

Good research paper on piagets theory of cognitive development

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Introduction

Cognitive theory can be described as a multifaceted and complex proposition. According to this theory, human development is the result of an interlinking connection with their rearing background, environment, and individual thoughts and experiences. Jean Piaget is renowned as a great psychological theorist who propounded a well-accepted cognitive development theory.

Piaget's Cognitive Theory of Development - Stages

Piaget proposed that there are four factors that play a major role in a child's cognitive development. These four factors are maturation of DNA (genetic material), knowledge and awareness of the physical environment, recognition of the social atmosphere, and equilibration. Piaget's cognitive theory also talks about four stages during which a child develops cognition (Piaget, 1973).

The Sensory Motor Stage is the first stage. It starts from birth to two years. During the first stage, the child acts in an impulsive manner. He displays a self-centered behavior and does not have a feeling for others' interests, needs, and wants. This stage also rapidly develops motor abilities and reflexes in the child. The first display of intelligence can be observed when there is refinement in his reflex movements. For instance, it is noticeable when the child reaches for a preferred plaything or he chooses a nipple instead of a pacifier in hunger. This stage also signifies the child's consideration of the world which includes only observation and stuff with which he has a direct connection and experience. In this stage, the child

repeats actions that are discovered by coincidence. He applies these actions to other situations for obtaining similar results. Just before the end of this stage, the child develops the ability of forming primordial psychological images. This is because it is the time when the child gets the idea of object solidity and permanence. Up till then, he does not gain the realization that things can subsist separately from him (Piaget, 1973).

Pre-Operations Stage is the second stage that spans from age two to seven. In this stage, present is the main focus of the child. Even though the child is not competent enough to think logically, his thought processes develop with continuity. It is the stage when the child acquires language and is capable of representing the world through rational descriptions and symbols. However, such symbols rely on his individual sensitivity, opinion, and instinct. The preoperational infant is totally inconsiderate and egoistic. While he starts to take more interest in people and things around him, he only views them according to his unique judgment and viewpoint. This stage can also be regarded as a 'curious' age. This is because the preschool child is always quizzical, inquiring, and exploring new things. As they understand the world through their limited familiarity and experience, they compose their own explanations when they do not have any. It is significantly important to mention that the preoperational child possesses the most different thoughts as compared to adult thoughts (Piaget, 1973).

Concrete Operations Stage is the third stage that includes age seven till eleven. During this stage, the child develops social and linguistic skills. He acquires a balanced, reason-based, and operational thought process. He begins to carry out mental operations in this stage. Such operations allow

him to consider physical actions performed previously by him. In the previous preoperational stage, the child is able to count till ten. However, it is during the third stage of cognitive development that he actually understands that one signifies one object. According to Piaget, reversibility is the most important feature of concrete operational thought. It is because the toddler is able to turn around the course of his thought in his mind. He begins to realize that if things can be added, they can also be subtracted. He is also capable of tracing his home-school route. In addition, he can also depict the place he left a thing previously without exploring the rooms in a haphazard manner. Piaget also proposed that one of the major achievements of the child in this stage is conservation. According to him, conservation is the competency of seeing that things or amounts remain the same even if there is an alteration in their substantial form. The child learns to conserve such capacities as weight, height, number, area, and volume. However, it is not necessary that they understand such concepts all at once (Piaget, 1973).

Conclusion

References

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Piaget, J. (1973). *Main Trends in Psychology*. London: Allen and Unwin.