Comparative Essay on Psychodynamic Theory and System Theory

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**Introduction**

The field of psychology is dealing with different forms of evolution and developments. It is important to critically focus on different aspects of consideration to adopt the most appropriate approach according to actual requirements of the situation. Both theories of psychodynamic theory and system theory are recognized as two prominent approaches in the broad domain of psychology. This paper critically focuses on comparing and contrasting both approaches of psychodynamic and system theories to examine their actual significance when it comes to consideration of group work.

**Overview of Psychodynamic Theory**

The theoretical approach of a psychodynamic theory is also known as psychodynamic psychology. The focal point of this approach is to consider the psychological forces that are closely linked with human behaviours, feelings, and emotions. This main theory is comprised of a comprehensive collection of various psychological theories to figure out the actual functioning of humans (Thyer, 2017). Active consideration of unconscious drives is a significant idea concerning this theory. In other words, this theory can be evaluated as a crucial collection of different psychological theories that are originated from Freud’s main theoretical approach.

The basic assumption of this theory is that human actions involve specific motivations that appear in the form of unconscious aspirations. These particular drives trigger humans to perform specific tasks and actions in their lives. Another crucial prospect associated with this theoretical approach is that the phenomenon of adult personality is closely linked with the domain of childhood experiences (Lazaratou, 2017). It is argued by theorists that events of childhood play a critical role in the overall development of personality and further appear in the form of adult behaviours and emotions. It is noteworthy to indicate that the idea of psychodynamic theory based on different assumptions. Identification of these specific assumptions is essential to determine actual implications of this psychological concept. The basic assumption of this theory is that when it comes to different thoughts, feelings, and emotions, then they are often unknown for people. The perspective of conflicting thoughts is also closely associated with the theoretical domain of this theory. There is the possibility that people might experience different forms of conflicts with each other due to the difference in their mental responses. Moreover, it is an established argument according to this theory that social interactions of people are greatly influenced by their unique mental understanding of their personalities and their association with others.

**Overview of System Theory**

Systems theory is the multidisciplinary study of systems to know about a phenomenon from a holistic methodology. It assists in knowing about the nature of complex systems in nature. These systems can be natural, living as well as non-living and can show different aspects of human life. Moreover, systems refer to organism, organization or any informational artefact. Karl Ludwig von Bertalanffy was the founder of their theory who was interested in knowing about potential sources of the problem and then examining each source exclusively with its specific role in the system (Liu, Yang, Xie, & Forrest, 2016). Accordingly, all systems consist of different components, known as subsystems that further have reliant associations in them. According to this theory, if there is an issue with one component in the system, then the problem can only be addressed effectively by taking a holistic approach into account. This theory helps in understanding how groups interact as a system and their different parts work together and affect each other to get stable in the long run.

Moreover, the theory also has applications in the field of psychology. Within psychology, it views people as pursuing homeostasis inside their systems. However, this theory has a limitation that it does not explain the behaviour of individuals as inseparable from a group. It is examined that behavioural aspects of different human beings are negated under the theoretical implications of this approach.

**Similarities and Differences Between Psychodynamic Theory and System Theory**

It is vital to examine existing differences and similarities between these theories to determine their actual effectiveness in the context of group work. The major difference between these theories is that psychodynamic theory has established its position as a behavioural theory whereas general system theory is a social theory. The main focus of system theory is overall social structure, whereas the domain of unconscious behaviour is the priority in case of psychodynamic theory. The theoretical approach of system theory is also different from psychodynamic theory because it accepts the idea of breaking complex features into parts to achieve better outcomes in the end (Toseland & Rivas, 2005). When it comes to the identification of existing similarities between these approaches, then consideration of the comprehensive system is one common ground. The versatility of a system is a significant aspect that can appear in both cases of psychodynamic theory and system theory.

Both the approaches of psychodynamic and system theories differ because the main aspect of consideration for system theory is identified as an interdisciplinary domain. Whereas, the paradigm of psychodynamic theory considered the behavioural aspects of individuals (Johnson & Johnson, 2012). Consideration of complex interacting factors is the foundation of practical implications of system theory while the approach of psychodynamic theory involves dealing with the behavioural aspects of individuals in case of different social situations. The comparison of these theories can never be ranked as complete without their evaluation in case of group work. It is vital to figure out the role of both of these theories in collective work setting to determine their actual effectiveness (Bornstein, 2019). It is essential to mention that both these theories have some form of positive practical applications that can never be ignored.

Detailed understanding of behavioural features of different people is a necessary approach to ensure the proper application of group work. The psychodynamic theory can be vital in case of a specific group made up of people of similar behavioural patterns. It is recommended as long-term approach to attain goals of teamwork specifically concerning to similar individuals. The practical idea of system theory is more accurate and effective in case of group work because it is dealing with different interdisciplinary approaches at the same time. The active implications of system theory can be viable to apply different practical aspects to resolve conflicts and achieve targets set for a group. The effectiveness of system theory in case of group work is imperative considering the domain of interpersonal approach. The paradigm of system theory provides critical consideration of different interconnected aspects that evolves over time (Morgeson, Mitchell, & Liu, 2015). The consideration of different group dynamics and differences are significantly catered in case of a practical domain of system theory. The effectiveness of system theory in group setting concerns the consideration of group association between different group members. The dynamics of group activities can better apprehend through the instrument of system theory. Proper acceptance of diverse relationships between different people is essential to develop a consensus in group work and achieve team goals in the end.

**Conclusion**

To conclude the discussion about the effectiveness of both the approaches of psychodynamic theory and system theory, it is vital to indicate that the effectiveness of both these approaches can never be overlooked. Active exploration of behavioural aspects of human beings is necessary to better evaluate feelings of others in order to avoid conflict. On the other hand, the approach of system theory provides foundations to develop useful interdisciplinary associations.

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