

Examrace

Psychology Study Material: Criticism Against Freudian Psychodynamic Theory

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Defense Mechanisms

Ego Defense system that may be distorting reality. A number of Defense mechanisms may be used by us for coping with anxiety:



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Repression

Blocking unpleasant/unacceptable thoughts by pushing them into the unconscious e. g. forgetting events of the painful childhood.

Regression

Reverting back to a stage that was satisfying e. g. a boss showing temper tantrums like a child; or acting like a baby.

Displacement

Redirecting the expression of unwanted desires or impulses to a substitute rather than the actual target e. g. beating children when a wife cannot express anger toward husband

Rationalization

In order to justify one's behaviour, one develops a socially acceptable explanation or reasoning e. g. going for a second marriage saying that the first wife was quarrelsome.

Denial

Refusing to acknowledge or accept anxiety provoking thoughts or impulses e. g. being a heavy smoker but saying 'I am an occasional smoker' .

Projection

Attributing one's unwanted thoughts and impulses to others e. g. a person takes bribe and blames the organization for paying him not enough salary.

Sublimation

Converting unwanted impulses into socially approved thoughts, feelings and actions e. g. disliking the in-laws but behaving in a very friendly manner, or becoming a stamp collector to overcome the impulse to steal

Criticism Against Freudian Psychodynamic Theory

- There is no scientific proof that many psychodynamic constructs, e. g. unconscious, exist.
- Psychic Determinism: Freudian approach is deterministic and leaves not much room for conscious, rational, decision making or personal will to act.
- It emphasizes the early childhood experiences too much.
- It ignores the external variables and the environment.
- Mostly criticized for its interpretation of the relationship between the two genders.
- The therapy based upon this theory is too time consuming and therefore expensive.

The Psychoanalytic Approach After Freud

The Neo Freudian

The theorists who belonged to the Freudian school and supported it, but later digressed on some issues and differed from Freud

Basis of Neo-Freudian's Disagreement with Freud

- Their emphasis on the functions of ego, and the control that it had over routine-life activities.
- The impact of social variables.
- Their emphasis on the role of society and culture on personality development.
- Freud's idea of the primary importance of sexual urges.

The neo-Freudians emphasized, more than Freud, the following:

- The role of current social environment.
- Life experiences have a continuing influence and childhood alone should not be of prime importance.
- Positive interpersonal relations of love, and social motivation have a significant role.
- Ego functioning is more significant rather than id.

- Development of self-concept is important.
- Self-esteem is important. Significant neo Freudians.

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