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Human Development Portfolio

Part 1 (page 2) : - Infographic exploring Maslow's model.

Part 2 (page 3-6) : - Essay exploring in depth concept of holistic child development links to Maslow's model.

Part 3 (page 7-9): - Essay offering three examples from Early Years Practice, to highlight Maslow's significance in understanding child development.

Reference List.

Physiological needs are the foundation of Maslow's hierarchy, this suggests that there are basic needs that must be completed before an individual can move on to upper levels of fulfilment.

Meeting physiological needs is critical for retaining and guaranteeing a person's survival and basic functioning needs are met. These needs are important as they include essential conditions for human survival, such as air, water, food and health.

Air: Sufficient oxygen intake is necessary for respiration and overall bodily functions.

Water: Normal hydration is crucial for maintaining bodily functions and preventing dehydration.

Food: Nutritious food provides the energy and nutrients for growth and development.

Health: Involves factors such as adequate nutrition, exercise, rest and medical care.

Without the basic functioning needs a person will simply not be able to accomplish the next level and ascend through the hierarchy.



(Source: Beyondpsychub,2023)



(Source: Ifioque, 2024)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Need

Security is the second level is Maslow's hierarchy of need. It focuses on the individual's basic need for security, stability and protection, this includes physical safety from harm and danger. It also includes emotional and psychological safety.

Maslow (1954) found that the importance of safety needs being met included having a safe living environment, being financial security and access to healthcare. Lack of safety can often lead to feelings of anxiety and insecurity. Which in turn can cause this level of need to decline and the individual will have to start to re-build their need for security all over again.

According to Willingham (2023) when referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, William describes several levels that human beings go through, and that each need can be fulfilled. Thus, relating to Maslow's theory that each level must be necessarily met before someone is ready to begin the following level.

Love and belonging needs which is also known as social needs are the third part of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which is a theory in psychology that give explanations to the different type of levels of needs that determine human behaviours.

Social needs contain the need for love, belonging, friendship, intimacy and relationships. This level highlights the importance of social connections and interactions for human well-being. People seek to form meaningful relationships and feel a sense of belonging inside their community and social group.

Shortage of social connections can often lead to feelings of isolation, loneliness and sometimes mental health issues. Meeting social needs can contribute to positive self-esteem and emotional well-being.

An important example of this is, spending time with family, and friends as well as participating in social gatherings and activities which are part of the wider community which humans find engaging.

According to the Douglas et al (2010, pg 3) renovating the pyramid of needs article, which critiques the original work from Maslow (1943). The article states, the ideas behind the behaviour can sometimes outweigh the need. Therefore, a shift in which the hierarchy can be achieved can be dependant on the persons attitude and willingness to become more social and less dependent on others.

Self-esteem also known as egotistical need is the fourth level in Maslow's hierarchy of need, following on from physiological, safety and social need. Egotistical needs are focused on self-esteem, self-worth, confidence, achievement, respect from others and recognition. This level comprises of both internal needs such as self-respect and external needs such as status and personal achievements. This need is driven by the desire to be valued and respected by oneself and others, individuals at this level seek to foster a strong sense of self-worth and assertion in their abilities.

Failure to achieve egotistical need can result in feelings of weakness, low self-esteem, and an over-reliance on outside validation. According to McLoed (2024) blog post, which indicates that throughout the hierarchy the egotistical need for respect or reputation is very important for children and adolescents as it leads real self-esteem and pride. In other words, the need to be liked and admired by their peers, can outweigh the need of security, love and physiological need.

Self-actualisation is the highest level of needs in Maslow's hierarchy of need. It represents the recognition of the individual's full potential, leading to personal growth, creativity, and a sense of fulfilment. Self-actualisation involves pursuing personal goals, seeking knowledge and striving for excellence.

Individuals who have achieved self-actualisation are described as having a strong sense of purpose, creativity and a deep understanding of themselves and the world around them. This need is about reaching one's highest level of personal development and becoming all that the individual can become. Although Maslow did not believe that many individuals could not achieve true self-actualisation, Maslow did believe that all individuals encounter transitional instants of self-actualisation. This is evident when such significant occurrences such as becoming parents, achieving sporting recognition or examination success. These achievements are often challenging to achieve and maintain regularly.

In this part of the portfolio there will be exploration into the concept of holistic child development and how it with links to Maslow's hierarchy of need model. It will include why holistic development is important to early years childcare and education, as well as touching on what other theorists say in relation to holistic development and how this also links in with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. There will also be discussions on what obstacles may get in the way of enabling holistic development and is there any issues with Maslow's theory.

Holistic development refers to a child's growth in all areas, these includes social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and moral. These developmental stages of a child often happens when the child is playing, which is how children learn during the infantile years. Human development occurs in multiple areas, at different times and is always unique for each child. According to McIlroy (2021) there are independent areas of growth and development, they all need to mature at once and they all come together to form the entire child. The early years are very important, as this is the time when fast growing and learning happen, the best techniques for improving and guiding young children is to use a holistic childcare method.

First, there are five aspects of holistic child development that provide children learning opportunities (Scaltsas, 2023). These include: **Physical development**, such as building gross motor and fine motor skills, a few examples of these would be walking, catching, building towers and completing jigsaw puzzles. **Social development**, discovering how to communicate, take turns, share, working together, establishing significant connections with friends, settle conflict and follow social cues. **Emotional development** is learning to express one's emotions in a healthy way, being able to recognise others' emotions, social and emotional development link together as they both impact on a child's overall wellbeing. **Cognitive development** includes learning the use of language, understanding concepts such as sorting, sequencing and matching, along with the process of cause and effect. The last part of

holistic child development is: **Morals and values**, enabling spiritual development, personality development, interactions with the environment in which they live and the view of ethical decision making and understanding moral cues.

According to Bruce (2019, p 368) the German educator Friedrich Froebel, remains one of the leading creators and most activist influencer on the education and care of young children and their families. Thus, from observation-based assessment of individual children, with informed planning. Bruce (2019, p 369) states that from the observation Friedrich Froebel had seen, that play was the greatest indicator which integrated development and learning in young children. Furthermore, holistic child development is looking at the child as a whole person and developing their own personality and discovering how the world works through a holistic approach. This in turn makes greater links into Maslow's hierarchy of need, with family being one of the core elements to Froebel's observations. In other words, being loved and valued is paramount to the development and learning of the child.

Following on from this is the freedom of movement and self-activity and how it is important. This also links to the hierarchy of needs in which Maslow described the need for self-actualisation, which works in conjunction with guidance from the adult which is crucial, and the need for safety is met when the adult or main care giver is there to support the child on their journey. Through making connections between what is familiar to the child, but also facing new challenges and un-familiar experiences, which is an influential tool for learning.

According to Frost (2013, p 16) there are many facts that strengthen the value of early experiences and how it could influence children coming into early years settings. First of all, at birth a baby has all the brain cells (neurons) it needs in place, these neurons are on the whole unconnected, by the time the infant is three years of age, there is vast system of connections. A baby's genes begin the activity of brain development; however, it is the encounters that triggers the electrical activity which establishes

how the neurons connect and grow. The development of the brain is therefore experienced dependant. According to Queensland Government (2023) A baby's brain develops because of experiences and through interactions with others. Secondly human babies are well armed for development in a social environment, being drawn to others and the need to pursue nurture and protection from those around them. The babies automatically get from others what they need to nourish the brain. To put it more simply, this early part of the baby's life is when the baby is at the weakest. If the social world is not able to give the baby what he or she needs, brain development will suffer. That is to say that when children's early dependency needs are not met, it can have a lasting effect on the child, not only on emotional and social development but also on the child's ability to learn. Frost (2013, p 17) also surmises whether children can improve from early childhood traumas or not, and it is the benefit of the continuous positive interactions they confront throughout their childhood. Many of these relationships will happen in educational situations.

Following on (Hive, 2022) touches on the attachment theory created by the workings of John Bowlby between 1907-1990, it was described as 'A lasting psychological connectedness between human beings.' When it comes to holistic child development, attachment is a key factor. Children and young people foster unique tactics of attachment which is built on events and connections with their parents and caregivers. The emotional bond a child forms with parents or care givers, can change the view and understandings of occurrences throughout their lives. As mentioned above disruption to these connections can cause attachment problems and are habitually the cause of social, emotional, behavioural and mental health problems later in life.

Another example of links to Maslow's Hierarchy of need and holistic child development is carried out by Carl Rogers (2021) is an American psychologist and from his work in 1959, stated that the child or young person has inside himself or herself countless properties for self-understanding, and for changing the self-concept basic approaches of his or her, self-directed behaviour. In other words, these emotions may well be modified when the child has been given the positive surroundings for beneficial thoughts.

Finally, I draw the attention to the critiques of Maslow's model. According to the document Maslow's hierarchy of needs: An Islamic critique (Bouzenita et al, 2016, pp 59-81) it states that it is not tough to find varied reviews of Maslow's model. There have been an abundant of criticisms on the realistic validity, as Maslow made inadequate personal observations, the basis of his model. Maslow shaped his model on the highly individualistic group of people in the U.S in the 1950s and did not think about more communalist societies of the far and middle east and the impact of socialism when discussing the hierarchy of needs. To put it more simply, Maslow needed to widen his observations and view of other people who were not of high status. Thus, drawing to conclusion the varied of needs based on other religions, cultures and race, and how some of the needs are not necessary met in the original order for the individuals to progress onto the next stage.

This part of the portfolio there will be discussions on three examples from Early Years practice and why Maslow's hierarchy of need is significant in understanding child development.

In an early years setting, meeting a child's basic needs is essential because it provides a secure basis for a child's development, allowing the child to engage in learning and social interactions effectively; if a child's basic needs like food, sleep, safety and love are not met, it can significantly deter the child's cognitive, emotional, and social growth. Thus, impacting on overall wellbeing and ability to learn later in life.

Firstly, the role of the early years practitioner would be providing nutritious meals and snacks, plenty of sleep and rest periods, regular physical activity and comfortable clothing and appropriate hygiene practices. It is important that as early years professionals that children's basic needs are being met, because this gives children the support to develop ones own emotional needs and form secure attachments with caregivers, also being subjected to positive interactions and praise.

Secondly, early years practitioners can create a safe and stable environment for children to explore, whilst feeling safe and always protected. This gives the children the opportunities to express emotions, feeling of belonging and having opportunities for social interaction and play with other children (Veale, 2020, p 69). Observing and responding to children's cues and adapt routines to meet their individual needs, also having a safe and predictable space with clear routines and consistent expectations. Communication with parents and caregivers is paramount, as this is an opportunity to regularly share information about the child's needs and involve them in supporting their development.

Following on from this is transitioning in the early years, is when the early years practitioner has a vital role in fulfilling the duty and ensuring the transition from one setting to another is smooth and comfortable for both the child and parents.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) claims that a transition arises when a child's position is changed as the result of an alteration in role, setting or both. Children often have little say or control in the transitions they encounter, those children who experience problems are more likely to come from vulnerable groups, for example: children with additional learning needs, children whose caregiver is fleeing domestic abuse and children who come from deprived backgrounds.

Children who fall under these categories may be predominantly vulnerable through the home to school or home to childcare provision transitions. Thus, being said there will be many children who do not fall under the above category that will have a hard time with transitioning from one environment to the next. This is because young children and the children mentioned above, often do not have the skills that would give them the robust, emotional resilience to cope with new outlooks and new or strange environments and relationships. According to Welsh Government (2022) It is important that all the main people involved in the child's life are working in collaboration to ensure the transition period is smooth. Furthermore, effective communication is key in the process, from the child's caregiver, childminder and early years staff are fully engaged in the transition process. There are many tools which can be adapted to use for the child, the use of pictures of the school or setting, a timeline so the child knows the order of the day. This can help with the child's overall emotional well-being and reduce the anxiety for both the child and the main care giver.

The Children and young people's plan (Welsh Government, 2024) sets out to ensure every child and young person have the right to a flying start in life, to participate and benefit from learning and to have the best education as possible. It also states that children and young people should have healthy lifestyles and be protected from harm. Children and young people need to be seen, heard and given respect. It is necessary that children and young people have a home and a local area, that is a welcoming place to grow up and have a sufficient amount of financial and material support for what they need.

To conclude, Maslow is significant to early years practice because the hierarchy of need is a major concept, that outlines the progress of children's needs from essential to advanced levels. When it comes to early years, examining children from birth to around five years old, the background within the hierarchy can direct caregivers and educators to have a nurturing and supportive setting for children's development. Understanding and speaking about children's needs at each level promotes their growth and well-being, developing the young children who will be ethically informed citizens of Wales and the world.

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