THREE AGES PROJECT

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Pledge: I have neither given nor received help on this work, nor am I aware of any infraction of the Honor Code

THREE AGES

Introduction

For this project, I interviewed three different people between the ages of 5 and 16. I interviewed my nephew Max and my siblings Christian and Andrea. Max is five years old, Christian is twelve years old, and Andrea is sixteen years old. I interviewed Christian and Andrea face to face. I interviewed Max over facetime because he currently lives in San Diego, California. I used questions that recognized their physical, social-emotional, and cognitive characteristics.

I first interviewed my five year old nephew, Max. He is in transitional kindergarten and he is also very sweet. I interviewed Max through FaceTime because he lives in California. I facetimed him after his dinner time because my brother, also his father, told me that was when he was the easiest to talk to and that he was comfortable. Max is very smart for a child his age so I thought it would be exciting to interview him. I chose these certain questions to ask him because they show the different levels in the early childhood stage.

I then interviewed my 12 year old brother, Christian. He is in seventh grade and is a very hyper and a handful. The interview took place at our home in Williamsburg. It was a comfortable environment for the both of us because we were familiar with our surroundings. I interviewed him after he ate lunch as well and had him choose where he wanted to sit. He chose to sit on his bed in his room because he felt most comfortable there. I chose to interview Christian because he is at the age of transitioning from a kid to a teen. I chose to ask him these certain questions because they show the levels of the middle childhood stages.

Finally, I interviewed my sixteen year old sister, Andrea. She is a junior in high school. She’s closest to my age and she is very smart. The interview took place at our home in Williamsburg. It was very comfortable for the both of us because we were both familiar with our environment. I interviewed her after she had eaten lunch and asked her where she wanted to sit. She had picked to sit on the couch because that was where she felt she was most comfortable. She has a peculiar personality and I chose to interview her because I feel that her answers would intelligent and informational. I chose to ask Andrea these certain questions because they show the levels of the adolescence stage.

The reason for this project was to note and analyze the different developmental stages and the interactions children of different ages had. Before starting the project, I knew that there would be many differences between all three people. I knew that all of their responses would be different from each other and expected to get varied multiple answers.

Interviewing process

I started the interview with easy questions for Max. I expected his answers to be short. The questions I had asked focused more on his interests and his everyday surroundings.

Me: “Do you like school?”

Max: “Yes!”

Me: “What do you like the most about school?”

Max: “Playing outside with my friends.”

This question helped explain the social emotional development part of the early childhood development. Social emotional development is, “The way in which individuals’ interactions with other and their social relationship grow, change, and remain stable over the course of life” (Feldman 1.5). “In the developmental literature, studies of emotion regulation span infancy and toddlerhood, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood (Cole). Max’s answer associated more with his social environment and had nothing really to do about school. I continued to ask more questions that would further examine his social emotional development.

Me: “Do you have a best friend?”

Max: “Yes, her name is Leila.”

Me: “Do you see her a lot?”

Max: “Yes, she comes over and plays toys with me.”

These questions showed Max’s social emotional development because it shows that he has social relationships with other children. It shows his concept of being able to socialize.

Me: “What do you want to be when you get older?”

Max: “Uhh.. Be a circus guy.”

Me: “Why do you want to be a circus guy?”

Max: “Because, the circus is fun.”

This question also shows his social development. At first he had to think about his answer because he was not sure but then got excited when he said he wanted to be in the circus. It shows that he has a good imagination and that also playing outside for recess or playing with other kids makes him very sociable.

While interviewing him, I paid attention to how he was answering the questions and watched his actions. His dad was with him the whole time making sure he paid attention because he would get distracted by certain noises or toys that were around him. He could only pay attention for short periods at a time and got a little restless if he got bored. While watching him, I was analyzing his cognitive development. Cognitive development is the, “Development involving the ways that growth and change in intellectual capabilities influence a person’s behavior” (Feldman 1.2) Because Max is still very young, his cognitive development is still growing. Cognitive development is also, “the constructive process by which genes interact with their environment to yield complex organic structures such as the human brain and the cognitive processes it supports” (Johnson). I watched as Max was very interested with his environment and how he wanted to interact with his toys or just moving his head to a sound, which is part of the exploring part of his life, this making it hard for him to focus on the questions I was asking him.

Physical development is the, “development involving the body’s physical make up, including the brain, nervous system, muscles, and senses, as well as the need for food, drink, and sleep” (Feldman 1.2). Physical development is the process of learning fine and gross motor skills like walking, crawling, and writing or drawing which also leads to coordination, learning perception, and strength. I analyzed Max’s physical development by asking him to draw a picture of his mom. His dad gave him a notebook and a black marker and Max seemed very eager to draw. I noticed that he would draw a little part then stop to look at it and the start drawing again and would repeat the process. He used his fine motor skills to draw the picture. I asked him to draw his mom because I thought it was simple and easy for him.

Next, I interviewed my brother, Christian. Christian was easier to interview because he had a better attention span but he is a very hyper boy so it was a little difficult to conduct the interview but it was easier than Max’s interview. He processed the questions I asked faster and gave me complete answers. Him being seven years older, his cognitive development is further than Max’s. I first focused on his social emotional development.

Me: “Do you like school?”

Christian: “Yes, I do.”

Me: “Why do you like school?”

Christian: “I like school because I can see all of my friends.”

Me: “Do you have a lot of friends?”

Christian: “Yes, I have a lot of friends.”

These questions showed that Christian was also very social. His answer had nothing really to do with the school aspect because he cared for his friends more. He likes to hang out with his friends and gets excited to see them in school.

Me: “What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Christian: “I do not know what I want to be when I grow up, I cannot decide.”

This question showed his social emotional development because he has thought about what he wanted to be when he grew up but has not decided. It showed that his emotion was still developing.

Me: “What type of person would you describe yourself as?”

Christian: “I would describe myself as helpful.”

Me: “Why are you helpful?”

Christian: “I think I’m helpful because I help mommy when she needs help.”

This showed that his emotional development was continuing to develop because it he described himself as helpful and it showed that he cared to help his mom. To find out more about his social development, I asked him a question regarding his hobbies.

Me: “What is your favorite hobby and why?”

Christian: “My favorite hobby is video games because they are fun to play when I’m bored and I like it when my friends play with me too.”

This again showed his social development because it shows him socializing with his friends over video games and showed how he cares about his friends a lot because he thinks about them enough to always include them in his answers.

For Christian’s physical development, I had asked him to draw his mom as well. I gave him a black marker and a drawing pad and he went to drawing. He did not have pauses like Max did when drawing but he did briefly stop to look at the drawing once and kept going. He drew the picture faster than Max did. Christian drew the picture in more detail than Max did because his development was progressing. He had used his fine motor skills to draw and by watching this activity, it showed that his fine motor skills were very developed compared to Max’s

For my last interview, I interviewed my sixteen year old sister, Andrea. She was the closest to my age so I thought it would be easier to ask her questions. She is also very intelligent so her answers would be very descriptive but she also has a funny sense of humor. I started with her social emotional development. Andrea is older than both Max and Christian and her cognitive ability is very developed. When I asked her questions, she was very quick to understand and answered them thoroughly.

Me: “Do you like school and why?”

Andrea: “I do not like school because I feel like it has the potential to be more productive. Different countries have schools that prepare students for possible careers while schools here are just general education with the choice of electives.”

Me: “What is your favorite subject in school?”

Andrea: “My favorite subject in school is math. I have a love hate relationship with math. It simultaneously makes me happy and sad-angry.”

This showed the different emotions that Andrea had with school and her favorite subject. She is very thorough and she is very descriptive showing that her social emotional development is very developed. She described what she felt about Math and what she disliked about school. I asked her more questions that had to do with her social development.

Me: “Do you have a best friend? If so, who is it?”

Andrea: “Yes, her name is Sunnidae. We met at a potluck.”

Me: “What type of personality do you have?”

Andrea: “I believe I embody the fake it until you make it personality. I pretend I’m confident until it is real.”

Me: “What do you want to go to college for?”

Andrea: “I want to go to college for engineering. I also want to go to college because I feel like I’d struggle to get a job if I didn’t.”

These questions showed that Andrea’s social development is almost fully developed because she could think clearly and knew what she was talking about. She gave straight answers and it felt like we were just talking normally to each other. Her social development has grown with her age and she had a better idea of what she wanted to do with her life.

For her physical development, I also had her draw a picture of her mom. I watched as she drew the picture and she drew with a lot of thought. She did not hesitate or stop drawing but would look intently at the picture. When she was done, her picture was very detailed and had a lot more detail than Max’s and Christian’s drawing. This showed that her fine motor skills were fully developed.

Discussion

After interviewing all three people, I could see some differences and similarities between all of them. A difference I found was when I asked what they wanted to be when they grow up or what they wanted to do in college, they all had different goals or they did not know what they wanted to do. Another difference I found was with their cognitive development. Since they were all different ages, they all had different attention spans. Andrea had a better attention span than Christian and Max because she could pay attention the whole time and Max had a shorter attention span than the others because he was younger and his cognitive development was still developing. For their physical development, their fine motor skills were all different. While drawing the picture of their mom, Christian and Andrea were more focused on drawing than Max was. Their gross motor skills were all the same because they were able to walk and do things.

Everyone is affected by the people around them. Their family teaches their children the basic needs like walking or their basic morals. A child’s peers are a huge part of their social life. Because Max is still at a young age, he is starting to learn how to socialize with others. At school, his teachers help him learn how to write or read books. Being in different environments and being with different types of people can cause someone to obtain new knowledge and techniques to have for the rest of their lives.

Piaget said that children can think differently at different ages. All the answers between the three individuals I interviewed were all different because of their ages. Vygotsky had said that cognitive development was, “a result of social interactions in which children learn through guided participation, working with mentors to solve problems.” (Feldman 9.1). He focused on the social aspects of learning and development. The individuals I interviewed were all social and they had learned different things through different people. Children tend to pick up different habits from the different people they interact with.

The Three Ages Project taught me a lot about the development of children that I did not know before. I did know that there would be differences between the different ages of these individuals but I did not know that they would be huge differences. One problem was that the youngest child I interviewed had a short attention span and the middle child had a longer attention span but would still get distracted by some things. It was easy to conduct these interviews because they were good listeners until Max started to get restless and his dad had to keep him calm.

There were not many challenges to this project. I took notes and voice recorded the interviews because the answers came straight from the individuals. If I had to interview them again, I would ask the same questions to see if their answers would be different and see if their developments had changed. This project was fun to do because I could learn more about these individuals and also learned more about child growth and development.

References

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