



Humanistic Psychology at a Crossroads: Choosing between Individual Growth and Societal Change

Ahmed Sayed*

Department of Psychiatry, Cairo University, Egypt

INTRODUCTION

Humanistic psychology, a movement that emerged in the mid-20th century, positions itself as a framework centered on the individual's capacity for self-growth, self-actualization, and the development of one's full potential. It was conceived as a reaction against the determinism of psychoanalysis and behaviourism, emphasizing human freedom, consciousness, and the intrinsic worth of every person. Pioneers of this approach, such as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, championed the belief in human beings' capacity for personal growth and the innate desire for meaning and fulfilment. However, as humanistic psychology evolves, it faces a fundamental choice: whether to remain a primarily individual-focused discipline or expand its scope to address broader societal, cultural, and global challenges that affect the individual's ability to thrive. At its core, humanistic psychology champions the belief that individuals have the innate capacity to transcend their limitations and pursue personal growth [1,2]. It focuses on concepts such as empathy, personal responsibility, and the therapeutic relationship, with the assumption that people can achieve psychological health through self-awareness and emotional openness. The approach places great value on subjective experience, understanding that each person's perception of the world shapes their identity and well-being. This individual-centered focus has been foundational to humanistic psychology's development as a counterpoint to more mechanistic views of human behaviour.

DESCRIPTION

Focusing primarily on the individual's experience can overlook how social, economic, political, and environmental factors shape that experience. For instance, systemic inequalities such as racism, poverty, and gender discrimination profoundly impact an individual's mental health; yet traditional humanistic

psychology has often underplayed these external influences. As the world becomes more interconnected and global crises such as climate change, social injustice, and political upheaval increasingly affect mental health, humanistic psychology faces a crucial choice. It can continue to focus narrowly on personal growth and therapeutic relationships, or it can broaden its lens to incorporate a more holistic understanding of the human condition—one that includes the social, cultural, and environmental contexts in which individuals live. This would require a more systemic approach that addresses not only internal psychological development but also the external barriers that prevent individuals from flourishing. To evolve meaningfully, humanistic psychology might need to adopt a more socially engaged stance. This would involve recognizing that individual well-being is deeply connected to the well-being of the community and the larger society. Issues such as economic inequality, environmental degradation, and social marginalization affect an individual's ability to achieve self-actualization [3,4].

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, humanistic psychology is at a crossroads. It has the opportunity to remain focused on its traditional emphasis on individual growth and therapeutic relationships, or it can choose to expand its perspective to address the complex societal and global factors that influence human well-being. By embracing a broader, more systemic view, humanistic psychology could not only continue to foster individual self-actualization but also contribute to the creation of a more just, compassionate, and sustainable world. The choice it faces is not merely about the direction of a psychological movement but about how it can help individuals and societies navigate the profound challenges of the modern world.

Received:	02-September-2024	Manuscript No:	IPAP-24-21609
Editor assigned:	04-September-2024	PreQC No:	IPAP-24-21609 (PQ)
Reviewed:	18-September-2024	QC No:	IPAP-24-21609
Revised:	23-September-2024	Manuscript No:	IPAP-24-21609 (R)
Published:	30-September-2024	DOI:	10.36648/2469-6676-10.09.82

Corresponding author Ahmed Sayed, Department of Psychiatry, Cairo University, Egypt, E-mail: ahmed.elsayed@cairouniv.edu.eg

Citation Sayed A (2024) Humanistic Psychology at a Crossroads: Choosing between Individual Growth and Societal Change. Acta Psycho. 10:82.

Copyright © 2024 Sayed A. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author's declared that they have no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Fumero ALM, Gonzalez PA (2013) Role of melatonin in schizophrenia. *Int J Mol Sci* 14(5):9037-9050.
2. Hoge E, Bickham D, Cantor J (2017) Personality and psychopathology. *Int Rev Psychiatry*. 23(3):234-247.
3. Borsboom D, Cramer AOJ (2013) Network analysis: An integrative approach to the structure of psychopathology. *Annu Rev Clin Psychol*. 9:91-121.
4. Litowitz BE (2010) Introduction: Creativity, psychopathology, and clinical theory. *J Am Psychoanal Assoc*. 58(3):419-420.