
HARNESSING THE POWER OF LOVE AND CARE TO TRANSFORM BEHAVIOR ACROSS ALL AGES

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ABSTRACT

The influence of love and care can be transformative on human behavior regardless of age. The theory of psychosocial development by Erik Erikson and Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man are utilized to extract insights. Through examining every phase of Erikson's theory and Shakespeare's seven ages, this article emphasizes the importance of love and care to conquer challenges and develop individual satisfaction. One should understand oneself and others to lead a fulfilling life. The results offer important knowledge for both laypersons and experts concerned with comprehending the effects of love and care in enhancing communication and emotional health at all stages of life.

KEYWORDS

Love and care, psychosocial development, Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man, communication, personal growth, psychological well-being

INTRODUCTION

By providing love and care, human relationships can fundamentally transform behavior and shape individual development. Fostering emotional well-being, social connections and personal growth throughout all stages of life is their primary role. Deep affection, empathy and compassion in love facilitate an individual's sense of belongingness, security as well as self-worth. Caring is comprised of attentive support, understanding, and responsiveness which lays the groundwork for healthy relationships and emotional development.

The capacity for transformative power that love, and care possess lies in their ability to positively impact human behavior and shape individuals' attitudes, beliefs, and actions. A secure and nurturing environment is created when people receive authentic love and care from others. Emotional and psychological health is promoted. Constructing resilience and cultivating healthy coping mechanisms in oneself can be inspired by these transformational agents. Challenges faced by individuals in their lives can be overcome with their aid. Friendships, mentorships, and communities also provide opportunities for love and care beyond just romantic and familial relationships. Within these situations, affection and concern foster empathy, comprehension, and connection leading to individual flourishing and realization of ultimate capability. The effects of love and care transcend particular phases of life, reaching all age groups. It comprises the phases of babyhood, childhood, teenage years, adulthood, and elderly stage.

Comprehending how love and care can create change is essential for people, families, communities, and society at large. We can create positive environments for development, communication, and relationships by acknowledging love and care as crucial human needs. Individuals and communities can benefit from this, leading to an improved quality of life. Exploring how love and care transform human behavior presents several potential avenues for research, interventions, and practices centered around promoting societal harmony, personal growth, and individual well-being. The significance of these factors in molding individuals and societies is emphasized. The key to personal growth and mental wellness is through effective communication. Connections with others are established and thoughts, emotions, and needs are expressed through communication by individuals. They handle the difficulties of bonds and group exchanges. Developing a strong sense of self and building meaningful relationships are facilitated by effective communication. They can attain personal fulfillment as well. Authentic expression of thoughts, feelings, and ideas becomes easier with effective communication. The provision of a platform encourages self-reflection and self-awareness. An enhanced understanding of their own emotions, values, and beliefs can be attained by individuals. The process of clarifying goals, articulating needs, and asserting boundaries is facilitated by self-expression for individuals. Individuals can develop their identities and experience personal growth through this.

The foundation of any relationship relies on clear communication. Individuals can establish emotional connections with others, share their experiences and nurture intimacy and trust through this. Active listening, empathy, and understanding are promoted through effective communication, fostering healthier and more fulfilling relationships. It empowers people to solve conflicts, discuss differences, and sustain transparent communication channels, which add to general mental wellness. Using

communication can help individuals release and receive emotional support. Processing experiences and relieving emotional distress can be achieved by individuals through the expression of both positive and negative emotions. Also, effective communication allows individuals to solicit support from others, distribute their problems among them, and get validation and sympathy. This cultivates emotional health and reinforces resilience.

Problem-solving and conflict resolution require effective communication skills. Individuals can easily recognize and deal with issues through clear and transparent communication. Negotiating solutions and compromises become possible with this approach. Constructive dialogue, active listening, and mutual understanding are encouraged. Handle conflicts in a collaborative and respectful manner, as it's crucial for resolution. People are given the ability to assert their needs, express thoughts and advocate for themselves when they effectively communicate. It boosts one's confidence and assertiveness, empowering him/her to handle social scenarios, take knowledgeable choices, and defend his/her rights. Bettering assertive communication improves personal growth, self-esteem, and overall psychological well-being. Professional success necessitates efficient communication. Teamwork, collaboration, and leadership become more effective with its facilitation. Clarity and concision in communication are essential for conveying ideas, influencing others, and giving useful feedback. Positive work relationships are facilitated by effective communication, which reduces conflicts and improves productivity and job satisfaction. To sum up, communication that is effective plays a crucial role in one's personal development and psychological health. It enables people to communicate, form connections, control their emotions, work through issues, increase their self-confidence, and succeed in a variety of spheres of life. People can find personal fulfilment by developing their communication skills and making meaningful connections with other people.

Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man as theoretical frameworks

Erikson (1950) examined how people develop over the course of their lives in his book *Childhood and Society*. Each stage includes a psychosocial crisis that may have a positive or negative effect on the person's development as a person. These crises, in accordance with Erikson (1958, 1963), are psychosocial in nature because they result from a conflict between the psychological needs of the individual and the requirements and expectations of society. (Crain, 2015). The most well-known and influential theory of human development in psychology was developed by Erikson, a renowned psychoanalyst and former Harvard professor. His eight-stage model of psychosocial development replaced Freud's contentious theory, which concentrated on psychosexual development (Sutton, 2020). His theory departed from Freud's contentious psychosexual development theory, putting more emphasis on the

interaction between a person's psychological needs and societal expectations (Cherry, 2022). According to Kivnick and Wells (2014), Knight (2017), and Orenstein and Lewis (2022), the theory divides human development into eight sequential and social factors. These fields of study include gerontology, personality development, identity formation, and life cycle development. The stages covered the lifespan, from infancy to old age, highlighting the value of community and social interaction.

Erikson's theory successfully completing each stage leads to the development of fundamental human virtues and a healthy personality, which aids people in becoming well-adjusted and more prepared for challenges in the future. A person's sense of self and personality can be profoundly affected by how well or poorly they get through a stage, which can result in feelings of inadequacy and difficulty getting through the future.

According to Erikson's theory, completing each stage successfully leads to the development of fundamental virtues and a sound personality. These qualities are assets that the ego can employ to get through upcoming crises. On the other hand, failing to finish a stage can make it harder to finish subsequent stages, which can result in an unhealthy personality and self-perception. It's crucial to remember that these phases can still be successfully resolved at a later date (McLeod, 2018). Shakespeare's poem is well known for its opening phrase, "All the world's a stage," which likens the world to a stage where actors perform roles that have been given to them by God. The poem emphasises the seven stages of life, with each stage having particular qualities and characteristics (Khurana, 2020). Shakespeare uses specific figures of speech to describe these stages in vivid and colourful detail. The final stage of life is described as "second childhood" in the poem, which emphasises the circular nature of life (2018). Shakespeare (2008) argues that the idea presented in this work of literature is extremely impressive. It implies that each and every person has a role to play in life, regardless of where they are from or what they hope to achieve. They go through various phases and then exit, just like actors on stage. It provides a psychological analysis of life and its various stages, illuminating the overarching trend of development and change in humanity. It includes physical changes at every stage of life in addition to psychological ones (Shakespeare, 1623).

The writer explores the natural changes that people go through from hour to hour, delving into various emotions and stages from infancy to infirmity in the dialogue, which paints a vivid picture of the transience of life. The poem illustrates the fleeting value of life by showing how humans develop, deteriorate, and ultimately fade into insignificance after passing away (Shakespeare, 2008). The progression of a person's life cycle is described by both Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and Shakespeare's theory of the Seven Ages of Man, but they do so from different angles.

Erikson's theory organises the stages of psychosocial development around the psychological difficulties that people encounter as they develop and mature. Each stage is distinguished by a unique challenge, and how people overcome these challenges has an ongoing effect on how they feel about themselves and how they interact with the outside world. Shakespeare, on the other hand, proposed the Seven Ages of Man theory, which views life as progressing through a series of stages or ages, each with its own set of experiences, traits, and behaviours.

The progression of life and the changes that take place during that progression are both described by Erikson's theory and Shakespeare's theory, but there are some significant differences between the two theories. For instance, Shakespeare's theory is more concerned with describing the experiences and events of life, whereas Erikson's theory is more psychologically oriented. Shakespeare's theory only has seven stages, whereas Erikson's theory has eight. We can gain a thorough understanding of the psychological, social, and emotional facets of human growth and behaviour by integrating Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man. Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man offers a vivid portrayal of the external experiences and societal influences that shape people's lives, while Erikson's theory offers a framework for analysing the internal conflicts and developmental challenges people face at each stage of life. Identity formation and personal development are viewed from complementary angles by both theoretical systems. Social interactions' influence on human behavior is also elucidated by them. To analyze and interpret human behavior comprehensively and multifacetedly, one can combine the psychological insights of Erikson's theory with the rich narratives of Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man. A more profound comprehension of human nature can be attained through this approach. With this integration, individuals are empowered to investigate more thoroughly the obstacles and difficulties they experience throughout their developmental journey. Transformative powers like love, care, and effective communication are emphasized in this sentence.

Love and Care in Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

In accordance with Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development, affection and care are essential for promoting healthy growth and psychological well-being at all stages of life. Erikson believed that the quality of relationships and the support individuals receive from their caregivers greatly impact their sense of trust, autonomy, competence, identity, intimacy, generativity, and integrity. According to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, the initial stage takes place during the first year of an individual's life and is the most crucial stage. Erik Erikson's first stage of psychosocial development focuses on how infants' basic needs are met by their parents, which either leads to trust or mistrust (Erikson 1950). The infants are dependent on their parents, primarily the mother, for nourishment and comfort, which

shapes their understanding of the world and society. Children will learn to trust if parents provide a nurturing environment that is warm, reliable, and affectionate (Bee Boyd, 2009). But if parents don't give their kids a safe environment and don't take care of their basic needs, it can lead to mistrust, which can lead to disappointment, suspiciousness, withdrawal, and a lack of confidence (Erikson, 1950). Erikson's theory's first stage is successfully completed when children gain the virtue of hope, which is the conviction that help will come when one needs it most (Sutton, 2020).

The foundational elements of Erikson's first stage of psychosocial development are love and care. When parents show their baby love and care, it fosters a nurturing environment that encourages trust. Knowing that their needs will be met and that they are loved without condition, the infants feel safe and protected. Physical touch, consoling actions, and responsive caregiving are all ways that parents show their love and care for their children. These actions aid in children's sense of security and lay a solid foundation for future relationships. Strong bonds between a baby and their parents can develop when there is love and care present. Children develop trust in their carers and their environment by experiencing warmth and affection on a regular basis. This trust enables children to explore their surroundings, form attachments, and gain a positive perspective on interpersonal interactions.

Early childhood, from the age of 18 months to three years old, is when children are developing a greater sense of autonomy and control over their physical abilities. This is when the second stage of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development takes place (autonomy vs. shame and doubt) (Erikson, 1958, 1963). Children's mobility and physical development increase as adults start to give them options and let them complete tasks on their own. By dressing themselves, playing with toys, and interacting with peers, children begin to demonstrate their independence. Parents should encourage their kids to push boundaries and take risks without punishing them when they fail by providing support and encouragement. With this method, the children can gain self-assurance and a sense of security that are essential for their continued development. Gaining the quality of willpower results from success in this stage. In order for children to venture out and exercise their will, parents play a crucial role in providing a secure base. Instilling a sense of autonomy in children begins with parents' encouragement, love, care, and patience. Children may investigate things that could be dangerous to their health and safety. When parents are overly strict and controlling, their kids may become doubtful and reluctant to take on new challenges because they are discouraged from exploring and trying new things. Parents who are overly strict and controlling may stop their kids from experimenting and trying new things, which can leave them feeling uncertain and reluctant to take on new challenges. A healthy parent-child relationship during this developmental stage is built on love and care. Children can see that they are valued and loved unconditionally when their

parents create a nurturing and supportive environment for them. Children can explore boundaries and take risks without worrying about being severely punished or rejected thanks to the sense of security and trust that this love and care fosters. Children's autonomy development is also aided by their parents' love and care. Children are more likely to exert their will and explore their interests and abilities when they feel loved and cared for. Children who have a safe foundation from which to explore the world are more likely to feel independent and autonomous. Parents can encourage their kids to take calculated risks and try new things by combining love, care, and a sense of responsibility, fostering their growth and development during this critical stage. Erikson's third stage of psychosocial development takes place during the preschool years, which are typically between the ages of three and five. In this stage, children encounter a conflict between initiative and guilt as they start to take charge and initiate play and social interactions. It is a dynamic period in children's life, characterized by rapid growth and activity that parents may perceive as aggressive, according to (Bee, 1992).

Preschool-aged children are gaining independence and can take on new tasks and activities. As they make their own choices, sometimes they succeed easily, and other times they take on challenges beyond their abilities, which may affect others' plans. When parents and teachers give them love and care, provide support and encourage their efforts while guiding them towards realistic and appropriate choices, children develop initiative and independence. However, if adults discourage or dismiss their independent pursuits, children may develop feelings of guilt about their desires and needs (LibGuides).

During this stage, children develop a strong desire for knowledge and may ask many questions. Children may feel guilty for being a burden or causing trouble if carers ignore their questions or chastise them for their actions. However, a certain amount of guilt is required for the formation of self-control and a conscience. The creativity and social interactions of children can be hampered by excessive guilt (McLeod, 2018). At this stage of development, a child's attitude towards learning and capacity for world exploration are greatly influenced by their experience with love and care. A positive learning environment is promoted when carers answer children's questions with kindness, encouragement, and genuine interest. Caretakers can instill a sense of confidence and curiosity in children, motivating them to keep learning, by demonstrating love and care through their words and actions. Children who experience love and care feel valued and supported, which fosters a positive sense of self and encourages healthy social interactions. Caregivers can support children in acquiring self-control, empathy, and a clear conscience while also nurturing their creativity and fostering meaningful social connections by creating a loving, caring, and understanding environment.

Therefore, it's critical for parents and other adults to strike a balance between accepting their children's mistakes and giving them helpful criticism without humiliating or demeaning them. Additionally, promoting children's emotional expression and validating their feelings can stop them from becoming overly guilty. Erikson's psychosocial theory identifies stage four (industry vs inferiority) as occurring between the ages of 5 to 12 years old. During this stage, children are primarily focused on education and acquiring skills such as reading, writing, and math (Erikson, 1958, 1963). Teachers are important in helping children learn and develop skills in reading, writing, and math. Peer groups and social interactions also become more significant at this stage, and interactions with peers and successful task completion can have an impact on children's self-esteem and sense of pride (Cherry, 2022).

According to Erikson, (1950) the elementary school years are crucial for developing self-confidence. Children are given many opportunities to earn recognition from teachers, parents, and peers by creating and accomplishing things such as drawing pictures, solving math problems, and writing sentences. If children are encouraged to create and are praised for their accomplishments, they start to demonstrate industry by working hard, persisting at tasks, and prioritizing work over pleasure. On the other hand, if children are punished or ridiculed for their efforts, or if they feel unable to meet expectations, they may develop feelings of inferiority about their abilities. Both socially and academically, demands and expectations are raised for children. Gaining acceptance from peers and adults turns into a motivating factor and is connected to exhibiting particular competencies. In this stage, teachers are extremely important, but peer groups and social interactions also help children develop their sense of pride and self-worth. Learning how to manage these expectations and maneuver through social situations is crucial (Syed & McLean, 2018). Children in this stage need a solid foundation of love and care in addition to the pressures of academic and social demands. For their emotional health and overall development, parents, carers, and other significant adults must support and nurture them. Children who experience love and care develop a sense of safety, worth, and belonging that helps them face challenges with resiliency and confidence. Additionally, healthy peer relationships and social interactions based on kindness, empathy, and understanding help children feel like they belong and boost their self-esteem.

Adolescents go through the identity versus role confusion stage five of Erikson's theory. This phase is characterised by fresh possibilities and encounters that are essential to creating a sense of identity and have a significant influence on our adult years. Adolescents are examining their sense of self, beliefs, values, and goals during the Identity versus Role Confusion stage, which is essential for the development of their individual identities. Ages 12 to 18 are critical for adolescents to develop a sense of who they are, as this can have an impact on their adult years.

Adolescence, a psychosocial transitional period between childhood and adulthood, is a time when people are in a state of moratorium. They are currently considering their future careers, relationships, and societal roles as well as exploring their beliefs, values, and sense of self. There is a time of transition between the morality that people learn as children and the ethics that they will develop as adults (Erikson, 1963, p. 245). Erikson contends that passing through this stage successfully results in the growth of fidelity, or the conviction that we are being true to ourselves. With the help of others, we develop more independence and a stronger sense of self-control. Ongoing exploration and experiences shape our sense of identity (Erikson, 1950). In this stage, people investigate various options and create their identities based on the findings of their investigations, which gives them a sense of control. They may experience role confusion and feel unsure of themselves or their place in society if they are unable to establish their identity within society.

The shaping of one's development during the adolescent moratorium is also significantly influenced by love and care. Adolescents start to navigate and experience friendships, family dynamics, and romantic relationships in new and complex ways. This stage gives people the chance to learn about empathy, compassion, and social responsibility while also exploring various forms of love and emotional connections. Teenagers frequently look for love and attention from a variety of people, including their friends, family, and romantic partners. These connections offer them the emotional support, reassurance, and sense of community that are vital to their wellbeing. Adolescents gain knowledge about the value of trust, how to build and maintain healthy relationships, and how to communicate and resolve conflicts effectively through these interactions. Additionally, encountering love and care during this stage fosters a sense of security and nurturing, giving people a strong base of support as they explore and develop their identities. The presence of loving adults, such as parents, guardians, or mentors, can have a big impact on how an adolescent develops emotionally overall, including their sense of self-worth and self-esteem. They offer advice, support, and a secure environment for teenagers to express themselves, make mistakes, and grow from them. In general, an adolescent's journey through the moratorium stage is heavily reliant on love and care. They aid in the development of positive relationships, emotional stability, and interpersonal abilities that will continue to influence adolescent interactions and moral behaviour as they enter adulthood.

In Erikson's psychosocial development theory, the sixth stage occurs during young adulthood which is typically between the ages of 18 and 40. This stage can be a time of significant struggle as individuals strive to establish meaningful, long-term relationships outside of their family of origin (McLeod, 2018). According to Erikson, the development of personal identity is essential for building intimate relationships in young adulthood. Each stage in his theory builds on skills developed in the previous

stages. Studies have shown that individuals with a weak sense of self are more prone to experiencing emotional isolation, loneliness, and depression, and have less committed relationships (Cherry, 2022). Erikson (1963) believed that a successful outcome of stage six is the development of love, which leads to healthy and long-lasting relationships.

According to Erikson's psychosocial development theory, the success or failure of the fifth stage, which focuses on creating a strong sense of personal identity, affects the capacity to create close and long-lasting relationships in the sixth stage (Sutton, 2020). Individuals are ready to commit to long-term relationships once they have established a solid sense of who they are. They are able to establish close, mutual relationships (such as through marriage or close friendships) and are prepared to make the necessary compromises and sacrifices for these relationships. People may feel isolated if they are unable to develop these kinds of close relationships due to their own needs or other factors (Wilder, 2004). (Erikson, 2006). Erikson's psychosocial theory states that the essence of love and care is essential to the formation of intimate relationships and the development of a person's sense of self in young adulthood. The emotional support that people need to discover and comprehend their own identities and to engage with others in meaningful ways is provided by love and care.

The sixth stage of Erikson's theory, "intimacy vs. isolation," focuses on the difficulty of forging close bonds with people while upholding a strong sense of self. In this stage, love and care are essential because they offer the assistance and emotional safety needed to negotiate the challenges of developing strong relationships with others. People are more likely to have developed a strong sense of self and a positive self-esteem if they received love and care during their formative years. They can establish relationships from a position of security and self-assurance thanks to this base. A person's capacity for trust, vulnerability, and the formation of emotional bonds is influenced by the love and care they receive from trusted people, such as their parents, carers, or mentors. Empathy, understanding, and compassion—qualities that are crucial for healthy intimate relationships—are nurtured by the presence of love and care. People are more likely to show their partners love and care when they have experienced it themselves, creating a nurturing and supportive environment. Love and care foster an emotional sense of connection that leads to a profound understanding of one another's needs, wants, and values. Additionally, during trying times in relationships, love and care offer a source of emotional stability and resilience. People are more likely to resolve conflicts and difficulties through open communication, empathy, and compromise when they feel loved and cared for. A safe environment where people can express their emotions, look for support, and make progress is created by love and care.

In conclusion, the essence of love and care is crucial for young adults' development of personal identity and establishment of fulfilling relationships. Love and care give people the emotional support they need to explore their own identities, build strong relationships with others, and deal with the difficulties of intimacy. Building strong, enduring relationships based on mutual understanding, respect, and support requires nurturing traits like trust, empathy, resilience, love, and care. Between the ages of 40 and 65, people go through Erikson's seventh stage of psychosocial development, generativity versus stagnation, in which they show a desire for long-term continuity and impact in their lives, frequently through their children or by making significant contributions to society. People in the generativity versus stagnation stage work to cultivate things that will outlive them in order to have a lasting impact on the world. This might entail prioritizing career and family while looking for ways to be more useful and productive to society. Feeling a sense of contribution to the world through active participation in one's family and community is necessary for success during this phase (Cherry, 2022).

The generativity versus stagnation stage emphasises the value of love and care in one's life in addition to emphasising career and family. In this stage, people work to build nurturing relationships and deepen their empathy and compassion for other people. During this stage, people frequently place a high priority on developing enduring relationships with their partners, kids, and close friends. They are aware of how important love and support are in fostering a sense of fulfilment and belonging. They might put time and effort into fostering and preserving these bonds, which would help them, and their loved ones live in a loving and encouraging environment. Additionally, those who are in this stage may go beyond their close friends and family to support the welfare of the larger community. They may participate in acts of altruism, voluntarism, or philanthropy because they genuinely want to improve society. They work to build a more compassionate and peaceful world by giving love and care to others. The pursuit of personal success and achievements, as well as the development of loving relationships and the practice of care and compassion towards others, are all included in the generativity versus stagnation stage. People can have a lasting impact and leave a legacy that lasts beyond their own lifetimes by performing these acts of love and care.

The distinctive feature of Erikson's model of psychosocial development is that it encompasses the entire life span, "from the cradle to the grave." Beginning at the age of 65 and lasting until death, the last stage is maturity. People slow down, become less productive, and spend time contemplating their accomplishments in life during this stage. Erikson defined success as achieving one's goals and finding happiness, leading to a feeling of integrity and wholeness, as the final stage of psychosocial development. As one evaluates their achievements and approaches death with a peaceful mindset,

this results in the virtue of wisdom and a sense of completion (Erikson, 1982). Failure can be felt as despair and regret over unfulfilled goals, unfinished business, or mistakes made in the last stage of psychosocial development. This might result in resentment towards the past and present as well as anxiety about dying without feeling satisfied or fulfilled (Sutton, 2020). Instead of being in either of these states all the time, late life is characterised by alternating states of ego, integrity and despair. Wise people can strike a balance between these states (McLeod, 2018).

Senior citizens typically become less productive and more interested in retirement. They can develop integrity during this period of self-reflection if they believe their lives have been successful. They may, however, experience despair and feelings of dissatisfaction if they believe that their life is unproductive or that they have not met their goals. These emotions can result in feelings of hopelessness and depression. People who believe their lives are about to end, such as those who are told they have a terminal illness, may encounter the final phase of psychosocial development out of order.

It's crucial to remember that everyone's definition of success and productivity is individual and subject to change. While some people might feel happy and fulfilled with their achievements, others might feel unfulfilled or dissatisfied with their goals. Love and care can play a transformative role in such circumstances by altering their perspective and improving their general wellbeing. During this phase of life, genuine love and care from family, friends, and carers can offer a sense of community, support, and emotional stability. When people are reflecting on their lives, offering empathetic listening, understanding, and kindness can be reassuring and comforting. It enables them to talk about their experiences, regrets, and joys, which promotes a sense of acceptance and validation. No matter how big or small, expressing gratitude and recognising someone's accomplishments can help them understand the importance and value of their contributions. This affirmation encourages pride and can help combat feelings of inefficiency or unmet expectations. Giving people support and motivation can help them achieve new objectives or find meaning in their remaining time. It can give them the motivation and empowerment they need to pursue interests or activities they have always wanted to try.

Despair or hopelessness can be caused by loneliness and isolation. Providing companionship through regular visits, shared activities or simply spending quality time together can remove these negative emotions. When individuals have true companionship, they feel connected and are reminded of being loved and appreciated. Finding meaning and purpose in present circumstances can be achieved through engaging in activities that hold personal significance. Examples include reminiscing, storytelling, or engaging in creative pursuits. Engaging in such activities can offer a

sense of success and joy. These experiences and relationships that have shaped their lives can cultivate a sense of joy, fulfillment, and appreciation in these moments.

Even in difficult times, we have the ability to positively affect someone's perception of their life by demonstrating love and care. In order to help each person, get through this stage of life with grace and a sense of fulfillment, it is crucial to approach them with empathy, respect, and sensitivity. This includes acknowledging their individual journeys and giving them the support, they require. Overall, love and care are essential elements of Erikson's theory because they help people develop traits like integrity, autonomy, competence, intimacy, and trust. These elements are vital for personal growth, psychological well-being, and the establishment of healthy relationships at each stage of psychosocial development.

Love and Care in Shakespeare's Seven Ages of Man

In Shakespeare's famous monologue from "As You Like It," the Seven Ages of Man, love and care are explored as essential elements that shape human behavior and experiences throughout life's different stages. Shakespeare presents a vivid and poetic depiction of the various phases individuals go through from infancy to old age, highlighting the role of love and care at each stage. In the first stage of life, according to Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man," birth signifies the entry of a person into the world as a helpless infant in the arms of a caregiver. The infants learn to survive and communicate through crying and accept breast milk as their first food, which can often result in vomiting. As babies do little else but cry and spit up after feeding, these activities are said to mark the first stage of life (Bergengren, 2022).

Babies have been considered cute for a long time. They eat, spit up, and cry frequently. Infants rely on their caretakers for survival and communication through crying. Parents are aware of these common activities even before they have a child. Although babies have always been lovable creatures, the difference now is that raising a baby requires both parents to put in a lot of effort (Khurana, 2020). During Shakespeare's time in England, babies were typically born at home with the assistance of a nurse. The cries and spitting up of the newborn in the nurse's arms established the scene of a recently born child. However, this stage of life is not limited solely to the moment of birth; it continues until the infant reaches an age where they are old enough to attend school (Bergengren, 2022). The bond between a parent and an infant is a testament to the power of love, as parents dedicate themselves to meeting their children's every need, ensuring their well-being and nurturing their development. It is through this deep connection of love and care that infants feel secure, supported, and cherished as they navigate the world, laying the foundation for their emotional and social growth. The profound love and tireless care parents offer to their infants create a nurturing environment where the purest form of affection flourishes, enveloping the little ones

in a cocoon of warmth, comfort, and love.

In the second stage, kids start going to school and are exposed to rules, routines, and discipline. Infancy's carefree days come to an end, and their lives become more structured. Children consequently frequently moan and complain about the imposed routine. The children moves into the second stage of life as they get older, which includes formal education and discipline. But they frequently dislike this new routine and would rather play and cause trouble. They move slowly and are reluctant to leave home for school, despite their mothers' aspirations for them. This stage is distinguished by a fondness for laughing, teasing, and annoyance. The children enter the second stage of life as they get older and starts school. They frequently baulk at leaving the convenience of home and playtime behind, though. Their parents are aware that going to school is crucial for their growth and development, even though they might protest by acting out. Even though they might be reluctant to go, parents get them ready for school by giving them a bag and a uniform (De, 2022).

Parents and teachers transform into pillars of love and care in their children's lives as they reach the stage of development known as school age. Shakespeare's seven ages include the schoolboy, the second age, which parents devote their hearts to guiding through. They provide unwavering support, inspiration, and a secure environment for their kids to explore, discover, and develop. With love as their guiding principle, parents make sure their kids feel cared for and appreciated, fostering a confidence and security that helps them succeed. Teachers play a crucial role in influencing the lives of children who are in school at the same time. Teachers foster a climate of love and support in the classroom through their dedication and sincere concern. Along with teaching, they act as confidantes, mentors, and supporters. Teachers go above and beyond to comprehend each student's particular needs, providing direction, tolerance, and a sympathetic ear. Their affection and concern go beyond academic success to include their students' emotional and social growth.

The positive working relationship between parents and teachers strengthens the bonds of love and care that surround school-age children in the area of education. Together, they create a supportive environment that encourages a love of learning, a sense of community, and the conviction that one is loved and valued. School-aged children set out on a transformative journey armed with the support and inspiration required to realise their full potential, with parents and teachers serving as beacons of love and care. Young adults go through a period of growth and change during their teenage years. They begin to go through the physical and emotional changes that come with adolescence during this time. Nowadays, young people are more fascinated by the idea of love and are more interested in romantic relationships. They often dedicate their poetry, music, and artistic creations to their love interest in order to express their

emotions. It is an ecstatic period when everything seems perfect, and love is the centre of their universe (Bergengren, 2013). They feel lost in their emotions because their beloved has captured the fire of their passion in their hearts.

When individuals reach adulthood and become a lover, they are in their third stage of life. During this time, they ardently and passionately love their partner. They often sigh deeply, like a furnace or an oven, as they passionately express their love. They become overly sentimental and sentimental, completely giving in to their emotions (Belsey, 2014). Teenage love has, in fact, evolved over time. Modern teenagers have access to a larger pool of potential partners thanks to technology and social media, and they can express their romantic feelings through a variety of online platforms. The emphasis is now on experimenting with different partners and exploring romantic relationships rather than finding a life partner. Additionally, there is a greater emphasis on individualism and self-expression, which may result in a more relaxed attitude towards romance and romantic relationships. While the search for love and romance still plays a crucial role in adolescence, the ways in which that love is expressed and manifested have changed over time (Classical Association, 1914). Even though contemporary and mediaeval teenage love differ, both eras go through the same emotional struggles, such as unrequited love, emotional turmoil, and depression. Especially in adolescence and in the context of romantic relationships, the transformative power of care is manifested. Teenagers who are navigating the turbulent waters of adolescence frequently find comfort in the care given to them. A sense of stability, understanding, and emotional support can be produced by parents, mentors, or role models who genuinely care about their charges. It can affect their behaviour by encouraging sound judgement, encouraging self-worth, and encouraging empathy for others.

Care fosters growth and connection in the context of romantic relationships. When people feel that their partners genuinely care about them, their behaviour frequently reflects a reciprocation of that care. Caregiving behaviours such as kindness, empathy, and thoughtfulness can strengthen a couple's relationship. Care has the capacity to establish a supportive and secure setting where trust can grow, allowing people to express who they truly are and fostering a sense of security within the relationship. Care can also act as an accelerator for healthy relationship change. When disputes arise, showing care can lower barriers, promote candid communication, and speed up the resolution process. People are inspired to change their behaviour, put their partner's wellbeing first, and work towards a healthier and more fulfilling relationship when they are reminded of the emotional investment and desire for mutual growth and happiness through care. In essence, care can influence both lovers and teenagers to behave in a way that embodies kindness, compassion, and understanding. It offers a supportive base from which people can navigate the complexities of their lives,

encouraging personal development and strengthening relationships.

Shakespeare's poem also discusses the life of a young soldier in mediaeval England, where males received combat training. At this stage, rebellious tendencies, impulsivity, and hot-headedness were mixed with an attitude of daring bravery (Evans, 1834). At this point, the individuals are characterised as a brave and daring soldiers who are passionate about the causes they defend and quick to act. They are committed to enhancing their reputation and are prepared to take chances to accomplish their objectives. .

The emphasis on ego and reputation over sound judgement is a defining feature of the fourth stage of human development. The individuals value their reputation even though it might be short-lived, much like soldiers would. They are peculiar characters due to their odd oaths, leopard-bearded face, enmity for honour, and quick temper. However, putting them in danger is never admirable (Thomas, 2002). The youth of today are just as passionate and rebellious as their Shakespearean forebears. They can, however, express their disobedience in a variety of ways, such as by creating social organisations to advocate for social or political causes. Due to the effectiveness of propaganda, their voices can be heard in distant parts of the world with the aid of social media platforms and the mass media, and responses can be immediate. Care and love are crucial in influencing how soldiers behave in the demanding and frequently difficult world they live in. Soldiers behave in ways that demonstrate a higher level of camaraderie, loyalty, and commitment to their mission when they feel that their leaders, fellow soldiers, and support systems genuinely care about them. Care can foster a strong sense of purpose in soldiers, fostering a close bond and inspiring them to go above and beyond in their duties.

The overall health of soldiers, both physically and mentally, is influenced by love and care. Resilience, perseverance, and a willingness to serve and protect are frequently traits of soldiers whose behaviour is influenced by feelings of support and care from their families, friends, and the military community. They are inspired to persevere through hardships and make sacrifices when they are aware of how much their loved ones back home care about their safety and well-being. Additionally, love and care can affect how soldiers behave during combat. Soldiers can be led by compassion and empathy, which are motivated by a concern for fellow humans, to approach their duties with an emphasis on minimising harm, looking for peaceful solutions, and upholding humanitarian principles. Military organisations that value the welfare and dignity of all participants can foster a culture that values mission success as well as care.

Overall, care and love have a transformative effect on the behavior of soldiers. They promote unity, resilience, and compassion, driving soldiers to exemplify values of

honor, selflessness, and service. By nurturing a culture of care within military contexts, we can enhance the well-being of soldiers, contribute to their effectiveness, and promote a more compassionate and humane approach to conflicts and warfare. Shakespeare's depiction of the Seven Ages of Man reflects the profound impact of love and care at different stages of life. From the nurturing care of infancy to the transformative power of love in youth, and the need for companionship and support in old age, love and care shape human behavior, relationships, and experiences throughout the journey of life as portrayed in Shakespeare's work. The concept of middle age has remained relatively unchanged over time. It is the time when individuals prioritize family, children, and careers over personal pursuits. Wisdom and a more pragmatic view of life come with age. Middle-aged people today may have more opportunities for both professional and personal growth than mediaeval people, especially women, who had fewer choices.

Their quest for justice characterises the fifth stage of man. They develop into a knowledgeable, discriminating, and frequently challenging character judge. Their bloated belly and well-kept beard give them a distinctive appearance. They give sage advice and carefully considers opposing points of view. They choose to lead others and make decisions based on their age and experience (Evans, 1823). Possibly as a result of eating too much meat and fat from castrated chickens, the men's physical appearance has matured at this point. Their conversations are now serious, firm, and grim, and they often use proverbs and examples from the past and present. They are visible embodiment of authority and a confluence of tradition, morality, religion, and education. They perform the role of a ruler or chief, making decisions about various facets of life (Bevington, 2005).

In the fifth age, affection and concern acquire a more experienced and mature quality that strengthens bonds and promotes emotional stability and companionship. In middle adulthood, people put their families and partners' needs first, which fosters an environment that is nurturing and supportive of one's own development and fulfilment. People who have experienced love and care have a sense of security and emotional stability that enables them to face challenges in life with resiliency and knowledge. A deeper appreciation of the value of love and care characterises middle adulthood, encouraging people to forge closer bonds with their loved ones and take part in deeds of compassion and kindness. Love and care are both given and received, and they both contribute to a sense of generativity in which people work to improve the lives of others and leave a long-lasting love and support legacy. In the fifth age, relationships are frequently marked by mutual care and understanding, fostering a space where people can express themselves honestly and get emotional support.

Beyond the immediate family, love and care encompass friends and community ties,

forming a web of support and belonging. It is during this period of middle adulthood that people begin to recognise the value of nurturing their own needs in order to effectively love and care for others. Through acts of kindness, gratitude, and emotional support, the love and care promote both physical and mental health, adding to overall well-being. As a result, people can embrace their roles as mentors, carers, and contributors to their communities. They act as pillars for personal growth and fulfilment.

A person's life expectancy in the mediaeval era was roughly 40 years, and those who survived to the age of 50 were regarded as fortunate. The social and economic status of the elderly affected how well they were able to live. The elderly was generally respected for their wisdom and experience, but they frequently suffered from neglect and deteriorated physically or mentally. When compared to people who were involved in domestic affairs, those who had a religious bent did better (Bevington, 2005). As a result, people can embrace their roles as mentors, carers, and contributors to their communities. They act as pillars for personal growth and fulfilment.

The description paints a picture of an elderly people who have grown frail, thin, and lean. Because of their poor vision, they wear glasses, loose-fitting pants and slippers. They wear long socks that no longer fit their thin legs and carries a purse filled with cash and cigarettes. In the speech, this period of life is compared to a return to infancy, where old people and young children both have high-pitched voices and a reliance on others. The individuals have thin, piping voice and have lost a few teeth at this point in their life. They talk about their youth while acting and looking like old people. Their impact has decreased (Bevington, 2005). Their influence has waned, and it sounds like they are playing a pipe or whistling. This is a time for introspection and remembering past accomplishments (Paul, 2002).

A 40-year-old today can live a full and active life. Many seniors in their 70s and beyond continue to participate in social activities, pursue hobbies, or work thanks to retirement plans and financial resources. They frequently travel the world, take part in sports, pursue higher education, and engage in other fulfilling activities (Khurana, 2020). As a result, people can embrace their roles as mentors, carers, and contributors to their communities. They act as pillars for personal growth and fulfilment. As people navigate the difficulties and changes that come with ageing, love and care become crucial sources of emotional support in the sixth age. Love and care give people comfort and consolation. Older adults who experience love and care benefit from a sense of belonging and connection, which helps them fight the loneliness and isolation that can occasionally accompany this stage. Love and care create a nurturing environment that supports overall health on all levels, including the physical, emotional, and mental, making old age more fulfilling and enjoyable. Despite any

limitations or health issues they may experience, these expressions from family, friends, and carers can encourage older adults to keep a positive outlook, develop resilience, and embrace the joys of life. In the sixth age, love and care encourage people to put self-care first and ask for help when they need it, encouraging a healthy, balanced lifestyle that improves their quality of life. When older adults receive love and care, they frequently grow grateful and appreciative, which makes them more willing to give to others and more considerate of their needs. They foster a sense of legacy and purpose as people strive to leave a lasting impression on subsequent generations through their knowledge, counsel, and deeds of love.

Older adults are more likely to maintain social connections, engage in meaningful relationships, and actively participate in their communities when there is love and care present in their lives. This encourages a sense of fulfilment and ongoing personal development. Additionally, assist people in coping with the inevitable losses and changes that come with ageing by giving them the emotional fortitude, adaptability, and resilience they need. People can reflect on their lives, find meaning in their past experiences, and develop a sense of inner peace and contentment as they approach the later stages of life when they have experienced love and care. As a result of physical and mental decline, the seventh stage of life, which Shakespeare compares to a second childhood, sees the individual becoming reliant on others for basic needs and care. Shakespeare lived in the Elizabethan era, when ageism was not seen as a problem and treating elderly people like "little children" was socially acceptable. Shakespeare refers to this period of life as a "second childhood," and it was also typical to show contempt for the elderly (Bergengren, 2013). Individuals' voice become shrill and childlike in their final years, and they become dependent on others much like a child. They might need specialised care due to their illnesses. They might want to take it easy after living a full life and move from old age to the oldest age (Sermon & Gould, 2013). People's life, which was once filled with odd events, comes to an end during this time. They start to develop weak memories and start to lose their taste, eyesight, and teeth. They have the impression that everything is missing. It is the stage at which a person ends the drama of their life and departs from this world's stage to enter the next (Daub, et al. 2002).

Shakespeare likens life to a circle, with infancy marking the beginning and infancy again marking the end. In the seventh stage, which he refers to as the "second childishness," the elderly persons resemble a newborn baby in that they lack teeth, have poor vision, and have little knowledge of the outside world (Bergengren, 2013). The needs of the elderly are being recognised and addressed by modern society more and more. Seniors now have more opportunities to stay engaged, active, and independent thanks to numerous services and programmes that are devoted to helping them. Ageism is also more widely recognised and efforts are being made to combat it,

with the understanding that seniors have important contributions to make and should be treated with respect and dignity (Daub and Townsend, 2002). The seventh stage of the seven ages emphasises the importance of love and care for people as they search for solace and assistance in their later years. Love and care also help people maintain a sense of dignity and worth, affirming their value as they face the difficulties of ageing. A nurturing environment that supports emotional well-being and lessens feelings of isolation is fostered by the presence of love and care. Being surrounded by love and care inspires people to keep up social relationships and have heartfelt interactions with family and friends. When people are in love and care, they are motivated to do good deeds and have compassion for others. People can age gracefully and with a sense of contentment when they are supported by a foundation of love and care, which offers a sense of stability and security. Love and care foster a deeper appreciation for the relationships and experiences that have shaped people by encouraging them to reflect on their life's journey. They also support holistic well-being, which integrates a person's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Love and care offer comfort and understanding as people age and experience the physical and emotional changes that come with it. People feel a sense of purpose and belonging when they are surrounded by love and care, which serves as a reminder that they are important members of their family and community.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The study has the following research objectives:

- To examine how the different stages of development outlined in Erikson's theory impact communication and the importance of love and care to transform behaviour during each stage of Shakespeare.
- To analyse the significance of love and care to conquer challenges and getting own fulfillment across all ages, as both Erikson and Shakespeare recognize the immense power these elements hold in fostering growth and self-realization.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper is based on qualitative content analysis, which involves analysing textual data, such as books and speeches, to identify themes, patterns, and meanings. The data source consults secondary sources such as literature reviews, academic articles, and scholarly books that discuss Shakespeare's works and Erikson's theory of psychosocial development.

DISCUSSION

Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development emphasises the importance of love and care at different stages of life. This study focused on that importance. Erikson thought that a person's development and psychological health were greatly influenced by the nature of their relationships and the care they received from others. The theory

emphasises the value of love and care in promoting integrity, intimacy, generativity, competence, autonomy, and trust.

It became clear from examining each stage that in the early years, parental love and care create a nurturing environment that encourages trust and a safe attachment. As children mature, love and care encourage their exploration of independence and autonomy, enabling them to gain confidence. In later stages, love and care play a role in the emergence of wholesome bonds, the growth of a person's sense of self, and the development of enduring intimate bonds. In general, love and care offer the emotional support required for people to successfully negotiate the complexities of life, create meaningful connections with others and cultivate a positive sense of self.

Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man," which highlights the influence of love and care in influencing behaviour and experiences, also offers a vivid and poetic exploration of the various stages of human life. Love and care are fundamental components that permeate every stage of life, from the helpless infant in a caregiver's arms to the disobedient teenager, from the passionate lover to the astute judge, and from the nurturing parent to the contemplative elder. Early on, love and care lay the foundation for a child's development, strengthening the bond between parent and child and fostering the development of their emotional and social skills in a safe and cherished environment. As children navigate the difficulties of learning and routine, parents and teachers support and encourage them. Love and care guide children's transition into formal education. On the other hand, love can become intense and infatuated, which encourages young people to experiment with romantic relationships. Care shapes relationship behaviour, fosters empathy, and serves as a catalyst for connection and growth.

Additionally, love and care play a significant role in influencing behaviour in military settings by encouraging compassion, resiliency, and camaraderie among soldiers. Then, as people get older, they develop a deeper appreciation for the value of love and care, which motivates them to give priority to their families and relationships. An atmosphere of love and care fosters creativity, personal development, and general well-being. Finally, love and care offer support and companionship in later life, enabling seniors to reflect on their lives and impart their knowledge and experiences to others. Love and care are constant companions throughout the seven ages of man, influencing behaviour, fostering relationships, and offering assistance and purpose at every stage of life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that people make time each day or week specifically designated for spending with their family members. They can participate in bonding activities like

family dinners, game nights, or outings and make the most of this time by actively listening, exchanging stories, and showing affection. Physical affection, like hugs, kisses, and delicate touch, is a crucial way to show that you care and that you love someone. Likewise, use words of encouragement, "I love you," and compliments to show verbal affection.

Additionally, they ought to promote honest and open communication within the family, encourage members to express their ideas, sentiments, and worries, and then actively and impartially listen before responding with empathy and understanding. Attending each family member's events, performances, or competitions demonstrates interest in and support for their interests, passions, and accomplishments. Additionally, it offers them chances to advance in their interests and encourages their pursuits.

Finally, set clear boundaries, encourage respectful and compassionate interactions among family members, foster conflict resolution skills, and create a space where everyone feels heard and valued. These factors will all help to create a home environment that fosters emotional safety and well-being. By promoting positive societal values, strengthening community ties, supporting individual development, and enhancing family well-being, this research hopes to make a significant contribution to society. This research can benefit individuals, families, and communities by emphasising the value of close family ties, honest communication, and emotional well-being, ultimately resulting in a more contented and supportive society.

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