

Feldman detailed six aspects to define abnormal behavior

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Defining Abnormal Behavior. Defining Abnormal Behavior “ Psychologist typically define abnormal behavior broadly, considering it to be behavior that causes people to experience distress and prevent them from functioning in their daily lives” (Feldman, 1993, p. 518) However, Feldman defines abnormal behavior by six definitions, i. e. abnormality as a statistical infrequency, abnormality as deviation from the normal, abnormality as deviation from the ideal, abnormality as a sense of subjective discomfort, abnormality as the inability to function effectively and abnormality as a legal concept. Moreover, to add value to the definitions, Feldman has also discussed abnormal behavior from six perspectives, i. e. medical, psychoanalytical, behavioral, cognitive, humanistic and socio-cultural perspectives.

To further elaborate on the definitions, each one of them have been in a set context by giving explanations with regard to the situational analysis.

Abnormality as statistical analysis implies that the behavior labeled as being abnormal is not the one which occurs frequently; rather it is the one which occurs seldom thus being low in frequency. Thus, the behavior being an exception which doesn't occur too frequently is deemed as being abnormal, for instance, murder. Secondly, any behaviors which contradicts the social norms of a society is considered to be abnormal for instance, a prostitute or a homosexual for that matter would be considered as abnormal in a closed society, however this definition varies from society to society. Abnormality as a deviation from normal regards any behavior which contradicts the behavior which others are aiming to achieve as being abnormal. Fourthly, a person will be considered as being abnormal if he personally feels stressed or

experience feelings like anxiety or depression after carrying out certain acts. Fifth definition implies that if a person has some disability to function properly or up to the mark, for instance is distressed psychologically; such a person is also labeled as an abnormal one. Lastly, there are legal standards set by law to decide which behavior should be labeled as an abnormal one, this definition follows that standard.

To study the various aspects of abnormal behavior, the first perspective suggests that the abnormal behavior has physiological roots behinds the condition a person is in, while the psychoanalytical perspective argues that the abnormal behavior is caused by the childhood experiences of a person (Durand 2010). On the other hand, the behavioral perspective argues that the abnormal behavior is a result of the learned attitudes which is a result of the environmental conditioning. However, the cognitive model implies that the cognitive processes including the patterns of thought and reasoning are flawed in an abnormal individual. Humanistic perspective suggests that a person himself is responsible for his actions and behaviors thus he should have self control in order to control the behavior. Lastly, sociocultural perspective rests the responsibility of the abnormal behavior on the external factors i. e. family, society and cultural.

In my view, abnormality should be judged by social standards as it is very important to comply by the standards of the society we live in. The definition of normal, rather abnormal behavior differs from place to place as what is acceptable in one society isn't acceptable in another. Similarly, the roots of the abnormal behavior are rooted in culture and society, i. e. how a person is groomed and how the society has treated the person. Anyone who fails to

comply by the set standards of the society and dares to rebel and break the norms is thus an abnormal person.

References:

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Durand, V. M., & Barlow, D. H. (2010). *Essentials of abnormal psychology*.

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