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by Tutor Lanez

Submission date: 27-Aug-2021 12:14AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1636357951

File name: Psychological_Problems.docx (18.45K)

Word count: 803

Character count: 4467

Psychological Problems Among Adolescents

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Psychological Problems Among Adolescents

Psychological problems involve situations where an individual's behaviors or feelings are abnormal (Keles et al., 2020). From a general perspective, psychological issues can be classified into substance use, internalizing and externalizing disorders. Substance use involves the use of legal or illegal drugs and can affect internalizing and externalizing problems. Internalizing disorders are emotional issues that affect individuals from within and are common during the adolescent period. Externalizing disorders involve related behavioral situations, which are turned outwards by individuals. Behavior problems may start from childhood, but they are most common among adolescents. The environment within which individuals are exposed may significantly influence their behaviors. Other problems related to mental issues may include disorders such as anxiety, depression, eating and dissociation disorders (Keles et al., 2020). This study discusses a video that portrays psychological disorders among the teenage characters and concepts from the film.

I chose the "13 Reasons Why" film for this study because it portrays multiple psychological disorders and consequences. Thirteen Reasons Why is a teen mystery television series that revolves around the current youths' social problems. Brian Yorkey developed the film and it is based on a novel written by Jay Asher. The film's story revolves around the two main characters, Hannah Baker and Clay Jensen, who are high school students. Generally, the television series is about a girl, Hannah Baker, who committed suicide. Hannah Baker leaves some cassette tapes that provide information on why she committed suicide. In the cassettes, there are names of people which Hannah felt were responsible.

Major psychological concepts that can be noted from 13 Reasons Why film include anxiety disorders, depression and suicidal and non-suicidal self-injury. Currently, anxiety among adolescents is very common and it involves being uneasy, nervous or having feelings

of worry (Keles et al., 2020). Anxiety disorders may be categorized into general, panic and social conditions. From the 13 Reasons Why film, anxiety disorders are present because there is a suicide case. Anxiety leads to the risk of suicidal thoughts, which Hannah faces in the show. She was troubled so much and she provides details of thirteen reasons why she decided to commit suicide. The thirteen people mistreated Hannah that she named (who were her friends) and this was traumatizing; hence it led to her decision to kill herself. Anxiety disorder in the film can also be traced from how Clay Jensen was affected by the death of Hannah. The death of his friend made him (Clay) develop eating disorders.

Mood disorders are also common among adolescents, which are heavily influenced by alcohol and substance use. Twenge et al. (2019) claims that mood disorders involve depression, which is more common in adolescent females compared to adolescent males. Depression is an internalizing problem, which is also evident in the 13 Reasons Why film. Sexual assault is a significant contribution to depression among adolescents. Examples of sexual assaults in the 13 Reasons Why film is when Bryce Walker rapes Hannah and Jessica Davis. In this film, depression is one of the reasons why Hannah committed suicide because she included Bryce in the tapes. Tyler Down, a student at Liberty High, is also assaulted by Monty. This act makes Tyler depressed and influences him to attempt a school shooting. Justin Foley is a victim of drug and substance abuse. Justin gets depressed when he is diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and this leads to his death.

Suicidal and non-suicidal self-injury among adolescents is very common, leading to many deaths. Suicidal attempts are higher than successful ones and this is influenced by anxiety and depression or mood disorder. Suicidal thoughts are associated with poor school grades, sexual assaults, family issues or drug abuse. According to Twenge et al. (2019), suicidal attempts among female adolescents are higher compared to males. In the 13 Reasons Why film, suicide is evident from Hannah's death, which was contributed by the issues she

had faced as detailed in the cassettes. Non-suicidal self-injury involves minor physical harm to an individual's body, such as cutting (Brown & Plener, 2017). In the 13 Reasons Why film, non-suicidal self-injury is evident when Clay sees a flesh wound on Sky Miller's (his friend) sleeve edge. She tells him that she cuts herself instead of committing suicide.

References

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