

PSYCHOLOGY FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Reflective essay

By
Richard Kanjoma
ID: 1916228

TEACHER:DIYA GANGULY

Introduction

Having studied and understood the theoretical perspectives related to developmental psychology in the infancy stage, and signifying the role of psychological perspectives in health and social care, this essay reflects a personal understanding of these psychological theories by showing how they impact on my day to day duty to care, why I chose these theories and how psychological perspectives are applied at my work place as a support worker. In addition, this essay reflects on how important it is to learn psychology for health and social care.

Reflection on Piaget's theory of development

Piaget did not focus on "psychosocial" or "psychoanalytical" to explain stages of growth but he put emphasis on children's cognitive growth. In his understanding, he believed that children too have "schemata" which guides their thinking and hence understand the world in their own way. He believed that children are able to develop their brains from stage to stage by taking new information their brains can handle. (Piaget, 1952, p.7). According to Piaget (1977), children keep adding knowledge to what they already know from earlier stages and they interpret this information in their brains since "children are naturally inquisitive".

I strongly agree with Piaget's thinking that children are "naturally inquisitive" because I have witnessed this at many occasions, for example, children love doing things to find out how it feels doing such things. For example, my baby liked putting things in the mouth to see if they are edible or not. This curiosity is within children as they grow up at all stages. At one point, my baby switched off light accidentally and he kept switching on and off at every chance he got, and this can clearly demonstrate Piaget's thinking that children are naturally inquisitive.

Like Piaget (1977) put it, I believe that children's brain develops from stage to stage and that at each stage; children's brain is able to handle more complex situations than at a previous stage. This is why at school, children are given different problems to solve depending on the age and stage, and they are taught what their little brains can comprehend. (Hammond, 2014).

Piaget's theory indicates that children understand what is happening even though they are not able to speak out their mind. In my own understanding, this assumption is very true and I agree to it because I know that children do not think like adults though they can figure out things in their own way. For example, my two year child was left alone in the bedroom and he was able to get down the bed without hurting himself, later on, I realized he had put pillows on the floor so that he would not feel pain upon falling off the bed. This is evidence that children can think and solve problems even though they are not able to speak.

Piaget stated that children develop languages between the age of two years and six years and that they use words and pictures to understand things. To me, this is also true because my son

developed language and started speaking clearly after the age of two. I also believe that children understand more through images and this is why at day care and nursery school, teachers use more of images to teach than writings. (Hammond, 2014).

McLeod (2020) agrees with Piaget and suggests that the best way to understand how children reason is by trying to understand from their point of view. However, this is difficult for a parent like me because it is not easy to know what the children think or want especially when they still too young to speak. On the other hand, it is easy especially the child can explain what they want or trying to mean.

To a smaller extent, I do not agree with Piaget theory of cognitive development because Piaget (1953) undermined children's abilities especially when it comes to reasoning because some children are able to solve complex situations at school in the area of Mathematics, physics, English spelling among others. For example on Steven Harvey's show "Little big shots", children as young as 2 years, 3 years 4 and 5 years are able to show their exceptional skills compared to the 11 years suggested by Piaget that children start to show concrete reasoning.

Also, some children understand other people's point of view at a very early stage than Piaget put it in his theory of cognitive development. This happens especially when a mother tells a child that she can't get the toy the children wants because there is no money, and some children are able to understand this point of view even at a very young age.

Reflection on Bowlby's Attachment theory

Bowlby (1969) defined attachment to mean any bond with another person and he specifically indicated a child bonding with the mother or care giver. In summary, the theory indicates that the bond created between the mother and any other care giver, has a great impact on the entire life of child from childhood to adulthood.

To begin with, I love the fact the theory indicates that a child cannot bond with a mother alone but also with the care giver as well. I credit this theory because a mother-child bond can also be transferred to the care giver in case of death of a mother, illness of a mother, busy mother among others. In addition, I agree that the bond created with the child helps them throughout the entire life to survive and this is why most people keep referring to the love and care they received from their mothers and care givers when they were children.

I strongly agree that a child first attachment is with the mother from the point of birth. A baby's attachment with the mother is no doubt real because even as an adult, I can still strongly feel attached to my mother. This bond is strong and this is why a baby stops crying the moment the mother holds it even though the baby has not yet developed vision to recognize the mother.

(Meins, 2017). This attachment is similar to care givers who are fulltime with the baby or child because a baby feels secure with such people.

Like Bowlby (1969) stated in his theory, I also believe that 'responsiveness and nurturance' are the main sources of attachment with a child. The way the mother or care giver responds to the needs of a child determines how much bond will be created with the child. I believe that mothers who show love and nurture their children becomes attached to the child because children will always confine in the person who loves them and hence helping them to grow with high self-esteem. (The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 2018). However, some behaviorists suggested otherwise that attachment with children is actually got from giving a child food. I do not agree to this controversy.

Similar to National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2015), I also credit the Attachment theory because it is important for parenting. I believe that if all mothers read and understood this theory, their parenting would they would want their children to feel secure around them. This theory has already changed me because I have improved on my response to my children at home.

I agree with Bowlby (1969) that children should behave in suspicious way towards strangers because it is a protective for our children against bad society acts like child kidnaps. Children who are suspicious of strangers are doing well because this behavior scares away people with intentions in a home.

I agree up in Africa with a perception that "too much love and care spoils the child" and that a child who grows up struggling has a better future. I strongly disagree with perception and agree with Bowlby's theory that too much loves and care improves a child's self-esteem and the child is most likely to survive socially and emotionally compared to other children. This can be seen at school because some children are more able to connect with others easily in a healthy way. (Zeanah et al., 2016).

I chose to discuss the Attachment theory because it clearly points out why it is important to nurture and love the children as they grow up. Showing love to the child at each stage of growth helps children to survive socially because they grow up with high self-esteem which shapes the personality as adults.

How psychological theories and perspectives are applied in health and social care

As a support worker, I am responsible for providing physical support to my clients/ patients at work. I care for my clients on a personal basis and also performing house hold tasks where need be. While performing these tasks I deal with people with different illnesses, disorders, and disabilities that cause to behave and act differently from the normal behavior.

Behaviorism

While dealing with such patients, I apply the behaviorism perspective so that I am able to understand why they behave the way they do. After understanding their behavior, assessing their needs becomes very easy. Firstly, when a patient has low self-esteem because of their negative, I always help them by making them understand that the negative behavior can be overcome. I do that by taking a walk with them to clear their minds, helping them watch important TV shows that will help them change their lives.

I always attend to these patients when performing my duties by complementing their good behavior especially when they take themselves to the bathroom and eat food by themselves.

Additionally, I talk to my patients by understanding their point of view especially when they become very violent or feel emotionally broken. This calms them down and hence giving them a chance to speak out their minds and get relieved.

Since learning is through interacting with environment, I always take my patients for a walk in the park which gives them a chance to see how other elders behave, interacting with other elders which help them to feel at ease. I have come up with simple guidelines like no taking a walk before food and this motivated those with eating disabilities to eat their food.

Humanistic perspective

At my work place, I carry on other roles like providing health care need which includes assisting the nurse to administer medication and encouraging service user skills through hobbies and skills.

I do all these tasks by showing empathy and love to these patients because I am also human and I can understand what they are going through. Instead of feeling irritated by their strange behavior and actions, I help them by getting concerned about them and comfort them. Avoiding those patients who are emotionally broken makes their condition worse.

While giving them company, we normally engage in open and honest discussions about their past and the patients share many sad stories that could have caused their current situation, therefore, these conversations help me to understand their and respect their view which helps to assess their needs and design for them a perfect care plan.

Additionally, I am also responsible for providing emotional support to my patients and their families. Some of my clients are lonely and abandoned in a care home by their families and they are also crying, commenting about how they feel bad. To help them, I encourage forgetting about people who hurt them, forget the past and embrace the present and we usually play games like chess, cards to enable them move on.

Relation of this learning to health and social care practice.

This module has taught me that understand why people behave the way they do and how they should be helped. To understand emotions and actions, people in need should be understood instead of being judgmental about their actions because it is not their own making but rather life experiences throughout their life span. For example to help someone who is socially isolated, we must first find out what could have caused it, including rape, torture, abuse etc.

Each theory covered under this module helps to understand human behavior and this is important for a support worker. For example, theories indicated that society and environment shapes our personality as adults and a health worker should know this information in order to assess the needs of the patients. Use stories and therapy to extract this information from the patients and help them according. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

By learning about these psychological perspectives and theories, I am able to promote wellness among my clients by using the knowledge acquired to know about the human mind of these patients in order to deal with their problems practically. For example, I use psychology to help my clients cope with stress, depression and overcome trauma through giving them emotional support.

Conclusion

In conclusion therefore, I am grateful to my University for introducing Psychology for Health and Social care as a module because I have acquired knowledge about psychological perspectives, their impact on the growth and development of children and above, it has helped me to understand why people act and behave the way they do. By using knowledge acquired from this module, I am confident that I will be a better performer at work and at home as a parent.

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