

Adolescence : Stage of Human Development

Adolescence is the most important and critical period of individual's development with which the teacher has to deal. Adolescents have to face various difficult situations and education should be organised to enable them to face all these problems of life. The adolescents have to be so educated that they should also build up their life in a way that they may successfully bring about the welfare of the society. Parents, teachers and educationists have a vital role to play in the life of the adolescents. They can build their life in a successful manner. Hence they should have the knowledge of the general characteristics, needs and problems of the adolescents. The following points highlight the importance of the study of adolescence :

1. Understanding characteristics and problems : To deal effectively with the problems of adolescents, teachers and parents must know their developmental characteristics and problems. They should also understand the causal factors of the problems of adolescents so that suitable educational, vocational and personal guidance may be imparted for making adequate social adjustment.

2. Maintenance of mental health : Adolescence period is marked with many problems which influence the mental health. The study of adolescence period is very important in order to preserve, cure and prevent incidences of maladjustment.

3. Adjustment to responsibilities : The study of psychology of adolescence provides the knowledge of needs and developmental tasks for adolescents. Parents and teachers can help adolescents to adjust to their responsibilities. By understanding the needs of adolescents, the teacher and administrator can frame curriculum, school policies and methodology of teaching for adolescents.

(A) MEANING OF ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence refers to the period of development and adjustment during the transitional period between childhood and adulthood. This period emerges from childhood and merges into adulthood. During this period, the establishment of childhood goes away and a revolutionary process of change starts. In fact, it is a period of revolutionary change. *It is markedly a period of growing up, during which the child develops into a man or woman.*

As the term is used today, it has a broader meaning than it had in earlier years. *Instead of limiting the adolescence period to the time when the individual grows to maturity sexually, it is now extended until the individual is expected to be intellectually, emotionally and socially mature.*

1. Etymological definition : The term "Adolescence" comes from the word "Adolescere" which means to grow' or 'to grow to maturity'.

2. Biological and chronological definition : From the biological point of view, adolescence is the stage when puberty dawns. Chronologically, this is a span of life ranging from 12 to 18 years and having individual and cultural differences.

3. Sociological definition : Sociologically, adolescence is a transitional period from dependence on parents to self-sufficient adulthood.

4. Cultural definition : Culturally, adolescence period varies from community to community. In some communities marriage among boys and girls takes place quite early (as early as 13 or 16 years of age).

5. Psychological definition : Psychologically, adolescence is a marginal situation which involves psychological disturbances and problems of adjustment. It differentiates the childhood behaviour from the adulthood behaviour.

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6. Jersild states, "Adolescence is that span of years during which boys and girls move from childhood to adulthood – mentally, emotionally, socially and physically."

7. Jean Piaget believes "Adolescence is the age of great ideals as well as the time of simple adaptation to reality."

8. Roger writes "Adolescence is the period of achieving the attitudes and beliefs needed for effective participation in society."

9. Kuhlen defines "Adolescence as a period which is characterised by sexual, social, occupational and ideological adjustment and striving independence from parents."

10. Stanley Hall has regarded adolescence as a "period of great stress and strain, storm and strife."

11. Bigge and Hunt have remarked, "The one word which best characterises adolescence is 'change'. The change is physiological, sociological and psychological."

The incidents of this period greatly affect the whole personality of the individual i.e., why it has been called the most crucial period.

(B) CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN ADOLESCENTS : PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL

(1) Rapid Physical Growth and Changes :

1. **Increase in height and weight** : Adolescent's height increases rapidly. His weight also increases due to increase in bones and muscles. The maximum limit with regard to increase in size, height and weight is achieved. Their weight generally fails to cope with increase in height, so they appear thin. Generally, boys are heavier and taller than girls, but in adolescence between 12 and 14, it is the girl who is both taller and heavier as she develops earlier than the male child. It is for this reason that in these years girls consider boys of the same age as younger and prefer to be with boys a couple of years older than themselves.

2. **Rapid development of bones and muscles** : The bones and muscles of adolescents develop very rapidly. They reach the final body type by the end of adolescence. The muscles of girls remain softer while those of boys become hard and firm.

3. **Changes in bodily proportions** : Different parts of the body grow at different rates and reach their final size at different rates. (1) Arms and legs grow longer. (2) Hands and feet grow bigger. (3) The trunk also grows to its full length. (4) Shoulders become broadened during late adolescence. (5) The abdomen increases in width and size. (6) Facial features also change. (7) The nose becomes large and assumes a final shape. (8) The forehead becomes wider. (9) The chin becomes longer. As the proportions of the body change, the adolescence, therefore, looks awkward and clumsy.

4. **Change in voice** : There is a distinct change in voice among the two sexes. The voice of the boy becomes harsh, rough and dry. The girl's voice acquires shrillness and becomes sweet and high pitched in sound. The sudden change of voice in case of boys may develop a sort of inferiority feeling but such feeling persists for a short duration and it dies with the passage of time.

5. **Changes in motor performance** : Physical development leads to increased motor performance both in case of boys as well as girls but there are great differences in the motor performance of boys and girls. The boys excel girls in motor activities which involve speed and muscular strength. The poor performance of girls in some of the motor activities may be due to their lack of interest in such activities and due to cultural norms and cultural restrictions.

6. **Increased size of genital organs** : In adolescence, there is (1) increased growth of the external genital organs in boys. (2) Growth of the testicle usually is apparent earlier than growth of the penis. (3) The left testicle usually hangs somewhat lower and often slightly larger than the right. (4) The growth of genital organs may have many psychological implications for boys, especially in groups where the notion prevails that a big penis is an especially important mark of manliness.

7. **Breast development and growth of the pelvis** : (1) The growth of the breasts and (2) Increase in the size of pelvis in girls are among the notable changes that can have a very significant effect on the

adolescent girl's conception of her "physical self". On the positive side, she may take pride in the growing evidences of womanhood. On the negative side, she may be self-conscious, and perhaps apprehensive for a time concerning what her ultimate profile will be.

8. Night emissions and menstruation : At the beginning of adolescent period sex glands begin to function. (1) In the case of boys, the seminal glands begin to work, semen is produced and there are night emissions (discharge of semen during sleep) accompanied by erotic dreams, which horrify the ignorant adolescent. There is reawakening of the repressed sexual impulse which remains dormant in late childhood. (2) The girls begin to menstruate monthly during the adolescent period. Menstruation usually becomes a disturbing and horrifying experience. Another term in common use is *menarche*, which denotes the beginning of menstruation. It may be noted that, on the average, girls who are tall during pre-adolescence period tend to reach the menarche at an earlier age than girls who are short-statured. They also exhibit the adolescent growth spurt at an earlier age. *Ford and Beach* (1951) point out that menstruation starts in most of the girls before their ovaries are capable of producing ripe eggs and they also report that egg production begins before the uterus is mature enough to support the bearing of a child. It should be noted that in adolescent period testicles start functioning in case of boys and ovaries start functioning in case of girls.

9. Hair growth : There is growth of hair in (1) pubic regions, (2) under-arms, (3) arms, (4) legs, (5) limbs, (6) trunk and thighs. There is appearance of (7) beard and moustaches in case of boys. (8) Hair also grow on the chest in case of boys.

10. Increase in blood pressure : During early childhood, girls have higher blood pressure than the boys. But with the beginning of adolescent period, the blood pressure increases in boys and the difference increases with age.

11. Increase in heart and pulse rate : Like other organs of body heart increases in size and weight. The rate of growth of heart is higher in boys than girls. During adolescent period, the pulse rate increases in both the sexes. But the increase becomes less as the individual becomes older.

12. Physiological systems : During adolescence, internal physiological systems of the body undergo rapid changes. Physiological systems involved in this regard are : (1) Digestive system, (2) Respiratory system, (3) Circulatory system, (4) Blood pressure, (5) Heart and pulse rate. Organs of digestive system also undergo qualitative changes. As a result of this change adolescence has a desire to eat more.

(2) Emotional Characteristics or Changes :

Adolescence is an age of emotional upheavals. There is no mental peace, calm and quiet for the adolescent and no serenity of mind for him. Period of adolescence has been marked by emotional storm and stress. Some of the emotional characteristics of adolescence period are as under :

1. Heightening of emotions : Adolescence is period of heightened emotionality. Adolescents are emotionally disturbed due to physical and sexual development. Their emotions are very intense. When an adolescent hates someone, he hates strongly and when he falls in love, he does so passionately. Thus emotions of adolescents are on the extremes. Heightened emotionality is evident from nail biting, tension, conflicts, quarrels with parents, siblings and classmates.

2. Variations in emotional moods : Emotional moods of adolescents vary from elation to depression. One minute the young adolescent is up in the clouds, and the next he is in the depths of despair. He sometimes, thinks of committing suicide. From tears to laughter, from self-confidence to self-depreciation, from selfishness to altruism, and from enthusiasm to indifference – all are common reactions of young adolescents. It is clear that adolescents are not consistent in their emotions. Their emotions fluctuate very frequently. In the words of Ross, "The adolescent lives an intensely emotional life, in which we can see once more the rhythm of positive and negative phases of behaviour in his constant alternation between intense excitement and deep depression." This is why the period is often designated as a period of stresses and strains.

3. Not under control : Emotions of adolescents are not under control. Outbursts of temper are often noticed in his emotional makeup during this period. He remains tense and anxious during this period. He is emotionally unstable. He does not tolerate the overstrictness of parents and teachers.

4. Complexity : Adolescent experiences a number of emotional upheavals and storms. His emotional development becomes complex by the experiences he gets in his environment.

5. Development of inferiority complex : Many adolescents develop the feeling of inferiority complex when they are not provided proper love affection and care or when their needs are not fulfilled. If an adolescent suffers from inferiority complex, he may try to run away from the home in search of better environment. If the adolescent becomes too much perplexed, he may sometimes even think of committing suicide.

6. Sexual frustration : Adolescents have greater tendency of having interest in the opposite sex and of developing friendship with the members of opposite sex. Moreover, they also remain emotionally disturbed due to the physical and sexual developments which take place in them. All this results in the feeling of sexual frustration among the adolescents.

7. Day dreaming and fantasy : Almost all adolescents have high hopes and aspirations for their future life. There are some adolescents who work hard in their life and follow a realistic approach to satisfy their hopes and aspirations. There are many adolescents who do little to realise their hopes and aspirations. Moreover, they do not follow a realistic approach. Such adolescents develop the habit of day dreaming and live a life of fantasy, false imagination and building castles in the air.

8. Development of abstract emotion : Generally, children show emotional expression in relation to concrete objects but adolescents can express their emotional feelings in relation to objects which are abstract.

9. Realism in emotional experiences : Adolescent enters the period of reality. He can perceive and appreciate people around him. He recognises the weakness and strength of one's character.

10. Capacity of sharing emotions : Adolescent develops an increased capacity of sharing emotional experiences with others. He develops the capacity for concern about the feelings of others. Sharing of emotional experiences reaches its fullest development when an adolescent is able to relate himself to another person in such a way that the satisfaction of one person is just as important as his own. It means he begins to love his neighbours as much as himself.

11. Widened loyalties : Emotional development begins from the home environment of the infant and during adolescence period, it is widened beyond home environment and neighbourhood. These loyalties are identified with peers and leaders of various fields.

12. Increased compassion : Compassionate means fellowship of feeling. To be compassionate means that a person is able to enter his own feelings and appreciate the emotional feelings of others.

13. Common emotional patterns : The most important emotional patterns of the adolescents include love, anger, jealousy, fear, worry, envy. Some of the more complex emotions of adolescent period are awe, reverence, gratitude, scorn, contempt, hatred, joy, grief, pity, shame etc.

(i) **Emotion of love :** Love is one of the dominant emotions of adolescent period. This is due to the development of sex instinct which takes place during this period. There are three phases of sexual development :

(a) **Auto-eroticism (self-love) :** The adolescent becomes self-conscious. He loves his body. He wears costly dresses to attract the attention of others. He stands before the mirror for quite a long time. One of the most prominent and common malpractices in which the adolescents indulge is *masturbation* i.e., self-stimulation of the genitals, as a means of seeking sexual satisfaction. *Kinsey* reported on the basis of study that 90% of boys and 60% of girls show masterbatory behaviour at sometime or the other.

(b) **Homo-sexuality :** During this phase, the adolescents show sexual activity with the members of the same sex. At early adolescence, boys mix with the boys and girls with girls only. They have more interest in their own sex. *Kinsey* on the basis of study reported that 37% male subjects and 25% of female subjects

had some form of homo-sexual behaviour. *Valentine* found among his own students that 50% of the boys and 72% of the girls have experienced homo-sexual tendency during their adolescence. The symptoms of homo-sexuality may take the form of mutual masturbation, sodomy (anal intercourse), fellatio (oral contact with the male genitals), cunnilingus (oral contact with the female genitals) or interfemoral coitus (intercourse between the thighs).

(c) Hetero-sexuality : At this phase, the object of attachment is the member of the opposite sex. Adolescents show keen interest in the activities of the members of the opposite sex.

In the words of *J.S. Ross*, "Sex, then, is the fundamental fact of adolescence, if not of all life. Like the overflow of great river, it irrigates and fertilises great tracts of life's territory."

(ii) Emotion of anger : The adolescent is made angry when he is teased, ridiculed, criticised or 'lectured', when he feels that he and his friends are unfairly treated or punished by parents and teachers, when privileges he considers fair are refused, when he is "treated like a child", when people impose upon him, or when people are bossy and sarcastic. In addition, he becomes angry when things do not go right, when he is unable to accomplish what he sets out to do, when he is interrupted at times when he is busy and preoccupied. The young adolescent experiences many frustrations when he is blocked in doing what he wants to do.

(iii) Emotion of worry: Among young adolescents, school work is the most common source of worry. Tests and examinations in school are the chief source of worry connected with school work. Young adolescent girls worry also about their appearance, health problems, clothes, money, vocational choice, about boy and girl relationships, difficulty in making friends, and suitable places for recreation. Boys worry more than girls about ability and money. In the worries about social relations, girls are more concerned about their reputation, popularity, dates and marriage. Frequent and prolonged worry often lead to anxiety.

(iv) Emotion of jealousy : The young adolescent is interested in the members of the opposite sex and craves popularity with them. Those who attain this desired goal arouse jealous reactions in those who are overlooked or scorned by members of the opposite sex. Young adolescents are also jealous of peers who have more privileges and more independence, who are more successful in school work or games than they.

Emotional characteristics of adolescents can be summed up in *Winifred V. Richmond*'s words, "The restlessness, the changing moods, the flaming enthusiasms, often short-lived, the romantic fancies and the tendency to day-dreaming, the self-conceit and self-assertion characteristics of the girl in her teens arise from the deepest recess of her nature. Adolescence is the hey day of emotional life, the blossom time of all those feelings and emotions which depend at bottom upon sex." This is equally true in case of boys also.

(3) Intellectual or Mental Characteristics of Adolescence :

Adolescents, generally, show the following intellectual characteristics and changes :

1. Development of intelligence : Adolescence is the period of maximum growth and intellectual development. Intelligence reaches its climax during this period. Intellectual powers like logical thinking, abstract reasoning and concentration are almost developed upto the end of this period. It is said that infancy is the period of sense-perception, late childhood of memorisation and accumulation and of experience, but adolescence is the period of logical thinking, reasoning and abstractions. An adolescent learns to reason and seeks answer to 'how and why' of everything scientifically. His power of critical thinking and observation is much developed. He is almost critical of everything.

2. Increase in span of attention : During adolescent period, the span of attention increases. The adolescent can attend to one thing for a longer period of time. His power of concentration is increased.

3. Development of memory : Memory is also developed and it tends to function more logically. It is better than any other stage.

4. Development of understanding : The depth of understanding develops. Consequently adolescents try to see and analyse essential relationships in the situation.

5. Development of abstract thinking : There is sudden development of abstract thinking and to deal with abstract ideas. Now adolescents start thinking in terms of concepts and symbols rather than concrete things. They try to comprehend and communicate things in abstract terms.

6. Development of generalisation : Adolescents have ability to generalise in abstract terms. During childhood, there exists ability of generalisation in relation to concrete objects but during adolescence period, there exists ability to generalise in relation to concepts and ideas.

7. Development of problem solving ability : The adolescent try to solve problems on their own whenever they are confronted with some problematic situations. They avoid looking towards others and prefer to use their own intellectual powers.

8. Ability to make decisions : Adolescents develop ability to make decisions. They learn to distinguish between actual and ideal, between reasoning and rationalisation. They learn to shift what is wished from what is wise.

9. Development of imagination : Adolescents possess excessive imagination. Writers, artists, musicians, poets, philosophers and inventors are born in this period. Improper channelisation of imagination and dissatisfied needs may turn an adolescent into day-dreaming. He builds castles in the air. The smallest thing can persuade him to temporarily abandon the world of reality and turn to the imaginary world. But during the late adolescent period, he begins to live in the world of reality. In the words of *James S. Ross*, "Fantasies fade and reality is faced. The young man of eighteen is a man of the world pre-occupied with practical problems, and proud of his knowledge of affairs and practical efficiency."

10. Hero-worship : Hero-worship is very prominent in adolescent period. An adolescent begins to worship his ideal man or woman and tries to model himself on him or her. Hero for an adolescent may be a film-star, a political or religious leader, a poet or an artist, a scientist, a wrestler or a teacher. Sometimes, this hero worship turns in love. Once a hero is selected, the adolescent tries to follow him or her blindly. The ideals of the hero i.e., character of the hero begins to guide the conduct of the adolescent. Thus he does so in order to be like the hero in his own life time, and himself to be selected as hero by others who are to follow i.e., by the succeeding generations. He selects the hero through the study of various biographies or stories of national or international heroes or tales of adventure. *Hall* says, "Boys in their teens have a variable passion for the story of great men. All these attachments sometimes lead to emotional conflicts." It is, therefore, suggested that the child should be helped in selecting a hero because it becomes difficult to change his life once he happens to select an unhealthy hero like a dacoit and guide his conduct for a number of years. It is essential that the teacher should represent the highest ideals, as he is the best example that the adolescent can imitate.

11. Widening of interests : Interests of young adolescents are numerous and varied. The most important categories of their interests include recreational interests, social interests, personal interests, vocational interests, interest in school, religious interests and sex interests.

(i) **Recreational interests :** Some of the favourite recreational interests of adolescents are interest in games and sports like swimming, basket ball, football and tennis ; stories and novels of adventures and romance, movies with adventure, romantic, mystery or comedy theme ; listening to the radio and watching television. There is an increase in preference for programmes of dance and popular music. Humorous sketches and plays also have great appeal. Among boys especially, mystery, crime and detective programmes are popular.

(ii) **Social interests :** Adolescent becomes markedly interested in all forms of group activities, as well as activities with one or more intimate friends. He becomes very social. He takes interest in social activities. Sometimes, he does social service at the cost of personal inconvenience.

(iii) **Personal interests :** With the awakening of interest in members of the opposite sex, interest in appearance, in dress, and in personal adornment increases. Interest in appearance covers not only clothes and personal adornment but also every aspect of appearance. Hair, body size, facial features, skin and nails are all focal points of interest to the young adolescent.

(iv) **Vocational interests :** Young adolescents begin to think seriously about their future and the kind of vocation they want to make their lifework. Girls plan ahead less than boys because the time of marriage is unpredictable. Boys are more seriously concerned about the problem of vocational choice.

(v) **Religious interests :** Adolescents take interest in religious matters and religious techniques. They talk about religion to their friends. They become interested in knowing the nature of God and man, hell and heaven, sin, life after death etc. Adolescents engage themselves in prayer as a meaningful personal experience under unusual circumstances, such as at the time of important examination.

(vi) **Interest in sexual matters :** When adolescent boys or girls get together with members of their own sex, they are likely to talk about sex. The more intimate is the group, the more intimate the subject of sex becomes. They discuss such matters as what is real love, how can one tell that love is real or not, what is the sex relationship in marriage, problems related to menstruation and nocturnal emissions, and sexual feelings and attractions.

(4) Social Characteristics or Changes :

1. **Sex consciousness :** In adolescent stage, the individual becomes very conscious of his sex. At this stage, boys and girls want to attract the members of the opposite sex. They want to have friendship with members of the opposite sex.

2. **Social consciousness :** Social consciousness is developed in adolescents at a fast speed. They want to be praised by their parents, teachers and friends. They know their status in the society. They want social approval of various modes of behaviour.

3. **Group loyalty :** Adolescent boys and girls form their groups and discuss their problems freely. They become very loyal to their groups. Here they learn the qualities of sympathy, competition, co-operation, obedience and leadership. Sometimes parental demands, are ignored by him in face of demands made on him by his group. He often comes in clash with his elders who do not approve of his group affiliations.

4. **Social service :** In adolescent stage, ideals of social service and altruism are formed and cherished. Social service in public gatherings, fairs and festivals becomes a passion for the adolescent. He does not mind personal inconvenience in doing of such service.

(C) NEEDS OF INDIAN ADOLESCENTS

Adolescence period as has already been pointed out is the most critical period of life due to various physical and emotional disturbances. So adolescents experience various difficulties and problems arising out of certain basic needs. The following are some of the needs of adolescents :

1. **Need of freedom from dependence :** Adolescents consider themselves as full-fledged adults. So they do not want to remain under the control of elders. Hence, they feel the need of independence and want to exercise their own opinion. This creates difficulties. Parents and teachers should regard them as full-fledged individual's and should give them freedom and responsibility.

2. **Need of association with the opposite sex :** During this period, sex instinct attains maturity and is very forceful. Adolescents decorate their bodies to attract the opposite sex. They feel the need of association with the opposite sex. Sometimes, they are not satisfied with mere association but they feel the need to develop intimacy. The poet has rightly expressed the sexual craving of developing adolescent in the following couplet :

“दिल तो तुम से लगा कर देख लिया,
अब तुम्हें दिल से लगा कर देखेंगे ।”

So the parents and the teachers should provide opportunities by which their needs can be sublimated.

3. **Need for self-support :** Self-support implies what they would like to do and become in life. So this need can be fulfilled by providing them educational and vocational guidance. So those courses should be selected in which they have special aptitude and interest.

4. Need for philosophy of life : Adolescents being mentally mature assume independent outlook regarding every activity of life. They take interest in the matters of religion. Their topics are not to discuss philosophy but to talk about conduct, religion and destiny. So it is the duty of teachers and parents to satisfy this need by providing religious teaching and moral training otherwise there will be conflict between the parents and the adolescents.

5. Need for security : Adolescents suffer from loss of support from the parents. Adolescents should be given sympathetic attitude and guidance so that they may not suffer from complexes and frustrations.

6. Need for self-recognition : Adolescence is a period of self-decoration and adolescents become self-conscious. It is their intense desire to attract the attention of others. They want to display themselves in every activity. The underlying idea is that they need self-recognition. So it is the duty of the parents and the teachers to give them full place. They should be fully recognised as full-fledged individuals.

7. Need for success : Failure disintegrates the whole personality, while success leads to adjustment. Hence every adolescent has the desire to gain success in all the activities he undertakes. The schools, therefore, should organise the curricular and co-curricular activities in such a way that all pupils achieve success in the activities they pursue.

8. Need for better food : The adolescence is a stage of rapid development. The body develops in height, weight and every other aspect. Therefore, the need for better food both in quantity as well as in quality is more in this stage than in any other stage of life. The parents, the teachers and the educators should see that the children get simple and rich diet in proper quantity and quality at suitable occasions.

9. Desire for new experience : The adolescent is never interested in routine. He is interested in new and new experiences. This urge or desire can be satisfied by arranging trips, excursions and other co-curricular activities in the school.

Parents, teachers and educationists should help the adolescents in the satisfaction of their need as far as possible.

(D) SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF INDIAN ADOLESCENTS AND SOLUTIONS

As described earlier, period of adolescence is the most critical period of individual's life. In this period equilibrium of physical, mental and social forces is lost, and the result is that the individual has to make new adjustments with his own self, with the family and with the society at large. The problems of adjustment of the adolescents are discussed as under :

1. Adjustments to physical growth : Because of rapid and unbalanced growth in height, weight and physique the adolescent feels embarrassment in the group with which he moves. He feels that he is looking odd in the company of his classfellows and playmates. The teacher and parents should not address him as 'camel' and 'bull', etc., to emphasise his temporary physical abnormalities.

The disturbing physical factors for girls are fatness, tallness, facial features, thinness, small breasts, general physical appearance, acne hair, big legs, scar on face and brace on back. The disturbing physical factors for boys are lack of size, fatness, lack of muscular strength, unusual facial features, acne, skin blemishes, scars, bowed legs, curvature of the spine, lack of shoulder breadth, unusually small or large genital and physique.

To provide for the rapid physical growth the adolescent should be given sufficient nourishing diet. As adolescent has excess of physical energy, healthy outlet should be provided for the same in the form of games, scouting, social service and other hobbies.

2. Adjustment to mental competition : Because of mental development, the adolescent becomes critical and fault finder. He wants to broaden his mental horizon by knowing everything he comes across. The mentally superior adolescent faces the problem of adjustment because of too strenuous a competition to which he is subjected to by his parents and teachers. The mentally slow adolescent faces the problem of adjustment because he finds that the school is geared to the bright and it is difficult for him to master the academic subjects.

To ensure adequate mental development of the adolescents, curriculum for adolescent should be as broad-based as possible. Co-curricular activities should be organised. Reading habits should be developed and suitable library facilities should be provided.

3. Adjustment to emotional disturbances : Emotional disturbances in the adolescent are due to the rapidly changing physical structures, abnormal functioning of the nervous and glandular systems and his widening social experiences. The adolescent has got extreme emotions. His emotional moods vary from elation to depression. One minute the adolescent is up in the clouds, and the next he is in the depths of despair. He, sometimes, thinks of committing suicide. From tears to laughter, from self-confidence to self-depreciation, from selfishness to altruism, and from enthusiasm to indifference – all are common reactions of young adolescents. In extreme cases the behaviour of the adolescent may be expressed in the form of an open defiance to the teacher or by destroying school property etc.

What is required is to help him in emotional control. In dealing with the adolescent, we must respect his individuality. Proper habits and sentiments should be developed in him. Self-governments should be introduced in the educational institutions. Discussion method should be encouraged. Emotions should be properly sublimated by introducing music, art, games and other co-curricular activities.

4. Problem of home adjustment : An adolescent, sometimes, cannot adjust himself to the conditions of home. His home adjustment problems arise due to the fact that his needs increase and his parents may not be able to meet all those needs. The adolescent begins to behave as an independent individual. He begins to assert himself. The parents resist his independence ; and this leads to trouble. He feels as if he is being kept in bondage by his parents. Some of the reactions of the adolescents are :

- (1) "My parents find faults in me that I believe I do not have."
- (2) "My father has become narrow and he always starts arguments."
- (3) "Every time when I say something my father passes a sarcastic remark. I am now afraid to say anything."

The parents should not dominate the adolescent unnecessarily, and should rather treat him as friend. Ancient wisdom in this regard is summed up in the following verse :

"लालयेत पञ्च वर्षाणि, दशा वर्षाणि च ताडयेत प्राप्ते तु षोडशे वर्षे, मित्र समवदाचरित । ।"

According to this verse, at the age of sixteen, the individual should be treated as a friend.

The other conflicts may be marriage problem, the choice of a vocation and social philosophy. Many parents ruin the lives of their children by forcing them to marry at a very early age. The parents should give maximum importance to the opinion of the adolescent regarding marriage. His refusal should not be changed into by any undue pressure. Similarly in the choice of a profession, many parents do not give a free choice to their children. They want to satisfy their unfulfilled desires through their sons and daughters. In the choice of vocation, the child's own interests and aptitudes should be the guiding factor. The parents should desist from imposing their own philosophy of life on their children. The child should be given sufficient opportunities of study and the right to free thinking and independent outlook.

5. Problem of adjustment with friends : At adolescent stage, boys and girls need some friends in whom they can confide their secrets and discuss matter freely. Hence friendships at this age have special significance on the one hand and a problem on the other. The friendships among girls are more emotionally charged than among boys. The girls tend to be more possessive of their "best friends".

6. Problem of sex adjustment : As has been stated earlier, there is sharply accelerated and rapid growth of sex life. Both the primary as well as the secondary sex characteristics appear during this period. The discharge of the semen during sleep (nocturnal emissions) accompanied by erotic dreams among the boys horrify the ignorant adolescents. They remain perturbed about the loss of fluid. Similarly, the flow of blood during menstruation creates worries among the girls and gives birth to so many fears, anxieties and complexes in the minds of adolescents.

For normal sex adjustment, which is very essential, parents and teachers should impart sex education. Scientific terms should be used while giving relevant information. Girls should know that flow of blood

during menstruation is not a disease. It is a natural process which prepares them for becoming mothers. Similarly, the boys should be told that the occasional discharge of semen during sleep is not in any way harmful to them and it should not be a cause of worry. Adequate information should be given regarding the sex hygiene and physiology, the process of the birth of a baby, the hazards of immature intercourse (*i.e.*, intercourse before marriage) in a free, frank, impersonal, judicious and scientific manner.

7. Problem of adjustment with society : Sometimes, adolescents have to face the problem of adjustment with society. The adolescent cannot stand the customs, traditions and rites that stand on his free will. The demands of the society are too exacting for him to carry out.

The adolescent should be won over to the society in a sympathetic way. The importance of social values should be explained, social responsibilities should be assigned, individualities should be respected, and healthy activities for self-expression should be provided. The state should provide employment opportunities for the adolescent. Social security to the adolescent should be assured.

(E) DIFFERENCES IN THE TRENDS OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN ADOLESCENCE

Differences in the trends of growth and development of boys and girls in adolescence can be mentioned as under :

1. Height and Weight : In the infancy boys surpass girls in height and weight. At the age of 13 years girls are taller and heavier than boys but by the age of 15 years boys are taller and heavier than girls.

2. Muscles : The muscles of girls remain softer while those of boys become hard and firm.

3. Bodily proportions : The pelvis bone of girls become broadened and their wrist becomes circular. The arms and legs grow in length and become finer. Boys develop round shoulders. Early maturing boys tend to be more feminine and the late maturing girls tend to be more masculine in the total trend.

4. Voice : There is a distinct change in voice among the two sexes. The voice of boys becomes hoarse and the voice of girls acquires shrillness and becomes sweet.

5. Secondary sex characteristics : Genital organs in boys increase in size. In girls sex organs acquire maturity. The growth of breasts and the widening of pelvis in girls are among the notable physical changes that have significant influence on the adolescent girl's conception of her physical self. There is roundness of the breasts and hips and thinness of the waistline among the girls. These changes in the external physical organs make the adolescent girls self-conscious. There is marked changes in her gait and now she becomes very conscious of her bodily changes.

6. Primary sex characteristics : Regarding primary sex characteristics, the development in girls involve the development of the ovaries, uterus and vagina, and the beginning of menstrual periods. While in boys, it brings the growth of testes and penis and the ability to produce sperm. At the beginning of adolescent period sex glands begin to function. In the case of boys, the seminal glands begin to work, semen is produced and there are night emissions (discharge of semen during sleep) accompanied by erotic dreams. The girls begin to menstruate monthly during the adolescent period. Menstruation usually becomes a disturbing and horrifying experience. In adolescent period, testicles start functioning in case of boys and ovaries start functioning in case of girls.

7. Hair growth : There is growth of hair in pubic regions, under-arms, arms, legs, limbs, trunk and thighs. There is appearance of beard and moustaches in case of boys.

8. Blood pressure : During early childhood, girls have higher blood pressure than boys. But with the beginning of adolescent period the blood pressure increases in boys and the difference increases with age.

9. Growth of heart : The rate of growth of heart is higher in boys than girls.

10. Physical maturity : Girls seem to mature earlier than boys in physical activity. In the matter of physical strength and stamina, the adolescent boys in general show marked superiority over the adolescent girls.

11. Motor performance : During adolescent period, there is great difference in motor performance (running, throwing a ball and jumping etc.) of boys and girls. The boys are superior, particularly in activities which involve muscular strength. The boys continue their interest in physical activities while there is a short decrease in interest of girls.

12. Masterbatory behaviour : Kinsey reported on the basis of study that 90% of boys and 60% of girls show masterbatory behaviour.

13. Homosexuality : Homosexuality is more prevalent in case of girls. Valentine found among his own students that 50% of the boys and 72% of the girls have experienced homosexual tendency during their adolescence.

14. Manifestation of sex feelings : Outward manifestation of their sex feelings are usually prevalent in boys than the girls. No doubt, girls are attracted to boys they do not make it public as boys do.

15. Expression : Boys are more secretive and seclusive whereas girls are found more expressive. Girls can release their tension easily through expression than boys.

16. Social qualities : Girls have more of tolerance, sympathy, kindness, sensitiveness, sense of sacrifice, humour, cheerfulness and various other social qualities. Boys have more pugnacity in them as compared to girls. Girls play a tendency of self-defence or self-security. Boys use force but girls go through reasoning. Even in western countries, there is difference in the social behaviour of boys and girls.

17. Areas of interests : Adolescent girls take interest in the stories of love, fairly tales, stories of the school and home and day-dreaming. On the other hand, adolescent boys take interest in the stories of bravery, science, war, scouting, games of occupation and skill. Boys take interest in activities and play which are considered to be more masculine and involve more physical strength and stamina. They show interest in machinery and outdoor activities. They prefer adventures. Girls are interested in less vigorous games. They have a better sense of fine art than boys.

It should be noted that various differences in trends of growth and development of boys and girls in adolescence differ from culture to culture, place to place, community to community and situation to situation.

(F) IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING (EDUCATION FOR ADOLESCENTS)

As has already been pointed out that almost every adolescent finds difficulty in adjusting with himself, family and society at large. Most of the adolescents suffer from frustrations, conflicts, complexes, anxieties and worries. They experience difficulty in physical, mental, emotional, social and other adjustment. However, whatever is needed is an understanding of the psychology of adolescent and then do our best to help him in his difficulties. A few concrete things are suggested below :

1. Physical exercises and activities : Adolescence being a period of rapid physical development, physical exercises and activities like sports, drills, games, dancing, hiking, gymnastics, wrestling, football, kabaddi etc. should be introduced in the school curriculum. According to Stanley Hall, dancing can serve the best job. He says, "Dancing is one of the best expressions and pure play and pure motor need of the youth. Perhaps, it is the most liberal of all forms of motor education."

2. Appropriate lectures and sex education : (a) Appropriate lectures on physical growth and development should be delivered and the scientific explanation of the sudden growth and various parts of the body should be given.

(b) The school should impart full information to the students regarding proper balanced diet, personal hygiene, cleanliness, various diseases and the measures to check these etc.

(c) Sex education should be given in free, frank, scientific, judicious and impersonal manner to the adolescents so that they may not pick up wrong information and come under immoral influence. Girls should be educated as regards menstruation and the boys as regards the involuntary changes brought in the genital organs. Nobody is better suited to this job than parents and teachers. Realistic and straight answers should be given to questions regarding sex.

3. **Discouraging tight and sleeveless dress :** Tight and sleeveless dresses should be discouraged as they excite sex instinct.

4. **Sympathetic and affectionate attitude :** The person gets perturbed when he looks at various physical and psychological changes that take place in him. Hence, it is the duty of the parents and the teacher that they should behave in sympathetic and psychological manner.

5. **Respecting individuality :** Individualities of adolescents should be respected and their opinions should be taken by parents concerning their choice of career or profession and marriage etc.

6. **Democratic atmosphere :** There should be democratic atmosphere in the school. There should be chance for leadership training. There should be provision for various societies, clubs and associations in the school.

7. **Co-curricular activities :** Adolescence is a period of intellectual development. So there should be co-curricular activities in the form of debates, declamation contests, paper reading contests, conferences, poetical symposium, literary, art, painting, music and dramatic clubs and societies, N.C.C., scouting, girl guiding and excursions and trips to various places of historical, geographical, scientific and cultural importance.

8. **Tasks of responsibility:** Tasks of responsibility should be given to them. Self-government should be introduced in the school so that they may accept responsibility, get some social status and exercise their own judgement.

9. **High moral and religious education :** (a) Moral and religious education should be given to adolescents. This stresses the importance of value of prayer in morning assemblies and celebrations of birthdays of great saints of all religions. Parents, teachers and religious leaders should not teach or propagate for narrow religion but spirit of brotherhood and humanitarism should be taught, propagated and cultivated.

(b) The pupils must be helped in the formation and development of strong moral sentiments and ideals like patriotism, nationalism, self-sacrifice, honesty, truth, beauty and goodness.

10. **Co-operation of parents :** Co-operation of parents must be sought. Parents should co-operate with the school and college staff in helping the adolescents in solving their difficulties. They should provide good hygienic conditions to the adolescents at home. Home atmosphere should be free from any tensions and worries. Moreover, the parents should have the knowledge of psychology of adolescence.

11. **School—centre of community service :** School should become the centre of community service in which the students are to take an active part in doing community service etc. Dignity of labour should be recognised and social disparities should be removed by education.

12. **Guidance centres :** Guidance centres should be started so that adolescents may get suitable educational, vocational and psychological guidance. There should be well-trained and experienced guidance workers and counsellors. They should help the adolescents in solving their problems and making personal, social and psychological adjustments.

Conclusion :

To include we can say that adolescence is a period of stress and strain, strife and storm, heightened emotionality and suggestibility, day-dreaming and adventures, intense affections and stirring of the heart. Adolescents have various needs and problems and hence the teachers have a vital role to play in their lives. Education should be organised in such a way that it may enable the adolescents to face and solve the problems of life.

(G) DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

What is Developmental Task ?

1. **Havighurst's view :** In words of R.H. Havighurst (1953), "A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness and difficulty with later tasks."

Developmental tasks are based on the aspirations and needs of the society. Every society is age-graded and every society has a system of social expectations regarding age-appropriate behaviour. The individual passes through a socially regulated cycle from birth to death as inexorably as he passes through the biological cycle ; and there exists a socially prescribed time-table for the rendering of major life events. Although the norms vary somewhat from one socio-economic, ethnic or religious group to another, for any social group it can easily be demonstrated that norms and actual occurrences are closely related. In simple words a developmental task may be explained as :

- (1) Every society/culture has certain norms.
- (2) Every society/culture expects its members to follow these norms.
- (3) The norms are in terms of essential skills.
- (4) Mastery over these skills leads to happiness and failure leads to unhappiness.
- (5) Skills are related to age-groups.
- (6) Norms vary somewhat from one socio-economic group to another.

Havighurst points out that any particular developmental task becomes appropriate for an individual when one or more of the following characteristics have developed :

1. **Physical maturation** : There are certain tasks which arise of physical growth of the child as walking.
2. **Learning the tasks** : The society expects certain behaviour from the individual and individual under cultural pressures learns these tasks as vocational preparation.
3. **Personal values, aspirations and psychological competence.**

Importance or Advantages of Developmental Tasks :

Developmental tasks change with the socio-economic development of the country and can be replaced by new developmental tasks suiting to the needs of the individual and society. Advantages of developmental tasks are given below :

1. **Specification of course content** : The concept of developmental task helps in specifying the course content and its objectives in definite terms. They serve as guide lines to the individual. He can know in advance what the society expects from him at a given stage. Parents can be guided in teaching their children certain skills and social competencies which the society expects from them.

2. **Definite goal** : The second important purpose which the concept of developmental task serves is to show the individual what lies ahead and what will be expected when he reaches the next stage of development. This develops purposefulness in the effort of the individual by providing definite goal.

3. **Helpful to the teacher** : The concept of developmental task is also very helpful to the teacher to be prepared to avail the opportunity and preparing appropriate atmosphere to achieve a developmental task. Educational efforts can be tuned with the developmental characteristics of the individual. The educational efforts will not go waste because now they may be organised at the appropriate moment.

4. **Channelisation of emotions** : Developmental tasks help in developing and channelising the emotions of adolescents to right direction.

Some studies have revealed that good achievement on the one developmental task was found to be associated with good environment on other tasks at the same age. If the adolescent is to accomplish the developmental tasks required in his society it is quite important that he masters his impulsivity to accomplish the tasks.

List of Developmental Tasks :

- (1) **Infancy (Early Childhood) Period (Birth to 5 years)** :
- (1) Learning to take solid food.
- (2) Learning to talk.
- (3) Learning to walk.
- (4) Learning to control the elimination of body wastes.
- (5) Achieving physiological stability.
- (6) Learning sex differences.
- (7) Forming simple concepts of social and physical reality.

- (8) Learning to relate one self emotionally to parents, siblings and other people.
- (9) Learning to distinguish right and wrong and developing a conscience.

(2) Late Childhood Period :

- (1) Learning physical skills, games.
- (2) Learning to get along well with friends, classfellows, age-mates, parents and teachers.
- (3) Learning an appropriate sex role i.e., masculine or feminine role.
- (4) Developing basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic.
- (5) Building wholesome attitudes towards one self as a growing organism.
- (6) Developing attitudes towards social groups and institutions.
- (7) Developing conscience, morality and values.
- (8) Developing concepts necessary to everyday living.
- (9) Achieving personal independence.

(3) Adolescence Period :

Havighurst recommended the following developmental tasks for adolescents if they want to be well adjusted and happy individuals :

- (1) Accepting one's physique.
- (2) Understanding and accepting male and female role in society.
- (3) Establishing mature relations with age-mates of both sexes.
- (4) Gaining emotional independence from parents and other adults.
- (5) Achieving assurance of economic independence.
- (6) Selecting and preparation for a vocation.
- (7) Preparation for competitive life.
- (8) Developing intellectual skills.
- (9) Developing socially acceptable behaviour.
- (10) Developing good habits useful for future life.
- (11) Selective educational activities.
- (12) Acquisition of useful knowledge.
- (13) Adopting values to live in society.
- (14) Cultivation of good language.
- (15) Fixing choices and preferences.
- (16) Attaining mastery in some activity.
- (17) Making goal-oriented life.
- (18) Story writing.
- (19) Preparing for marriage and family life.
- (20) Developing harmonious physical, social, intellectual, aesthetic, cultural, moral and scientific values.

**(H) GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR ADOLESCENTS
(ROLE OF SCHOOL AND TEACHER)**

(1) Guidelines for Parents and Teachers relating to Developmental Tasks :

The following guidelines should be kept in mind for planning and implementing suitable programmes for the all round development of children and adolescents :

1. **Knowledge of developmental tasks :** Each stage of individual's development has peculiar developmental tasks. Both parents and teachers should have knowledge of these developmental tasks.
2. **Attention to individual needs :** There are individual differences. No two individuals are alike. Hence, attention must be paid to individual needs. Each child needs attention and a neglected child in the home or in the class loses interest in work and play.

3. Observation of children : Both parents and teachers should observe their wards and pupils. Observation of children leads to better understanding on the part of parents and teachers.

4. Better environment : Children need an environment which promotes initiative and trust. Hence, parents and teachers should provide conducive environment.

5. Provide an example : Children imitate their parents and teachers. They should provide their own good example. When parents and teachers speak clearly, use appropriate words and adopt a proper style and manner, children and adolescents are likely to do the same. Consistency, firmness, love and patience on the part of parents and teachers will go a long way in the whole development of children.

6. Suitable activities : Children and adolescents learn through doing and playing. Doing helps in the development of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, educational and vocational skills. Singing songs and learning rhymes, drawing pictures and reading stories help the children and adolescents to develop their mind at the pre-primary, primary, middle and secondary stages. Therefore, parents and teachers should provide various types of activities to them.

7. Suitable objects : Children learn through concrete objects in the beginning. Hence, parents and teachers should use concrete objects for their learning and modification of behaviour.

8. Encouragement : Both children and adolescents need encouragement to develop at their own pace. Hence, parents and teachers should encourage them for effective learning and best development of personality.

9. Sensitive relationship : Anger and violence are damaging to the inner development of the child. Children as well as adults need a close, loving, healthy and sensitive relationships with the adults who are charged with the responsibility of looking after them. So, both parents and teachers should have good and sensitive relationships with their wards and students. Healthy relationships established in the earlier stages of life helps to set the pattern of future development.

10. Feeling of being loved : The feeling of being wanted and loved in the children and adolescents is vital to the inner development of the child. Therefore, parents and teachers should make all possible efforts for developing this feeling.

11. Sense of security : Children as well as adolescents need a sense of security. Sense of security should be provided by parents and teachers.

12. Praise and recognition : For proper development, all children and adolescents need proper praise and recognition for their work. So parents and teachers should suitably praise and recognise the individualities of their wards and students.

13. Satisfaction of curiosity : Children and adolescents are curious to learn and respond with interest to new things. Therefore, parents and teachers should do their utmost to satisfy the curiosity of their children and wards.

14. Repetition : '*Practice makes a man perfect*' is a well known saying. Children and adolescents learn through practice or repetition. Of course excessive repetition tends to kill interest. Therefore, parents and teachers should provide opportunities for adequate practice to their wards and pupils.

The entire programme of guidance in school revolves around adolescent boys and girls. For an effective guidance programme, it is imperative on the part of the guidance worker to understand the meaning, characteristics, importance, problems and needs of adolescents as well of the society and education of adolescents. (We have already discussed these aspects of adolescents in chapter 6 of the book from page 81 to 93).

It should be remembered that guidance and counselling are specially needed for adolescents because adolescence is the most critical period of life, because of stresses and strains, storm and strife, heightened emotionality, adventures, day dreaming, intense affections, stirring of the heart ; rapid physical, intellectual, emotional and sexual changes and problems and psychological needs (like need of freedom from dependence, need of association with the opposite sex, need for self-support, need for philosophy of life, need for security, need for self-recognition, need for success and need for new experiences etc.

Incidents occurring in adolescent period are of great importance in moulding character, personality, and educational and vocational career of a youth and it is very essential that the guidance worker should be fully acquainted with the problems and psychology of adolescents.

According to *Rabindra Nath Tagore*, "In the world of human affairs there is no worse nuisance than a body at the age of fourteen (adolescent). He is neither ornamental nor useful. It is impossible to shower affection on him as a little boy ; and he is always getting in the way." In words of *William H.Burton*, "The adolescent is an odd, awkward, graceful, respectful, selfish, altruistic, idealistic, narrow-minded, sympathetic and cruel individual."

(2) Educational Guidance for Adolescents :

Educational Guidance is confined to the efforts that are connected with the educational development of the students. Optimum educational development of the students is the aim of activities and programmes of educational guidance. Educational guidance for adolescents include the following :

- (1) To assist the adolescents in the identification and development of their abilities, aptitudes and interests.
- (2) To assist the adolescents in intelligent selection of courses, hobbies and co-curricular activities.
- (3) To assist the adolescents in making improvement in methods of study by making the best use of :
(i) Mode of reading – silent and loud reading, (ii) Mode of taking notes, (iii) Methods of memorising like (a) Whole and part method, (b) recitation method, (c) spaced and unspaced method, (d) rote and intelligent method ; (iv) method of summarising, (v) proper division of time between study and rest, and division of study period according to the subject to be studied ; and (vi) provision for rest.
- (4) To provide special methods of education for backward adolescents (practice, drill, repetition, audio-visual aids, learning by doing, educational trips and play-way methods).
- (5) To provide special education programmes for gifted students (like enrichment in co-curricular activities and diversification of courses).
- (6) To provide special library facilities for broadening the mental horizon of adolescents.
- (7) To provide special guidance for certain subjects and preparation for examination.
- (8) To give special guidance for selection of textbooks and reference books.
- (9) To help the adolescents to secure information regarding the possibility and desirability of further education.
- (10) To help the adolescents to know the purposes and functions of different types of educational and vocational/professional institutions that they might attend.
- (11) To help the adolescents to know in details the offering of the institution that they might attend.
- (12) To help the adolescents to know the requirements for entrance into the institution of their choice and taste.
- (13) To help the adolescents to adjust themselves to the curriculum, the institution, social life connected with it and building good social relationships.
- (14) To help the adolescents in knowing the availability of scholarships and loans etc.
- (15) To help the adolescents to know about the various openings available after completing the school careers.

(3) Vocational Guidance for Adolescents :

Vocational guidance for adolescents include the following :

- (1) Helping adolescents to know themselves especially their vocational assets and liabilities and to make their best use.
- (2) Helping adolescents to know the world of work i.e., adequate information about various vocations or jobs, skills, requirements for admission, duration of training, salary, working conditions, future prospects for progress and opportunities, etc.
- (3) Helping adolescents to make a right choice of the vocation.
- (4) Helping adolescents to prepare themselves for entry into careers of their choice.
- (5) Helping adolescents to get suitable jobs in their chosen field.

(4) Personal or Psychological Guidance and Counselling for Adolescents :

Personal or psychological guidance and counselling for adolescents include the following :

- (1) To help the adolescents to solve the problems concerning physical growth and health.
- (2) To help the adolescents in making adjustment to mental competition.
- (3) To help the adolescents in solving emotional and sexual problems.
- (4) To help the adolescents in making home adjustment, school adjustment and social adjustment

by developing healthy ideas and building a healthy philosophy of life.

Psychological or personal guidance at this stage will comprise of (1) appropriate lectures on physical and sex education, (2) discussions, (3) interviews, (4) sympathetic and affectionate attitude, (5) assigning tasks of responsibility, (6) engaging the adolescents in various co-curricular activities and (7) imparting moral and religious education.

(I) SELF-CONCEPT OF ADOLESCENTS

Self-concept like motivation is a major psychological factor operating within the individual which determines his behaviour.

The formation of self-concept is fundamental to the development of individual's personality. As an individual grows, he not only forms concepts about his surroundings and other individuals, he also gradually forms an image or concept about himself. Through the interaction of the individual with his total environment (family environment, school environment, neighbourhood environment, play-ground environment and social environment at large) he begins to form an image of his own self—his physical health, structure of his body, physical features, strength and vitality; and other potentialities like interests, intelligence and attitudes etc.

Meaning of Self-concept :

1. View of William James : "Self or 'Empirical Me' is the sum total of all that a man can call his—his body, traits and abilities; his material possessions; his family, friends and enemies ; his vocations and avocations and much else." According to *James*, there are three constituents of self :

(i) **Material self**: The material self consists of his material possessions.

(ii) **Social self**: Social self consists of how he is regarded by his fellows.

(iii) **Spiritual self**: The spiritual self consists of his psychological faculties and dispositions.

(iv) **Pure ego**: The ego is the stream of thought which constitutes one's sense of personal identity.

2. View of Carl Rogers : *Carl Rogers* puts self-concept, "a portion of the total perceptual field gradually becomes differentiated as the self." Not only does the person begin to see himself as a person somehow separate from the rest of the world and from other people, but he learns to recognise and identify familiar faces, sounds, objects and events.

3. View of Combs and Snygg : "Self-concept is the individual's perception or view of himself."

It can be concluded that self-concept is the sum total of all that the individual can call 'I' or 'Me'. It refers to those perceptions, beliefs, feelings, attitudes and values which the individual views as part or characteristics of himself. Thus self-concept refers to individual's perception or view of himself.

Self-concept includes the person's abstractions and evaluations about his physical abilities, appearance, intellectual capacities, social skills, psychological self-image, self-confidence, self-respect and self-adequacy. Thus self-concept deals with self-perceptions of the person. A person's self-perceptions will in turn affect his social interaction, level of aspiration, psychological health, school achievement, and indirectly his popularity and approval by other people in his environment.

Dimensions or Components of Self-concept :

Dimensions or components of self-concept will further highlight the meaning of self-concept. Self-concept has three major components or dimensions :

1. Perceptual component : The perceptual component is the image the person has of the appearance of his body and of the impressions he makes on others. It is often called the 'physical self-concept'.

2. Conceptual component (Psychological self-concept) : The conceptual component is the person's conception of his distinctive characteristics, his abilities and disabilities, his background, his origin and his future. It is often called the psychological self-concept.

3. Attitudinal component : The attitudinal component refers to feelings a person has about himself, his attitudes about his present status and future prospectus, his feelings about his worthiness and his attitudes of self-esteem, self-reproach, pride and shame.

Stability of Self-concept (Positive and Negative Self-concept) :

Even during adolescence, an individual's self-concept is relatively stable. He may have positive self-concept or negative self-concept. But students whose self-concept was negative during the initial stage of development are significantly less stable in their self-concepts whose self-concept was positive.

Self-concept is not the ideal image of himself as the individual hopes to be or would prefer to be; but as he is. In persons with positive stable self-concept there is enough difference between the real self and the ideal self to serve as a motive for self-improvement. An increasing discrepancy between the real and the ideal selves brings maladjustment.

Characteristics of Persons (Adolescents) with Stable Self-concept :

1. Consistent approaches : Persons with stable and positive self- concepts are characterised by consistent approaches to perceiving themselves, responding emotionally to themselves and others, thinking about themselves and the events they experience.

2. Feeling for attractiveness : They feel that they are attractive as persons.

3. Social attitudes and goals : They have acceptable social attitudes and goals and are congenial.

4. Independence : They have enough independence to maintain their self-esteem and individuality in thought and action.

5. Wholesome persons : They see themselves as wholesome persons, desirable human beings whose self-concepts are not far removed from their ideal selves.

6. Tolerance : The acceptance of one's self is positively associated with tolerance.

7. Acceptance of others : Self-acceptance is positively associated with willingness to others. Self-acceptance and acceptance of others are positively correlated. Sometimes self-acceptance and acceptance of others may be evident in an adolescent's behaviour in varying degrees.

8. Self-confident : Those who are high in self-acceptance and acceptance of others are healthiest in their positive confidence in self and others.

9. Self-determination and personal responsibility : They show considerable self-determination and acceptance of others and personal responsibility for conduct and actions.

Students high in self-acceptance but low in acceptance of others overestimate their personal acceptability to others. Those low in acceptance of self and high in acceptance of others shun leadership almost completely. Those low in acceptance of self and acceptance of others exhibit high anxiety, impulsivity, low moral, over-dependence and a marked tendency to accommodate others.

Development of Self-concept :

Self-concept is a developing phenomena. It develops along with the development of the individual from infancy to adulthood.

1. Early infancy stage (From birth to 2 years) : At this stage, love and affection are the greatest essentials. These are perceived by the infant through the fulfilment of his physical and other needs and requirements. If his needs and requirements are properly attended to, he feels secure and wanted and consequently, develops a positive self-concept. On the other hand if his needs are not properly fulfilled, he feels insecure and unwanted, and consequently begins to entertain negative feelings, which lead to the formation of negative self-concept. This self-concept (positive or negative) forms the basis on which the edifice of the personality is to be built later.

2. Babyhood stage(From 2 to 4 years) : This is just a prolongation of infancy period. It may be termed as *late infancy* period. During this period, his sense perceptions are developed and increased and he also begins to acquire language skills. His curiosity about his surroundings is increased.

If proper attention is paid to him, and proper opportunities are provided to him to experience sense perceptions and he gets proper environment to talk, to converse and to develop his language skills, he feels satisfied, which helps to develop a positive self-concept.

3. Early childhood stage (From 4 to 7 years) : This period is characterised by curiosity and independence of action. He becomes distinctly conscious of his individuality. He begins to distinguish himself from others. In order to satisfy his curiosity, the child asks many questions. Therefore, it is essential that his questions are properly attended to and answered correctly, faithfully and sympathetically. Do not try to evade the questions or give incorrect answers, thinking that the little child is unable to understand. As far as possible the answers given must be correct. This will add to his knowledge. Positive self-concept is formed if his questions are sympathetically answered and attended.

4. Late childhood stage (From 7 to 12 years) : At this stage potentialities of the child begin to develop. This stage is referred to as the latency stage by psychoanalysts. At this stage the child develops a sense of competence as a result of his learning, or he may develop a sense of inferiority in comparison to his peers. If the child finds himself competent, a positive self-concept is formed which leads to striving and achieving more and more. If he finds himself less competent than others he may develop feelings of inferiority, leading to the formation of negative self-concept. Here the teacher's function is to encourage the child and not to discourage him. Appreciation and encouragement surely lead to the formation of positive self-concept.

5. Adolescence stage (From 12 to 17 years) : This is a stage of social awareness and social intercourse. The adolescent achieves more and more awareness and understanding of his self in the midst of his social environment. He begins to understand himself and his capacities. He develops self-concept according to his capacities, potentialities, attitudes and interests. If he is in a position to adjust himself well in society, he develops a positive self-concept.

It is very essential that one should develop a positive self-concept. Health, happiness and success are the result of positive self-concept. Therefore, one of the important functions of the teacher is to help the individual to develop positive self-concept.

Erikson's views concerning Development of Self-concept : Erikson's views on the development of self-concept are noteworthy. He states that every individual normally passes through eight stages of psycho-social development :

- (1) Trust versus mistrust.
- (2) Autonomy versus shame and doubt.
- (3) Initiative versus guilt.
- (4) Industry versus inferiority.
- (5) Identity versus role diffusion.
- (6) Intimacy versus isolation.
- (7) Generativity versus stagnation.
- (8) Ego integrity versus despair.

Note : These stages have been briefly explained at page 113 and 114.

These eight stages represent new challenges and crisis, new abilities and new strengths. During these stages the individual has to establish challenging concept of their self and reality. Each developmental stage has positive as well as negative features.

Adolescents faced with heightened sexual desires and uncertainties about future adult roles often become preoccupied with what and how they appear to others as compared to their beliefs about who and what they are. This search for self either culminates in a sense of identity or confusion about what they are. Elkind (1970) believes that adolescents must integrate into a meaningful whole all those roles that they have learned : son, daughter, student, athlete and friend. If they are successful, adolescents require a sense of psycho-social identity ; if they are unsuccessful, they remain uncertain as to what they are. Basic to a sense of identity is fidelity that is, the search for people and ideas to have faith in.

Factors Influencing Development of Self-concept :

1. Physical health : Health and vitality are essential for competency and good performance in any field. Good physical health also leads to good mental health. "A sound mind in a sound Body" is a well known saying. The physical and mental health increase the competency of the person, which has a positive effect on the personality of the individual leading to the formation of positive self-concept.

2. Intelligence : Intelligence plays a vital role in the progress and success of an individual. A more intelligent adolescent will show better progress. He will get appreciation from parents, teachers and others. Thus he will be encouraged to do better. His progress will be spectacular. This will go a long way in developing in him a positive self-image.

3. Healthy attitudes : Self-concept is significantly related to one's attitudes. Some adolescents are optimistic or pessimistic by nature. An optimist will feel more secure and confident and will therefore come to have a positive self-concept. A pessimist will have the feeling of inferiority and self-pity and therefore will have a negative self-image. Hence, emphasis should be placed on the formation of healthy and positive attitudes.

4. Love and affection : Love and affection are basic psychological needs of an individual (a child or an adolescent) which must be fulfilled for the formation of positive self-concept and for the proper development of his personality. If an adolescent is given love and affection, he feels secure and wanted. This helps in the formation of positive self-concept which is very desirable for the future happiness and progress of the adolescent.

5. Sense of security : Sense of being secure has a positive effect in the development of self-concept of adolescents. Lack of sense of security leads to frustration which has a negative effect on the personality of the adolescent. Hence adolescent must be properly looked after to develop in him a feeling of security. This will help in the formation of positive self-concept in him.

6. Appreciation and encouragement : Adolescents must be appreciated and encouraged for good performance. Appreciation and encouragement will help adolescent in raising himself in self-esteem and therefore, he will have a positive self-image. Punishment and rebuke discourage the adolescent ; he will lower himself in self-esteem, which results in negative self-concept. Hence always rely on the value of appreciation and encouragement.

7. Socio-economic status of the family : Adolescents belonging to higher socio-economic status of society are liable to have a more positive self-image, because most of their needs are satisfied, and they have higher aspirations. They feel themselves superior to others and therefore, their self-esteem is higher. They do not find any difficulty in meeting their day to day needs, and therefore, do not experience the feeling of inferiority. This naturally results in the formation of positive self-concept.

8. Moderate aims and expectations : Self-image is significantly influenced by success or failure. Failure leads to frustration. On the other hand, even small success has a very healthy and positive effect on the mind. Hence, it is better to keep moderate, reasonable and feasible aims before the adolescents. Of course the level of aims should depend upon the potentialities and capacities of the adolescents. Moderate aims should be placed before the adolescents with average intelligence. This will save them from the failures and frustrations. Let the average adolescents have moderate aims ; their attainments will lead to the feelings of success, which will help in developing positive self-concept in them.

9. Availability of opportunities : The potentialities of a child are better exploited if he gets more opportunities in life. More opportunities means more and varied scope for the exploitation of one's capacities and potentialities. This means the adolescent will be able to show himself in one field or the other, which helps him in boosting the self-image. So varied opportunities should be provided to the adolescents so that they may be able to excel in one field or the other.

10. Availability of competent guidance : Effective educational, vocational and psychological guidance is very essential for the adolescents. Generally lack of progress is the result of non-availability of proper guidance. Proper guidance leads to better performance which helps to form a positive self-image.

Role of Teacher in Developing Self-concept of Adolescents :

Various researches have shown that a student's (adolescent's) self-concept and his academic achievements are positively correlated. This means that if a student has positive self-concept, his academic achievements will also be good. Hence it is essential and obligatory for the teacher to make efforts for developing positive self-concept in the students. He can help the students in this direction on the following lines :

1. Encouraging attitude : As it has already been stated that encouragement and appreciation are conducive to the development of positive self-concept. Hence the teacher should have encouraging and appreciative attitude towards the adolescents.

2. Trust and mutual respect : Trust and the establishment of an atmosphere of mutual respect are helpful in developing positive self-concept among students. The teacher should take time to listen to what the students have to say and to use their ideas when possible.

3. Warm and accepting attitude : Warm and accepting attitude of the teacher helps in developing positive self-concept where as distant, cold and rejecting attitude is negatively related to the development of positive self-concept.

4. No derogatory remarks : Derogatory remarks have a damaging effect on the self-concept and personality of children and adolescents. For example the teacher should never say that such and such student can never study or pass in the examination.

5. No corporal punishment : Punishment is also very damaging to the development of positive self-concept and personality of adolescents. Not to speak of corporal punishment even rebuke has a bad effect on the adolescents. Hence corporal punishment and rebukes should be avoided as far as possible.

6. Individual attention : No two individuals are alike. Every body cannot learn and make progress at the same rate. There are fast learners as well as slow learners. Slow learners should not be compared with fast learners so that they may not be discouraged and their self-image may not be hurt. The teacher should pay proper individual attention.

7. Developing potentialities : Every student (adolescent) has unique potentialities. The teacher should try to find out the potentialities of every adolescent, and encourage them to develop and exploit their individual potentialities. It will help in developing positive self-concept.

8. Co-curricular activities : A variety of co-curricular activities like games and sports, debates, declamations, singing, dancing, *bhangra*, *gidha*, variety programmes, girl-guiding, scouting, N.S.S. ; N.C.C. clubs and societies, excursions and trips etc. should be organised from time to time and adolescents should be encouraged to take active part in the activities which suit their talents. It will help them in maximum achievement, increasing self-confidence and developing positive self-concept.

9. Effective guidance : The teacher should provide effective guidance to the adolescents in making the best use of their potentialities and solving their educational and personal problems. It will enable them to have a positive self-concept.

Thus a teacher can devise a number of ways and means to boost self-image or self-concept of adolescents, and thereby help them to become competent and worthy members of the society.

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the meaning of adolescence.
2. Describe some of the general characteristics of Indian adolescents.
3. Explain either physical or intellectual characteristics of Indian adolescents.
4. Describe either emotional or social characteristics of Indian adolescents.
5. What are the special problems of adolescents ? How would you help an adolescent to meet these problems ?

6. What are the needs of an adolescent ? How should we gear our school programme to meet those needs ?
7. Point out the main differences in the trends of growth and development of boys and girls in adolescence.
8. How will you educate the adolescents ?
9. Explain the meaning and importance of developmental tasks.
10. Mention various developmental tasks at infancy, late childhood and adolescence period.
11. Suggest guidelines for parents and teachers relating to developmental tasks of adolescents.

Or

Which guidelines will you as a teacher keep in mind for planning and implementing suitable programmes for the all round development of adolescents ?

12. How will you provide guidance and counselling to adolescents ?
13. How will you provide educational and vocational guidance to adolescents ?
14. Explain the meaning and importance of developmental tasks.
15. Mention developmental tasks at infancy, late childhood and adolescence period.
16. How will you provide guidance and counselling for adolescents ?
17. How will you provide educational and vocational guidance to adolescents ?
18. Explain the meaning of self-concept. Describe the characteristics of adolescents with stable self-concept.
19. How is self-concept developed ? Explain the factors influencing self-concept of adolescents. What is the role of teacher in developing self-concept of adolescents ?