

CHAPTER 18 – PERSONALITY THROUGH COGNITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this chapter you should be able to:

- understand the cognitive view of basic human nature
- compare cognitive concepts with behaviourist/learning concepts and psychoanalytic concepts
- describe Kelly's view of personality in terms of the fundamental postulate and 11 corollaries
- explain motivation and personality development in terms of cognitive constructs
- describe possible applications of cognitive theories and concepts
- understand the cognitive perspective on psychological health
- critically evaluate cognitive theories and indicate implications for future research.

KEY CONCEPTS

cognition – the process of obtaining information and thinking about it

information processing – the integration and organisation of bits of information

decision-making – consciously generating ideas and choosing the best option

self-regulation – consciously striving to be in control of one's own behaviour and events

person as scientist – where people systematically form and test hypotheses to predict events

personal constructs – criteria or hypotheses through which people view the world, or their personal theories about the world and people

constructive alternativism – the changeability of constructs

meaning structures – how people understand things

schemata – basic structure of the mind into which people fit new information

cognitive structures – schemata describing how people perceive, organise and interpret information about themselves

postulate and corollaries – various types of fundamental and consequential assumptions to interpret and predict knowledge or meaning

security versus adventure – clarifying existing constructs versus exploring new aspects of life

cognitive complexity – a more differentiated way of perceiving, constructing and judging events

cognitive simplicity – a lesser ability to differentiate between things and judge them

cognitive change – to change meaning systems

C-P-C cycle – considering several constructs to interpret a situation, then deciding upon a single construct for dealing with the issue in question and selecting that pole of the construct that promises to improve one's predictions

emotion – strong mental or instinctive feeling

CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

This chapter focuses on how individuals process and integrate information from the environment and use knowledge to handle situations and predict the future.