

Multidimensional Assessment Paper

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Human behavior in the social environment

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Abstract

The multidimensional assessment is designed to identify the influence of different dimensions of an individual's environment and upbringing which direct their behavior and thought patterns or lifestyle. This type of assessment is to gather information to adequately devise a plan of care that would assist them whether it is for medical, mental, or physical care. The multidimensional assessment approach's different facets incorporate biological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions within a person's development. It is important to evaluate these dimensions according to the application of theory, such as Erickson's Life Span Theory. This theory encompasses a person's life from the neonatal stage in their biological mother's womb through the late adulthood stage.

Life Span Development

Erik Erikson was a theorist who established one of the most used theories in psychology and social services professions. His theory focused on psychosocial development, which differentiated from his greatest influencer, Sigmund Freud, who formalized theories based on the psychosexual study. Erikson developed the Life Span Theory which involves eight stages across an individual's life. He suggested that lifespan development takes place in stages and each stage presents a crisis in order to move to the next. The life span development theory will be discussed throughout this multidimensional assessment of my aunt, Ms. Gomez.

Multidimensional Assessment

For the purpose of this paper, the client will be my biological mother (MS. GOMEZ), Ms. Gomez. She was born and raised in the Dominican Republic. And migrated to the United States in the 1980s. According to the U.S. Census, 511,297 Dominicans were permanent residents in the United States and 65% of them lived in New York State by 1990. (Saillant, 1998) Most of these Dominican immigrants moved to the neighborhood of Washington Heights. MS. GOMEZ was one of those immigrants. She arrived in the USA in 1982. When SW asked, "how old were you when you arrived to the USA?", MS. GOMEZ explained that in the Dominican Republic birth certificates are declared after actual birth dates. MS. GOMEZ is one of 12 siblings, and they were all declared at a different time from their birth date as well. She says that they often argue about who's older than who, and clarified that her age is 60 and not 65; she is in the middle adulthood stage.

Prenatal Development and Infancy

According to Erickson's Life Span theory, the stage of infancy is from birth to 18 months. During this stage, it is important that mothers form a healthy and nurturing attachment with the

child, known as bonding. Ms. Gomez could not remember details about her mother's pregnancy or much of her infancy. But has been told by siblings that she wanted mom's breast milk when her mother had other children. MS. GOMEZ expresses a sense of trust in others and that life will work itself out, which may stem from this initial nurture provided by MS. GOMEZ. The risk factors present may be that there were many children in one household so space, food, and attention may have been limited. The protective factors are that MS. GOMEZ was breastfed and MGM demonstrated parental resilience after experiencing stillbirth before MS. GOMEZ was born.

Biological

MS. GOMEZ was healthy and had no birth defects.

Psychological

MS. GOMEZ was known to cry when hungry and uncomfortable.

Social

There was a lot of love and support in MS. GOMEZ's environment.

Spiritual

MS. GOMEZ remembered that her mother had faith and prayed.

Interventions in this developmental stage are providing psychoeducation such as pamphlets, videos, and meetings with a nurse to both parents in regard to caring for a newborn. Some of the information could be material on nursing interventions such as keeping the baby warm, stimulating the baby to breathe, and giving the newborn time and dedicated attention to avoid neglect.

Early Childhood

Early childhood includes the toddler stages, which are between the ages of 1 and 3, and preschool age, between 4 and 6. During this stage, the children are to show developmental tasks of independence and autonomy or shame and also, take initiative in their environment or withdraw and develop guilt.

SW asked MS. GOMEZ, '*how was school in the Dominican Republic?* MS. GOMEZ shared that during her school-age years, she remembers walking with her older sister to school. She started at 4 years old and carried her own chair to school. Ms. Gomez shared to be a well-behaved and charismatic child. She remembered playing with her older siblings and their friends, in the streets, in the gallery of the home, or in the 'campo', which is known to be the wilderness or mountainous area. According to MS. GOMEZ, she was a natural, go-with-the-flow toddler. From observing her older and younger siblings, MS. GOMEZ was able to cultivate her own personality and preferences. Some relevant risks are that MS. GOMEZ was a small child who traveled to and from school by herself or with other children, instead of being accompanied by an adult. There also was probably not much attention reserved for MS. GOMEZ, since there were many children to care for including infants. The protective factors were support from the neighborhood with basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter when necessary: walking to school alone and carrying a chair to school, cultivated MS. GOMEZ's sense of responsibility and autonomy at an early age.

Biological

MS. GOMEZ was healthy; MGM maintained its immune system with herbal home remedies.

Psychological

MS. GOMEZ demonstrated initiative to thrive as she explored her surroundings.

Social

There were various supports and caregivers in MS. GOMEZ's life.

Spiritual

MS. GOMEZ embraced spirituality through prayer and church attendance with neighbors.

Interventions during this developmental stage could be the Group Attachment Based Intervention program (GABI). GABI provides clinician-facilitated play therapy, allowing parents to strengthen attachment with their children, which research demonstrates reduces the risks of child maltreatment. The program also provides parents with one-on-one clinical sessions and peer support through parent groups. (NYC.gov, 2020)

Middle Childhood

According to the Life Span theory, Middle childhood is known to be between the ages of 6 and 12. The developmental tasks include developing relationships and learning the skills which lead to building connections and competence.

SW asked Ms. Gomez, how was *the experience of making new friends when she was a little girl*. MS. GOMEZ had many friends and cousins in the neighborhood. She learned to be comfortable with meeting strangers and didn't feel awkward or afraid because the neighborhood's dynamic was like a big family. MS. GOMEZ shared that her mother, my maternal grandmother (MGM) was a seamstress and her biological father was a carpenter. Their small neighborhood was taught by both, to sow and build. She slept over at different aunts and uncle's homes for short periods of time in order for her parents to be resourceful with food and finances. SW, asked MS. GOMEZ *at what age did you get your menstrual cycle?* MS. GOMEZ shared that she was 12 and her older sisters taught her about puberty. Some relevant risk factors

include role confusion in the household as to who is the adult/mother. The protective factors present are, there was a father in the home, as well as older siblings, to support MS. GOMEZ in the transition of puberty.

Biological

MS. GOMEZ started puberty at 11. There were no known biological concerns in the family.

Psychological

MS. GOMEZ learned about the female's menstrual cycle because of her older sisters. There may be a sense of abandonment or confusion about who is the mother in the home.

Social

There were various caretakers in MS. GOMEZ's life, including her biological father.

Spiritual

MS. GOMEZ continued assisting the church until her early adolescent years. An intervention at this development stage would be to provide psychoeducational information to the family, regarding clarification of roles and boundary setting.

Adolescence

Adolescence is a time in the life span which ranges from the ages of 12 and 18. The developmental tasks during this time are known to be the role of finding one's identity or experiencing confusion.

During her adolescence, Ms. Gomez spent a lot of time observing and learning. SW asked MS. GOMEZ when did she have her *first boyfriend*? And MS. GOMEZ said she was in her late teens because her mother was strict. She told SW stories about her older sisters being disciplined and punished, so she learned to be discreet and in some ways sneaky. During this time MS. GOMEZ also learned to sew, cook, clean and do hair. SW asked, *when did you start*

smoking? MS. GOMEZ shared that MGF smoked Tobacco cigars and would give her a puff here and there behind MGM's back. MGM was very strict and stern with them, while MGF was very loving. Some risk factors in this stage of life, are the covert smoking habit as a way to cope with stress or for a sense of independence, control, or privacy. Some protective factors are the presence of caregivers and possible mentors, within the neighborhood and within the family. The family home also provided structure and rules.

Biological

There were no known biological concerns during this time.

Psychological

MS. GOMEZ smoked cigarettes, possibly to cope with stress or for a sense of independence.

Social

MS. GOMEZ smoked in secret; this may have had a negative influence in her relationships.

Spiritual

MS. GOMEZ felt guilty because she stopped going to church when she started smoking. Intervention, here, would be to enhance the involvement of family members and mentors in the community to decrease cigarette smoking. Social worker would also provide psychoeducation based on effects, pros and cons of nicotine and smoking cigarettes.

Young Adulthood

Young Adulthood is the life span range between 19 and 40 years old. Many things happen during this stage and according to Erickson, a lack of self-identity leads to isolation while having developed a secure sense of identity leads to intimacy. This stage is known to develop long lasting relationships, although there are many periods of change and instability throughout.

Ms. Gomez attended high school in the Dominican Republic and graduated. She recognized throughout the years that her family could not pay for everyone to go to college. MS. GOMEZ attended a beauty and cosmetology institute, with help from scholarships, friends and family. SW asked Ms. Gomez, *how were your relationships in your early 20's?* MS. GOMEZ shared that she wanted marry and have children. After 21, MS. GOMEZ readjusted many times as each of her sisters received their American Visa's and headed for New York City. She broke up with her boyfriend at the time, when she received her VISA. She experienced grief during this time, since she was leaving her father and close friends. In New York, she started working in a hair salon and eventually owned it. SW asked Ms. Gomez, *how she met her ex-partner, my biological father (BF), Mr. Gomez?* They met in Washington Heights. He was a hustler, playing the Dominican lottery for others in the neighborhood and connecting international callers on pay phones. At the time, the calls could only be made through travel agencies which were expensive. In the beginning they admired certain things about each other but according to her, she suffered in managing his bad habits. She said her ex-partner, was independent, a provider and appreciated that she was a 'wife'. SW explained that she and BF are part of the baby boomer's generation and their values of gender norms are traditional. MS. GOMEZ shared that those norms changed not too long ago, even though men and women both work now, women that are stay at home moms work more and still made money, like her mother who made money as a seamstress and also cared for the home. In her late 20's, Ms. Gomez found out that she was pregnant with her first child. Although she and BF lived together, they were never married. Many of her sisters were also expecting at the time. There were also marital problems in the home, with infidelity and finances.

Ms. Gomez had three children, one girl and two boys. Her first pregnancy was premature. She told the story of seeing a woman driving BF's car and she took her styling scissors to attack her and her water broke. Her second pregnancy resulted in a miscarriage; she was 33. The third pregnancy resulted in a C- section because the baby was not in position; she was 34. The fourth pregnancy resulted in a C-section as well; she was 36. Her father passed away in the Dominican Republic when MS. GOMEZ was 33 as well, he passed away 'from depression', as she stated. SW asked MS. GOMEZ if he was diagnosed. However, MS. GOMEZ shared there were no accessible mental health evaluations during that time. The present risk factors are grief and depression from loss and transition, if this is untreated it could lead to possible conflict with child rearing. Protective factors are supportive relationships.

Biological

MS. GOMEZ experienced a miscarriage before her second child was born.

Psychological

MS. GOMEZ experienced grief for many years. There were many periods of transition and loss, from leaving the Dominican Republic to live in NYC, leaving the love of her life, the loss of friendships, marital problems, her father's death and experiencing a miscarriage.

Social

MS. GOMEZ's developed many business relationships and clientele and her extended family also grew; there was support between them.

Spiritual

MS. GOMEZ had a close friend, who practiced divination and she also sporadically visited Jehovah Witness meetings.

Intervention at this stage of development would be referrals to marital counseling and a grief counseling support group.

Middle Adulthood

Middle adulthood is known as the life span stage between the ages of 40 and 65. This stage is important for various reasons, it is self-reflective in nature and sets the stage for the aging process. During this time, there is a focus on physical changes, career and family. Erikson supposed that if people are successful during this phase, they will create generativity and avoid stagnation, by contributing to society, whether in their home or community.

SW followed up by asking Ms. Gomez, *how was it raising three children since you always wanted a family?* MS. GOMEZ shared that it was a lot, she sold the hair salon in order to care for the children until they were school age and applied for government assistance which helped with rent and food. MS. GOMEZ connected deeply with the Washington Heights neighborhood; she's made many connections with neighbors and community's store owners and supers. SW asked Ms. Gomez, *how are you doing financially?* When MS. GOMEZ was in her early 50's she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She stopped working as Home Health Aid, and went through chemotherapy and a mastectomy; which added to the thought that 'she is old'. Around this time, she felt abandoned by BF, whose father had recently passed away. After entering remission, MS. GOMEZ applied for SSI and was eventually approved. A couple years after the cancer remission, MGM, Graciela Gomez, passed away, which sank Ms. Gomez into a deeper state of grief and depression. She also lost a beloved niece who left behind her 8-year-old son, who MS. GOMEZ babysat for years. Now at 60, MS. GOMEZ 'feels lonely at times, because she was used to having her children in the home'. She indicated that COVID has changed a lot of things for her because she was used to going to Washington Heights and visiting

some of her friends and family, and saying hello to the people in the businesses and in the neighborhood. Risk factors during this stage are mental health illness being affected by limited engagement with others due to COVID; MS. GOMEZ does not always take the medication to manage symptoms of depression and her emotional and sensitive nature causes her to experience high anxiety. Protective factors currently present are that MS. GOMEZ attends therapy and keeps up with regular checkup appointments. She also receives SSI and rent subsidy which ensure her basic needs are being met.

Biological

MS. GOMEZ is not consistent in taking medication to treat symptoms of depression.

Psychological

MS. GOMEZ attends monthly sessions with mental health therapist.

Social

MS. GOMEZ is actively engaging with relationships in her life: family and community.

Spiritual

MS. GOMEZ wants to attend church because she wants to serve God.

Intervention during this session would be an action plan in order to assist BFin taking prescribed medication. She would also be referred to programs within the aging population to enhance well being, finances and medical needs. Social worker would also refer MS. GOMEZ to group counseling or community events to increase engagement with other likeminded and age appropriate individuals.

Conclusion

Erickson's Life Span Theory, Piaget's Cognitive Theory and Havighurst's Developmental Task Theory would be applicable to assist Ms. Gomez with support and guidance. MS. GOMEZ

shows proper levels of care on the biological and social dimensions. She is consistent with receiving medical attention; she recently underwent surgery for glaucoma and received corrective lenses. According to Havighurst, it would be beneficial for MS. GOMEZ to tap into adult leisure time. Activities which could fill her days with events, day trips, or bingo and karaoke nights with friends and family. It would be beneficial for MS. GOMEZ to join a community center or join a church setting for building relationships or benefit spiritually. On a spiritual level, she reads the bible, prays more and uses her faith to stay positive. On a physical level, a referral to a community center, gym or Pilates studio would be ideal. After MGM's death Ms. Gomez suffered intense grief because she did not receive support or professional help for the previous losses and transitions. Psychologically, she would also benefit from a grieving support group. Erikson's stage of generativity vs. stagnation states that during middle adulthood the most important thing for adequate development is the individual's sense of contribution to the world, even after raising children which was the case for MS. GOMEZ. She can regain a sense of purpose in helping future generations through mentoring others, such as her grandchildren, or aiding to move society forward, as outlined by Piaget's Cognitive theory suggests. (Ashford, 2017)

References

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