

Theoretical Perspectives on the Significance of Sexual Instinct in Individual Psychosocial Development

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Abstract:

Sexual instinct is a complex set of biological drives and behaviors that manifest in the form of attraction and interaction between individuals of different sexes. It is characterized by a combination of psychological and emotional exchanges and physical intimacy. Through the sexual instinct, individuals seek to satisfy both personal and social needs and to build relationships based on mutual fulfillment.

This instinct plays a fundamental role in driving attraction between individuals, creating a dynamic cycle in which individuals seek physical pleasure and release of tension, while simultaneously adhering to the social norms and values that govern sexual behavior. In this way, the sexual instinct allows individuals to achieve self-actualization and social status within their community.

Keywords: Primary Drive, Sexual Activity, Sexual Instinct, Vital Energy, Individual's Psychosocial Development.

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Introduction:

In this theoretical research, we focused on the concept of sexual instinct, or in other words, the primary sexual motive or activity of the individual in psychology. We were amazed by the abundance of research and theories, and the diversity of theoretical approaches related to sex regarding the circulation of these concepts and linking their importance to the psychological and social construction of the individual. We also discovered through the research, the extent of the interest of the specializations of the social sciences, such as psychology, anthropology, and sociology, in this biological aspect of the individual and trying to link it to the construction of the personality and its balance, and the construction of the cultural phenomenon and the social phenomenon within the society.

Many theoretical concepts also showed the relationship of the sexual instinct with personality disorders and their balance, their importance in organizing relationships within the social structure, and the cultural structure of the group as a whole, as Freud showed in the book Totem and Taboo.

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The major theories and research have shown how the subject of sex occupies great importance for the individual in his conception of himself, and his conception of his place among the members of the group through this biological function. It also gave importance to the psychological and biological dimension, in organizing and building social relations between individuals and building the value and cultural system within society. Researchers have linked this topic to the construction of the personality and its balance and disorder when this activity is disrupted, repressed, or excessive in spending outside the social values and controls of the group. It is not just data or bodily characteristics of the individual, as biological sciences see, but rather an instinct and energy for life that is directed towards individuals through the process of socialization, which is compatible with the social and cultural context of the society to which it belongs.

To discuss this vital motive, we will seek in one part of this topic to define the concept of sexual instinct, and its importance in the psychological and social construction of the individual, with the identification of its dimensions and behavioral indicators, and the enumeration of the most important theoretical concepts that have addressed the research in it and revealed the symbolism of some behavioral practices and rituals in the social structure of the group.

Therefore, we have organized the presentation of our ideas in this article according to the following basic questions:

- *What do we mean by sexual instinct or sexual drive in an individual?*
- *What are the most important terms that are close to the concept of sexual instinct used in psychology?*

Before we address this concept in terms of terminology, we wanted to define it linguistically so that we can approach it with the term and the scientific term. "Instinct in the Arabic dictionary means "nature, disposition, and inclination, and it also means the innate desire to survive¹."

Moustafa Zywar says in his translation of Freud's book "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality": "I honestly admit that I was shocked as a translator by a real problem with the adoption of the word 'sexuality' in the Arabic language as a counterpart to the concept of 'sexuality' in the German concept as adopted by Freud. It is a corrupt translation in common usage." For this reason, we have turned in this part of the article to define this concept psychologically and list the most important terms that are close to it in meaning²."

The French dictionary Le Robert defines libido as "the instinctive search for sexual pleasure³".

The Larousse psychological dictionary also defines libido as "all sexual phenomena or behaviors related to sex that can be observed in the living world, as well as all the different ways of sexual satisfaction⁴".

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It is also defined as "a set of physiological mechanisms that contribute to the rapprochement of the sexes and the reproduction of species⁵".

what does the concept of instinct mean in psychology?

In psychology, instinct is defined as "the activity, movement, and driving force behind behavior."

« Instinct; natural impulse, intuition, spontaneous feeling, acting on instinct, by instinct⁶ »

Freud's view of instinct

Freud viewed instinct as "a type of tension that is specific to a presumed psychic energy that is activated by the work that expresses physical needs and produces all the characteristic phenomena of life. Therefore, the instinct will create pressure, resulting in the need to interact. Freud sees instinct as more of a drive than a feeling or a natural behavior that arouses that need. Mental phenomena and social activities are always determined by the constant need to reduce these tensions produced by instincts, which will form the driving force of human life and are perceived as annoying and unpleasant feelings⁷."

In the realm of psychology, instinct transcends biological drives to embrace a concomitant psychological desire. This desire impels the individual to expend a significant portion of their vital energy, driven by the fundamental instincts of life and sex.

Within the confines of common understanding, the concept of sex or sexual instinct primarily refers to the anatomical structure and function of the reproductive system. However, it often intertwines with affection, tenderness, love, and attraction. Additionally, it encompasses notions of desire, erotic fantasy, and seductive behaviors. Furthermore, it encompasses themes of voluptuousness, instinctual urges, and the experience of pleasure. Ultimately, it represents the intrinsic biological driving force within each individual.

Sexual instinct is an individual psychological and social drive and energy that includes emotional and psychological reactions. At the same time, it is a social behavioral response. Sexual activity is an important factor in individual development and a fundamental subject in the process of individual socialization through the regulation of this activity following cultural values specific to the group to which it belongs.

Sexuality is a psychosocial and affective given that is both individual, personal, intimate, or private, and at the same time interpersonal and collective. It is an important factor in socialization. Sexuality and society, sexuality and culture are inseparable⁸.

In his theory of personality, Carl Jung defined the driving force of the psychological phenomenon in the individual as the vital energy, which he also called libido. This libido is located in the unconscious and is a collection of repressed sexual urges, desires, and inclinations that motivate individual behavior.

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Carl Jung said, "In every human mind, there are not only conscious or unconscious contents that are elaborated by personal experience, but also, in the depths, there are themes of which it has never had any experience. This means that under every individual psyche, there is a common or collective unconscious⁹."

According to Freud's conception, every human mind contains not only conscious or unconscious contents that have been developed through personal experience, but also deep-seated themes that the individual has had no experience of and has not received through experience. In other words, there is an essential part in the structure of individual psychology called the collective unconscious, or shared unconscious.

Freud uses the term "libido" to refer to sexual energy, "invested in love in all its forms¹⁰."

In Freudian psychoanalysis, sexuality is "synonymous with the concept of love in its broadest sense. It includes, firstly, sexual love, i.e. sexual contact with another individual, as well as self-love, love of others, and attachment to objective objects and abstract ideas. These inclinations are considered to be a single instinctual drive. In relationships between the sexes, these drives seek to achieve sexual union, but in other circumstances, when they are prevented from achieving this goal, they are diverted from this aim and turn into illness, neurosis, or aggression towards oneself or others¹¹."

The definition of sex in the biological sense, as a function that does not differ from other biological functions, appears to be reductive and inadequate to the concept of sex in the individual. Sexual life does not appear among the basic and vital needs of the individual in the early stages of his life. This functional perspective has also ignored how individuals are attracted to each other to dissipate this biological energy in the group and has neglected to mention the relationship of sex to the social structure in organizing social relations, sex and its relationship to the distribution of wealth within the group, and sex and its relationship to the cultural structure of values, norms, rituals, and symbols that regulate behavior.

In other words, sexuality is considered to be a function among others (hunger, thirst, or sleep). Thus reduced to a bodily drive that must be satisfied, sexuality does not, however, appear among the basic and vital needs of an individual.

This functionalist perspective is very reductive. It leaves out reproduction, but also the entire social organization that is built around this activity of sexuality-reproduction¹².

- *Does the sexual instinct count among the most basic factors in the psychological and social construction of the individual?*
- *What are the most important theoretical explanations?*

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Sigmund Freud studied everything that is hidden within the individual, whether conscious or unconscious. He also studied human nature and its various components, from instincts, thoughts, feelings, delusions, and dreams, and he delved into their depths. In his research and scientific studies, he discovered the structure of the psychological apparatus, its components (the ego, the superego, and the id), and the process and function of this apparatus in the formation and cohesion of the individual's personality and behavioral and health orientations.

Through his long studies of the theory of psychoanalysis in the construction of the individual's psychological apparatus, Freud explained to us that "the superego is that socially acquired aspect that strives to guide the ego and repress it. Freud considered this part of the apparatus in the personality to be the basic reference for consciousness and the formation of the individual's social and cultural identity. It is everything related to personal experiences and also the totality of customs, traditions, and ethics that the individual collects and stores in this superego. It is also considered, according to Freud's conception, to be the authority that monitors the unconscious instinctive side of the individual. It is the primary biological side that contains all the biological instincts that the human being is born with. Freud called it in the theory of psychoanalysis the term id, which carries all the motives for survival, and the most important driving motive for the individual according to the theory's conceptions, which is the sexual drive that always tends to pleasure in a continuous dynamic, trying to meet its desires and desires directly or indirectly when it imposes self-control¹³."

Freud summarizes his idea by saying "that the ego is that part of the id that has changed according to its proximity to the external world and its influence on it. It became ready to capture the influences and equipped to protect from emotions like a layer of bark that surrounds a piece of living matter. While the ego Ich forms the critical consciousness and regulates the relationship of the soul with the external world according to the mechanisms of perception and understanding, and tries to meet the requirements of the id in a rational way, which means the spiritual energy or the emotional charge associated with a specific image of something or someone or a body, or part of it, which Freud calls the target Objekt¹⁴."

Sigmund Freud, in his psychoanalytic theory, viewed human beings as animalistic creatures driven by a powerful biological energy. He affirmed this idea by analyzing the early stages of human childhood and tracing the process and dynamics of the primary biological instincts with which the individual is born, especially the sex drive, which manifests itself in his behavior in different forms and shapes according to his upbringing, education, and influence by his social, cultural, geographical, and economic environment.

In his book, "Totem and Taboo," in which he tried to analyze individual psychology starting from collective psychology and vice versa, Freud tried to explain some of the collective behavioral phenomena starting from the analysis of individual psychology. He believes that culture and social upbringing are two essential references to which humanity as a whole refers in raising and

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guiding the individual. They play a decisive and important role in forming the child's identity and determining the nature of his behavior and his relationship with others. Culture and upbringing are also two essential determinants for the individual, through which his innate desires and inclinations are defined within his social environment and directed in a way that is compatible with his cultural, social, and religious values and perceptions. This leads to the development of multiple concepts in his mind about what is permissible and what is forbidden, between what is halal and what is prohibited and forbidden. These concepts form a basic reference in the formation of the individual's psychological apparatus and his position in the prevailing social structure and organization during that historical era to which the individual belongs. Therefore, Freud considered that culture and social upbringing play a major role in the formation and organization of the individual's social behavior by directing his instincts, sexual energy, and overall social psychological structure.

Freud says, "Some primitive peoples believe that killing animals or touching certain objects is a great calamity, and the idea of the forbidden is associated with the idea of the saint in the sense that the one who violates the sanctity of the sacred thing exposes himself to the wrath of the gods. The forbidden has also extended to a specific type of sexual contact, which is precisely what is known as incest¹⁵." Eric From also confirmed this view by saying, "Society does not only affect the individual's behavior, but it also shapes and determines his psychology¹⁶."

Freud was guided by listening to his patients that "every time he approached this topic, he found great embarrassment in revealing what was going on in his head, or the patient would show strong resistance when talking about this topic. Here Freud wondered about the patient's need for such embarrassment and resistance, even if the topic was not of such importance, especially since the continuation of narrating his thoughts after overcoming this resistance leads to the dissolution of the symptom and its disappearance later¹⁷." This is what he confirmed in many of his theoretical writings, that there must be a link between sexual dysfunction and neuroses.

Freud proved through psychoanalysis that the dynamics of action and the driving desire lie in the unconscious and not in the ego, as was imagined by thinkers before. The role of the psychoanalytic theory was to reveal the dynamic sexual desire in the unconscious that moves the human being without his knowledge, starting from consciousness.

Freud states that if we adopt sexuality as a primary driver in our social life, this does not mean what is equivalent and prevalent in the general concept of behavioral drivers, but rather the power of Eros in driving our behavior.

Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud emphasized that the significance of the sexual act transcends the commonly held misconception of it as merely a catalyst for seeking pornography. Rather, psychoanalysis posits that sexuality plays a crucial role in shaping both personality and individual dynamism. Analytical experience has revealed that, in numerous instances, the root cause of

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mental illness can be traced back to a lack of understanding or regulation of one's sexual impulses. Unbridled sexual urges, often fueled by exposure to pornography, can trigger feelings of guilt and inferiority, generating a subconscious desire to reinforce internal barriers and unearth the source of the transgression, ultimately aiming to restore normalcy to one's life. While deviant sexual desires exist within every society, their outward expression and manifestation depend heavily on the prevailing legal and social norms of the time. It is important to acknowledge that indulging in such impulses does not eliminate the underlying cause of distress. For example, individuals engaging in frequenting prostitutes or participating in a deviant sexual lifestyle remain susceptible to potential exposure to sexually transmitted diseases or severe psychological crises. Ultimately, psychoanalysis does not advocate for indulging in these acts but rather seeks to address the "vermin" of repressed desires residing within the unconscious¹⁸.

Freud's theoretical concepts were influenced by the Vienna School in its psychological concepts that attributed the causes and symptoms of mental illness to a malfunction in the individual's psychological structure. According to Freud, neurosis is originally due to the repression and suppression of the biological sexual energy of the human being. Freud also discovered that most human behaviors are unconscious and irrational behaviors based on multiple psychological mechanisms that work to repress this vital energy in the individual from the early stages of his life.

Humans usually do not talk about sex because it is a socially taboo subject that they are not allowed to talk about or look at except from a distance. The individual is inevitably met with repression if he approaches it, and this repression takes the form of psychological intimidation physical punishment, or even social isolation amid the group to which he belongs. All of these restrictions and taboos have been formulated by the group in the form of morals or values, religious or social norms, or mythical materials that are taught to the individual through socialization to regulate his behaviors and primary instincts, especially the sexual instinct, within his social environment and do not appear to him except in the form of dreams as safe ways to transform and express the repressed emotional and sexual life¹⁹.

This is to achieve social adaptation for individuals and to preserve the integrity of the social structure of the group.

Margaret Mead endorses this idea in her book *L'un et L'autre Sexe* "The One and The Other Sex" "The body is the complex and difficult thing that we used to hide under clothes to hint at in a roundabout way in slang or borrowed language, and we even hide the sex of a small child under blue and pink ribbons, and it is difficult to deal with this physical reality in direct knowledge It has always been and will always be characterized by our humility and our indecision and we reject it equally and rightly and that how the physical differences and similarities between the two are formed is The basis on which all our knowledge is based on our gender and our relationships with the opposite sex²⁰"

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"Talking about sexual desire as an instinct, or sexual act in all its forms, deviations and abnormalities recognized socially, religiously and culturally, and talking about it, is one of the forbidden and not allowed topics for the individual to delve into²¹" According to Osho's perceptions, since ancient times to the present day, the subject of sex is among the most forbidden and forbidden topics, and a taboo of social taboos that are strictly forbidden to delve into or hint at it, as the latter remained indoctrinated through socialization and cultural transmission processes. It is dominated by denial, distortion, ambiguity, and repression, and even standing in the face of everyone who talks about him or brings him closer, and rejects him when delving into it, isolates him socially, and condemns him to corruption

Sex in the individual's social environment has been considered a sin by the community, and the individual who displays his sexual activity in practicing his instinct in front of others and is unable to control it and repress it among them must be fought.

For this reason, the individual will inevitably find himself consciously or unconsciously avoiding talking or expressing his vital instinct, and he will also strive to avoid social isolation in his natural social relations with others, so he will succumb to the influence of the great terror that the community exercises on him through the strict moral standards and values in the process of socialization.

As a result, the individual will inevitably fall victim to the conflict between his instinctive whims and his social belonging.

Human beings have been forced within the community to permanently and continuously repress their sexual activity and their creative vital energy, whether this control is conscious or unconscious. Rather, they have always been taught through the process of socialization, with psychological mechanisms, how to repress their sexual energy and oppose these natural vital impulses within them.

The individual has been created on the belief that thinking about sex is toxic thinking that must be fought and repressed and that it is obligatory not to show his sexual desires and orientations in front of others.

However, the truth that the process of socialization overlooked through the promotion of cultural and religious values is that humans cannot be separated from their sexual energy, because sex is originally a primary biological instinct, essential, and one of the vital impulses that the individual is born with, just like other life instincts. He is born and reproduces through sex.

According to Osho's view, religion and culture "poison sex in human thinking, create conflict within it, and plunge it into a battle against its primitive energy²²." This has made man in many cases neurotic, behaviorally disordered, weak, and uncontrolled in directing his biological energy and social behavior by himself, devoid of positivity in his relationship with the other, and in a

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constant separation between himself and himself in expressing his instinctual desires. He is in a constant and permanent conflict with his vital energy, and this is evident in the amount of violence, crime, wars, and murder that he practices on earth. Freud also talked about this conflict in his reference to "Civilization and Its Discontents" and linked it to the repression of this drive in man.

Osho also says, through his psychological analysis of the individual, that we should not create enmity with sex, but we should be in constant harmony with it, and sex should rise in the process of social development to the highest states of purity to achieve a healthy and reconciled person with himself.

Osho adds that "something deeper happens inside the individual and its depths when he insists on avoiding something. The decision is made by apparent thinking, so the thing that opposes the decision will remain inside the labyrinths of the subconscious, constantly pressuring our psychological and social stability. If we divide the mind according to his perception into ten parts, then only one part is the upper part that will adhere to the decision, but the remaining nine parts that are repressed will be against it. Therefore, the individual's thinking takes only one part of thinking, while the remaining larger part of thinking suffers from madness longing to practice sex in the rest of the parts of the subconscious consciousness²³."

"Culture, religion, and social customs have formed the obsession with sex in the individual's mind, as a result of the constant repression, so it became a disease and deviation, and the individual became poisoned in his thought and behavior because of what is instilled in the child since the early stages of his life, and considering that sex is a sin that is forbidden to approach, so he gets a disorder in his behavior, through the lack of connection between himself and his desires, and between his mind and his vital energy in his life²⁴."

Freud's research agreed with Osho's view, and Freud stated in his articles through listening to his patients that "every time the individual approaches this topic, he finds great embarrassment in disclosing what is going on in his head, or this patient shows violent resistance when talking about this topic. Here, Freud wondered about the need of this patient, for such embarrassment and resistance, even if the topic was not of such importance, especially since the continuation of narrating his thoughts after overcoming this resistance, leads to the dissolution of the symptom and its disappearance later²⁵." This is what he confirmed in many of his theoretical writings, that there must be a link between sexual dysfunction and neurotic diseases

Sigmund Freud proved through psychoanalysis that the dynamics of action and the driving desire lie in the unconscious, not in the ego as previously imagined by thinkers. The role of the psychoanalytic theory was to reveal the dynamic sexual desire in the unconscious that moves the human being without his knowledge, starting from the conscious."

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Freud explains that "the sexual act does not mean as misunderstood is the call for sexual pornography, but we consider it essential in the formation of personality and dynamism as shown to us by analytical experience, many times the cause of mental illness may be sexual pornography does not know its limit, or violation through the passions generating feelings of guilt and inferiority, and his subconscious request is to strengthen these barriers and reveal the subject of violation, until he returns to a normal life, the deviant sexual passions exist in all societies, and their exit into action and implementation Subject to laws and social norms, prevailing in the era, and what must be noted, is that gratification does not cancel the vermin that was the cause of this, the prostitute, for example, and all those who practice a pornographic sex life and deviant are not far from being exposed to diseases or severe psychological crises, psychoanalysis is not the act, but it is vermin the home of repressed desire²⁶

Sigmund Freud says that if we consider sex to be the primary driving force in our social life, this does not mean what is consistent with the general concept of behavioral drives. Rather, it means the power of Eros in driving our behavior and organizing our social relations with others according to the controls and standards imposed by society for fear of incest or for fear of the overlap and conflict of relations within the social structure.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, sexuality in the individual does not solely reflect their biological side, but it rather serves as a window into an entire civilization. Through the study of sexuality, we gain insights into the organizational aspects of social relations between individuals, and we can utilize this understanding to explain certain prevailing conflicts, tensions, and crimes. Furthermore, it allows us to comprehend the formal and informal cultures that guide individual behavior through the deciphering of symbolic structures and rituals.

Understanding the individual's psychological structure in terms of their desires and primary biological needs empowers us to comprehend the social structure of society and its degree of cohesion. Moreover, understanding the individual in terms of their vital aspects, instincts, and basic needs, such as their primary need for sex, can offer us glimpses into the foundational principles of wealth distribution among individuals within a community. As Freud states in *Totem and Taboo*, "What attracted me most in anthropological studies was the subject of totemism, which is the first form of social order with a simple religion and strict control of taboos in that system. The sacred being is always and forever an animal from which the tribe claims to have descended, and my starting point in that was the striking contrast between the two things that totemism forbade us (i.e., the killing of the totem and sexual intercourse with any woman of the same clan as the totem itself). The sexual instinct is the origin of the distribution of property and wealth between members of the same totem tribe or different totems."

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The individual's sexual life also serves as a significant indicator of their current state, whether healthy or troubled, and it provides insights into the social, cultural, and political life of humanity since the dawn of history. This is achieved through the recognition of the vast amount of Oedipal language left behind in social cultures, such as the language of stories and love myths, images, sculptures, cinema, and songs. This symbolic language holds within it, from ages past, the nature of the prevailing sexual activity of that period in terms of meaning, form, and symbol. It also informs us about the nature of the social organization of relations between individuals, the distribution of power and wealth within society, and reveals the cultural structure of that particular period.

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