

- This eventually helps children to understand their culture. According to psychoanalysts, this play provides children with opportunities to develop competence in dealing with intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts.

BEHAVIOURIST'S THEORIES

They argue that play is learnt behaviour that is both experiential and constructive.

Social and dramatic play provide children with crucial experiences at the critical periods (sensitive periods of acquisition of certain concepts)

- Most of the aspects of development that children acquire at play would be hard for adults to provide e.g. skills of social interaction.
- As they play, they acquire a diversity of motor skills that may be hard to develop otherwise
- At play, reinforcement, rewards or punishments are not as severe or extreme as in non-situations
- Play may be viewed as reinforcement of learning of future roles because
- children are able to model behaviours of numerous people and they settle for those in which they receive encouragement.
- They do away with behaviours that are rejected. They also learn certain roles that are associated with their sex through play.

Cognitive Dimension

In these perspectives play is believed to make a major contribution in both psychosocial and intellectual development.

- Play is viewed as a process of integrating actions and thought.
- The theorists claim that play consolidates and enlarges mental concepts and cognitive skills.
- Through play children gain more confidence and competence
- Brunner (1973) and Sutton – Smith (1967) argued that play allows children to solve problems in a relatively stress-free atmosphere.
- This prepares them for more complex challenges in real life e.g. *chenga-toa* play
- According to Piaget one of the primary functions of all living organisms is to adapt to the environment. According to him adaptation is crucial for survival.
- Physical adaptation is necessary for the survival and growth of the body and the psychological adaptation ensures the continued growth of the intellectual structures of the mind.
- Adaptation involves assimilation and accommodation. Piaget sees play as the dominance of assimilation over accommodation (in exploration) i.e. play is mainly incorporation of new intellectual materials into already existing cognitive structures without altering them.
- Piaget says that although play isn't the same as learning it leads to learning.