

Reflective thinking from Cultural Perspective: 'Sound and Fury'

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Succinct Description of the movie

'Sound is Fury' is a feature documentary about an American deaf family released in 2000. This movie has an emotional power because of the medical procedure called cochlear implant. Artinian's family has been suffering from deafness for three generations. In this movie, the conflict between two brothers is discussed about whether to get their children cochlear implants or not. Peter Artinian and Chris Artinian are two brothers where. Peter is deaf, while Chris has sound hearing ability. Heather is the main character in the movie; she is 6 years old and the child of Peter and Nita, both deaf parents. Chris and Mari Artinian belong to the hearing world and have a child of 2 years. They discover that their child has a hearing disability and start doing research about cochlear implants. Meanwhile, Heather starts demanding to have an implant as well.

This situation raised arguments between the brothers about controversies about this procedure and the meaning of deafness in life. Nita and Peter fear the thought of losing Heather to the hearing world and decide to move to Maryland, a community for deaf people. However, Chris and his wife had surgery on a cochlear implant for their newborn child.

There was a follow-up in the film Sound and Fury with the title 6 years later, in which Heather is now 12. In this documentary, the extended family of Heather, including her mother and siblings, has opted for the implant surgery and now they are part of the hearing world. She has a connection with hearing people and the deaf world as well as moving comfortably in both settings.

The major characters in this documentary are the family members Heather having a direct influence on her development of character and functioning. Her parents are abiding her to get an implant when there is a way out for her to gain her hearing back. This is a situation of conflict with which the character has to cope up.

Application of theoretical constructs

This movie highlights the conflict between two families about the difficulty of having Cochlear implants for their children. They are confusion about whether it would be detrimental or beneficial for their children. The life of the deaf community is discussed in detail in the complete movie as how this has an effect on the lives of people. However, this is a neutral perspective but there are many issues that can be addressed using this documentary analysis. Some of the highlighted issues include

biological, emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioural functioning assessments.

From a biological perspective, the identity of every individual is different, and everyone has some positive or negative characteristics. Biologically, a person inherits many traits from their parents. In the documentary, Heather was biologically deaf, but this does not bring the same thinking pattern as her parents. According to her parents, getting a hearing implant would result in her abandoning the deaf world and entering the world of hearing. However, from their perspective, Heather, this was a great opportunity to get what she was missing out on in this world. On the other side, Heather's parents were of the view that they belong to the deaf community for the past 3 generations, so they had an affiliation with the [deaf culture](#) and did not want to abandon it.

When we see this movie from a cognitive perspective, this gives multiple thinking patterns for reasoning. This documentary shows the world from two different perspectives the deaf world and the hearing world. This can be best described from Piaget's perspective of cognitive development. Cognitive thinking is developed in an individual when he interacts with the environment and becomes mature biologically. This shows that cognitive development only takes place when internal intelligence goes through the knowledge of the outer world (Piaget, 1976). So is the case in the movie under discussion. Heather was never thinking about getting a cochlear implant until she knew about it. Once she got knowledge from the external world, her cognition persuaded her to be in favour of this medical procedure.

Emotional functioning is determined by psychoanalytic theories. The political, as well as social ideas collectively make emotional functioning work. Heather's parents were emotionally attached to their deaf community. They had been living like this from the start and now it was fearsome for them to try a new thing. They were also concerned with the [health of their child](#) and considered that having a cochlear implant would turn her into a robot. The natural communication pattern for a deaf person is believed to be signed and is in the deaf world. The moving out of Heather's family to Maryland is an example where her parent believed that living with people like them would be a good change. Freud discusses in his Psychoanalytic theory that the person, as well as social changes in an individual, imply their tradition in a psychoanalytic way.

Behavioral and social functioning highly depends on the fact that how a person perceives his environment. The traits present in a person define what he actually is. The social and behavioural factors of a person can be determined according to Erickson's eight stages. These stages are developed over time with age. These factors highly influence the maturity and choice of an individual (Munley, 1975). The social culture of discrimination is highlighted in this documentary. This led to the classification of the Deaf world and the Hearing world, where none of these two is willing to accept people from another one.

Developmental functioning

This is a fact that individuals are different and their behavior goes through many changes in stages of development. The character of a person is built over time with the stages of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. During this course of time, many normative as well as non-normative circumstances arise. There are situations when the person is told about what actions to carry out, and there are circumstances when he has to think about the results of certain decisions he is going to take.

Some things are inherited in a person, while few are taken from the environment. These things are well described in the nature vs. nurture theory. This determines the development of an individual child and results in success or failure (Sameroff, 2010). From the perspective of nature, the development of an individual is based on the characteristics he got from his genes. This normally comprises personality [characteristics](#) and [physical appearance](#). While, during life, the person is nurtured by the environment around him. There are experiences a person encounters during childhood, and social relationships, as well as the culture of a person, are shaped by them.

During development, a person comes across multiple scenarios where he has to decide between the contradictions raised by these multiple schools of thought. It cannot be said that any nature and nurture are more prominent in the personality of an individual. Human behaviour is a collection of both these factors.

In terms of normative and non-normative events in life, non-normative events require more critical attention and skills of self-regulation as compared to normative experiences (Wrosch & Freund, 2001). The character in this documentary, Heather, is going through the early childhood stage of her life. The whole family lived their lives like cripples, and now there was a solution. The debates Heather listened to her grandparents and parents made her aware of the fact that there was a way out. Children are thinkers, and at the age of six, when they hear about a new thing, their instinct wants them to try it, especially when that experience is meant to remove such a big weakness in them.

The character was toggling between the two worlds of deaf and hearing she had to choose the best option for her. The biggest issue is the difference in communication, and there is a solution for this in the form of a cochlear implant that can be solved by surgery. This issue is creating problems in the family. They have been living in a deaf world since the start, and now it is difficult for them to accept a non-normative experience. As Heather is in the early stages of life, it is easy for her to go through such a change, while her parents consider it difficult to change it. They believe that it is the way they were born and they should live like this because the deaf world has its own beauty.

Risk and Protective Factors of Character

The character in this documentary, Heather, wants to have a big change. This change has multiple implications in real life. This is not just a cochlear implant; it is about bringing change in the culture

and living style. The major challenge is living in a family of the deaf. Heather's family has been deaf for three generations, and now this is the way of living they have adopted. Parents of Heather have a sense of affection for deaf culture and they do not want to get out of it. Especially when Heather's mother mentions that when she discussed cochlear implants, her friends in the deaf community became angry. On the other side, Heather's Grandmother accuses her mother of being selfish for purposefully depriving her daughter of hearing ability when there is a solution available.

In this current world, hearing disability is considered a big issue, and people suffering from this problem are cast out of the community. This lack of awareness in society has given rise to a separate community of the deaf. Heather has an option, and if she continues living life as deaf when she has a better alternative available, this will make her an outcast in the world. This is a risk factor making her deprived of many other facilities in life.

Society has built its own models of disability, which is not justified in any respect, but this definitely has an impact on the lives of many people. This results in multiple risk factors. Such as children having a hearing disability are prone to develop aggression, depression, a disorder in conduct, psychopathy, and anxiety as compared to peers with normal hearing ability. They also feel attention deficiency, which serves as a basic factor in decreasing their level of confidence.

The approach of psychology named psychodynamics states that there are underlying forces in human behavior, emotions, and feelings that are related to early life experiences. Heather is still in her early life and the experiences she is facing will determine her future behavior in society. The feeling of acceptance is a necessity of an individual because humans are a social animal. These are the factors motivating her for a protective future.

The communication options with which the deaf are left with include the language of signs. Heather's mother was concerned about her leaving this language and moving on to the hearing world. The social dilemmas and behaviours have brought fear to the mind of her mother that the outer world would not accept it. Her father also pointed out that special education is helpful in building the character of Heather that will be ruined by having cochlear implant surgery. They are also fearful that having this surgery would result in a gadget attached to the back of her head, resulting in danger to her identity as deaf.

Family dynamics and impact on individual functioning

The family is an important part of a person's life, and it has a great impact on the life decisions of an individual. Family dynamics include the patterns in which family members interact and how they relate to one another. They are unique in every family environment and should be dealt with in the same manner. In the subject under discussion, Heather is living in a deaf family where few people are in support of getting a cochlear implant while few are against it. Among all the other members of the

family, their parents are the most important, and her parents are not in favour of getting this transplant. Therefore, this shows clearly that individual functioning is highly dependent on family dynamics.

These family dynamics also shape the way in which an individual sees himself, his surroundings, and the outer world. The environment of Heather's house was also a mix where deaf and hearing lived together. She was well aware of how it felt like to be with the type of people. In this way, the thinking is shaped and no matter what are the dynamics of earlier generations, new things attract.

Peter was proud to be deaf; however, this was not a matter of being proud; this was just an aspect of human existence that some people can hear and others cannot. The culture is discriminatory, and this makes a person even oppose his family. Even when family dynamics are different, and a person wants to function according to them, he must consider the outside world. It is true that the level of stress is high in families with deaf children, and their dynamics are entirely different from normal families; this thing has a high impact on the personality.

Family issues are normally catered to in a way that a particular issue has raised this problem, and then the ideas of family members help in resolving such issues. The instructions are given in the family by the parents, and then children take them as normative experiences to act in different areas of life. All these things indicate that family has an impact on the functioning of an individual but only to a particular extent. The external world includes the environment as well, and other people in communities have a role in shaping individual behaviour.

Cultural Considerations and Discrimination

Cultural influences human behaviour, and the family in which Heather was living had deaf culture. In this documentary, culture is highlighted mainly where the people believe this world to be divided into two halves the Deaf world and the Hearing world. Culture is a collection of shared values, and people depict similar behaviours in culture. This culture shaped the thinking of Heather's parents, as the hearing world is fearful. It is also about the comfort level. Her parents have been living like this since they were born, so they believe that it is more convenient to be deaf because they were born like this.

There is an **ecological perspective** in which people see about how they interact with the environment. The behaviour and culture are shaped when people practice their parenting practices, beliefs, and peer support (Steinberg, Dornbusch, Brown, 1992). These things should be considered while seeing cultural support. The social, as well as the economic environment is important to consider. In the movie, Heather's mother considered that hearing culture is not suitable for them and their children so they moved to Maryland. For her, it was the place where people of similar type lived, and she would feel more relaxed in an environment like that.

Discrimination evolved in this movie from multiple points of view. Starting with the details of a cochlear implant and then dramatizing the effect of conflict between families was the main turning

point. This was also a matter of family history because they were deaf for the past three generations and it was a difficult decision for them to abandon what they actually were. They valued deaf culture and did not want to enter into the discriminatory world of hearing. Heather was studying in a special children's school where other children were also hearing impaired. Her parents had the fear that getting a cochlear implant would take her real identity, and then she would be discriminated against in the hearing world while living with them.

So, the cultural considerations in this movie were related to the deaf community. It is also evident from the movie that the new concept of having a cochlear transplant took resistance from even deaf people because they were not ready to give up their legacy.

Helping a family with social issues and action plan

This family was deaf for 3 generations, and this has caused a sense of social resistance in them. In such scenarios, the fear of society and living in a world that is not yours become difficult. This was the main reason behind the conflict in both families. In order to get rid of this problem, a proper action plan should be created. This needs to be addressed from a psychodynamic perspective where the psychological changes are managed along with the environment.

As a micro action plan, the research on cochlear implants should be shared with them. The advantages and disadvantages of this procedure will help a lot in this respect. Once they know that it is not harmful, they will start accepting this process. After acceptance, it will become easy to convince them for surgery.

As a mezzo plan, the family should meet with people who have already gone through this procedure. When they see people working in a normal way, it will increase their motivation level. There are many predispositions in the minds of people especially when they are going to get something new like this. For those dispositions to go away, it is important to have a connection with the world they will see afterwards.

In the macro plan, the hearing community should make some efforts to make deaf people comfortable. This will increase their comfort level and the discrimination they experience will be removed. A level of confidence will help in taking this big step. As it is shown in the follow-up of this documentary after six-year, Heather, along with the mother who was once against this process, has a cochlear implant. Now they are living a healthy and easy life with the comfort of moving between the deaf world and the hearing world.

Conclusions

In this term paper, the detailed scenario of the movie 'Sound and Fury' is seen where the issues are solved from a cultural perspective. Different theories of psychodynamics, ecology, nature,

discrimination, and society are discussed to make it clear. The issues faced by the deaf community are discussed and how they can be solved with the help of these cultural perspectives. This movie was a detailed understanding of how deaf people are assessed from behavioral, emotional, social, and cognitive views.

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