

Choose one strength
and one weakness of
parsons sick role
model. do you agree
wit...

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Parsons Sick Role Model Talcott Parson was the first social scientist to theorize the role relationship between patients and doctor. According to Parsons, illnesses are undesirable to the lives of human beings because they impair the performance of their roles and responsibilities (Hart 22). Parsons believed that the sick-role is acquired through community socialisation and the behaviour portrayed by the sick are determined by their societies of residence. For parsons, the primary role of the doctor is to communicate the norms governing the functional sick role to the patient to control their deviance.

One of the strengths of Parson's sick role model is that it provides a rational background through which people can understand deviant behaviour and excuse it. I agree with this strength because sick people are actually not able to perform normal duties. This is because their health conditions and metabolic activities are impaired. Parson argues that the sick are supposed to be exempted from normal obligations until they recover. Parson enables people to understand the reasons for the sick not working properly; hence, people are made to appreciate the sick role and volunteer to help them during the recovery process (Hart 28). The model also enables doctors to build beneficial relationships with the patients, which prevents physicians from acting on their own interests rather than the interests of the physicians.

The weakness in Parsons sick role model is that the model did not consider chronic illnesses and disabilities. I agree with this weakness because Parson was too specific to acute illnesses and avoided a sick role that is permanent and not transitional. Acute illnesses are characterized by patient passivity

and physician assertiveness while chronic illnesses involves physicians participating in a treatment plan and patients bearing the responsibility of helping themselves (Hart 32). As people advance in age, chronic illnesses they suffer from in their life can deviance labels, which is not actually the case.

Work Cited

Hart, Christopher. A Collection of Essays in Honour of Talcott Parsons.

Poynton, Cheshire: Midrash Publications, 2009. Print