

Developmental psychology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Question Drawing upon material from the text, respond to the following questions. Is the " mid-life crisis" real? Why might some people experience this phenomenon while others do not? How might the mid-life crisis be different for men and women? Are these differences biological, sociological, psychological, or a combination of all three?

According to the text, midlife crisis is not strongly supported by existing evidence, even after " extensive testing and interviewing" (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2008: 492). What should be the " midlife crisis" for some people had turned out not to be extraordinarily uncomfortable or disagreeable, thereby tending to suggest that the theory of midlife crisis as a " universal age-related stage" is a myth. The text categorically states that most of the adults who go through some sort of crisis at this stage suffer from general psychopathological problems. Aside from this, adults experience some sort of fundamental change characterized by generativity at some point in their lives, but nothing approaching a universal crisis-level event. The transition rather takes the form of unique challenges and issues, which may be successfully negotiated by ego resilience. The age at which these transitions occur is not predictable, as such transition does not seem to be age-related (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2008). Some people may experience midlife crisis while others may not because individuals deal with the challenges and issues in different ways.

Midlife crisis may be different for men and women. Women tend to perform the role of " kinkeeper" (one who keeps the family together), and therefore would experience midlife crisis more when the older generation becomes dependent and dies, or the younger generation become adults and leave the family home. Women tend to feel the crisis more with respect to their

children, and men with respect to their parents. The changes are biological, sociological and psychological. Women experience the climacteric, a biological process during which menopause takes place. Men's biological changes are more gradual. The hormonal changes cause responses in people's psychological makeup. The changes for both genders are likewise sociological, because both men and women redefine their roles, in accordance with their cultural background, together with the loss of responsibility to children and to parents who pass on. (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2008: 493).

Question 2--- Drawing upon material from the text, respond to the following questions: How have workplace roles changed for both men and women? What about the "glass ceiling?" Does gender inequality still exist?

In the past, there have been traditional workplace roles that differentiated between men and women, based on social conventions of how men and women are expected to behave. At first, women were restricted to secretarial, teaching, nursing, social work and other similar jobs. Today, due partly to legislation and partly to gradual erosion of social bias, women are accepted in nearly all jobs men are employed in. Women's employment opportunities are now wider and broader, although there are still non-traditional jobs where women comprise less than 25% of the employed workforce. Examples of these roles are the skilled jobs, such as electricians, plumbers and carpenters (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2008: 443).

Despite massive strides in creating a level playing field between men and women in the workforce, there still remain indications that gender inequality still exists to some degree. Studies confirm that to attain the same top

positions as men, women are constrained to work much harder; even then, there appears to be a level beyond which women may not go in an organization. This level, called the “ glass ceiling”, is a limitation upon the upward mobility of women in the organization, and is still a very real phenomenon in many firms, and despite the best intentions, the glass ceiling remains because social biases tend to change slowly. This is referred to as the social psychology of the workplace (Thye & Lawler, 2006). Women are likewise prone to receive comparatively lower pay than their male counterparts. To accelerate the process of equalizing work opportunities and workplace treatment between men and women, there is a need for companies to more readily seek out and value the personal attributes, qualifications, and competencies of women, and should assume a more active and systematic role in helping men adjust and feel more comfortable towards women as peers and even superiors. Diversity, with regard to gender as with race, creed and ethnicity, should be aggressively pursued as a company policy. Employee education and behaviour modification seminars would be most helpful in this regard.

References:

Kail, R. V. & Cavanaugh, J. C. (2008) Human Development: A Life-Span View. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Thye, S. R. & Lawler, E. J., eds. (2006) Social Psychology of the Workplace. Kidlington, Oxford: Elsevier, Ltd.