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The theory

Abraham Maslow had a theory of a hierarchy of needs. This theory is essentially a pyramid in which there are levels of needs. According to Maslow (1943, p4) humans prioritise their needs into hierarchies. In Maslow's theory there are pre-potency needs prior to moving to the next level. Maslow (1943, p19) suggests that the development of needs relies upon the fulfilment of prior needs being fulfilled. Within this info graphic, this will all be discussed in depth.

Physical/Physiological Needs.

The first level is peoples physical needs. In this section, there are the needs for food, water, sleep, air-shelter and health. Without meeting these basic needs, a person cannot move onto the next level of the pyramid. Within this theory there is an emphasis on the physical needs and how they should be met first and foremost. According to Maslow (2022, p8) a person who is needing any of the needs in each section of the pyramid would prioritise the need for food over all else. If all the physiological needs are simply not met, then other needs will cease to exist. Community playthings (2017) states the physiological needs are of the highest importance. Maslow theorised that if the basic needs are simply not net, the mind and body cannot further develop. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is known with in the early years profession and is referred to frequently. Maslow's theory has also influenced the cognition behind the "living model". Aubrey (1943, p116) states Bronfenbrenner theorised that children need to have their basic needs met prior to being able to achieve at a higher level. Bloom also agrees that the child's basic needs should be met and that educators and professionals should ensure that the need for shelter, food and safety are met so that the children are able to achieve the final goal of "self-actualisation". The world health organisation (2017) agrees that humans have a right to have safe drinking water, wholesome food and good sanitation in order to ensure that basic needs are met, these needs are mentioned in the first level of Maslow's theory. The world health organisation (2017) states that it is a right to have suitable housing. This links into Maslow's theory as within the first tier, one of the imperative needs is a need for shelter and safety. This need would be met if they have adequate accommodation. This can also be linked into the second tier in respect of making the child feel safe and secure.

Safety and Security

The second level is then safety and security. Within this tier are the needs for safety, security, shelter and stability. Again, these must be met before one can progress onto the next tier of the pyramid. Weinburg (2012) suggests that Maslow's explanations of the needs in this tier can be linked to Montessori beliefs. According to Weinburg (2012) Maslow suggested that through observations, it is a general belief that children wish to feel safe, logical, predictable and orderly world, in which they can reply on. This satisfies the need for safety. Burleson (2014) acknowledges that in regards to safety needs they are generally thought to be environmental. This can include the child's school, home and in the general environment around the child. If the child's home life isn't adequate, then the child will have difficulties to develop and learn as they would not feel secure. This could be parents fighting or arguing at home, this would have a knock-on effect to the child feeing unsafe and unsecure therefore not meeting the needs for safety and security. Likewise, if a child doesn't have a sufficient routine then the world is not predictable to them, this can lead the child to feel anxious and unsafe. This can again affect the child's needs of safety and security as they would be uncertain of what will happen next.

Love and Acceptance/Belonging

In the third tier, the need for social interactions will be found. In this tier the needs for love, belonging and acceptance will be present. Once these are fulfilled then one can progress onto the next level of self-esteem. According to Johnson (2018) states that Bowlby believed that it is imperative to build strong social and emotional bonds in order for children to develop to their highest potential. This links to Maslow's hierarchy of needs through the love and belonging tier. If a child doesn't feel loved, they are not able to develop and reach their full potential or reach the tier of "self-actualisation". Burleson (2014) states that to aid satisfaction for the needs of love and belonging, the child will need to feel cared for and loved. Children may seek approval of practitioners and therefore would need to show that they know the worth of the child to ensure they feel cared for and belong within the setting.

Self Esteem

Within the forth tier of self-esteem, the needs for power, control, self-esteem, achievement, and confidence can be found here. Then there is the final tier called self-actualisation. Within this tier the need to develop, create and grow can be found. Maslow (1943, p18) suggests that once the self-esteem need is fulfilled then the person will develop self-confidence, strength and worth. If the need for self-esteem is not met then the person will develop feelings of self-doubt, weakness, inferiority and helplessness. Weinburg (2012) states that if a child has little self-esteem, they feel inferior and put little value on themselves. With out fulfilling the need of self-esteem they cannot develop to the stage of "self- actualisation".

Self-Actualisation.

At the top of the pyramid is the need for self-actualisation. The needs that fall into this category are morality, acceptance and creativity. Maslow (1943, p18) once this need is achieved then there will be a need to move onto the next need even though there is no further needs. This is not always the case if the person is fulfilled. According to Weinberg (2012) the definition of "self-actualisation" is problematic, but it can be said that people who have can "self-actualize" have psychological health. This is because the physiological and psychological needs have been met and as a result can enable one to be their "real self" and work towards fulfilling ones life goals.

The concept of holistic development

This essay will discuss the concept of holistic development and how it links to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It will also discuss what other theorists and their theories of holistic development and how it applies to Maslow's theory. Additionally, it will discuss factors that can affect holistic development and any issues with Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Holistic development is an overall development right from birth. This includes the growth, learning and development. When children learn holistically, they will not learn certain skills in an order. They will however learn a multitude of skills all at the same time (Trodd,2016). When one observes children, it is clear that children do not categorise their learning as an adult may. They use their skills in different areas to navigate their surroundings seamlessly learning as they go. In a holistic approach a child's well-being cannot be separated from their development (Lindon, 2005). The department of education (2020) emphasises the importance of holistic development and learning through its "seven areas of learning". These areas are to enhance the children's holistic development. Queen Margaret's university Edinburgh (2022) states that holistic development refers to progression of children through different areas of development. These are cognitive, biological, social and emotional. All areas of development are intertwined with others. A holistic approach to development ensures all areas of being are met collectively to ensure that the child's general well-being and health are met. Holistic development is important when working in the early years because it offers a sturdy foundation for "lifelong learning and well-being". When cultivating all areas of a child's development, practitioners are enabling them to meet their potential, develop an optimistic sense of self and to build vital skills to enable them to succeed in their later lives. Queens Margaret's university Edinburgh (2022) also states that holistic development enhances brain development and promotes neural connections, which in turn promotes the child's capability to learn and acclimate to their environments. Birth to three maters demonstrates that a child's development and learning are constant and use at the same time.

Johnson (2018) suggests that Bowlby' attachment theory (1951) emphasises that it is vital to build reliable social and emotional foundations to enable children to fully develop and achieve their full potential. This is also found within Maslow's hierarchy of needs; this would fulfil the needs under the love and belonging needs. According to Aubrey et al (2022,p116) Bronfenbrenner and bloom both theorised that parents make an impact on a child's holistic development prior to school age. This is underpinned by understanding that children's basic needs need to be met before they are able to progress the higher-level cognitive tasks. Bloom, like Maslow, believed that practitioners and society as a whole, should ensure children's basic needs are fundamentally met so that they are then able to begin to work towards their goal of "self-actualisation". Brodie (2018) agrees that within Bronfenbrenner's theory young children and babies are highly influenced by their family members from birth and that there will be contributing factors from the world around them, that may have a positive or negative impact on them. When children have a strong relationship at such a young age it gives them the opportunity to develop self-esteem, resilience and confidence. According Trodd (2016, p11) to Bandura's social learning theory, it is believed that children learn through imitation of what they view in the world around them. This links to Maslow's theory though the idea that an individual is motivated by progression within the hierarchy of needs. This would also make a child feel like they belong and that they are accepted by the adults and society around them.

The NSPCC (2024) states that children's mental health and development can be affected by a multitude of issues, for example if a child's environments are inadequate or if they have not built strong relationships with their families and peers will affect the experiences they have. If a child is neglected or emotionally abused this can still be considered a part of Maslow's theory. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs it states that all needs must be achieved before progression to the next tier can take place. These needs can be hindered if an individual is in this position as that child would not have their basic needs met. They may not have access to food, shelter and the general feeling of being safe and wanted (Johnson, 2018). According to the national library of medicine (2019) children with chronic illness have worsened general health. These children although having such an illness have comparable satisfaction to well children and are able to lead happy lives. This may affect their holistic development as if a child

has an illness that is physical it may hinder their physical development. This could in turn have a knock-on effect and hinder other areas of development such as social and emotional or cognitive. However, children that have chronic illnesses have a lower parent reported general health. These children have comparable satisfactions with other children that are well.

There are some flaws in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Maslow states that all needs must be met in order to be able to progress onto the next section of needs, however Stoyanor (2017, p56) suggests that there are "several scholars" that have established that the basic needs do not occur in the order that Maslow's theory proposes. There was a study carried out that found "people" in nations that are penurious, with little control over if they can have their basic needs met, were still able to find a degree of well-being. This was achieved through social relations and by fulfilling other psychological needs that they had more control over. For instance, in an penurious country where safety and physiological needs are not easily met, individuals can still find love, self-esteem and potentially self-actualisation. Stoynor (2017,p37) states that the self-actualisation need in Maslow's theory is not an original idea, it was first theorised by Kurt Goldstein in his theory " the organism (1939)". Maslow is purposefully ambiguous about the exact nature of "self-actualisation needs". This is because it is a rarity to find someone who is completely fulfilled and has achieved all they desired to.

Human Development: Part 3 Structure

Maslow's significance in understanding child development

This will discuss three case studies on different scenarios within the early years. Then it will discuss how it links into Maslow's hierarchy of needs and what role the adult plays in these cases to provide support to the child. Policies within Wales will be discussed in terms of how they support the child as a whole. Where applicable it will then link relative theorists.

Attachment

A child has started to attend an early years setting, the child has never been away from their parents, and gets very upset at drop offs.

Birth to three matters (no date) states the practitioner should help the child feel confident by ensuring they have a sense of belonging. The child should feel safe with the adult and know their individual needs will be met. The city of Bradford (no date) suggests Maslow classifies feeling "safe and secure" as a basic need in his hierarchy of needs theory. Glowscotland (2017) suggests that attachment is located higher on the hierarchy of needs, indicative of the vitality in childhood. Social care Wales (2024) suggests that behaviours are not a conscious act. The child could be acting this way as a coping strategy, this behaviour may have been an effective method for them in the past.Iriss (2020) suggests that the idea of attachment enables adults to understand and respond to children's needs.

According to Glowscotland (2017) Bowlby theorised that children have a natural capability of developing attachments. Konrad Lorenz studies influenced Bowlby's research on attachment. Glowscotland (2017) states that they disagree with Bowlby's theory in regard to attachments in children. Bowlby determined children that are deprived of motherly attachments later on develop a "delinquent personality". Glowscotland (2017) also states Ainsworth established a theory of attachment through her own research. Within this experiment a baby and mother went into a setting that contained toys. Whilst there they played, a visitor that the child does not know then enters the room while the mother then leaves. The babies reactions were then recorded. This experiment was carried out to determine the

power of babies attachments. This research found that babies formed strong secure attachments from a very young age. Ainsworth's research also discovered that children who have strong secure attachment had "more intimate relationships", therefore giving them a higher sense of self-esteem and that these children have a higher performance in school.

Play

This child is not able to play nicely with others and share toys.

The early years alliance (2019) suggests that adults should be facilitators during play. When doing this the adult is organising the play space in order for the children to play with different resources and create different opportunities. The adult's role changes throughout play and should respond to the unique needs of each child. According to Smidt (2011) play should be child led. This is how children problem solve and express their feelings and needs. Community play things (2024) suggests that play is a key feature in Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

In Wales there are policies that support the need for play. The UNCRC (2016) states that children have the right to play. According to Welsh government (2002) children have a strong instinct to play. Children can use play to learn about the world around them.

According to the early years alliance (2019) Piaget believed that play should be "the work of children". Vygotsky (1978) states that play is a major aspect of development. It is also suggested that within play "the zone of proximal development" presents earlier. Vygotsky (1978) also suggested that children develop according to their environment.

Transition

A child is starting to attend a childcare setting and has never left their parent before.

Transitions are frequently very stressful for young children; this may make them feel anxious and unsettled. NDNA (no date) states that for effective transitions, the transition should be based around the child and their needs. The child in this scenario is very much attached to their parent.

The adults role is to respond to each child's unique needs accordingly (Essex county council, 2024). Birth to three matters (no date) states the importance of having "high quality transitions" as this makes the child feel "known". The practitioner needs to work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that transitions are smooth and effective. This can be done by firstly visiting the child in a familiar setting where the child has a sense of security and safety. According to birth to three matter (no date) it is vital that families voices are heard, especially any concerns, this should be at a distance from the child.

The UNCRC (2016) article 12 states that all children have the right to express their feelings, wants and needs in any circumstances that affect them. These views should be taken seriously and the views of the child should be respected. This right should be considered when it comes to transitions, for example if a child does not want to do something they should not "have" to because the adult wants them to. There should be a choice in the matter.

Broker (2008, p20) suggests Bronfenbrenner's micro system is applicable to transitions as this plays a key role in the children's development. Bronfenbrenner children's well-being is impacted by links between micro systems (mesosystems). Bronfenbrenner suggested that transition is a period where great change takes place in a child's social setting.

In conclusion, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is important in the early years because it demonstrates the needs of children and the order in which they should be met. Although Maslow's theory isn't always correct as higher needs can be met without having all the lower needs in some cases.

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