

Theoretical Conceptualization of Alex's Sexual and Relational Development Using CBT

Student's Name

University Name

Course Code

Professor's Name

Due Date:

MY PERFECT WRITING

Theoretical Conceptualization of Alex's Sexual and Relational Development Using CBT

Presenting Issues (Counselor Perspective)

From a counseling perspective, Alex presents with issues related to guilt, shame, and confusion about his sexuality and relationships. He finds it hard to balance his own personal wants with the moral principles he has been indoctrinated with since his childhood. Alex struggles with creating limits and is afraid of being perceived as selfish. He will tend to seek outside confirmation when it comes to making relational decisions, which will cause him to become anxious, emotionally distressed, and fail to exploit genuine relationships.

Life Stage 1: Emerging Adulthood (Sexual Development, Relational Health, Sexual Expression)

In emerging adulthood, Alex explores polyamorous relationships. His sexual development shows a great internal conflict between his desires and moral beliefs. This brings confusion and a poor sense of sexual self.

In terms of relational health, Alex has trouble communicating, jealousy, and setting boundaries. He does not engage in confrontation and considers the needs of others along with his own needs, and this brings imbalance in relationships (Carroll, 2025).

Regarding sexual expression, Alex feels uncertain about his desires and struggles to identify what is pleasurable to him. Shame makes him repress his needs in such a way that boundaries become unclear, leading to emotional strains.

Life Stage 2: Young Adulthood (Sexual Development, Relational Health, Sexual Expression)

In young adulthood, Alex gets into a monogamous relationship. His sexual development reflects a conflict between authenticity and social expectation. He doubts that his actions are those of his real self or that he wants someone to like him.

His relational health lacks openness. He lives in fear of conflict, thus avoiding the discussion of intimacy and long-term needs. In terms of sexual expression, Alex suppresses desires that do not conform to his existing pattern of relationships. This translates to frustrations, anxiety, and conflict within himself in making decisions.

Cultural, Religious, and Societal Attitudes and Beliefs

Alex's attitudes and beliefs about sexuality are shaped by his conservative upbringing. He correlates “good” relationships with sacrifice and control. These assumptions are the direct cause of his presenting problems through the creation of feelings of shame, the constriction of communication, and the impact on what decisions he will make in his relationships (Scavarda, 2024). Consequently, his personal identity, as well as personal relationships, is influenced by external perceptions rather than his own principles.

Sex-Positive Theory/Model: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) provides a structured and sex-positive approach to address Alex’s concerns. It emphasizes the recognition and the alteration of unhelpful thoughts in addition to the acceptance of sexuality (Carroll, 2025). Alex believes in the form of problem statements like “I must sacrifice my needs” and “my desires are wrong”. These trends intensify shame and emotional pain, which is why CBT can be an effective model to use in dealing with this question.

Application and Appropriateness of CBT

CBT is appropriate because it directly targets internalized beliefs, shame, and conflict that surround Alex with respect to sexuality. It enables him to know how these beliefs have formed and how they are affecting his emotions and actions. Through disrupting these patterns, Alex can work to minimize guilt and learn to have a more accepting perception of his sexuality.

CBT helps Alex recognize the negative thoughts shaping his experiences. It enables him to explore how these beliefs were formed and how those have affected his behavior (Carroll, 2025). This process strengthens his sense of self, as he develops self-trust and understanding of who he is. It also improves relationships by minimizing avoidance and promoting more open communication. Regarding sexual decision-making, CBT helps Alex to make decisions regarding his own principles and not because of fear or other demands of those around him.

Interventions and Application

Cognitive restructuring helps Alex in identifying and challenging negative thoughts about sexuality. Reinterpreting himself through words like “my needs are selfish”, he can reduce shame and come up with a more balanced perspective about himself (Santos et al., 2024). This goes directly towards enhanced self-understanding.

Values clarification and communication practice help Alex to identify what is important to him, and to communicate it directly in relationships. These skills can be enhanced by the practice that allows boundary-setting and openness to be improved (Santos et al., 2024). In the long run, this builds his sense of agency and therefore makes confident decisions based on his values and not influenced by external forces.

References

- Carroll, J. (2025). *Sexuality Now: Embracing Diversity* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Santos, B., Pinho, L., Nogueira, M. J., Pires, R., Sequeira, C., & Montesó-Curto, P. (2024). Cognitive Restructuring during Depressive Symptoms: A Scoping Review. *Healthcare*, *12*(13), 1292. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare12131292>
- Scavarda, A. (2024). The shame–blame complex of parents with cognitively disabled children in Italy. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, *46*(5), 966–983. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.13742>