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by Wsa Edr

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Going back to about 70 years ago, how the lives of our great grandparents were like when they were in their early twenties is fascinating. The question is, how does their experience compare to ours at that particular age? In this case, their lives in the twenties were different than ours today because it was a different era. Most of our great grandparents either joined the army in their early twenties or the moment they got to 18 years they were already thinking about marriage and getting a job. Some did not attend school as it was not mandatory, like in this era. The journey from adolescence to adulthood in today's world is different and somehow complicated that in the previous centuries. The paper will discuss and critically review the crucial components of adulthood in the aspect of emerging adulthood in today's world.

Emerging adulthood has often been suggested to be the life between adolescent stage and the young adulthood stage from 18 to 25 years, where one is neither an adult nor a child. It is a stage where maturity starts kicking in, and one begins to stop being dependent on family slowly and rely on themselves in different aspects of their lives (Arnett, 2015). Young adults in this stage experience fear, freedom, loneliness, relationships and possibility. Emerging adulthood has been taking place in most developed countries, whereby young adults are working hard to get to that degree and getting a job to sustain themselves. With the advancement in technology, this has made things more accessible, especially for those young adults who have to take care of their families while studying, they have embraced online studying to balance their time. Emerging adulthood has somehow been influenced by trends back in the '70s whereby young adults between the ages of 18-25 years would either be married with children at this age or the army. Young women during this time were not working, and if they did, only a few of them dared to join the workforce, which was male-dominated. In today's world, the case is almost similar, but

now emerging adults are pursuing education for a better future both male and female, the marrying age has changed as well, as it has shifted from 18-25 years to 28 years and above. Young women have also embraced their capabilities and are empowered more to be a forceful change in society.

In an article by Tribble (2015) she states that most young adults today do not take advantage of their age by not exploring more and discovering new things about themselves or what they like and I agree with the statement. I agree because to some extent it is true; young adults rarely take advantage of their youth to enjoy themselves due to the fact they have a lot of responsibilities that make it hard for them to enjoy their youth. For instance, the young adults between 18 to 25 years are mostly in school pursuing higher education and are expected by their families or guardians to get excellent grades that will guarantee them a job in the end, which for some it does not happen that way. Other young adults at this time due to their family issues like raising tuition fee is a problem, so they have to study and work at the same time to raise money for their tuition and pocket money. Plus, it is not that they do not want to live freely and see the world at this age, they do want to do all that before age catches up with them, but circumstances mentioned above forces them not to. But to some extent, those who have all the resources available to them tend to abuse those privileges by engaging in criminal activities, and some begin to explore the world of drugs. In the long run, they become addicts ending up in rehab while others in jail due to crime.

² Wood et al. (2018) article “Emerging adulthood is a critical stage in the life course,” Wood and colleagues in their study discussed the aspects of an identity crisis when it comes to emerging adulthood. They believed that forming one's identity during this time is a crucial factor, and I agree with them. Youths who are transitioning from adolescence to adulthood rarely

have time to get to know themselves fully as this is a complicated stage. They go through an identity crisis phase trying to understand their character, their career choices and figuring out who they are. Because this is a stage where they experience a lot like getting their first job or moving out of home completely after completing school, in this stage, the decision they make has long-lasting consequences whether they make good choices or not. For instance, in the case a young adult is conflicted when it comes to forming their identity, they go with the flow, and this is where most of them fall into bad companies due to peer pressure. So they should explore the different aspects of their lives by looking deep within themselves to find which qualities make them stand out and what makes them happy.

Emerging adulthood has five characteristics, namely; ⁴ the age of exploration, the age of instability, the age of self-focus, the age of feeling in-between and the age of possibilities and I will discuss three. The age of exploration mainly focuses on the aspects of exploring various directions in their lives, such as work, what they are good at and relationships as well. For instance, when emerging adults start working or moving out from home, it shows a sense of responsibility and independence. In this context, Arnett (2015) believes that this is the stage where emerging adults begin to take work seriously than they did when they were adolescents, for example, working in a summer job in fast-food restaurants. I concur with this statement because this means that when an emerging adult decides to work, they choose their career intentionally because they see themselves working in that field for long. Others decide to move to different countries for school or work purposes for the aims of exploring other cultures as well. The age of instability, according to Arnett (2015), believes that the age of exploration influences it. That even though emerging adults make serious decisions about their lives, at some point, they are going to change their minds when something happens. For instance, if the young

adult was living in a particular neighborhood because of the location of their offices, in the case their work shifts to another area, chances are they are likely to move as well. I believe that change is inevitable, and emerging adults are quick to embrace change when things or plans do not work out as they had hoped because, in the process, they learn something about themselves.

The third characteristic is the age of self-focus. In Arnett's article, he states this the time where emerged adults are self-focused. Many argue that emerged adults are so self-centered, and this partly because they tend to do things based on their interests. I agree and disagree with this statement; yes, their character seems to show that they are self-centered because of how maybe they treat those who are close to them. But in the real sense, emerging adults are not selfish since there is nothing wrong with wanting to quit that job since it does not interest them anymore. Instead, them being self-focused means they want to get a better understating of who they are, their likes and dislikes. The purpose of self-focusing is to learn how to be self-sufficient and to develop skills that will help them build a better future for themselves (Arnett, 2015).

In conclusion, having discussed and critically reviewed the crucial components of adulthood in the aspect of emerging adulthood in today's world, it is evident that emerging adults have a complicated life. It is complicated because they are faced with many circumstances as they transition to adulthood, and have a lot of pressure because of the expectations they have set for themselves. For that reason, they need to figure themselves out early, and they need to make decisions that will have positive outcomes in the long run. In this crucial stage, society needs to support them, especially when they feel conflicted by encouraging and being patient with them.

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