**Apply a life course theory to an individual from the video "56 Up"**

**Introduction**

The doctrine of original by Thomas Hobbes informs human nature as espoused by Freud. At the core of his psychoanalytic theory lies, the notion that what drives human beings entails strong urges that are biological in nature and require satisfaction (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 87). In the Up series, these urges are embodied in the aspirations of all 14 children and their fulfillment. The study will look at the 1964 film (“7 up”) that preceded the current “56 up” film that was premised on expectations, hopes and lives of 14 children. The Thanatos drives the human being and Eros both of which are instincts premised on relentless selfishness. The *Eros* entails instincts inclined towards survival and sustenance of life through activities such as sex, breathing, eating and so on. On the other hand, the *Thanatos* entails instincts inclined towards death and destruction whose expression heavily borrows from behaviours such as masochism, murder, sadistic aggression, fistfights and arson (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 89). The Eros and Thanatos in “56 Up” answer the questions on commitment, purpose, relationships and happiness as viewed globally. *This study will focus on the theory espoused by Freud on psychosexual stages and will look at Suzy especially when she was aged 7 up to the age of 56 as the timeline. In addition, the table in the appendix section will represent her psychosexual stages during the timeline that I have provided.*

**Do any of the developmentalist theories that Freud came up with on genitalia, anal and oral conflicts influence future personality?**

According to Freud, personality entails three components that include the id, ego and superego (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 87). These components are what gradually developed and lead to the psychosexual stages. The id emanates from the moment the child is born. In addition, the child’s instincts that are biological in nature are present immediately\_ for example, when the infant is wet or hungry, they tend to cry and fuss until their biological needs are met, impatience forms the bulk of their character. Ego is premised on the rational and conscious component that entails the abilities of the child with regard to reasoning, remembrance, learning and perception (Shaffer and Kipp 2013, p. 64). Gratification of these instincts forms the core of this stage\_ for example; a toddler who is hungry can tell the mother that she wants “cereals”. By and large, as they grow, they establish means to satisfy their needs as well as become more rational.

**The impact of the lifecourse on Suzy’s health and social needs**

The superego develops between age 3 and 6 years\_ it entails internalization of parental standards by the children as well as the moral values instilled in them (Allen 2015, p. 45). At age seven, Suzy is undergoing regression; delving into earlier stages of development that were coupled with fewer demands in the face of extreme or severe stress. Coping with anxiety entails inclination to inappropriate or immature behaviours (Clark 2014, p. 89). For example, frightened children may respond by indulgence in hiding, thumb sucking, excessive dependence and weeping. The 7 year old Suzy is able to identify and realize that she has a boyfriend. According to Freud, we can conclude that Suzy’s sexual instincts underwent maturation that shift from time to time through the stages that entailed the psychosexual development. From the above inference, we can delineate that Suzy’s phallic stage was characterized with hostility between the child and the same sex parent premised on the desire that is incestuous in nature for the parent of the opposite sex. This state of affairs is referred to as Electra complex and Oedipus complex for the girls and boys respectively. This state of events would continue till the moment these children denounce these desires that are incestuous in nature once they acquire feminine and masculine identities. All psychosexual stages are important and as such parents must be actively involved in all the stages. Permission of too little or too much gratification of needs that are sexual was responsible for obsession with the activity so strongly discouraged or encouraged\_ this might explain Suzy’s belief that the thirteen year old boy in Scotland is her boyfriend. What Freud is trying to say is that early activities in the lives of infants especially conflicts and experiences may haunt them for life thus influencing their personalities, activities and interests (Green and Piel 2015, p. 84). She is able to identify with reaction formation, a threatening impulse expressed through an opposite impulse through development of conscious behaviours and attitudes that show diametrical opposition to desires that are disturbing hence explaining the anxieties that individuals face. Love may be used to conceal hate or kindness to hide cruelty. During this stage, children do not require the opinion of their parents on whether they have been bad or good; they are capable of identifying with shame or guilt premised on the nature of conduct and transgressions that they have committed (Clark 2014, p. 99). The impulses that are undesirable in nature and brought about by ego are curtailed.

At the apex of Freud’s lists of instincts was sex premised on the fact that much of the mental disturbances emanated from repression of conflicts at a young age; he associated this with urinating and thumb-sucking (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 90). This awareness excludes threats of painful feelings and thoughts. A host of neurotic disorders and ego defenses emanate from this behaviour. In addition, Freud noted that most of these painful events are buried between ages 5 to 6 but later recur in adult life thus influencing personality (Laska et al 2014, p. 467). At age 21, Suzy finds relationships cynical and does not want to dwell on the issue of boyfriends. She is on denial being a self defence mechanism that distorts the thinking of an individual, their feelings and perceptions towards a situation that is traumatic. Largely, it operates at the conscious and preconscious levels. Furthermore, she is yet to identify with people, organization and causes that are successful in the hope that the perception will be worthwhile. Furthermore, it enhances the feeling of self-worth as well as the role of gender in influencing behaviour particularly among persons suffering from inferiority.

Interaction between the environment and biology formed the core function of development (Rubin et al 2013, p. 677). By and large, children undergo conflicts between the aggressive and sexual instincts as well as social and parental demands. Perceptual illusions and sensory processes form the core of conscious experiences and as Freud explains, conscious awareness was the gist of psychic experience premised on early experiences and their influences on future personality (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 93). Determination of behaviour depends on recognition of the unconscious in the quest to understand significant development. Once Suzy attains the age of 14, she cannot establish whether she has a boyfriend or not premised on her conscious awareness of sex and relationships since she is at puberty. At 14 she may have been a victim of rationalization thus explaining her bruised ego. The process entails justification of behaviours and softening of disappointments. For example, when she fails to respond to questions on whether she has a boyfriend she chooses to ignore possible underlying reasons for her status\_ in this attempt, she convinces herself that  she does not need one either way.  Understanding human development and particularly the emotional aspect provides the underlying basis for powerful emotions in our lives such as anxieties fears and loves (Laska et al 2014, p. 467). Rational thought processes and observable behaviours have been at the apex of developmental theories that influence human beings and their existence.

Developmental psychology heavily borrows from Freud especially on the relationship between children and their mothers premised on identification, moral development, aggression development and learning of sexual roles (Clark 2014, p. 99). The implication of childhood experiences lasts for a lifetime although the notion has become less effective in the current world. However, there is still a connection between personality and early life experiences. Suzy was not really sure about who her boyfriend was at age 7, 14, 21 and 28 thus shows the disparity in early life experiences and future personality. At age 21, we can conclude that she is undergoing projection since her individual impulses and desires are attributed to her interests. This mechanism reflects *possessive* impulses that entail other people’s aggressive and lustful behaviours coupled with self-deception mechanisms. At the same time, she is undergoing displacement having found that the original person or object has become inaccessible; the energy is directed to those around them. This aspect entails a shift from threatening persons to targets that are safe. For example, she chooses to refer to relations as stuff that is cynical directing her energy towards past experiences.

At age 28, Suzy is undergoing introjections premised on the act of swallowing and/or taking in of the standards and values of other persons. Largely, this involves incorporation of therapist values and attributes as well as parental values. As a matter of fact, she is happier having inculcated the values acquired through experience into her own life.

At age 56, Suzy is married to Rupert thus sublimation has already taken place. This entails diversion of aggressive or sexual channels into alternative channels. Energy is diverted into admirable and acceptable channels. For example, she diverts her energy into caring for her children (son and daughter). In addition, Suzy reaches for compensation thus covering up for limitations through development of positive traits or masking of weaknesses that are premised on perceptions. The individual focuses on accomplishments and ignore their inferiority thus having a direct adjustive value (Rubin et al 2013, p. 679).

**Safeguarding guidelines**

This theory helps us understand the risks of harm that the character we have chosen (Suzy) faces.Relief of nervous anxiety and symptoms is the underlying basis for the theory\_ repression and hypnosis are indicators of these defects among the participants (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 93). Analysis of events and motives that cause suppression of Suzy’s confidence that she has a boyfriend entail the conflictual nature of human beings.  What makes her glare at the interviewer at age 14 when asked about a boyfriend? Suzy’s biological nature dictates that these aggressive and basic sexual instincts must be served contrary to the society’s notion that these particular instincts must be subjected to restraint premised on the fact that they are undesirable. Parents play a crucial role in shaping these aggressive urges and sexual instincts especially in the early years of life moulding the child’s character and conduct (Mitchell and Black 2016, p. 93).  These early events tend to recur later in life indicating that the effect must have trickled down from the failure of the parents to be consciously aware of the instincts. Counseling is a product of developmental stages (Sharf, 2015, p. 123). Oral stage is premised on mistrust of others and oneself thus occasioning low self-esteem, the fear for closeness and love\_ this has been observed the different ways that Suzy responds to the question on whether she has a boyfriend over the years. Secondly, the anal stage that entails the inability to express and realize anger, leads to lack of autonomy largely shown by the negative events that have plagued the lives of the participants (Shaffer and Kipp 2013, p. 40). Thirdly, the phallic stage entails the inability to accept one’s sexual feelings and sexuality particularly difficulty in identifying with oneself as either a woman or a man\_ for example, Suzy is able to identify with her femininity and even has a boyfriend at age 7. All this are foundational aspects and result from the first 6 years of life that build personality in the latter stages. This is probably the basis for the phrase “give me the child until he is seven and I will give you the man (7 Up).” *Lack of development of these aspects may lead to psychological immaturity.*

**Application of the lifecourse theory to the relationship between patient and carer**

Understanding Suzy has assisted both the patient and carer in the sense that the age of the patient will help the carer place the individual affected at a particular stage and understand what the patient is undergoing in a much easier way. The series of documentaries outline the lives of 14 children all documented representing the differences in social class, upbringing and the diverse psychosexual stages that they go through. Comparisons between Suzy’s psychosexual stages and the theory espoused by Freud will help carers and patients in improving their relations especially counseling at an advanced level. The defence mechanisms portrayed by Suzy went a long way into shedding light on the expected behaviour of patients at different times during their growth. By and large, the lifecourse focused on the stages and their anticipated defence that dictate the behaviour of patients during neurotic disorders and normal growth. The differences in the behaviour of patients inform diagnosis during counseling as well as the influence of biology and environment on the growth of individual persons. Finally, the lifecourse theory has been able to express sexuality in terms that are not abhorred in society in a much sexualized world.

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