

**Philosophy of Child Development**

Hana Lone

Texas Woman's University

## **My Philosophy of Child Development**

In the nurturing of a child, it is my belief that we must place an emphasis on wholeness. Attempting to understand the child in their entirety—across biological, cognitive, physical, socio-cultural, and spiritual domains— is the holistic foundation that guides my practice. By embracing each child in their totality and recognizing the contexts that shape them into who they are, societies and early childhood educators may be better equipped to properly guide the growing child towards their innate and infinite potential.

### **Biological Basis of Understanding**

Evolutionary theory offers an extremely valuable framework for understanding the biological root of all human behavior. Within a matter of decades, mass industrialization and exponential technological advancements have played significant roles in driving profound changes from our ancestral past. Such shifts can be observed across a variety of factors, including pervasive technology use, diminished social interaction, less time spent outdoors, to name a few. In a time where the world is evolving at a pace surpassing our own—a concept known as evolutionary mismatch— these changes have increased the prevalence of mental and physical health issues, as well as a lack of social connectivity (Li et al., 2018). The global health crises of COVID-19 only exacerbated these developmental impacts, as many children and adolescents were increasingly isolated during crucial formative years.

### **Interpersonal Relationships, Community Support, and Socio-Cultural Contexts**

Another piece of my philosophy is largely tied to the ideas of Lev Vygotsky, who emphasized the transmission of cultural tools through interpersonal contexts such as conversations, modeling, and scaffolding. Such reciprocal interactions are crucial for a child's smooth transition into their social and cultural milieu, highlighting the collective responsibility

of families and communities as they contribute to shaping the development of the child. Moreover, our globalized world offers a wealth of diverse people and communities. Increased multicultural socialization offers numerous benefits to the growing child, positively impacting areas such as self-concept, psychological flexibility, and diversity appreciation (Puente-Diaz et al., 2020).

### **Creating Enriching Environments**

The importance of fostering environments conducive to the unique development of every child is paramount to my philosophy. Understanding the conditions that facilitate optimal learning stands essential to my approach in effective child-rearing and environmental design. Concepts such as multisensory learning, developmentally appropriate practices, and inspiration drawn from Maria Montessori and Reggio Emilia childcare practices have profoundly shaped my perspective on nurturing and enriching the minds of young children.

### **Vision for the Future**

In a Montessori inspired childcare center, something as simple as a garden and friends serve as the classroom. Young, delicate hands of many colors plant seeds and tend to plants that soon become nutritious meals prepared together in the kitchen—fostering a sense of joy in our little community. The allure of digital screens fades and children prefer to seek out genuine human connection. At the table, children marvel at the flavors of foods from across the world and engage in fruitful interactions. They appreciate and engage in cultural events from around the world—enveloped in the beautiful colors of Holi or the warm light of a Christmas tree. A place where children can socialize across ages and are filled with curiosity, as guest speakers from different backgrounds enrich learning by immersing children in interactive narrative experiences.

Wrapped up in the warm embrace of their caregivers— allowing each child feeling safe enough to learn, play, love, and explore the wealth of knowledge illuminated in the world around them.

## References

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