

# Psychology for health professionals

Psychology



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Psychology for Health Professionals There are very many theories and stage models that have been proposed to explain the development of a child from birth to adolescence. Theorists such as Sigmund Freud and Fredrick Skinner have come up with theories that try to explain how these changes occur and simplify the many details of developmental changes that take place throughout childhood and adolescence (Hoffmann & Bailey 1992). The way these theorists have attempted to explain how these changes occur vary and focus on various aspects of development according to (Hoffmann and Bailey (1992). However, although the theories are numerous, they can be categorised into seven groups: mediational, contextual, essentialistic, reductionistic, deterministic, causal, descriptive or explanative (Guerin & Guerine 2009). This paper gives an explanation of some of these theories and their implications on health care practice.

Reductionistic theories or reductionism are theories in which complex concepts are reduced to or understood as basic simplified elements (Guerin & Guerine 2009). For instance, in a reductionist theory, the taking risk behaviour of adolescents can be understood in terms of brain development since at this stage the prefrontal cortex which is responsible for higher order cognitive functioning is not fully developed. The implication of these theories to health care practice is that, it enables health practitioners to break down complex medical or biological problems into many parts that they are likely to understand their causes and devise a cure. Mediational theories are almost similar to reductionistic theories except that in the former, concepts or behaviours are mediated by something else (Guerin & Guerine 2009). For instance, considering the example of adolescent risk taking behaviour, mediationists would argue that the risk taking behaviour is mediated by

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brain development.

Determinism or deterministic theories are theoretical approaches in which the observed behaviours of a person are related to their past (Guerin & Guerine 2009). For example as explained by Freud in his theory, history of relationships and Skinner in his behaviourism theory. According to deterministic theory, the risk taking behaviour of adolescents can be explained in terms of history of consequences of behaviours, that is, the behaviour has been reinforced, perhaps by getting attention. The importance of this theory to health care practice is that, it helps health practitioners have a clear understanding of the medical history of their patients and design proper diagnosis for their conditions (Guerin & Guerine 2009).

Although this paper has only covered a few categories of the theories, it does not mean that the uncovered have no implications on health care practice. All the theories are very important in health care. In fact, the theories are interrelated and are equally important in explaining and determining the cause and cure of medical phenomena faced by medical practitioners. The theories are also very important in explaining human development as well.

#### References

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