

ASSUMPTION 1: TRIPARTITE PERSONALITY EXPLANATION

The **Id**: the pleasure principal which controls the impulsive and unconscious part of our personality and is present from birth. A dominant Id could lead to a psychopathic personality type.

The **Ego**: the reality principal which controls the conscious, rational part of the mind. This develops around the age of two. A dominant ego could lead to a narcissistic personality type.

The **Superego**: the morality principle which encompasses the sense of right and wrong. This is the final part of the personality to develop and this occurs around the age of four. A dominant superego could lead to a neurotic personality type.

Tripartite personality example

According to Freud, criminals are ruled by their Id and their superego is suppressed. Criminals, particularly those who commit violent offences, often lack a sense of morality and remorse, and seek immediate pleasure and gratification regardless of the costs. This is particularly true in the case of psychopaths. Eysenck further supports the role of personality on criminal behaviour recognising that individuals who score highly in extroversion, neuroticism and psychopathy tests are more likely to develop criminality.

ASSUMPTION 2: INFLUENCE OF CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Psychosexual stages:

Oral	Birth - 18 months	Focus - mouth. Frustrated - pessimism, sarcasm and envy. Over indulged - optimistic, gullible, needy.
Anal	18 months - 3 years	Focus - anus. Frustrated - stubborn, possessive, overly tidy. Overindulged - messy, disorganised, reckless.
Phallic	3 - 5 years	Focus - genitals. Frustrated - self-assured, vain, difficulty maintaining relationships.
Latency	5 years - puberty	Focus - little/no sexual motivation. No fixations.
Genital	Puberty onwards	Focus - genitals. No fixations.

Influence of childhood experiences example

Freud believed fixations at the oral stage of development could lead to an eating disorder in adulthood or an addiction such as alcohol or smoking. A fixation at the anal stage of development could lead to an adult developing an anal personality type and potentially OCD. A fixation at the phallic stage of development could lead to a confused sexuality and difficulties in building and maintaining romantic relationships. Freud's case study of Little Hans provides further support for the Oedipus complex.

ASSUMPTION 3: THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

Freud proposed that the mind is like an iceberg. This iceberg metaphor is used to represent the unconscious mind as he believed most of what goes on inside the mind is below the surface and is unconscious. The bit above the water (the surface) represents the conscious mind and this is what we are aware of and is logical. Freud believed the unconscious mind has the biggest influence on behaviour.

Freud suggested that the unconscious mind has unresolved conflicts and these conflicts influence our behaviour. Conflict between the Id, Ego and Superego create anxiety. To protect the ego (the self) Freud believed that we have ego defence mechanisms. These occur when there is conflict between the Id, Ego and Superego. Some examples of these defence mechanisms include regression, repression, displacement, projection and denial.

The unconscious mind example:

Gothelf et al. (1995) found that regression, denial, projection and repression were common to psychiatric patients suffering from severe adolescence anorexia and distinguished them from adolescents without any psychiatric disorder. It was found that anorexic adolescents relied on more mature defence mechanisms than other adolescents.

Application of psychodynamic assumptions to relationship formation

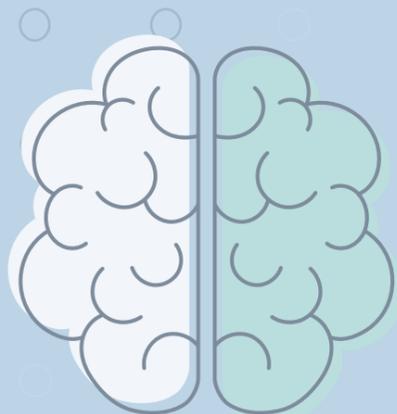
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If one part of the tripartite personality becomes dominate this could, in turn, affect relationships.

If the Id is most dominant, it can lead to a power control relationship which can be aggressive and domineering, making it traumatic for the partner.

If the ego is most dominant, it can lead to the individual having an overinflated sense of ego and put themselves first neglecting their partner which is detrimental for maintaining a healthy relationship.

If the superego is most dominant, it can lead to lower levels of satisfaction in relationship and marital quality.



ASSUMPTION 2: INFLUENCE OF CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Using the 'childhood experiences' assumption of the psychodynamic approach, the formation of romantic relationships can be explained through the progression through the psychosexual stages of development. According to Freud, if a child successfully progresses through each stage, reaching the genital stage of development, it will lead to a well-developed adult personality who will go on to form a heterosexual romantic relationship. However, any fixations may make this difficult.

For example, if a child is fixated at the oral stage of development and is overindulged, it could result in an unhealthy over dependence on others in adulthood. If this is the case, this adult could become 'needy' in a relationship and seek constant reassurance.

Another key stage, influencing relationship formation, in the psychosexual stages of development is the phallic stage. If a fixation occurs during this stage it could pose problems in forming relationships in adulthood. Freud proposed the idea of an Oedipus complex based on the Greek mythical King Oedipus who killed his father to marry his mother. The term is used within the phallic stage of development and the Oedipus complex represents an unconscious sexual desire from the boy to his mother and a wish to exclude the father. The equivalent in girls is the Electra complex whereby the girl has the desire for the father and wishes to exclude the mother.

The Oedipus complex needs to be resolved to move successfully to the next stage of development: the latency stage. It becomes resolved when the boy no longer sees his father as a rival and instead sees the father as a role model. If no fixations occur during this stage the child moves through to the latency and genital stage of development and can form healthy friendships and heterosexual romantic relationships. If fixations occur during this stage and the Oedipus complex isn't resolved, then problems in forming and maintaining relationships can occur and Freud believed that this explained homosexuality.

ASSUMPTION 3: THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

If a person is struggling to come to terms with their sexuality in adulthood, they may use a defence mechanism to protect the ego. Denial may be used whereby the individual will deny their sexuality and form relationships with people they aren't happy with, ultimately, resulting in an unhappy destructive relationship.

Another way defence mechanisms can be applied to relationships is when a person is having an affair they might accuse their partner of being unfaithful as they are projecting their behaviour onto someone else.

