1. For example, research has found that some schizophrenics have enlarged ventricles in the prefrontal cortex and also that sufferers experiencing hallucinations have lower activation levels in the superior temporal gyrus.
2. As such strategies adopted in the therapy have been found to improve symptoms this suggests the cognitive dysfunction is the cause of such symptoms
3. This would suggest that there is a neural basis to cognitive symptoms such as derailment of thought and language. This explanation of schizophrenia therefore may be criticised as it does provide us with understanding about the underlying causes of dysfunctional cognitive processing and the symptoms experienced by sufferers.
4. Cognitive treatments have been found to be effective which would further support the validity of the explanation.
5. Furthermore there is ample theory and evidence to suggest there is a genetic and or neural cause to the disorder and that family dysfunction might act as a contributing factor or trigger for the condition; not be at the root cause of the condition.
6. For example CBT can help develop the functioning of meta representation through the sufferer challenging the origin of delusions and recognise the source of hallucinations.
7. Despite a large body of research supporting the link between symptoms and faulty cognition, the theory does not tell us anything about the origins of those faulty cognitions. It may be the case that structural brain abnormalities lead to the differences in thought processes seen in symptoms of the disorder.
8. A disadvantage of adopting this explanation therefore is its potential negative implications and furthermore the social sensitivity of the theory may mean that the theory is not widely researched or accepted by society
9. The support for this theory can be criticised due to its correlational nature and its inability to establish the true cause of schizophrenia.
10. It is very difficult to establish the direction of the relationship between environment and behaviour.
11. Family dysfunction including maladaptive communication may be the result of the child’s symptomatic behaviour rather than the cause of the illness.
12. This challenges the support for this theory and its ability to explain the cause of schizophrenia.
13. Adopting this explanation may have negative implications as it can be interpreted as blaming the parents of sufferer’s for their child’s development of the disorder.
14. The theory suggests the cause of schizophrenia is the families’ maladaptive communication and the home environment.
15. As a result of this explanation parents of sufferers may then feel responsible for their child’s illness. Furthermore, responsibility being placed on parents for their child’s illness can cause even greater levels of stress and anxiety in the family which may in turn then trigger off or exacerbate the illness.
16. Research findings demonstrate that Cognitive Behaviour Therapy has a significant effect in reducing both positive and negative symptoms of schizophrenia through brief intervention programmes (Tarrier et al., 2005).
17. This would suggest Interactionist explanations using theories of cognitive neuroscience that consider biological and cognitive contributions to the disorder would be more effective in explaining onset.