Beliefs on human development and learning by Olivier Salvas

Children are exposed at a young age to different learning environments such as school, communities and society. The latter three exposes them to diversity and to individuals with whom they build relationships. Through these environments, learners will also explore culture and symbols. Positive experiences will have a direct effect on the learner’s emotions, which will affect their motivation. Both the intrinsic and the extrinsic motivation will act as the fuel to their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. In school, learners will be exposed to various learning opportunities based on a blend of three major learning theories: behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism. The theorists behind these philosophies have developed strategies to the acquisition of abilities and skills, which have created learning standards in society. Behaviourism-based learning will give learners stimulus and feedback, along with operational conditioning, that will fuel their extrinsic motivation. Cognitivist and constructivist theories will provide an active environment and create hands-on learning situations what will fuel the intrinsic motivation. Learners will be stimulated to find personal goals if they feel respected by their teacher and if their teacher’s teaching stile will create positive experiences for them and provide them with constructive feedback. These personal goals can be reached through self-regulation and will drive the learner in the direction they wish to take. Negative experiences, due to unhealthy relationships, difficult family situations or disconnect with the teacher’s methods, can affect a learner’s emotional needs, which could impact the stages of development, leading to possible amotivation and by consequence, a lack of fuel. Brief, it is with the blend of experiences in the microsystem, the mesosystem, the ecosystem, the macrosystem and the chronosystem that learners will define their identity. It is through happiness and well-being that students will find motivation and define their personal goals.