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Bianca Sanfilippo

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REFLECTIVE REPORT

Assessment 2

Ignacio SAVE - 2133947

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Introduction

In this report, I discuss developmental psychology, firstly focusing on the 8 stages theory in a human lifespan published in 1950 by Erik Erikson, the humanistic theory of psychosocial development. I also analyse the social learning theory made by Frederic Skinner, known as the behaviorist theory that prioritizes conditioning reinforcement after a certain stimulus, and how this has effected and affected my life. Consequently including an overview of how knowledge of these theories can help me evolve professionally and work more effectively in my career.

Reflection on Erik Erikson's psycho-social theory

Mapping and understanding the brain and its functions, has been one of the main objectives in the last century, boosted by the industrial revolution, the need to identify typical and atypical patterns of behaviours or normative development, maturation, the aging process, learning, and idiographic development were in the arising (Mcleod, 2023). Deviating from the famous and traditional psychosexual theory of Sigmund Freud, according to Harvard (2023),

Stage	Basic Conflict	Important Events	Key Questions to be answered	Outcome
Infancy (0 to 18 months)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Feeding/ Comfort	Is my world safe?	Children develop a sense of trust when caregivers provide reliability, care and affection. A lack of this will lead to mistrust.
Early Childhood (2 to 3)	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training/ Dressing	Can I do things by myself or need I always rely on others?	Children need to develop a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence. Success leads to feeling of autonomy, failure results in feelings of shame and doubt.
Preschool (3 to 5)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Exploration/ Play	Am I good or bad?	Children need to begin asserting control and power over the environment. Success in this state leads to a sense of purpose. Children who try to exert too much power experience disapproval, resulting in a sense of guilt.
School Age (6 to 11)	Industry vs. Inferiority	School/ Activities	How can I be good?	Children need to cope with new social and academic demands. Success leads to a sense of competence, while failure results in feeling of inferiority.
Adolescence (12 to 18)	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Social Relationships/ Identity	Who am I and where am I going?	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
Young Adult (19 to 40)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Intimate Relationships	Am I loved and wanted?	Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65)	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Work and Parenthood	Will I provide something of real value?	Adults need to create or nurture things that will outlast them, often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people. Success leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment, while failure results in shallow involvement in the world.
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Identity vs. Despair	Reflection on life	Have I lived a full life?	Older adults need to look back on life and feel a sense of fulfillment. Success at this state leads to a feeling of wisdom, while failure results in regret, bitterness, and despair.

Erik Erikson's humanistic theory of psychosocial development identifies that the brain continues to develop after childhood, he also insists that the development of personality is defined by the perception and the outcome of existentialist crises. He believed that each of the stages of his theory was identified by the resolution of a contradictory emotional disposition, classified as a good outcome, adaptive or syntonic, where the optimal outcome

of a particular stage is successfully achieved, and a bad outcome, maladaptive or dystonic when the individual fails to succeed the stage (Psychologynoteshq, 2021; Gross, 2015, p.628).

According to Lawrence in 2023, this theory is fundamental to be considered, it has been an important determinant in developmental psychology for the last 70 years. Although it defines precise and relevant stages, as life-long span, they can have at a certain point a level of elitism, as Erikson intends to define as a healthy mind with healthy outcomes to his perception, which to many can be categorized as an American white male, medium socio-economic class and thus, an optimal or advantageous quality of nurture and options, others consider that positive or healthy outcomes come from many different variants of life circumstances, religion, gender, socio-economic status, family conditions, also different cultures recognize different life stages of development and more traditional ways to reinforce their legacy. Is at the same time considered a little imprecise by some critics, that insist that the theory is focused on childhood and that adult stages are broader in understanding when more or different stages could be integrated.

The personal impact of behaviourism in my life

To all human beings, the most basic learning method is associating stimuli and conditioning their outcomes. As Kendra explains in 2022, Frederic Skinner came up with the behaviorist theory, where he proposed that human conditioning of learning is established with reinforcement or punishment of a particular stimulus of each individual action. According to Pressbooks (n.d.), positive reinforcement is added to increase behavior and negative reinforcement is when an undesirable stimulus must be removed to increase the behavior. On the other hand, there is positive punishment, when an undesirable stimulus is added to decrease a behavior and negative punishment when an aversive stimulus is removed also to decrease the behavior.

We all naturally react to this phenomenon, so much so that we do not even realize how far this conditioning goes and its omnipresence, and how this can define or shape our lives, as human, socio-emotional beings with a need to be socially accepted, these conditions are essential. From an early age, we start to be exposed to these conditions, a simple smile or an angry face, green or red, a tic or a cross, high or low school marks, a bar of chocolate or one week without games, praise or refusal, acceptance or disapproval in a broader sense.

There are benefits to this learning theory, as we better understand it we can apply it to our benefit, in order to communicate to others what they need to know to help assimilate the value and outcome of their actions. This not only helps others but ourselves too, in

expressing our desire for outcomes we manage to reduce social conflict. Contrarily, for some people this type of conditioning instead of being helpful guidance to social conventions, eliminates the maturity and individualism of action, having no other reason to do it than emotional reward or recognition, some people have been so exposed to this reinforcement, that tends to depend on it in decision making, and without this reinforcement, tend to lose motivation, intention, identity, direction or have the wrong ambitions or objectives.

As Erikson's Theory explains, in the second stage of psychosocial development, around the age of two we start showing signs of autonomy or doubt, and as the theory proposes, the dystonic disposition will tend to mark a dependency of a conditioned response along the lifetime of the individual. As a consequence of being maybe the only truth, at least in cognitive perception, this wrongdoing, can with long-term exposure, be so natural that people even protect this dystonic outcome as something normal or congruent, and fail to succeed in the third or fourth stage of Kohlberg's stages of moral development, as Practical Psychology (2023) explains.

In my particular experience, I have received a very authoritarian education, where Skinner's Theory was applied to me all the time, but was never explained to me, and thus, unbeknown to me, I was creating a sort of dependency on others in my own decision-making and developed an attitude of an attention seeker in order to get that conditioned response that will reinsure the feedback of my actions, and thus my reaction depended on it, also encouraged a deficiency on dreams or aims setting caused by the negative reinforcement received from a very young age. Unfortunately, ignorance is installed until knowledge is reached, and thanks to this module, I started to analyse behaviourism and manage now to have a better understanding of these psychological nuances.

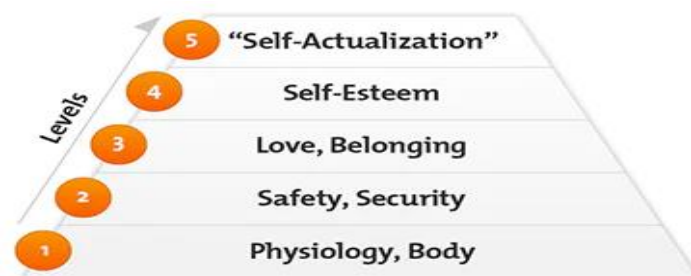
Application of psychological theories in professional life

Having the knowledge of all of these theories together makes a great difference professionally as a health practitioner. As a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, these theories and studies are not just helpful to fulfil the skills set of requirements to do the job, they all are essential to fully understand and master to effectively comprehend all possible circumstances and to be effective as a Therapist, to accurately analyse and identify what ethical resolution is required to be considered or implemented, to obtain the most syntonetic outcome possible of any professional and psychological engagement.

If all Health Services are prompted to be centred on service users, Psychologists are required to put in more care when supporting service users to deal with their psychological

affections. Is very important to consider all ethical and public acts, and to respect each service user and health practitioner, applying these theories will make a difference in working with effectiveness.

More objectively, having these nuances in consideration will allow me to understand that for example, a homeless person is less interested or willing to strive, not because he does not want to be in a more comfortable living condition, but because as Maslow's hierarchy needs pyramid suggest that psychological needs are required to be insured first, as a secure please to live and have their belongings and can eat, have a wash, go to the toilet (MindTools, 2023).



Similarly important are Kohlberg's stages of moral development in understanding how people are mature, how they might reason as individuals, and how they relay to others, as Practical Psychology published in 2023 over Kohlberg's theory that, age can approximately predict the outcome of a reaction to particular circumstances, where a wide list of possible outcomes are probable, children will have a tendency of response different to some adolescents, and more so to some adults.

Kohlberg's Moral Stages		
Level and Age	Stage	What determines right and wrong?
Preconventional Up to the age of 9	Punishment & Obedience	Right and wrong defined by what they get punished for. If you get told off for stealing then obviously stealing is wrong
	Instrumental-Relativist	Similar, but right and wrong is now determined by what we are rewarded for, and by doing what others want. Any concern for others is motivated by selfishness.
Conventional Most adolescents and adults	Interpersonal concordance	Being good is whatever pleases others. The child adopts a conformist attitude to morality. Right and wrong are determined by the majority.
	Law and order	Being good now means doing your duty to society. To this end we obey laws without question and show a respect for authority. Most adults do not progress past this stage.
Postconventional:1 0 to 15% of the over 20s.	Social contract	Right and wrong now determined by personal values, although these can be over-ridden by democratically agreed laws. When laws infringe our own sense of justice we can choose to ignore them.
	Universal ethical principle	We now live in accordance with deeply held moral principles which are seen as more important than the laws of the land.

Last but not least, when interacting with children two famous theories are to be regarded, one is Piaget's cognitive stages of development, which are focused on infancy, which intends to explain that the sequence of the stages of his theory cannot be skipped, the length of the stages are rigid, which are determined by new intellectual competences and abilities (WebMD, 2023). Also important is Bandura's social learning theory, according to Sutton in 2021 we all learn to interact by imitating and observing others, and the more susceptible to this learning method are the children, and when children are exposed to certain behavior they might and will learn something new willingly or not. In becoming a Cognitive Behavioral Therapist, getting prepared to not become a danger, to leave a good example and a professional approach, we all should pay attention to the message we spread and the behavior we install in others.

Piaget's Cognitive Stages

Sensorimotor	Birth to 18/24 months	Acknowledge the immediate environment, and focus on the senses.
Preoperational	18/24 months to 7 years	Develop language, memory, and imagination.
Concrete operational	7 to 11 years	Logical and reasoning, better awareness of external events.
Formal operational	11 to adulthood	Systematic thinking and abstract conceptualism.

Conclusion

This module has helped me to understand Developmental Psychology, analyse the different theories that explain psychological reasoning, determinants, the evolution of ourselves and others, and also the keys to identifying and better assessing in a clinical and professional manner, not only applying these codes at work but at home and at any required moment. Is important to understand that this knowledge is not finite, we must keep on studying and stay actualised of novelty in the field coming out and not forget we are working in Health and Social Care to help others and we must excel in understanding how the mind and behavior work.

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