

<p>Introduction:</p> <p>Overview of the essay</p>		<p>Scotland and Wales allow adults that are aged 16 to vote and participate in the political affairs of the country. According to ONS, in 2015 Scottish parliament passed a bill that allowed 15- and 16-year-old adults to vote in the Scottish Elections. But the question that arises from this discussion is that, are adults who are eligible to vote at the age of 15 and 16 mature and developed enough</p>	<p>(ONS, 2021)</p>
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		<p>to decide this caliber. To make important decisions such as participating in an election requires the ability of critical thinking to evaluate different candidates and to compare and contrast their abilities. Such critical thinking skills are developed throughout the childhood of a person. Experience and perception of different stages of childhood determine the critical thinking and decision-</p>	
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		<p>making ability of adults. This development of thinking and decision-making ability at different stages of life can be determined through the theories of Social Constructionism, Theory of Mind, and boundary-crossing. This paper will discuss how adults aged 16 can decide on political elections.</p>	
<p>Childhood studies</p>	<p>Childhood studies claim that children are actively involved in the development of their life and life</p>	<p>In the UK, childhood is perceived to be a time for enjoyment and recreation before that child grows up and deals</p>	<p>(Montgomery, n.d.)</p>

		<p>of the people around them.</p> <p>Moreover, how childhood is perceived in various regions of the world determines how children are treated in those regions.</p>	<p>with the matters of the world. But in many cultures, such as the Hazda culture of Tanzania childhood is seen as a time for preparation.</p>	
	<p>Social Constructionism</p>	<p>The decision-making and thinking abilities of children are not determined by the biological aspect but through social interaction and experience.</p>	<p>In religious cultures such as Jewish culture, Bat Mitzvah is a girl at age of 12 whereas, a boy becomes Bar Mitzvah at 13 years of age. These practices assign the same sense of responsibility to children of that age as it assigns to the adults.</p>	<p>(Dillon, n.d.)</p>

	Theory of Mind	Throughout childhood and infancy, children develop abilities to form attachments and to understand the mental state of others.	Children learn to respect the emotions of other people as they consider it rude to mock another upset child.	(Flint, n.d.)
	Boundary Crossings	The transition from adolescence to adulthood is marked by biological, social, and psychological changes. This helps an adult to solidify their identity. Late modern theory suggests that these changes are not hindered by social class anymore.	In the African culture of the Kaguru people, the transition to adulthood is marked by the process of circumcision. This ritual helps in solidifying cultural values and identity in young people of the tribe.	(Holford, n.d.)

	<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>Consider the balance of evidence and conclude.</p>	<p>The right to vote is one of the most important rights because a person gets to choose representatives that work for their welfare and better future. But the lowering the legal age for voting has been a long going debate because of the concerns about the decision-making abilities of a teenager. Wales and Scotland allow 16 years old adults to vote in the elections.</p> <p>Social Constructionism,</p>		

		<p>Theory of mind, and boundary-crossing show that adults have enough time to develop social and critical abilities which can help them decides political and legal matters.</p> <p>From the age of 18 months, children show the signs of self-awareness, and from then on different social and psychological changes that help the decision-making abilities of adolescence and adulthood.</p> <p>Thus, by the age</p>		
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		<p>of 16, young people have enough ability to make decisions about how to vote because by that age they develop characteristics such as reasoning, self-awareness, and recognition of differences of opinion.</p>		
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Childhood Development and Critical Thinking

Introduction

Scotland and Wales allow adults that are aged 16 to vote and participate in the political affairs of the country. According to ONS, in 2015 Scottish parliament passed a bill that allowed 15- and 16-year-old adults to vote in the Scottish Elections. Many other countries in the world are also discussing lowering the legal age for voting. But the question that arises from this discussion is that, are adults who are eligible to vote at the age of 15 and 16 mature and developed enough to decide this caliber. To make important decisions such as participating in an election requires the ability of critical thinking to evaluate different candidates and to compare and contrast their abilities. Such critical thinking skills are developed throughout the childhood of a person. Experience and perception of different stages of childhood determine the critical thinking and decision-making ability of adults. This development of thinking and decision-making ability at different stages of life can be determined through the theories of Social Constructionism, Theory of Mind, and boundary-crossing. This paper will look into these concepts to understand the development process of children to make the argument that adults aged 16 can decide political elections.

Childhood Studies

Childhood studies do not focus on the changes that occur throughout the childhood period and how interactions with society and society's perception of childhood affect the treatment of children in that society. Perception of childhood has evolved and the Puritan view is very less common. Puritans view saw children as evil and sinners and asked for a strict approach to the development of childhood. Puritan view focused on the value of the punishment to bring children towards God. But this view has changed over time and Children

are seen through a romanticized view. The romantic view associates clause of innocence and goodness with children and it has changed the way parents and society treat children.

According to Montgomery (n.d.), in the UK the vast perception of childhood is that it is a period of life during which children should focus on enjoyment and recreation, not having to worry about the social and political problems of the world. But in some cultures, such as the Hadza culture in Africa, childhood is seen as a period of training and preparation to face the challenges that will be presented to them throughout their life. The difference in perception in two cultural settings changes the way they treat children. Some laws provide protection and provision to children. But the laws of participation are debated because they can interfere with the protection and provision of Children. Children can influence their own lives as well as the lives of people around them. This provides children with the agency for involvement in matters of the world so that they can become responsible and competent members of society.

Social Constructionism

The lower legal age for the voting process makes sense according to social constructionism which claims that biological aspects of childhood development are not as significant as the social construct and interaction in developing the thinking and decision-making abilities of children. The example of social construct can be seen in the cultures that promote either collectivist or individualist culture. During the adolescence period, the individualist culture which focuses on individual achievements might instill different cultural values than the collectivist culture who promote the values of teamwork and contribution to society. Apart from the social values of a society, religious culture also has a significant impact on the development of children and creates awareness about their role in society. It can be seen through the practice of Bar Mitzvah in the Jewish community. A girl in the Jewish community becomes a Bat Mitzvah at the age of 12 whereas a boy becomes Bar

Mitzvah at the age of 13 years. This goes to show that the experiences of children all over the world and in different cultures are different. Moreover, during the age of 11 to 16 children go through the process of cognitive development and develop the abilities of reasoning and problem-solving. These cognitive changes can be linked with the physiological changes that occur in the brain. Dillon (n.d.) explained this using a study that tested the critical thinking and reasoning of children aged 9 and 11. When 9-year-olds were asked to put a third eye anywhere in the body and all of them placed it on the forehead and provided the reason that it would help them in seeing better. But when the same question was asked to the 11-year-olds they were much more creative with their answers and provided different reasons for their choices. The younger group showed signs of limited understanding of abstract concepts and labeled the task as silly, whereas the older group enjoyed the task and asked for more tasks of similar nature. Apart from cognitive development, the social development of children is also a part of adolescence. The relationship of children with their parents and friends changes during this period due to which their interaction changes as well. There is a change in the parenting style which can be influential in shaping different characteristics in children such as avoiding risky behavior and any problematic situation. During adolescence, children go through not just biological and physical development but social development as well which provides adults abilities such as reasoning, thinking, and problem-solving through interaction with society and social norms.

Theory of Mind

Children develop the theory of mind when they are around the age of 3 to 5 years. This theory helps them understand that different people around them perceive the world differently and allows complex social development. Theory of mind is important for the social and emotional development of children through early relationships and relationships

with peers. Through the period of infancy, children develop the ability to recognize faces and voices and communicate with parents in a verbal and non-verbal manner. This two-way communication allows the development of communication skills and helps in recognizing the agency of children. The attachment between children and their primary caregiver is also important for the future emotional and psychological development of children. In absence of sensitive parenting, the relationship between children and primary caregivers can be affected which could lead to potential psychological disorders in the future. Psychological well-being can be ensured by a positive relationship with siblings and caregivers (Flint, n.d.). During adolescence, children develop the ability to recognize and regulate different emotions which can help them understand the emotional state of others and themselves. Flint (n.d.) uses the rouge test to demonstrate the awareness that develops among the children from the age of 18 months onward. The experiment requires applying rouge on the face of the baby and to put a mirror in front of them. If the kid removes the rouge from their face instead of removing it from the mirror it can be said that child has developed the ability of self-awareness. This phenomenon occurs during the age of 18 to 24 months. The self-awareness of children increases after this age and by the age of 4 to 5 years children become more self-aware and show signs of self-reliability and competency. The development of the sense of identity and self-concept develops as early as 5 years of age when children can identify different gender roles and can show the tendency to practice gender stereotypes. The same trend can be seen in the recognition of nationality and race. Theory of Mind also starts to develop during the age of 3 to 5 years when children start to understand the emotional state of other people. If a child will start to cry upon hearing another crying child or can develop a sense of embarrassment and envy. They can also show the tendency of sharing toys and food with other children because at this stage they have developed the ability to understand the emotional state of others.

Boundary Crossings

Transition to adulthood can not be represented by a single line but through multiple lines. These lines may include social, legal, and biological boundaries. Different societies and cultures perceive aspects of the transition to adulthood differently. Some societies perform religious or cultural rituals to mark boundaries between adulthood and childhood, whereas other societies assign some legal age and responsibility to distinguish. For example, the Kaguru people of African culture perform the ritual of circumcision to mark the transition to adulthood. The idea of self-identity is becoming more and more important because modern society is moving from "normal biographies" to "choice biographies" (Holford, n.d.). This suggests that the transition to adulthood and path to life is no longer administered by the social class and social norms rather it is determined by the choices made by the person. The choices of a person are significantly affected by their perception of own. The education received in school also determines the preparedness of adults for entering the work market. But the lack of opportunities in the work market can exclude young people from society which is why work cannot be labeled as a key marker for identity anymore. This shows that the transition to adulthood can not be identified through one aspect alone. There is a non-linearity in the transition to adulthood for different people because throughout the process of developing young people show different emotions and different signs. An adult can feel adult at one moment and in the next they might experience something that could make them feel like a child. Thus, it is important to appreciate the childishness that adults show rather than seeing that childish aspect as some restriction and as an excuse to exclude them from important social and political decisions.

Conclusion

The right to vote is one of the most important rights because a person gets to choose representatives that work for their welfare and better future. But the lowering the legal age for voting has been a long going debate because of the concerns about the decision-making abilities of a teenager. Wales and Scotland allow 16 years old adults to vote in the elections. Social Constructionism, Theory of mind, and boundary-crossing show that adults have enough time to develop social and critical abilities which can help them decides political and legal matters. From the age of 18 months, children show the signs of self-awareness, and from then on different social and psychological changes that help the decision-making abilities of adolescence and adulthood. Thus, by the age of 16, young people have enough ability to make decisions about how to vote because by that age they develop characteristics such as reasoning, self-awareness, and recognition of differences of opinion.

Reflection

I've matured and developed the academic skills necessary to succeed as an academic student or scholar at this institute. The E102 module taught me skills like writing an amazing essay with a title, introduction, and main arguments, as well as how to put together an assertion and a counter-argument backed up with evidence, examples, and citations. Understanding the age of voting responsibility for Children and Young People in England and Wales is one example of how my experience working with language has influenced the terminology I use to describe the development of decision-making in the voting process in Wales and Scotland. Writing academic essays needs a lot of time that a student must plan for. It is important to collect reliable data and to find information in the source that is relevant to the study at hand. I have learned to improve my skimming and note-taking skills which have made me capable of planning my essays and effectively expanding the information. Through the course, I have learned the importance of vocabulary and technical terms which are

important in conveying the appropriate context of the information. To make sure that all of these aspects are covered, a writer should always plan. A student must therefore show dedication to his or her studies, taking into account both time and finances, after meticulous preparation.

When children and the adult markets around them are still in their formative years, there is a phenomenon known as the "commercialization of childhood". Commercialization does have some positive impact on the development of Children. This positive effect can be seen through educational development. There are various media and commercial products that can be beneficial for children because they are created considering the educational aspect of the product. Children sometimes engage with media such as books, games, and toys that can provide education and some positive messages. Whereas, there are multiple negative impacts of the commercialization of childhood. The consumer habits promoted by brands and other people in the society can influence the behavior of children which can sometimes lead to the behavior of materialism in children. Increased use of media such as games and increasing trends of materialism can lead to mental health problems and poor self-esteem among children. The concept of false childhood memories refers to memories that seem real but they are either partially fabricated or completely incorrect. Children are associated with false memories and are considered to be highly unreliable. But through the study of childhood behavior in this course, I have found evidence that false memory can be more significant in adults rather than in children. Some studies suggest that children and adults are equally sensitive to false memory. This showed me that previous studies might have been unreliable due to a lack of technology and the use of less effective techniques. This allowed me to develop a habit to improve my critiquing skills and questioning the findings and methods of any study before believing it.

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