Family Relationships: Cross-cultural Perspectives

Throughout this assessment I will be evaluating cross cultural perspectives on families. The definition of family varies extremely and has a different meaning to different individuals. There are some couples who do not have children and still believe they are a family however the authentic meaning of family is two parents and their children who are living together as a unit. The important question we should be asking ourselves is what about childless couples or other variation? Different family structures can sometimes have a positive or negative outcome in the child's behavior and development, therefore it is crucial parents have qualities such as warmth, appropriate discipline and control and, emotional involvement. These are the qualities that make a good parent, which is why Each of theses qualities are very important in a child's life.

Baumrind (1967) was a developmental psychologist who discovered the three styles of parenting in psychology. she wanted to study the different styles of parenting and if they had an effect on a child's behavior and development. Baumrind decided to observe three groups of preschool children. The ones who were mistrusted and unhappy children, they had parents who were known to be controlling. The children who were freewheeling and happy, they had parents who were demanding but also communicative parents. The last group of children were dependent but also childish/ playful. They had parents who were warm hearted who didn't set any rules or limits for their children. From the three different groups the children were in, Baumrind then decided to make a category for each child; authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting skills. From this she wanted to see which parenting style was more effective with a positive outcome. Baumrind suggested Authoritarian parents are solid and controlling. These type of parents demand many things from their children, without giving any warmth or giving the child the attention it need from a parent. These particular parents also order their children to do things without explanation. These parents believe to discipline their children harshly and therefore the child then has very little control on their life. This parenting method is known to have a negative outcome to a child behavior and development. children who are raised in this way tend to have issues building trustworthy friendships. It has been also anticipated these children shall not do well in education. Psychology Concepts and Applications' by Jeffrey S. Nevid, Baumrind"

Throughout the study what was noticed is that unlike the authoritarian parents, the authoritative parents tend to set very high expectations for their children. Theses type of parents listen and advice their children. This method of parenting is known to have a positive outcome on a child's development. children who are raised using this style of parenting tend to have high self esteem and confident in their self. When comparing both authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles they are extremely different. Authoritative parents listen to their children. Theses parents don't order their children without explanation, unlike authoritarian, authoritative parents believe in explaining wrong from right to their children. They tend to also set reasonable expectation without expecting so much or being forceful. The last category is permissive parenting styles, these parents tend to be warm and soft when it comes to their children. They do not set any rules or limitations; therefore, the child tends to do whatever they like without any consequences. This parenting style has a big negative outcome on the children. Study has shown that children who are raised like this find it difficult understanding society will impose limits on their behavior. The main issue this particular parenting style has on a child is that the

child later on will not be able to function into adult life, and the reason for this is because they might find it difficult following or listening to instructions.

This study has a few limitations, the first one being the ages of the children. Throughout the study it can be difficult to be able to analysis a child's behavior at such a young age. This can give you results which are not accurate. In order to make the study more accurate, it would be more useful to involve children who are older, therefore it is easier to identify the child's behavior. The effects of authoritarian parenting on a child are mostly negative than positive. There are a few weaknesses which come with this study. Mainly authoritarian parenting style have negative outcomes for example poor social skills and indecisiveness. The Cross-cultural perspectives on family is very important in this study. The way a family is accepted by society may influence the type of effect it will have on a child. For example, sibling studies in particular have been controlled to a narrow range of cultures. It has been suggested children who are growing up or getting raised in non western countries are often more involved in caregiving, for example sibling's relationships and Parent and child relationships more closely.

There are other studies on family, Bowen was a psychologist who introduced family systems theory in the late 1960s. The family system theory is a study which was introduced by murray bowen. This study was a theory which proved that people find it hard to understand each other When they are in isolation from each other, however rather as a family. bowen suggested family is a system, where each person has rules to respect. Each member of the family has an expectation to respond to respectfully depending on who they are talking to. For example, their mother or father. keeping the same pattern of behaviors within a system can lead to balance in the family system. For example, as a husband, they are roles which must be maintained and if they cannot be maintained, then the wife steps in to pick up the slack. The changes may maintain the stability in the relationship, however can also push the family towards issues. The reason for this is because the wife may not be able to continue maintaining the overachieving role over a long period of time. Weather someone might feel discounted from their family, family have a huge impact on people's emotions and actions. This can also be negative or positive. One member from the family changing, can spark a change in how other member in the family unit act or feel. Another similar theory by Bowen is the behavior of each member of the family and what it means. For example, Murray Bowen also introduced the eight interlocking concepts. The most common statement he made was that by using system thinking to consolidate important information of human species as a good example of evolution with knowledge from family research.

When family member finds it difficult to communicate or someone feels neglected, the best thing which can be done, is family therapy. family therapy Is a method which helps a group of people to find an understand by communicating and listening to one another. However, there are some limitations on family therapy, for example there is an empirical verification base which is growing more data, most likely from objectively sources. Family therapy use a method known as CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy). the strengths which come with family therapy are very positive and effective. Family therapy isn't usually a solution focused, everything tends to be brief.

Cognitive behavioral therapy teaches strategies which can be useful in other areas of someone's life. There is also some weakness which occur with family therapy. some of which have a positive effect and a negative effect. In order to be able to get a positive outcome from family therapy, it is very important that you can open up and express yourself and work towards new change. Some people do not feel comfortable with expressing their feelings and

confronting their emptions although it is a very important stage of getting better. The feeling of being vulnerable can be frightening. Majority of people find it difficult to confront their feelings and end up not getting the professional help they need. Others can express their feelings and start to see a difference. It is all about what kind of person you are and how confident you can be with the truth behind your actions. The aim of Family system theory is to identify individual's ability in order to be able to balance separateness and also connectedness when involved in intimate relationships.

If we are discussing culture in family therapy system, culture is rarely defined as a context of development in its relevant process. Different family backgrounds, have a different way/ method of dealing with family issues. There is an insufficient literature in couples and family therapy about the impact it has on peoples realtionships. the cross cultural issues during family therapy with families from different background, for example African, American, Asian communities. These issues tend to be either related to extended family or therapist family race similarity. Some people tend not believe in family therapy, due to cross-cultural issues, in Asian communicates, family therapy is a foreign concept. They tend to avoid mental health services due to different cultural values or their common attitude toward mental health service. The common reasons why they avoid and ignore the help they need is the feeling of shame and stigma with major psychological disorders and mental illness. Asian cultures believe in finding situation to their issues in a different way. Some of the values in Asian communities are authoritarian, interdependence and intense relationships. The role of silence is another one and the importance of not bring shame to the family. (Baptiste,2005).

There are studies that Asian communities are being ignored and are not getting the mental health services they need. They are getting treated different to American society. The reason for this is because there is this widespread belief that Asian communities are an example of a minority who are not in need for special consideration. This is one of the reasons why the people from Asian communities do not trust or believe in the mental health system, and that is because they see what is happening and believe that they will not get the treatment they really need to get better.

To conclude relationships in general, that can be a family relationship, a couple. They all have different effect and outcomes depending cross-cultural perspective. Therefore, cultural is very important in any relationship and plays a big part in someone's life. Let that be either a positive effect or a negative outcome, it also shapes the type of relationship one might have with another person. Different families, have different traditions, where they believe it is part of their culture and up bringing. Therefore, it is important to consider the impact of cross-cultural perspective on family relationships since it has a huge impact.

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