

# Essay on theory of psychosexual development

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The Theory behind Psychosocial Development Born on May 6, 1856 in Moravia, Sigmund Freud was an Austrian neurologist who in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, developed the field of psychoanalysis. Freud developed many theories including those that focus on the unconscious, the interpretation of dreams, 'id, ego, and super ego, and what is referred to as the psychosocial development theory. Freud saw the unconscious mind as the actual source of mental energy, which determined behavior, and as many psychological approaches still assert; behaviors is directed by an individual's goals.

Freud believed that behavior is the direct result of influence of all prior experience, and these influences have greater effect if from childhood. According to Freud these experiences formed solid foundations on which a developing child would structure the rest of its life. Adult personality was formed from childhood, according to the experience and treatment as a child. Freud formed the opinion that the early experiences of childhood were responsible for the development of personality, especially during the first five years of life.

He then went further and divided the infant's development into stages relating to the relative importance of zonal regions of the body, which were relevant to the infant at a particular point in time. Oral Stage The oral stage occurs in an infant's life from birth to 18 months. During this time, an infant is focused with receiving oral pleasure. This occurs through breast or bottle feeding, or sucking on a pacifier. It is believed that if an infant receives too much or too little oral stimulation, they may develop a fixation or a personality trait that is fixated on oral gratification.

It is believed that these people may focus on activities that involve the mouth such as over eating, biting the fingernails, smoking, or rolling. In tenor states Tanat tense people may develop personality traits such as becoming extremely gullible or naive, always following others and never taking the lead, and becoming extremely dependent upon others. Anal Stage The anal stage is directly related to a child's awareness of bowel control and gaining pleasure through the act of eliminating or retaining feces.

Freud's theory puts the anal stage between 18 months and three years. It is believed that when a child becomes fixated on receiving pleasure through controlling and eliminating feces, a child can become obsessed with control, perfection, and cleanliness. This is often referred to as anal retentive, while anal expulsive is the opposite. Those who are anal expulsive may be extremely disorganized, live in chaos, and are known for making messes.

Phallic Stage Freud believed the phallic stage or the Oedipus or Electra complexes occurs during a child's three to six years of age.

The belief is that male children harbor unconscious, sexual attraction to their mothers, while female children develop a sexual attraction to their father. Freud taught that young boys also deal with feelings of rivalry with their father. These feelings naturally resolve once the child begins to identify with their same sex parent. By identifying with the same sex parent, the child continues with normal, healthy sexual development. If a child becomes fixated during this phase, the result could be sexual deviance or a confused sexual identity.

**Latency Stage** The latency stage is named so because Freud believed there weren't many overt forms of sexual gratification displayed. This stage is said to last from the age of six until a child enters puberty. Most children throughout this age form same sex friendships and play in a manner that is non-sexual. Unconscious sexual desires and thoughts remain repressed.

**Genital Stage** Freud believed that after the unconscious, sexual desires are repressed and remain dormant during the latency stage, they are awakened due to puberty. This stage begins at puberty and develops with the physiology changes brought on through hormones.

The prior stages of development result in a focus on the genitals as a source for pleasure and teens develop and explore attractions to the opposite sex.

The genital stage is the last stage of the psychosocial development theory.

Freud also divided the mind, the PSYCHE, into three parts: 1 . The unconscious - material which cannot be brought into conscious awareness 2. Preconscious - material not currently in conscious awareness but can be brought up to that level easily. 3. Conscious - material that is present at that point in time.

These concepts can be equated to the ID, Ego, and Super-ego. These are abstract concepts which relate to the subconscious forces of the mind which dominate human behavior. The old The id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. This aspect of personality is entirely unconscious and includes of the instinctive and primitive behaviors.

According to Freud, the id is the source of all psychic energy, making it the primary component of personality. The id is driven by the pleasure principle, which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants, and needs.

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If these needs are not satisfied immediately, the result is a state of anxiety or tension. For example, an increase in anger or tenors snouts produce an immediate attempt to eat or drink. The id is very important early in life, because it ensures that an infant's needs are met. If the infant is hungry or uncomfortable, he or she will cry until the demands of the id are met. However, immediately satisfying these needs is not always realistic or even possible. If we were ruled entirely by the pleasure principle, we might find ourselves grabbing things we want out of other people's hands to satisfy our own cravings.

This sort of behavior would be both disruptive and socially unacceptable. According to Freud, the id tries to resolve the tension created by the pleasure principle through the primary process, which involves forming a mental image of the desired object as a way of satisfying the need. The Ego The ego is the component of personality that is responsible for dealing with reality. According to Freud, the ego develops from the id and ensures that the impulses of the id can be expressed in a manner acceptable in the real world. The ego functions in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mind.

The ego operates based on the reality principle, which strives to satisfy the id's desires in realistic and socially appropriate ways. The reality principle weighs the costs and benefits of an action before deciding to act upon or abandon impulses. In many cases, the id's impulses can be satisfied through a process of delayed gratification--the ego will eventually allow the behavior, but only in the appropriate time and place. The ego also discharges tension created by unmet impulses through the secondary process, in which the ego <https://assignbuster.com/essay-on-theory-of-psychosexual-development/>

tries to find an object in the real world that matches the mental image created by the id's primary process.

The Super-ego The last component of personality to develop is the superego. The superego is the aspect of personality that holds all of our internalized moral standards and ideals that we acquire from both parents and society--our sense of right and wrong. The superego provides guidelines for making judgments. According to Freud, the superego begins to emerge at around age five. There are two parts of the superego: 1. The ego ideal includes the rules and standards for good behaviors. These behaviors include those which are approved of by parental and other authority figures.

Obeying these rules leads to feelings of pride, value and accomplishment. 2. The conscience includes information about things that are viewed as bad by parents and society. These behaviors are often forbidden and lead to bad consequences, punishments or feelings of guilt and remorse. The superego acts to perfect and civilize our behavior. It works to suppress all unacceptable urges of the id and struggles to make the ego act upon idealistic standards rather than upon realistic principles. The superego is present in the conscious, preconscious and unconscious.

The Interaction of the 'd, Ego and Superego With so many competing forces, it is easy to see how conflict might arise between the id, ego and superego. Freud used the term ego strength to refer to the ego's ability to function despite these dueling forces. A person with good ego strength is able to effectively manage these pressures, while those with too much or too little ego strength can become too unyielding or too disrupting. According to

Freud, the key to a human personality is the ego, the id, and the superego.

Criticisms of the theory In a Dialectic of the Book Human Development (D. A.

Low, 1998) states that Freud's theory is the result of an imaginative interpretation of the memories and dreams of adult neurotic patients rather than the result of a systematic observation of children. This methodical weakness is one of the most serious criticisms of his work. Memory is not a reliable source of scientific data, since it is often incomplete, faulty, vague, and can be interpreted in many ways. In addition, many of Freud's patients became aware of his theories, and it is possible that they unconsciously changed and colored their dreams and memories to correspond to his theories.

Another criticism is that Freud's database was biased in the sense that he relied mainly on the memories of his neurotic patients, rather than those of normal, well-balanced people. His approach was also biased because in Freud's time, sexual taboos were much stricter than they are today. So it is possible that his strong emphasis on repressed sexual drives is the result of the morality of that time. A further serious criticism of his theory is that he saw the individual's development as practically complete by the age of six. The emphasis on early childhood has prevented the proper study of further development for several decades.

The final criticism in this book is that Freud dealt with only a few aspects of human development, namely psychosocial development, and to a limited degree, the development of aggression. The development of important aspects of human functioning such as thinking, language, social relationships,

emotions and motivation were either totally ignored or seen through the screen of his psychosocial theory. Other texts lay claim to the same criticisms along with others; that conclude that the theory is almost entirely on male development with little mention of female psychosocial development.

Such concepts as libido are impossible to measure, and therefore cannot be tested, and that Future predictions are too vague. How can we know that a current behavior was caused specifically by a childhood experience? The length of time between the cause and the effect is too long to assume that there is a relationship between the two variables. However, we cannot deny that past has a crucial role to play in the presenting issue of a client and in the treatment of that issue. The neurotic behavior will inevitably come from a client's past, and I have no doubt that we become the people we are today because of our pasts.

You could relate Freud's theory to a psychopath, as they never seem to evolve beyond the ID stage. They refer to others as objects, as they have never been able to develop to the latency stage where a caring and understanding of others is acquired, so humans are merely objects. So, for example, a serial rapist has a need to satisfy his sexual urges, his ego is not there to ensure that although he may have that thought it is not socially acceptable to carry out the act, and his super-ego is no super-ego to make him feel guilty about his actions.

However, it could also be suggested that said person was abused as a child, and in turn, because of the pain suffered as an abusee, they became the



abuser. In terms of ethics, if a therapist was to ensue the psychosocial development as a complete process in their analysis of a clients issues, from research, they would therefore be searching through a clients past for the cause of the issues solely through those stages, and would inevitably have the need to find something within that time p to be the cause of the clients issues.

This could either, bring the therapist to the conclusion that there cannot be anything wrong with the client, or could make the client believe that the cause of their issues was related to something hat was of no actual relation to their presenting issue at all, thus causing more stress and anxiety within the client. We all remember certain stages of our life, good and bad, but those stages may be of no importance to us, but if someone in authority is discussing these issues with you, they come to the surface (into you conscious), and then you could easily start to believe that this could be the cause.

Conclusion Freud's theories form the basis of all of today's psychological theories and practices, whether they are based from an agreement or conflict to his work. The best form of reactive is to treat a client's presenting issues as to no others, but encompassing tools from the work of Freud and others, and to incorporate those into the practice of resolving the presenting issues.

The unconscious is a very powerful influence, and a good practitioner will understand this, but they must also understand how each individual interprets past situations and moulds them into something that their brain can

understand. A client's memory depends on not just their upbringing, but their social environment, their beliefs, religion and their generation. Freud's stages can easily be discredited all of these factors.