

UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

INTRODUCTION

This poster is designed to outline Erikson's theory of Psychosocial development across the Lifespan. According to Boyd and Bec, (2019), Erikson sustained that human being faces age related changes in personality, emotion, thinking and behaviour, containing eight stages of development from birth to death. However, there are a variety of theories used nowadays, another one is Piaget's theory of Cognitive development which contains only four stages from birth to twelve years old.

Erikson suggest the individual needs to pass each stage in order to develop into a healthy and well contributed member of society. In case of fail to overcome the obstacles, prevents the individual to develop skills for a strong sense of self.

Erikson stages of Psychosocial development:

1. Infancy - Trust vs Mistrust stands for new-born to age 1. At this stage basic trust or mistrust is formed. If the new-born is provided with their basic needs, food, love and safety may develop a sense of trust, if parent is inconsistent mistrust.

2. Early childhood - Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt normally happens between age 1 to 3, when the child begins to show preferences, such as food, toys and clothing. If is left to choose becomes secure and confident. Those who are not left to make choices develop feelings of shame and doubt.

3. Preschool - Initiative vs Guilt, it happens between age of 3 to 5. Children are now capable of initiating activities, and they are allowed to take it. In this case child will develop a sense of capability and able to lead others. If actions and initiative are not allowed children will feel guilt.

4. School - Industry vs Inferiority. This stage takes place under age of 6 to 12 years old thru social interactions. Children begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments, in schoolwork, family life and social activities. If they are encouraged by teacher or parent, they develop competence, if parents or teacher do not show them appreciation, they will doubt their abilities forming inferiority.

5. Adolescence - Identity vs Role confusion happens between age of 12 to 18 and is about identity vs role confusion. If the individual explore independence, will develop a personal identity. Those who fail on becoming independent risk of experience role confusion.

6. Young adulthood - Intimacy vs Isolation it usually takes place between age of 18 to 35. Individuals now explore personal relationships, such as friendship and marriage, those successful can establish relationship, if fail they may develop isolation.

7. Middle Adulthood - Generativity vs Stagnation it happens at age of 35 to 55. Successful people are those who are raising a family and they follow a career they love, however if family life and career is not fulfilled, they may face stagnation.

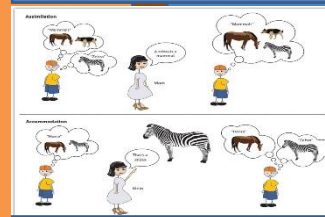
8. Maturity - Ego Integrity vs Despair is the most vulnerable stage, and it takes place after age of 55 until death. At this stage individuals start to evaluate life; they contemplate on their life accomplishments which are proud of or not. Missed opportunities come along with depression and despair. (Gilibrand, Lam & O'Donnell, 2016)

Piaget stages of Cognitive development:

- 1. Sensori-motor** stage it usually happens between birth and age of 2 when infants gather information about the world through their eyes, hearing, touch, smell, senses.
- 2. Pre-operational** (2-7 years). At this stage children starts to develop and engage in play and learning, able to talk, learn symbols.
- 3. Concrete-operational** (7-11 years). Children can begin to equal mathematics, think logically and understand conservations.
- 4. Formal-operational** stage takes place at age of 12 and above. Adolescent can reason abstract concepts and think about consequences of potential actions, think like adult and continue to develop with time. (Bjorklund, 2018)



Img.1 Erikson



Img.2 Piaget

Erikson and Piaget differences:

Erikson

- Psychosocial development.
- Birth to death.
- Obstacles to overcome.
- Social interactions.
- Environment.

Piaget

- Cognitive development.
- Birth to age of 12.
- Learn from objects.
- Social interactions do not influence.



Img.3 Lifespan

How staff can support older in stage 8. Maturity- Ego integrity vs Despair.

This stage is the most vulnerable and full of wisdom, as individuals who fail overcoming the obstacles become angry, anxious and depressive.

It is important to be aware of their backgrounds, and communication is a key factor in interacting and supporting vulnerable Matures.

Addressing older with a calm tone of voice is crucial, let them know of what help is available, practical and mental health. Guide them through accessing the help required.

Make sure all their needs are meet, for example physical comfort, safety, socialising, needed for good quality of life and well-being.

ANOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bjorklund, David F. (2018). *A Metatheory for Cognitive Development (or "Piaget is Dead" Revisited)*. Child Development. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13019> (Accessed: 20 June 2021).

The article above is a credible and reliable source as it has been published by University of Atlanta, well recognized institution and the author Bjorklund (2018), being a researcher for over 20 years. Bjorklund (2018) argues that understanding brain development is important in biological aspects as well as understanding organism growth from embryo to adult, changes occurring at different and unique age. Cognitive development according to Piaget's theory (1936) explains how brain develop across the lifespan, which is also explained by Bjorklund (2018) also suggesting that Neuroscience research have showed that early brain damage may develop into autism or learning disabilities at a later age. For example, children do not born with fears and knowledge adult have, developing at a particular age when are able to understand the risks and potential hazards, brain is not fully developed at an early age. What Bjorklund wants to say about neuroscience research that early brain damage can have serious impact later in life is, while the child is in the womb the brain can suffer from substances mother uses while pregnant, like alcohol, tabaco, affecting brain development, leading to disabilities of the child, also brought into attention by Kavanagh (2021).

Boyd, D.R., Bee, D.R. & Bee, Helen L., (2019). *Lifespan development* Eight, Global edition. Harlow, England: Pearson 2019. Moodle Psychology in Health and Social care, UWTSD, Reading list, essential.

By reading this book I have managed to expand my knowledge in Erikson's theory of Psychosocial development, being also an essential reading in our reading list at University of Wales Trinity Saint David. As well as other philosophers, Erikson agrees with the idea that early age have an impact on brain development at later age, sustaining that infancy is the most important stage, were trust and mistrust is obtained, forming a sense of hope and attachment to the caregiver. If the caregiver does not meet the infant needs, like food, love and play, a sense of mistrust is formed leading to not trusting their abilities at a later age and others. However, it is important that each stage is passed successful in order to develop a strong sense of self. For example, stage 3, Fig.1, Preschool were if the child is let to take initiative is forming a purpose for life, in case of fail on initiate activities they will develop a sense of guilt and insecurity.

Psychological crisis important to be overcome are occurring across all stages, but another one that captured my attention was Young Adulthood – Intimacy vs Isolation, Fig. 1, when individuals explore relationships, like friendship, marriage, they are ready to make commitments to others. Ability to form and maintain relationships, engaging in caring and love will manifest in further relation at work and family life, if failing on this stage can experience isolation.

Gillibrand, R., Lam, V. & O'Donnell, V.L., (2016). *Developmental psychology* edition. Harlow, England: Pearson 2016. Moodle Psychology in Health and Social care, UWTSD, Reading list, essential.

Gillibrand, Lam & O'Donnell (2016), has given me a larger view on Erikson's theory, as understanding deeper thinking and behaviour of Middle Adulthood – Generativity vs Stagnation, and elderly at Maturity – Ego integrity vs Despair. In order to emerge from these stages with a sense of self, individuals need to engage in creative work, serving the society, as well as raising a family, helps on creating a sense of Generativity and Ego integration. On the other hand, those who suffered separation and not engaging in creative work will face stagnation and at a later age depression and despair.

Gillibrand (2016) also emphasize with the idea of continuous learning, at Maturity stage older should engage in activities, arts, painting, dancing, in order to maintain wellbeing. Getting involved in social activities keeps individual occupied, learning and developing until death. Chapter 2 of the book made me realise that Piaget ignored the school stages and that we are a signature of socialising and environment.

James, I., (2020). *Meeting the Needs of People with Dementia Living in Care Homes during Covid-19*. Available at: [Meeting the Needs of People with Dementia Living in Care Homes during Covid-19 - YouTube](#). (Accessed: 20 June 2021).

Watching the video above has enabled me to understand the eight fundamental needs elderly have, and these are: physical comfort, safety, love, self-esteem, control, touch, fun and occupation. The staff in care homes allowed visits in garden during Covid-19, with social distancing in place to maintain their physical needs, also encouraged the residents to wash their hands regularly in order to feel safe. Care homes have been using technology so the old people can keep in touch with their families, and by treating them with respect and compassion increase their self-esteem.

Kavanagh, R., (2021). *Psychology in Health and Social Care*. Internal UWTSD Annotated Bibliography. Unpublished.

By attending Kavanagh (2021) classes I have expanded my knowledge about human behaviour and thinking development across the Lifespan. The topic I emphasize most, was Maturity stage, as it has given me a larger view of how people think and action at that stage, now I am able to be more patient with elderly, understand their thinking and respect them even more. As well as every human being in this world, special children and vulnerable adults. Kavanagh (2021) did make me feel motivated to do more research in order to understand human development across the Lifespan and it has helped me to create a sense of safeguarding others. Another important fact that Kavanagh (2021) shared with us in that the baby's brain will start develop from the womb, and outside factors can stop or delay brain development, like caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, stress that the mother is exposed to can have a serious impact on child development.

Lumen, (2021). *Lifespan Development. Human Development*. Available at:

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wmopen-lifespandevelopment/chapter/human-development/>.

(Accessed: 20 June 2021).

According to Lumen, Img.3, humans pass through physical, cognitive and psychosocial development across the lifespan. Physical development is important in every stage of the life, like nutrition, habits, weight, exercise, keeping a healthy and active lifestyle is important at any age.

Cognitive development stands for our mental operation stages, like Piaget suggested that changes occur at unique and specific age, for example a child on preoperational stage is not able to think critical and concrete as a child in concrete operational stage. And this have been proved by science, example of one exercise our lecturer Kavanagh (2021) shared with us in class, was a little girl at Pre-operational stage who was given one full biscuit and another one split into two and she was asked which one has more, and she was saying the two part has more. While the same exercise was experienced on a child at Concrete operational stage the answer was that they are equal, as they can think logically and understand conservation. Cognitive development it increases with age and becoming wisdom, experience and memories.

Psychosocial development is part of our emotions that are early formed, from Infancy stage when the new-born forms a sense of attachment and trust towards the caregiver and develops in time according to experiences, social interactions, relationships and personality.

Marcia, J., (2021). *Erikson Stages of Psychosocial Development & High School Students*. Available at:

<https://zan13.wordpress.com/about/> (Accessed: 20 June 2021).

I would like to say that I have completely enjoy reading this article as I discover some interesting facts about Erik Erikson (1902-1994), Img.1, he was a pupil of Sigmund Freud, another philosopher, as well as the first psychoanalytic child in Boston. Marcia (2021) also highlighted adolescence as the stage we start developing. At this stage individuals will start thinking about what education they want to follow, career and life aspirations. Erikson called Adolescence – Identity vs Role confusion, because at this stage individuals also explore independence, they are creating a self-identity, if are not allowed to follow their goals and be independent, are risking role confusion, being unable to understand their role in the world, leading to isolation and stagnation at later age. This article is credible and reliable as is backed up with facts and well recognised theories.

The Open University of Hong Kong, (2016). *Cognitive Development During Childhood*. Available at: <http://www.opentextbooks.org.hk/ditatopic/26934>(Accessed: 20 June 2021).

The open textbook offered by University of Hong Kong explains how children assimilate and accommodate with shape, size, colour, learn the difference between them, in our case between a zebra and horse, Img.2, Piaget sustained that child do not passively just learn, but constantly asking and memorizing information, for example children always asking, “Mommy what’s that?”, either if you have told them before, they will keep asking until they assimilate the information and accommodate with the topic. The most important aspect that Piaget stated in his theory is that changes occur at “unique and distinct stages”.

Another aspect that Piaget sustained in his theory and is quite true is the sensori-motor stage when the child learns the object permanence. For example, showing a baby a toy and then hiding it, they will believe is gone, only when arriving by age of 1 they will learn that the object exists even if they do disappear.

CONCLUSION

Summarizing the concepts, we can clearly see the importance of each stage as well as their impact in individual’s life at a later age. Erikson, as Piaget agreed with idea that changes occur at unique and different age. However, according to Erikson there are obstacles to overcome in order to be a well contributed member of society, in case of failing on overcoming the obstacles individuals will find it hard to find their role into the world, also environment plays an important role in person development across the lifespan. (Marcia, 2021)

On the other hand, Piaget disagree with the idea that environment influence child development and he sustained that child would develop through assimilation and accommodation while changes occur at each stage. However, Lumen (2021) suggest that physical, cognitive and psychosocial development are all important across the lifespan in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

