

From development of self-construction to sustainability

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The goal of this paper is to discuss the idea that an individual has throughout their life personal development in a humanistic perspective, initially promoted in an institutional way by educational system, but also by live experiences, in a way that allows him to built a self knowledge in relation to others, we may “built” more sustainable individuals. For this we will address concepts of some theories of psychology and other social sciences that we believe can help to understand this idea.

Following the previous thought, psychology, the concept of development lies primarily with children and is described in theories of development through authors such as Piaget, Vygotsky and Bowlby, who studied the way humans mature during growth in the physical or motor, the intellectual, the sexual, the socialization skills, and also in moral development. These issues affect the individual in his future course of life and influence and / or determine much of what will become as an adult. The intervention in these developmental stages passes mainly by stimulation of fragile or nonexistent skills in order to achieve a more complete and complex individual, enabling full integration for children or adolescents within their family, school and social or communityⁱ. The humanistic perspective advocated by Maslow and Rogers believes that human development does not end with childhood and adolescence, but is rather a continuum throughout the life of an individual. The pyramid of Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows that the base (of the pyramid) needs more intense are the physiological (breathing, eating, drinking, sleeping, etc.), Followed in the need for security (physical resources, etc.), then love or relationships (family, friendship, sexual intimacy), esteem (self-esteem, confidence, respect for others and for others, etc.) and finally at the top of the pyramid personal fulfillment (morality, acceptance of differences or absence of prejudice, etc.)ⁱⁱ.

Thus, also the educational psychology and educational sciences seek to study the processes that are involved in teaching and learning processes. Involve the analysis of psychosocial aspects (related to the mechanisms of learning of each individual), socio dynamic aspects (related to the strategies and methods used in teaching and in the relations between individuals or groups in these processes) and institutional (related study of organizations in education and training). Evidence indicates that the efficiency and

effectiveness of educational processes are related to the intrinsic conditions of the individual subject to learning but also the physical conditions of local education and training, and especially the methods used and the quality of relationships between subjects that students or trainees and teachers or trainersⁱⁱⁱ.

With the above argument we understand the obvious reasons why educational models are so important in a child's life. The traditional school model does not usually promote the acquisition of knowledge with intrinsic motivation, because it is based on unequal relationships between students and teachers, assumes the length of a rigid curriculum that does not allow children to discover what pleases them most, leading that children and young people to study just because it is required, and not because they truly feel a strong motivation to discovery learning. The non-traditional educational models, which in Portugal are mainly framed in the educational model of the Modern School Movement, which is in some aspects similar to school models used in some northern European countries such as Sweden and Finland, do not focus on results individual quantitative nor global average. In this model children only guided by teachers achieve good quality results and greater autonomy and motivation in performing individual tasks, implementation and organization of individual and group capacity and critical self-evaluation, integration of people and groups with different origins and characteristics, promotes cooperation and coordination between students and cooperatives rules. Plural relationships based on trust, respect and responsibility among students and between the first and the teachers^{iv}.

The perspective of other social sciences such as sociology, anthropology and economics are also in line to the above, since they perceived the concept of development that is historically associated with the liberation of southern former colonies of various European countries. It was created at the time a dichotomy between countries with greater economic prosperity, the countries of North America and Europe (United States, Canada and the countries of northern Europe) and other developing countries. In economics, the development is not a concept solid or consensual, which focuses on the development of theories and methods that facilitate and enable, politically and socially, the process of economic growth and structural changes in the lowest income countries. The changes are promoted by public and private means, in the areas of health, education, housing, work, etc.. The economic theory is concerned with balance, understanding that homo economicus is not subject to impulsive decisions or uninformed. However, time has shown

that the most appropriate approach is to interdisciplinary and the market economy to the real and social economy^v.

In economics and sociology the notion of capital has been associated with wealth and invested money and power generation. The different types of capital can be: Physical Capital (manmade resources); human capital (education and knowledge that increase the productivity of labor), capital (features that facilitate cooperation and coordination). Social capital refers to features of social organization informal networks, norms and trust in coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. This may be an important factor for economic development as a way of strengthening and revitalization of democracy and good governance. It has three main elements: the social networks to which each subject belongs (family, friends, etc.); Standards that social relationships develop and consolidate previous permit; confidence in other subjects and institutions. There can be created heterogeneous groups that promote inclusive social integration and cooperation between individuals, collective action and wide with universal norms. The homogeneous groups are unique because they generate a strong group solidarity (as in the family), but creates specific reciprocity and segregation between the group and others. It can be assumed that social capital relates to social cohesion, economic prosperity and sustainable development of a society as it relates to the institutions, relationships and norms that make up the quality and quantity of society relations. The existence of social capital involves trust and reciprocity in interpersonal relationships^{vi}.

In the same sense the geriatric studies reinforce the relevance of continued personal development even in old age because older people when they feel closer to the end of their lives, have the fear of dying, and often lament various aspects of your life. The expressions of grief are different and concurrent with the wish of a time that no longer have. Interventions in this area are made as preventive and promoting healthy elements such as activities of daily living and combating isolation, revealing social relations support very important to maintaining the quality of life idealized and real, as well as satisfaction and well-being or happiness with life itself. Policies to promote active aging, healthy and worthy programs are provided in the European Commission^{vii} and can relate well with the community with higher social capital.

Positive psychology and economics of welfare, allow to make a contribution towards the creation of resilience. Studies of happiness show that people consider themselves happier

when they have meaningful family relationships, are integrated and have feelings of belonging to a community. As for the well-being of these facts are related living conditions of the people, which can be measured, but can especially be observed behind simple matters such as housing conditions, public health, predictability of maintenance and existence of job or compliance with human rights legislation^{viii}.

Thus it still makes sense to refer to as the Solidarity Economy concept materialized into entities that can facilitate processes of individual stance and form the basis of a change in the sense that is based on three basic principles: reciprocity non-market (use the exchange as a means, not an end), redistribution of resources (which come from the state and whose order the application of the common good) and the market economy (ie, uses the traditional market to make the sale of goods and services that enable complement and reinforce the other two principles). Several authors identify three ways to define the concept: the Francophone, the Latin American and the Macaronesia. Each of the forms has several dimensions. The more complete the Macaronesia eight projects that should be and build a single entity: the economic, the social, cultural, environmental, Territorial, management and political or democratic solidarity^{ix}.

In conclusion it may be possible to build and develop more sustainable cities and society, that is, enabling present generations to meet their needs without jeopardizing the ability of future generations can meet their needs is the environmental point of view, economic, social or institutional or political. Sustainability can be measured through objectives and measurement indicators for verifying whether we are making progress toward the goals established in the field of sustainability or not. However, it is still possible to believe in people and what they can do for themselves and for others and for the unknown future. Maybe if child development is performed with innovation in facilitating the acquisition of competencies physical, intellectual, creative, emotional and moral, that allow building dynamic individuals life, who are interested in being a person for himself and for everyone and everything its surroundings, and not have to look only for material possessions, maybe our society can become more just, democratic, responsible and sustainable^x.

ⁱ For more information read Gleitman, H., 2003. *Psicologia*. 6ª Edição ed. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, or seach on internet <http://www.apa.org/pubs/index.aspx> , <http://www.eadp.info/Home.83.0.html> , <http://www.simplypsychology.org/perspective.html> .

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- ⁱⁱ For more information read Gleitman, H., 2003. *Psicologia*. 6ª Edição ed. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
- ⁱⁱⁱ For more information search on internet <http://www.spce.org.pt/> , <http://www.eera-ecer.de/> , <http://www.cic.pt/pec/default.asp?link=inicio.asp> , <http://gaius.fpce.uc.pt/pessoais/apcouceiro/page22.html#Abordagem> , <http://www.apa.org/topics/education/index.aspx> .
- ^{iv} For more information read Csikszentmihalyi, M. 2002. *Fluir*. Relógio D'Água. Santa Maria da Feira, or search on internet <http://movimentoescolamoderna.pt/> .
- ^v For more read Durlauf, S. N. & Blume, L. E., 2008. *The New Palgrave - Dictionary of Economics*. Second Edition ed. New York: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., Krugman, P. & Wells, R., 2007. *Introdução à Economia*. Tradução Helga Hoffmann ed. Rio de Janeiro: Elsevier: Editora Campus: Elsevier Editora Ltda., Kuper, A. & Kuper, J., 1985. *The Social Science Encyclopedia*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- ^{vi}For more information read: Almeida, J., 2011. *O essencial sobre o Capital Social*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional da Casa da Moeda, Hintze, S., 2009. *Capital Social*. In: *Dicionário Internacional da Outra Economia*. Lisboa: Edições Almedina, S.A., pp. 49-54.
- ^{vii}More information about these issues can be found at: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/quality-of-life/leaflets/en/keyact06.html> , http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/my_health/elderly/index_pt.htm e http://ec.europa.eu/health/ageing/innovation/index_pt.htm .
- ^{viii}More information about these issues can be found at: <http://apeipp.com/index.php> , <http://www.institutodafelicidade.com.pt/> , ou em Dahrendorf, R., 1995. *A Quadratura do Círculo*. Copenhaga: Edições 70.
- ^{ix}See Cattani, A. D., Laville, J.-L., Gaiger, L. I. & Hespanha, P., 2009. *Dicionário Internacional da Outra Economia*. 1ª Edição ed. Lisboa: Edições Almedina, Lda., Amaro, R. R., 2010. Nota Introdutória. *Revista de Economia Solidária*, Fevereiro.
- ^xSee: Fromm, E., 1999. *Ter ou Ser*. Lisboa: Editorial Presença., Gomes, M. L. et al., 2000. *Proposta para um Sistema de Indicadores de Desenvolvimento Sustentável*. Amadora: Direcção Geral do Ambiente.