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Essay 1 – Research Proposal Essay (Popular Sources)

Dissociative Identity Disorder is a disorder that is hard to discover at an early age but usually is noticed around the late teenage years. This is important, due to how it can be done away with by having a strong connection and support from friends and family; having the courage to speak among others about mistreatment and abuse is key to preventing the disorder. A home is where children grow and begin to create their future self as an adult, and the type of culture one is in also plays a factor in how home life is upheld. I plan to argue how home life in an Individualistic culture contributes to the development of this disorder and provide solutions to possibly eradicate it.

Dissociative Identity Disorder was formerly called 'Multiple Personality Disorder', and it was changed to show the disorders reality. "One of the reasons for the decision by the psychiatric community to change the disorder's name from Multiple Personality Disorder to Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) is that "multiple personalities" is somewhat of a misleading term"(Grohol). Patients with this disorder have a lack of consistency in maintaining one identity. It is a mental disorder that is characterized by the existence of two or more personalities and is acquired by experiencing severe trauma and abuse during early childhood development. The individual suppresses the horrendous events by pretending it was happening to someone else, or 'dissociating' from themselves.

Kirstin Fawcett, from my first source, The U.S. News and World Report, addressed this disorder first by describing it as "A patient's personality splinters off into separate identities allowing some respite from emotional pain"; the person copes with their trauma and abuse by losing connection with their thoughts and memories. Next she includes a movie that is based on a true story of a man who had twenty-four identities, and he was the first person to use Dissociative identity disorder successfully in

court as a defense. She also adds how the disorder is seen as controversial, some physicians don't know how to diagnose it, and gets it confused with schizophrenia! There isn't a specific treatment for it, but there are different approaches that doctors have tried, consisting of many kinds of therapy sessions and practices. This source relates because it addresses how an individual's trauma is caused by someone close to them, how they handle it, and why they handle it that way. Not having someone to confide in about hurtful events isolates a person from everyone else, and even themselves. One thing I found interesting about this source was that Dissociative Identity Disorder only affects 1 to 3 percent of the population; this led me to investigate more on what countries were the affected populations. Another thing I found interesting was a quote that explained how the therapist has to go back to the patient's childhood to find out what makes the patient act the way they do currently.

My second source, "Dissociative Identity Disorder" from *The Express Tribune Magazine* by Zohaib Amjad, begins with him describing how the disorder needs to be further understood and learned in the realm of mental disorders. Next he gives the definition of what a personality is and how it contains feelings that makes people behave in certain ways. Zohaib states, "Unfortunately, at times, some traumatic experiences push the different ego states to lose all forms of communication with one another"; this leads to a person adapting different names and genders. He then continues to explain why Dissociative Identity Disorder is rare for adults to develop, because the 'period of vulnerability' is from about 18 months to 8 years old. Lastly he gives examples of how to spot signs of the disorder, to get help, kinds of therapy, and raising awareness. I found a few things that were interesting in this source. Some families are apathetic about taking their children to the doctor because they want to purposely avoid finding answers. This led me to my hypothesis because different cultures handle situations differently. Another is that there is a national day, National Multiple Personality Day on March 5th!

My hypothesis is that Individualistic cultures are more likely to have a higher chance in the development of Dissociative Identity Disorder, than collectivistic cultures. I came to this perspective due to endless reading about childhood and attachment. It seems as if this disorder is acquired due to lack of help, support, or safety within a family. Stronger family connections are very necessary in preventing this disorder. Another perspective I came across from my first source was that some individuals do become successful with this disorder. I never thought someone could manage different identities and a life successfully! Some additional research questions I will have to answer will be: the time needed to be spent with the children in an individualistic culture, solutions to making a stronger family, ways to create comfort in talking about feelings among peers, how to propose more awareness tactics and more.

I personally relate to this topic because it's something I have always had interest in. While being a Psychology major, I have a very colossal interest in the human brain and how it works. In my Psychology 1101 class, we never went into full detail about Dissociative Identity Disorder. We only skimmed the surface of what the disorder was and never really talked about any historical examples or movies. I recently watched a new movie out in theaters with my boyfriend called "*Split*" which is about a man with 24 distinct personalities who kidnapped 3 girls. I'm also enticed to a fairly new television show called Bates Motel, which is about an 18 year old boy that has two personalities. Pretty interesting right?

At this point in my research, I have to focus on finding more sources that are specifically culture based and help strengthen my argument with sufficient data. I will need to additionally answer questions like: what causes people to abuse kids, which culture has higher rates of child abuse, and what solutions can be offered to ending child abuse in relation to this disorder. I will need mainly peer reviewed scholarly journals and books to incorporate into my research, and I need pure accuracy within my paper. My perspective may change if I find that collectivistic cultures that have higher rates of Dissociative Identity Disorder than individualistic cultures.

Works Cited:

Grohol, John M. "What is Dissociation?" *Psych Central*. Grohol, Feb. 2016. Web. 9 Feb. 2017.

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Amjad, Zohaib. "Dissociative Identity Disorder." *The Express Tribune*. The Express Tribune, Nov. 2015. Web. 9 Feb. 2017.