

# Overview of the functionalism archetype of psychology

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Functionalism is the second archetype of psychology. It is a theory regarding nature of mental state of humans. According to functionalism, mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of.

Functionalists:

1. Disapprove the search for the components of consciousness as unproductive.
2. Want to study the function of the mind that how it helps us to accommodate to environment.
3. Want psychology not be pure science but to be pragmatic.
4. Want psychology to expand and use a wide variety of techniques of study.
5. To know behavior of organism, desire and action of the organism should be study.
6. They are more enthusiastic in knowing what makes people different from one another.

Functionalism American Pioneers:

1. William James (1842-1910)
2. Granville Stanley Hall (1846-1924)

## **William James**

He was the first American psychologist known for this contribution in functionalism approach. " Principles of psychology" is one his famous works. He represented the progression between European and American psychology.

Stream of Consciousness: William James was the one who framed the phrase “ Stream of Consciousness”. This theory indicates the flow of thought in the conscious mind of person. James pointed that every other person has different sensation, experiences, opinions, thoughts. Thought is like a stream as it is continuously experienced. Even when we are sleeping it is maintained subjective.

Characteristics of Consciousness:

1. Personal: Consciousness is private and subjective. Every single person has individual perception. He or she has different experiences, observes things in different ways and have different thoughts regarding that thing. It is very rare that similar elements can be found in all human minds.
2. Continuous: Thoughts are continuous they never stop. They cannot be divided for analysis.
3. Constantly Changing: Thoughts keeps on changing from the time of birth till death. According to James, a person cannot experience the same idea again.
4. Selective: Consciousness is selective. Some are inhibited while some are chosen for further consideration.
5. Functional: The most important fact is that consciousness is functional.

Habits and Instincts: According to James, human behavior depends on both habit and instincts. Habits are formed when a person desire for something, want or need it. Habits target the mind for achieving those needs. Habits are not always bad, they can be good too, and this ability to form habits proves

the strength of the mind to focus and attain. Repetition of certain activity also makes it a habit. James observed instincts as adaptable while behavior as unstable. James said that human have more instincts as compare to animals. These instincts could be alter by involving with each other and practice.

Consciousness vs. Habits: Habits are uncontrolled, unintentional and spontaneous. They are integral part of mental life. Repetition of behavior increases the link between action and the context. As a result, the actions become easier to perform but when a new situation occurs and there is a need of new mode of adjustment, consciousness plays it role.

James' theory of the self: This theory is divided into two parts: "Me"(empirical self) and the " I"(transcendental self). The empirical self refers to an individual person describing their personal experiences while the other part of self was the thinking self; he linked it with the soul of person. The empirical self is further divided into three components:

#### 1. Material self

It comprises of things that belong to a person or entities that a person belongs to. Such as body, family, clothes, money etc. For James, the most important thing was bodyю

#### 2. Social Self

It consisted of the various rules a person played his or her life. This was a person know by others. He said people had as many social selves as much they interacted with social situations.

### 3. Spiritual self

The spiritual self was who we are at our core. The spiritual self is our subjective and most intimate self. It consisted of a person's will and moral responsibility.

Theory of Emotions: Emotion is no more than the perceptual of internal bodily changes that have occurred in response to some stimulus. It is a consequence rather than a cause of bodily changes in response to some stimulus. Example, it is not that we see a bear, fear it, and run; we see a bear and run; consequently, we fear the bear.

Theory of Pragmatism: James highlighted the value for psychology of pragmatism, the basic view of which is that the validity of an idea or conception must be judged by its practical consequences. The popular expression of the pragmatic viewpoint is " anything is true if it works." Pragmatism had been advanced in the 1870s by Charles Sanders Peirce, his work remained largely unrecognized until James wrote a book titled Pragmatism (1907), which formalized the doctrine as a philosophical movement.

### **Granville Stanley Hall**

He was named as " Father of Adolescence". He worked on childhood development, evolutionary theory and their applications in the field of education.

Recapitulation Theory: Hall started the child psychology movement in America. It was based on the ground that growing children would recap

transformative stages of development as they grew up, and that it was biased to force a child ahead of its development stage.

Three basic stages of children development:

1. First stage - until six or seven children experience life through the physical senses. Physical growth is fast and energy levels are high. However reasoning is not yet developed, nor is sensitivity to religion, or socialization.
2. Second stage - from age eight, when the brain is fully developed in size. Hall said that formal education should start from this age. As reasoning skills are only developing, children are not ready to face complicated issues of morality.
3. Third stage - at adolescence the child develops into a sexual being, and Hall argued that coeducation was not convenient at this stage. Without interfering with opposite gender, children can study better. They are ready to learn about moral issues, and how to live in society.