



CHILD PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT - A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH

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Abstract

Human beings, and not only, are born, develop and finally die. What makes man different from other creatures is this mystery called personality. We can observe around us people, children, who behave in a certain way, have a different attitude from each other. It is very interesting to understand this mystery. Throughout the history of psychology, various authors and scholars have contributed with insights into the elucidation of the mystery of personality. Some of the most prominent authors are S. Freud and C. G. Jung. Their contribution to explaining the concept of personality and its development is important in psychology. We want to highlight in this study the development of the personality of the child, but from a special perspective, namely the psychoanalytic one.

Keywords: human development; personality; child; psychoanalysis

Introduction

The personality term derives from the Latin persona, which means the mask "of the character of the actor, from which the word was formed" (Benito, 2003, *cited in* Bonchiş, 2006 p. 9). The definition of G. Allport's definition says "personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his thinking and behavior "(Allport, 1981, *cited in* Bonchiş, 2006, p.11).

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Personality refers to important and relatively stable aspects of behavior. Some theorists say that personality can be studied only by observing social and external behavior. However, for most psychologists, personality originates within the individual. They point out that personality can also be manifested in the absence of contacts with others and may have aspects that are not visible (Ewen, 2012, p. 23).

Personality covers a wide range of human behaviors that encompass almost all dimensions of a person - the mental, emotional, social and physical dimensions (Ewen, 2012, p. 23).

Personality structure in Freud's view

The concept of psychoanalysis is a polysemantic word. The initial meaning was the therapeutic method. According to the Great Dictionary of Psychology (Larousse, 2006), psychoanalysis is an investigative process, a theory, a doctrine of interpretation of the human psyche, a science whose subject is the unconscious psyche.

Psychoanalysis is a method of research, an unbiased instrument by exploring the unconscious, a method of treatment of neuropsychic diseases, based on the free association (the patient has to relate everything that goes to his mind without any restraint), the analysis of dreams and some automatic reactions, seemingly so insignificant.

Psychoanalytic theory is a psychological and technical psychotherapy theory enunciated by Sigmund Freud, based on the analysis of unconscious mental processes and the conflict between different spheres of the psyche (ego and libido).

Classical psychoanalytic theory emphasizes the biological causes of human behavior. Freud supposed that the human mind performs its functions using energy similar to the physiological fission of the body that procures energy from food, the difference being that the energy used by the mind is of a psychic nature. The connection between the two types of energy is captured by Freud through the concept of instinct. The instinct is in the psychoanalytic conception mental representation of the stimuli of bodily origin (Bonchiş, Drugaş, Trip, & Dindelegan, 2009, p. 90).

According to Freudian theory, instincts are divided into two categories: the instincts of life and the instincts of death. Among the instincts of life, Freud

considers the sexual one to be the most important, including not only the erotic side, but also any other behavior and thoughts that produce pleasure. Freud frequently replaced the term instinct with the Greek word "eros" to emphasize that sexuality involves more than sexual intercourse or reproduction. The instincts of death are based on the assumption that all living beings manifest the unconscious desire to die. The most important of the instincts of death is aggression (Bonchiş et al., 2009, pp. 91-92).

Freud initially divided personality into three levels (the topographic model): Conscious, Preconscious, and Unconscious.

The consciousness includes the sensations and experiences we can access at any time. It was considered a narrower part of personality, because only a small percentage of our sensations and memories can coexist in a conscious one at a time.

The preconscious is the deposit of memories, of thoughts that we are not aware of, but which can easily be brought into the field of consciousness.

The unconscious is the essential, unseen part of the psychoanalytic theory. It contains the instincts, desires, which determine our behavior; is the storehouse of forces that we cannot see or control (Bonchiş et al., 2009, p. 92).

To overcome the shortcomings of the topographic model, Freud revised his theory by proposing a structural model describing the personality through three basic notions: ID - the correspondence of the old unconscious term; ego, superego.

ID is the only component of the personality present since birth and contains the genetic heritage and reflexes. In Freud's conception, the origin of personality is a biological one, ID being the basic element of personality.

The ID is directly focused on the satisfaction of bodily needs, to eliminate the tension caused by the emergence of a need. It operates in accordance with the principle of pleasure, without allowing any delay or postponement whatever the nature of needs, thus being totally illogical and amoral, bypassing the constraints of reality (Bonchiş et al., 2009)

The ego develops in ID from the age of 6-8 months, and its formation is influenced by experiences that help the child to differentiate between himself and the non-self, especially with regard to his own body. The child makes an important breakthrough during this period, namely that the environment contains objects that can meet the requirements of the ID. Thus the ego possesses the consciousness of reality and is able to perceive and manipulate

the environment by operating according to the principle of reality. The stronger the ego, the healthier is the personality (Ewen, 2012, pp. 41-42).

Superego is a special part of the self that observes and participates in the judgment of others. It forms from ID during the second year of life and up to the fifth year of life and continues to influence the characteristics of the surrounding people. Superego is partially convincing and partly unconscious. It operates according to the internalized moral imperatives and can be realistic and self-conserving (Ewen, 2012, p. 49).

Child personality development

In the development process, the personality, like the whole living nature, undergoes a series of transformations that allow the transition from the immaturity of childhood to adult maturity. From a psychoanalytic perspective, a theory of personality development has to consider two aspects. The first point is that the individual must go through certain stages of development: the development of thought and instincts. The second aspect draws attention to the importance that should be given to the experiences of the early years of life, and this because of the impact that events have on maturity behavior. For Freud, personality development consists of a series of psycho-sexual stages (*see* Table 1). Each stage is characterized by a certain erogenous area, which serves as a primary source of pleasure (Ewen, 2012, pp. 51-52).

Table 1. Summary of the stages of evolution after Freud

Age	Stage	Priority in development	Incomplete resolution of the characteristic stage that occurs in adulthood
0 to 1 year	Oral	Alimentary	Passivity, tendency to blame, addictive behavior.
2 to 3 years	Anal	Daily care	Obsessions, opposition tendency, excessive preoccupation with order and cleanliness.
3 to 6 years	Phallic	Identification with the parent of the same sex	Vanity, Oedipus and Electra conflict
6 to 12 years	Latency	Developing defense mechanisms	Somatization
12 to 18 years	Genital	Sexually mature relationships and emotional intimacy	Adults who have successfully completed previous stages reach this stage with a clear sense of their own identity and clear interests

Jung did not emphasize the existence of stages in personality development as Freud did. The main periods of personality development in Jung's vision are:

From childhood to adulthood

According to Jung, childhood is not considered decisive in the formation of personality. Initially a child is dominated by physical instincts, and the ego begins to develop only when the child begins to distinguish between the person and other objects (Bonchiș et al., 2009, p. 116).

From middle age to old age

Major changes occur between 35-40 years, and although adaptations have already taken place, the individual has a job and perhaps a marriage.

Old age

Jung states that old age is very similar to the first years of life, because the unconscious dominates the personality (Bonchiș et al., 2009, pp. 117-118).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the approach of the personality both from the point of view of classical psychoanalysis and from the point of view of analytical psychology demonstrates the amazingly complex character of human behavior which can only be explained by theories such as those of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung.

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