

## Child Psychology

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### How to cite this article:

Nirupam Nisha Sahu. Child Psychology. Int J Pediatr Nurs. 2019;5(2):83-88.

### Abstract

Child Psychology is today a vast concern as children's today are more advanced with the progressively changing routine in our day today life. Today with the advanced knowledge and intervention many problems can be dealt in its early phase. Previously children's were not given much importance about what they feel, their desire, themselves being treated as an individual, abnormal childhood behavior etc. which has lead to many psychological problems later in the adulthood. By understanding the "Child Psychology", its importance and ways to deal with has proved to alleviate many problems of childhood to take its root. This article will tell us about child psychology, its importance, its different branches and various key points to understand it with evidence based reviews.

**Keywords:** Child Psychology; School Psychology; Education Psychology; Clinical Child Psychology; Developmental Psychology; Emotional Quotient; Reviews

### Introduction

According to eminent psychologist Sigmund Freud, babies are initially driven by instinctive and selfish urges but gradually adapt to a more realistic approach by imbibing their parents' values and rules. These play a role in the development of the child's conscience.

Find out about the simple things that tell you what your kid likes or dislikes, what makes him laugh or cry, and what motivates him or causes him misery.

### What is Child Psychology?

This specialized branch focuses on the psychological processes of children from birth to adolescence [1].

It takes note of the psychological changes that occur from infancy [1].

Child psychology is the study of subconscious and conscious childhood development [2].

### Why the recent attention? [3]

Psychopathology relatively common in childhood (8-22% of children diagnosed with a behavioral, emotional or learning disorder)

Many childhood disorders have lifelong consequences

Most adult disorders have their roots in childhood disorders

By studying childhood disorders, may be better able to develop effective early interventions

Media attention to high-profile, child-related problems (school violence, misuse/over-use of meds, child abuse, etc.)

### Tips to Understand Your Child's Psychology: [4]

There are some important tips which will help us to understand our child's psychology in more better way. They are-

- Undivided attention
- observation
- Pay attention

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**Received on:** 17.04.2019, **Accepted on** 04.05.2019

- Listen
- Understand
- Spend quality time
- Express
- Right Questions
- Educate
- Empathize
- Don't Assume
- Emotional Quotient

**Classification**

Child psychology can be grouped as [5]

1. Clinical child psychology
2. Developmental psychology
3. School psychology
4. Educational psychology

**Developmental psychology**

Developmental psychology is the scientific study of how and why human beings change over the course of their life. Originally concerned with infants and children, the field has expanded

to include adolescence, adult development, aging, and the entire lifespan. Developmental psychologists aim to explain how thinking, feeling, and behaviors change throughout life. This field examines change across three major dimensions: physical development, cognitive development and socioemotional development [6]

*Theories based on developmental psychology*

- ▶ Psychosexual development
- ▶ Stages of moral development
- ▶ Stages of psychosocial development
- ▶ Theories of cognitive development
- ▶ Stages based on the model of hierarchical complexity
- ▶ Ecological systems theory
- ▶ Zone of proximal development
- ▶ Constructivism
- ▶ Evolutionary developmental psychology
- ▶ Attachment theory

**Psychosexual development**

According to the famous psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, children go through a series of psychosexual stages that lead to the development of the adult personality. His theory described how personality developed over the course of childhood. Different stages of Psychosexual development are (Fig. 1)

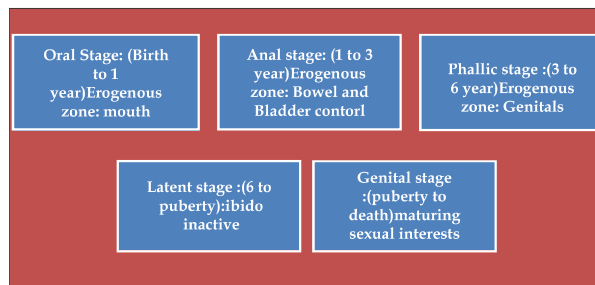


Fig. 1:

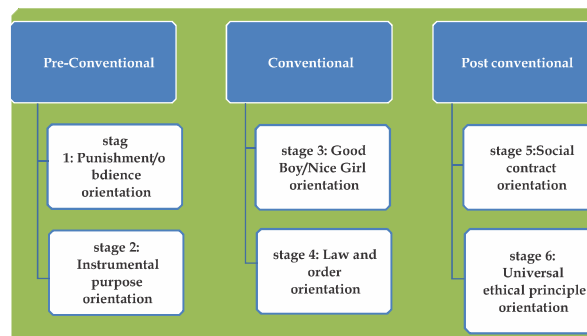


Fig. 2:

### *Stages of Moral Development*

Kohlberg's six stages can be more generally grouped into three levels of two stages each: pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional (Fig. 2).

### *Stages of psychosocial development*

Erik Erikson was an ego psychologist who developed one of the most popular and influential theories of development. Erikson's theory centered on psychosocial development. The stages that make up his theory are as follows:

- Stage 1 – (Infancy) Trust vs. Mistrust
- Stage 2 – (Toddler) Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt
- Stage 3 – (Preschool) Initiative vs. Guilt
- Stage 4 – (School age) Industry vs. Inferiority
- Stage 5 – (Adolescence) Identity vs. Confusion

### *Theories of cognitive development*

Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that children move through four different stages of mental development. His theory focuses not only on understanding how children acquire knowledge, but also on understanding the nature of intelligence. Piaget's stages are:

- Sensorimotor stage: birth to 2 years
- Preoperational stage: ages 2 to 7
- Concrete operational stage: ages 7 to 11
- Formal operational stage: ages 12 and up

### *Stages Based on the Model of Hierarchical Complexity*

The model of hierarchical complexity is a framework for scoring how complex a behavior is, such as verbal reasoning or other cognitive tasks [1]. It quantifies the order of hierarchical complexity of a task based on mathematical principles of how the information is organized, in terms of information science [2]. This model has been developed by Michael Commons and others since the 1980s (Table 1).

### **Ecological Systems Theory**

#### *Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory of Development*

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory views the person as developing within a multilayered system of relationships. He considers development to take place within nested systems. He calls these;

the microsystem (such as the family or classroom), the mesosystem (which is two microsystems in interaction), the exosystem (which is a system influencing development, i.e., parental workplace) and the macrosystem (the larger cultural context). Each system contains roles, norms & rules that can powerfully shape development.

### *Zone of proximal development*

According to Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development is: "The distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." (Vygotsky, 1978)

### *Constructivism*

Constructivism is a learning theory found in psychology which explains how people might acquire knowledge and learn. It therefore has direct application to education. The theory suggests that humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences.

### **Evolutionary Developmental Psychology**

Evolutionary developmental psychology is the study of how genetic systems are developed during developmental, how the ecology of developing organism influence the expression of one genetic system or the another and how the modification in timing of developmental process influence evolution (Hilbert, Opitz and Raff 1996)

### **Attachment Theory**

Attachment theory is a psychological model attempting to describe the dynamics of long-term and short-term interpersonal relationships between humans. "Attachment theory is not formulated as a general theory of relationships; it addresses only a specific facet": how human beings respond in relationships when hurt, separated from loved ones, or perceiving a threat. Four different attachment classifications have been identified in children by John Bowlby:

- *Secure attachment* occurs when children feel they can rely on their caregivers to attend to their needs of proximity, emotional support and protection. It is considered to be the most advantageous attachment style.

**Table 1:** Stages of hierarchical complexity

Order or Stage	What they do	How they do it	End result
0 - calculatory	Exact computation only, no generalization	Human-made programs manipulate 0, 1, not 2 or 3.	Minimal human result. Literal, unreasoning computer programs act in a way analogous to this stage.
1 - sensory or motor	Discriminate in a rote fashion, stimuli generalization, move	Move limbs, lips, toes, eyes, elbows, head View objects or move	Discriminative establishing and conditioned reinforcing stimuli
2 - circular sensory-motor	Form open-ended proper classes	Reach, touch, grab, shake objects, circular babble	Open ended proper classes, phonemes, archiphonemes
3 - sensory-motor	Form concepts	Respond to stimuli in a class successfully	Morphemes, concepts
4 - nominal	Find relations among concepts. Use names	Find relations among concepts Use names	Single words: ejaculatives & exclamations, verbs, nouns, number names, letter names
5 - sentential	Imitate and acquire sequences Follows short sequential acts	Generalize match-dependent task actions. Chain words	Various forms of pronouns: subject (I), object (me), possessive adjective (my), possessive pronoun (mine), and reflexive (myself) for various persons (I, you, he, she, it, we, y'all, they)
6 - preoperational	Make simple deductions. Follow lists of sequential acts. Tell stories.	Count event events and objects Connect the dots Combine numbers and simple propositions	Connectives: as, when, then, why, before; products of simple operations
7 - primary	Simple logical deduction and empirical rules involving time sequence Simple arithmetic	Adds, subtracts, multiplies, divides, counts, proves, does series of tasks on own	Times, places, counts acts, actors, arithmetic outcome, sequence from calculation
8 - concrete	Carry out full arithmetic, form cliques, plan deals	Does long division, short division, follows complex social rules, ignores simple social rules, takes and coordinates perspective of other and self	Interrelations, social events, what happened among others, reasonable deals, history, geography
9 - abstract	Discriminate variables such as stereotypes; logical quantification; (none, some, all)	Form variables out of finite classes Make and quantify propositions	Variable time, place, act, actor, state, type; quantifiers (all, none, some); categorical assertions (e.g., "We all die")
10 - formal	Argue using empirical or logical evidence Logic is linear, 1 dimensional	Solve problems with one unknown using algebra, logic and empiricism	Relationships (for example: causality) are formed out of variables; words: linear, logical, one dimensional, if then, thus, therefore, because; correct scientific solutions
11 - systematic	Construct multivariate systems and matrices	Coordinates more than one variable as input. Consider relationships in contexts.	Events and concepts situated in a multivariate context; systems are formed out of relations; systems: legal, societal, corporate, economic, national
12 - metasytematic	Construct multi-systems and metasytems out of disparate systems	Create metasytems out of systems Compare systems and perspectives Name properties of systems: e.g. homomorphic, isomorphic, complete, consistent (such as tested by consistency proofs), commensurable	Metasytems and supersystems are formed out of systems of relationships
13 - paradigmatic	Fit metasytems together to form new paradigms	Synthesize metasytems	Paradigms are formed out of multiple metasytems
14 - cross-paradigmatic	Fit paradigms together to form new fields	Form new fields by crossing paradigms	New fields are formed out of multiple paradigms

- *Anxious-ambivalent attachment* occurs when the infant feels separation anxiety when separated from the caregiver and does not feel reassured when the caregiver returns to the infant.
- *Anxious-avoidant attachment* occurs when the infant avoids their parents.
- *Disorganized attachment* occurs when there is a lack of attachment behavior.

## Clinical Child Psychology

The Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology (SCCAP) is an academic and professional society in the United States that was established to encourage the development and advancement of clinical child and adolescent psychology through integration of its scientific and professional aspects.

### *Who can benefit from clinical psychology?*

- ▶ Childrens Anxiety
- ▶ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- ▶ Autism Spectrum Disorder
- ▶ Giftedness
- ▶ Learning disabilities
- ▶ Intellectual disabilities
- ▶ Other concerns including behaviour, depression, history of trauma and adjustment to stressful life events

### *What role can parents play?*

- ▶ Parents play a big role in psychological treatments. When a child is displaying a challenging behaviour, the parents are often on the front lines. It takes considerable effort to change behaviour patterns, and it is the parents' commitment, effort and energy, working with the therapist, that makes it happen.
- ▶ The therapist provides the parents with the techniques and ongoing support they need to help their child. For example, the psychologist might say, "This week we want you to focus on noticing positive behaviour and giving feedback on that; then we will see what has changed and what to do next."

## Educational Psychology

It tells us about

- ▶ Learning and Teaching Today
- ▶ What Is Good Teaching?
- ▶ The Role of Educational Psychology

## *Teaching and learning today*

### *Teachers Today*

Teacher's sense of efficacy

- A teacher's belief that he or she can reach even difficult students to help them learn
- Predicts student achievement
- Grows from real success with students
- Experience and training are essential.

### *Students Today*

- Dramatic Diversity – Language
  - 18% speak language other than English at home – Ethnicity
  - 22% of children are Latino – SES
  - 1 in 5 children lives in poverty
- Technology – High levels of technology

## *What Is Good Teaching?*

Is Teaching a Science or an Art?

- Beware of either/or choices.
- Teachers must be:
  - Able use a range of strategies
  - Flexible and inventive
  - Knowledgeable about their students

Going beyond accommodating learner differences to seeing diversity as an array of strengths on which to build

- ▶ Creating curriculum that is
  - Focused
  - Engaging
  - Demanding
  - Important

## *The Role of Educational Psychology*

In the Beginning – Educators and psychologists observing children in classrooms

- Today – Research on teaching and learning
  - Child/adolescent development
  - Motivation
  - What happens when someone teaches something to someone else in some setting?
- ▶ Educational psychology is a field dedicated to the study of teaching and learning.

- ▶ Using Research to Understand and Improve Learning

### School Psychology

If you want to

- ▶ Help children reach their potential
- ▶ Promote children's mental health
- ▶ Work collaboratively with others
- ▶ Develop interpersonal and communication skills
- ▶ Have a variety of career options for children.

### Definition

It is a psychology that is concerned with the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process.

- ▶ School Psychology tells that all children learn when given:
  - ▶ Adequate supports and resources
  - ▶ Recognition of their individual needs
  - ▶ Connection to and trust in adults
  - ▶ Opportunities to achieve
  - ▶ Acceptance and encouragement
  - ▶ Cooperation between school and home

### Outcomes

- ▶ High academic achievement
- ▶ Positive social skills and behavior
- ▶ Healthy relationships and connectedness
- ▶ Tolerance and respect for others
- ▶ Competence, self-esteem, and resiliency

### Reviews on child psychology

Scientists estimate that during this time, a baby's brain consumes 60 % of the body's total energy, compared with an adult brain that on average uses only between 20% and 25% (Brunton, 2007). Research has shown that memory begins not long after birth and matures significantly by the age of six. The development of sight, hearing, and other senses reaches its peak at three months, and at four months babies start distinguishing between the

faces of loved ones and strangers ("Inside a Baby's Brain," 2005). Undoubtedly, understanding brain function and learning can only help adults teach children better [7].

According to the Clinical Child Psychology Organization, research from developmental psychology testifies to the importance, beginning in infancy, of caring, nurturing, emotionally healthy experiences and relationships to long-term physical and mental health and to the lifetime development of harmonious, reciprocal, psychologically productive relationship [8].

Jinamoni Saikia, Anshu and Anjali Mathur *et al.* did a study on emotional intelligence of adolescents to find out the differences among them due to different sociocultural background. The sample size comprised of 325 adolescents (16–18 years) drawn from urban, rural and tribal areas of Jorhat district of Assam. It can be highlighted from the results that the level of emotional intelligence of most of the adolescents was far better in the dimension of interpersonal management. Majority of adolescents were least competent in the abilities pertaining to the dimension of intrapersonal management. Majority of adolescents of urban culture were found to have more skills in all the dimensions of emotional intelligence than the adolescents of rural culture barring interpersonal management. The adolescents of tribal culture possessed considerably low level in all the dimensions of emotional intelligence [9].

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