**3.7 Social Development**

What are the constituents that participate in the development of a person? For moral philosophers ‘personhood’ is not an automatic characteristic in human existence but is rather dependent on the realisation of self-awareness, moral autonomy, and a multitude of other constituents of distinctly human ability. Yet, while studying the development of personhood, developmental scientists stress the continuous relational context in which babies and little children develop their earliest understandings of who they are, who others are, and how to weave relationships with children. (Thompson, 2006)

The aim in this introduction to child’ social development is not to describe how the early personality of a child emerges or identify individual characteristics that will give us insights about adult personality traits. Instead, through this chapter, we just want to highlight the different stages that shape the social development of a normal human being and that can be summarised in terms of Erikson (1980).

Erik Erikson, a German American Psychoanalyst, developed the theory of social development in stages just in the way Jean Piaget did with his cognitive development theory.

The only difference is that Erikson regarded those stages as a series of psychological or social crises which have a very crucial role in the life of a person in terms of relationships and feelings towards himself and towards the others (Erikson, 1980). It is to be raised that each of Erikson’s stages consists of a kind of dilemma which hold either advantages or disadvantages to the individual person at different ages. Surmounting one stage crises will have effects on the upcoming crises related to each respective stage. Erikson came up with eight crises that extend throughout a person’s life span. They are summarised in the table below.

**Table 6:** Eight psychosocial crises according to Erikson (adopted from Seifert)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Psychosocial crisis** | **Approximate age** | **Description** |
| Trust and Mistrust | Birth to one year | Development of trust between caregiver and child |
| Autonomy and shame | Age 1-3 | Development of control over bodily functions and activities |
| Initiative and guilt | Age 3-6 | Testing limits of self-assertion and purposefulness |
| Industry and inferiority | Age 6-12 | Development of sense of mastery and competence |
| Identity and role confusion | Age 12-19 | Development of identity and acknowledge of identity by others |
| Intimacy and isolation | Age 19-25+ | Formation of intimate relationships and commitments |
| Generativity and stagnation | Age 25-50+ | Development of creative or productive activities that contribute to future generations |
| Integrity and despair | Age 50+ | Acceptance of personal life history and forgiveness of self and others |

* + 1. **Preschool Crises**

1. **Trust versus Mistrust:** The first stage in Erikson’s social personal development theory starts from birth to the age of 1 year. Up to Erikson, the babies who go through this age successfully are those who gain confidence from their caregivers while they satisfy their basic needs. This takes place as a result of care givers being responsive to their infant’s needs for food and care, which will end up in the feeling that they can rely of the world around them(Thompson, 1998). Meanwhile, infants who do not resolve the trust crisis will end up by a feeling of mistrust towards others and view the world around them as hostile and not supportive.
2. **Autonomy versus Shame**

The stage that follows the trust mistrust one, is characterised by a period where children start to learn to become self-sufficient. For instance, between the age of 1 and 3, babies start to talk, walk, eat and use the toilet. This stage usually fosters a sense of children’s autonomy, independence, and mastery of thought, emotion and behaviours control.

According to Erikson, babies who fail to resolve the autonomy crisis will end up in doubting in themselves and develop a sense of shame as result of their beliefs that they are unable to control their environment. This trust phase while resolved successfully by children, will have positive results in school where they will show high confidence while doing their academic tasks as well as coping with their classmates and making relationships. This sense of confidence may generate success (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998).Erikson advises caregivers to encourage such autonomous behaviour by allowing children to make their own choices, to eat and dress alone, and to do their toilet by themselves.

1. **Initiative versus Guilt.**

At approximately the age between 3 and 6 appears the next stage which coincides with the first experiences of children at school. During this period, children affirm themselves in ways considered to be socially acceptable and start to learn to take initiative in their relationship with their school mates and tasks given by their teachers. For example, the child at a day care center may now undertake, for example, to build the “biggest city in the world” out of all available unit blocks—even if other children want some of the blocks for themselves. The child’s projects and desires create a new crisis of initiative and guilt, because the child soon realizes that acting on impulses or desires can sometimes have negative effects on others—more blocks for the child may mean fewer for someone else. According to Erikson, kids who cope well with this stage are the ones who have insights about the purpose in life. Children who fail to resolve the initiative crisis successfully will have difficulties to take initiatives later on in their lives. At school, successful children will demonstrate well refined self-regulation skills and an ability to set learning objectives. The role of caregivers and at home and teachers at school is to provide opportunities for children to work on new things and scaffold children when they try to do activities on their own.

* + 1. **Elementary and Middle School Crisis: Industry versus Inferiority**

The fourth stage occurs between the age of 6 and 12 when children are at primary or middle school years. At this stage the child needs to face new challenges and learns new skills. Unfortunately, when these learning needs are not fulfilled, children will likely develop a feeling of inferiority.

To pass this stage successfully, children need to develop a sense of competence and industriousness in any work they tackle. Of course, in school this industriousness competence should have to do with school work such us homework and projects. To promote industry, caregivers and teachers at schools should set children to work on activities that are within their zone of proximal development, that is to say, reasonably challenging to their actual cognitive development in order to promote a sense of attainment of success (Dweck,2008).

While the child successfully fulfils and masters an activity, he might be given another one which is a bit higher and more demanding and challenging than the previous one.

For example, Belcher & Hatley (1994) setting learners to work on challenging and supportive middle school experience is a crucial factor in their preparation towards a successful shift into secondary school education . In a research undertaken by Mizelle (1995), it was asserted that learners declared that if their middle school teachers had encouraged them towards taking in charge their own learning and presented to them a more challenging curriculum, their upgrading to secondary school would have been much more easier . These findings are congruent with those of Oates and her team of researchers (1998), who came out with the conclusion that students who took part in a community learning project ,meant to help middle school pupils develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and behaviour ,had an easier and successful move into high school than pupils who had not taken part in the community project.

* + 1. **High School Crisis: Identity versus Role Confusion**

The fifth stage of Erikson’s psychological development theory coincides with adolescence which is a very critical period in the life of a person, when teenagers seek to find their identity in occupation, politics, and religion. It is at this age that teenagers start to question themselves who they are, what they will do with their lives,

(Kroger, 2005; Pals, 2006).

Teenagers who manage to successfully go through this stage are the ones who are self-confident about themselves. However, those who struggle to resolve this identity crisis will generally remain confused about who they are, how their future as human beings inside their community will be, and what they should do with their lives.

Some key solution to help adolescents go through this period safely, is at the hands of adults who should show more appreciation of as many careers, life styles, and ideologies as possible. At school, teachers should create environments that enables the learners with chances to explore and expand their views of the occupations they might do after school. For example, encouraging them to take on roles as doctors, authors, noble prizes holder

(Hamman & Hendricks, 2005).

Besides, teachers are required to demonstrate and show some kind of tolerance vis-à-vis their students’ behaviour still in search of their identity. Erikson suggests that adults should be more tolerant towards adolescents’ public displays, unsteadiness, and experimentation since it is via these activities that they have an idea about their future adult roles. When adolescents’ identity choices lead to rejection, tension, and violent behaviour from peer mates, then it is of utmost importance to provide and support them within a safe environment so that they are protected. (Koppelman & Goodhart,2005).

**3.7.4Erikson’s Adulthood Crises**

The last stages of Erikson’s personal development theory take place at advanced ages and begin after the adolescence period approximately around the age of 19.

1. Intimacy versus Isolation.

This stage is characterised by young adults seeking intimate relationships with others. Success at this stage will usually generate the young person’s ability to feel non-selfish admiration, and to develop a strong, affectionate relationship that usually is bilateral in giving and taking.

The non-success at this stage will generally result in a feeling of isolation and a feeling that one is unable to tie intimate relations with others (Berscheid & Reis, 1998).

1. **Generativity versus Stagnation**.

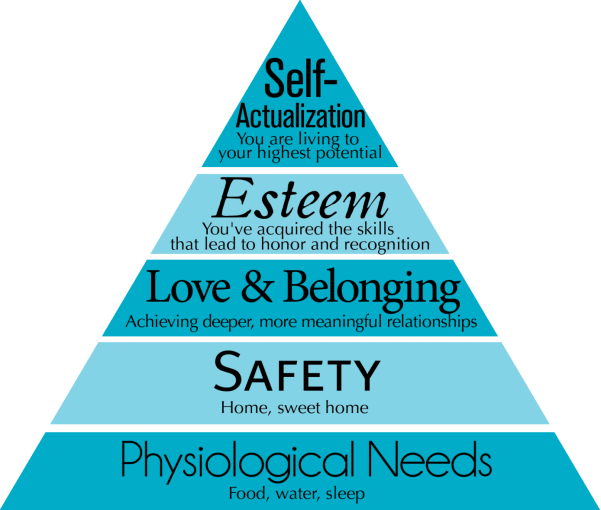
The seventh psychological stage occurs during mid-adulthood, at a time when individuals have established a family and look for the adequate ways to sustain themselves and others. Adults who successfully manage to get through this crisis, usually feel a need to nurture their family, share what they have realised with younger adults, and engage in child education or mentorship (Smetana, 1997). In case the crisis is not resolved, adult individuals might develop a sense of stagnation in their lives and would have a negative feeling towards their contribution in the world. Like teachers, adults who manage to go through this stage successfully are likely to be proud enough about their realisation and would like to help their students achieve their own objectives.

1. **Integrity versus Despair.**

The last psychosocial stage occurs by the age of 50 an onward, as people attempt to make sense of the lives they have led so far. According to Erikson, the people who are happy with the choices and the decisions they had taken during their lives, do generally gain a kind of wisdom that will accompany them throughout the rest of their lives. However, if the crisis at this stage is not resolved, this may result in a development of a feeling of despair over their lives and the opportunities they could not profit from.

* 1. **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

The theory of personal needs developed by Maslow is framed in a form of a pyramid where the basic or “lower level” needs have to be satisfied before the higher level needs start to develop as shown in the figure below:



**Figure 3:** Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (retrieved from Education in Education Library)

In his theory Maslow distinguishes two kinds of needs: deficit needs and being needs.

The table below summarizes the two levels and their sublevels.

**Table 7:** Maslow’s sublevels of Needs

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Deficit needs | -Physiological needs  -Safety and security needs  -Love and belonging needs |
| Being needs | -Aesthetic needs  -Self-actualization needs |

Deficit needs precede the being needs, not in a way that they happen earlier in a person’s life, but in that deficit needs have to be satisfied before being needs can be tackled. As explained by Erikson, deficit needs might reappear at any time in a person’s life, depending on circumstances that shape his life. If that happens, the deficit needs must be realized before

an individual’s attention might move again to ‘higher’ needs. While we consider students’ cases that might be addressed when a student is issued from a family with economic problems, or with the stress related to poverty (Payne, 2005).

* + 1. **Deficit needs vs. growth needs**

The five stage model put forward by Maslow can be divided into two categories: deficiency and growth needs. The first four stages are usually referred to as deficiency needs, and the upper need is labelled by growth or being needs. Deficiency needs are the result of deprivation and are the supposed to be the reason behind the motivation of people mainly when they are not realised. It also assumed that the longer those needs are denied, the stronger the motivation to fulfil them will be.For instance, the longer an human being stays without eating, the sharper his hunger will be. Maslow (1943) primarily explained that individuals have to first satisfy lower level deficit needs before moving on to satisfy higher level growth needs. However, he later made it clear that meeting the needs is not “all-or-none” phenomenon, which means that the need should not be realized 100⸓ before the following need occurs (1987, p.69).

Deficit needs, as explains Seifert (2009), are the fundamental daily necessities of physical and emotional well-being. The primordial needs are the physiological ones- food, sleep, clothing, and the like. If these requirement are unmet, nothing else matters for an individual, mainly higher needs such as self-fulfilment. A school learner who is not having the appropriate amount of food to eat, is not going to show much interest in learning. Yet, while physiological needs are satisfied, safety and security needs become of utmost importance. One of the most basic requirements for any human being is stability and protection. A child growing in an abusive family might get enough food to eat but may have a feeling of constant insecurity and a lack of safety. In school, the learner is more likely to get along with a well-organised classroom with regulations that guarantee his personal safety, regardless of whether or not the quality of learning is satisfactory in his eyes.

While the physiological and safety needs are satisfied, love and belonging needs show up. Individual persons try to develop relationships with friends, as these personal relationships have an impact on their personality within their community. In schools, a student may consider friends’ and teachers approval as one of his top priorities. If such a student manages to integrate a group, then his motivation will shift to esteem needs. Now the concern is to gain recognition and respect which will help him/her achieve learning goals to earn public recognition.

* + 1. **Being needs**

These needs characterised by the will to of a person to become the best of what he can possibly become. They embody cognitive needs (a desire for knowledge and understanding), aesthetic needs (this has to do with beauty and order), and above all self- actualisation needs which has to do with reaching the utmost level of one’s potential. Being needs appear when all the deficit needs have been fully realised. Yet, unlike the deficit needs, the being needs do not disappear when they are fulfilled, but tend to generate a will for more realisations of the same kind. A wish to know more is an ever ending process which motivates the person to know more and more during his life span.

Maslow explains that self-actualizing individuals have some kind of characteristics which specify them. They have deep relationships with others, but tend to value solitude too. They have sense of humour, but know when to use it and never use it against others. They accept themselves as well as others and are spontaneous, creative, and ethical.