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TASK 1

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Introduction

Psychology is the scientific study of how the mind works and how it influences the way a person behaves, ranging from thoughts to communication, and emotions. (Brazier, 2018) Throughout a man's lifespan, psychology plays a great role. To understand the role of psychology in shaping the behaviour of an individual, it will be appropriate to look at some psychological theories that focus on lifespan.

In this essay, I will be looking at the adolescence stage of life with a few branches of psychology, such as developmental, clinical, cognitive, and evolutionary psychology.

a) Developmental: This aspect deals with the changes that occur in a person through his lifespan from infancy, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. It helps us understand how humans go about learning and adapting. (McLeod, 2017).

b) Clinical: This aspect looks at personal development through theory, science and practice to figure out problems such as mental illness and give solutions.

c) Cognitive: This aspect deals with how a person can develop mentally by getting information, processing such information, and storing it. In essence, it is about how they think, learn and remember. (Brazier, 2018).

d) Evolutionary: this aspect looks at how human behaviour, such as language has adjusted over time and evolved to what it is now. Psychologists who look at evolution believe that traits in humans are adaptive and that explains why humans have been able to survive over the years. (Brazier, 2018)

Adolescence: This period of development takes place between childhood and adulthood. Within this period, there is a significant amount of physical development, an increase in cognitive ability, and greater social interaction. (Alle and Waterman, 2019)

In adolescence, there are three broad stages, namely; Early adolescence (Ages 10 to 13), Middle Adolescence (Ages 14 to 17), and Late Adolescence (18 to 21).

Early Adolescence (Ages 10 to 13): At this stage the following developments take place; a) Children grow more quickly, such as hair growth around the armpit and genitals, breast development in girls, and growth of the testicles in boys. They become more curious and prone to anxiety. They see things straight as either right or wrong and they tend to be egocentric. They begin to seek their privacy and crave independence.

Middle Adolescence (Ages 14 to 17): At this stage their physical development continues, these include; voice change in boys, regular monthly periods in females, and they begin to get interested in sexual relationships and develop a tendency to argue with their parents.

Late Adolescence (18 to 21): At this stage full physical development must have been attained and full adult height attained. They can think before they act.

Erik Erikson

Adolescence age, as reflected by Erik Erikson, is a modified version of Sigmund Freud's psychosexual theory. He looks more at the social nature of a human's development than his sexual nature. He states that adolescents face the task of identity versus role confusion. (Cherry, 2020) His theory lays much importance to the social outlook of development and it is referred to as the psychosocial theory. His theory sees the drive to achieve competence in particular aspects of our lives as the main motivating factor, it is when we achieve this competence that we now feel a sense of achievement.

He looked at eight stages of development in a human's lifespan. Every stage has a task it has to overcome. Every task Resolved, gives a sense of fulfilment, and failure creates a feeling of loss. For adolescence (12 to 18 years), Erikson reasons that the main task facing them is deciphering between identity versus confusion. Successful adolescents at this stage come up with a strong identity and they hold on to their convictions and values in the face of all odds. Whereas, those adolescents who are unable to create an identity for themselves end up being confused with very low self-esteem and unsure of where their future lies.

Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

Jean Piaget was a developmental psychologist of Swiss descent. His studies were conducted in the early 20th century. He came up with the theory of cognitive development. This theory suggests that children go through four stages of development which shows growth in intelligence and their thoughts. It advances that the development of the child is hinged on his natural growth and his environment. He sees the adolescent years as the period from the age of 12 and this falls at the fourth stage of his cognitive development theory, this is the 'Formal Operational Stage'.(Cherry, 2020)

Dr. Saul McLeod in his article in SimplyPsychology posits that as children grow older, their intelligence changes. He went further to state that the child has to devise or build a mental model of the world besides his cognitive development. (McLeod, 2020)

Piaget's Four Stages

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Sensorimotor	Birth to 18 to 24 months	Object permanence
Preoperational	2 to 7 years old	Symbolic thought
Concrete operational	7 to 11 years	Logical thought
Formal operational	11 to adulthood	Scientific reasoning

The formal operational stage: This stage is the fourth of Piaget's theory, it covers the ages 11 and above which is the age of adolescence through to adulthood. Piaget sees this stage as a period when a person builds upon the knowledge they have acquired. Adolescents begin to have abstract thinking and no longer rely on manipulation. They solve problems in a coordinated and ordered way rather than experimenting. They use more logic and can reason deductively, that is working with ideas.

His theory has proved to be comprehensive, coherent, and consistent. It has had so much influence and impact on education and psychology. It has facilitated a great interest amongst parents, teachers, and childcare workers to look into the development of children.

Criticisms

- 1) Underestimation of Children's Intellectual Abilities. He did not take into cognizance young children's cognitive ability.
- 2) It has been said that Piaget's theory did not take into consideration the effects of the cultural and social groups that students belong to can have on them.
- 3) Unscientific Methods: Piaget's theory was not backed by statistical analysis; it lacked control and the sample size was very small.

Cognitive development in adolescents: This occurs from ages 12 to 18 when the child's ability to think and reason begins to grow. Their thought process becomes more robust and complex. They now do abstract thinking, create subjective questions and ideas, weigh or look at the differences in ideas or views. Indeed they think about the methods and ways of thinking. They deviate from concrete thinking to formal logical ways of doing things by creating their views of the world, they begin to question authority, and analyse more, including influencing relationships with others.

(Adler and Turley, 2021)

Emotional development in adolescents: At this stage, they tend to exhibit staunch emotions and inconsistent moods at various times, which tend to lead to conflict within the child. The child becomes more sensitive to others and tries to understand people's emotions. They also become more self-conscious and about themselves by comparing themselves with their friends. Their decision-making ability is being shaped and therefore, coming to terms with the fact that actions or inactions have consequences. (Social and emotional changes: 9-15 years, 2018)

Behaviour in adolescence: The key trait of adolescents is the craving for independence, they start questioning and even flouting rules. Parents at this stage are expected to guide rather than control their adolescents' actions. Adolescents who get showered with affection and love from their parents are less likely to get involved in risky behaviours. (Levy, 2020). Several factors aid the likely risk of violence in adolescents, these include

- ☐ Substance abuse or drinking
- ☐ Poverty
- ☐ Access to firearms
- ☐ Developmental problems
- ☐ Gang membership
- ☐ Fighting or bullying
- ☐ Running away from home

Research Studies

I will be looking at three recent works focusing on health and social care.

1) In their work titled Hindsight 2020, Lessons on setting targets in health and social care, (Palmer, Buckingham, Crellin and Oung, 2020) looked at the government's planned investment of £10 billion extra cash into the NHS and social care between the years 2015 and 2020. It included huge plans such as employing more GPs, bringing health and care services together and making it easy to reach psychological therapies, and capping social care costs.

After five years, it can be observed that the plans of the government have received varying degrees of success in the following areas: In Social care, not much commitment has been seen. In general practice, the number of qualified GPs has fallen. On a positive note, citizens can see GPs seven days a week from 8 am to 8 pm. Waiting time in A&E for about 81% attended to within four hours. But subsequently, this target has been dwindling. The digitalisation of health and care records was expected to be completed by 2020 but by 2019, barely 12% of

departments were ready. In mental health cases, there was an increase in access to therapies from 15% to 25%, and even though it fell short of the expected target, it showed a marked improvement.

From the above, one can see that there was a mixed balance between the set goal and the level achieved.

It can be said that over-ambitious targets should be scrapped by the government when making decisions. Some of the set targets have been moved forward while others have been dropped. The study went further to come up with the following recommendations:

- a) Government should be making achievable targets. Rather than setting maximum time for A&E, they should rather look at the average time across patients.
- b) Targets should be transparent and should be published in annual reports.
- c) Making sure that the organisation is held accountable and does the right thing that tallies with the goal.

2) In another research paper by Baxter et al., 2018 titled, 'The effect of integrated care: a systematic review of UK and international evidence' . They looked at the need for health care systems response to the request for integrated models of care delivery in the UK to see if it will work as it has in other countries where it was practiced.

In this work, they looked at the impact of integration between health care services and its outcome in such areas as, effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of care. They reviewed the impact of integrated models in health and social care service delivery in some developed countries to arrive at their results here in the UK.

Their research found out that there was improved quality of care as evidenced by increased patients satisfaction, enhanced access to care though, the research did not delve much into the overall effects on service users.

The work concluded that integrated care could improve patients satisfaction, open up access to service and increase the quality of service. The cost of service delivery was not made very clear but the positive findings of enhanced access may present a glimmer of hope to those services finding it hard to cope with spiralling demand. This outcome tallies with the recent agitation that the NHS cannot cope with the expanding financial demand being placed on it without changing the face of health and social care delivery being given by it.

3) In a research work published by BMC Medical Research Methodology, titled Enabling research in care homes: an evaluation of a national network of research-ready care homes, Sue L. Davies et al., 2014 paid particular interest in creating awareness and increasing the participation of care homes in research.

The research was carried out with a two-way, mixed-method approach which first looked at the basics of fresh and recent studies in conjunction with the National Institute for Health Research portfolio. They conducted interviews with researchers working for the Dementia and Neurodegenerative Disease Research Network (DeNDRoN) and care home managers, to explore their experiences. The work found out that at the initial stage, most care homes were run by non-profit organisations without nurses among their staff to take care of old people. The majority of residents in care homes were females as of March 2012 and most of them were depressed. The 13,134 residential care homes in England at this time had 247,824 beds and 4,672 nursing homes with 215,463 beds. The residents had a wide range of health care needs.

They came up with a two-phased conclusion. The first revealed that, though the number of studies involving care homes was increasing, they are still too small. The second pointed out that there was a need to increase the recruitment and training of researchers for care homes.

In conclusion, one can see that adolescence deals with a period in humans, when they become conscious of how they are perceived by others and also become emboldened by the influence of peer groups. On the other hand, the adolescent may show signs of alienation from his peers as a result of being ridiculed by them. He may see himself as not being fit for purpose and end up lacking confidence in himself.

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