



PSY 211 Project One

Use this template to complete your case study analysis. Answer each question with a minimum of 3 to 5 sentences. Support your answers with credible sources when appropriate. Complete this template by replacing the bracketed text with the relevant information.

1. Describe the ways in which Piaget's research applies to Jamie's development.

Piaget was an interactionist who theorized that intellectual development occurred from infancy to adolescence (Sigelman et al., 2018, pp. 46 & 47). Piaget's research brought to light that children see the world in a different lens compared to adults (Famous Psychologists, 2014). Piaget believed that children learned about their world through interaction with it, and that they used this understanding to help them problem solve (Sigelman et al., 2018, p. 47). Jamie was raised by Judi, who has a history of drinking, poor health practices, and severe psychosocial trauma. One can infer these behaviors and experiences did not create a world in which Jamie could create meaningful understanding due to the likelihood that predictability was not part of Jamie's day to day fabric in her life. Because Jamie grew up interacting with a world that was unpredictable, unstable, and trauma enforced, his ability to develop proper coping skills and a firm understanding of the world around her was likely impacted which could explain her outbursts, anxiety/depression, and ADHD. Jamie likely experienced a great deal of disequilibrium that she could not reckon with due to the lack of predictability and stability in her world (Sigelman et al., 2018, pp. 202 & 203).

2. Describe the ways in which Vygotsky's research applies to Jamie's development.

Vygotsky's research centered around the belief that culture was a critical factor in a child's development (Famous Psychologists, 2014). Holding that children grow cognitively through their interactions with their social and cultural experiences (Sigelman et al., 2018, p. 207). Vygotsky theorized that children learn best in the Zone of Proximal Development where they grow in their learning as a result of others teaching them through situations/tasks that are just above the level of understanding they presently have (Sigelman et al., 2018, p. 208). Believing that children do not learn independently, Vygotsky surmised that children learned through collaboration and interaction with more mature thinkers (Sigelman et al., 2018, p. 208). Vygotsky theorized that, "adults use a variety of tools to pass culturally valued modes of thinking and problem solving to their children" (Sigelman et al., 2018, p. 208). When relating Jamie's development, one can assume that Judi's own chaotic, unpredictable, unstable, and unhealthy upbringing instilled inappropriate modes of thinking and problem solving (like her drinking and drug use), and that Judi then modeled these negative and unhealthy modes of thinking, problem solving, and social interactions to her daughter, leaving Jamie to shape her skills in relation to what she's been shown by her mother. Her social interactions have been limited due to her past traumas impacting her relationships and limited friendships. Having maladaptive coping and problem-solving skills as well as poor sociocultural connections paves the way for Jamie to experience frustration, anxiety, and depression due to a broken foundational understanding of the way the world works and how to cope and problem solve in healthy ways within her world.

3. Identify factors that could have influenced Jamie's physical well-being during the prenatal, birth, and early childhood stages of development.

Some factors that could have influenced Jamie's physical well-being during the prenatal/birth period are the following: high maternal distress (and stress) while in Jamie was in utero, poverty (Judi noted gainful employment was not something she has yet attained) and the likely potential for malnutrition during the gestation period and the potential for inadequate prenatal care as well. Judi also noted that she has a substance abuse history, so use of alcohol and/or drugs during the prenatal period could have impacted Jamie's physical well-being. If Judi was unable to adequately care for herself, the likelihood exists that she was also incapable of meeting Jamie's basic needs as well as an infant and young child. One might assume that Jamie experienced improper nutrition/unhealthy feeding schedules and poor medical care. Depending on Judi's relationship status during/after the pregnancy, Jamie's physical well-being could have been impacted by abusive caretakers if Judi was unavailable (if she was working or incapacitated). Poor nutrition and childhood stress can negatively impact the health, growth and development of a child (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

4. Identify factors that could have influenced Jamie's cognitive well-being during the prenatal, birth, and early childhood stages of development.

When considering the factors that could have influenced Jamie's cognitive well-being during the prenatal period, we should take into account that Judi's past history of substance abuse could have occurred during pregnancy. If this is in fact the case, then Jamie's development in utero could have been compromised. According to the CDC, alcohol use of any kind at any time during pregnancy can be detrimental to the growing fetus causing growth and central nervous system problems, including behavioral issues (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Given Jamie's attentional and behavioral issues, it's plausible that Judi's engagement in substance use during pregnancy could have impacted his cognitive development. After birth, Judi's mental health issues likely prevented her from engaging in stable ways with her daughter. Parenting is a hard job when all the cards are lined up in your favor, it's exponentially more difficult when you add in complicating factors. Her drug use, mental health issues, and poor social relationships all likely impacted her cognitive well-being and put her at risk for an insecure (either a disorganized or an avoidant attachment) that will ultimately impact her throughout not only her early childhood, but throughout her entire life (Sigelman et al., 2018, p. 441).

5. Identify factors that could have influenced Jamie's psychosocial well-being during the early and middle childhood stages of development.

There are several factors that could have influenced Jamie's psychosocial well-being during the early and middle childhood stages of development. Jamie undoubtedly experienced emotional abuse, and it's unclear whether or not she knew her older half-brother, but if she did, losing a sibling to addiction is traumatic, especially when you're young and don't have a solid and predictable world around you. If Judi hasn't had a stable job that provides gainful employment, Jamie may not have stable or safe housing which can impact her psychosocial well-being. Jamie also was raised in an environment that didn't provide a lot of social contacts, so Jamie's social interactions were likely limited to home and school. With home being dysfunctional, Jamie's ability to relate to her peers is likely stunted and not appropriate. Judi's lack of help given to Jamie



to address her mental health and behavioral issues to this point has definitely impacted his psychosocial well-being. Given the fact that she has impulse control issues, angry outbursts, anxiety, depression, and severe ADHD, Jamie likely struggles to relate to her peers in healthy ways. This inability to relate to his peers in healthy ways can impact his ability to manage herself and the environment around her and likely hinders her ability to make meaningful connections with her peers (Seifert, 2018). Being unable to manage his emotions, Jamie likely struggles with her inability to govern herself properly, which can impact his relationships with Judi, his teachers, and her peers.

6. Evaluate the sociocultural factors that could contribute to Jamie's maladaptive behavior.

Pointing back to the lack of gainful employment his mother has reported, Jamie likely was not raised in a stable or safe home/neighborhood. She likely did not have access to proper medical care. Jamie's lack of mental health counseling placed her at higher risk for behavioral issues as she aged as well as relational issues. If Jamie's school was not a school that had access to proper resources (as many schools in poor neighborhoods struggle with budget deficits and lack of appropriate resources), early identification of abuse, neglect, behavioral issues, learning deficits all could have been missed. Early intervention could have mitigated some of the issues that Jamie is experiencing emotionally and educationally.

7. Explain why it is important to consider the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial factors in combination (versus separately) throughout the life span when evaluating an individual's well-being.

Our experiences are not isolated, they are connected and woven into every aspect of our lives. If you toss a stone into a still pond, the stone breaks the surface of the water and impacts all the areas around it. Who we are physically (genetically), mentally (cognitively and behaviorally), and psychosocially (within our community) are all connected. Therefore, when we look at an individual's well-being, we can't just look at them physically or cognitively or psychosocially – we must be willing to see the individual in a holistic way. For example, if we take an individual who comes into the hospital with acute pancreatitis and just symptom manage until the person is stable again, yes – we've identified the 'problem' and 'fixed' it – but truthfully, all we've done is looked at the symptom (pancreatitis) and put a band aid on the issue (supportive care/treatment for the pancreatitis until patient is stable). Being able to step back and ask the right questions, like, "What caused the pancreatitis? Was it alcohol abuse?" allows us to step back from the immediate issue and see the larger picture, in this case – alcoholism. We then could see that the alcoholism was rooted in deep trauma and the patient could be offered the appropriate supportive mental health/addiction help. This holistic approach allows us to identify the root causes of our issues and gives us an opportunity to treat the entire problem, which offers better outcomes for the patient on the care continuum. In Jamie's case, being able to see that Jamie's development was impacted before she was even born, understanding the roots of her emotional and behavioral issues, and seeing how the psychosocial impacts complicated her ability to thrive helps us see Jamie not just for the symptoms that she presents with today, but all of the synergistic factors that created the perfect storm. Understanding Jamie in this way gives us the ability to get to the root problems and address them in more targeted and efficient ways.



8. Describe the research or theory that best explains Jamie's behavior. Explain your response.

Jamie's behavior can best be summed up by Albert Bandura's social learning theory. His theory states that our learning comes by way of observation by way of reinforcement and imitation of others (Sutton, 2021). Judi was raised in an unhealthy and unpredictable environment. She witnessed alcohol abuse, psychological abuse, untreated mental health issues, and codependency. She learned from the example her parents set forth and experienced the same situations her parents modeled for her: she suffered from untreated mental health issues, found herself in unhealthy and broken relationships, and abused alcohol and drugs. When she had her daughter, Jamie, she modeled the behavior she witnessed and learned from, thus perpetuating the cycle. Jamie witnessed drug and alcohol abuse, untreated mental health issues, was likely a recipient of emotional abuse, and unhealthy/broken relationships. Jamie learned that what she saw was normal and began to imitate some of it. She's already experiencing anger outbursts, anxiety, depression, and severe ADHD. She is responding to her environment in the same way that she saw her mother – with negative, unhealthy coping skills. Her behaviors were reinforced by his mother.

References

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