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Stages Of Psychosocial Development For Adults In Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day*

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Abstract

Sports often serve as a powerful arena for exploring adult psychosocial development, highlighting struggles with identity, connection and purpose. The competitive nature of sports can intensify internal conflicts, such as the quest for self-worth or the fear of stagnation. Through victories and defeats, individuals navigate key psychosocial stages, shaping their emotional growth and life perspective. This paper explores the stages of psychosocial development in adulthood as depicted in Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day*, using Erik Erikson's theoretical concept, focusing on the four important adult stages. This study explores how adult characters grapple with internal conflicts and external pressures, shaping their development through the conflicts and resolutions at each stage of psychosocial growth. It delves into the emotional and psychological struggles of the adult characters as they confront the challenges associated with identity formation, emotional connection, personal contribution and self-reflection. By examining the characters' navigation through the crises of identity confusion, loneliness, stagnation and despair, the paper highlights how unresolved conflicts and societal pressures shape their growth. By investigating the characters' pursuit of athletic glory, personal validation and self-worth, this study highlights how sports serve as a metaphor for broader human struggles with identity, purpose and fulfilment. It reveals how the characters embody the complexities of self-discovery, relationships and the search for meaning, offering a profound reflection on human growth and the enduring impact of unresolved conflicts. Through this analysis, the paper demonstrates how the sports arena captures the complexities of adult development, providing a poignant commentary on human resilience and the lifelong quest for fulfilment.

Keywords: Sports, Psychosocial Development, Adult, Identity Confusion, Loneliness, Stagnation, Despair, Self-Discovery and Human Growth.

Aravind Adiga is a contemporary Indian writer and journalist. His writings provide a critical look at the intersection of talent, ambition and the socio-economic realities of modern India. Adiga studied at Columbia University and the University of Oxford before working as a journalist for publications like *Time* magazine and *The Financial Times*. His debut novel, *The White Tiger* (2008), won the prestigious Man Booker Prize and brought him international recognition for its darkly satirical take on India's class divide. Some of his notable works are: *The White Tiger* (2008), *Between the Assassinations* (2008), *Last Man in Tower* (2011), *Selection Day* (2016), *Amnesty* (2020). Adiga's writing often delves into the complexities of Indian society, examining issues such as corruption, economic disparity and personal aspirations. His novel *Selection Day* continues this trend, using cricket as a backdrop to explore themes of ambition, parental pressure and identity in contemporary India. His novel *Selection Day* depicts the world of cricket in India and it explores the themes of ambition, family dynamics and social expectations. The story was set in Mumbai and follows the lives of two brothers Manju and Radha, Manju wants to become a scientist and Radha wants to become a cricket star. Their father, Mohan Kumar, is an overbearing and ambitious man who believes that cricket is their only path to success. He relentlessly pushes his sons to become

professional cricketers, particularly aiming for Manju to surpass his elder brother Radha as the best batsman in the country. As Manju struggles with his own aspirations and his father's expectations, *Selection Day* paints a poignant picture of ambition, personal freedom and the harsh realities of the sporting world.

This paper examines the adult characters in Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day* experience and navigate different stages of Erik Erikson's psychosocial development concept to explore the stages of adolescence to late adulthood. The psychosocial stages of development concept were proposed by the American psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, widely recognized for his theoretical work *Childhood and Society* in 1950. Erikson classified these crises as psychosocial because they involve the individual's psychological demands engaging with the necessities of society. Each stage in Erikson's concept builds on the earlier ones, providing the groundwork for next stages of development. Erikson felt that at each stage, humans face a conflict that acts as a turning point in their development. But this paper particularly focusing on the four stages of psychosocial development for adults. Those are, Identity Vs Role Diffusion, Intimacy Vs Isolation, Generativity Vs Stagnation and Ego Integrity Vs Despair.

The first stage of psychosocial stages of development for adult is Identity Vs Role Diffusion. This period is essential for building a sense of personal identity, which will impact a person's behavior and development for the rest of their life. This period is essential for building a sense of personal identity, which will impact a person's behaviour and development for the rest of their life. While Erikson believed all stages of psychological development were important, he emphasized the establishment of ego identity. "The sense of ego identity, then, is the occurred confidence that the inner sameness and continuity are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others" (Erikson 228).

According to Erikson ego identity is always changing as a result of new experiences and knowledge gained through everyday interactions with others. As gain new experiences, also face problems that could be beneficial or detrimental to the development of identity. The favourable outcome of this stage is seeing oneself as a unique and integrated person as well as the unfavourable outcome is confusion over who and what one really is. It refers as role diffusions. "The danger of this stage is role diffusion. Where this is based on strong previous doubt as to one's sexual identity, delinquent and outright and psychotic incidents are not uncommon." (Erikson 228). In this stage Individuals consider previous experiences, societal expectations and aspirations while establishing values and finding themselves.

Manjunath Kumar his younger brother Radhakrishna Kumar were attaining the adolescence period, Radha's passion about the cricket, he finds his own desire and identity and also, he performed well in interschool matches. But Manju had the confusions between his own identity and role diffusion because his interest towards forensic science, he wants to become a scientist but his father was forcing and compelling him to achieve in cricket to escaped from poverty. "My biology experiment. I want full marks in class this time.' Two months ago, his model fighter jet plane, a project for physics class, left on the dining table, had mysteriously vanished after he had put four days of work up by now" (SD 21). Manju sometimes feels the cricket is not suited for his career bur his father forcing him to achieve in that field. Manju wishes to become a forensic scientist, by watching a TV show on the Crime Scene "CSI Las Vegas" (SD 77), but evolves to be an Investigation better sports star.

Manju gets a chance to spend one and a half month at J. F. Browns International school playing cricket. He moves England for cricket practice but he was interesting and the passion about science as well as mathematics, he attend classes at school and reading newspapers. "the uplifting culture of the United Kingdom" (SD 142). He experiences the culture of United Kingdom and the importance of study. In the other side he played interschool cricket match and performed well, he also selected for Mumbai cricked association.

Manju's shifted mind did not allow him to choose a perfect path and identification. In this period only adults were focusing the career which one is opted for their passion or desires. They create an identification and role who and what one really is? Radha chooses a correct path but Manju failed to analyse which one give an identification. In the other side his father not care of his son's real ambition and desires. His father Mohan Kumar escapes from the poverty and to attain rich. So, he forces Manju to achieve sports field and also, he creating some rules for his son. These types of forcing activities of his father, Manju faces lot more psychological struggles. He did not focus his studies, sports, not identify his career and so on. Manju, on the other hand, played for financial reasons and had a hidden passion for forensic science. These how the character Manju did not realise the identification and failed to build a role because of the family structure were forcing him to achieve uninterest desires.

The second stage of psychosocial stages of development for adult is Intimacy Vs Isolation. In this stage the adults need to form intimate, loving relationship of other people or passion for career and so on. "It is only as young people emerge from their identity struggles that can master the sixth stage, that of intimacy." (Erikson 229). This stage covers the period of early adulthood when people are exploring personal relationships. In this stage the adults were ability to make commitments or love. Due to the imbalance mindset and the less committed relationships, individuals are more likely to struggle with emotional isolation, loneliness and depression.

In the theme of intimacy versus isolation is seen in Manju's relationship with Javed. Manju feels comfortable to have a meaningful, honest relationship with Javed but his father Mohan Kumar oppose these types of relationships. "Watching the woodpecker, and thinking of Javed" (SD 42). Its emphasis the relationship between the two adults were intimacy. Manju was choosing the homosexual relationship with Javed, he noticed the incidents and carry out some understanding like the person fall in love with the other gender he or she notices the activities, dressing sense and so on. "One look at him Manju knows that they are both arrived the club early for the exact some reason:" (SD 112). "The same charge of electricity an ornithologist feels when he catches sight of a rare migratory species of bird" (SD 63). Manju's reaction to seeing Javed Ansari was not the same as his brother Radha Kumar's. Each stage marked by a unique conflict that humans must overcome in order to move to the next stage. These phases range from infancy to late adulthood. This stage focuses on creating strong, permanent connections with people. It entails the capacity of combining one's identity with that of another without losing oneself in the process. Success at this stage results in solid connections and a sense of a close relationship. Here, Manju was spent the life as homosexual but he trying to hide it. But his brother spread the news that Manju was a homo. Manju was broken into pieces. Through these types of conflict Manju were fell guilt, depressed and inability to make an affectionate relationship. He became isolating himself and feel low esteemed character in the world. These types of intimacy accept by worldwide but Manju's societal and familial surroundings not accept this. Manju says that, "Every man must martyr himself to something: but we have martyred ourselves to this mediocrity" (SD 279). Adiga considers Manju as a mediocre. Mediocre is the one who is inclined towards someone or something for some time and changes his mind later towards another person or object. Sometimes Manju was attracted to women, but another time he was attracted to men. Similarly, sometimes he was very interested in playing cricket, but then he isolating himself and wanted to give up cricket and become a scientist. When the person chooses the right path of intimacy they may grow. But those who failed in this stage they feel empty, broken and isolating himself.

The third stage of psychosocial stages of development for adult is Generativity Vs Stagnation. In this stage the adults were engagement with the next generation through parenting, coaching or teaching. They are concern with family, contributing to the society or some other positive changes. "Generativity is primarily the interest in establishing and guiding the next generation or whatever in a given case may become the absorbing object of a parental king of responsibility." (Erikson 231). In the other side, the individuals not making the positive impacts, failing in career, lived in a uninterest desires and lack of growth, they feel stagnation. The outcomes of the stage are those succeed during this period realize that they are contributing to the world by being involved in their personal residence and surroundings. Those who lack this ability will feel unproductive and uninvolved in the world.

In *Selection Day*, Mohan Kumar, the father of Manju and Radha, embodies this stage. His obsession with his sons' cricket careers is his attempt at generativity. Mohan Kumar did not realise that, he forcing his son Manju to achieve the disinterest sports. Manju is well interested in science but Mohan did not allow him to focusing on study in spite of focusing in cricket. His father Mohan Kumar escapes from the poverty and to attain rich. So, he forces Manju to achieve that field and also, he made some creating some cricket rules and food rules for the son. These types of forcing activities of his father, Manju faces lot more psychological struggles. He did not focus his studies, sports, not identify his career and so on.

The fourth stage of psychosocial stages of development for adult is Ego Integrity Vs Despair. The final psychosocial stage comes in old age and focuses upon looking back on life. At this stage of growth, people reflect on the events of their lives and judge if they are satisfied with their lives or regret what they did or did not do. In this stage the person contemplating and acknowledgement of personal life experience. The outcomes of the stage is those who reflect on a life well lived will feel fulfilled and prepared to face the end of their lives with peace and willingness to face death. Those that fail during this period will feel as if their lives have been wasted and they may have numerous regrets.

The person will experience bitterness, dissatisfaction with life and despair at the possibility of death.

When the part two of *Selection Day* Manju coming out the cricket club, the two schoolboys were waiting to see him.

One of the boys glanced up; and said, at once, 'Can I have your autograph?' He held a little notepad towards Manju. 'And a selfie?'

'Do you know who I am?' Manju asked.

The boy smiled.

'Cricketer.' (SD 264)

In that time Manju feels embrace as well as happiness. The embracement because of, he loses his career, ambition and passion. He starts living and accept the reality. The happiness because of somehow, he made a frame and built an identification. Radha was failed to achieving his career. In the time of selection process, he becomes aggressive as well as angry with his teammate, Radha beats that person. So, the cricket board announced Radha was disqualified for his attitude. He moves to native and go for work. Manju helps him and products him financially. Mohan Kumar feels depressed and started drinking because he did not realise what their son's really wants? In one time he moves to bar and drank, he blabbered, shouted because of his anxiety. He paid the amount and left the bar. He waited for the train in the platform. "His hand rose, palm rotated to felt and vibrated. In old days you solved a problem like that. Come here, Manju. Come here, Radha." (SD 225). Manju and Radha were recollected and sharing the past events they realise the worth of identification and the real passion. They lost everything, now they are living a life thy want. They feel emptiness and guilt because of the were not doing anything what they want. Manju's kind heart accepts everything and move on to the next step. Manju fells emptiness and regret sometimes, he fails to build a proper identity with his own. The father's guidance's and forcing him to achieve in cricket, his suspicious view, illiterate action upon Manju these are play an unimaginable impact in Manju's life.

"Every man must martyr himself to something: but we have martyred ourselves to this mediocrity" (SD 279). Mediocre is the one who is inclined towards someone or something for some time and changes his mind later towards another person or object. Here, Manju as a mediocre. Sometimes Manju was attracted to stranger women but another time he was attracted to Javed. Similarly, sometimes he was very interested in playing cricket, but then he wanted to give up cricket and become a scientist. Every man must martyr himself to something such as money, power, women, land etc. Persons like Manju have martyred themselves to this kind of mediocrity. This paper gives an information's about the complexities of the young adults who are pushed into uninterest desire to attain success.

In August 2017, it was announced that Netflix would be adapting the novel into an original series, the series was released under the same name *Selection Day* in 2018. The movie adaptation of In *Selection Day*, it perfectly narrates the characters arc and the struggles were faced by the characters, because of the familial and societal expectations in an extraordinary manner. While the series effectively captures the essence of the novel, it also takes creative liberties, adding new plot elements and expanding certain character arcs. Its show's portrayal of the intense pressure placed on the boys by their overbearing father, combined with the exploration of identity, ambition and rebellion, makes it a compelling adaptation.

The paper suggests that high financial burden and psychological control by parents, is not essential components of an adult's future development. When parents force their children to pursue goals that do not fit with their interests or passions, it may result in serious consequences for both the child and the parent. These types of crises were happened to the adults they surly lost all of their passion, dreams as well as life. Some are committing suicide for these types of crises. It affects the adults mentally. For the sake of family relationships and society's view of them, some adults were willing to accept and give up their personal ambitions. For the other hand, it may have significant effects for children, such as heartache, despair, loneliness and resentment. They experienced the distress of losing everything, including their identity and passion, till their entire life. Their parents feel fear and regretted as well. Rather than forcing their ambitions on their adults, Parents and society should encourage kids to appropriately pursue their own interests and passions rather than pressuring them to conform to their adults' expectations.

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Watch *Selection Day* | Netflix Official Site. www.netflix.com/in/title/80194558.

