**Unit 8**

**Ml**

**Assessing the behaviourist approach**

The strengths and weaknesses or limitations of the behaviourist approach to psychology are Summarised below:

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| Strengths | Weaknesses or limitations |
| 1. The behaviourist approach has been widely used in health care settings to successfully modify  (e.g. phobias) and motivate (e.g. weight loss)  behaviour change. | 1. Behaviourism reduces human behaviour to a simple stimulus and response model. This fails to take into account inner mental processes or wider cultural and environmental influences on behaviour. |
| 2. Behavioural assessment and treatment is relatively quick , inexpensive and solution-focused. | 2. Some care practitioners and psychologist are critical of behaviourism for being manipulative and for failing to address the underlying causes of an individual's problems. |
| 3. Changes in behaviour can be easily measured, monitored and observed. | 3. Behavioural treatments work well in controlled environments, especially with animals. They have a more limited application to the real-world behavoiur of human beings. |

**Assessing the Psychodynamic approach**

The strengths and weaknesses or limitations of the social learning theory approach to psychology are summarised below:

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| Strengths | Weaknesses or limitations |
| 1.Effective for treating mild, anxiety-based problems but less suitable for treating more serious and enduring mental health problems. | 1. Based on a theory and concepts that are difficult for many people to grasp, and which some distrust or find hard to believe |
| 2. Recognises the influence of the unconscious and the individual's 'inner' mental and emotional life on behaviour, emotion and development. | 2. Places the therapist in a very powerful positon in-they are seen as having the 'expertise' to analyse and treat the individual. This may lead to abuse of power or may feel disempowering for those receiving treatment. |
| 3. Aims to find and resolve the root causes of an individual's problems. | 3. Can be very time-consuming, taking a long  time to resolve an individual's problems or reduce their distress |

**A comparison of the behaviourist and psychodynamic approaches to health and social care provision**

**M2 Comparing behaviourism and the psychodynamic perspective**

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| **Behaviouism** | **Psychodynamic perspective** |
| **1. Focuses on observable beahviours only. This means that behaviourists deals with a person’s current problems and not thing from their past.** | **1. Focuses on ‘inner’ mental processes that are inaccessible and can’t easily be controlled by the individual.** |
| **2. Offers a relatively quick and cheap way of treating the behavioural symptoms of psychological problems.** | **2. Usually involves establishing a long-lasting relationship to get to the root causes of a person’s problems. This is time consuming and expensive.** |
| **3. Sees behaviour as the key aspect of human psychology and doesn’t deal with issues in a hypothetical or subjective way – not interested in ‘inner processes’.** | **3. Sees the human mind as a deep, dark dungeon’ filled with an individual’s demons and nightmares- this is very negative.** |
| **4. Based on relatively simple, effective principles.** | **4. Based on a relatively complex theory that is difficult to test or evaluate for effectiveness.** |
| **5. reductionist and deterministic. It reduces human psychology to a stimulus- response level and assumes that behavior is determined by learnt responses.** | **5. Also reductonist and deterministic. It reduces human psychology to unconscious processes and unobservable mental structures that are seen to control or determine mental processes and emotional experiences.** |

**A evaluation of the behaviourist and psychodynamic approaches to health and social care provision**

**D1 Evaluating behaviourist approach**

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| Strengths | Weaknesses or limitations |
| **1. Behaviourism is a scientific and test able way of understanding and treating psychological problems.** | **1. Views human behaviour as being like a ping pong ball, continually being bat t ed**  **between stimulus factors and automatic responses.** |
| **2. Has many practical uses and can help people to modify or change their behaviour relatively quickly.** | 1. **Ignores the influence of human consciousness, emotions and thinking**   **abilities on human psychological development and experience.** |
| 1. **Provides a way of**   **understanding individual differences in behaviour *bec*ause it focuses on an**  **individual's particular Circumstances and ways of responding.** | 1. **Restricts its focus to**   **observable behaviours only, ignoring a range of other factors (the unconscious, genetics, cognition, biological processes) that can**  **influence psychological experiences** |

**Evaluating the psychodynamic approach**

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| Strengths | Weaknesses or limitations |
| **1. Psychodynamic therapies are effective with certain types of people (articulate, introspective) and certain**  **ty pes of disorders (anxiety- based, linked to attachments and early experiences).** | **1. Psychodynamic therapies tend to focus on past experiences rather than the current difficulties a person faces.** |
| **2. These therapies seek out the root causes of people's problems and try to resolve t hem** | **2. Digging deeply into a person's problems and past**  **experiences can produce more distress (making the person feel worse) before a solution is found and symptoms are**  **relieved.** |
| **3. The psychodynamic approach can be used with individuals or groups** | **3. Costly and time-consuming, requiring a specially trained therapist.** |