

1-Describe Erickson’s developmental stages found in middle childhood. How can Erickson’s theory be useful for assessment?

According to Erik Erikson, at the age of 6-12 years a child enters the school age and is immersed in a world of school and opportunities and now have more control over their world, while learning that they can gain recognition for their accomplishments (Robbins et al., 2019). This stage Erikson refers to as “Industry versus Inferiority”, where industry means “to build” which is likely to happen when the child is encouraged in their endeavors. While inferiority is felt when a child is not encouraged or they are punished for their efforts, which ultimately can cause to the child to feel inadequate (Robbins et al., 2019).

When it comes to assessment using Erikson’s theory, the social worker is likely to get a clearer understanding of why the child or the adult behaves the way they do, through analyzing the individuals current behaviors and feelings and tying them to the different developmental stages. This I believe is useful in assessment as the social worker gets the opportunity to explore the client’s childhood, environment and interactions in order formulate an accurate and in-depth assessment of the client.

2-Discuss the significance of peer relationships in middle childhood. How can peer relationships support development in middle childhood? How can peer relationships impede development in middle childhood?

Peer relationships in middle school is very important as it provides an inimitable environment in which children can learn an array of critical social emotional skills, such as empathy, cooperation, and problem-solving skills, as well as, interpersonal skills, which in a nutshell supports development. However, while peer relationships can support positive development in

middle childhood, it can also impede development. This is likely to occur when poor peer relationships are formed, which according to the text can result in increased risk for mental health problems (Ashford et al., 2018). Additionally, children identified to be at risk because of poor peer relationship suffered disproportionately from psychiatric problems as adults (Ashford et al., 2018, pg. 262). Poor peer relationships are also associated with discomfort, anxiety, and an unwillingness to engage in environment. Therefore, peer relationships are critical for learning social skills, role-taking abilities and the beginning of a sense of group belonging (Ashford et al., 2018).

3-Discuss the development of social cognition, in particular, social role-taking and interpersonal awareness. How can social cognition function to support and/or impede development in middle childhood?

Social role-taking is the ability/skill that the child develops as they mature cognitively through the exposure of role-taking activities which is the ability to understand someone else's thoughts, feelings, and points of view. This means that the child would have to step outside of his/her egocentric world. On the hand, interpersonal awareness focused on how the child conceive his/her own interpersonal relationship with others. According to the text, social cognition is linked with the development of social skills (Ashford et al., 2018, pg. 252), therefore if a child is not engaged in role-taking opportunities, they are likely to lack social skills, which means that they are less likely to empathize with other people's feelings due to immature social cognitive capacity.

Reference: Ashford José B., LeCroy, C. W., & Williams, L. (2018). Human behavior in the social environment: A multidimensional perspective. Cengage Learning.

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Robbins, S. P., Chatterjee, P., Canda, E. R., & Leibowitz, G. S. (2019). *Contemporary Human Behavior Theory: A Critical Perspective for Social Work Practice*. Pearson.