Models Of Abnormality Essay, Research Paper

In the not so far away past people used to suggest witchcraft and superstition as the cause of abnormal behavior. Today we find that those beliefs are not so realistic. There are six major models of abnormality that suggest the cause of abnormal behavior: medical model, psychoanalytic model, behavioral model, cognitive model, humanistic model, and the sociocultural model. Those models provide us with a better understanding on abnormalities in behavior. Take stealing, for example. Each of the models of abnormality would provide a different outlook on the thefts mind frame.

The medical model of abnormality suggests that the cause of abnormal behavior could be found in a physical examination, which may show a hormonal imbalance, a chemical deficiency, or a brain injury. A person caught shoplifting under these circumstances might have an imbalance or an injury to the brain that makes them unaware that stealing is wrong.

The psychoanalytic model of abnormality is derived from childhood troubles regarding sex and aggression. If to associate this model to a theft, one might say that he/she maybe revealing some aggression by stealing. This model hasn t been proven to be the most accurate of the models of abnormality.

The behavioral model associates the behavior itself as the problem, as a learned response. This model associated with theft would bring me to believe that the thief would think that stealing is a normal thing. I think the behavioral model is deeply associated with the sociocultural model.

The cognitive model of abnormality theorizes that people s thoughts and beliefs are the cause of abnormal behavior. Relating this model to stealing would lead me to believe that the thief stole because they thought or actually believed that it wasn t wrong to do so.

The fifth model of abnormality is the humanistic model, which strongly brings about that people are solely aware of their behavior even when it is abnormal. Associating this model to the theft situation would lead me to believe that the culprit knew what he/she was doing was wrong but went ahead and engaged in high risk behavior despite the wrongness.

Last but not least, the sociocultural model of abnormality. This model brings about the theory that one s behavior is learned and shaped by the family, society and/or culture in which they live. This is one of the stronger models of abnormality. Relating this model to the theft would suggest that the thief was maybe brought up to believe that stealing was all right. Maybe the society that they live in was so poor everyone stole to make ends meet. I know of someone who is like that. He grew up in the sixties and his family was poor. His father died when he was very young. To make ends meet, his mother would steal from stores to help put food on the table. Today this man has a terrible problem. It is really a sickness. He makes good money and owns a home. No matter how many times people tell him that stealing is not good, he steals anyway. That s the way he was brought up. That s what he was learned.

There are many aspects of abnormality. The six models discussed provide psychologists with some grounds to why people act the way they do. I think as time goes on we will find out more about the different types of abnormal behavior. We have gone a long way from claiming witchcraft to actually recognizing abnormality disorders as a medical condition.