human nature are not certain, and thus, the human personality is infinitely expandable. This emphasis on the possibilities of expanding and transcending the self is associated indirectly with man's striving for self-actualisation and with the central thrust of the human potential movement, which, in general, urges the individual to actualise their as yet unrealised potential.

Similar thoughts are echoed in the characteristics of Humanistic Psychology as listed by the Association for Humanistic Psychology. These, as quoted by J. Robert Donald (1985, pp.9-10), are as follows:

- A centring of attention on the experiencing person and thus focus on experience as the primary phenomenon in the study of man. Both theoretical explanations and overt behaviour are considered secondary to experience itself and to its meaning to the person.

- Emphasis on such distinctive human qualities as choice, creativity, and self-realisation as opposed to thinking about human beings in mechanistic and reductionistic terms.

- An allegiance to meaningfulness in the selection of problems for study and of research procedures and opposition to a primary emphasis on objectivity at the expense of significance.

- An ultimate concern with and valuing the dignity and worth of man and an interest in the development of the potential inherent in every person. Central in this view is the person as he discovers his being and relates to other persons and social groups,

This background knowledge about humanistic psychology equips us to investigate the theoretical positions of this school's eminent psychologists and illustrate their humanistic orientation.

Like Maslow, Erich Fromm authored the humanistic orientation and tried to look beyond man's animal nature. To him, humans are not just a 'large white rat'. Thus, he viewed man's gregariousness in the psycho-socio-spiritual continuum. Therefore, to him, man's herd instinct was not a mere biological need but a higher social and spiritual need.

According to Erich Fromm, the psychological needs that lower animals lack are important in

influencing human personality. All human beings, healthy and unhealthy, are motivated by these needs; the difference between them is how these needs are satisfied. While the ways of a healthy person would be creative and productive, those of an unhealthy person would be irrational.

The needs cognised by him are as follows:

• Need to relate or unite with others.

• Need to transcend or rise above passive roles as creatures.

• Need to establish roots to replace the severed primary ties with nature.

• Need to have a sense of identity as unique individuals, an identity that places them apart from others in terms of their feelings about who and what they are.

• Need to have a frame of reference. It is acquiring a context within which to interpret all the phenomena of the world. It is formulating one's philosophy of life.

His description of the unhealthy and healthy modes of satisfying each of these needs and the very nature of the needs reflect the existentialist influence on him. Within the set for the 'frame of reference' need, he takes stock of the unresolvable existential dichotomies man faces. He observes that Man "is part of nature, subject to her physical laws and unable to change them, yet he transcends the rest of nature. He is set apart while being a part of it, and thus, being aware of himself, he realises his powerlessness and the limitations of his existence. (Fromm (1971) in Roberts, 1975, p.77)"

He cognises "Man's main task in life is to give birth to himself, to become what he potentially is. The most important product of his efforts is his own personality." (Fromm (1971) in Roberts, 1975, p.81). At every step, the humanistic orientation becomes evident at a level that is a little deeper than what meets the eye. The need for rootedness and relatedness provides the terra firma to the concept of a holistic, integrated personality in a society suffering from alienation. The need for transcendence is rooted in the existential awareness of the role of the creature and the urge to transcend it and acquire the role

of the creator. 'Awareness' implies a significant role of consciousness. Anchored as it is to the social milieu, the identification of and emphasis on the need for a sense of identity reflects the antireductionist orientation. The need for a frame of reference, in simple words, can be identified as the phenomenological thrust of the theory. Erich Fromm's theory thus meets the conditions of humanistic psychology.

The most systematic and representative thought Abraham Maslow gave the system of humanistic psychology. His theory of human nature is termed the Theory of Motivation because he looked at human nature from the point of view of what motivates him. He identified the needs of the individual as the motivational forces. The underlying thought was:

Man is a wanting animal and rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction except for a short time. As one desire is satisfied, another pops up to take its place. When this is satisfied, another comes into the foreground, etc. It is characteristic of human beings throughout their lives that they practically always desire something.16

Maslow (1954) saw human needs operating in a multilayered and dynamic fashion. Some needs, he felt, are more salient at a particular stage of human development than others. The illustration is obtained from the more pronounced security need during childhood than during adulthood. Similarly, needs differ in their prepotency or degree of priority; some press for satisfaction harder than others. From the developmental point of view, lower-level needs must be tended to before higher-level needs emerge. Hence, Maslow was able to devise a motivational hierarchy that included five distinct levels of need (Shaffer, 1978, p.36). Maslow was unwilling to view one need as somehow based on or derived from another. For him, each level of need is as human and basic as any other and is reasonably independent of another. He rejected the tension-reducing principle of both the psychoanalytic and behavioural theories of motivation.

Maslow describes the nature of this hierarchy in a reply to a question. Question: But what

happens to man's desires when there is plenty of bread and his belly is chronically filled? Reply: At once, other higher needs emerge, and these, rather than physiological hunger, dominate the organism. When these, in turn, are satisfied, again, new and still higher needs emerge, and so on. This is what we mean by saying that the basic human needs are organised into a hierarchy of relative prepotency" (Maslow, 1959, p.83).

The various levels of need are:

Level 1: Physiological Needs

Survival-related needs include oxygen, food, sex, and sleep (Shaffer, 1978, p.35). These are undoubtedly the most important of all needs.

Level 2: Safety Needs

Needs for order, stability, routine, economic and job security. (Shaffer, 1978, p.35).

In life, there are apparent dangers that are neutralised by knowledge acquired through education. This refers to the conative function of education. For example, I am not afraid of thunder because I know something about it. In Maslow's words, "We may list the study of science and philosophy, in general, as partially motivated by the safety needs" (Maslow, 1959, p.85).

Level 3: Belongingness and Love Needs

Physical contact, affection, family membership, informal social networks, clubs and organisations are their manifest expressions (Shaffer, 1978, p.35). Not to be overlooked is the fact that love needs to involve both giving and receiving love (Maslow, 1959, p.90).

Level 4: Esteem Needs

These include both the need for self-esteem (e.g. a sense of competence, autonomy and mastery) and awareness and indication of being held in esteem by others. (e.g. praise, recognition, status and reputation).

Satisfaction with these needs leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy in being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting these needs produces feelings of inferiority, weakness and helplessness. The noteworthy feature about the satiation of these needs is that most stable and healthy self-esteem is based on deserved respect from others rather than on external fame and unwarranted adulation.

Level 5: Self-Actualisation Needs

Even if all the above-mentioned needs are satiated, one may still often expect that a new discontent and restlessness will soon develop unless the individual is doing what he is fit for. What a man can be, he must be" (Maslow, 1959, p.91).24 This need has been stated as a Self-Actualization need. The term 'Self Actualization' was first coined by Goldstein. It refers to man's desire for self-fulfilment, namely the tendency for him to become more and more what man is, to become everything one is capable of becoming.

Maslow described need levels one through four as 'deficiency' needs and need level five as higher order needs, growth needs and "meta needs" (Shaffer, 1978, p.36). Meta needs differ from deficiency needs in that they are long-term and active forever and, in this sense, can never be easily satisfied. In contrast, deficiency needs like hunger and belongingness can be appeased, even temporarily. Hence, it is "only deficiency needs that lend themselves to a homeostatic model wherein the individual after a period of need-related activity finds himself 'at rest', in a state of relative satiation" (Shaffer, 1978, p.36). Operating at this level, the individual does not seek to acquire something new to fill the lacunae or satiate the deficiency; instead, the efforts are directed towards the meaningful investment of that which is, in his acquisition, his potential.

In a corollary fashion, the means-end dichotomy often employed in looking at deficiency motivation no longer applies to meta needs; here, one's activity is not so much a means of reaching a specific goal as it is a gratifying activity in its own right. At level five, it is not 'D'-motivation (deficiency of a need serving as motivational force) but 'M' or 'B' motivation, i.e. Meta-motivation or Being Motivation, which is operational. (The need to operate at this level is its motivational force and thus the term 'Meta' or beyond motivation).

Hence, if satisfied on a reasonably periodic basis and woven into the daily fabric of living, deficiency needs do not have to become prominent in one's life. Maslow tried to emphasise the fact that Meta needs simply are in no way less rooted in the fundamental nature of the human being.

According to Maslow, the search for self-actualisation, whether via intellectual, aesthetic or spiritual pursuits, was endemic to man and was what made him truly human. We do need to transcend the more animalistic and security-conscious side of our beings. He sees people as "becoming completely human when they strive for some kind of perfection and fulfil their highest possibilities by discovering a non-egocentric, creative engagement with the world" (Shaffer, 1978, p.37). The "ultimate direction that the satisfaction of such needs may take in the case of any particular individual has much to do with the person's basic constitution or inherent capacities" (Shaffer, 1978, p.36) as well as with specific environmental differences.

An introduction to this hierarchy of needs leads one to decipher the manifestation of the satiation of these needs. Satisfaction of physiological and safety needs would ensure physical health and prepare grounds for social adequacy. Social maturity would be contingent on emotional health, which the individual would have by virtue of satiation of belongingness, love and esteem needs. This would open the doors of interpersonal growth. However, this in itself would be incomplete; it needs to be supplemented with intra-personal growth to achieve the overarching aim of 'human life'- a meaningful existence and self-actualisation. This need launches man into the orbit of self-actualisation. Self-actualizers show certain common traits and expressions of behaviour, too. These have been summarised as follows:

More Efficient Perception of Reality

The self-actualizers are more comfortable with reality. Considerations, which are a priori, encourage the hypothesis that this superiority in the perception of reality results in a "superior ability to reason, to perceive the truth, to come to conclusions, to be logical and to be cognitively efficient in general" (Maslow, 1959, p.205).

Acceptance of Human Nature Perse

They see human nature as it is and not as they would prefer it to be. Their eyes see what is before them without being strained through spectacles of various sorts to distort the shape or colour the reality (Maslow, 1959, p.205).

Simplicity and Naturalness

These are the hallmarks of their behaviour. It lacks artificiality or straining for effect. Their impulse, thought, and consciousness are unusually unconventional, spontaneous and natural. However, they do not let convention hamper them from doing anything that they consider as important. They are relatively autonomous, individual and unconventional codes of ethics.

Problem-Centering Life

Individuals operating at lower levels have an ego-centred life. However, self-actualizers use their energies to fulfil certain tasks that they feel are responsibilities, duties, or obligations. Also, their tasks are non-personal. This reflects that they work within a framework of broad and universal values, in terms of a 'century rather than moments'. Philosophical proportions characterise their whole disposition.

Detachment, Autonomy

Self-actualizers show a strong need for privacy, and this is manifested in their behaviour, their objectivity, and their intense concentration. A correlated expression is their independence of culture and environment, which is qualified by their relative stability, serenity, and happiness during circumstances which may prove to be a rough tide for an average normal person. "They have also been described as 'self-contained'" (Maslow, p.214).

Continued Freshness of Appreciation

The basic goods of life hold a "naive appeal" for them, and "this they express with awe, pleasure, wonder and even ecstasy" (Maslow, p.214). They possess an acute richness of subjective experience.

Mystic Experiences; Oceanic Feelings

It has been described as a "feeling of limitless horizons, opening up to the vision, the feeling of being simultaneously more powerful and also more helpless than one ever was before" (Maslow, p.216)—an experience characterised by loss of self or transcendence of it. The subject emerges transformed and strengthened, convinced that something valuable has happened.

Gemeinschaftsgefuhl

Adler invented this word and describes the feelings for humanity expressed by self-actualizers very well. A general deep feeling of identification, sympathy and affection despite occasional anger, impatience or disgust. It's a genuine desire to help humans.

Inter-Personal Relations

These are more profound, marked by a greater degree of fusion, love, perfect identification, and obliteration of ego boundaries, although they were established with rather fewer individuals. These are complementary to their widespread Gemeinschaftsgefuhl benevolence.

Character-Structure

It is democratic, and the most profound aspect of their character is their tendency to give a certain quantum of respect to any human being just because he is a human individual.

Discrimination Between Means and Ends

Their means are subordinated to their ends. Their notions of right and wrong are not often conventional. They show an adherence to moral standards by doing only that which they perceive is right.

Philosophical, Unhostile Sense of Humour

The kind of humour associated with them is rather philosophical humour that elicits a smile, that is spontaneous, rather than planned and that very often can never be repeated" (Maslow, p.222).34

Creativeness

Their originality or inventiveness has certain peculiar characteristics. It "seems rather to be kin to the naive and universal creativeness of unspoiled children" (Maslow, p.235). It is expressed in whatever activity the person is engaged in. It simply describes the earlier-mentioned traits like freshness and efficiency of perception. They have less inhibited, less enculturated behaviour.

Resistance to Enculturation

Their inner attitude is one of detachment from culture; however, they yield to convention in a rather casual and perfunctory manner. They guide themselves by the laws of their character rather than those of the society, i.e. 'autonomous nature'.

Values

A firm foundation for a value system is automatically furnished to the self-actualizer by his philosophic acceptance of the nature of his self, of human nature, of much of social life and nature and physical reality. Thus, the self-actualizers have a value system distinct from that of the average normal man, wherein the value system is guided by D-motivation. A striking aspect of their value system is that, for each one of them, the topmost portion of the value system is unique, idiosyncratic- character structure expressive. They may be described as simultaneously very much alike and very much unlike each other.

Resolution of Dichotomies

Their operating principle is to see the synergistic nature of the dichotomies and their organismic unity.

These characteristics reflect the core of Maslow's philosophy that an individual earns his worth by virtue of being a human being and more so by virtue of being a unique individual at 'a' level of psychological and philosophical maturity.

Thus, well aligned with the principles of humanistic psychology echoing the underlying existentialist and phenomenological notes, this theory takes cognisance of the following:

i) Man's Consciousness of his potential and his motivation to reach a state of 'heightened consciousness' wherein he perceives.

ii) Man's essential wholeness and integrity of elements within and the elements without; the former crediting him with uniqueness and the latter furnishing him with the potential to transcend this uniqueness for the essential oneness of Man with the other members of his universe.

iii) Retention of essential freedom and autonomy. It becomes an indispensable aspect for the maintenance of uniqueness. The humanist position is opposed to the idea of human beings being fed as the grist into the mill of conformity.

iv) Worth of Individuality. The individual is not to be understood in terms of conscious and unconscious. However, in the verbal explanation of the holistic understanding of personality and behaviour, it becomes imperative to describe that 'Human behaviour is guided neither by the conscious nor by the unconscious but by that 'essence' or 'being' which emerges when those mentioned above unite into a single whole or entity the 'self'. It is consciousness which plays an important role in the development of personality.

v) Indefinable Human Nature. This fifth principle of the humanistic school is echoed in the concept of self-actualisation. The individual who operates at the highest level of needs and is self-actualized is in a state that is beyond need, i.e., 'Meta need'. Being in this state is his motivational force. He is always in the process of becoming what he can be, 'actualising', 'realising", and 'manifesting' that which is 'latent' in him. It is the capacity to acquire the form of ability.

An individual can never reach the limits of their potential. The simplistic explanation of this process is that investing in each potential creates opportunities to tap into other potentials. The logical parallel of this system is a feedback mechanism in the human body. While Maslow has illuminated the broader spectrum of human consciousness, Rogers deserves credit for expressing similar ideas in axiomatic or epithetic formulations.

Congruence

"He is congruent to the degree to which he is without facade and does not pretend to be anything he doesn't feel himself to be" (Shaffer, 1978, p.82). It echoes some of the characteristics that Maslow identified in self-actualizers. These are the traits of simplicity, naturalness, acceptance of self and others, and problem-centred life. It relates to being aware of one's responses and being comfortable with them, being courageous enough to face them as one's subjective feelings instead of labelling them as objective facts.

Empathy

Emphasised here is Roger's interest in grasping and adhering to other people's frames of reference. It is the approach of being one with the person, of being in the shoes of the person, of experiencing an event or phenomenon as the experiencer and not as distinct from him. There is no direction from without, but full scope is given to the direction from within. Herein is the complete faith in the individual's ability to make a wise choice of his set of values or frame of reference in arriving at a greater measure of congruence.

Positive Regard

That is unconditional acceptance of an individual regardless of his particular behaviour at that moment. It is caring in a non-possessive manner; it is an open willingness for the individual to be whatever feelings are real in him at that moment. It's a love equivalent to the theologian's term agape. It provides an environment which is most conducive to an individual's personal growth.

Interpreting Humanistic propositions, J. Robert Donald coins the terms Mitwelt and Eigenwelt. Expressing his views about Humanists, he says:

In their effort to analyse and study the Image of Man from the point of view of the individual's subjective experience, they have proposed several dimensions of primary structures of Human Existence. One can see in these structures the consistent Humanistic emphasis on the fundamental significance of Human relationships. The forms and purposes of such relationships. Every facet of living may be considered as simultaneously manifesting a way

and purpose. In relating it to other people, it is technically termed as Mitwelt, and in relating to oneself, it is called Eigenwelt" (Donald, 1985, p.147).

Donald also considers the various themes which build the foundation of humanistic thought. He especially mentions 'autonomy', 'freedom' and 'creativity'. 'Creativity' is the mystery of 'freedom', and it is in freedom' and 'autonomy' that existence becomes meaningful. Intrinsically associated with these themes is the theme of authenticity. In his view, he who is on the way to self-hood and fulfilling himself is experiencing a truly authentic existence (Donald, 1985, p.147). The notion of 'authentic existence brings us back to the starting point. "Man not only exists but knows that he exists, but man is something more than what he knows of himself today. He has possibilities, through freedom, to make himself an authentic being. Man must transcend; go beyond himself; and discover himself" (Donald, 1985, p.160). (sic)

All that has been discussed above makes it imperative to form a genuine philosophy of life that is sound enough to explain various facets of human existence and place man in a position where he can 'choose' his values. In the context of the present study, it is to be seen how far humanistic psychology lends itself to Axiological interpretations.

Axiological Aspects of Humanistic Psychology

Axiology is the theoretical study of values, their origin, meaning, nature and structure. Axiological problems pose questions such as: what is value? What are the springs of value? How do we justify our values? How do values relate to reality and knowledge? In psychology, 'value' is taken to mean 'what is valued' or the 'dominant interest', which serves as a frame of reference for determining one's choice or behaviour. From the axiological perspective, value refers to 'what is valuable?', clearly referring to the desirability of a particular trait, disposition or interest. This axiological aspect enables a person to pass a judgment of value on any mode of behaviour. The study of facts must move in close proximity to the study of values, which is the subject matter of axionoetics.

Humanistic psychology distinguishes itself in adding value dimension to all personal human experiences.

Subjective Nature of Values: By identifying and analysing humanistic formulations, we find that this science prizes the 'personal' nature of human experiences more than anything. Humanistic psychology is heavily oriented towards 'personal' responses to situations. A person's feelings and appreciation of the situation enable him to 'choose' and determine his behaviour. Completely dedicated to the development of human potential, this psychology is subjective in its approach.

The major themes of humanistic psychology are as follows: (i) The need for relatedness, rootedness, transcendence, frame of orientation, and sense of identity (Fromm). (ii) Maslow's need hierarchy comprises physiological, safety, belongingness, love, esteem, and higher self-actualizing needs. Being-motivation guides the latter. The impressive array of characteristics associated with the self-actualizers is the axiological 'blinkers 'for the alienating society. Amongst these traits are spontaneity, simplicity, naturalness, purposiveness, detachment, acceptance (self and others), efficient perception, 'self-start', 'self-movers', 'self-contained,' freedom, autonomy, love, safety, serenity, stability, 'self-disciplined', autonomy, respect, prestige, naivete, 'peak - experience,' sympathy, affection, benevolence, profundity, genuineness, genuineness, the democratic character, ethical, definite moral standards, creativity, inventiveness, originality, philosophic vision, self-actualizing, self-affirming, holistic and unique.

The subjective nature of values emanating from humanistic contentions brings this branch of psychology close to existential and phenomenological standpoints in philosophy. In this context, Berkeley's assertion that reality is only what is 'perceived' also becomes significant. It implies that evaluation reveals nothing about the object but only about the individual and his psychological state. The existential dictum that 'existence precedes essence' again suggests the priority given to the

'personal' human experiences rather than to an external, general idea or theorisation. In Sartre's words, "it means first of all that man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and only afterwards defines himself" (Fromm, 1971, p.134).

It is this emphasis on existence which is mirrored in Rogers' concept of unconditional positive regard in Maslow's concept of unconditional positive regard and Maslow's concept of the need for Self-Actualization, which obtains its driving force from meta-motivation or Being-Motivation. While the former develops a case for taking cognisance of existence, the latter asserts the indispensability of establishing the 'existence'. "To be what one can be" (Shermis, 1967, p.134).

Rogerian concepts of congruence and empathy are also based on this line of thought. Individuals credited with the capacity for authentic existence and responsibility lend meaningful expression to this capacity through a congruent personality. The conditions in the surroundings are not static, as the individual is always in interaction with a living and non-living environment. Thus, he is perpetually involved in making responsible decisions that affect the authenticity of his existence and the congruence of his personality.

Maslow, too, acknowledges this heritage of Man, for he clearly states that though the four lower-level needs and the higher need of self-actualisation circumscribe man's personality, nevertheless, the mode of satisfying these needs is essentially different for every individual, according to their disposition. Similar views are expressed in Erich Fromm's ideas. The satiation of a need may be in a healthy manner or a disintegrative manner. In his own words, "Creation and destruction, love and hate, are not two instincts which exist independently. They are both answers to the same need for transcendence" (Fromm, (1959, p.154). The same guiding principle is applicable to the satiation of all needs.

The recurrent themes in these psychological viewpoints are needs or motives. Amongst the primarily significant themes are – Freedom, Autonomy, Choice, Creativity, Authenticity, Genuineness, Simplicity, Spontaneity,

naturalness, humaneness, etc., leading to the development of human potential, man as a person, the person as a subject and not as an object. The support for the acceptance of these values comes from the humanistic-existential faith in the potential of the individual. He is 'self-guiding', 'self-starter', 'Self-mover,' 'Self-Contained,' and 'self-directing.' In the words of Protagoras: 'Man is the measure of all things.' Rollo May, commenting on the problems that man experiences, states, "man's consciousness of himself is the source of his highest qualities" (May, 2009, p.118) because "in the achieving of consciousness of one's self, most people must start back at the beginning and rediscover their feelings" (May, 2009, p.118) which shall lay the groundwork for 'knowing what one wants'. Thus, he establishes that values emanate from that which is embedded in man's consciousness.

Erich Fromm, expressing the same, says, "Humanistic ethics is anthropocentric in the sense that his value judgements are rooted in the peculiarities of his existence and are meaningful only with reference to it…..The humanistic position is that there is nothing higher and nothing more dignified than human existence" (May, 2009, p.75). Man works not merely from automatic routine but because he consciously believes in the value of what he is doing. Fromm distinguishes humanistic ethics by formal and material criteria. Formally, it is based on the principle that only man himself can determine the criterion for virtue and aim and not an authority transcending him. Materially, it is based on the principle that 'good' is what is good for man and 'evil' is what is detrimental to man; the sole criterion of ethical value being man's welfare" (May, 2009, p.75).

The idea co-exists with 'personal freedom', which is that of 'responsibility'. Evidently, then, the discipline from outside is changed into self-discipline. Thus, the value – the goal towards which man moves, "serves him as a psychological centre, a kind of the core of integration which draws together his powers as the core of a magnet draws the magnet's lines of force together" (May, 2009, p.123). One such virtue is courage, a sine qua non in this age of

anxiety. In the humanistic Weltanschauung, "Not self-renunciation nor selfishness but self-love, not the negation of the individual but the affirmation of his truly human self are the supreme values" (May, 2009, p.76). To sum up, good in humanistic ethics is the affirmation of life, the unfolding of man's powers. "Virtue is responsibility towards his own existence. Evil constitutes the crippling of man's powers; vice is irresponsibility towards himself" (May, 2009, p.123).

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