

# Motivated and enthusiastic child psychologist influences



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## Introduction

Child psychology is considered as a 'new thing' in the psychology workforce. And not many universities worldwide have a postgraduate course for child psychology.

## Definition of child psychologist

Psychiatry and psychology are quite clearly like a pair of brothers with similar heritage in the general family life (Blain, 1946). Both pediatric psychology and clinical child psychology deal with children and they are both specialties within clinical psychology. In the present, instead of observing, recording, classifying what children do, child psychologists began to study how children do what they do. It took a decade from the development of a new importance in clinical child psychology for pediatric psychology to develop (Tuma, 1975). Pediatric psychology was defined by Wright (1967) as 'any psychologist who finds himself dealing mainly with children in a medical setting which is nonpsychiatric in nature' (Routh, 1975).

The research and practices of Clinical Child Psychology are focused on understanding, preventing, diagnosing and treating psychological, cognitive, emotional, developmental, behavioral and family problems of children. Of particular importance to clinical child and adolescent psychologists is a scientific understanding of the basic psychological needs of children and adolescents and how the family and other social contexts influence socio-emotional adjustment, cognitive development, behavioral adaptation and

health status of children and adolescents. There is an essential emphasis on a strong empirical research base recognizing the need for the documentation and further development of evidence-based assessments and treatments in clinical child and adolescent psychology (Clinical Child Psychology Formal Specialty Definition, 2005 as cited in Jackson, Alberts & Roberts, 2010).

### History of child psychologist

Child psychology is a product of 'new marriage' between clinical psychology and pediatrics as stated in an article written by Jerome Kagan in 1965. It is known that the existence of clinical psychology was first declared by Lightner Witmer in 1896 (Watson, 1953 as cited in Routh, 1975). National Institute of Child Health and Human Development was founded in 1962, which therefore supported much medical and psychological research related to child development and some professional training in pediatric psychology. In 1966, the first formal graduate program to train 'pediatric psychologists' was begun by the Departments of Pediatrics and Psychology at the University of Iowa (Routh, 1969) as cited in (Routh, 1975), with funding from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The year 1967 was a landmark for pediatric psychology where in that year, Logan Wright's article, 'Pediatric Psychology, A Role Model', appeared in the American Psychologist (Routh, 1975). The potential role of child psychologists in the medical system was first described by Anderson (1930). Kagan emphasized the early detection of childhood disorders and especially each of the following: (a) the relationship between prenatal and perinatal abnormalities and future behavioral disturbance; (b) the early detection of severe childhood disturbance, especially the schizophrenias; (c) the early

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detection of psychosocial problems including academic retardation, psychopathy, delinquency, psychosomatic disturbances and phobias during the preschool and early school years; and (d) the application of theoretical knowledge and empirical generalizations to therapeutic regimens for children in his article named ' new marriage'. Logan Wright saw that pediatric psychologists as being more behaviorally oriented than clinical-child psychologists (Mesibov, 1983).

### Reason for choosing to be a child psychologist

Child psychology is a very interesting field for one to master in. If one loves children, they may want to consider child psychology as their job will be revolving around children. Children are God's gift, they are miracle for hope. Children are just innocent angels. In the past, most of the psychological problems only occur during the adulthood period but not for children. But in the present, many roots of psychological problems kick off from childhood period but it is unknown, unrecognizable and not diagnosed until adulthood. In the very recent, problems starts off from when one is an embryo itself with many effects such as environmental pressure and drug abuse influencing the embryo and the mother-to-be. Child psychology is a very important field nowadays because most parents are not able to cope and handle their children. They need some form of advices and ideas on what to do and how. Some parents may also not know if their child has any psychological problem which may worsen in the future if it is not recognized since young. Children are the future leaders of the country, we need to mould them from the beginning itself rather than when they are much older. It is no doubt a very challenging task, but one would be learning all along the whole process. <https://assignbuster.com/motivated-and-enthusiastic-child-psychologist-influences/>

Learning is a never ending process. Another main reason would be there is limited or no child psychologist at all in Malaysia, so it is very crucial that we have one or more.

In this guided literature review, I will be relating child psychology to motivation as learnt in industrial and organizational psychology.

### Definition of motivation

Motivation is the study of why people think and behave as they do (Graham & Weiner, n. d.). Motivation is a power that emerges with the desire and effort, driving them to reach a certain goal (Budak, 2009; Eren, 2008; Pintrich, 2003; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Woolfolk, 1998 as cited in Uyulgan & Akkuzu, 2014). Dornyei (2009) emphasized that even if individuals have a great worth of learning skills, they will not be able to reach long-term targets without motivation (Uyulgan & Akkuzu, 2014). Motivation is defined as a drive to fulfill a need (Aderman, 1999; Maslow, 1954; Murray, Poole & Jones, 2006 as cited in Goodman, Jaffer, Keresztesi, Mamdani, Mokgatle, Musariri, Pires & Schlechter, 2011).

### Body

There are four motivation theories which are need theories of motivation, behavior-based theories of motivation, job design theories of motivation and cognitive theories of motivation. I will be only focusing on the extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation and also the goal-setting theory under the behavior-based theories of motivation.

### Behavior-based theories of motivation

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## Extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation

To be motivated means to be moved to do something. A person who feels no encouragement to act is therefore characterized as unmotivated, while someone who is energized toward an end is considered motivated. People have not only different amounts, but also different kinds of motivation. That is, they differ not only in level of motivation, but also in the direction of that motivation. The most basic difference is between intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it is essentially interesting or enjoyable and extrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it leads to a discrete outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In defining motivation, it is important to draw a division between intrinsic motivation, which refers to engagement motivated by pleasure and extrinsic motivation, which refers to engagement motivated by external pressures (Henderlong & Lepper, 2002). Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in a task for its own natural rewards whereas extrinsic motivation refers to engaging in a task in order to achieve some divisible outcome (Hayenga & Corpus, 2010).

## Goal-setting theory

Setting a specific hard goal versus a generalized goal of 'do your best' leads to extensive increases in performance. The setting of a goal that is both precise and demanding leads to an increase in performance because it makes clear to the individual what he is supposed to do (Latham and Baldes, 1975). Intention is a symbol of planned actions, whereas goal reflects the object or aim of actions. Intention is broader than goal. In goal-setting, action plans are sometimes called strategies. An objective is alike to what Garland

(1985) called a task goal. The term personal goal is often used when discussing or measuring a person's intention. Products (Naylor et al., 1980 as cited in Tubbs & Ekeberg, 1991) are the direct results of actions and the focus of the objective. Both personal and environmental factors can have an effect. Personal factors are such as skills, abilities or willpower and environmental factors are such as time limits, task difficulty and the influence of other people moderate the intention-action relationship (Tubbs & Ekeberg, 1991). So long as a person is committed to the goal, has the essential ability to attain it and does not have contradictory goals, there is a positive relationship between goal difficulty and task performance. Focusing on reaching a definite performance outcome on a new, complex task can lead to 'tunnel vision' – a focus on reaching the goal rather than on acquiring the skills required to reach it. Drach-Zahavy and Erez (2002) found that people who were made to view a situation as a risk achieved notably lower performance than did those who were made to view the situation as a challenge (Locke & Latham, 2006). Goal setting may also help prevent dysfunctions in an organization (Austin & Bobko, 1985). The theory also states that goals should be precise rather than broad. Commitment is needed to achieve goals and can be enhanced by two categories of factors that: (1) make the goal realization important and (2) enhance individuals' belief that they can accomplish the goal. People tend to prioritize goals based on their value (Locke & Latham, 1990 as cited in Fried & Slowik, 2004). Goal-setting theory also emphasizes that challenging goals cause people to work longer on a task (Fried & Slowik, 2004).

Relation of motivation to child psychology

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If one is motivated to do something, it really pushes them to go for it and achieve it. The level of common interest, which is formed during childhood and adolescence, affects the individual's professional direction (Stoykova, 2013).

#### Challenges and expected challenges of being a child psychologist

The necessitate to train more child psychologists is apparent. A part of the challenge is that having inadequate resources to train the child psychologist and also to practice as a child psychologist. In pediatric settings, issue faced is related to restricted numbers of practicum spots (Clark, 2011).

#### Nature of work of a child psychologist

The main duty of clinical child psychologists is to provide therapeutic services for the wide range of cognitive, emotional, developmental, behavioral, social, medical and family problems portrayed by youth from infancy through adolescence. Clinical child psychology is a growing field of practice and research within professional psychology. Today clinical child psychologist accomplish professional roles in community programs in a diversity of settings such as community mental health centers and children's hospitals, children's service agencies as well as schools, juvenile justice, prevention programs, in-home intervention and outreach programs (Jackson, Alberts & Roberts, 2010). The role of pediatric psychologists is: (a) instant screening for developmental difficulties; (b) early diagnosis of problems; (c) transmission of current knowledge of child development to pediatric staffs; (d) transmission of knowledge about child-rearing practices and (e)

sensitization of medical staff to the emotional needs of children (Mesibov, <https://assignbuster.com/motivated-and-enthusiastic-child-psychologist-influences/>



1983). In Nigeria, the clinical child psychologist has three mutually dependent roles: teachers, clinician and researcher (Bakare, 1975). In Colombia, the clinical psychology works with children, adolescents and adults in both private practice and in institutions (Ardila, 1975). Ross (1972) defined the duties of clinical child psychologist as: (1) the prevention of psychological disorders and (2) the treatment of these disorders. The objective of the clinical child psychologist is to offer direct services to the child and his family, to diagnose and treat problem behaviors. Today's clinical child psychologists use other than testing techniques for diagnosis, such as interviewing, observations of family interactions, etc., sometimes collaborating with other disciplines particularly the psychiatric social worker or the psychiatrist (Tuma, 1975). Pediatric psychologists have a significant role to play where they need to enhance pediatric practice by insuring that those in need of psychological services are willingly identified and treated (Willen, 2007).

#### Maintenance of a sustainable level of motivation

If one enjoys doing something or wishes to go for something they like, they must make sure they can achieve it and not giving up even though it is not easy as the saying goes 'easier said than done'. One needs to consistently progress and remind oneself the motivating factor. Child psychology is something new, only a spark of interest can motivate one to pursue in the pathway of child psychology alongside with motivation to keep assisting the interest.

#### Conclusion

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In a nutshell, the roles we play as child psychologists in the future will largely and solely depend on decisions we make now. Dreams are not easy to be achieved but we need to fight to realize our dream and goal in life.

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