

Jean Piaget

1896-1980



INFANCY LIFE STAGE DEVELOPMENT 0-3 YEARS



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Ddrnodod Ddaer Sant
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*Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
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Assessment 1: Group Presentation

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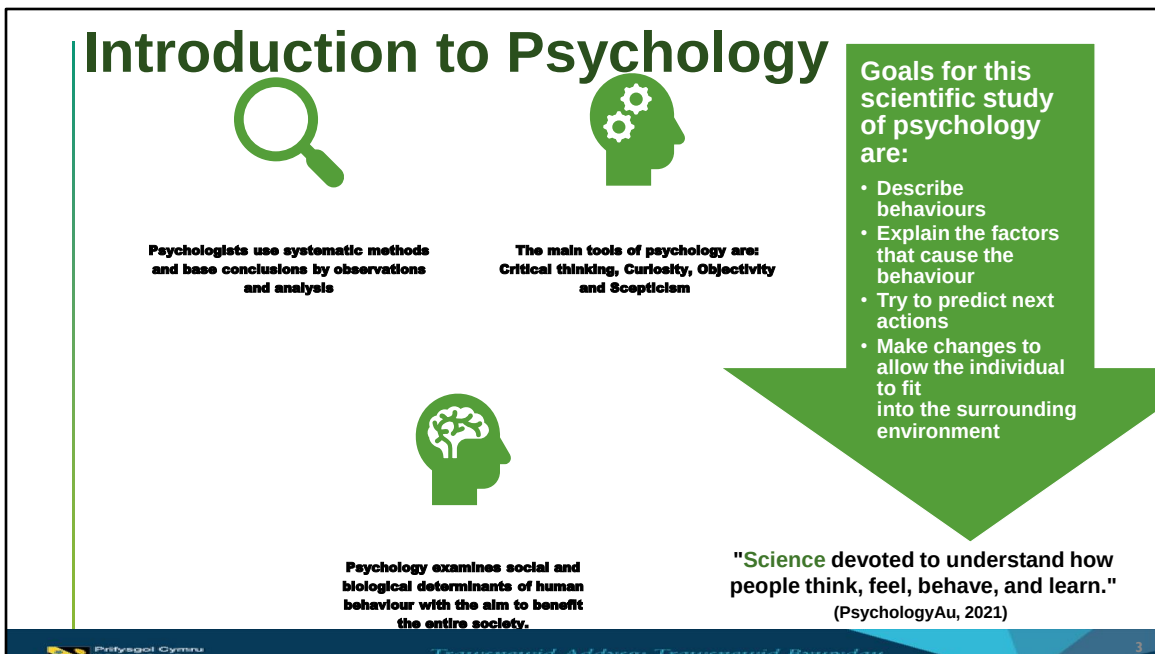
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Topic: Introduction to Piaget and Cognitive Development

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Topic: Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory



Psychology is usually considered a science to help individuals with psychological problems. Generically people think that psychology is needed when individuals are suffering from behavioural or social problems. However, psychology is definitely more than that- it is a Science that works with every individual and every stage of life with the aim to create predictable mind-related activity. Psychology is born with philosophies and evolved during every era: from Aristotele and his associationism, to Descater's and his "therefore I am" till the dark era in the Middle ages where demons were the mind controllers. In 1879 Whilelm Wundt decided to create the first Institute for Experimental Psychology in Germany and make Psychology become a proper Science based on empirical methods that observed and processed thought and feeling.

Psychology is a very wide science that has various branches and theories such as

developmental, experimental, educational, cognitive and many more. In each branch scientists have created different theories during the last century: the most famous one is the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud. All these theories, have the purpose of being based to understand people minds and actions, and they are created to inspire future research and adapt with the time in the current environment.

Psychology plays a huge part in our society, especially on the development of new cultural and social environment (such as social media platform, new work professions and new wellness habits) and is indirectly in the lives of everyone. So, it can be said that psychology is beneficial for the human species to fit in the always-evolving environment that we live in. (PsychologyAu, 2021)

Developmental Psychology

"How people learn and adapt to changes over time" (GoodTherapy, 2021)

Stages	Prenatal
	Early Childhood
	Middle Childhood
	Adolescence
	Early Adulthood
	Middle Adulthood
	Older Adults

Cognitive Changes

Physical

Cognitive

Social

Intellectual

Emotional

Psychology Debates

Nature vs. Nurture

Continuity vs. Discontinuity

Universal vs. Context-Specific

"The principles of normative development helps professionals to spot potential problems and provide early intervention for better outcomes" (Cherry, 2020)

Developmental psychology is a branch of science that focuses on human development and how changes are affecting behaviours and makes individuals adapt to changes. This specific theme was treated by different psychologists like Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget and Albert Bandura. They all focused on specific changes. Physical, Cognitive, Social, Intellectual and Emotional with the aim to optimise theories and use them in every individual practical life. People normally seek advice to a developmental psychologist when an activity in the lifespan stages does need assistance. (Cherry, 2020)

There are different stages of human life. The prenatal is the period before birth, where developmental psychology looks at primary reflexes.

The early childhood is the infancy period where specialists look at natural growth

goals, such as nutrition and facial expressions.

The middle childhood is defined mainly by physical increase and social initialisation.

Adolescence is the period where humans are more interested to create their own identity.

The early adulthood is the stage where people are trying to stabilise their social interaction and use their intellectual skills to build their future.

Older adulthood is considered a period of reflection where the physical and intellectual changes can affect individuals lives.

Theories had to go through different investigations to derive their theories.

Nature vs. Nurture: Some scientists believed that you are born with ideas and thoughts. Others believed that the mind is empty to start with.

Continuity vs. Discontinuity: There are also different beliefs as continuity can affect changes gradually while discontinuity theories are based on sudden changes, changes that are happening without patterns and short terms.

Universal vs. Context-Specific: Some theorists believed that the changes are universal and applied to all children, others believed that the changes are related to the context in which humans live. (Cherry, 2020)

Introduction to Infancy Life Stage Development

(FlowVella,(2021)



Infancy Life Stage Development is a process of infant growth which starts from when they are in their mother's womb until the age of 3.

A new-born doesn't know how to speak, eat or play in their first stages of development, it depends on their parents to feed, play, give love and attention so they can develop well through nurturing.

From 2 months to 3 years the babies have the ability to absorb things from their surroundings to help them to develop.

There are **cognitive changes** which infants develop: **Language Development, Sensory Development and Social Development.**

(Vedantu, n.d)

Infancy life stage development- The infancy life stage development begins from the time of conception to the age of 3 years old. In the mother's womb when the head and upper body of the baby start to form the babies cognitive development begins. Babies can hear noises around the mother and recognise their mothers voice from the womb. When the lower body of the infant becomes strong enough they learn to sit up around 3-6 months. Approximately from 6-9 months, they are strong enough to start to crawl. From 9-18 months the baby starts to walk and by 2 years they are running.

Nurturing: "Action of raising or caring" (Free Dictionary, 2021)

(Medicalnewstoday, 2019)

Infancy Cognitive Development



Cognitive development is the way children develop through motor skills such as physical skills, social/emotional skills, cognitive (brain development) and communication. The children adapt and develop cognitive maturity around 2 years old, the essential steps taken from brain development starts from the age of 2 in the Infancy Life Stage Cognitive Process. Every moment or activity they experience they remember and then use and copy. (Boyd, Denise Robert, 2019)

Language Development: Babies develop their language by hearing, they take in information then process what they hear through sounds and their sight.

Sensory Development: Babies develop through using sensory objects. They learn how to touch, hear, see and feel.

Social Development: Babies are born to be social because in the first months they start to take information from the people around them, they learn how to interact with people by responding through smiling, gestures, mimicking and facial expressions. (Scholastic, 2021)



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Cognitive: "Activity related to thinking, reasoning, or remembering". (FreeDictionary, 2021)

Cognitive Development: "The developing child builds cognitive structures—in other words, mental “maps,” schemas, or networked concepts for understanding and responding to physical experiences within his or her environment." (FindAnyAnswer, 2020)

As an infant goes through cognitive changes they start to do things by themselves e.g. by learning to recognise their parents, learn to suck milk, understand other people around them and solve problems (to stack bricks, form lego, make puzzles).

Language Development: The babies mimic and copy movements using their mouths, tongues and hearing senses. They copy what they see and hear from other

people so that they can make their own sounds and communicate. The main thing that the baby needs to be able to communicate well is their brains, which gives them the instincts to mirror, copy and mimic facial expressions and movements.

If the carer observes their baby and notices any developmental problems or delays (brain, mouth, hearing, facial expressions...) the carer must make a consultation with a paediatrician as soon as possible. The more the parent or family interacts with the baby, the more he/she develops communication skills.

Sensory Development: From birth babies senses develop further, as they can smell their mother, taste their mothers milk, touch their mother through skin to skin contact and recognise their mothers and fathers voice through their hearing senses. From birth the infants have blurred vision, by the age of 3 months, their vision is formed fully and they are able to follow their parents with their eyes clearly (Infobloom, 2021).

Social Development: "Social development can be summarised as the process of organised human energies and activities at higher levels to achieve greater results". (Scholastic, 2021)

A child develops socially through play activities e.g through shadow experiments. Shadow experiments are educational activities made in pre-school/nursery for infants to teach them how light moves and changes during the day. Carers like to see how infants react to determine their development. Normally when infants under 8 months see a shadow they feel fear, because they don't understand where the image is coming from, but as they develop and carers show them shadows can be made into games, they find shadows fun and no longer feel fearful of them.

A shadow is made when an object, plant, animal, or person is blocking the light, e.g. if a child plays outside and looks at the floor when a cloud/object is covering the sun they are going to see a shadow reflection of themselves. Another example of shadow experiments is when you use an object with a natural source of light through a wall

and make hand gestures with it, like the shape of a bird, dog, rabbit moving.

Infancy Emotional Patterns

(Steemit, 2018)



"The first years last a lifetime."
(urbanchildinstitute, 2021)

At birth babies show two different types of emotional responses which are **attraction** towards situations that help them feel comfortable and **withdrawal** from unpleasant circumstances.

Infants have no control over how they feel, they display **feelings of interest, distress, disgust and happiness** from birth, which they communicate through **facial expressions, crying and body positions**.

Emotional attachment is a bond between a child and the adults who are looking after them. Children form this bond from birth which helps them get closer with their carer's and depend on them for support.

Infants begin to display **temper tantrums** from 9-12 months when they don't get their way and they begin to develop **separation anxiety** when they meet unfamiliar faces.

Emotional development shapes an infant from age 2-3 years **socially** e.g. when you teach a child to share and care, they will show social behaviours of caring and kindness towards their peers and family members.

The experiences infants come across during their early years affect how their brain develops and they display their emotions accordingly.

At every stage of infants lives they change and develop different ways of expressing themselves, the patterns infants develop depends on the types of attention they get as it will help them not develop any problems, socially and emotionally while they grow.

At birth to 3 months babies become familiar with the people who are caring for them by engaging with them through smiling or responding by interaction.

3 to 6 months babies tend to be more active by communicating through their smiles, they can also respond to interaction during playtime.

Age 6 to 9 month infants begin to explore because they are curious about the things they can do by themselves and also they begin to understand that when they cannot see anyone it doesn't mean they are not around.

9 to 12 months at this age so many things fall into place, infants begin to imitate their caregiver's actions, they develop a **temperament**, which is the beginning of a child's personality which interprets the way they respond to their adults or

towards a stranger. There are three stages of temperament children fall into: easy, slow to warm up and difficult e.g. children who slowly warm up or who prove to be difficult can be hesitant especially when they are surrounded with new things or strangers, they develop anxiety because they are not familiar with them.

At age **1 to 2 years** an infant begin to have self-awareness and be in control of things, they feel satisfied when they complete thing which gives them pleasure.

At **2 to 3 years** of age infant begin to have ideas of who they are and showing their feelings about how they feel, they are also aware of other people feelings (urbanchildinstitute, 2021).

Infancy Behavioural Pattern

Infants change throughout the infancy life stage, they go from being a helpless little human to developing their **language** at one years old and develop their own **personality**.

Infants develop different behavioural patterns, each month as they grow and reach each milestone. e.g. **temper tantrums, teeth grinding, thumb sucking and head banging**. (Kapoor, 2020)

Reflex action: The infant has 7 reflexes: **sucking, tonic neck, rooting, grasping, stepping, crawl reflex, Moro reflex** (when the baby moves the arm and leg). (healthofchildren, 2021)

Infants behaviours depends on the type of care they receive and the atmosphere they are in (they practically respond to the type of nurturing they receive).

Newborn babies **sleep** up to 18 hours throughout the day but wake after 4-6 hours to be fed and changed. By 2-3 months babies develop day and night routine **sleep patterns**, and once weaning has been established after 6 months, they tend to sleep through the night.

Infants can develop **behaviour problems** when children don't establish a good bed time routine or stable sleeping pattern.



Behavioural Patterns in infants develop from birth, starting as helpless little humans to 3 years, by which time their language is well developed and their personalities are flourishing.

Temper tantrums are common in most children by the age of two years, to let out their frustrations and sense of anger. The best way to deal with this situation for an adult would be to ignore the child and give them time to calm themselves down rather than get angry or respond negatively as this could lead to aggravate the toddler further and make the situation worse. The adult should give the child options and choices to help the child feel like they are still in control to be able to resolve the situation.

Teeth grinding can be associated with day anxiety, this anxiety might occur due to

circumstances the child is not familiar with. Reassurance helps reduces teeth grinding, the infants caregiver has to ensure the child is relaxed, comfortable and not agitated.

Every infant develops an ability to **thumb suck**, they use it as a pleasurable act to soothe themselves, especially to help them sleep.

Self-inflicting injury such as **head banging** can be damaging, it is normal for some toddlers to have this behaviour, but if they continue after the age of 5 then they will have to be referred to a specialist for further investigation of possible developmental disorder e.g. autism. (Kapoor, 2020)

There are 7 **reflex behavioural patterns** that an infant physically develops, they are essential patterns which start from birth for a newborn to be able to survive, which they utilise for the first few months:

- 1. Sucking:** An infant begins to suck when a mother's nipple, finger or milk bottle is placed in an infant's mouth, they are able to suck and swallow coordinately.
- 2. Tonic neck:** An infant turns their head to one side, they stretch the arm to that side and bend the other arm slightly at the elbow, which they continue to do until 5-7 months.
- 3. Rooting:** The adult touches the infant's cheek to make them alert to believe they are about to get milk from their mother so they open their mouths and begin rooting by turning their head towards their mother.
- 4. Grasping:** An infant grasps their caregiver's finger as a reflex action until the infant reaches around 6 months.
- 5. Stepping:** The infant is held up right up until 2 months old, one of their feet lightly touches a flat surface, the infant responds by making stepping movements with both feet.
- 6. Crawling:** The infant is placed faced down on a flat surface, around 3-4 months of age and they will attempt to crawl by moving their arms and legs.

7. Moro reflex: this is a reflex caused by the infant feeling startled by a sudden shock, where they spread out their arms and bring the legs closer to their bodies. (healthofchildren, 2021)

Positive atmosphere: If the infant senses a happy atmosphere it creates positivity and the child's emotional behaviour development flourishes through this act of good nurturing.

Sleep Patterns: Infants cognitively, emotionally and physically develop through sleeping, newborns sleep between 16-18 hours a day, they wake to be fed, changed and make themselves familiar with their surroundings. By 2-3 months the infants start to establish day and night routine patterns by having a wash and having lullaby's sung by their caregivers before bed at night time to begin to develop a stable sleep routine and differentiate between night and day. After 6 months, once weaning has been established infants stomachs slightly begin to expand as they can retain more food and start to sleep throughout the night as their stomachs are well filled, establishing a full night's sleep, between 6-8 hours. If a night time routine and stable sleeping patterns aren't maintained then infants can develop behaviour problems, start to become irritable and throw temper tantrums more frequently and be very difficult to manage as they may become sleep deprived. If a child simply cannot sleep then well, it may be due to the fact they may have neurological disorders and be on the autism spectrum or ADHD and need to be referred to a child specialist for further investigations.

Introduction to Piaget and Cognitive Development



Jean Piaget was the first psychologist to make a systematic study to understand Cognitive Development in the Infancy Life Stage Process



He played a major role in 20th century developmental psychology



By observing his own 3 children he studied how infants cognitively developed and devised his own cognitive development theory



Piaget's cognitive development process theory importantly helps us to understand how an infant transfers from a sensory thinker to an abstract or a logical thinker

(Mcleod, 2020)

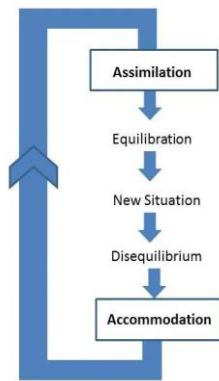
Jean Piaget was born in Switzerland 1896, he was a hard working young boy, as he had his first scientific paper published at the amazing age of just 11 years old as he worked as an assistant to psychologists Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon (developers of IQ test).

Piaget became extremely interested from the 1920s onwards in the cognitive development of children while observing his own children. He hypothesised that children's minds weren't just small forms of adult minds, as all previous psychologists thought of children to think similarly to adults yet smaller. However, Piaget was the first psychologist who actually identified that children have a different perception compared to adults, and also a very important factor was that children develop best naturally, without being taught by an adult. He achieved to prove this intellectual development theory by developing a series of 4 stages from birth to 12+.

(SimplyPsychology, 2020)

According to his findings, Piaget came to the conclusion that adults were not more intelligent than children, children think in a different way. Albert Einstein called Piaget's discovery "so simple only a genius could have thought of it." (Verywellmind, 2020)

Piaget's Assumptions



(McLeod, 2020)

According to infants experiences they build upon their own knowledge.

Infants have the ability to learn many things without any help from others.

Infants are naturally motivated learners without the need for rewards towards learning.

"Jean Piaget viewed intellectual growth as a process of adaptation (adjustment) to the world." (SimplyPsychology, 2020).

Adaptation happens through: **Continuous vs. Discontinuous:**

Schemas: Actions or mental representations of repetitive behaviour to help infants develop

Assimilation: Infants translate information into schemas they understand

Accommodation: Adjusting current shemas into new experiences

Equilibration: A balance of assimilation and accommodation to reach a balanced understanding



"When you teach a child something you take away forever, his chance of discovering it for himself."

-Jean Piaget

(Quotecites, 2020)

According to McLeod (2020) Piaget claimed that when children are born they already have a mental structure that their future learning is based on. Every new information of knowledge learned is a schema that helps children understand the world around them.

Piaget also assumed that there's a process that help children grow intellectually. This assumption is called Process of Adaptation, where children adjust to the world. The assumption has three stages including assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration that create a cycle that shows the way children learn new information.

Assimilation, the first stage is when children learn new information and try to fit the knowledge they have learned into an existing schema.

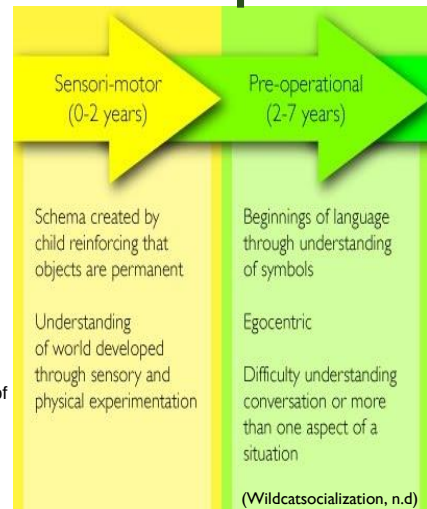
Accommodation, the second stage is when children go back to an existing schema and try to make sense of new information by adapting the schema so the information can fit it.

Equilibration, the third stage is when children learn new information and fit it into their already existing knowledge, but when they can't understand the new information and are unable to fit it as per the assimilation stage, disequilibrium occurs. This stage is what helps the learning process and by learning the new knowledge they arrive back to the accommodation stage where they adapt their existing schema to fit the new information. (SimplyPsychology, 2020)

Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

- The **Infancy Life Stage** starts from birth to 3 years.
- There are 4 stages of Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development
- Piaget's stages describe the **Theory of Cognitive Development**. In infancy this theory is how children think through logic and reasoning to help them to understand their surroundings.
- The first stage is the **Sensorimotor Stage** and is made up of 6 Substages, from 0-2 years, where an infant starts to understand the world through using their senses and actions and achieving 'Object Permanence'.
- The second stage is the **Preoperational Reasoning Stage**, in the Infancy life stage this is from 2 to 3 years, it is when an infant starts to understand the world through developing their language and form mental representations of images.
- Infants become **Egocentric** as they perceive the world from their own point of view.

(Cherry, 2019)



A child cognitively develops through interactions within their environment, throughout their ages where they develop themselves through 4 different life stages:

1. **Sensorimotor:** Birth to 2 years – Infants achieve *Object Permanence*
2. **Preoperational Reasoning:** 2 years to 6 or 7 years – Infants, young children develop a *Symbolic Thought* process
3. **Concrete Operational Stage:** 7-11 years – Children develop a *Logical* way of thinking
4. **Formal Operational Stage:** 12+ years – Adolescents form a way to *Scientifically Reason*

Sensorimotor stage: Piaget explained this stage to be a period of a remarkable amount of vast changes of development and cognitive growth. There are 6 substages

in this stage:

Substage 1: Simple Reflexes (birth to 1 month) - Infants develop their knowledge through their reflexes (grasping, rooting, sucking, startling).

Substage 2: Primary Circular Reactions (1 to 4 months) - Infants grow stronger physically and develop cognitively through developing their reflexes further by unintentionally developing pleasurable behaviours through intuition and discovery (discovering their thumb and bringing it to the mouth to suck).

Substage 3: Secondary Circular Reactions (4 to 8 months) - Infants discover that by intentionally repeating actions around them can create interesting results (shaking a rattle repetitively and hearing different noises they realise they are creating this and find these actions extremely interesting).

Substage 4: Co-ordination Circular Reactions (8 to 12 months) - Infants form mental representations- a schema of an object when they can't see them anymore, achieving "object permanence." This is when the object is taken away from them they try to find it and understand the objects still exist, through games like 'Peekaboo' where the adult hides their face and the child believes the adult has vanished and becomes upset at the thought and is startled when the adult reappears, however if the infant has reached object permanence, they realise the adult is still there when unseen and understands it's just a game. Piaget believed if a child cried and got upset when the object was taken away then *object permanence* wasn't achieved. At this point when an infant is able to achieve object permanence, they start to show signs of stranger anxiety- where they show that they feel fear and anxiety when they see unfamiliar faces.

Substage 5: Tertiary Circular Reactions (12 to 18 months) - Infants actively begin to explore ways through creating intentionally repetitive sounds and actions to get a reaction and attention through trial and error experimentation (shaking the water around from their cup to see how far it goes, banging a spoon on their high chair, to create and hear different levels of sounds, intentionally repeating the action of dropping their toy to see how far it can go and the see the adult picking it up). (Lin, 2018)

Substage 6: Beginnings of Thought (18 to 24 months) – Infants are able to begin to understand the world through mental representations by picturing an image in their minds of an object or symbolic thought (past event) instead of just understanding through their own actions (if the infant throws a ball under furniture they can perceive where they think it will come out from). (Cherry, 2019)

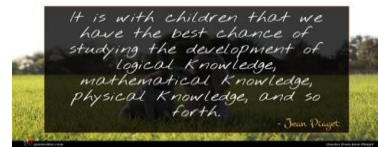
According to Piaget, for an infant to develop object permanence it is one of the most important achievements during the sensorimotor stage. The sensorimotor stage is an important foundation in the infancy life stage of development and helps a child to be able to be successful to progress into the second stage of development around the age of 2.

Preoperational Stage:

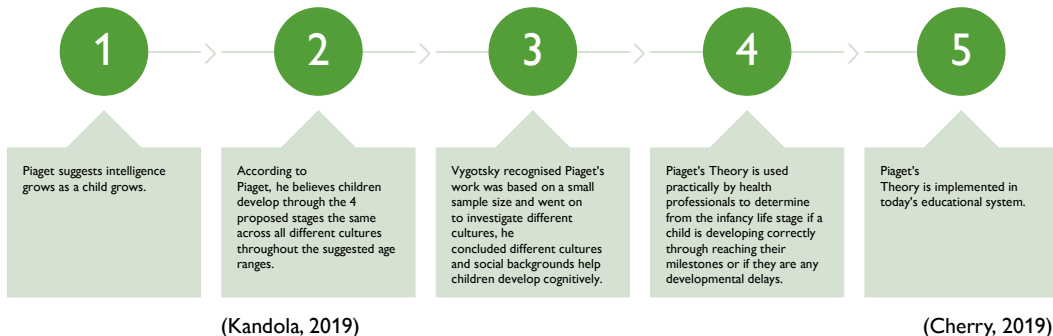
Egocentrism: Infants understand the world through their own perspective and struggle to perceive life from others perspectives.

They also start to develop a symbolic thought process as a stepping stone to develop their language, imagination and memories. (Cherry, 2019)

Piaget's Theory's Strengths, Limitations and Practical Implementations



(Quotecites, 2020)



(Kandola, 2019)

(Cherry, 2019)

"Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that intelligence changes as children grow. A child's cognitive development is not just about acquiring knowledge, the child has to develop or construct a mental model of the world."

(SimplyPsychology, 2020)

Piaget believes that children develop the same across all different cultures and go through all the stages in the same order, and develop cognitively at some point during the proposed age ranges. In my opinion, different cultures and children with special needs are factors that should have been taken into consideration as Piaget has only considered a small sample of children within Europe. This is perhaps due to lack of interaction with others globally at that time. Russian psychologist Vygotsky recognised the small sample size Piaget observed and built upon Piaget's theory by investigating children

from different cultures and realised that different cultures and social backgrounds helped them cognitively develop. (Kandola, 2019)

Piaget also, has not considered the factor of children who are born with special needs/disabilities as they will not be able to reach the proposed milestones according to the 4 stages of Piaget. This is due to the lack of recognition or acceptance of disabilities in Piaget's time period. In today's age there is a lot more awareness of disabilities.

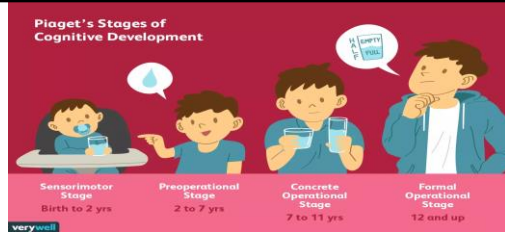
However, in today's society Piaget's cognitive development theory is used widely in the healthcare industry by healthcare professionals to determine whether a child is developing according to Piaget's findings. This theory is practically implemented to determine if there are any recognised developmental delays and is used from birth within the infancy life stage to determine if the child has reached the recommended milestones.

From this other developmental delays can be picked up and healthcare professionals can refer the child to the appropriate specialist to help them develop better e.g. speech delay, sight problems, hearing issues, autism etc.

Piaget's cognitive development theory is implemented in today's educational system and is how the educational system was structured according to Piaget's findings. (Cherry, 2019)

(Verywellmind, 2020)

Conclusion



Developmental psychology aims to develop, explain and improve the growth of every individual and is the branch of psychology that has major interaction with our everyday life: therapists and psychologists are focused into helping people to go through different stages and build individualism and identity.

During the Infancy Life Stage Development infants develop through social, language, sensory and cognitive changes using their senses: hearing, touch and sight.

Emotional and behaviour patterns develop in infants from birth and continue to flourish throughout the infancy life stage. If developmental issues occur then the infant must be referred to a child specialist.

According to Piaget, the process of Adaptation is an assumption that shows children's cognitive learning and creates a cycle between Assimilation, Accommodation and Equilibration.

Piaget developed 4 stages of Cognitive Development Theory to certainly understand how children and adults think differently and develop according to their ages.

Piaget's model overall is good as he has investigated thoroughly and looked at evidences to back his points up, but there are negative points to be considered and developed on to update his theory according to today's times.

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