

Developmental psychology topics and concepts



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Developmental psychology topicsAttachment

Describe how culture might affect the classification of infant attachment using evidence from at least two assessment methods.

Attachment is as an emotional tie that the infant develops with their caregiver in everyday interactions (Bowlby, 1982, 1988; Ainsworth, 1969. Cited in Posada & Kaloustian, 2010). There are variations between the types of attachment in different cultures.

One assessment method used to classify attachment is the 'Strange Situation', involving seven short episodes; measuring reunion behaviour, stranger and separation anxiety between the infant and caregiver (Smith, Cowie & Blades, 2015). This is the most commonly used method to measure attachment types between infants and their caregivers (Smith et al., 2015) which was developed by Ainsworth et al., (1967-1973). As a result four primary attachment types have been specified: A- avoidant, B- secure and C- ambivalent; with D- disorganised added later (as cited in Smith et al., 2015).

Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) conducted a cross cultural comparison of the Strange Situation within many countries, finding 70% of American infants to be type B, 20% type A and 10% type C (Smith et al., 2015). A further study was conducted by Grossman et al., (1981), finding 40-50% of German infants to be type A and a Japanese study found that 35% of Japanese infants to be type C (Miyake et al., 1985. As cited in Smith, Cowie and Blades, 2015). This could be potential evidence that culture does affect the classification of infant attachment as there is a variation of attachment types identified

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between the cultures. However, since there's variations between the findings from the same western culture (American and German), this suggests that attachment is difficult to classify due to mixed results being produced. As suggested by Rothbaum et al.,(2000), different cultures put different cultural values on certain traits e. g. independence and autonomy (as cited in Smith et al., 2015), which can provide an explanation as to why culture might seem to affect the classification of attachment as essentially the infants are raised to act in a certain way and therefore attach differently.

Another assessment method is that of Gernhardt, Keller & Rubeling (2016) as they conducted a cross cultural comparison, assessing attachment types through children's drawings of their family from different cultures: middle class family from Germany and rural families from Cameroon. This was done by using a " *Checklist of Drawing Signs (Kaplan & Main, 1986) and the Global Rating Scales (Fury, 1996)*". Through the assessment, they found the Berlin children to be securely attached and those children from Cameroon families to show " *anxious-avoidant attachment behaviour*" (True, Pisani, & Oumar, (2001).

Overall, it appears that culture does affect infant attachment, as there is evidence that outlines differences between the attachment type the child shows and the culture they were raised in.

Word count: 439.

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Cognitive Development

Education draws on the theories of cognitive development of both Piaget and Vygotsky. Outline how aspects of both these theories are represented in at least two different methods of early mathematics education.

There are many theories that have been created into early mathematics education yet Piaget and Vygotsky are both major theorists within cognitive development.

Piaget (1946) is a stage theorist, who's regarded with high significance. He believes that from birth, every child progresses through 6 stages; at different rates but in the same order (Smith, Cowie & Blades, 2015) (Crain, 2011). He highlights that it's important to recognise this within education. Piaget tried to develop a scientific approach of the understanding of knowledge (Smith et al., 2015). He believes that children create ways to develop their own knowledge and how to deal with the environment by recognising patterns (Fusion, 2009).

This can be represented in education by teachers allowing time for the children to actively come up with their own answers to problems, instead of just being passively told the information (Smith et al., 2015). This can be represented by using a sandpit as a method of early mathematics education. This is because by the children exploring the sandpit they can learn for themselves and develop their own theories about mass, weight and volume (Crain, 2011). He suggests that this is done through talking to themselves out loud about things that they have come to learn and recognise, whilst exploring (Crain, 2011).

Another major theorist is Vygotsky, who tried to develop a theory combining both internal and external variables for cognitive development (Crain, 2011). He believes that society can encourage children to learn, how to learn by providing the right opportunities and supporting the child which is known as 'scaffolding' (Wood, 1988 as cited in Crain, 2011) as these opportunities are temporary until the child no longer needs to make use of them. This can be represented in mathematical education by having numerical posters on the wall of the class room with the numerals and the word for that number alongside it, allowing the children to access it every time that they are in that setting and therefore eventually learn (Fusion, 2009). Vygotsky developed 'signs' to enable him to understand human behaviour and thought processes. He states that "*the most important sign system is speech*" (Crain, 2011, pp228) and 'writing' and 'numbering systems' are also important sign systems, represented in the use of the poster.

It can be concluded from the evidence provided above that both of these theories play a relevant role in early mathematical education for children.

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Word count: 397.

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Individual Differences Topics

Personality

Outline and describe the research related to whether all five factors of personality are equally important in academic achievement.

Most psychologist are in agreement around the idea that there are five “*super traits*” (Maltby, Day & Macaskill, 2013, pp. 167) to effectively describe the structure of the personality. The evidence into the structure of the personality has come from various sources.

The Five Factor model (FFM) was described by Costa and McCrae (1992), which suggested the five aspects were; neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion (as cited in Maltby et al., 2013). Following this, a psychologist developed an inventory of descriptive statements relating to each trait, known as the International Personality Item

Pool. Using this theory psychologists have then researched into whether each factor is equally important within academic achievement (Matthews, Deary & Whiteman, 2009).

A theory produced by Costa and McCrae (1992) on the five factor model has been quite influential within psychology, as there has been many studies conducted in support of the FFM, suggesting that all the factors are equally important, when it comes to academic achievement. The Personality and Social Cognitive Study aimed to explore to what extent the role of the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality played within academic performance. The secondary aim of the study was also to use the data collected and to measure the incremental validity of self-efficacy against an indicator of Absenteeism. The sample of participants was made up of 47 Male and 73 Female college students aged 17, and examined relationships between the following variables; FFM, academic self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy and Absenteeism against each students Grade Points Average. The results showed that four of the FFM factors and the two self-efficacy measured had direct correlations with said students GPA's. Therefore, the study, suggests that the only four of the FFM factors are important within academic achievement (Mcilroy, Palmer-Conn, Lawler, Ursavas & Poole, 2017).

Although, the study conducted by Costa and McCrae(1992) provided evidence that the FFM is influential when it comes to academic achievement, there have been studies conducted to suggest that in fact the trait that contributes most towards academic achievement is the Conscientiousness trait (as cited in Maltby et al., 2013). Due to the nature of the conscientiousness trait, the individual has the drive to achieve.

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In conclusion, all the five factors in the model do play an active role in academic achievement, yet conscientiousness plays the most important role, enabling the individual too have the drive to achieve the best they can. Therefore, suggesting that potentially not all the factors play an equal role in academic achievement but still contribute.

Word count: 414.

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Intelligence

Some scholars argue that emotional intelligence is not a legitimate form of intelligence. Select and describe the evidence to counter this claim.

Some scholars do argue that emotional intelligence (EI) is not a legitimate form of intelligence, yet other academics provide evidence to counteract this statement (Maltby, Day & Macaskill, 2013). The extent to which an individual has the ability to understand the way that they feel and how their associates around them are feeling, can be defined as emotional intelligence (Ritchie, <https://assignbuster.com/developmental-psychology-topics-and-concepts/>

2015) which also involves the individual being able to carry out accurate reasoning about their emotions and the ability to use them (Mayer, Roberts & Barsade, 2008).

Yussen and Kane (1985) aimed to find out how children see intelligence; finding that the older students categorise intelligence into: academic, social, and physical intelligence whereas younger students do not differentiate between them, they just specify between whether they believe a person is intelligent or not (As cited in Maltby et al., 2013), this can provide a reasoning as to how people don't identify emotional intelligence as a legitimate form. However, since it is a newly added concept that could be the reason as to why they do not (Mayer et al., 2008).

Moreover, there are three approaches that are taken from a theoretical and a methodological perspective, which suggest that emotional intelligence is a legitimate form of intelligence. The research ranges over approximately around a 18-year span from 1990 to around 2007 (Mayer et al., 2008).

A further supporting study which provides evidence that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a legitimate form of intelligence, is the research which suggests that in order it to be classed as legitimate there needs to be certain aspects that need to be met which is known as the '*specific ability approach*' which includes skills such as the ability to correctly identify emotions, which an individual can achieve when they have emotional intelligence. In addition, this theory can be seen as international (Neubaumer & Freudenthaler, 2005, as cited in Mayer et al., 2008).

In conclusion, there is varied research into whether Emotional Intelligence is a legitimate form of Intelligence or not, where some studies suggesting that is not and others suggesting otherwise. These differing views create uncertainty as to whether it should be classed as legitimate or not but with the support provided throughout, it does suggest that Emotional Intelligence should be considered legitimate as it meets certain criteria as stated in Mayer et al., (2008).

Word count: 387.

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