1

AN INTRODUCTION TO LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT AND ADOLESCENCE PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT - I

Unit Structure

1.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to understand –

➢   What is meant by lifespan development?

➢   what is the scope of lifespan development?

➢   The factors that influence lifespan development

1.1 Introduction

The story of human life is a fascinating story that has intrigued people from time immemorial. The curiosity about human life is visible even among children as young as 5 years old. Children often ask their mothers from where have they come, how a sibling has landed in mother's stomach to more philosophical questions such as what is death, where does a person go after death and what happens to that person. This curiosity about human life among children and adults alike, is

justified, as there is a constant change as well as growth in all spheres of life right from conception to death. Psychologists are also interested to know –

- How people develop physically throughout their lives. Whether a person conceived and born in traditional way differs from a person conceived through medical assistance, such as test tube babies. They are also curious to know how a child reacts once he/ she comes to know that he/she was born in non-traditional manner. Do such children differ in any way from those born in traditional way?

- How a child's genetic makeup and social environment impacts his personality, intellect and social relationships. Developmentalists are interested to know how much of the personality characteristics, abilities, talent as well as health of a person is determined by genes and how much is due to the environment.

- How a child starts understanding the world around him. How a person's thinking changes over the course of life. When and how does a child differentiate between self and others, i.e., when does his self-concept develops. Once a self-concept is developed in childhood, does it change later on depending upon other experiences or remains constant, and how does this self-concept influence his behavior? How and at what age his language, his various physical and cognitive abilities develop.

- How his emotional maturity develops? Very often we see, the things or issues that were very important for a child, do not remain important once the child grows up.

- What is the impact of old age on his physical and cognitive abilities, personality, and emotional health.

- Developmentalists are not only interested in knowing about the changes that take place in behavior due to growing age but also in what remains constant in behavior over the years. To find answers to all these questions, we begin with first understanding what is lifespan development, its scope and then the influences that affect the lifespan development. We will also see how various psychologists had different views about lifespan development. We will dwell upon how research is done in lifespan development area and how that research can be applied, as well as what are the ethical guidelines that one should follow while carrying out research in lifespan development field.

1.2 An Orientation to Lifespan Development

In orientation to lifespan development, we will look into the definition and scope of lifespan development as well as we will look into some of the basic influences on lifespan development.

1.2.1 Defining Lifespan Development

Lifespan development is a field of study that looks into the full process of human development, from conception to death. It scientifically studies the physical, cognitive, behavioral, social and emotional changes taking place at the different stages of human life.

The salient features of this definition are-

- **Scientific:**
  Just like any other field of psychology, lifespan development also uses scientific methods to research various aspects of life. It makes assumptions, develops theories about development, uses research methods to test those assumptions and then uses scientific techniques to validate the accuracy of those assumptions.

- **Human Development:**
  Though in other branches of psychology, we do study animal behavior too, but lifespan development focuses on only human development. This includes understanding the universal principles of development as well as to understand the influence of cultural, racial and ethnic difference on human development. Furthermore, it also studies the individual differences in terms of traits and characteristics. In short, it looks into the growth and development taking place throughout the lifespan, i.e., from conception to death. Growth refers to increase in size (e.g., growth in height) and development refers to progression towards maturity (e.g., development of cognitive abilities).

- **Stability:**
  Lifespan development also studies the areas and the time periods of life, in which people show change and growth, and the areas and behaviors in which there is consistency and continuity shown with the prior behavior.

- **Plasticity:**
  Developmentalists believe that development takes place continuously throughout our lives in every part of our lives, right from conception to death. People continue to change and grow throughout their lives. We can't say that growth and development takes place only in some specific period of life (e.g. childhood). The ability to change is not restricted to any period of life. People can learn to react and adapt to their environment at any age (Boyd & Bee, 2009).

People maintain their ability to grow and change throughout their lives, they can develop new habits or give up the old habits. However, in spite of this continuous changes taking place, in some aspects our behaviors remain constant or stable.

1.2.2 The Scope of Lifespan Development

Developmentalists cover a variety of areas to study lifespan development. These areas can be classified as topical areas in lifespan development and age range areas. Let us look at each of these categories.

A.) Topical Areas in Lifespan Development:

Some of the topical areas covered by developmentalists are -

i)   Physical Development:

Developmentalists interested in studying physical development investigate –

- how our brain, nervous system, muscles and sense organs influence our development.

- what are the long-term effects of premature birth on the lifespan development.

- What are the benefits of breast milk?

- Which are the factors responsible for obesity?

- How do adult people cope up with stress?

- What are the internal and external signs of aging?

- How to define death.

- How our biological needs such as the need for food, hunger, drink, sleep, etc., influence and shape our behaviour. It also studies how malnutrition influence human growth, how one 's physical performance declines as one ages, etc. (Fell & Williams,2008; Muiños& Ballesteros, 2014).

ii)   Cognitive Development:

Psychologists interested in studying cognitive development throughout lifespan look at how growth and changes taking place in intellectual capabilities influence a person's behavior. Cognitive developmentalists examine how our development influences learning, memory, problem solving skills and intelligence. They also study –

How problem – solving skills change over the course of one 's life.

Are there any cultural differences in the way people explain their academic success and failure? For example, in India, generally students tend to attribute their excellent academic success to the blessings of the elders and good wishes of the well-wishers, but they attribute their academic failures to their own shortcomings. In other words, students externalize the success while internalize the failures. On the other hand, in Western cultures, the students do exactly the opposite of this. This has a significant effect on students' self-esteem and future risk-taking behavior in India.

Developmentalists looking at cognitive development are interested in finding out –

- what are the earliest memories from infancy that can be recalled by a child,

- They are also interested to find out do children remember early life significant experiences or traumatic events and if they do, then how do these memories affect their behavior in later life. (Penido et.al., 2012).

- In what way television watching impacts the intellectual development of a person.

- Does being a bilingual influence the intellectual abilities development?

- Does adolescent's egocentrism affects his view of the world?

- What is the relationship between ethics and racial differences and intellect?

- Does intelligence decline with age?

- Is there is any link between creativity and intellect of a person?

These types of studies can significantly contribute to our understanding of lifespan development, especially in war torn areas such as Syria, Palestine or even terrorism torn areas such as Kashmir.

iii) **Personality and Social Development**

Personality development is the study of stability and change in the characteristics that differentiate one person from another over the life span.

Social development is concerned with the ways in which individuals' interactions and relationships with others grow, change and remain stable over the course of life.

Developmental psychologists interested in personality development ask questions such as are there any stable, enduring personality traits throughout

the life span. Social developmental psychologists are interested in examining how racism or poverty or divorce influences our development (Evans et.al., 2008; Tine, 2014). They are interested in topics such as the different ways in which a newborn reacts to his mother and others, the most effective way to disciplining the child, the development of gender identity in children, causes of adolescents' suicide, the factors contributing to the choice of romantic partner, the effect of parental divorce on different stages of life of a person, the emotional aspects of facing imminent death, etc.

B.) **Age Ranges and Individual Differences with respect to Development:**

Apart from topical areas as explained above, developmentalists look at particular range too. The life span is usually divided into four age ranges, viz.,

1) The Prenatal Period (from conception to birth)

2) Infancy and Toddlerhood (birth to three years)

3) The Preschool Period (3 to 6 years)

4) Middle Childhood (6 to 12 years)

5) Adolescence (12 to 20 years)

6) Young Adulthood (20 to 40 years)

7) Middle Adulthood (40 to 65 years)

8) Late Adulthood (65 to Death)

These broad age ranges are social constructions.

Social Construction:

A social construction is a shared notion of reality that is widely accepted but is a function of society and culture at a given time. So, the age ranges within a period and even the periods themselves are arbitrarily and culturally derived. For e.g., the concept of childhood as a special period did not exist during the 17th century. During this period, children were seen simply as miniature adults. Similarly, the adulthood period which is considered to have begun from 20 years varies from culture to culture. In western cultures, up to nineteen years of age is considered as teenage, and twenty marks the onset of adulthood. However, in present education system, this change from teenage to adulthood does not bring any significant change in the lives of the people. They continue to be in institutes of higher education for some more years (e. g., medical students) and real change in their lives happens when they finish

with their education and enter the work force, which may be at the age of twenty-four or so. At what age they will enter the work force is also depended upon the course of education that they are pursuing. So, for them the adulthood will begin only when they enter the workforce. In some cultures, adulthood starts much earlier than what is stated above. For instance, in India and other poor countries, children belonging to poor families may enter into workforce at the tender age of eight or nine to support their families. Even if the children from poor families are not sucked into workforce, they may be expected to participate in childrearing of younger siblings and participate in household chores like an adult.

Some of the psychologists have proposed totally new developmental periods. For instance, Arnett (2010) said that adolescence extends into early emerging adulthood. Early adulthood extends up to mid-twenties. During this period, people are not adolescents but at the same time they do not take up the responsibilities of adults also. This is the period when they are exploring different identities for themselves and do self-focused exploration. They are trying to figure out what they want to make of their lives. Consequently, there are substantial differences in the timing of events in different people 's lives. Individuals mature at different rates and reach developmental milestones at different points. Even environment plays a significant role. For example, the typical age of marriage varies from one culture to another, depending upon the functions that marriage plays. For instance, according to Hindu philosophy, human life is divided into four periods – Bramhacharya (student life), Grihastha ashram (married life -establishing a house and looking after the family), Vanaprastha ashram (retirement) and Sannyas (renouncing the life). These life stages are conceptualized on the basis of role or duties that a person has to perform as a useful member of the society and it is not based on the developmental process. Previously, there used to be a practice of child marriage, where parents used to marry off their even few months old children. The children had no choice in deciding in when and to whom they will marry. Then in 2006, through the Child Marriage Act, 2006, child marriage was made illegal and the legal age for a boy to get married was fixed as 21 while for girl it was fixed as 18 years. However, the child marriage is still practiced in some places, though it is illegal. Thus, the onset of different stages in the lifespan depends upon the socio-cultural context. (Lal,2015).

When developmental psychologists talk about age ranges, they are talking about averages - a time period when people on an average reach that

milestone. Some children will achieve those milestones earlier or later than averages while others will achieve them at average time.

C.) Link between Topics and Ages:

Each of the broad areas of life span, such as physical, cognitive, social and personality development plays an important role throughout the life span. Developmental experts generally emphasize on one area at a given period of time such as:

- Physical development during prenatal period or adolescence, etc.

- Social development during preschool years.

- Social relationships in late adulthood, etc.

Some may take a broader approach and look at cognitive development through every period of life.

1.2.3 Basic Influences on Development

Cohort:

Cohort refers to a group of people born at around the same time in the same place. Major social events such as wars, economic upturns and depressions, famines, epidemic, etc., have similar influences on members of a particular cohort.

Baltes, Reese, and Lipsitt (1980) have identified three major influences on lifespan development. They include normative age-graded influences, normative history-graded influences, and nonnormative life event influences. However, these influences are dynamic. They are continuously changing and are interrelated. The relationship between these three influences keeps changing and is different during different phases of life.

Age-graded influence:

Age grade influences correlate with chronological age. These are biological and environmental influences that are similar for individuals in a particular group, regardless of when or where they are raised. For example, biological events such as puberty and menopause are universal events that occur at about the same time in all societies. Similarly, socio cultural event such as entry into formal education can be considered as age-graded influence because it occurs in most cultures around the age of 6. Each culture and subculture has its own set of age related influences. For example, in Indian culture, for a girl to get married at the age of 20 would be age graded normative influence but it would be non-normative in western cultures.

History-graded influence:

Normative history-graded influences are those influences within the life that are related with historical times and are experienced by the majority of a culture. These are biological and environmental influences associated with a particular historical moment. For example, tsunami would be an environmental influence and even an economic meltdown in a country, is an environmental influence. An epidemic would be considered as biological influence. Holocaust experienced by Jews during Nazi regime, people in Mumbai who witnessed 26/11 terrorist attack in 2008 or those in New York who experienced 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center experienced biological and environmental challenges due to the attack. The internet revolution going on at present is also an history graded event. Thus, wars and epidemics can be considered history-graded events. They are normative because they are experienced by the majority of the cohorts in the same way during that given time.

Sociocultural-graded Influences:

It refers to socio-cultural factors present at a particular time for a particular individual depending upon many variables such as ethnicity, social class and sub-cultural membership. Sociocultural -graded influences refer to similarities and differences among various ethnic, cultural, and racial groups that distinguish between universal and culturally determined principles of development. For instance, socio-cultural graded influences within nation will be considered different for children belonging to minority community compared to majority community. In western countries, racial discrimination is very high and children, especially nonwhite children get affected and start realizing the dynamics of racism at a very young age. Biological milestones such as puberty tend to be universal, while social milestones, such as the age at which children begin formal schooling can differ greatly across cultures (Gesell &Ilg, 1946). Stereotypes also get shaped by the racial prejudice and discrimination and create what is called stereotype threat. For instance, if a black child in America gets the message through others' prejudiced behavior that blacks are not intelligent as white ones, the black child may start attributing his low academic performance to his color.

Consequently, it is imperative that developmentalists must take into account the social cultural influences for better understanding of lifespan development.

Non-Normative Life Events:

Non-normative life events are specific, significant, unexpected, unpredictable, atypical events that occur in a person's life at a time when such events do not happen to most people. For example, a young child losing his parents in an accident, occurrence of natural disaster such as tsunami, earth quake, or even manmade

disaster such as terrorist attack, bomb blast, war, etc. These non-normative events can be both, positive and negative. Winning a lottery ticket can be unexpected positive event.

Check your Progress:

What is life span development?

What it is the scope of lifespan development?

Discuss Cohort Influences on Development.

1.3 Summary

In this unit, we first of all discussed what is lifespan development. It is a scientific study of growth, changes and stability in the physical, cognitive, social and personality characteristics of a person, at all ages from conception to death. Then we dwelt on the scope of lifespan development studies. As the definition of lifespan development indicates, it covers changes and growth in the physical, cognitive, social and personality development at different stages of life, right from conception to death.

We also emphasized that growth and development in every individual's life are governed by normative history graded influences, normative age graded influences, normative sociocultural graded influences and non-normative life events. Normative age-graded influences occur in a similar way for most of the people in a given group. They affect most people of about the same age and within a given culture. Within any one culture, there will be some specific normative age-graded events that will influence the people of that culture, but many such events will be different from one culture to another culture. The examples of age-graded influences in any one culture can be parenthood, marriage at a particular age, joining the workforce, schooling and higher education, skills acquired, etc. Thus, cultural factors play a very important role in the lifespan development. These cultural influences can be both broad and narrow. Normative history-graded influences are common to cohorts. These historical events affect the lives of each and everyone living in that place and era. For example, bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima affected every Japanese living in that place and in that era. Some of the other examples of history graded influences can be famines, acts of terrorism, assassination of a national leader, etc. Non-normative life events are unexpected events that have profound impact on the development of a person, e.g., loss of employment, life threatening illness such as cancer, loss of partner, failure of bank.

However, these non-normative events can be positive too, such as promotion, winning an award, scholarship, getting a new job, etc.

1.4 Questions

1. Define the field of lifespan development and describe what it encompasses.

2. Describe the areas that lifespan development specialists cover.

3. Describe some of the basic influences on human development.

1.5 References

Feldman, R. S. &Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India, Education services Pvt.Ltd

Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. (2012). Human Development. (12th Ed). McGraw Hill, international Edition

❖❖❖

2

AN INTRODUCTION TO LIFESPAN DEVELOPMENT AND ADOLESCENCE PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT-II

Unit Structure

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to understand –

➢   How physical maturation takes place during puberty

➢   How nutrition affects the growth during puberty

➢   How the brain development takes place during adolescence

➢   How cognitive development takes place during adolescence

➢   Various factors that affect the school performance

➢   How adolescents use internet.

1.1 Introduction

Adolescence is a period of turbulence in anyone's life. It is a time for growth spurt. Adolescents go through rapid and extraordinary physical changes, development of brain and cognitive changes. All aspects of their lives such as socioeconomic status, school performance, social relationships, etc. goes through a change. This is the age when they are coming out of childhood and entering the adult world. The most Commonly used chronologic definition of adolescence includes the ages of 10 - 18, but may incorporate a span of 9 to 26 years depending on the source (APA, 2002). Feldman (2018) states that adolescence starts just before the teenage and ends just after teenage years. Adolescents are neither children nor adults. The age and nature of transition from childhood to adolescence differs from culture to culture. For instance, in Hinduism, coming of age in terms of physical and psychological maturity is signified by thread ceremony for boys. For girls, in some communities, a ceremony called Ritushuddhi is performed when girl's first menstruation cycle ends. This ceremony includes dressing them in a sari, and announcing their maturity to the community. Similarly, every culture in the world has its own rituals to celebrate the onset of puberty. The basic idea is to celebrate a child's body getting transitioned into cusps of adulthood and capable of reproduction.   Let us see how these maturation takes place.

1.2 Physical Maturation

1.2.1 Growth during Adolescence

Height & Weight: Adolescence is a time for rapid physical growth, especially growth in height and weight. It is reported that on an average, boys grow 4.1 inches in a year and girls grow 3.5 inches a year during this period (Tanner,1972).

However, there are individual and gender differences in the growth spurt. Generally, girls get a spurt in their height by 10 years of age while boys' height starts increasing at the age of 12. At the age of 11, usually girls tend to be taller than boys, but by the age of 13, on an average, boys become taller than girls.

Puberty: The period in which sexual organs mature is called puberty. Puberty begins when pituitary gland in the brain signals other glands in the child's body to start producing sex hormones at adult level as well as growth hormones. These growth hormones interact with sex hormones and trigger the growth spurt and puberty. Sex hormones are androgens (male hormones) and estrogens (female hormones). Both types of sex hormones are produced in the body of both males and females, but males have a higher concentration of androgens and females have higher concentration of estrogens. Apart from sex hormones and growth hormones, hormone leptin also plays an important part in the onset of puberty.

Puberty in Girls:

Onset of menarche is a very important signal of puberty among girls. However, all girls do not get it at the same age. The nourishment and health of the girl, the affluence of the family are important determinants of the timing of the onset of menarche. It has been reported that girls from poorer or developing countries start menstruating at a much later age then girls from rich or developed countries. Even in rich countries, the girls from more affluent families start menstruating much earlier than girls from lesser affluent families.

Similarly, it was found that healthy and well-nourished girls start menstruating much earlier than under nourished or chronically ill girls. Some studies suggested that ratio of fat to muscle is also a key determinant in onset of menstruation. For instance, Sanchez -Garrido & Tena -Sempere, 2013 reported that in United States, sports women having low percentage of body fat may start menstruating much later than inactive girls. On the other hand, girls who are obese will start menstruating much earlier than thin girls because leptin hormone which is responsible for onset of menstruation is produced more in obese girls than in thin girls.

Belsky et.al. (2007) and Ellis (2004) reported that even environmental factors can influence the timing of onset of menstruation. For instance, girls who experience parental divorce or high level of family conflict, menstruate earlier than girls who have not experienced any such event. It has been observed that over the past 100 years, all over the world, girls are reaching puberty much earlier than girls previous to that period. At the end of 19th century, girls started menstruating at an average age of 14 to 15. Today the onset of menstruation among girls starts at an average age of 11 or 12. Apart from menstruation, other indicators of puberty such as height and sexual maturity also appear at much earlier age than before. This may be due to better nutrition and better health (McDowell et.al.,2007).

Secular Trend:

Secular trend refers to a pattern of change taking place in physical characteristics over many generations. For example, changes such as earlier onset of menstruation, increase height that takes place due to better nutrition over the many centuries.

Primary & Secondary Sex Characteristics:

Apart from menstruation, primary and secondary sex characteristics also develop during puberty. Primary sex characteristics refer to the development of organs and structures of the body that are directly related to reproduction. On the other hand, secondary sex characteristics refer to visible signs of sexual maturity but are not directly related to reproduction. For instance, in case of girls, primary sex characteristics are changes in vagina and uterus. Secondary sex characteristics are indicators of onset of puberty and include development of breasts, pubic hair and underarm hair. The timing of appearance of secondary sex characteristics in girlsdiffers on racial basis. Though generally, the development of breasts startsapproximately at the age of 10, pubic hair grows at the age of 11 and underarm hair appear at the age of 13, but in Caucasian girls and African American girls, secondary sex characteristics appear much earlier. The scientists do not know why these girls differ from others and at what age appearance of secondary sex characteristics can be considered as normal or abnormal.

Puberty in Boys:

In boys, the development of primary sex characteristics is marked by the development of scrotum, enlargement of the prostate gland and seminal vesicles which produce semen. The scrotum starts developing rapidly at the age of 12 and achieves the full adult size by the age of 15 or 16. At the age of 12 only, the body starts producing sperms and usually the first ejaculation, called spermarche, takes place at the age of 13. In the beginning, there are few sperms in the semen but as the age increases, the sperm count too increases in the semen of the boys.

Secondary sex characteristics in boys also are marked by the growth of pubic hair at the age of 12. Next comes the growth of underarm hair and facial hair. In puberty, boys' vocal cords become longer and larynx becomes larger. Consequently, their voices deepen.

Mood Swings: Apart from the physical changes, adolescents (both boys and girls) go through rapid mood swings. For instance, boys feel angrier and more annoyed due to higher levels of hormones. Girls, on the other hand, feel angrier and more depressed due to higher levels of hormones. (Buchanan et.al.1992).

Body Image: Reactions to Physical Changes in Adolescence

Adolescents are fully conscious of the changes taking place in their bodies. There are individual differences in their reactions to these changes. Some react with horror and others react with joy and spend long periods in front of mirror. Few others remain neutral to these changes.

Some of these physiological changes can lead to psychological weight for the adolescents depending upon the culture they live in and how they react to these changes. For example, in the past, girls used to react with anxiety to menarche, because western society used to emphasize the negative aspects of the menstruation, such as cramps and messiness. People used to avoid discussing openly about menstruation. In Asian culture too, it was considered to be a pollutant and menstruating females were not allowed to enter the kitchen and, in some cultures, they were asked to stay out of the house, in a windowless ramshackle, for three to four days of menstruation. In modern times, in western cultures as well as in Asian cultures, people have started talking about menstruation in public places and it is no more a taboo, thanks to T.V. commercials. Consequently, now girls do not feel so anxious about menarche as in olden times. In fact, studies have shown that menstruation is associated with increased self-esteem, rise in status and higher self-awareness among girls. (Chakraborty & De, 2014).

Girls generally inform their mothers when the menstruation begins. This becomes necessary for them as they need to get tampons or sanitary napkins from their mothers. But boys rarely inform their parents or friends about their first ejaculation, which is similar to girls' onset of menarche. Boys are reluctant to talk with others about their budding sexuality.

While menstruation and ejaculation are not visible in public, but other body changes taking place in body shape and size of the adolescents are quite visible to others. Many adolescents feel very embarrassed and unhappy by these changes. Especially, girls feel very unhappy with their new bodies. During puberty, in case of girls, the number of fatty tissues increase, hips and buttocks get enlarged. But the society puts a premium on slenderness of female body, which is unrealistic and makes many girls very anxious. (Cotrufo et.al.2007).

Another cause for adolescents' worry is the timing of onset of puberty.

The Timing of Puberty:

The timing of puberty is very important for adolescents as either early or late maturation has social consequences for them.

Early Maturation:

Early maturation in boys can lead to both positive and negative consequences. For instance, early matured boys have comparatively large bodies and tend to be good in athletics. They also tend to be popular and have positive self-concept.

At the same time, for some boys, early maturation can have negative consequences. For example, they are more likely to have difficulties in school. Due to their larger size, they may seek out the company of older boys. These older boys may be indulging in activities that are not appropriate for this young adolescent who has matured early. Such adolescents may get involved in delinquency and substance abuse. But in general, early maturation has more positive consequences than negative ones for boys.

In case of girls, early maturation reflected in their bodily changes, makes them feel uncomfortable and different from other similar age girls. Early maturing girls may have to face ridicule from their less maturing peers. Since they mature earlier, they are more in demand among boys as potential dates. At this juncture, they may not be socially ready for this kind of one-to-one dating situation and may find such situations as psychologically challenging. Moreover, their clearly visible difference from their later maturing classmates may have a negative effect, leading to lot of anxiety, unhappiness and depression among early maturing girls. Yet, early maturation is not a totally negative experience for them. It does have some positive fall out too. Girls who mature earlier are very popular among boys as potential dates and this leads to increase in girls' self-concept.

Whether girls will have positive or negative experience of their early maturation, depends upon the cultural norms too. For instance, in United States, girls who appear sexy, attract lot of appreciation as well as jeers. While in countries, such as Germany, having liberal attitudes towards sexuality, early maturing girls will have higher self-esteem than girls in United States. Even within conservative countries such as United States, the experience of early sexual maturation will depend upon the attitudes of the peer groups and the community to which the girl belongs.

Late Maturation:

Just like in case of early maturation, for late maturation too the results are mixed. Boys get more adversely impacted with late maturation than girls. Boys who appear to be smaller and lighter than their physically matured peers are viewed as less attractive. They find themselves at disadvantage in sports activities too. As part of the social norms, the boys are expected to be bigger than their dates, so in their social lives too, late maturing boys are at disadvantage. These experiences lead to decline in their self-concept and continues to affect their adult lives too. However,

late maturation can lead to some positive fall outs also. Late maturing boys grow up to have many positive qualities such as assertiveness and insightfulness (Kaltiala-Heino et.al.,2003).

On the other hand, late maturing girls have more positive experiences. In the beginning, due to late maturation, they may be overlooked in dating and mixed sex activities, they may have relatively lower social status. But when they begin to show signs of sexual maturation, their satisfaction with the changes in their bodies and with themselves will be much higher than early maturing girls. They have less emotional problems and are more apt to fit the societal ideal of slender body type than early maturing girls.

At the end, whether early maturation or later maturation will have positive or negative effect on both boys and girls, depends upon many other factors such as peer groups, family dynamics, schools and other societal institutions. (Hubley& Arim,2012).

1.2.2 Nutrition, Food and Eating Disorders

As mentioned above, adolescence is a period of rapid growth. During this period, as the growth spurt is taking place in bodies, adolescents experience high level of hunger too and their food consumption goes up many times. Studies have reported that during this period, an average girl needs around 2200 calories and boys need around 2800 calories per day. Though there is no doubt that to grow body needs lot of calories, but it is not just any calories that help bodies to grow. Adolescents require a balanced diet at this time. They require especially calcium and iron for their bones to become stronger and to avoid the problem of anemia. If adolescents do not get sufficient calcium during this period, the chances are very high that in old age they may develop osteoporosis, that is, thinning of bones. Both osteoporosis and iron deficient anemia are more prevalent among women.

Eating of junk food can lead to the problem of obesity. Obesity can lead to low self-esteem and negative body image and this can lead to eating disorders among adolescents. It has been found that eating disorder is more prevalent among girls than boys (Kumar et.al.2016).

Obesity:

Obese adolescents tend to be obese adults too (Morrison et.al. 2015). Obesity adversely affects the circulatory system, increasing the chances of high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes.

There are many causes of obesity during adolescence –

1. **Lack of exercise:**

    Many research studies have found that most of the adolescent girls do not get any exercise, except for the physical education class in school. Lack of opportunity to exercise becomes more pronounced as they grow older. The reason for this can be the cultural norms in many societies, that emphasize that athletic participation is more in tune with boys' role rather than with girls' social roles.

2. **Availability of Fast Food:**

    Fast food generally has large proportion of high calories and high fat but it is cheaper and adolescents can afford it. It is tastes good and is filling. Many adolescents get addicted to fast food.

3. **Leisure Time Activities:**

    Many adolescents spend their entire leisure time on social media, watching television or playing video games. These leisure activities lead to lack of exercise, sedentary life style and very often is accompanied by junk/fast food.

Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia:

A strong desire to avoid obesity and fear of becoming fat can lead to eating disorders of anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Both of these eating disorders come under psychological disorders. In case of anorexia nervosa, people have distorted body image and refuse to eat, even if they are so thin that they appear to be skeletal. In severe cases of anorexia nervosa, people starve themselves to death. This disorder is more prevalent among women than men. Women in the age group of 12 to 40 years of age, belonging to rich families are more susceptible to this disorder. These women also tend to be most intelligent, successful and beautiful. For example, Prince Charles' wife Diana Spencer was suffering from anorexia nervosa. Herpertz-Dahlmann (2015) reported that anorexia nervosa is increasingly becoming a common problem in boys too and is associated with the use of steroids in them.

Though people suffering from anorexia nervosa eat very little, but they are always thinking about food. They often go and shop for food items, collect cookery books, talk about food and cook large quantity of food for others.

Bulimia is another eating disorder. In this disorder, people are equally concerned about becoming obese. They do binge eating and then purging. It means they will eat a huge quantity of food, then strongly feel guilty about eating so much food and

get depressed, so they will purge the food through induced vomiting or through the use of laxatives.

The weight of people suffering from Bulimia remains fairly normal, but it affects their health. The constant cycle of binge eating and then deliberately inducing vomiting and diarrhea leads to chemical imbalance in the body and that can cause heart failure.

There are many reasons for these disorders to develop. For instance –

a.) In almost all societies, it is believed that slender or thin is beautiful, especially in case of girls' bodies. Obese bodies are considered as unattractive, and people make fun of such people. No one takes them seriously, it is believed that fat people have less intelligence. It affects their careers, social life and happiness in life. Once, people start dieting and develop a feeling of control and are successful in losing some weight, they are motivated to lose more weight.

b.) Early maturing girls and girls with high level of body fat are more likely to develop one of these eating disorders.

c.) Adolescents who are clinically depressed are also more likely to develop one of these eating disorders at a later stage.

d.) Some researchers believe that there are biological causes for both of these eating disorders. Twin studies have indicated that these eating disorders are hereditary. Apart from that, hormonal imbalances may also lead to higher body fat and consequently to one of these eating disorders.

e.) There can be psycho-social factors too that may trigger eating disorders. For example, some psychologists reported that people suffering from these eating disorders tend to be perfectionists, may have overdemanding parents or other family difficulties.

f) Culture plays a very important role in these eating disorders. These disorders are more common in those cultures where slender female body is idealized. For example, anorexia is not very common in Asia, except in Japan and Hong Kong. In japan and Hong Kong western influence is much more than in rest of Asia.

These eating disorders were not prevalent in 17th and 18th century because at that time plump female body was the considered as beautiful rather than thin, slender body. In the beginning of 19th century, these disorders were unheard of among boys. But now it is becoming common among boys too as muscular male physique is becoming the norm of male handsomeness. (Cwikel & Mirsky,2007).

Thus, we can conclude that both of these eating disorders have biological, psychological and environmental causes. To treat them, we need to use dietary modification, psychological therapy and in extreme cases even hospitalization.

1.2.3 Brain Development and Thought

During adolescence, it is not just the body that undergoes changes, even brain produces an oversupply of gray matter that is reduced to 1 to 2 percent in later years. As the number of neurons and their interconnections grow, become richer and more complex, adolescents thinking power also increases and becomes more complex.

Myelination, i.e., the process of nerve cells getting insulated by a covering of fat cells, increases and makes transmission of neural messages much more efficient. This further grows the cognitive abilities of the adolescents (Sowell et.al., 2003)

Prefrontal cortex of a person does not fully develop until early 20s. During adolescence, it goes through significant development but is not fully developed. The prefrontal cortex allows a person to think, evaluate and make complex judgments in a unique human way, thus it allows complex intellectual achievements during adolescence. It becomes more and more efficient in communicating with other parts of the brain and a communication system develops in the brain, which facilitates different parts of the brain to process information more effectively.

A fully developed prefrontal cortex helps in controlling impulses. A person with fully developed prefrontal cortex does not react immediately while experiencing anger or rage. In adolescence, since the prefrontal cortex is not fully developed biologically, the adolescent does not have full ability to control his/her impulses. Thisis the reason why adolescents often behave in a risky and impulsive manner. In fact, some researchers believe that adolescents underestimate the risk of risky behavior and overestimate the rewards of risky behavior (Gopnik,2012).

The Immature Brain Argument:

Very often we read in newspapers about the heinous crimes committed by juvenile delinquents but they get away with lighter punishments. The question arises why the judiciary is lenient towards criminals below eighteen years of age. The reason lies in neuroscience and developmental psychology. It has been proved that the brains of adolescents are not fully developed and they are not fully capable of making reasonable decisions. Their brains are still growing. For example, neurons that make up unnecessary gray matter of the brain start disappearing during adolescence and the white matter of the brain begins to grow, leading to more

sophisticated cognitive processing. Then the question arises, should we really let juvenile criminals get away with lighter punishment. There are no easy answers to this question and after the Nirbhaya incident, Indian government has passed a Juvenile Justice Bill. According to this bill, all juvenile deviants above the age of 16 can be treated as adults in cases of heinous crimes.

1.2.4 Sleep Deprivation:

Sleep deprivation is another issue that affects adolescents in a significant manner. Adolescents require at least 9 hours of sleep every night to feel rested, but most of the adolescents get seven hours or less than that sleep every night. In fact, one in five adolescent gets only 6 hours of sleep. This may be due to their life styles as well as shift in their internal body clock. They do not feel sleepy early and go to bed late and they want to sleep till late in the morning but they have to get up early due to their early morning classes. There is increasing academic and social pressure on them and they tend to go to bed late and get up early. This sleep deprivation has its own consequences for them. Sleep deprived teens tend to score lower marks in exam, are more depressed, have difficulty in controlling their moods and are more likely to meet with car accidents (Louca & Short,2014).

Check your progress

1. What are the gender differences in puberty period of adolescent's life?

2. How does the timing of onset of puberty affects the adolescents?

3. What is the impact of brain development on thought process?

4. What is the impact of sleep deprivation on adolescents?

1.3 Cognitive Development

Adolescents' thinking is different from children's thinking. As adolescents, they develop the ability to think beyond concrete, current situation and imagine what might or could be. They can think of various abstract possibilities and can see issues in relative terms instead of absolute terms. They can understand that no issue or problem can be seen as only black and white, either there or not there, rather there are various finer nuances of every problem, various shades of every problem.

Let us look at the cognitive development of adolescents through Piaget's theory.

1.3.1 Piagetian Approach to Cognitive Development

The Formal Operational Stage:

Piaget theorized that at the start of adolescence age, that is, around 12 years of age, children develop the ability to think abstractly and use this ability to solve problems. He called this ability to use abstract thinking as **the formal operational stage** which is different from concrete operational stage of cognition. Children between the age of 7 to 11, go through concrete operational stage of cognition, where they use logic to understand and solve the problems, they can classify objects by their many features and can place them in order, but they do not use thought process in abstract terms.

Around 12 years of age, when they enter formal operational thought process, their abstract reasoning advances. Adolescents not only think about concrete realities but can also think about many abstract possibilities or infinite number of imaginable realities (Siegler,1998). In other words, they can use theoretical, hypothetical and counterfactual thinking. They can strategies and plan. They can apply concepts learned in one context to another context.

Hypothetical-Deductive Reasoning:

Piaget believed that at this point, teens become capable of thinking about abstract and hypothetical ideas. They think more like scientists. They often ponder "what-if" type situations and questions and can think about multiple solutions or possible outcomes and systematically deduce the best one to solve problems. Adolescents start with general theory about what is producing a certain outcome and then deduce the reason or explanation for the specific outcomes that are taking place. In other words, they can start with abstract possibilities and then move towards theconcrete. To test the adolescents' ability to think in a systematic and abstract terms, Piaget devised a task called "third eye". He asked children if it was possible to have a third eye, where would they like to place it. Children at the concrete operational stage (7-11years) said they would like to put it on the middle part of the forehead, between the two eyes. On the other hand, formal operational stage adolescents were more imaginative and inventive. They said they would like to put it at the back of their head, in their hand or on a foot and imagined various other uses of this imaginary eye than usual task of seeing.

The formal operational thinker has the ability to consider many different solutions to a problem before acting. This greatly increases efficiency, because the individual can avoid potentially unsuccessful attempts at solving a problem. The formal operational person considers past experiences, present demands, and future

consequences in attempting to maximize the success of his or her adaptation to the world (Salkind NJ,2004).

Propositional thought:

Proposition thought refers to the reasoning that uses abstract logic in the absence of concrete examples. Propositional thinking allows adolescents to understand that if certain premises are true then a conclusion based on them also will be true. One of the most famous examples of propositional thinking is from Aristotle –

All men or mortal. (premise)

Socrates is a man. (premise)

Therefore, Socrates is mortal. (conclusion)

However, Piaget believed that intellectual development takes place throughout our lives. The development of formal operational thought process is a gradual process, one does not have full-fledged formal operational thinking ability the moment he/she turns 12. The capacity to reason abstractly develops gradually along with a combination of physical maturation and environmental experiences. By the age of 15 years, adolescents fully settle in the formal operational stage. There also, individual differences are there.

There are individual differences in the use of formal operational stage. Many individuals refine their formal operational skills at a later age and some individuals never make full use of their formal operational thinking. For example, a study reported that only 40 to 60 percent of college students and adults obtain their full formal operational thinking power and use it also. But many adults who do not show their formal operational thought in all areas are also fully competent in some aspects of formal operations (Keating,1990,2004).

One of the factors for differences in the use of formal operations among adolescents, is culture in which they are raised. It has been reported that people who live in isolated, scientifically unsophisticated societies and have had little formal education are less likely to perform at formal operational level than those who are formally educated and living in comparatively more technologically sophisticated societies (Segall et.al. 1990, Asadi et.al.,2014). The reason for this difference is that all societies do not value scientific reasoning that formal operations entails. People will not use scientific reasoning if it is not required in everyday life and therefore it will be unreasonable to expect them to use it when they are faced with any problem (Gauvain, 1998).

The Consequences of Adolescents' Use of Formal Operations

While previously children use to accept any rule or explanation without questioning it, now with increased abstract reasoning in formal operations, adolescents question their parents and other authorities more extensively. Increased abstract thinking also leads to greater idealism, making adolescents impatient with imperfections in any institutions.

Consequently, adolescents become more argumentative. They enjoy using their new found abstract reasoning to find holes in others' explanations. With increased ability to think critically, they become more sensitive to their parents' or teachers' shortcomings. For example, an adolescent may become acutely aware that his father who is a chronic smoker, tells him not to smoke and explains various harmful effects of smoking. This leads to arguments. However, at the same time, it has been found that adolescents can be indecisive, as they can't see the multiple sides of an issue and their advantages. This increased ability to think critically can be a problem for authorities but this also makes adolescence period interesting for any person in his life.

Evaluating Piaget's Approach:

There are several criticisms against Piaget's theory. Let us see some of them –

1. Piaget believed that cognitive development takes place in the same manner for all human beings, progression takes place in step-like advances at various stages. That means this development process is universal. Yet it has been observed that people of the same age and same age people belonging to different cultures, do differ from each other in their cognitive abilities.

2. Piaget was of the opinion that once a person has reached a particular age and achieved a particular operational stage, he/ she should be able to perform all tasks that come under that stage. But it was observed that even within one individual, there might be inconsistencies in his/her cognitive development. A person might be able to perform some tasks categorized in a particular operational stage, but not able to perform other tasks.

3. The notion of stages given by Piaget gives the impression that cognitive development takes place in spurts, it does not grow gradually or smoothly. But there are many developmental psychologists who believe that there is no rapid shift from one stage to another stage and cognitive development is a continuous process. It does not grow qualitatively as much as it grows quantitatively. Another criticism of Piaget's theory is that it only describes

the behavior in a given stage, it does not explain why cognition shifts from one stage to another stage.

4. Critics of his theory also questioned the nature of tasks used by Piaget to measure cognitive abilities. They believed that the use of these tasks as a measure of cognitive abilities underestimated the age at which certain capabilities take place. For example, many studies have reported that infants and children are more sophisticated in their thinking abilities at an age earlier than what Piaget claimed to be the age for those capabilities. (Kenny,2013).

5. Critics further said that Piaget had narrow view of what is meant by thinking and knowledge. Developmental psychologists have established that we have many kinds of intelligence, that are separate and independent of one another (Gardner,2006).

6. Piaget was of the opinion that formal operation is the last stage of cognitive development. But many developmental psychologists believe that formal operation is not the final embodiment of thinking. In fact, the more sophisticated forms of thinking do not actually emerge until early adulthood. It is argued that we live in a society that requires much more complex form of thinking and does not always follow pure logic. It needs flexible thinking, more interpretive processes and emphasizes that the reasons behind various events are subtle. Labouvie-Vief called it post formal thinking (Labouvie - Vief & Diehl,2000).

1.3.2 Information Processing Perspectives

According to information processing approach too, adolescents' cognitive abilities grow gradually and continuously. The changes in adolescents' cognitive abilities are proof of gradual transformation in the capacity to take in, use, and store information. It is believed that a number of progressive changes take place in the ways people organize their thinking about the world, develop strategies for dealing with new situations, sort facts and achieve advances in memory capacity and perceptual abilities (Wyer,2004).

Though adolescents' general intelligence remains same but dramatic improvements take place in certain mental abilities such as verbal, mathematical and spatial abilities. Their memory capacity improves, they can simultaneously pay attention to more than one stimulus in a much more effective way, e.g., doing mathematics homework and listening to music.

Their repertoire of knowledge about the world increases as they are exposed to varied things while growing and their memory is getting enlarged. But the most

important reason for this advancement in mental abilities is the growth of metacognition.

Metacognition: The prefix 'meta' means 'about' the thing itself. So, metacognition is 'cognition about cognition', or 'thinking about one's thinking'. It is the knowledge that people have about their own thinking process and their ability to monitor their own cognition. It is the combined monitoring and regulation of one's own thinking processes. It is a conscious verification of one's personal cognitive status that allows a person to develop and expand upon new knowledge. It allows people to take charge of their own learning. It involves awareness of how they learn, an evaluation of their learning needs, generating strategies to meet these needs and then implementing the strategies. (Hacker, 2009).

Primary grade children have limited knowledge of their memory capability, factors that affect reading comprehension and recall, the need to tailor learning tactics to task demands, when they have learned something well enough that they can pass a test. Metacognitive knowledge develops with age, experience, and instruction.

Adolescents improve their understanding of their memory capacity. They can make a better judgement about how much time they will require to memorize a particular lesson for a test. They can also accurately judge when they have fully memorized the material. Thus, metacognition helps adolescents to understand and master the school material more effectively and perform better in the academics (Thielsch et.al., 2015).

1.3.3 Egocentrism in Thinking

Adolescent egocentrism refers to a state of self-absorption, in which the world is viewed as focused on oneself. Due to this egocentrism, adolescents believe they are the focus of everyone else's attention. They may develop an imaginary audience or fictitious observers and believe that they pay as much attention to their behavior as adolescents do themselves. For example, a student sitting in a class may be sure that the teacher is focusing on him only, a girl in a party may be convinced that everybody is focused on the pimple on her cheek.

Due to this egocentric thinking -

- They become highly critical of authority figures such as parents, teachers, etc.

- They are unwilling to accept criticism of themselves,

- They are quick to find fault with others' behavior (rai et.al.2014).

Personal fables – Egocentrism makes adolescents develop a distorted belief that their experiences are unique, exceptional and shared by no one else. For example,

when they have a heart break in a romantic relationship, they believe that no one else gone through such kind of pain and no one can understand what they are going through (Alberts et. al., 2007). This kind of thinking error is called personal fables.

Much of the risky behavior of adolescents also can be explained through personal fables. For example, they may think that it is alright to indulge in unsafe sex practices, because they have a personal fable that pregnancy and AIDS happen to only others and can't happen to them. They may drive after drinking because they have a personal fable that they are careful drivers and are always in control (Reyna &Farley, 2006).

1.3.4 School Performance

It is commonly assumed that due to development of metacognition, and other cognitive abilities, academic performance should improve. Academic performance can be measured in terms of grades in school tests. In India, we find it is a different story altogether. According to ASER 2015, in India, more than half of fifth standard students' reading ability is as good as second standard students' abilities. Shashidharet.al. (2009) reported that 13.5 percent adolescents in India are low achievers. UNESCO (2014) reported that 250 million children in developing countries (including India) are functionally illiterate, even though 50 percent of them had spent at least 4 years in school. The report further states that 75 percent of primary school teachers are not properly trained and do not have adequate qualifications and there is a problem of their attendance too. Studies portraying such a pathetic situation of education in developing countries and especially in India raisesthe questions like what is the reason for such dismissal situation in India and what the government is doing about it?

It has been found that there are many factors that significantly contribute to a student's academic performance. Some of these factors are –

Socio-demography, family, school system, curriculum, pedagogy, home environment, parental education, quality of maternal care and relationship between parents (Dev,2016). Further, it has been observed that classroom climate, positive student-teacher relationship and regular attendance boosts academic performance of the students. Student's perception of an encouraging, impartial teacher plays an important role in student's motivation to attend the school.

International policy making bodies such as WHO and UNESCO as well as HRD, Niti Aayog in India has tried to bring reforms in education. In 1990, UNESCO made a policy "Education for All".

Masinoet.al. (2016) conducted a review of policy intervention to improve quality of education in developing countries and found that quality of education remained poor in developing countries. This is significant because it was assumed that improved quality of education will lead to increased economic growth, improved productivity and development.

Socioeconomic Status and School Performance –

Studies have shown that there is a very strong relationship between educational achievement and socioeconomic status. Students from middle and high socioeconomic status get higher grades, score higher on standardized tests of achievement and complete more years of schooling than students from lower SES. This disparity between middle and high SES students and lower SES students starts showing right from lower grades and becomes more obvious by the time they reach adolescence (Roy& Raver,2014).

There are many reasons for students from middle and high SES achieving greater academic success, such as -

- Children from lower SES lack many of the advantages enjoyed by children from middle and high SES.

- Children from poor strata may not get enough nutrition and may suffer from ill health.

- Very often, students from poor strata live in crowded conditions and attend inadequate schools, and may have inadequate places to do homework. Their homes will not have books and computers that are so common in middle and high strata houses. (Prater,2002). Consequently, children from poor families may be at a disadvantage from day one of their schooling and this disparity grows more as they grow older. Their academic performance continues to suffer and can have a snowball effect. This will result in their lagging behind students from middle and high SES.

Dropping out of School –

According to a report by UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Global Education Monitoring, 47 million youth of secondary and higher secondary school going age youth in India drops out of school. Since India considers youth as its advantage and capital, such figures are alarming. There are many reasons for youth to drop out of school, such as –

- Some leave because they got low percentage of marks and could not get a seat for further study.

- Some drop out because they lack skills.

- Some drop out due to poverty. Poverty is the biggest determinant in deciding whether a student will complete high school or not. Students from lower socioeconomic strata are three times more likely to drop out of school than students from middle and high-income group. It becomes a vicious cycle – they do not have money to afford higher education, so they drop out and because they do not have higher education and skills, they have lower economic success leading to getting drowned in poverty again.

1.3.5 Cyberspace: Adolescents Online

In present ear, most of the adolescents extensively use internet and internet based technologies such as social media in their day to day lives. According to a survey conducted by Kaiser Family Foundation, young people spend an average of 6.5 hours a day with media. Not only that, very often they use multiple mediums at the same time, and thus in reality, they are actually exposed to internet medium for 8.5 hours a day (Jordan et.al., 2007).

Lenhart (2010) and Richtel (2010) found that some teenagers send nearly 30,000 texts a month and often carry multiple conversation simultaneously. Instead of having face to face conversation or talking on telephone, they use text form of conversation, may be in email or on WhatsApp.

Media & Education

Easy availability and common prevalence of internet has brought significant changes in our education system too. Now there is no more tap and bucket relationship between the teacher and the student. Students have access to lot of information on the internet. Teacher is no more the only important and reliable source of information. However, educationists are still trying to determine whether this easy access to internet has uniformly positive impact on education or not. A lot needs to be changed before we can see the uniform positive impact of cyber technology on education. For instance, schools need to change their curricula to include specific instruction in a key skill to use internet constructively. Students need to be taught how to sort through huge bodies of information to identifywhat is most useful and discard what is not useful. Students must develop the ability to search, choose, and integrate information in order to create new knowledge (Guilamo-Ramos et.al., 2015).

However, internet use has its own disadvantages too. Some of them are –

1. **Cyber bullying –**

   Some teenagers use internet to bully others. They repeatedly text or email hurtful or even abusive messages to the victim. On web, these cyberbulliesca remains anonymous. Though they do not cause any physical harm, the psychological harm can be severe (Manktelow & Taylor,2014). Trolling on net is one form of cyberbullying.

2. **Easy access to Objectionable material** –

   Cyberspace makes objectional material, such as pornography, easily available to everyone. Pedophilias find it easy to identify their victims and harm them in real life too.

3. **Online gambling**

   Online gambling has become easy and is rampant. Even school children or college students can easily bet on sport events, such as cricket, and participate in games such as poker on the web using credit cards (Wolak & Finkelhor,2007).

4. **Digital Divide –**

   Adolescents belonging to poorer strata and minority communities do not have as much access to computers as the advantageous adolescents belonging to middle class or rich families and from some majority communities. This is known as digital divide. Purcell (2013) reported that in America, white students have maximum access to personal computers, Hispanics have marginally less access to personal computers and black adolescents have much less access to personal computers than these other two groups.

Check your progress –

1. What is formal operational stage and how does it impact the thought process?

2. What is the difference between Piaget's theory and information process approach to cognitive development in adolescents?

3. What are the factors that influence academic performance?

4. Why do adolescents drop out of school?

4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of cyberspace?

1.4 Threats to Adolescents' Well-Being

Adolescence is the healthiest period of anyone's life, but this is also a stage where adolescents indulge in most risky behaviors that can be a threat to their health.

Some of these undesirable behaviors that can threaten their health and general well-being are taking drugs, alcohol, tobacco use and sexually transmitted infections.

1.4.1 Illegal Drugs

Studies have shown that substance abuse among young people is quite rampant across the globe and it is maximum in the 16-19 years age group (Ahmad et.al.,2007). Kapil et.al. (2005) reported that there are no gender differences in India on the choice of substances but gender differences are there in the magnitude of substance abuse. Singh et.al. (2006) reported on the basis of a study in Jaipur that among 9th to 12th standard students, 2.1 boys and 1.7 percent girls were tobacco users. Smoking and tobacco use was more in those adolescents whose families were using tobacco and smoke. In another study, Juyal et.al. (2008) found that drug abuse was more prevalent among male students than female students. A survey conducted by Ray (2008) showed that 3 percent children and adolescents in the age group of 12 to 18 years used cannabis and only 4 percent of Adolescent drug abusers went for the treatment of drug problems.

Gopiram and Kishore (2014) study indicated that most of the users start using drugs from 15-18 years of age. There are several reasons for children and adolescents getting into use of illegal drugs. Some of these reasons are –

1. **Peer influence** – Peer influence was consistently identified as a source of encouragement for initiation as well as maintenance of substance abuse (Chowdhury & Sen,1992).

2. **Imitation of role models –** celebrities, parents, teachers or any other adults to whom they look up to.

3. **Curiosity**

4. **Sense of growing**

5. **Feel good factor and socialization**

6. **Source of enjoyment** (e.g., partying, celebrating festivals, etc.)

7. **To escape stress** related to failed love relationships, parental pressure (especially from father), family problems, etc.

8. **Adverse Childhood Experiences** – Dubey et.al. (2003) found a correlation between the number of adverse childhood experiences and future substance abuse behavior. Adverse childhood events include physical, emotional or sexual abuse, physical or emotional neglect, growing up with household substance abuse, criminality of household members, mental illness among household members, parental discord and illicit drug use in the family. The

study showed that each additional adverse childhood experience increased the likelihood for drug use under the age of 14 years by 2 to 4 times and increased the risk of later addiction by 5 times.

9. Enhancing Academic Performance

This is one of the newest reason for drug use. With increasing competition and emphasis on higher and higher academic grades, students are under lot of pressure. Many students use a drug called Adderall, which is normally prescribed for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It is believed that it increases the focus and allows a user to study for longer hours (Schwarz,2012).

The use of illegal drugs can have many adverse effects. For instance, some of the drugs can cause addiction. They are called addictive drugs. They produce biological or psychological dependence in users. In case of biological addiction, the body of the user gets so used to having that drug that it cannot function normally in the absence of drug. If the drug is not taken. It causes actual physical, and may be long lasting, changes in the nervous system. In such cases, the drug does not produce "high" for a person, rather it is needed to maintain the perception of everyday normalcy (Cami & Farr´e, 2003). In case of psychological addiction, people become increasingly dependent on these drugs to cope with everyday stress. If adolescents use drugs to escape stress, it prevents them from confronting and potentially solving the problem that led to drug use to begin with. Studies have shown that drugs can be dangerous because even casual users of less hazardous drugs can become addict to more dangerous form of substance abuse (Segal & Stewart,1996).

Marijuana cannabis is the most commonly used illegal drug. Consuming cannabis can result in impairing short-term memory and learning, impaired ability to focus, and poor coordination. It also results in increased heart rate, can affect lungs and may cause the risk of psychosis among vulnerable people. Manu et.al. (2013) pointed out that cannabis is a common substance of abuse during adolescence.

Opioids is another drug, often used by adolescents. Opioids are centrally stimulating at very low doses and sedative at high doses. Opioid's intoxication leads to analgesia, feelings of dysphoria, flashing of face, itchy skin, dry mouth, warmth feeling, etc. Intravenous injection of opioid can cause abdominal discomfort and sensation followed by sedation and dreaming. Severe intoxication can cause death. Prolonged use of opioids causes changes in the types of opioids used. Over the years, opioid users lose their dependence on natural opioids and simultaneously get inclined to use prescribed drugs. For example, a rapid rise in

the number of buprenorphine and codeine containing cough syrups and dextropropoxyphene dependence takes place. Studies have also shown that adolescents, especially from lower socioeconomic strata, increasingly start using inhalantsubstances. Benegalet.al.(1998) reported that children start with tobacco at the age of 10-11 years and gradually move towards inhalants as they grow older.

1.4.2 Alcohol Use and Abuse

Increasing use of alcohol among young people is a matter of grave concern in India. It has been estimated that 75million people are alcohol users in India (Srivastava et.al.,2002). Ray et.al. (2004) conducted a National Household Survey on a male sample of 12 to 60 years and found that 21.8 percent were using alcohol and drug. Sinha et.al. (2004) conducted a study in Andaman school and found that adolescents who start drinking alcohol at an early age tend to highest rate of alcohol consumption during adult life than those who start drinking at a later age. There are various reasons for increasing alcohol consumption by adolescents. Some of them are -

- Rise in the social acceptance of alcohol consumption, even for fixed self-induced intoxication.

- Easier access

- Male athletes tend to drink more to prove that they can drink as much as anybody else.

- Some drink to reduce tension and stress, as well as it reduces the inhibitions.

- Some start drinking because they see so many people around them or in their friend circle drinking that they assume that everyone is drinking heavily. This is known as false consensus effect.

- In many parts of Northeast in India, alcoholic drinks are prepared at home by taking rice as the main ingredient or other available ingredients by fermentation. These homemade alcoholic drinks are used in religious and social functions, and children drink them in front of parents and elders without any hesitation. Elders also have no objection to this tradition. In such societies, adolescents get taste of alcohol at a very early age and continue to drink in tolerable quantities. However, at a later age, some of them shift to commercially available alcohol and gradually become habitual drinkers or alcohol addicts.

- Early use of alcohol has its own disadvantages apart from the fact that such people are potential addicts. Early age alcohol consumption can lead to risky sexual behavior, substance abuse, criminal behavior and violent behavior, poor academic performance, mood disorders and injuries.

- **Alcoholics** - For some people, drinking alcohol becomes a habit and they tend to depend on alcohol and cannot control it. They start with consuming small quantity of alcohol, but gradually their tolerance for that much quantity increases and they need larger and larger quantity of alcohol to get intoxicated or to experience the positive effects that they crave. Some drink throughout the day and others drink at a particular time but do binge drinking. It is not known with certainty why do people become alcoholics. Some believe that it has genetic reasons as it runs in the families. But the counter argument is that all members of alcoholic's family do not have alcohol problem.

- **The cause of alcoholism is not important**. The most important task is to get adolescents cured of alcoholism if they have that problem.

1.4.3 Tobacco: The Dangers of Smoking

It has been noticed that most of the adolescents are aware of the dangers of smoking, still they indulge in it. Studies have reported that the number of adolescents smoking in present times is much lesser than in previous decades, but the number of adolescent smokers is still too high. Studies have further reported that smoking patterns show that there are gender differences and racial differences in smoking. In many countries such as Austria, Norway and Sweden and many other countries, smoking is increasing among girls compare to the boys. White children and children from lower SES are more likely to start smoking at an early age than African American children and children from higher SES. In American high schools, more white males tend to smoke than African Americans males, though this gap is vanishing rapidly (Barnett & Muilenburg,2012).

Of late there is growing awareness and societal sanctions against active as well as passive smoking. Governments have declared public places such as schools, offices, airports, etc. as 'smoke free" regions and there are designated smoke areas in these places. Yet, many adolescents are smokers. The question arises, why do adolescents pick up this harmful habit?

There are many reasons for adolescents to pick up the habit of smoking. Some of them are –

1) Some adolescents see it as a rite of passage – a sign of growing up.

2) They get influenced by influential models such as celebrities, parents, and peers. They see them smoking and imitate them to be like them.

3) Cigarettes are very addictive. Nicotine in them can produce biological and psychological dependency very quickly. Studies have shown that people who smoke as less as 10 cigarettes early in their lives stand 80 percent chance of

developing the habit of smoking (Westet.al.,2007;Tucker et.al.,2008; Wills et.al.,2008).

4) In India, Srivastava et.al. (2004) reported that apart from cultural, social and family environment, one of the most significant factors leading to adolescents' smoking is having the number of friends who smoke.

e-cigarettes:

The latest trend is to use e-cigarettes, a battery powered cigarette shaped instrument that gives out vaporized nicotine. It is believed that these e-cigarettes are less harmful than traditional cigarettes, but there are no hard evidences available for such belief. In spite of that the number of users of e-cigarette are increasing and people are using them as a substitute of traditional cigarettes.

India is the third largest consumer and producer of tobacco in the world. A National Sample Survey Organization of the Indian Government reported that about 20 million children in the age group of 10-14 years were estimated to be tobacco addict. Chadda& Sengupta (2002) added to this report by showing that approximately 5,500 new users are added to this figure every year. In another study, Bhojani et.al. (2009) found that the average age for initiation of tobacco consumption in Indian adolescents was 14.7 years. In India, tobacco is usually consumed in the forms of bidis, cigarettes or through devices such as chillum and hooka. In India too, e-cigarette is becoming popular among tobacco consumers.

1.4.4 Sexually Transmitted Infections

Considering that adolescents are prone to indulge in more risky behavior and the at which they become sexually active, the chances of their getting infected with sexually transmitted infections is very high. Let us see some of the STIs that afflict them. It has been found that one out of four adolescents gets affected by STI at high school level in America (Weinstock et.al. 2004).

AIDS:

As AIDS is spreads basically through sexual contact, it is classified as STI. Initially, it began as a problem that mainly was mainly restricted to gays, but gradually it has spread to other populations as well such as heterosexuals and intravenous drug users. In America, it has especially affected the minorities. 70 percent of African Americans and Hispanics form the new cases of AIDS. Compared to white males, African American males are eight times more likely to get affected by AIDS. In India too, it has spread at an alarming speed.

Other Sexually Transmitted Infections:

Other more common STIS are –

1. **Human papilloma virus (HPV)-** This can be transmitted through genital contact even without intercourse. The symptoms of HPV are that it produces warts and, in some cases, leads to cervical cancer. There is a vaccine available that can protect against some kinds of HVP. In America, the U.S. Center for Disease Control & Prevention had suggested that this vaccine should be routinely administered to 11 to 12 years old girls, but there was political uproar against it and therefore that plan was dropped.

2. **Trichomoniasis –** It is an infection that takes place in vagina or penis, and it is caused by a parasite. In the beginning of infection, there are no outwardly symptoms, but later on, it can cause painful discharge.

3. **Chlamydia – It** is a bacterial infection. In the beginning, there are very few symptoms of this infection but later it causes burning sensation in urination and a discharge from the penis or vagina. It can lead to pelvic inflammation and even to sterility. However, this infection can be treated successfully through antibiotics (Fayers et.al.2003).

4. **Genital herpes –** It is a virus. The first symptoms of herpes are small blisters or sores around the genitals, just like cold sores that sometimes appear around the mouth. These sores may break open and become quite painful. They may heal after a few weeks but infection often comes back after sometime gap and the whole cycle repeats itself. It is an infection for which there is no cure and it is contagious.

5. **Gonorrhea & Syphillis –** These two STIs have been recognized for a long time. The cases of these two infections are recorded in old history too. Previously, they were considered as untreatable, but today, antibiotics are available and they can be fully cured effectively.

Avoiding STIs:

The best way to avoid STI is to abstain from sex. The other way is to make sex safer. It has been reported that in spite of being exposed to sex education, most of the adolescents do not use safe sex practices. Due to personal fable thinking, they feel invulnerable and tend to indulge in risky behavior. They think that the chances of their contracting STI are minimal or do not exist, especially if they perceive their partner as safe – someone they know well for a long time. Some of the safe sex practices that can reduce the riskare –

1. Know your partner well. Learn about his/her sexual history. Unless the STI status of a partner is known, unprotected sex is risky. However, learning a partner's complete sexual history is not easy. Because of various reasons such as - it is embarrassing to ask, the partner may not be willing to give accurate answers, either deliberately or because he himself/herself is not aware of their own exposure, the partner may be embarrassed or may have a strong sense of privacy or simply due to forgetfulness. This can be risky.

2. Use condoms – condoms are the most reliable means of preventing STIs.

3. Avoid the exchange of bodily fluids, especially semen. Avoid anal intercourse. It has been reported that especially the AIDS virus can spread through small tears in rectum. Without condom anal sex is dangerous. Similarly, oral sex is also dangerous, as this can also lead to contracting AIDS.

4. Stay Sober – Use of alcohol or drugs impairs the judgment and can lead to poor decision making. One may not use condom correctly, if one's judgment is impaired.

5. Benefits of Monogamy – It is better to have sexual relationship with only one partner, who is faithful to you, instead of having it with many partners. This can reduce the chances of contracting STI.

1.5 Summary

In this unit, we discussed the physical changes taking place during adolescence period, especially the changes taking place -both physically and psychologically- during puberty. We elaborated on how the timing of onset of maturation can have psychological and social impact on the adolescent. How these impacts are different for different gender. We also looked the nutritional needs and concerns of adolescents. We discussed the eating disorders that may set in from the start of adolescence age and may for whole life. How these eating disorders can be due to social norms of beauty and can have not only psychological effect but are also health hazards. It was also highlighted that though initially these eating disorders were more common among girls but now they are prevalent in both genders.

We also dwelled into how the development of the brain leads to rapid cognitive development, especially leading to sophisticated thought and complex intellectual achievements of adolescents. We looked at two theories of cognitive development – Piagetian theory and information process approach. Piaget believed that approximately at 12 years of age, children start using abstract thoughts and

scientific reasoning. He labeled this type of thinking as formal operations period. On the other hand, information processing approach believed that cognitive development does not take place in age related spurts, rather it is a gradual, continuous process that continuous throughout a person's life. It takes place in terms of improvement in memory capacity, mental strategies, metacognition and many other aspects of cognitive functioning. We also looked into howegocentrism affects their thinking. Egocentrism refers to their self-absorption as a result of their increasing sense of considering themselves as independent identities. Due to this, they can't accept any criticism of themselves and tend to rebel against authority figures. They also develop personal fables, where they strongly believe that they and their experiences are unique. We also looked at why the school performance of adolescents show downward trend. Studies have shown that there are various factors that influence the school performance such as socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity and belief system, of the society in which the adolescent is growing, about the link between the school performance and success in life.

It was emphasized that adolescents are ardent internet users and spend a significant part of each day on either on social media, entertainment outlets or on information resources. It was emphasized that internet can be both – a boon or bane.

We also looked at the threats to the well-being of adolescents such as use of illegal drugs due to peer pressure, pleasure seeking or imitation of role models or simply the desire to show authority. We also looked at their consumption of alcohol and tobacco as well as vulnerability of adolescents in contracting AIDS and various other types of sexually transmitted diseases and how one can reduce the chances of contracting STIs.

1.6 Questions

1. Describe the physical changes that adolescents experience during puberty.

2. Explain the nutritional needs and concerns of adolescents.

3. Explain the brain development in adolescence.

4. Describe how Piaget explained the cognitive development process during adolescence.

5. Describe the cognitive development process in adolescence according to information process approach.

6. Describe how adolescent egocentrism affects thinking and behavior of the adolescents.

7. Describe the factors that affect adolescents' school performance.

8. Describe how adolescents use the Internet.

1.7 References

Feldman, R. S. & Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India, Education services Pvt.Ltd

Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. (2012). Human Development. (12th Ed). McGraw Hill, international Edition

❖❖❖

3

SOCIAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN ADOLESCENCE - I

Unit Structure

3.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to understand following concepts:

➢ Identity: Asking "Who Am I?"

➢ Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

➢ Identity Formation: Change or Crisis?

➢ Marcia's Approach to Identity Development: Updating Erikson

➢ Religion and Spirituality

➢ Identity, Race, and Ethnicity

➢ Depression and Suicide: Psychological Difficulties in Adolescence

3.1 Introduction

The issues of identity and self-esteem is very common among adolescents. For some teenagers, this phase of life might be very painful and difficult but mostpass through this period without any major problem. Most of the adolescents find adolescence a very good and exciting time during which they make friends and develop intimate relationships.

Adolescents face lot of challenges during this phase of their life. In this chapter we will discuss what are the major changes that take place during adolescence and we will especially focus on personality and social development during adolescence.

We will begin by considering how adolescents form their views of themselves. Then we will discuss the following topics in detail:

Self-concept,

Self-esteem, and

Identity development.

Depression and

Suicide.

Next, we will discuss relationships during adolescence. We will consider how adolescents reposition themselves within the family and how the influence of family members declines in some spheres as peers take on new importance. We will also examine the ways in which adolescents interact with their friends and the ways in which popularity is determined.

3.2 Identity: Asking "Who Am I?"

By the time a person becomes 13-year-old teenage, he starts showing his awareness—and self-consciousness about his newly forming place in society and life. During adolescence, questions like "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong in the world?" begin to take place.

First, let us discuss why issues related to identity are important during adolescence? One reason is that adolescents' intellectual capacities become more adult-like. Adolescents are able to see their relationships with others and are aware that they are individuals. They consider themselves apart not just from their parents but from all others. They are undergoing physical changes during this time and they are very much aware of their bodies and aware that others are reacting to them in ways to which they are unaccustomed. Whatever the cause, adolescence often brings

substantial changes in teenagers' self-concepts and self-esteem—in sum, their notions of their own identity.

Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

Who are you, and how do you feel about yourself? Questions like these present important challenges during adolescence.

Self-concept: When you ask an adolescent to describe herself, and she says, "Others look at me as laid-back, relaxed, and not worrying too much. But in reality, I'm often nervous and emotional". This answer makes it clear that the adolescent is able to differentiate between others' views of her and her own perception about herself. This ability to differentiate between others' views from one's own perceptions indicates a developmental advancement of adolescence. Differentiating between what the adolescent thinks of herself and what others think of her would not have been possible when she was a child. Adolescents are able to make the distinction, and when they try to describe who they are, they take both their own and others' views into account (Updegraff et al., 2004; Chen, S. et al., 2012; Preckel et al., 2013; McLean & Syed, 2015).

Adolescents have a broader view of themselves and they also have an increasing understanding of who they are. They can see various aspects of the self simultaneously, and this view of the self becomes more organized as they grow. They look at the self from a psychological perspective (Adams, Montemayor, & Gullotta, 1996). For example, teenagers are able to describe themselves in terms of their ideology (saying something like "I'm an environmentalist") than in terms of physical characteristics (such as "I'm the fastest runner in my class"). This characteristic is not found in very young children.

In some ways, this broader self-concept helps adolescents in their early years. During this time, they may be troubled by various issues and aspects of their personalities. During the beginning of adolescence, for instance, teenagers may want to view themselves in a certain way ("I'm a sociable person and love to be with people"), and they may become concerned when their behaviour is in consistent with that view ("Even though I want to be sociable, sometimes I can't stand being around my friends and just want to be alone"). By the end of adolescence, however, teenagers find it easier to accept that different situations elicit different behaviours and feelings (Trzesniewski, Donnellan, & Robins, 2003; Hitlin, Brown, & Elder, 2006).

Self-esteem: refers to asking how do I like myself? Let us consider two things here: One is 'knowing' who you are and second, 'liking' who you are. I am sure you will appreciate the fact that *Knowing* who you are and *liking* who you are two different

things. Adolescents are quite accurate in understanding who they are (their self–concept), but, this knowledge does not guarantee that they like themselves (their self-esteem).

Cognitive development, at adolescence stage, allows adolescents to make differentiation in various aspects of the self and at the same time also enables them to evaluate those aspects in different ways (Chan, 1997; J. Cohen, 1999). For example, an adolescent may have low self-esteem in terms of relationships with others and higher self-esteem in terms of academic performance.

Gender differences in self-esteem. Now, let us consider the question "what determines an adolescent's self-esteem?" There are many factors which can make a difference. One important factor is gender. Research has found that during early adolescence, girls' self-esteem is lower and more vulnerable than boys' self–esteem. What is the reason of such finding? Girls are more concerned about their physical appearance. They are also more concerned about their academic achievement. On the other hand, boys are more casual in their attitude.

In addition, female academic achievement is considered a hindrance to social success and this creates lot of confusion in young girl's mind. If they do well academically, they do not enjoy social success. It is not a surprise that the self-esteem of adolescent girls is more fragile than that of boys (McLean & Breen, 2009; Mäkinen et al., 2012; Ayres &Leaper, 2013; Jenkins & Demaray, 2015).

Although generally self-esteem is higher in adolescent boys than girls, boys have their own set of problems. For example, if a boy is not able to get selected in a sports team or got rejected by a girl, he would feel very miserable because of society's typical gender expectations that a boys must always succeed in all their endeavours and should be confident, tough, and fearless all the time. Boys facing difficulties, such as not making to a sports team or rejection from a girl they wanted to date, are likely to feel not only miserable about the defeat they face but also incompetent because they don't measure up to the stereotype (Pollack, 1999; Pollack, Shuster, & Trelease, 2001).

A research by Jain & Dixit (2014) revealed that among many causes of low self-esteem, in India, the most common cause for reduction in self-esteem has been the inability to meet academic expectations of self, parents, and teachers. As a result, it could be seen that expectations and pressure posed by the society to be the best in academics is a matter of concern for the Indian youth today.

Socioeconomic status and race differences in self-esteem

Socioeconomic status and race also influence self-esteem. Those adolescents who belong to higher socioeconomic status have higher self-esteem than those belonging to lower socioeconomic status, particularly during middle and later

adolescence. The reason could be that the social status factors that especially enhance one's standing and self-esteem — such as having more expensive clothes or a car — become more conspicuous in the later periods of adolescence (Dai et al., 2012; Cuperman, Robinson, & Ickes, 2014).

Research has found that other than socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity also has an impact on self-esteem of adolescents, but it has been noticed that as minorities have started getting better treatment in the society, the impact of race and ethnicity has lessened.

Research supports that African Americans and Hispanics had lower self-esteem than white Americans because prejudice faced by them in the society. It made them feel inferior. More recent research has different findings. Recent findings suggest that African American adolescents differ little from whites in their levels of self-esteem (Harter, 1990b). What could be the reason of these new findings? One explanation is that because of sustained social movements within the African American community, adolescents of African American community have started taking pride in themselves. Research finds that a stronger sense of racial identity is related to a higher level of self-esteem in African Americans and Hispanics (Verkuyten, 2003; Phinney, 2008; Koganet al., 2014).

Researchers in this area has established that self-esteem is not only influenced by race alone but by a combination of many factors. For example, some researchers have considered race and gender together, coining the term *eth gender* refer to the joint influence of race and gender. One study that took both race and gender together into account found that African American and Hispanic males had the highest levels of self-esteem, while Asian and Native American females had the lowest levels (Saunders, Davis, & Williams, 2004; Biro et al., 2006; Park et al., 2012).

3.2.1 Identity Formation: Change or Crisis?

Summarize how Erikson explains identity formation during adolescence.

Erikson described identity as "a subjective sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image. According to him, the search for identity ultimately leads some adolescents into some kind of psychological turmoil as they encounter the adolescent identity crisis (Erikson, 1963). Identity formation extends from birth through adulthood. According to Erikson, identity formation, while beginning in childhood, gains prominence during adolescence. Faced with physical growth, sexual maturation, and impending career choices, adolescents must accomplish the task of integrating their prior experiences and characteristics into a

stable identity. Erikson came up with the phrase identity crisis to describe the temporary instability and confusion adolescents experience as they struggle with alternatives and choices. To cope with the uncertainties of this stage, adolescents may over identify with heroes and mentors, fall in love, and bond together in groups, excluding others on the basis of real or imagined differences.

According to Erikson, successful resolution of identity crisis depends on trust, autonomy, and initiative. By the age of 21, about half of all adolescents have resolved their identity crises and are ready to move on to the adult challenges of love and work. Others, however, are unable to achieve an integrated adult identity, either because they have failed to resolve the identity crisis or because they have experienced no crisis.

J. E. Marcia identified four common ways in which adolescents deal with the challenge of identity formation. Those who experience, confront, and resolve the identity crisis are referred to as "identity-achieved." Others, termed "identity-foreclosed," make commitments (often conventional ones, identical or similar to those of their parents) without questioning them or investigating alternatives. Those who are "identity-diffused" shrink from making defining choices about their futures and remain arrested, unable to make whole-hearted commitments to careers, values, or another person. In contrast, those in the "moratorium" group, while unable to make such commitments, are struggling to do so and experience an ongoing though unresolved crisis as they try to "find themselves."

Although the phrase "identity crisis" was initially popularized in connection with adolescence, it is not limited to this time frame: Erikson himself initially formulated the concept in connection with World War II veterans. A variety of changes that affect one's work, status, or interpersonal relationships can bring on a crisis that forces one to redefine oneself in terms of values, priorities, and chosen activities or lifestyle.

In Erikson's view, adolescents who are not able to handle themselves well and are not able to find an identity for themselves, usually adopt socially unacceptable roles as a way of expressing what they do *not* want to be, or they may have difficulty forming and maintaining long-lasting close personal relationships. In general, their sense of self becomes "diffuse," failing to organize around a central, unified core identity.

On the other hand, those who are successful in creating an appropriate identity set a course that provides a foundation for future psychosocial development. They learn their unique capabilities and believe in them, and they develop an accurate sense of who they are. They are prepared to set out on a path that takes full

advantage of what their unique strengths permit them to do (Allison &Schultz, 2001).

Table 1 A Summary of Erikson's Stages -

Stage	Approximate Age	Positive Outcome	Negative Outcome
1.Trust versus mistrust	Birth- 1.5 years	Feelings of trust from others support	Fear & concern regarding others
2. Autonomy versus shame & doubt	1.5-3 years	Self-sufficiency if explanation is encouraged	Doubts about self, lack of independence
3. Initiative versus guilt	3-6 years	Discovery of ways to initiate actions	Guilt from actions & thoughts
4. Industry versus inferiority	6-12 years	Development of sense of competence	Feelings of inferiority, little sense of mastery
5. Identity versus confusion	Adolescence	Awareness of uniqueness of self, knowledge of roles	Inability to identify appropriate roles in life
6. Intimacy versus isolation	Early adulthood	Development of loving, sexual relationships & close friendships	Fear of relationships with others
7. Generativity versus stagnation	Middle adulthood	Sense of contribution to continuity of life	Trivialization of one's activity
8. Ego-integrity versus despair	Late adulthood	Sense of unity in life's accomplishments	Regret over lost opportunities of life

Societal pressures and reliance on friends and peers

Societal pressures are also high during the identity-versus-identity-confusion stage, as any student knows who has been repeatedly asked by parents and friends "Which course are you pursuing?" and "What are you going to do when you graduate?" Adolescents feel pressure to decide whether their post-high school plans include work or college and, if they choose work, which occupational track to follow.

During this period, adolescents increasingly rely on their friends and peers as sources of information. At the same time, their dependence on adults declines. This increasing dependence on the peer group enables adolescents to forge close relationships. Comparing themselves to others helps them clarify their own identities. This reliance on peers helps adolescents define their identities and learn to form relationships. This is part of Erikson's intimacy vs. isolation stage.

When teens modify their choices or behaviour in order to conform to what their friends are doing, they are answering to peer pressure. Peer pressure is often associated with negative outcomes such as skipping school, wearing distasteful clothing, or consuming alcohol and other drug use. However, many parents do not recognize that peer pressure can also exert a positive influence. Because of advanced cognitive and emotional maturity, teens can now encourage each other to make wise decisions, and discourage each other from making harmful choices.

Since it is important for youth to "fit in" with their peer group they may also decide to participate in the same hobbies or activities as their friends. This enables them to spend more time together and to bond over shared experiences. In general, teens will gravitate toward peer groups with whom they share common interests and activities, similar cultural backgrounds, or simply a similar outlook on life. But oftentimes, as teens experiment with their identity, they may be attracted to peer groups with very dissimilar interests.

Adolescent peer groups are quite a bit different from the typical circle of friends that are characteristic of younger children. For instance, adolescent peer groups are closer and more tightly knit. However, the increased loyalty and cohesion that is characteristic of adolescent peer groups can lead to several problems, particularly in the early and middle adolescent years. Cliques may form and some children will inevitably be excluded. This kind of rejection is often very painful, particularly for very sensitive children. Other times, groups of youth may be negatively labelled for their characteristics or interests, creating tension and conflict between groups.

Another problem associated with adolescent peer groups is that these groups can lead to bullying situations. This may occur when there are disparate amounts of power between groups or between group members. Disparities in power may include physical, mental, social, or financial power. Research performed during the last decade has demonstrated that bullying behaviours are linked to serious and long-lasting emotional and behavioural problems for both the victims and perpetrators of bullying, including depressive symptoms and suicidality (van der Wal, de Wit, Hirasing, 2003; Bond, Thomas, Rubin, Patton, 2001).

Reliance on peers to help adolescents define their identities and learn to form relationships is the link between this stage of psychosocial development and the next stage Erikson proposed, known as *intimacy versus isolation*. When Erikson developed his theory, he suggested that males and females move through the identity-versus-identity-confusion period differently. These ideas largely reflect the social conditions at the time Erikson was writing, when women were less likely to go to college or establish their own careers and instead often married early.

Today, however, the experiences of boys and girls seem relatively similar during the identity-versus-identity confusion period.

In summary, during adolescence the number of close friendships decline, but the quality of these relationships becomes more vulnerable, trusting, and intimate. Meanwhile, the number of casual acquaintances continues to rise, as youths' social networks expand due to sophisticated communication technologies, new recreational and social activities, new educational experiences, and employment.

Psychological moratorium

The *psychological moratorium* is a period during which adolescents take time off from the upcoming responsibilities of adulthood and explore various roles and possibilities. For example, many college students take a semester or year off to travel, work, or find some other way to examine their priorities.

Psychological moratorium is a time during which society permits the individual to work on crisis resolution. During this moratorium, the adolescent/young adult has the opportunity to examine societal roles, career possibilities, and values, free from the expectation of commitments and long-term responsibilities. Although some individuals choose to remain in a moratorium indefinitely, Erikson says that there is an absolute end to the recognizable moratorium. At its completion, the adolescent should have attained the necessary restructuring of self and identifications so that he or she can find a place in society which fits this identity.

Limitations of Erikson's theory

One criticism that has been raised regarding Erikson's theory is that he uses male identity development as the standard against which to compare female identity. To critics, Erikson's view is based on male-oriented concepts of individuality and competitiveness. In an alternative conception, psychologist Carol Gilligan has suggested that women develop identity through the establishment of relationships. In this view, a key component of a woman's identity is the building of caring networks between herself and others (Gilligan, 2004; Kroger, 2006).

3.2.2 Marcia's Approach to Identity Development: Updating Erikson

Refining and extending Erik Erikson's work, James Marcia came up with four Identity Statuses of psychological identity development. The main idea is that one's sense of identity is determined largely by the choices and commitments made regarding certain personal and social traits.

Based on Erik Erikson's important work on identity and psychosocial development in the 1960s, Canadian developmental psychologist James Marcia refined and extended Erikson's model, primarily focusing on adolescent development.

Addressing Erikson's notion of identity crisis, Marcia maintained that the adolescent stage consists neither of identity resolution nor identity confusion, but rather the degree to which one has explored and committed to an identity in a variety of life domains from vocation, religion, relational choices, gender roles, and so on. Marcia's theory of identity achievement argues that two distinct parts form an adolescent's identity: crisis (i. e. a time when one's values and choices are being re-evaluated) and commitment. He defined a crisis as a time of upheaval where old values or choices are being re-examined. The end outcome of a crisis leads to a commitment made to a certain role or value.

After conducting lengthy interviews with adolescents, Marcia proposed four categories of adolescent identity:

Identity Diffusion – the status in which the adolescent does not have a sense of having choices; he or she has not yet made (nor is attempting/willing to make) a commitment

Identity Foreclosure – the status in which the adolescent seems willing to commit to some relevant roles, values, or goals for the future. Adolescents in this stage have not experienced an identity crisis. They tend to conform to the expectations of others regarding their future (e. g. allowing a parent to determine a career direction) As such, these individuals have not explored a range of options.

Identity Moratorium – the status in which the adolescent is currently in a crisis, exploring various commitments and is ready to make choices, but has not made a commitment to these choices yet.

Identity Achievement – the status in which adolescent has gone through a identity crisis and has made a commitment to a sense of identity (i.e. certain role or value) that he or she has chosen

Identity Formation Process

The core idea is that one's sense of identity is determined largely by the choices and commitments made regarding certain personal and social traits. The work done in this paradigm considers how much one has made certain choices, and how much he or she displays a commitment to those choices. Identity involves the adoption of 1) a sexual orientation, 2) a set of values and ideals and 3) a vocational direction. A well-developed identity gives on a sense of one's strengths, weaknesses, and individual uniqueness. A person with a less well-developed identity is not able to define his or her personal strengths and weaknesses, and does not have a well-articulated sense of self.

To better understand the identity formation process, Marcia conducted interviews with young people. He asked whether the participants in his study (1) had established a commitment to an occupation and ideology and (2) had experienced, or were presently experiencing, a decision-making period (adolescent identity crisis). Marcia developed a framework for thinking about identity in terms of four identity statuses.

It is important to note that adolescents are not necessarily stuck in one of the four categories. Some move back and forth between moratorium and identity achievement in what has been called a "MAMA" cycle (moratorium—identity achievement—moratorium—identity achievement). For instance, even though a foreclosure may have settled on a career path during early adolescence with little active decision making, he or she may reassess the choice later and move into another category. For some individuals, then, identity formation may take place beyond the period of adolescence. However, identity gels in the late teens and early 20s for most people (Al-Owidha, Green, & Kroger,2009; Duriez et al., 2012; Mrazek, Harada, &Chiao, 2014).

Marcia's Identity Statuses

Basak and Ghosh (2008) have studied the pattern of identity development among adolescents living in urban and rural areas of West Bengal. The researchers observed that the ego-identity status of students differed with respect to gender and rural urban location. Female students even from rural areas were observed to have identity crisis with respect to occupation, ideological beliefs, and interpersonal relationships. Adolescents with identity achievement status have higher self-esteem whereas identity moratorium, identity foreclosure, and identity diffused adolescents have lower self-esteem.

3.2.3 Role of Religion and Spirituality in Identity Formation

Adolescence is a stage in the human developmental cycle which is characterized by extraordinary dynamism. The biological, psychological, and social changes that take place during this period naturally orient the young person to religious and spiritual developmental tasks, such as challenging the worldview and values, looking for meaning and purpose, and looking for the sacred (King, Ramos, & Clardy, 2013; Levenson, Aldwin, & Igarashi, 2013). It is the time when young people begin the psychological attempt at understanding their own experience and look for their identity in terms of family, social, and professional roles; religion and spirituality may be important factors in this process (King et al., 2013;Rydz&Zarzycka, 2008;Yonker, Schnabelrauch, & Dehaan, 2012)

During adolescent phase, adolescents start asking questions related to religion and spirituality. *Spirituality* is a sense of attachment to some higherpower, such as God, nature, or something sacred. During childhood, children do not question their religious identity. But, because of their cognitive clarity they may view religion more critically and seek to distance themselves from formal religion. In other cases, they may be drawn more closely to their religious affiliation because it offers answers to such abstract questions as "Why am I here on this earth?"and "What is the meaning of life?" Religion provides a way of viewing the world and universe as having intentional design—a place that was created by something or someone (Azar, 2010; Yonker, Schnabelrauch, & DeHaan, 2012; Levenson, Aldwin, &Igarashi,2013).

3.2.4 Challenges faced by ethnic and minority groups in identity formation

Minorities groups are often discriminated against and hence, forming an identity is quite difficult for them and it presents a challenge for members of minority groups. Usually, it is said that societies should not indulge in discrimination and all should be treated equally irrespective of their race and ethnicity and everyone should be given same opportunities. If members of minority group are able to avail those opportunities, then they should be accepted by the society. Based on a traditional *cultural assimilation model*, this view holds that individual cultural identities should be assimilated into a unified culture in India.

The *pluralistic society model* suggests that U.S. society is made up of diverse, cultural groups that should preserve their individual cultural features. In a pluralist society, groups not only co-exist side by side, but also consider qualities of other groups as traits worth having in the dominant culture. Pluralistic societies place strong expectations of integration on members, rather than expectations of assimilation. The existence of such institutions and practices is possible if the cultural communities are accepted by the larger society in a pluralist culture. Often the acceptance of a culture may require that the minority culture remove some aspects of their culture which is incompatible with the values of the dominant culture. According to this view, then, racial and ethnic factors become a central part of adolescents' identity and are not submerged in an attempt to assimilate into the majority culture. From this perspective, identity development includes development of minority group identity – the sense of membership in a minority group and the feelings that are associated with that membership. This view suggests that an individual can live as a member of two cultures, with two cultural identities, without having to choose one over the other (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Shi & Lu, 2007).

The process of identity formation is not simple for anyone and may be doubly difficult for minority group members. Racial and ethnic identity takes time to form, and for some individuals it may occur over a prolonged period. Still, the ultimate result can be the formation ofa rich, multifaceted identity (Quintana, 2007;Jensen, 2008; Klimstra et al., 2012).

3.2.5 Depression and Suicide: Psychological Difficulties in Adolescence

Although majority of teenagers have anxious time in search for identity—as well as the other challenges presented by the adolescent period—they pass through this phase without major psychological difficulties. But some adolescents find this period quite stressful. Some, in fact, develop severe psychological problems. Two of the most serious problems are adolescent depression and suicide.

Adolescent depression.

No one is immune to periods of sadness, unhappiness, and feeling emotionally upset, and adolescents are no exception. The end of a relationship, failure at an important task, the death of a loved one—all may produce profound feelings of sadness, loss, and grief. In situations such as these, depression is a fairly typical reaction.

At least 5% of adolescents, roughly 1 in 20 teenagers, experience an episode of depression, making it one of the most common medical illnesses young people face. Prior to puberty, males and females report similar rates of Depression. During and after adolescence, females begin to show higher rates of the illness, nearly two to one. Depression is associated with increased risks of substance abuse, unemployment, early pregnancy, and educational underachievement. Suicide, the most serious risk of the illness, is the third leading cause of death in 15-24-year-olds and the second leading cause of death among college students. There is a clear link between Depression and suicide. (Grunbaum et al., 2001; Galambos, Leadbeater, & Barker, 2004).

As per NMHS (2015-16), in India, one in 20 (5.25 percent) people over 18 years of age have ever suffered (at least once in their lifetime) from depression amounting to a total of over 45 million persons with depression in 2015. Traumatic experiences in early childhood, frequent migration, negative life events, educational setbacks, relationship problems, family history of mental illness as well as stress at school and in family are linked to depression among children and adolescents.

In India, study on adolescent depression is a relatively new area. In one study psychiatry morbidity among school samples of adolescents was found in about 29 percent of girls and 23 percent of boys with depression being the most common

disorder. Jayanthi and Thirunavukarasu (2015) have also shown a high level of depression (25 percent) in a school sample of adolescents in South India. In 2004, Nair et al. have assessed the prevalence of depression among 13- to 19-year-old school-going adolescents and the number stood at 3 percent. Trivedi et al. (2017) found that 22.45 percent of students were depressed. As per the report, there were 6.9 percent students with borderline depression, 8.9 percent with moderate depression, 4.1 percent with severe depression, and 2.6 percent with extreme depression and mood disturbances among 18.1 percent. Depression was detected in a significant number of older adolescents (ages 14 and 15 years), and girls were found to be significantly more depressed. Students who were comfortable with friends and those who received moral support from their families were significantly less depressed. Students who were comfortable with friends and those who received moral support from their families were significantly less depressed.

In India there are an estimated 57 million people (18 percent of the global estimate) affected by depression. It is said that with globalization, urbanization, migration and modernization along with rapid socio-demographic changes, depression is likely to increase in the coming years (WHO; 2017).

The National Mental Health Policy 2014 (http://www.mohfw.nic.in/) recognizes the various factors and circumstances that lead to depression. Highlighting the relationship between poverty and depression, the policy has stressed the need for reducing poverty and income disparity in the country to improve mental health outcomes.

Gender, ethnic, and racial differences are also found in depression rates. As is the case among adults, adolescent girls, on average, experience depression more often than boys. Some studies have found that African American adolescents have higher rates of depression than white adolescents, although not all research supports this conclusion. Native Americans, too, have higher rates of depression (Zahn-Waxler, Shirtcliff, & Marceau, 2008; Sanchez, Lambert, & Ialongo, 2012; English, Lambert & Ialongo, 2014).

In cases of severe, long-term depression, biological factors are often involved. Although some adolescents seem to be genetically predisposed to experience depression, environmental and social factors relating to the extraordinary changes in the social lives of adolescents are also important influences. An adolescent who experiences the death of a loved one, for example, or one who grows up with an alcoholic or a depressed parent is at a higher risk of depression. In addition, being unpopular, having few close friends, and experiencing rejection are associated with

adolescent depression (Eley, Liang, & Plomin, 2004; Zalsman et al., 2006; Herberman Mash et al., 2014).

Adolescent suicide

In India, the National Crimes Record Bureau collects data on suicides from police records. Youth (18 to 30 years) emerged as one of the vulnerable groups resorting to suicides with 33 percent share of the total number of suicides. Family problems and illness has emerged as the major causes for suicides accounting for 28 percent and 16 percent of the total suicides respectively.

In the US, it has been observed that in adolescence, the rate of suicide is higher for boys than girls, although girls *attempt* suicide more frequently. Some estimates suggest that there are as many as 200attempted suicides by both sexes for every successful one (Dervic et al., 2006; Pompili et al.,2009; Payá González et al., 2015).

The reasons are not very clear behind the increase in adolescent suicide over past decades. One possible reason is that the stress experienced by teenagers has increased, leading those who are most vulnerable to be more likely to commit suicide. But it is unclear why should stress have increased only for adolescents whereas suicide rate for other segments of the population has remained quite stable over the same time period? Although this reason is not clear why adolescent suicide has increased, it is clear that certain factors increase the risk of suicide. One factor is depression. Depressed teenagers who are at greater risk of committing suicide (although most depressed individuals do not commit suicide). In addition, social inhibition, perfectionism, and a high level of stress and anxiety are related to a greater risk of suicide. The easy availability of guns—which are more prevalent in the United States than in other industrialized nations—also contributes to the suicide rate (Wright, Wintemute, & Claire,2008; Hetrick et al., 2012).

In addition to depression, some cases of suicide are associated with family conflicts and relationship or school difficulties. Others stem from a history of abuse and neglect. The rate of suicide among drug and alcohol abusers is also relatively high. (Lyon et al., 2000; Bergen, Martin, &Richardson, 2003; Wilcox, Conner, & Caine, 2004).

Following warning signs should sound an alarm regarding the possibility of suicide:

- Direct or indirect talk about suicide, such as "I wish I were dead" or "You won't haveto worry about me any longer"

- School difficulties, such as missed classes or a decline in grades

- Making arrangements as if preparing for a long trip, such as giving away prized possessions or arranging for the care of a pet

- Writing a will

- Loss of appetite or excessive eating

- General depression, including a change in sleeping patterns, slowness and lethargy,and uncommunicativeness

- Dramatic changes in behaviour, such as a shy person suddenly acting outgoing

- Preoccupation with death in music, art, or literature

Adolescent Suicide: How to Help

If you suspect that an adolescent, or anyone else, is considering suicide, don't be an idle spectator. Act! It can save someone's life. Her eare some suggestions:

- Talk to the person and give the person an understanding forum in which to try to talk things through.

- You can ask questions like: Does the person have a plan? Has he or she bought a gun? Where is it?

- Evaluate the situation, trying to distinguish between general upset and more serious danger, as when suicide plans *have* been made. If the crisis is acute, *do not leave the person alone*.

- Be supportive, let the person know you care, and try to break down his or her feelings of isolation.

- Do not keep suicide talk or threats secret; these are calls for help and call for immediate action.

- Do not challenge, dare, or use verbal shock treatment on suicidal persons in an effort to make them realize the errors in their thinking. These can have tragic effects.

- Make a contract with the person, getting a promise or commitment not to make any suicidal attempt until you have talked further.

- Don't be overly reassured by a sudden improvement of mood. Such seemingly quick recoveries sometimes reflect the relief of finally deciding to commit suicide or the temporary release of talking to someone, but most likely the underlying problems have not been resolved.

For immediate help with a suicide-related problem, call **AASRA: 022 27546669; SAMARITANS: 91 8422984528**

3.3 Summary

During adolescence, the view of the self becomes more organized, broader, and more abstract, and takes account of the views of others. Self-esteem grows increasingly differentiated as the adolescent develops the ability to place different values on different aspects of the self.

Erikson's identity-versus-identity-confusion stage focuses on the adolescent's struggle to determine an identity and a role in society. Those who are successful in forming an identity prepare themselves for future development.

Marcia's four categories of adolescent identity—identity achievement, identity foreclosure, moratorium, and identity diffusion—are based on the presence of absence or crisis and commitment. The most psychologically healthy adolescents are in the identity achievement category.

Increased cognitive abilities allow adolescents to think more abstractly about religious and spiritual matters. As they question their religious identity; they may draw a distinction between organized religion and a personal sense of spirituality.

Ethnic and minority adolescents must navigate a course through two models of societal acceptance: the cultural assimilation model and the pluralistic society model. For these teenagers, identity development includes the development of a racial and ethnic identity. A third model—forming a bicultural identity—is available to them.

One of the dangers that adolescents face is depression, which affects girls more than boys. Suicide is the third most common cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds.

3.4 Questions

1. Describe how self-concept and self-esteem develop during adolescence.

2. Discuss socioeconomic status and race differences in self-esteem.

3. Summarize how Erikson explains identity formation during adolescence.

4. Explain Marcia's categories of adolescent identity.

5. Describe the role religion and spirituality play in identity formation in adolescence.

6. Discuss the challenges minority groups face in identity formation in adolescence.

7. Identify the dangers adolescents face as they deal with the stresses of their age.

8. Discuss some reasons of adolescent suicide.

3.5 Reference

Feldman, R. S. & Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India, Education services Pvt. Ltd.

Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. (2012). Human Development. (12th Ed). McGraw Hill, international Edition

❖❖❖

4

SOCIAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN ADOLESCENCE - II

Unit Structure

4.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to understand following concepts:

➢ Relationships: Family and Friends

➢ Family Ties: Changing Relations with Relations

➢ Relationships with Peers: The Importance of Belonging

➢ Popularity and Conformity

➢ Dating and Sexual Behavior

➢ Dating and Sexual Relationships in the Twenty-First Century

➢ Sexual Orientation: Heterosexuality, Homosexuality, Bisexuality, and Transsexualism

➢ Teenage Pregnancies

4.1 Introduction

Peer relationships, including close friends and romantic partners, are an extremely important factor for adolescents. Different from childhood, adolescents spend a much greater amount of time interacting with their peers. One study found that adolescents were spending about 2 times as much time with their peers than their parents, even over weekends, outside of formal school time. Adolescents have the maximum contact with their peers during school hours; however, they also spend time with friends after school, and may develop friendships through church, work, or extracurricular activities.

Peers relationships serve numerous purposes for adolescents. A basic purpose of peer interaction is social integration. Friends also provide a source of social comparison, such that adolescents can gauge themselves against friends. Other than friendship with peers and friends, adolescents also indulge in dating and sexual relations. Adolescents this phase of life has various problems as well, such as conflict with parents, criminal activities and teen pregnancy, etcetera.

4.2 Relationships: Family and Friends

The social world of adolescents is quite wide as compared to that of younger children. As adolescents' relationships with people outside the home grow, their interactions and relationship with their families can become considerably challenging and difficult. (Collins, Gleason, & Sesma, 1997; Collins & Andrew, 2004).

Family Ties: Changing Relations with Relations

When children enter adolescence, their relationship with their parents changes dramatically. Instead of being a cordial loving relationship, it becomes extremely tense relationship. The adolescent feels that as he is growing up, instead of giving him more freedom, his parents are becoming more restrictive. On the other hand, the parents of an adolescent see things differently. They feel that they are not the source of the tension in the household—the adolescent is. From parent's point of view, they had established a close, stable, loving relationship with their off spring throughout much of his/her childhood but, now suddenly everything has changed. They feel that their adolescent children shut them out of their lives, and even when adolescents speak with their parents, it is merely to criticize their politics, their dress, their preferences in TV shows. Parents find this behaviour of their children very upsetting and confusing.

The quest for autonomy

Parents usually do not like when children do not accept their judgments and guidelines. They get puzzled by the conduct of adolescents. These clashes are caused in part by the shifting roles that both children and parents must deal with during adolescence. Adolescents want to be independent; they seek autonomy and they want to have a sense of control over their lives.

Most parents understand that this shift is a normal part of adolescence and it is important part of development and hence, they welcome it as a sign of their children's growth. However, in many cases adolescents' increasing autonomy may prove difficult for them to handle (Smetana, 1995). When parents do not allow independence, for example by refusing adolescent to attend a party, it is not taken well by the adolescent. To the adolescent, her parents' refusal indicates a lack of trust or confidence. To the parent, it's simple good sense: "I trust you," they may say. "It's everyone else who will be there that I worry about."

The increase in adolescent autonomy changes the relationship between parents and teenagers. At the start of adolescence, parents hold most of the power and influence over the relationship. By the end of adolescence, however, power and influence have become more balanced, and parents and children end up in a more equal kind of relationship. Power and influence are shared, although parents typically retain the upper hand (Goede, Branje, & Meeus, 2009; Inguglia et al., 2014).

Culture and autonomy

The degree of autonomy varies from one family and one child to the next. Cultural factors play a big role in giving autonomy to adolescent by parents. In Western societies, which tend to value individualism, adolescents seek autonomy at a relatively early stage of adolescence. In contrast, Asian societies are collectivistic; they promote the idea that the well-being of the group is more important than that of the individual. In collectivistic societies adolescents' aspirations to achieve autonomy are less pronounced (Raeff, 2004; Supple et al., 2009; Perez-Brena, Updegraff, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012).

As far as obligation towards family is concerned, adolescents from collectivistic societies tend to feel greater obligation whereas, adolescents from individualistic societies are not so inclined in terms of their feelings related to obligation towards their families. In collectivistic cultures adolescents tend to show more respect, provide assistance and support their families. The push for autonomy is less strong (Fuligni& Zhang, 2004; Leung, Pe-Pua, & Karnilowicz, 2006; Chan &Chan, 2013).

Research has shown that in comparison to Asian adolescents, Caucasian adolescents mature early and they expect greater autonomy at an earlier age (Feldman & Wood, 1994). For example, when asked at what age an adolescent would be expected to carry out certain behaviours (such as going to a concert with friends), Caucasian adolescents and parents indicated much earlier age then adolescents and parents of Asian cultures. In other words, Caucasian adolescents exert more autonomy at a younger age in comparison with adolescents with Asian adolescents.

In addition to cultural factors affecting autonomy, gender also plays a role in granting autonomy to adolescents by parents. In general, male adolescents are permitted more autonomy at an earlier age than female adolescents. The encouragement of male autonomy is consistent with more general traditional male stereotypes, in which males are perceived as more independent and females, conversely, as more dependent on others. The more parents hold traditional stereotypical views of gender, the less likely they are to encourage their daughters' autonomy (Bumpus, Crouter, & McHale, 2001).

The myth of the generation gap

Many movies often depict that there is a Generation gap, a deep divide between parents and children in attitudes, values, aspirations, and worldviews. It is usually held that adolescents and their parents have totally opposing points of view about the world.

The reality, however, is quite different. The generation gap, if it exists, is really very narrow. Adolescents and their parents tend to see things almost in the same way in a variety of domains. For example, Republican parents generally have Republican children; members of the Christian right have children who hold similar views; and so on. On social, political, and religious issues, parents and adolescents tend to be in synch, and children's worries mirror those of their parents. Adolescents' concerns about society's problems are those with which most adults would probably agree (Knafo & Schwartz, 2003; Smetana, 2005; Grønhøj&Thøgersen, 2012).

Actually, most adolescents and their parents get along quite well. Despite wanting to have autonomy and independence, most adolescents have deep love, affection, and respect for their parents—and parents feel the same way about their children. On the other hand, some parent–adolescent relationships are quite troubled. But it can be said that the majority of relationships are more positive than negative and help adolescents avoid the peer pressure (Resnick et al., 1997; Black, 2002; Coleman,2014).

Conflicts with parents

Research has found that parents and teens may hold similar attitudes about social and political issues, but they often hold different views on various other issues such as matters of personal taste, music preferences and styles of dress. Parents and children have disagreements when adolescents seek to achieve autonomy and independence sooner than parents feel is right. Consequently, parent–child conflicts are more likely to occur during adolescence, particularly during the early stages, although it's important to remember that not every family is affected to the same degree (Arnett, 2000; Smetana, Daddis, & Chuang, 2003; García-Ruiz et al., 2013).

It has been observed that conflict is greater during early adolescence than at later stages of development. Psychologist Judith Smetana, who has studied this topic, maintains that the reason involves differing definitions of, and rationales for, appropriate and inappropriate conduct. Adolescents do not like any interference when it comes to matters of personal choice. It has been seen that parents may not like things which is not considered appropriate by the society, whereas adolescents have their own views (Smetana, 2006; Rote et al.,2012; Sorkhabi & Middaugh, 2014).

The argumentativeness and assertiveness of early adolescence usually at first leads to conflict, but in many ways these qualities play an important role in the evolution of parent–child relationships. In the beginning, parents may react defensively to the challenges that their children present, and may grow rigid and inflexible, in most cases they eventually come to realize that their children *are* growing up and that they want to support them in that process.

Many parents realize that their adolescent children's arguments are not so unreasonable and often compelling and that their children, in fact, can be trusted with more freedom, they become more yielding, allowing, and eventually perhaps even encouraging independence. Although the majority of teenagers maintain stable relations with their parents throughout adolescence, as many as 20 percent pass through a fairly rough time (Dmitrieva, Chen, & Greenberg, 2004).

Cultural differences in parent–child conflicts during adolescence

Although parent–child conflicts are very common in all cultures, it has been found that conflict between parents and their teenage children in "traditional," preindustrial cultures is less. Teens in such traditional cultures also experience fewer mood swings and instances of risky behaviour than do teens in industrialized countries (Arnett, 2000; Nelson, Badger, & Wu, 2004; Kapadia, 2008; Jensen & Dost-Gözkan, 2014).

What could be the reason? The answer lies in the degree of independence that adolescents expect and adult's permit. In more industrialized and individualistic societies independence is an expected component of adolescence. Hence, parents of adolescent children have to negotiate the amount and timing of the adolescent's increasing independence—a process that often leads to conflict.

In contrast, in more traditional societies, individualism is not valued as highly, and therefore adolescents are less inclined to seek out independence. With diminished independence-seeking on the part of adolescents, the result is less parent–child conflict (Dasen & Mishra, 2000, 2002).

In India, Hegde and Gaonkar (1991) attempted to find out the perception of parental control by adolescents on different activities such as social, academic, leisure time, household activity as well as in terms of discipline and behaviour. They found that female adolescent perception of parental control on social activity and household activity was significantly higher than for male adolescent, and boys perceived more control in academic activities. Saxena et al. (2011) observed differences in parent-adolescent relationship in middle class and lower-class families. In the middle-class families, it is school- related disagreements; in the lower-class families, the disagreement revolves around family-related and society-related issues.

4.2.1 Relationships with Peers: The Importance of Belonging

For decades, scholars have pointed to peer relationships as one of the most important features of adolescence. Peers have been alternately blamed for some of the more problematic aspects of adolescent functioning and praised for contributing to adolescent health and well-being. Recently, researchers have pushed the study of peer relations in exciting new directions, using more sophisticated methodologies to explore understudied aspects of adolescent peer relationships and mechanisms of influence.

Adolescents spend a much greater amount of time interacting with their peers. Research has found that adolescents spend about two times as much time with their peers than their parents, even over weekends, outside of formal school time.

During adolescence, adolescents seem to have a compulsive need to communicate with friends. It demonstrates the role of friends and peers during adolescence. Adolescents spend lot of time with their peers, and the importance of peer relationships grows as well. There is probably no period of life in which peer relationships are as important as they are during adolescence.

In India, Bakaya (2012) conducted study on adolescents regarding their understanding of peer relationship. Adolescents (subjects) in this research expected

such relationships to be reciprocal in nature and wanted peers and friends to be considerate of their views and feelings. Adolescents in the study showed the need for intimacy. According to findings of the study 71.87 percent of the younger participants and 75 percent of the older participants maintained that they had the need to share their feelings with their close friends. Another need which emerged from the study was need for companionship.

Social comparison

There are many reasons why peers become more important in adolescents' life. Adolescents like to compare themselves with their peers. They also provide each other with the opportunity to evaluate opinions, abilities, and even physical changes. This process is called as *social comparison.* Because the physical and cognitive changes of adolescence are so unique to this age group and so pronounced, especially during the early stages of puberty, adolescents turn increasingly to others who share, and consequently can shed light on, their own experiences (Rankin, Lane, & Gibbons, 2004; Schaefer & Salafia, 2014).

Since adolescents are motivated to become more autonomous and they do not like adult interference and authority, they rely on their friends and peers for their source of knowledge.

Reference groups

Adolescents indulge in experimentation in trying out new identities, roles, and conduct. They get to know what is acceptable by their peers and friends. These peers serve as reference groups. Reference groups are groups of people with whom one compares oneself. Teenagers compare themselves with those who are similar to them.

Reference groups present a set of *norms*, or standards, against which adolescents can judge their abilities and social success. An adolescent need not even belong to a group for it to serve as a reference group. For instance, unpopular adolescents may find themselves rejected by members of a popular group, yet use that more popular group as a reference group (Berndt, 1999).

Cliques and crowds: belonging to a group

Adolescents usually belong to two types of groups: cliques and crowds. Cliques are groups of 2 to 12 people whose members have frequent social interactions with one another. In contrast, crowds are larger, comprising individuals who share particular characteristics but who may not interact with one another.

Membership in particular cliques and crowds is often determined by the degree of similarity with members of the group. One of the most important similarity relates

to substance use. Adolescents choose friends who use alcohol and other drugs to the same extent that they do. Usually, adolescents make friends with those whose academic success is also quite similar to them. During early adolescence, attraction to peers who are particularly well behaved seems to decrease, while, at the same time, those who behave more aggressively become more attractive (Kupersmidt & Dodge, 2004; Hutchinson & Rapee, 2007; Kiuru et al., 2009).

The emergence of distinct cliques and crowds during adolescence shows the increased cognitive capabilities of adolescents. Teens are not very discrete although they make their own judgments about people with whom they want to interact occasionally of whom they have little direct knowledge. It is not until mid-adolescence that teenagers are sufficiently sophisticated cognitively to make the subtle judgments that underlie distinctions between different cliques and crowds (Burgess & Rubin, 2000; Brown &Klute,2003).

Gender relations

When children enter adolescence from middle childhood, their groups of friends are composed almost of same-sex individuals. Boys hangout with boys; girls hang out with girls. This sex segregation is called the sex cleavage.

When boys and girls reach puberty the situation changes. Both the sexes experience the hormonal surge that marks puberty and causes the maturation of the sex organs. This leads to a change in the ways adolescents view the opposite sex. Heterosexual teenage boys and girls begin to regard each other with greater interest in terms of both personality and sexuality.

At this stage, adolescents begin to attend boy–girl dances or parties, although mostly the boys still spend their time with boys, and the girls with girls(Richards et al., 1998).A little later, however, adolescents increasingly spend time with members of the other sex. New cliques emerge, composed of both males and females. In the beginning, the teenagers who are leaders of the same-sex cliques and who have the highest status lead the way. Eventually, however, most adolescents find themselves in cliques that include both, boys and girls.

4.2.2 Popularity and Conformity

Popularity and rejection

Most adolescents are quite aware when it comes to knowing who is popular and who is not. For some teenagers, popularity may be a central focus of their lives.

Social world of adolescents is not divided only into popular and unpopular individuals; the differentiations are a little more complex. For example, some adolescents are controversial. Usually, *popular* adolescents are liked by most

whereas, controversial adolescents are liked by some and disliked by others. For example, a controversial adolescent may be highly popular within a particular group, such as the string orchestra but not popular among other classmates. Furthermore, there are rejected adolescents, who are not liked, and neglected adolescents, who are neither liked nor disliked. Neglected adolescents are the forgotten students—the ones whose status is so low that they are overlooked by almost everyone.

Most of the time, popular and controversial adolescents are similar in their overall status which is high, while rejected and neglected adolescents have a lower status. Popular and controversial adolescents have more close friends, engage more frequently in activities with their peers and friends, and disclose more about themselves to others than less popular students. They are also more engaged in extracurricular school activities. In addition, they are well aware of their popularity, and they are less lonely than their less popular classmates (Becker & Luthar, 2007; Closson, 2009; Estévez, et al., 2014).

So, what exactly do we mean by status? Research has found that for college men physical attractiveness is the most important factor in determining high school girls' status, while college women believe it is a high school girl's grades and intelligence (Suitor et al., 2001).

The social world of rejected and neglected adolescents is not very pleasant. They have fewer friends and do not engage much in social activities, and have less contact with the opposite sex. They are usually aware that they are less popular, and they are more likely to feel lonely. It is not unusual for them to have frequent conflicts and fights with others. Sometimes these conflicts can escalate into full-blown fights that require mediation (McElhaney, Antonishak, & Allen, 2008; Woodhouse, Dykas, & Cassidy, 2012).

In Indian context, Bakaya (2012) identified three major types of peers – popular peers, neglected peers and rejected peers. It was observed that adolescents belonging to a particular peer group engaged in similar activities, thought and behaved in similar manner and this differentiated them from other peer groups. Bakaya (2012) also classified Indian adolescents in another four specific categories – High Academic Achievers, Fashionables, Rejected peers and Neglected peers.

High academic achievers had very good academic track records and were considered intelligent by their peers. Such adolescents were interested only in academics and were totally disinterested in fashion. They preferred to have small circle of friends who were equally good in academics. They were obedient and respectful towards their teachers, but some of them were helpful while some of

them were arrogant and unhelpful to their peers. Those who were helpful were popular among peers and those who were not helpful were disliked by their peers.

Fashionable adolescents were more concerned with their physical appearance and fashion. They tend to be self-centered, arrogant and not much interested in studies. Some of them are bullies as they have strong physique. Some of them are aggressive yet popular among their peers as aggression is considered as a symbol of power and status.

Rejected peers are those adolescents who are rejected by their peers for various reasons. For example, some are rejected as they are weak in studies or have irritating mannerism. Some others are rejected due to their physical appearance or being mentally challenged.

Neglected peers – Adolescents in this category are seen to be introverts who engage in very little communication and rarely initiate the interaction.

Conformity: peer pressure in adolescence

Peer pressure is defined as "the influence of one's peers to conform to their behaviour and attitudes".

Research suggests that in the U. S., teenagers are highly susceptible to peer pressure. In some cases, adolescents *are* highly susceptible to the influence of their peers. For example, when choosing what to wear, whom to date, and what movies to see, adolescents are quick to follow their peers. Wearing the right clothes, down to a particular brand, sometimes can give you an entry in a popular group(Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994).

In short, particularly in middle and late adolescence, teenagers, if they have social concerns, they turn to the people most likely to be experts—their peers. If the problem is one about which parents or other adults are most likely to have expertise, teenagers tend to turn to them for advice (Young & Ferguson, 1979; Perrine & Aloise-Young, 2004).

It can be said that peer pressure during adolescence does not suddenly happen. In fact, adolescence brings about a change in the people to whom an individual conforms. It has been seen that children usually conform to their parents during childhood, in adolescence conformity shifts to the peer group, in part because pressures to conform to peers increase as adolescents seek to establish their identity apart from their parents.

As adolescents gradually develop their identity and autonomy, they become less dependent on their peers and other adults. They like to make their own decisions they grow in confidence. They reject pressures from others, no matter who those

others are(Cook, Buehler, & Henson, 2009; Monahan, Steinberg, & Cauffman, 2009;Meldrum,Miller, & Flexon, 2013).

4.2.3 Juvenile delinquency: the crimes of adolescence

Adolescents involved in criminal activity is not unusual. The question is why do adolescents become involved in criminal activity? Some offenders, known as under socialized delinquents, are adolescents who are raised with uncaring parental supervision and little discipline. Although it can be said that they are influenced by their peers, these children have not been socialized appropriately by their parents and were not taught standards of conduct to regulate their own behaviour. These under socialized children usually begin criminal activities at anearly age, well before the onset of adolescence (Hoeve et al., 2008).

There are many common characteristics in under socialized delinquents. They are usually aggressive and violent quite early in life. These characteristics often lead to rejection by peers and academic failure. They can also be diagnosed with attention deficit disorder as children, and they tend to be less intelligent than average (Silverthorn & Frick, 1999; Rutter, 2003).

Under socialized delinquents often fit a psychological pattern called antisocial personality disorder and usually suffer from psychological difficulties. It is very difficult to rehabilitate them successfully, and many under socialized delinquents live on the margins of society throughout their lives (Lynam,1996; Frick et al., 2003).

There is a large group of adolescent offenders who are socialized delinquents. Socialized delinquents are aware of societal norms and they follow it; they are quite normal psychologically. Most socialized delinquents pass through a period during adolescence when they engage in some petty crimes (such as shoplifting), but they do not continue law breaking into adulthood.

Socialized delinquents are highly influenced by their peers, and they often commit crimes in groups. Like other aspects of adolescent behaviour, these minor delinquencies are often a result of giving in to group pressure or seeking to establish one's identity as an adult (Fletcher et al., 1995; Thornberry & Krohn, 1997).

4.3 Dating, Sexual Behaviour and Teenage Pregnancies

Dating and Sexual Relationships in the Twenty-First Century

During adolescence there is a need to break away from the emotional dependence of childhood. Friends and peers are source of companionship and recreation for the young people. Forming friendships with those of both sexes begins during

adolescence. Adolescents find acceptance in social groups as powerfully motivating. When and how adolescents begin to date is usually determined by cultural factors that change from one generation to another. Until quite recently, it was considered a cultural ideal when dating was exclusively with a single individual. But now things have changed and some adolescents believe that the concept of dating is old and, in some places the practice of "hooking up"—a vague term that covers everything from kissing to sexual intercourse—is viewed as more appropriate. Although cultural norms are changing, dating still remains the dominant form of social interaction that leads to intimacy among adolescents (Denizet-Lewis, 2004; Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2006; Bogle, 2008).

The functions of dating

One major purpose of dating during adolescence is to have fun and amusing experiences. Dating is a form of recreation and enjoyment. Wanting the friendship, acceptance, affection and love of the opposite sex is a normal part of growing up. Dating is also a means of *social and personal strength.*

One of the major purposes of dating is to find intimacy. Intimacy is the development of affection, respect, loyalty, mutual trust, sharing, openness, love and commitment. Some adolescent relationships with friends may be superficial while the others may be real close ones. Dating can provide the opportunity for intimacy.

Just how well dating serves such functions, particularly the development of psychological intimacy, is not very well understood. True intimacy becomes more common during later adolescence. At that point, the dating relationship may be taken more seriously by both participants, and it may be seen as a way to select a mate and as a potential prelude to marriage (Zimmer-Gembeck&Gallaty,2006; Friedlander, Connolly, Pepler & Craig, 2007; Paludi, 2012).

Dating can present real challenge to homosexual adolescents. Because there is a prejudice related to gay and lesbian relationships, gays and lesbians may end up dating to other sex in efforts to fit in. Even if they seek relationships with other gays and lesbians, they may find it difficult to find partners, who may not openly express their sexual orientation. Homosexual couples who do openly date usually face harassment, making the development of a relationship all the more difficult (Savin-Williams, 2003a).

Dating, race, and ethnicity

There is influence of culture when it comes to dating patterns among adolescents of different racial and ethnic groups. Parents may try to control their children's

dating behaviour in an effort to preserve their culture's traditional values or ensure that their child dates within his or her racial or ethnic group.

For example, Asian parents are usually conservative in their values and attitudes because of their own upbringing. (In many cases, the parents' marriage was arranged by others, and the entire concept of dating is unfamiliar.) They may insist on making their own rules for dating. As a consequence, they may find themselves involved in substantial conflict with their children (Hamon & In golds by, 2003; Hoelter, Axinn, & Ghimire, 2004; Lau et al., 2009).

Sexual behaviour

Hormonal changes during puberty produce a new range of feelings in the form of sexuality. Sexual behaviour and thoughts are among the central concerns of adolescents. Almost all adolescents think about sex, and many think about it a good deal of the time (Kelly, 2001; Ponton, 2001).

Usually, solitary self-stimulation or masturbation is the first type of sex in which adolescents get engaged. Research suggests that by the age of 15, almost 80 percent of teenage boys and20 percent of teenage girls engage in masturbation. After early teens masturbation in males declines considerably while in females, the frequency is lower initially and increases throughout adolescence. It has been found that African American men and women masturbate less than whites (Schwartz, 1999; Hyde & DeLamater, 2004).

Masturbation is common and widespread, still it may produce feelings of shame and guilt. There are many reasons for this feeling of shame and guilt. One of the reasons is that adolescents may believe that if they are indulging in masturbation it means they are not able to find a sexual partner. This is a wrong assumption, since statistics show that three-quarters of married men and two-thirds of married women report masturbating between 10 to 24 times a year (Das, 2007; Gerressu et al., 2008).

Other reason for feelings of shame and guilt about masturbation is the result of misguided views about masturbation. For example, nineteenth-century physicians and lay persons warned of the horrible effects of masturbation, including "dyspepsia, spinal disease, headache, epilepsy, various kinds of fits, impaired eyesight, palpitation of the heart, pain in the side and bleeding at the lungs, spasm of the heart, and sometimes sudden death" (Gregory, 1856). Suggested remedies to overcome practice of masturbation were very horrifying and crude in nature.

None of the above-mentioned things are considered right today. The reality of masturbation is different. Experts on sexual behaviour view it as a normal, healthy, and harmless activity.

Sexual intercourse

Sexual intercourse is a major milestone in the perceptions of most adolescents. Usually, intercourse may be preceded by many different types of sexual intimacy, including deep kissing, massaging, petting etc. The main focus of researchers investigating sexual behaviour has been on the act of heterosexual intercourse.

Over the last 50 years, the average age at which adolescents first encounter sexual intercourse is gradually declining, and about 13 percent of adolescents have had sex before the age of 15. Overall, the average age of first sexual intercourse is 17, and around 80 percent of adolescents have had sex before the age of 20. (MMWR, 2008; Guttmacher Institute, 2012).

There are also racial and ethnic differences in the timing of initial sexual intercourse: African Americans generally have sex for the first time earlier than do Puerto Ricans, who have sex earlier than do whites. These racial and ethnic differences likely reflect differences in socioeconomic conditions, cultural values, and family structure (Singh & Darroch, 2000; Hyde, 2008).

4.3.1 Sexual Orientation

Heterosexuality, Homosexuality, Bisexuality, and Transexualism

Sexual orientation is defined according to a person's physical and emotional arousal to people of the same or opposite sex. Particularly in adolescence, sexual preference may not be the same. Gender identity is separate from sexual orientation. The range of sexual orientation spans from heterosexual (primarily attracted to the opposite sex) to bisexual (attracted to both males and females) to gay or lesbian (primarily attracted to the same sex).

When we consider adolescents' sexual development, the most frequent pattern is *heterosexuality* yet, some teenagers are *homosexual*, in which their sexual attraction and behaviour is oriented to members of their own sex. Many young people who engage in some sort of same-sex experience are not gay, and many gay teens have never had sex with someone of the same sex.

Many teens experiment with homosexuality. At one time or another, around 20 percent to 25 percent of adolescent boys and 10 percent of adolescent girls have at least one same-sex sexual encounter. In fact, homosexuality and heterosexuality are not completely distinct sexual orientations. Alfred Kinsey, a pioneer sex researcher, maintained that sexual orientation should be viewed as a continuum in

which "exclusively homosexual" is at one end and "exclusively heterosexual" at the other (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948).In between are people who show both homosexual and heterosexual behaviour.

Sexual orientation and gender identity are two different and complicated terms. While sexual orientation relates to the object of one's sexual interests, *gender identity* is the gender a person believes he or she is psychologically. Sexual orientation and gender identity are not necessarily related to one another: A man who has a strong masculine gender identity may be attracted to other men. (Hunter & Mallon, 2000).

Some individuals identify themselves as transsexuals which means being trapped in the body of the other gender. Transexualism represents a gender issue involving one's sexual identity. It has been found that transexuals may seek sex-change operations in which their genitals are surgically removed and the genitals of the desired sex are created. It is not an easy procedure but the outcome can be very positive.

Transexuals are different from individuals who are called *intersex* or the older term *hermaphrodite.* An intersex person is born with an atypical combination of sexual organs or chromosomal or gene patterns. For instance, they may be born with both male and female sex organs, or ambiguous organs. Only one in 4,500 births are intersex infants (Diamond, 2013).

What determines sexual orientation?

It is not completely known why someone might be lesbian, gay, straight, or bisexual. These factors are not well understood. But research shows that sexual orientation is likely caused partly by biological factors that start before birth. Genetic and biological factors may play an important role. Studies of twins show that identical twins are more likely to both be homosexual than pairs of siblings who don't share their genetic makeup. Other research finds that various structures of the brain are different in homosexuals and heterosexuals, and hormone production also seems to be linked to sexual orientation (Ellis et al., 2008; Fitzgerald, 2008; Santilla et al., 2008).

Other researchers have stressed on the role of family or peer and environmental factors. According to Sigmund Freud homosexuality was the result of inappropriate identification with the opposite-sex parent (Freud, 1922/1959). Problem with Freud's theory is that simply there is no evidence to suggest that any particular family dynamic or childrearing practice is consistently related to sexual orientation. (Isay, 1990; Golombok & Tasker, 1996).

In short, there is no accepted explanation of why some adolescents develop a heterosexual orientation and others a homosexual orientation. Most experts believe that sexual orientation develops out of a complex interplay of genetic, physiological, and environmental factors (Le Vay & Valente, 2003; Mustanski, Kuper, & Greene, 2014).

One thing is clear. Those adolescents who find themselves attracted to members of the same sex usually face more difficult time than other teens. U.S. society still shows ignorance and prejudice regarding homosexuality, persisting in the belief that people have a choice in the matter—which they do not. Gay and lesbian teens may be rejected by their family or peers, or even harassed and assaulted if they are open about their orientation. The result is that adolescents who find themselves to be homosexual are at greater risk for depression, and suicide rates are significantly higher for homosexual adolescents than for heterosexual adolescents (Toomey et al., 2010; Madsen & Green, 2012; Mitchell, Ybarra, & Korchmaros,2014).

On the other hand, most people ultimately come to grips with their sexual orientation and become comfortable with it. Although lesbian, gay, and bisexuals may experience mental health difficulties as a result of the stress, prejudice, and discrimination they face, homosexuality is not considered a psychological disorder by any major psychological or medical association.

All of them endorse efforts to reduce discrimination against homosexuals. Furthermore, society's attitudes toward homosexuality are changing, particularly among younger individuals. For example, a majority of U.S. citizens favour the legalization of gay marriage, which became legal in 2015 (Russell & McGuire, 2006; Baker & Sussman, 2012; Patterson, 2013).

4.3.2 Teenage Pregnancies

Summarize the challenges of teen pregnancy and the types of programs that are most effective in preventing it.

Often the terms "teenage pregnancy" and "adolescent pregnancy" are used as synonyms. The World Health Organization (2006) defines teenage pregnancy as "any pregnancy from a girl who is 10-19 years of age," where the age being defined as her age at the time the baby is born (WHO, 2004). According to UNICEF (2001), worldwide every fifth child is born to a teenage mother. Globally, girls younger than 19 years give birth to 13 million births. The incidence of teenage pregnancies varies from country to country.

Teenage pregnancies are considered problematic because complications from pregnancy and childbirth are leading causes of death in teenage girls aging between

15 and 19 years in developing countries. It is estimated that 70,000 female teenagers die each year because they are pregnant before they are physically mature enough for successful motherhood (Mayor, 2004).

In developing countries, adolescent marriage and adolescent fertility rates are very high. Unlike in most other countries, adolescent fertility in India occurs mainly within the context of marriage. As a result of early marriage, about half of all young women are sexually active by the time they are 18 and almost one in five by the time they are 15 (Jejeebhoy, 1998).

Women married as minors are more likely than those married as adults to report early, frequent, and unplanned pregnancies (typically as a consequence of non-contraceptive use), which have been consistently linked to increased risk for maternal and infant morbidity (UNICEF, 2007, 2008; UNFPA 2005). India is one of the 10 countries with the greatest numbers (that is, 11,875,182) of women aged 20-24 who give birth by the age of 18 (UNFPA, 2003).

India, being the largest and most prosperous nation within South Asia, has maintained laws against child marriage since 1929, although the legal age of marriage was set at 12 years at that time. Though the legal age of marriage was increased to 18 years for girls in 1978, marriage of adolescent girls below their legal age is still prevalent in the country till date (Raj et al., 2009).

4.4 Summary

This unit focuses on aspects such as relationship of adolescents with family and friends, quest for autonomy, popularity and rejection, dating and sexual behaviour and teen pregnancy.

The search for autonomy may cause a readjustment in relations between teenagers and their parents, but the generation gap is less wide than is generally thought. Cliques and crowds serve as reference groups in adolescence and offer a ready means of social comparison.

Sex cleavage diminishes during this phase and boys and girls start to pair off. Racial separation increases during adolescence, bolstered by socioeconomic status differences, different academic experiences, and mutually distrustful attitudes.

Degrees of popularity in adolescence include popular, controversial, neglected, and rejected adolescents. Adolescents tend to conform to their peers in areas in which they regard their peers as experts, and to adults in areas of perceived adult expertise. Adolescents are disproportionately involved in criminal activities, although most

do not commit crimes. Juvenile delinquents can be categorized as under socialized or socialized delinquents.

Dating in adolescence serves a number of functions including intimacy, entertainment, and prestige. Masturbation, once viewed very negatively, is now generally regarded as a normal and harmless practice that continues into adulthood.

Sexual intercourse is a major milestone that most people reach during adolescence. The age of first intercourse reflects cultural differences and has been declining over the last 50 years. Sexual orientation, which is most accurately viewed as a continuum rather than categorically, develops as the result of a complex combination of factors.

Teenage pregnancy has negative consequences for adolescent mothers and their children. The incidence of teenage pregnancies has declined because awareness among adolescents has increased, as have the use of condoms and reliance on substitutes for intercourse.

4. 5. Questions

1. Describe what family relationships are like during adolescence.

2. Explain how relationships with peers change during adolescence.

3. Discuss what it means to be popular and unpopular in adolescence and how adolescents respond to peer pressure.

4. Describe the functions and characteristics of dating during adolescence and how sexuality develops.

5. Explain how sexual orientation develops in adolescence.

6. Summarize the challenges of teen pregnancy and the types of programs that are most effective in preventing it.

4.6 References

Feldman, R. S. & Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India Education services Pvt. Ltd.

❖ ❖ ❖

5

PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY ADULTHOOD - I

Unit Structure

1.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to understand

➢ What is the state of physical development and fitness in early adulthood

➢ Which factors affect the health in the early adulthood

➢ How do people in this age group cope with physical disabilities

➢ How do people in early adulthood cope with stress?

1.1 Introduction

Early adulthood is the best but most turbulent time of anyone's life. This is the time when a person comes out of childhood but has not yet entered adulthood fully. This period marks the end of adolescence (around 20 years of age) and continues till the start of middle adulthood (around 40 years of age). During this period, the person at the peak of his productivity and good health. He/she undergoes lot of changes in life. In the present unit, we will be discussing the physical changes taking place and

what kind of stress these young adults have to face, how it affects them and how to cope with it.

1.2. Physical Development, Fitness and Health

By early adulthood, Physical development and maturation get almost completed. At this stage, in their early 20s, most of the people attain their full height, their limbs become proportional to their size and their physical capabilities are at the peak. They are healthy, vigorous and energetic. Though senescence, the natural physical decline brought by aging also takes place, but these age-related changes are not visible to people until later in their lives. However, some growth does continue at this stage for some people. For example, late maturers continue to grow in their height even in early 20s. Some parts of their bodies also reach maturity at this stage, e.g., the brain grows both in size and weight, reaching its maximum in early adulthood. Later on in life, the brain contracts in size. The gray matter of the brain is constantly pruned at this stage and myelination continues to increase. As mentioned in previous units, this process of pruning of gray matter and increase in myelination helps brain to support the cognitive advances taking place at this stage (Schwarz & Bilbo,2014).

The Senses:

In early 20s, the senses are at their best capacity. They are as sharp as they can be. Though, due to continuing aging process, the elasticity of eyes starts changing even at the age of 10 years and continues to keep changing even in early 20s, but the changes are so small that they do not produce any deterioration in vision. So these changes are not noticeable. It is only at the age of approximately 40 years, that a person starts noticing the change in the vision due to change in elasticity of eyes.

Even hearing is at its peak during early 20s. Though hearing of both men and women at this stage is very good, yet it is found that women can detect higher tones more readily than men (McGuinness,1972). In a quiet situation, an average young adult can hear the ticking of a watch kept even 20 feet away.

Similarly, the other senses such as taste, smell and sensitivity to touch and pain are also at their peak and begin to deteriorate only in 40s or 50s.

Physical Fitness:

While physical fitness is at its peak during early 20s and continues to be so throughout early adulthood, it starts declining in 30s. Even those athletes who constantly train also lose their physical edge as they touch the age of 30s. Individual variations are there, for instance some athletes continue to perform well even in

their 40s, but it also depends upon the kind of sports they are playing. In some sports (e.g., in gymnastics), athletes get worn out much earlier than 30s also and in some sports, they may continue to do well even later,e.g., in swimming.

Even for non-athletes, their psychomotor abilities are at the peak during early adulthood. For instance, their reaction time is quicker, muscle strength is greater and eye hand coordination is better than at any other period of life (Sliwinski et.al.,1993). However, people who don't exercise and have a proper diet do not reach their full physical potential.

The benefits of exercise at every stage of our lives are well known all over the world. It increases cardiovascular fitness. That is, the heart and circulatory system operates more efficiently. The lung capacity increases, endurance increases, muscles become stronger and the flexibility of the body increases. The muscles, tendons and ligaments become more elastic and the range of movement increases. Exercise done during early adulthood also reduces osteoporosis, that is, thinning of the bones, at a later stage of life. Exercise also improves the immune system, thus, helping the body to fight diseases. It reduces stress, anxiety and depression. It provides a sense of control over our bodies and gives a feeling of accomplishment (Bronas & Salisbury, 2014). The most important reward of exercise is that it increases the longevity of our lives.

 In America, yoga and aerobics classes, Nautilus workouts, jogging and swimming are very popular forms of exercises. Yet the number of people doing regular exercises is very less. Studies have shown that only 10% American do sufficient regular exercises to keep themselves in good physical shape, and less than one fourth of the population engages in moderate regular exercise. One of the reasons for such dismissal figures can be socioeconomic status. It has been observed that people from upper and middle class are largely involved in regular sufficient exercise rather than people from lower socioeconomic class. Poor people do not have either the time or the money to engage in regular exercise (Farrell et.al., 2014). Studies suggest that we need not spend too much time or do lot of exercise to keep ourselves fit. In fact, the American College of Sports Medicine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that people need to accumulate only 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day, for the period of 5 days a week to remain healthy. One can do continuous exercise or one can break the total exercise time into the bouts of 10 minutes each. As long as it totals up to 30 minutes per day, it serves the purpose. This moderate physical activity can include brisk walking at the rate of 3 or 4 mph, biking at the speed of 10 mph, golfing while carrying or pulling clubs, fishing by casting from shore, playing ping pong or rowing a boat at 2 to 4 mph. Even common household activities such as sweeping,

swabbing, weeding, vacuuming and mowing with a power mower also can come in the category of moderate exercise.

Health:

It is well established fact that exercise improves our health. As people are in the peak of their health during early adulthood, generally the health risk is minimal for them. Compare to childhood, during this period of life, people are less likely to suffer from minor illnesses such as colds. Even if they fall prey to such minor illnesses, they recover much faster than other age groups.

Being in the peak of health does not mean that there are no risks to the lives of people in their early 20s and 30s. In the previous units we have already mentioned that adolescents are more susceptible to egocentric thinking and this continues even in early adulthood. They tend to fall prey to dangers such as automobile accidents, often leading to death too. Some of the other reasons for their death are AIDS, cancer, heart disease and suicide. Especially, the age of 35 is very crucial. At this age, the chances of dying from illnesses and diseases are much higher than accidents.

As in adolescence, some people in early adulthood continue to have the tendency to take risks or may have already fallen in the trap of dangerous habits. For instance, making egocentric decisions and getting into alcohol, tobacco or drug abuse, engaging in unprotected sex, being a couch potato, excessive consumption of junk food, etc. All such risky behaviors can accelerate secondary aging, that is, physical declines brought about by environmental factors or by an individual's behavioral choices.

Secondary aging includes cultural, gender and race factors too that are related to dying in young adulthood. For example, men are more likely to die than women, because more men are involved in automobile accidents. Men in their early adulthood are also more likely to be involved in violence than women of that age. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in India too reported that over the years, there is an increase in homicide in most of the states in India.

Let us see some of the health risk factors related with young adult's lifestyles.

Eating, Nutrition and Obesity:

It is essential for young adults to have a nutritious and balanced diet. Most of the young adults are aware of it and yet they are not so concerned about having balanced diet. The question arises what is good nutrition.

Good Nutrition:

Good nutrition means eating food low in fat, comprising of lots of vegetables, fruits, whole-grain foods, fish, poultry, lean meats and low-fat dairy products. The whole grain foods and cereal products, vegetables and fruits raise the amount of complex carbohydrates and fiber that people eat. People also need to consume milk and other sources of calcium to prevent osteoporosis. People need to keep low salt intake to avoid problems originating from high blood pressure (Tyler et.al., 2014).

Adolescents tend to eat lot of junk food and fat but they do not suffer too much and do not even realize the negative impact of such a diet at this age, because their health at this stage is at its peak and can take the impact of unhealthy diet. However, when they reach young adulthood and the growth starting slowing down, they need to reduce their calorie intake, especially the empty calories. If they continue to eat high amount of junk food and fat as before, they gradually put on more weight.

Obesity:

Today obesity has become an epidemic that has gripped the adult population in America and India in the same way. Even in India morbid obesity has affected 5% of Indian population.

According to WHO, overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health. A crude population measure of obesity is the body mass index (BMI), a person's weight (in kilograms) divided by the square of his or her height (in meters). A person with a BMI of 30 or more is generally considered obese. A person with a BMI equal to or more than 25 is considered overweight.

Overweight and obesity are major risk factors for a number of chronic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer. Once considered a problem only in high income countries, overweight and obesity are now dramatically on the rise in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in urban settings.

Once a person puts on weight, it becomes very difficult to get rid of it. Many people resort to dieting to reduce weight. It helps, if at all, only temporarily. People lose weight for few months or so and then again it comes back with vengeance. Some people diet very strictly for few weeks and then do binge eating and the weight comes back. It becomes a seesaw cycle of weight gain and loss. In fact, the rate of dieting failure is so high that many people wonder whether there is any point in dieting and they abandon the idea of dieting altogether. Experts suggest that people should not avoid eating their desired food, rather they should eat that food in moderation. If they totally avoid it, they may binge eat it later on. By following this

rule, obese people may not be able to reduce their weight, but they will be able to maintain it at current level.

1.2.1 Physical Disabilities

First of all, let us understand what is meant by physical disability?

Physical disability refers to a bodily condition that significantly restricts a major life activity such as walking or vision or speech and hearing impairment. People with disabilities face lot of difficulties and challenges in their lives and very often cannot achieve their full potential.

"People with disabilities are vulnerable because of the many barriers we face: attitudinal, physical, and financial. Addressing these barriers is within our reach and we have a moral duty to do so...... But most important, addressing these barriers will unlock the potential of so many people with so much to contribute to the world." - **Stephen Hawking**

According to UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others...... Persons with disabilities include those who have long -term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

WHO explains that 'Disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Disability is thus not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives. Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires interventions to remove environmental and social barriers.

Statistics show that in America more than 500 million people are physically or mentally challenged.

In India too, as per Census 2011, 2.21% people out of 121 crore population are disabled. Surveys show that people with disabilities are a minority group that is undereducated and underemployed. In America, less than 25% of disabled men and 15% of disabled women work full time. In fact, unemployment rate among disabled people is high. Even if they do get work, it is mostly routine work having low wages

(Albrecht,2005). The situation is no better in India. Low literacy, unemployment or severe underemployment and wide spread social stigma make this group as most excluded part of Indian society. Even families with disabled member are often worse off than average. Both in America and in India, even though law has made it mandatory for all public establishments, such as hotels, banks, schools and colleges, malls, in transportation, etc., to make these places accessible to physically handicapped people, people in wheel chair still cannot gain access to many of these facilities.

One of the prime reasons for this is widespread prejudice and discrimination in society against physical disabilities. People with disabilities face either pity or avoidance from nondisabled people. In fact, normal people tend to focus so much on the disability of the disabled person that they tend to overlook his other characteristics and react to a disabled person, only as a person from problem category. Some people treat disabled persons as children who always need help. These types of attitudes do not help a person with disability. They lose confidence, have low self-esteem, develop a sense of helplessness and start believing that they can't achieve much in life and will have to remain dependent on others permanently.

According to a World Bank report, in India, children with disabilities are 4 to 5 times less likely to be in school than SC/ST children, and they rarely go beyond primary level of education. In future, the number of disabled people in India is expected to rise dramatically as age related disabilities grow.

1.3 Stress and Coping

Irrespective of age, gender, nationality, socioeconomic status and other factors, stress is experienced by all human beings. What is meant by stress? Stress refers to the physical and emotional response to events that threaten or challenge us. The events or circumstances that threaten or challenge us are called stressors, as they produce threat to our wellbeing. Stressors can be pleasant one or unpleasant ones. Even pleasant events such as joining a long-desired job or planning a wedding can produce stress (Shimizu & Pelham,2004).

The Origin of Stress:

Research studies indicate that there are individual experiences depending upon various personal, social and environmental factors. The same event may be viewed differently by different people. According to Arnold Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984), people go through various stages that determine whether they will experience stress. These stages are –

Primary Appraisal:

Primary appraisal is the first stage. This refers to an individual's assessment of an event to decide whether this event is a positive, negative or neutral. If a person sees the event as basically a negative event, he/she appraises it in terms of harm that it has caused in the past, potentially how threatening this event can be, what are the chances of facing successfully the challenges presented by this event. For example, different students will feel differently towards an upcoming exam in the month of March. Those who have performed well in previous exams, have high intelligence and are well prepared, and for those the impeding exams are not very crucial for future prospects may experience less stress than those for whom this upcoming exam is very crucial for future prospects and those who are not well prepared.

Secondary Appraisal:

Secondary appraisal is a cognitive appraisal that refers to an individual's evaluation of their own abilities to cope with the challenge presented by the circumstances. It is a person's answer to the question," can I handle it?" At this stage, people take stock of their resources and the amount of challenge posed by the event. The resources can be physical (such as health), social (in the form of close-knit family and friends), psychological (in terms of self-efficacy, morale, perceived control, commitment, etc.) and material (in terms of money, infrastructure). If their resources are not sufficient to meet the challenge, the challenge is much bigger then they experience stress. On the other hand, if they feel it is difficult but it can be done, then they experience less stress. For example, the new traffic violation laws imposed by the state are causing lot of stress to people. Fines for violation of traffic rules are very steep according to the new law and many people do not have sufficient economic resources to meet this challenge, so they are experiencing greater stress.

Depending on their temperament and circumstances, different people appraise an event different. Let us take above example, a very rich person or a person who is exempted from paying fines for traffic violations (government officers) or someone who can bill his employer for the fines paid (all these factors are circumstances), or has very cool temperament will not experience as much stress as a person who gets easily disturbed by any adverse event or cannot afford to pay those fines. Yet there are some general principles suggested by Shelley Taylor (2009) that can help to predict when an event will be appraised as stressful.

Some of these principles are –

a.)   events and circumstances that produce negative emotions are more likely to produce stress than events that produce positive emotions.

b.) Uncontrollable and unpredictable situations produce more stress than predictable and controllable situations. Seligman (1975) stated that experiencing uncontrollability generally leads to depression, whereas experiencing unpredictability generally leads to anxiety. An experiment was conducted in which 10 healthy volunteers were subjected to loud noise under controllable and uncontrollable conditions. It was found that subjects under uncontrollable stress reported higher helplessness, tension, lack of control, anxiety and depression. It was concluded that lack of control over even a mildly aversive stimulus can bring changes in the mood (Breier, A., Albus, M., Pickar, D., Zahn, T. P., Wolkowitz, O. M., & Paul, S. M.,1987).

c.) Ambiguous and confusing events produce more stress than those that are clear and unambiguous. Ambiguity refers to the absence of information, inexactness, having more than one meaning or indistinct. In case of work life, non-clarity of job responsibilities or not knowing what is expected in terms of job performance causes lot of stress. Studies have shown that role ambiguity is associated with anxiety, burnout, depression, and physical illness.

d.) Doing too many things simultaneously (multitasking) that strains a person's abilities to them successfully puts strain on that person and makes him feel the stress than those who have fewer things to do. People now days believe that multitasking is good as it can help us to achieve more and more results in shortest possible time. But research shows that multitasking, which means performing several tasks at the same time, reduces productivity by as much as 40%. Concentration decreases, which causes stress. Prolonged stress hinders thinking and memory. Our brains are not designed for multitasking. If we leave any task uncompleted, a part of our brain keeps worrying about that task even when we begin working on the next task. This leads to the Zeigarnik effect. The Zeigarnik effect says that the brain can hardly forget about unfinished tasks. So, if you have four or five unfinished tasks at the same time, the brain's resources get divided among them and this results in intense stress as well as not finishing any task satisfactorily. You must have experienced this while preparing for your exams. Few days before exam, a student who has not been consistently studying throughout the year, will have many subjects to prepare for exam. He may start with one, give up after some time without completing it and pick up another subject, give up that also without completing it and pick up another subject and so on. All these unfinished tasks keep lurking in his mind and produce stress.

Effects of Stress:

According to psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) there is a relationship between brain, immune system and psychological factors. People may suffer from acute stressors, that is, sudden one-time events, such as earth quake, riots, decoity, etc. or they may suffer from chronic stressors, that is, long term continuous events. For example, war raging in Syria for last four five years, Taliban in Afghanistan, living in poverty, etc. Since there is a relationship between brain, immune system and psychological factors, stress produces many adverse effects. For instance –

1.   **Biological reaction** – when a person experiences stress, adrenal glands start secreting adrenaline hormones that results in rise in heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rate and sweating. As stress is considered as threat perception, this bodily response is an inherent evolutionary emergency response of the sympathetic nervous system, where body prepares to either fight or flight.

     However, if a person is continuously exposed to stressors, as in cases of chronic stressors, his body's ability to deal with stress reduces. If stress related hormones are continuously secreted, the heart, blood vessels and other body tissues start deteriorating. It reduces the strength of immune system and people become more susceptible to diseases.

2.   **Other biological reactions to stress** -

     Stress not only triggers increased secretion of adrenaline hormones but also affects entire body. **Stomach** – Stress affects our digestive system. This may result in stomachaches, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, ulcers. Stress can also lead to heartburn as the production of stomach acid increases with stress.

     High blood sugar – Stress causes liver to release extra sugar into the blood stream which over time may result in type 2 diabetes.

Tense muscles – Under stress, muscles tense up to protect themselves from injury. Chronic stress can lead to tension related headaches, shoulder pain, backaches and other body pains.

Reproductive system – Stress can interfere with the reproductive system of both men and women and this may lead to difficulty in conceiving. Stress lead to erectile dysfunction. Fluctuating hormones can influence menstrual cycle or totally stop menstruation. Under stress, people experience loss of sexual desire or ability. This may result in social withdrawal.

Insomnia – Stress makes it hard to fall asleep and stay asleep.

Weakened Immune system – The immune system refers to the combination of organs, glands and cells that form the natural line of defense in fighting disease. This may get damaged by prolonged stress. The reason is that stress overestimates the immune system and it may begin to attack the body itself, damaging healthy tissues instead of fighting with bacteria and viruses. Stress can also prevent the immune system from reacting effectively. This gives opportunity to germs and viruses to multiply more easily and much faster. This is the reason why cancer cells spread so fast (Lie, N. et.al.,2012). Weakened immune system is responsible for frequent colds and infections too.

Some of the other physiological effects can be low energy or fatigue, nervousness and shaking, ringing in the ear, skin rashes, dry mouth and difficulty in swallowing, overeating or not eating enough, alcohol or drug abuse.

Respiratory system - Stress can cause shortness of breath and rapid breathing, as the airway between the nose and the lungs constricts. This can lead to asthma, chronic bronchitis and other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Psychosomatic Disorders:

Psychosomatic disorders are those disorders that are caused by the interaction of psychological, emotional and physical difficulties. For example, ulcers, asthma, arthritis and high blood pressure may be due to stress (Wippert & Niemeyer, 2014).

Psychological effects of stress:

Some of the psychological effects of stress are -

- Mood swings, Irritability, Bored,

- Anxiety, Panic attacks, Depression,

- Poor Problem -Solving,

- Feelings of Sadness,

- Feeling of powerlessness

- Feeling of unhappiness

- Frustration, Anger,

- Loss of Emotional Control,

- Inability to Rest,

- Urge to Cry, Urge to Hide,

- Suspiciousness,

- Negative Attitude/Thoughts, Increase in cynicism,

- Loneliness, alienation

- Nightmares,

- Excessive Daydreaming About "Getting Away from It All",

- Loss of confidence, more apprehensive,

Catastrophic thinking– It refers to blaming yourself, a tendency to do 'negative self talk'. This self-blame is associated with increased distress and depression for individuals who have experienced traumas such as sexual assault, war, and natural disasters (DePrince, Chu, & Pineda, 2011).

Behavioral effects of stress:

Some of behavioral effects are

- Use of Sleeping Pills,

- Cigarette Smoking, Drug/Alcohol Abuse

- Impulsive Behavior,

- Accident prone

- Inappropriate Crying,

- Aggressive, Antisocial

- Overeating / Under eating

- Lack of Initiative

- Fault Finding

- Forgetfulness regarding appointments, dates, deadlines, things

- Neglecting personal appearance

- Increased absenteeism

Indulging Yourself - Stress sometimes leads to self-indulgence. For instance, after anexceptionally stressful day, some people cope with stress by making a beeline for drinking, smoking, gambling, and drug use.

Coping with Stress:

Coping refers to "cognitive and behavioral efforts to master, reduce, or tolerate the internal and/or external demands that are created by the stressful transaction" (Folkman, 1984, p. 843; see also Folkman and Lazarus, 1980). Lazarus held that coping helps in reducing the stress and in managing the stressful situation. There are many ways to cope with stress. Their effectiveness depends on the type of stressor, the particular individual, and the circumstances. Just as there are

individual differences in experiencing stress and its effects, similarly there are individual differences in coping with stress. Different people use different mechanisms to cope with stress. Coping refers to the efforts to control, reduce or learn to tolerate the threats that lead to stress (Taylor & Stanton, 2007).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggested there are two types of coping responses emotion focused and problem focused. Let us see both of these coping styles -

1. **Problem - focused coping –**

    Problem-focused coping tires to remove the causes of stress by changing the situation to make it less stressful. This can involve time management, getting social support, or finding solutions to their problems. For example, if an employee is stressed due to the overwork, job being difficult for him, long hours on job, etc. He can solve the problem of job being too difficult for him, by talking to his superiors and ask for simpler jobs, may be in some other department or on lower rank. If the problem is of being overworked and long work hours, he can ask his superior for reducing his work load and managing his time.

    In general problem-focused coping is best, as it removes the stressor, so deals with the root cause of the problem, providing a long-term solution. Problem-focused strategies are successful in dealing with stressors such as discrimination (Pascoe & Richman, 2009), HIV infections (Moskowitz, Hult, Bussolari, & Acree, 2009) and diabetes (Duangdao & Roesch, 2008).The general steps involved in problem focused approach are –

    1. Identify the problem in specific terms

    2. Do brainstorming and think of various possible solutions to solve the problem at hand.

    3. Evaluate every possible solution in terms of pros and cons posed by each one of them and choose the best alternative available.

    4. If needed, acquire new skills.

    5. Apply the best-chosen solution and reappraise the situation.

    However, it is not always possible to use problem-focused strategies. Problem focused approached will not work in any situation where it is beyond the individual's control to remove the source of stress. They work best when the person can control the source of stress. Optimistic people who tend to have positive expectations of the future are more likely to use problem-

focused strategies, whereas pessimistic individuals are more inclined to use emotion-focused strategies (Nes & Segerstrom, 2006).

2. Emotion focused coping –

Emotion focused coping involves the conscious regulation of emotions. Itinvolves trying to reduce the negative emotional responses associated with stress such as embarrassment, fear, anxiety, depression, excitement and frustration. This may be the only realistic option when the source of stress is outside the person's control.

Emotion focused coping techniques include:

- Distraction, e.g., keeping yourself busy to take your mind off the issue.

- Emotional disclosure. This involves expressing strong emotions by talking or writing about negative events which precipitated those emotions (Pennebaker, 1995) This is an important part of Psychotherapy.

- Praying for guidance and strength.

- Meditation, e.g., mindfulness.

- Eating more, e.g., comfort food.

- Drinking alcohol.

- Using drugs.

- Journaling, e.g., writing a gratitude diary (Cheng, Tsui, & Lam, 2015).

- Cognitive reappraisal. This is a form of cognitive change that involves construing a potentially emotion-eliciting situation in a way that changes its emotional impact (Lazarus &Alfert, 1964).

- Suppressing (stopping/inhibition of) negative thoughts or emotions. Suppressing emotions over an extended period of time compromises immune competence and leads to poor physical health (Petrie, K. J., Booth, R. J., &Pennebaker, 1988).

- Remaining occupied with work.

- Seeking new experiences in terms of going on an expedition or taking up new responsibilities.

- Confiding in some trusted person.

A meta-analysis revealed emotion-focused strategies are often less effective than using problem-focused methods in relation to health outcomes (Penley, Tomaka, & Weibe, 2012). Emotion focused strategy is ineffective as it

ignores the root cause of the stress. Epping-Jordan et al. (1994) found that patients with cancer who used avoidance strategies, e.g. denying they were very ill, deteriorated more quickly than those who faced up to their problems. Gender differences have also been reported: women tend to use more emotion-focused strategies than men (Billings & Moos, 1981).

3. **Social Support –**

Social support indicates to a person in distress that there are people who care for him and he is not alone. This social support can be in many forms.

Emotional Social Support:

Connecting with online social support has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety (Leung, 2007). Coping with stress becomes easier if a person has social support. When a person is under stress, seeking out others to share their stressors, can provide both emotional support (in terms of a shoulder to cry on) and practical, tangible support (getting help for child caring). For example, if a lady is having a small baby at home as well as full time job that demands long working hours, she can reduce her stress by approaching her relatives or friends who can give quality support in child care. Having social support also enhances one's self-esteem. Sometimes, emotional social support may be in terms of just allowing the person in distress to vent out his concerns and anxieties. One just needs to listen compassionately and empathically and assure the person that his feelings are real and nothing unusual. Emotional support may be needed when a person is distressed due to loneliness. One just needs to include such a person in group, giving him a sense of belongingness.

Informational Social Support:

Others can also provide support in terms of giving information, offering specific advice on how to deal with stressful situations. For example, in above mentioned working lady's case, if friends and relatives can't give her help in looking after the child, they may give her information about reliable, good child care centers that operate for long hours or share one's own experiences about the ways in tackling the same problem in the past.. Very often, to get social support in terms of getting information, people join on net or in their vicinity, the groups of people with similar experiences or problems as they have (Vallejo-Sanchez & Perez-Garcia,2015).

Materialistic Social Support:

This type of social support includes helping others in distress in terms of money or other resources needed, offering services etc.

4.   **Defensive Coping –**

Some people use unconscious defensive coping strategies that distort or deny the true nature of the situation. They are themselves not aware of using these strategies but they help them in reducing stress. People are especially defensive when the stress and anxiety are the result of some threat to their self-esteem. Defensive coping styles work on the basis of self -deception. Some of these techniques are **trivialization, day dreaming, denial, fantasy, and projection**. Many of these coping strategies are nothing but wishful thinking. For example, let's say you're doing poorly in college and the chances are very high that you might fail. In the beginning, you might use denial to block awareness of the possibility that you could fail or you may trivialize the impending disaster by convincing yourself that passing this exam is not so important for you. This tactic might temporarily reduce or block the feelings of anxiety. If it becomes difficult to deny the obvious, you might resort to fantasy, daydreaming about how you will manage to pass by getting good marks on the upcoming final exams, while the reality is that you are hopelessly behind in your studies. Thus, defense mechanisms work their magic by bending reality in self- serving ways (Bowins, 2004).

Another defensive coping strategy can **be emotional insulation**. People unconsciously try to avoid experiencing either positive or negative emotions. They try to remain unaffected by negative or positive experiences. This way, they try to avoid the pain that such experiences may bring with them. Defensive coping gives temporary relief to a person using them, but if a person forms the habit of using only defensive coping strategy to deal with stress, they can be detrimental. They will stop the person from facing the reality of the situation as the person will constantly either avoid or ignore the problem (Ormont,2011).

A defensive coping style has been related to poor health, in part because it often leads people to delay facing up to their problems (Weinberger, 1990). Defensive coping is an avoidance strategy, and avoidance rarely provides a genuine solution to problems. In fact, Holahan er.al. (2005) found that avoidance coping is associated with increased chronic and acute life stressors as well as increased depressive symptoms.

Hardiness, Resilience and Coping:

Young adults using 'hardy' coping style are more successful in dealing with stress than others. Hardiness is a personality characteristic that includes commitment, challenge and control. Hardy people consider themselves as being in control of the situation rather than being controlled by the situation. They want and try very hard to overcome the challenges instead of getting bogged down by the challenges. Therefore, people with hardy personality have lower rate of stress related illnesses.

Some of the characteristics of Hardy people are –

They are take -charge people who enjoy challenges in life. They are more resistant to stress related illnesses than those who show less hardiness. There are three traits that make up hardiness: challenge, control, and commitment.

Challenges:

Challenge means seeing problems or stressors as challenges and opportunities. They turn threatening situations into challenging ones, so they experience less stress (Maddi, 2014). Individuals with this trait accept change as part of life and don't expect life to be easy. They don't become defensive, rather they start investigating the gaps or loopholes that they might have missed. They happily accept new situations as an opportunity to learn, to grow personally.

The control:

The control means that they don't see themselves as a helpless victim who is at the mercy of stressors. It involves having an internal locus of control. They are more optimistic, and hopeful and feel a sense of personal power. They believe that they can make things happen in their favor. They have a strong sense of self efficacy, but they are not fool hardy. They can recognize the situations that are not/ cannot be under their control and they don't waste time and energy in trying to control those situations. In such a situation, they become flexible and change their goals if needed. They have self -belief that they can deal with stressors effectively. They use less negative self-statements than others.

The Commitment:

The Commitment, the third "C" of hardiness, involves having a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Persons with this trait do not just survive, going through life with little direction, instead they thrive. If they are faced with

any problems, they consider them as minor setbacks in the larger scheme of things and do not feel helpless.

Level of Resilience –

Resilience is the ability to withstand, overcome and actually thrive when they are faced with extreme adversity (Lipsett & Demick,2012). Some of the characteristics of resilient young adults are that they tend to be -

- Easy going,

- Good natured

- Have good social and communication skills

- Independent – feel that they can shape their own fate and not dependent on others or on luck.

- Make the best of the situation in which they are and whatever resources they have.

1.4 Are You an Informed Consumer of Development

Though different people use different coping strategies, but researchers have given some common guidelines to deal with stress (Kaplan, Sallis & Patterson,1993). These are –

1. **Seek Control over the situation** that is producing stress. In other words, take charge of the situation instead of allowing situation to affect you in any way. For example, if you are feeling stressed due to upcoming exam, start studying instead of just worrying about it.

2. **Redefine threat as challenge**: Look for some positive sides of the threatening situation instead of getting bogged down by the situation. In your mind, believe that there must be some good outcome of this challenging situation.

3. **Find social support**: Connect and talk with family members, friends. You may even use telephone helpline which is manned by trained counselors.

4. **Use relaxation techniques:** Reduce the physiological arousal triggered by stress inducing situation. Some of the relaxation techniques that can be used are transcendental meditation, Zen and yoga, progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing exercises and even hypnosis.

5. **Maintain Healthy Lifestyle:** This will strengthen your body's natural coping mechanism. For example, do regular exercise, eat nutritional food, get

enough sleep and avoid or reduce the consumption of alcohol, tobacco or any other drugs.

6. **Remember that life without any stress will be very dull one:** Stress is a natural part of our lives and if we learn to cope with it, it can be enjoyable. All stressors are not bad. There is good stress and bad stress. Good stress can trigger personal growth while bad stress can pull us down.

Especially, one of the techniques devised by Herbert Benson (1993) is known to be very effective in reducing stress. This technique emphasized on getting the relaxation response through following steps –

1. Identify and fix 10 to 20 minutes from your daily routine as the time when you will do this exercise. During this period, make sure that there are no distractions and your mind is free of other demands and duties of life.

2. Sit comfortably and quietly and close your eyes. Relax your muscles

3. Commit yourself to a specific length of time to do this exercise and try to stick to this period. You may glance at the clock occasionally but don't set the alarm.

4. Pick a focus word or a short phrase that is firmly rooted in your personal belief system. For example, in India, very often people with Hindu faith, choose to chant 'Aum' or a mantra of their liking.

5. Breath slowly and naturally and keep repeating silently, the word or phrase of your choice.

6. Throughout the exercise, keep a passive attitude. Don't bother about whether you are doing correctly or not, how well are you performing. If other thoughts come to your mind, let them come and gently let them pass and return back to your chanting.

7. When you finish, sit quietly for a minute or so and then gradually open your eyes. Keep sitting for another two or three minutes, before you get up.

8. This exercise can be practiced once or twice during the day.

1.5 Summary

In this unit, we emphasized that in early adulthood, the body, the senses, the health of a person are at their peak, but some growth is still taking place, especially in brain region. Compared to young children, young adults fall ill less frequently and recover much faster due to their good health. Yet they are not free from dangers. Due to their egocentric thinking, they are more susceptible to indulge in risky

behavior and become victims of accidents. They are also more likely to fall victim of gang wars and violence, especially young males. Now days, obesity is becoming an epidemic and engulfing people of all ages- right from children to old people. Therefore, to remain healthy during young adulthood as well as in later years of life, they need to maintain proper diet and exercise. Young adults with physical difficulties face the challenge of fighting the psychological barrier of prejudice and discrimination. Public places are not easily accessible to these people. They have problem in getting educated and getting jobs. People tend to treat them either as a child or less able. They don't realize that except for the disability that a particular part of their body suffers, they are otherwise normal people and deserve due respect and support just as it is given to any other normal person.

Stress affects young adults also in the same way as it affects people of other ages. We have looked into the physical, psychological and behavioral effects of stress and we have discussed various coping strategies that people generally use to cope with stress. Some of these strategies are effective while others cause more harm than help. We have also seen how people with different personalities get affected differently by stress. At the end, certain guidelines are given to cope with stress effectively in general.

1.7 Questions

1. Describe how the body develops and stays healthy during early adulthood.

2. Explain why a healthy diet is particularly important in early adulthood.

3. Describe the challenges people with physical disabilities face in early adulthood.

4. What are the effects of stress and what can be done to reduce them.

1.7 References

Feldman, R. S. &Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India, Education services Pvt.Ltd

Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. (2012). Human Development. (12th Ed). McGraw Hill, international Edition

❖❖❖

6

PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY ADULTHOOD - II

Unit Structure

1.0 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to understand

➢   The cognitive development during young adulthood

➢   The concept of postformal thought process

➢   The difference between Piaget and Schaie's theory of cognitive development in young adulthood

➢   The concept of intelligence

➢   The demography of college students and the reasons for high college dropout rate.

1.1 Introduction

During early adulthood, cognition begins to stabilize, reaching a peak around the age of 35. Early adulthood is a time of relativistic thinking, in which young people begin to become aware of more than simplistic views of right vs. wrong. They begin to look at ideas and concepts from multiple angles and understand that a question can have more than one right (or wrong) answer. The need for specialization results in pragmatic thinking—using logic to solve real-world problems while accepting contradiction, imperfection, and other issues. Finally, young adults develop a sort of expertise in either education or career, which further enhances problem-solving skills and the capacity for creativity. Research has indicated that your brain continues to develop even when you have reached young adulthood. It continues to grow till late twenties. Especially, the prefrontal cortex continues to grow. The prefrontal cortex performs cognitive functions such as planning, impulse control, and decision making. This period can lead to adversaries such as motor vehicle accidents, drugs, violence, internet addiction or tobacco addiction, etc. or it can lead to development of positive traits such as resilience, self-control and self-regulation (Steinberg,2014).

1.2 Cognitive Development

Piaget believed that by the time adolescence period ends, the qualitative thinking of a person is more or less developed fully. This thinking becomes what it would be for the rest of his life. People may gather more information and increase their knowledge, but the ways in which they think about this information would not change after adolescence. He called the development of thinking at adolescence level at formal operational stage of thinking.

1.2.1 Post formal Thought

Gisela Labouvie-Vief (1980) extended Jean Piaget's cognitive-development theory into adulthood by offering a theory of pragmatic thought and cognitive-emotional complexity. The theory propagated that nature of thinking changes qualitatively during early adulthood. She emphasized in her theory that thinking based only on formal operations cannot meet the demands faced by young adults. Labouvie-Vief demonstrated how contextual factors can influence cognitive development. She stated that we are living in very complex societies. Early adults need to acquire specialization to face the ever-increasing challenge of finding their way through the complexities. This challenge cannot be faced only with logic as suggested by Piaget's formal operational stage. It also requires practical experience, moral judgments and values (Labouvie-Vief.2006,2009). Labouvie-Vief asserted that

adults move from hypothetical to pragmatic as they face real-world problems and make conscious commitments to a single path (Goldhaber, 2000). In other words, adults put aside childish dreams and focus on reality.

Post formal thought is an ability to deal with uncertainty and inconsistency, contradictions, imperfections and compromises. It draws upon intuitions and emotions apart from logic. It is characterized by problem solving. In postformal thought stage, a person is more open to ideas and less concerned with absolute right and wrong.

Perry's Relativistic Thinking:

Peery (1981) believes that period of young adulthood is marked with not just the mastery of particular knowledge but also the ways of understanding the world. He conducted a study to find out the ways in which college students grow intellectually and morally. He took a sample of well-educated students studying in elite college and used interview method to conduct the research and found that students entering college tend to have dualistic thinking in their views of the world. In other words, at the beginning of college life, they have the tendency to think everything in terms of black and white, good or bad, for or against, etc. But as they come across new information and ideas and variety of different views of others, their dualistic thinking gives way to postformal thinking. They gradually start realizing that issues can have multidimensions. This multiple thinking brings a change in the way they view their teachers. They don't expect teachers to have all the answers and they start assuming that their own thinking on an issue can be right if it is based on well thought out and rationale views. Perry said that this clearly shows that they have entered a stage in which knowledge and values are regarded as relativistic. They realize that different societies, cultures and individuals can have different standards and all of them can be equally valid. One criticism against Perry's study is that since his sample was well educated students from elite college only, his findings may not apply to those people who are not trained to examine multiple points of view, i.e., those who have not gone for higher education. But it can't be denied that thinking does continue to develop during early adulthood.

Young adults start realizing that life is not straightforward and they must learn to adapt to the limitations of reality. In adolescence age, they are most likely to think in black and white absolutes, in adulthood, Labouvie-Viefsuggested that young adults are continuously exposed to ambiguous situations and they have to learn to deal with ambiguities. They have to learn to use analogies and metaphors to make comparisons, face society's paradoxes and use subjective understanding of the situations. They start realizing that reasons behind events in the real world are subtle and painted in the shades of gray. They are able to understand that truth as

perceived by one person may not be true for others, and that there are multiple, coexisting worldviews. On the other hand, at formal operations stage, adolescents believe that each problem has only one solution and that solution can be applied all similar situations. Now young adults can mentally accommodate conflicting or differing ideas and continuously keep judging the pros and cons of various situations. To do this, they develop lot of mental flexibility. They realize that world is in a constant state of change.

To show post formal thinkingLabouvie-Vief conducted an experiment. Subjects' age range was from 10 to 40 years. They were presented with stories that had clear logical conclusions. But if the real world demands and pressures are taken into account than the same story could be interpreted differently. For example, one such story was that there was a couple. Husband was heavy drinker, especially while attending social parties. His wife did not like that and warned him that if one more time he came home drunk, she will leave him and take the children with her. After few days of that warning, husband attends a party in his office and come home drunk. Now the question arises, whether wife leaves him as she threatened or not?

Adolescents in this experiment predicted that wife would immediately leave the house with children as she has warned beforehand. Their prediction was based purely on logic inherent in formal operations. On the other hand, young adults, did not jump to such a conclusion on the basis of logic alone. They predicted that though wife warned her husband but in reality, there can be many constraints or things to consider before she decides to leave. For example, what would she do if husband apologizes and begs her not to leave? Another aspect to look at is did she really mean to leave or was it an empty threat? Does she have an alternative place to go and does she have economic independence? What is the opinion of the children? Answers to all these questions will decide whether she will leave or no. This is an example of relativistic thinking, a part of postformal thought process.

Dialectical Thinking:

This is an appreciation for arguments, counterarguments and debates (Basseches,1984). Dialectical thinking too realizes that there are no absolute right or wrong answers and sometimes they need to be negotiated. According to Jan Sinnott (1998a,2009), postformal thinkers can shift back and forth between abstract, ideal solutions and real-world limitations that might prevent the solutions to be successfully implemented. They understand that just as there can be multiple causes of a situation, similarly there can be multiple solutions.

The question arises why till adolescent age, people can't see things from multiple perspectives. One of the reasons can be that a child grows up in a very protected environment till he/she reaches young adulthood. Society protects children and

adolescents from various experiences while it feels can harm the impressionable minds. Once a person reaches young adulthood, he/she is not required to live under parental supervision or take consent for various things. He gets exposed to new experiences. However, even in early twenties, a person's brain is not fully developed and continuous develop till late twenties. The brain continues to grow new neural connections and prune unused pathways. Especially one part of the brain, prefrontal cortex, does not mature till a person reaches young adulthood. Prefrontal cortex is responsible for higher order mental functions such as planning, decision making and impulse control. Consequently, young adults' minds are still malleable and adaptive to new experiences. For example, Whiting et.al.(2011) pointed out that learning a new language or a musical instrument is much easier at young adult age than at older age.

1.2.2 Schaie's Stages of Development

K. Warner Schaie (1928) gave another perspective of postformal thought. He focused on the way information is used during adulthood and suggested that adult's thinking follows a set pattern of stages. Unlike Piaget, he did not look at how the changes take place in acquiring and understanding of new information. Shaie based his theory on three main questions –

What one needs to know – This question is dominant during earliest stages of the development, i.e., during infancy and adolescence. At these stages, we are learning to live the life and prepare ourselves to live in society.

How to use what we already know – This is dominant in first adult stage. We are integrating skills already learnt and putting them in practice.

What we need to learn – This question is dominant during old age. At this stage we are looking at the purpose for acquiring certain knowledge and also developing capabilities to pass it on to future generations.
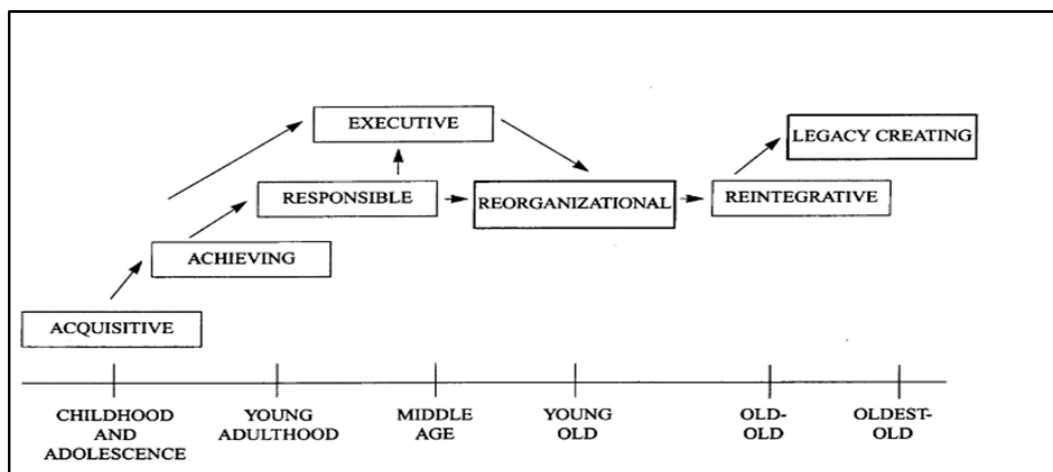
Fig.1. Shaie's Stages of Adult Cognitive Development

Based on these predominant questions in different stages of our lives, Shaie said cognitive development takes place in seven stages. They are –

1. **The Acquisitive (Under 18 years of age)** – This stage is dominant during our entire childhood and adolescence. Information is gathered mainly for future use. In fact, the reason given for entire education is prepare a person for future activities.

2. **The Achieving Stage (Between 20s and 30s years of age)** - This stage begins from the end of adolescence (age of 19 to 20 years) and goes on till early adulthood (up to the age of 30 to 31 years). Instead of collecting information for future use, now the focus is on present use of the information. Schaie said that young adults in this stage are in the achieving stage. They apply their intelligence to achieve long term personal goals such as career, family and contributions to society. They use the information to resolve problems and achieve optimization. They have to face and resolve issues that can have long term impact on their lives, e.g., what kind of job to take up and whom to marry.

3. **The Responsibility Stage (Between 30s and 40s years of age) - This** stage starts from the late stages of early adulthood and middle adulthood, i.e., between 31 years to 40 years of age, and lasts till the start of early old age, i.e., 60 years. In this stage, middle aged adults are mainly concerned about protecting and nourishing their families and careers. This is the age where young adults have mastered the cognitive skills needed for monitoring their own behavior and therefore have achieved a certain degree of personal independence. These adult cognitive skills are required because responsibilities for others in family and job and in community increases.

4. **The Executive Stage (Between 40s and 60s years of age) -**Later on in middle adulthood, some people only and not all people enter the executive stage. They take a broader perspective and become more concerned about the world, society and politics. They deal with complex relationship at multiple levels. The most important thing to note here is that the executive stage is not narrowly age-based. Though it usually begins in late middle adulthood but there are exceptions. Some people take up leadership roles in their late 30s and early 40s. Though theoretically, executive stage ends by 60 years of age, but for some it continues even into their 70s and 80s. As the life expectancy has increased and, in some countries, such as America, the idea of retirement age is delayed or scrapped, the executive stage gets prolonged into old age for many professionals.

5   **The Reintegrative Stage (Between 50s and 60s) –** This is the period of late adulthood. The focus in this stage is on tasks that have personal meaning. This is the age where a person's need to acquire substantial amount of knowledge declines. There is no need to monitor decisions that can have long term consequences. The future appears to be more in short terms. Executive monitoring is also less important because by the age of 58 or 60 years, people retire. Schaie (1977-1978) said this is thestage where transition from childhood question, "what should I know?" through the adult question "how should I use what I know?' to the question in later life, "Why should I know?" The reintegration stage is similar to Erikson's (1963) stage of ego integrity. It requires integration of their attitudes, interests and values. The elders are less likely to waste time on tasks that are meaningless to them. At this stage, the focus is not on acquiring knowledge as a means of solving potential problems. Instead the focus is on using information for a particular issue that the person may be especially interested into. They have less interest in and patience for issues that are not immediately connected to their lives. For example, the abstract issue of whether Donald Trump should be impeached or not may be of less concern to an elderly person who is not residing in America. The elderly man will be more concerned about the free health insurance policy that a government may offer.

6.   **The Reorganizational Stage (Between 60 to 65 years of age) -**This is a universal stage occurring mostly in the industrialized societies. This is the stage where people spend lot of efforts in reorganizing their lives. Their earlier responsibilities of raising family and job responsibilities are replaced with meaningful pursuit of life. Now in reorganization stage, people who enter retirement reorganize their lives and intellectual energies around meaningful pursuits that take the place of paid work. The activities are directed at planning how one's resources will last for the remaining 15 to 30 years of post-retirement life characteristic for most people in industrialized societies (Smith,1996). This planning is needed because one expects dependence on others in order to maintain a high quality of life in the face of increasing frailty. A person may decide to change his house, shift to another town, make will or make changes in the will and make sure of eventual availability of both familial and extrafamilial support system. These activities continue to require the cognitive characteristics of the responsibility stage but the objectives of these activities are more towards current and future personal needs of the individual rather than the needs of his family or organization. Instead of spending energies in work and in raising family,

people now reorganize their time and resources towards other meaningful environment such as leisure activities, volunteerism and involvement in larger kinship network. The objective is to maximize the quality of life during the final years of life as well as not to become burden on the next generation (Lawton,1997).

This reorganizational stage requires high levels of cognitive competencies. It is important to have not only high cognitive competencies but to have flexible cognitive styles, being able to restructure the context and content of one's life after retirement. Flexibility also means being able to give up control over one's resources and to partially surrender one's independence (Schaie,1984,1996). This also involves reduction in information seeking activities and increasing the importance of emotional regulation.

7. **Legacy Creation Stage (more than 65 till end)**–Near the end of life, in advanced old age, people have clear mind but frail bodies. The legacy stage may begin by the self or therapist induced efforts to conduct a life review. Those who are highly literate and successful in public or professional life, it often includes writing or revising an autobiography (Birren et.al. 1995). People being successful in public or professional life means those who think that their life is worth writing about and will of interest to others. Writing an autobiography requires long term memory, verbal skills and reflecting over past events. Reflecting over past events includes judgments influenced by the socioemotional importance of the events and others people involved in those events.

There are other more routine legacies to be left. For instance, they may create instructions for the disposition of prized possessions, make funeral arrangements or leaving instructions for donating their bodies for scientific research, make final revision of one's will, provide oral histories or explain family pictures and heirlooms for the next generation. All of these tasks involve cognitive competencies within a socioemotional and interpersonal relationship context.

At the end, it is clear that Schaie's perspective on cognitive development emphasizes that cognitive change does not stop at adolescence age as proposed by Piaget. In fact, significant changes continue throughout life. It is also highlighted that the sequential process of these developmental stages is important and not the chronological age at which they occur. The onset of these cognitive changes may vary in different societies and for individuals at different levels of intellectual competence and personal engagement.

1.3 Intelligence

We have been talking about cognitive development. The basic question faced by psychologists is what is intelligence? There is lot of disagreement among psychologists about what is intelligence. Charles Spearman defined it as a general ability while Louis L. Thurstone regarded it as a composite of many other abilities such as verbal comprehension, reasoning, perceptual speed, numerical ability, word fluency, associative memory and spatial visualization. Gardner also gave a theory of multiple intelligence and described eight types of intelligence – visual-spatial intelligence, verbal-linguistic intelligence, bodily- kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, musical intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and naturalistic intelligence. The modern approach suggests that intelligence involves ability to learn and use knowledge, identify the problems and find solutions for them. This involves logic, reasoning and planning. Robert Sternberg defined intelligence as "mental activity directed toward purposive adaptation to, selection, and shaping of real-world environments relevant to one's life" (Sternberg,1985). This means that intelligence is how well individual deals with environmental changes throughout his lifespan. He believed that some of the types of intelligence mentioned by Gardner can be actually categorized as individual talents rather than the intelligence. He proposed the concept of "successful intelligence" and designed assessment of a particular type of intelligence that may have more impact on future success than the type of intelligence measured by traditional IQ tests.

Stenberg's Triarchic theory of intelligence

He said working of mind involves many components. These components are –

- **Metacomponents** – The Metacomponents are executive processes used in problem solving and decision making. They tell the mind how to act. They are sometimes referred as a homunculus, a tiny, fictitious person inside our head that controls our actions.

- **Performance components** – Performance components are the processes that actually carry out the action the Metacomponents dictate. These are the basic processes that allow us to do tasks such as perceiving problem in our long-term memory, perceiving relations between objects and applying relations to another set of terms.

- **Knowledge – acquisition components** – These components are used in getting new information. They complete tasks that involve selectively choosing information from irrelevant information. These components can be used to selectively combine the various pieces of information that they have gathered.

Gifted individuals are proficient in using these components because they are able to learn new information at a greater rate.

- **Even though the basic information processing components are same, different contexts and different tasks require different types of intelligence**. So, he proposed that intelligence has three distinct sub theories. These are –

1. **The Componential/ Analytical Sub theory –** The componential part includes the mental components included in analyzing the data used in solving problems, especially problems involving rational behavior. It includes the ability to select and use formulas, to choose appropriate problem-solving strategies and in general to make use of what has been learnt in the past. individuals with only this type are not as adept at creating unique ideas of their own.

2. **The Experiential / Creative Sub theory -**It refers to the relationship between intelligence, people's prior experience and their ability to cope with new situations. This stage deals mainly with how well a task is performed with regard to how familiar it is. Sternberg divided the role of experience into two parts: novelty and automation. A novel situation is one that a person has never experienced before. This basically refers to insightfulness, which allows people to relate what they already know to a new situation and facts. Automation refers to a process that has been performed many times and can be done with little or no extra thought. Once a process is automated, it can run parallel to other processes. The only problem with novelty and automation is that being skilled in one component does not ensure that the person will be expert in other component too.

3. **The Contextual / Practical Sub theory – This** "deals with the mental activity involved in attaining fit to context. Through the three processes of adaptation, shaping, and selection, individuals create an ideal fit between themselves and their environment. This type of intelligence is often referred to as "street smarts." In other words, it involves the degree of success people show while facing the demands of everyday, real-world environments. For example, in adapting to on-the-job professional demands (Sternberg,2005). Practically gifted people are superb in their ability to succeed in any setting. See fig. 2 and 3. Sternberg also acknowledges that an individual is not restricted to having excellence in only one of these three intelligences. Many people may possess an integration of all three and have high levels of all three intelligences.
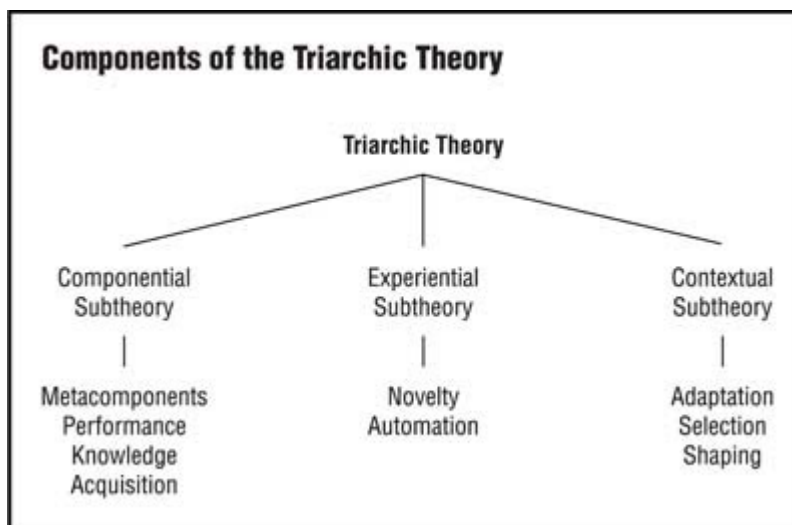
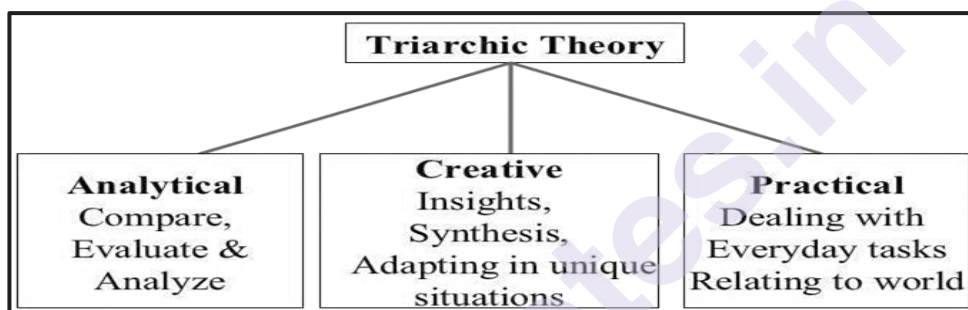*Fig 2 Components of the Triarchic Theory*

Fig 3 Triarchic Theory

Practical and Emotional Intelligence:

Sternberg held that if you want to succeed in your career then you need to have high practical intelligence. **Practical intelligence** is totally different from the kind of intelligence required in succeeding in academics (Sternberg et.al.,1997). Sternberg differentiated by saying that academic success comes mainly from reading and listening while practical intelligence comes mainly from observing and imitating others. People with high practical intelligence have good social skills and are able to handle even new situations effectively. They can understand people and situations insightfully based on their previous experiences.

On the other hand, **emotional intelligence** is the set of skills that involves accurate assessment, evaluation, expression and regulation of emotions. People with high emotional intelligence can get along with other people well. They can understand what other people are feeling and experiencing and respond accordingly to other's needs. Emotional intelligence is a key factor in personal and career success of a person.

Creativity: Novel Thought

It has been noticed that well known artists have produced their major works in their early adulthood (Dennis,1966a). The question comes to mind, what happens to the creativity of the talented people after early adulthood? Sarnoff Mednick(1963) a psychologist, said that familiarity chokes the creativity, it is like 'familiarity breeds rigidity'. The more a person knows about a subject, the less likely he is likely to be creative in that area. With this rationale, one can say that creativity is at its peak during early adulthood because many of the problems encountered professionally are novel to them. As people become familiar with problems, their creativity gets hampered. However, there are many people who do not reach the peak of their productivity till much later in life. For example, even at the age of approximately 70, Charles Darwin and Jean Piaget were still contributing significantly influential work, and Picasso was painting even in his 90s. Simonton (2009) noted that among humans, productivity remains fairly steady throughout adulthood.This indicates that there are no consistent development patterns of creativity.

Before we look for developmental patterns of creativity, the question arises what is creativity. Creativity is defined as the combination of responses or ideas in novel ways. However, the definition of what is novel differs from one person to another person and that is why it is difficult to identify a particular behaviour clearly as creative.

Some psychologists believe that one of the important components of creativity is a person's willingness to take risk that may result in high payoffs. Sternberg et.al. (2002) held that creative people are like stock market investors who follow the rule of 'buy low and sell high'. Similarly, creative people develop and support ideas that are unusual or may be regarded as wrong (buying low). They assume that gradually others will see the value of their ideas and accept them (selling high). Creative adults look at new ideas or relook at solutions to the problems that they might have initially rejected, especially to the familiar problems. They are flexible enough to ignore time tested solutions and the ways of doing things and try out new approaches and opportunities.

Life Events & Cognitive Development

There are many important milestones during the life span. For example, completion of education, first job, marriage, birth of a child, death of parents, etc. Some of these events are pleasant and some trigger sadness and anxiety. Whatever the event may be, pleasant or unpleasant, they trigger stress. There are studies emerging that state that these events not only cause stress but they also contribute to our cognitive growth. For example, the birth of a child brings new insights into the nature of

one's relationships with relatives and ancestors, one's broader place in the world and the role one has to play in continuing the humanity. The death of a relative brings insights into what is important for a person and to reevaluate how to lead one's life (Yan & Jowett,2015).

The experiences of the highs and lows of life make a young adult to have a flexible outlook and look at the world in a new, more complex and sophisticated way. Instead of just using formal thought process, they use postformal thought process and pay attention to trends, patterns, personalities and choices.

1.4 College: Pursuing Higher Education

Getting college education is a matter of pride for any student and it is a major achievement in anyone's life. Though it may appear that it is a common occurrence, but if we look at the population of the India or even America, it becomes obvious that a very miniscule population of the country is able to take advantage of college education. Let us see what kind of people avail college education.

1.4.1 The Demographics of Higher Education

According to U.S. Department of Education (2012) in America, the college students are mainly from white middle class. In the age group of 18 to 24 years, 58% of American students are white, 19% are Hispanics, 14% are Black and only 7% are Asians and 2% are other races or ethnic groups. The most alarming fact is that 60% of these college students do not complete their 4 years course to get degree and drop out in the middle, and only 40% finish their education and get degree.

In India, however, the scenario is very different. There has been rapid growth of higher education. There has been 88% increase in the number of central universities and 51% increase in state universities between the period 2008 to 2016. Obviously, the number of students availing higher education has also increased tremendously.

Gender Gap in College Attendance:

The most significant change taking place in the area of higher education in America is that more women than men are joining colleges. Especially in case of minority students, this gap is more evident. For every 100 African American men, there are 166 African American women in the colleges (Adebayo,2008). One of the reasons for this gender gap can be that men have more opportunities to earn money after passing high school than women. For example, military or jobs that require more physical strength are easily available to men than to women. Men find it hard to resist these opportunities and delay going to college. Another reason can be that

women generally score better marks in high school than men and they stand a better chance of getting admission in colleges than men (England & Li, 2006).

In India too, since independence, there has been 42% rise in the women taking admission in colleges. However, the percentage of women, enrolling for professional courses still needs to be improved. So far, at 14.72% , Goa has the maximum number of women in professional courses and Bihar has the lowest number of women in professional courses. The Indian Government has initiated various measures to increase the percentage of women joining higher education and also for taking up professional courses. Some of these initiatives are Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child, constructing women hostels and capacity building for women managers in higher education.

The Changing College Student:

The stereotype of college student is that he/she will be a young adult in the age group of 18 to 21 years old. However, we are living in knowledge economy and there is an ever-increasing importance of higher education. College degree is becoming extremely important to get a job. The workers are feeling a constant need to either upgrade their current skills or learn new skills to sustain their jobs. In America, another factor – maturation reform also plays a part in older people joining the colleges. Maturation reform refers to the desire to settle down in life with one's family. This leads them to stop taking risk and focus on acquiring abilities or skills to support the family. Consequently, the profile of college student is also changing, both in America as well as in India. According to American Association of Community College (2015) two third of community college students are 22 years old or older than that, and 14% of them are aged 40 years or more.

1.4.2 College Adjustment:

In the initial years of college life, students living away from home for the first time, experience lot of adjustment difficulties and feel depressed, lonely and tend to withdraw from others. This is called first year adjustment reaction. It includes symptoms such as loneliness, anxiety and depression related to college experience. It is more likely to take place among students who–

- Are first generation college students., the people who are the first in their families to take admission in college. They may come to college without having a clear idea about how the demands of college life differ from demands of school life, and their families may be unable to give sufficient social support. (Barry et.al.,2009).

- Have been academically or socially, very successful in high school. When they enter college life, sudden change in their status results in distress for them.

  However, these first-year adjustment reactions are temporary for most of the students. They get over it as they make new friends, experience academic success and get integrated into campus life. But in case of some students, these problems may not get resolved and these first-year adjustment issues may fester and lead to major psychological problems, requiring professional help. Engler & Goleman (1992) stated that professional help is required if a student shows the following symptoms –

1. If the psychological distress is prolonged. Ithinders the feeling of well-being and his ability to function is dented so much that it does not allow a person to complete his work (e.g. due to depression the person is not able to complete the work)

2. A person feels that he is unable to cope with his stress in an effective manner

3. A person feels hopeless or depressed for no obvious reason

4. A person is not able to form close relationships with others

5. A person suffers from physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach cramps and skin rashes without any apparent physical cause.

Such people can be given professional help by a counseling psychologist, clinical psychologist or any other mental health worker. A survey done by Benton et.al. (2003) showed that more than 40 percent college students who visited college counseling center were suffering from depression. The actual number of students suffering from depression may be much higher as these were only those cases who visited the counseling center. There are many who do not seek treatment.

1.4.3 Gender and College Performance

Prejudice and discrimination against women is a centuries old problem and has not changed till today. Though it is not so blatant in present times as it was in the past. College life is also not immune sexism. You will observe that number of males and females taking various courses differ significantly. For example, the large number of female students are in social sciences courses than in pure science courses. Men are more likely to be in engineering, physical sciences and mathematics courses. Women in engineering, physical sciences and mathematics courses are more likely to drop out than men. Though the number of women wanting to graduate in engineering and science has increased, yet their number is smaller than the number of males seeking these courses (Halpern,2014).

These gender differences in the courses opted for and dropout rate are not by accident. They reflect the underlying gender stereotypes present in the world of education. Gender based inequalities in education around the world, according to UNESCO, are mainly determined by "poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy and gender-based violence"

Women expect to earn less and in reality, to earn less than men, both at the start and at the peak of their careers (Catalyst,2015). Women generally have more breaks in their careers and their career generally is of shorter duration. Men and women have different expectations about the area of their competencies. A survey was conducted by Astinet.al. (1989) in which they asked first year college students to indicate whether they are above or below average on a variety of traits and abilities. The results showed that men were more likely than women to think of themselves as above average in overall academic and mathematical ability, competitiveness and emotional health. Even college professors, both male and female, tend to treat male students differently from female students. They don't differentiate between male and female students intentionally and they are not conscious of their discriminatory actions. For example, in class, professors tend to make more eye contact with male students than with female students and ask male students more questions than females. This is true even for female professors. Professors tend to give extra help to male students more than women. Moreover, compared to female students, male students are more likely to get positive reinforcement for their comments, from professors.

Benevolent Sexism:

Sexism can be hostile sexism or benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism takes place when people openly treat women in harmful way, either physically, socially or emotionally. Benevolent sexism is the one in which women are placed in stereotyped and restrictive roles that appear on the surface to be positive. It may appear to be positive but actually harms the women. For example, when a boss compliments a female subordinate on her good looks or gives her lighter duties, it may appear that he is being considerate to her, but in reality, it indicates that he thinks that she is not capable of taking up heavier duties. In other words, he is casting aspersions on her competency (Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014). Thus, sexism in any form is harmful for women.

1.5 Dropping Out of College

All over the world, it is a common phenomenon that all students who join college do not complete their degree courses. Some of them drop out midway or in the

beginning itself. The dropout rate differs from country to country, for different socioeconomic strata and for different ethnic groups. The question arises why do people dropout from the college before completing their courses. There are many reasons for it, such as –

1. **Finances** – College education is expensive and many students may not be able to afford it. To meet these expenses, the students from lower socioeconomic strata may take up a job and then find it difficult to manage both, job and classes.

2. **Changes in life situations -**

   Some students drop out due to changes in their life situations such as marriage, birth of a child or death of a parent.

3. **Academic Difficulties –**Some students may find that the course is too difficult for them and they find it hard to pass the course. In such cases, either they drop out themselves or are forced by the authorities to drop out.

   Though, students who drop out from college in their early adulthood, don't give up on studies completely. They intend to come back to studies later on when they can. But later on, they get so much seeped into the problems and chores of everyday life that it becomes difficult for them to come back to education. They may get stuck in undesirable, low paying jobs for which they are intellectually overqualified. For such people, college education becomes a lost opportunity.

Benefits of Dropping out of College:

However, dropout is not all that catastrophic, sometimes it can be beneficial for some people. For example, some people consider it as a time to reassess their goals. Especially students, who are waiting to complete their college education, so that they can get to the real task of earning money benefit as they gain full time work experience. They get different perspective on the realities of both work and college and this can lead to their social and psychological maturity

In India, the dropout ratio for girls is much higher than for boys for almost all courses. Therefore, to promote girls' education, University Grant Commission gives scholarship for single girl child for research in social sciences.

1.6 Summary

In this unit, we discussed about the cognitive development in early adulthood. We discussed postformal thought which goes beyond formal logic and rigidity of the

thought process. Postformal thought process emphasized on flexibility of thoughts and on subjective thinking. It acknowledges the complexities of real world and realizes that all things can't be black or white, right or wrong, that there are shades of grey. It yields to subtler answers to problems than those that were found in adolescence. We looked at different theories of cognitive development. Perry's theory emphasized that in early adulthood, a person progresses from dualistic thinking to the realization that it is possible to hold multiple perspectives on issues. That is different people can have different views on the same issue and yet no one is right or wrong. Each perspective is valid in its own way. Schaie on the other hand, looked at cognitive development in terms of how we use information acquired in the past. He believed that cognitive development follows a set pattern and it does not end in adolescence or early adulthood. It continues throughout our lives. We also discussed Sternberg's triarchic theory in which he differentiated between traditional concept of intelligence and practical intelligence. He identified three aspects of practical intelligence- componential, experiential and contextual aspects. He stated that a person high in practical intelligence will have higher chance of success in career than the one high in traditional intelligence. He further stated that emotional intelligence is the base for successful social interactions and responsiveness to others' needs. Furthermore, creativity is also a form of intelligence that peaks in early adulthood and then declines. But exceptions are there and some people peak in their creativity in past their prime age. For most people creativity ebbs away after early adulthood due to familiarity with the problems encountered. Important life events, such as marriage, birth of a child, too contribute to cognitive development of a person as they give new insights to a person into their own self and to the world around them. We also looked at the profile of college students in America as well as in India. We looked at what are the difficulties that students face in college and how it leads to depression, anxiety and withdrawal from others and how it gets aggravated if a student is a first-generation learner or belongs to a poor economic stratum. This is called first year adjustment reactions and sometimes it gets triggered if the person has been academically and socially very successful in school before joining the college and in college, there is a decline in his status. We also deliberated on the gender differences in performance and girls differ from boys in their own expectations of completing a course and how they get discriminated in college as well as at work place too due to gender stereotypes. Prejudice and discrimination against women is rampant even now as it was in olden times. This discrimination may show in terms of hostile sexism or benevolent sexism but both types of sexism are equally harmful. Lastly, we looked at the reasons for students dropping out of the college education for various reasons. In some cases, it is harmful, trapping them into low

paying jobs and in some cases, it is good as it allows a person to reflect and reassess his options.

1.7 Questions

1. Describe how cognitive development continues in young adulthood.

2. Compare and contrast Perry's and Schaie's approaches to cognitive development in young adulthood.

3. Explain how intelligence is defined today and how life events cause cognitive growth in young adults.

4. Describe the demographic characteristics of college students.

5. What are the difficulties faced by students in present times.

6. Describe how gender effects the treatment of college students and their college performance.

7. Why do students drop out of college?

1.8 References

Feldman, R. S. & Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India, Education services Pvt. Ltd

Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. (2012). Human Development. (12th Ed). McGraw Hill, international Edition

❖❖❖

7

SOCIAL & PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY ADULTHOOD - I

Unit Structure

7.0   Objectives

7.1   Introduction

7.2   Forging Relationships during Early adulthood: Intimacy Liking and loving

    7.2.1 Components of happiness: fulfilling Psychological needs

    7.2.2 Intimacy, Friendship and love

    7.2.3 Love: Defining the Undefinable

    7.2.4 Choosing a Partner: Recognizing Mr. or Ms. Right

    7.2.5 Attachment Styles and Romantic Relationships: Do Adult Loving Styles Reflect Attachment in Infancy?

7.3   The Course of relationships

    7.3.1 Cohabitation, Marriage, and Other Relationship Choices: Sorting Out the Options of Early Adulthood

    7.3.2 Parenthood: Choosing to Have Children

    7.3.3 Gay and Lesbian Parents

    7.3.4 Staying single: Wanting to be alone

7.4   Summery

7.5   Question

7.6   References

7.0 Objectives

In this unit we shall focus on:

➢ Summarization of how young adults find happiness and what is social clock.

➢ Explain ways in which young adults respond to the need of friendship and intimacy and how these relationships work or cease to work.

➢ Analyze how arrival of children affects early adulthood relationship.

➢ Comparing gay and lesbian (homosexual) parents to heterosexual parents.

➢ Explaining about people choose to remain single during early adulthood.

➢ Identifying role of work, picking an occupation and gender differences

➢ Understanding different forms of loving

➢ Differentiate the different types of love.

➢ Understand decisions of how spouses are chosen.

➢ Remember infant attachment styles and how are they related to adults in their romantic relationships.

7.1 Introduction

Early adulthood is a period that consist of a variety of developmental tasks. It is a period which ranges from twenty to forty years of age. It is during this period, we come in touch with the reality that we are no longer children. We start to view ourselves as adults, as members of society with significant responsibilities. The relationship with parents gets redefined. Close relationships and careers become a major concern for young adults. Many young adults, but not all, form romantic relationships that may last until the end of their lives. Their identity is shaped by the kind of work that people choose to do for occupation.

Arnett, 2006 identified five characteristics of emerging period of adulthood which differentiates it from adolescence and young adulthood.

- An age of identity exploration

- An age of instability

- An age to focus on self

- An age of possibilities

- An age of feeling in between

7.2 Forging Relationships: Intimacy, Liking And Loving During Early Adulthood

For some it may be easy to fall in love, however not everyone falls in love quite as easily as others. For some of them love is an experience full of soured relationships while for others, it is a place never visited. For some, love eventually leads to marriage having a vision to have long years together as a couple. For many, it may

lead to a not so happy ending, facing divorce and custody battles. During adulthood, the major considerations are that of forming relationships and intimacy. Happiness for young adults comes in the form of their relationships, while many worry whether they will be able to develop serious relationships "on time." there is some extent of willingness to connect with others even in those who are not quite interested in forming a long- term relationship.

7.2.1 Components of Happiness: Fulfilling Psychological Needs

Evidence shows that for young adult's happiness is obtained from the feelings of competence, self- esteem, independence or relating well to other people. That is happiness is derived mainly from the satisfaction of psychological needs rather than the materialistic needs. However, which psychological needs are of prime importance to a person are influenced by the cultural background of that person. For example, a research study reported that Korean young adults were satisfied with experiences that involved other people, but American young adults felt more satisfied from experiences that were related to their self and self-esteem.

The social clocks of adulthood

Social clock can be viewed as a psychological timepiece that records the milestone in a person's life. For example, getting married, having children or receiving a promotion at a particular age. This social clock helps us make sense of whether the benchmarks of life were reached on time, early or rather late in comparison to our peers. These social clocks are culturally determined. They reflect expectations of the society we live in.

The social clock of adulthood used to be quite uniform in Western societies, up to the middle of 20th century. However, in present times, the social clock of men and women has become significantly heterogeneous. The timings at which major life events take place has changed remarkably. Especially women's social clocks have changed dramatically due to social and cultural changes.

Women's social clock

Helson et.al. suggested that people have several social clocks from which they choose when a particular life event will take place. This selection has significant influence on their personality development during middle adulthood.

Helson conducted a longitudinal study on women whose social clocks were focused either on their families, or on career, or on a more individualistic target. She found that over the years, women became more self-disciplined and committed to their duties, felt greater independence and self-confident and could cope with adversities more effectively. Many of them showed traditional feminine behavior, such as

getting married and becoming mothers, in the age group of 21 to 27. As children grew up and maternal duties diminished, they took up less traditional roles. Both groups of women – the one who chose to focus on families and the ones who chose to focus on careers showed similar positive changes in their personality development. On the other hand, women who were not focused on either family or career showed either very little change or negative change in their personality development and grew as dissatisfied women over time. This indicates that some goal should be there in life to have positive personality change.

Helson was of the opinion that the personality development cannot be determined by the particular social clock that a woman chooses. Instead, the process of choosing these social clocks may be important in producing growth, depending on whether that social clock involves a career path or motherhood. It is not important whether a woman first develops a career or becomes a mother first. What is important is that whatever path she chooses, she remains focused on it.

Social clocks are influenced by culture. There is a social, cultural and economic influence which determines a women's timing of motherhood and the type and course of a career they want to pursue.

7.2.2 Intimacy, Friendship and love

Despite ongoing changes in the nature of women's (and men's) social clocks, one aspect of adulthood still remains a central feature: the development and maintenance of relationships with others. As we consider next, those relationships are a key part of development during early adulthood.

Seeking intimacy: Erikson's view of young adulthood

Young adulthood according to Erik Erikson was regarded as the period of the intimacy – **versus-isolation stage**, ranging from, the period of post adolescence to the early 30s. The focus during this period is on the development of close, intimate relationships with others. According to Erikson, intimacy comprises of several aspects. One is the extent of selflessness, which consists of sacrificing our own needs to those of another. While the other component consists of sexuality, an experience of joint pleasure from focusing not only on one's own gratification but also on that of one's partner. Lastly, there is a component of deep devotion, i.e., efforts to fuse one's identity with the identity of a partner.

According to Erikson, individuals who feel lonely, fearful and isolated in their relationships feel so because of facing difficulties during this stage. These difficulties may develop due to a failure to form a strong identity. In contrast, those

who successfully form intimate relationships with others on a physical, intellectual, and emotional level resolve the crisis at this stage of development.

Even Though this approach has been influential as he placed emphasis to examine a continuous growth and development of one's personality throughout life span. There are some aspects of this theory which trouble today's developmentalists. For instance, while considering healthy intimacy, he limited it to adult heterosexuality, having a goal of producing children. Any other kind of intimacy between opposite sex or same sex was considered as inferior. Focus was given more to men as compared to women. There was no consideration given to racial and ethnic identity, limiting the applicability of his theory to a great extent.

Friendship

For most of them having friendships and maintaining friendships is an important part of adult life. This is because the basic need for belongingness helps us seek and maintain at least some relationships with others. However, the question arises, how do people make friends? One of the important contributing factors is proximity. People form friendships with those who live nearby and whom they come in contact with. This proximity can result into rewards such as companionship, social approval, and occasionally a helping hand, at relatively little cost.

Similarity, also plays a crucial role in the formation of friendship. People who hold attitudes and values similar to their own are more likeable, like the saying goes, Birds of a feather do flock together. Similarity becomes especially more important in cross race friendships. However, the number of cross race friendships starts reducing as a person enters adolescence age and this pattern continues throughout their lives. That means, from adolescence age onwards, people form close friendships mostly with people of their own race.

Friends are also chosen on the basis of their personal qualities. For example, people are more attracted to those who keep confidences and are loyal, warm, affectionate, supportive, helpful and give a sense of security to us.

7.2.3 Love: Defining the Undefinable

Ever fell in love? Imagine a series of events taking place. A few unexpected encounters, leading to initiation of conversations having commonalities, turning into casual meet ups finally leading to official dates. Most relationships develop in a similar manner progressing in following steps:

▪ Two people interact more often with each other for longer periods of time.

▪ The tendency of two people to seek out each other's company increases.

- They disclose more intimate information about themselves as they start to open up to each other more and more, and also begin to share physical intimacies.

- They become more willing to share both positive and negative feelings, and may offer criticism as well as praise.

- There is an agreement between both of them over the goals they hold for the relationship.

- Their reactions to most situations become more similar.

- Their own psychological well- being begins to depend on the success of the relationship, viewing it as unique, cherished and irreplaceable.

- Lastly, changes in their definition of their behavior and themselves changes: beginning to see themselves and act as a couple rather than as two separate individuals.

The question here is how can we differentiate love from liking? Most Developmental psychologists believe that love not only differs qualitatively from liking but also qualitatively represents a different state altogether. For instance, intense physiological arousal, heightened interest in another person, rapid swings of emotions and recurrent fantasies about that person at least in the beginning stage.

Love differs from liking as it includes elements of closeness, passion and exclusivity.

All kinds of love are not the same. We do not love our parents in the same way as we love our partners or siblings or close friends. What creates the difference between these types of love?

Some psychologists suggest that our love relationships may fall into two different categories: Passionate or Companionate.

Passionate and companionate love: the two faces of love.

Passionate love can be stated as a powerful absorption into someone. It consists of caring, and physiological arousal and interest for another's need. In comparison, companionate love is the strong affection that we feel for those with whom our lives are deeply involved.

What causes passionate love? As per one theory, anything producing strong emotions even negative ones - anger, fear, rejection or jealousy - can be a source of deepening passionate love.

In Labeling theory of passionate love, romantic love is experienced when two events occur together, i.e., situational cues and physiological arousal indicate that

love is an apt label for the feelings that they are experiencing. The physiological arousal can be produced by excitement, sexual arousal or even negative emotions such as jealousy. Whatever may be the cause, if that arousal is subsequently labeled as "he makes my heart flutter" or "she really turns me on," then it may be attributed to passionate love. The theory is helpful to explain why people might feel deepened love even after experiencing continual hurt or rejection from their assumed lover.

The question arises that if physiological arousal can be experienced through such varied possibilities, then why people label it as love only. One of the reasons can be that in western cultures, romantic love is seen as possible, acceptable and desirable experience, that people seek out. The concept of love is present in love ballads, commercials and other mass media products. So young adults are primed to experience love in their lives. In some of other cultures, such as Asian cultures, the concept of passionate romantic love is not there. Marriages are arranged by the elders in the families on the basis of various other considerations than love. For example, socioeconomic status, caste, religion, etc. is considered for fixing the marriages of young adults. Even in western cultures, the concept of love as a basic requirement in marriage was introduced only in Middle Age.

Three faces of love: Sternberg's Triangular Theory

To Robert Sternberg, love is something more complex than the simple division of passionate and companionate kinds. He instead suggested love consists of three components namely, passion (motivational drives related to romance, sex and physical closeness), intimacy (affection, closeness and connectedness), and commitment/desire (the initial cognition that one loves another person and long term determination to maintain it).

These components can be combined into eight different types of love depending upon which three components are present or missing from a relationship. For instance, non-love consists of absence of passion, intimacy and decision/commitment since it refers to a kind of relationship where people are involved casually.

Liking only develops:

When there is a presence of intimacy but passion and commitment are missing. When only passion is felt it is termed as infatuated love.

When only decision/commitment is present it is termed as empty love.

In **romantic love** commitment is absent while other two factors passion and intimacy are present. It tends to happen when two people are drawn together both

emotionally and physically but they do not necessarily see their relationship as long lasting.

Companionate love is when there is a joint presence of desire/commitment occurs during long lasting relationships in which physical passion is too little or absent.

Fatuous love is when there is a presence of decision/commitment and passion while there is an absence of intimacy. It is a kind of mindless loving in which there is no emotional bond between the partners.

Only in consummate love all three components- passion, intimacy and commitment are present.

The dominance of the type of love in a relationship varies over time.

This theory of love not only places emphasis on the dynamics of love but also its complexities. Love develops and changes as people and relationships do.

7.2.4 Choosing a Partner: Recognizing Mr. or Ms. Right

Searching for a partner is a major aim for many young adults during their early adulthood. Society that we live in, contributes to a great extent to succeed in this arena. Despite of all of these the road to identify a partner to share life with is no easy.

Seeking a spouse: Love is the only thing that matters

For most people, there is no hesitation in processing that major factor in choosing a partner is love. However, culture plays an important role in determining the reasons for marriage. Studies have shown that in countries like US, Japan or Brazil, people will not marry someone if they don't love that person. On the other hand, data from countries like India and Pakistan shows that marriage without love is acceptable to young people. People in US believe that the primary characteristics that people look for in their partners is love and mutual attraction. In China, men believe that good health is the most important characteristic in consideration for marriage, while women rated emotional stability and maturity as most important considerations for marriage. In South Africa men rated emotional stability as the most important characteristics while women rated dependability as most important factor in marriage.

This does not mean that apart from US, people from other cultures do not give importance to love at all. In all cultures, love and mutual attraction is highly desirable characteristics for marriage, though it may not be the first priority. Apart from that emotional stability, pleasing disposition, and intelligence are also highly valued traits universally.

There are certain gender differences accounted in the cultures when characteristics of mates are preferred. Women prefer a spouse who is industrious and ambitious while, men prefer a potential marriage partner who is attractive physically.

These cross- cultural similarities can be due to evolutionary factors. Buss et.al. (2008) explained that human males are genetically programmed to seek out mates that have high reproductive capacity. Physical attractiveness of female is an indication of her reproductive capability. On the other hand, women are genetically programmed to seek out partners who can provide them with scarce resources and safety so that there is greater likelihood of survival of their off springs.

The argument in favor of evolutionary principle is not without criticism. Psychologists argue that first of all explanation given by evolutionary psychology is not testable so it is not scientific. Secondly, these cultural similarities can be attributed to gender stereotyping too. Thirdly, it has been argued that in all cultures, men generally hold more power, status and earning potential consistently, so, it is highly likely that women will prefer a man with these attributes rather than a man with lower economic potential or a weak person. Since men don't depend on women for resources, they consider factors other than economic resources while choosing a mate.

Filtering models: sifting out a spouse

Though these surveys help in identify characteristics highly valued in a potential spouse, but they are not as helpful as needed to be to determine how a specific individual chooses a partner.

Filtering model attempts to help us answer this complex question.

Researchers suggest that just as we sift flour to remove the undesirable material, similarly, people seek their potential mates by finer grained filters. According to this theory, people first filter for factors which are broad determinants of attractiveness. Once a person passes through this initial filter then more sophisticated types of screening are used. The end result is a choice between two individuals based on their compatibility.

How is compatibility determined? Not only personality characteristics but several cultural factors play an important role. For instance, when it comes to marriage, principle of homogamy is followed. Homogamy is the likeliness to marry someone who is similar in age, education, race, demographic characteristics and religion.

The marriage gradient is another standard that influences marriage decision. The marriage gradient is the tendency for men to marry women who are slightly younger, smaller, and lower in status and women tend to marry men who are

slightly older, larger and higher in status. The marriage gradient limits the number of potential mates for women, especially as they age, while allowing a men a wider choice of partners as their age increases. Bernard (1982) believed that some women are unable to marry because they are higher in status and seek someone of higher status than anyone in the available pool of men. Such women are known as "cream of the crop". The marriage gradient makes finding a mate especially difficult for well-educated African American women as very few African American males are well educated. In such cases, women are more likely to marry a men who are less educated or choose to not marry at all.

7.2.5 Attachment Styles and Romantic Relationships: Do Adult Loving Styles Reflect Attachment in Infancy?

Evidence reveals that the kind of attachment experienced during infancy reflect during the adult romantic relationships. Attachment refers to the development of a positive emotional bond between a child and a particular individual. Most infants possess one of the three attachment types

Securely attached children: who have positive, trusting, healthy relationships with their caregivers. Adults having secure attachment style readily enter into relationships and feel happy, energized and confident about the future success of their relationships.

Avoidant infants: relatively indifferent to caregivers and avoid interactions with them. Adults with avoidant attachment style typically tend to be less invested in relationships, have higher breakup rates and often feel lonely.

the Ambivalent infants: who show great distress while separated from a caregiver but when caregivers return they appear to be angry. Adults with ambivalent attachment style have a tendency to become overly invested in relationships, have repeated break ups with the same partner and have relatively low self-esteem.

According to researchers, attachment styles continue into adulthood, affecting the nature of romantic relationships. For instance, consider the following statements:

1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me. (Secure attachment style)

2. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being. (Avoidant attachment style)

3. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away. (the ambivalent attachment style)

Attachment style may also be related to the nature of care that adults give to their romantic partners when they need assistance. For instance, secure adults are more responsive to their partner's psychological needs, by being more sensitive and supportive.

In comparison, anxious adults are more likely to provide intrusive, compulsive aid to their partners. People having difficulty in relationships, might want to look back to their infancy to identify the root of their problem.

Check your progress

1.   Enumerate the ways for forging Relationships. Elaborate your answer with suitable examples.

2.   Write a detailed note on women social clock.

3.   Write Erikson's view on relationships in brief.

7.3 THE COURSE OF RELATIONSHIPS

There are a variety of challenges that are faced by individuals who are in a relationship. Men and women encounter significant changes as they move through early adulthood. These changes take place when they work at building their careers, bearing children, maintaining, establishing and at times ending relationships with others. The utmost question that young adults have to face is that if they would want to get married and if yes then when.

7.3.1 Cohabitation, Marriage, and Other Relationship Choices: Sorting Out the Options of Early Adulthood

For some people, whether to marry or not is a primary issue rather than identifying a potential spouse. Surveys indicate that most heterosexuals mention that they want to get married, but they choose another path, that which is not of getting married but of *Cohabitation, where they prefer to live without marriage*. This is more prevalent in America at present. It has also been noted that in US, most young adults live with their romantic partner for at least one period of time during their 20s and most marriage occur after the couple has cohabited. The most likely question to stem in our mind would be why do couples choose cohabitation over marriage? Some may do so because of not being ready for a lifelong commitment. Others may do so to get used to or have a practice of how marriage really feels like. In terms of

gender, men view cohabitation as a way to test a relationship while women view it as a step towards marriage. On the other hand, some couples may not agree with the institution of marriage. They believe that marriage is outmoded and it is unrealistic to expect a couple to spend a lifetime together.

Statistics has suggested that those who believe that cohabiting increases their chances of having a happy marriage are incorrect. In factthe chances of those couples who have previously cohabited to get divorced are much higher than the counterparts.

Marriage

During early adulthood, marriage is the ultimate alternative preferred by most individuals despite the prevalence of cohabitation. Reason being that many people view marriage as an appropriate culmination of a loving relationship, whereas others may feel that after reaching a particular age during early adulthood it might be the 'right' thing to do so. Others may seek marriage for various roles that a spouse can fill like that of providing security, financial and economic well-being and that of sexual gratification that is totally accepted by the society. Some of the other roles that a spouse can play are recreational and therapeutic where spouses can discuss their problems and work together as partners for activities. Marriage is also considered as the only means that is fully accepted by the society to have children. Lastly, marriage also offers legal protections and benefits, such as being eligible for social security benefits, medical insurances and survivor benefits which otherwise would not have been received. Even though marriage is important it is not a static institution. Divorce and wanting to marry later in life being the major source for why the number of couples getting married are fewer.

However, marriage is still a very strong social institution. Surveys in Europe indicate that most people ultimately do marry and believe that good family life is important.

The question arises then why are people getting married later in life? There can be numerous reasons for people to marry later in life, like that of first having a stable career or emotional maturity and then take major decisions of life after having a hold on other aspects of life.

What makes a marriage work

There are several characteristics displayed by partners in successful marriages. Some of these characteristics are –

1.   Relatively less negativity in communication,

2.   Having similar interest,

3.   Agreeing on distribution of roles

4.   Display of affection to one another

5.   Perceiving themselves as interdependent rather than two independent individuals.

However, our awareness of the characteristics displayed by husbands and wives in successful marriages has not, however, helped prevent what can only be called an epidemic of divorce. It is not something that one considers during middle age, it is a problem that has roots in the early years of marriage, during early adulthood. Evidence show that most divorces occur during the first 10 years of marriage. Divorce is a significant problem not only in US, but also in poor countries too.

Early marital conflict

Conflicts are bound to happen in marriage. Statistics indicate about half of newly married couple facing a significant amount of conflict. One of the major reasons is that tin the beginning, the partners perceive each other through "starry eyes" but as they start to live with each other, they come to know each other's flaws. During the first 10 years of marriage the perception of marital quality starts to decline following a period of stability and then an additional decline.

There can be many other sources of marital conflict. Couples may face difficulty in making a transition of being a child of their parents to being independent, autonomous adults. While others may have difficulty in developing an identity apart from their spouses, some may struggle to find a satisfactory time to share with their spouses as compared with other family members and friends. However, most of the married couples find early years of marriage deeply satisfying. They tend to consider it an extension of courtship. As they negotiate changes in relationships, they learn more about each other. Many couples find this newly wed period as one of the happiest periods in their entire married lives.

7.3.2 Parenthood: Choosing to Have Children

What is it that makes a couple decide whether to have children? It is one of the most important decisions to make. Bringing up a child can be a great economic burden on the couple. Young adults typically attribute the decision to have a child to psychological reasons. They expect to derive pleasure from watching the child grow, thief accomplishments and by having a close bond with them. Sometimes parents may have children to fulfil their self-serving needs. For instance, wanting to have kids so that they may provide them with protection or offer companionship during their old age. While rest may want children to fulfil the societal norms.

Whereas for other couples, pregnancy may be unplanned due to absence or failure of birth control methods. Pregnancy may be viewed as problematic when a couple might have had enough of children or may not wish to have children.

Very often, the couples who are most vulnerable in society are more likely to have unwanted pregnancies. Unplanned pregnancies are common among younger, poorer and less educated couples. Happily, there has been a dramatic rise in the use and effectiveness of contraceptives, and the incidence of undesired pregnancies has declined in the last several decades.

Family size

Most families these days seek to have not more than two children, three being more ideal if money is not an issue. In most of developed countries, the fertility rate has dropped significantly after World War II.

This can be due to reliable birth control methods and more and more women have started working - leading to the pressure of simultaneously managing job and raising children. This has convinced many women to have fewer children. Another reason can be that of conceiving later during their child bearing years to develop their careers.

Another reason for having fewer children is that some of the traditional benefits of having children such as economic support in old age is no longer attractive. There is no guarantee that elderly can rely on their children to look after them.

Lastly, some may avoid having children because of the fear of not being able to be good parents or because of the responsibility involved in child bearing or due to the sheer high cost of raising the children.

Dual earner couples

one of the major historical shifts affecting young adults is increase in the number of families where both parents working. Since, bearing children is a costly affair, financial contribution of both the partners have an important role to play. While doing so, women are the ones completing chores even after getting back home from their work as compared to men who may help in tasks that do not require a lot of effort. Husbands tend to carry out chores that can be planned in advance, while women have to carry out chores that require immediate attention such as child care and cooking food. Hence, females are found to be contributing more as compared to men, which may also be a reason to why they experience stress and anxiety.

The Transition to Parenthood: Two's a Couple, Three's a Crowd?

Becoming parents, going through a transit from an adult to parent is not very easy. It makes them look towards the world in an entirely different way. The arrival of a child changes every aspect of family life, in both negative and positive ways. There are additional changes and shifts into the roles that spouses play as they get into new role of being a father and a mother. The birth of a child leads to higher psychological and physical demands such as near constant fatigue, tiredness and financial responsibilities, and increased household chores.

There are cultural differences too. Western culture emphasizes on individualism, so childrearing is considered as totally a private affair of the parents. There is not much community support. In non-Western cultures, there is lot of community support for child rearing.

In western culture, for many couples the birth of the child may be a reason for low marital satisfaction, particularly for women who are dissatisfied with their marriages after the child had arrived. Because the responsibility that women experience is greater than that of husband's even when the chores of childrearing are shared. This is not to say that all couples experience a decrease in marital satisfaction upon the birth of a child.

In particular, couples who were previously satisfied as newlyweds are more likely to feel satisfied as they raise their children. Parents who work along as a team where they adopt child rearing goals and strategies are more likely to be satisfied with their roles of parenting. John Gottman et.al. (2000) stated that marital satisfaction can remain stable and may even increase with the birth of the child, if the stress of parenting is reduced through following are kept in mind:

1.   working to build fondness and affection toward one's partner.

2.   Remaining aware of events in one's spouse's life and responding to those events.

3.   Considering problems as controllable and solvable.

To conclude, having children lead to great marital satisfaction for those who are already satisfied with their marriage as compared to marriages where there is low satisfaction, bearing children may make a bad situation worse.

7.3.3 Gay and Lesbian Parents

A rough estimate indicates that there are around 16 to 20 % of parents who are of same sex in US. There has been an increase in the number of children being raised in families having two dads or two moms. There are differences in heterosexual and homosexual households. Studies indicate that in terms of labor, homosexual couples divide labor more evenly as compared to heterosexual couples. As each

partner in homosexual relationship carry out around the same number of various chores than heterosexual partners. Further, homosexual couples are more likely to follow an equal allocation of household work as compared to heterosexual couples.

Just as in case of heterosexual household, the arrival of the child (mostly through artificial insemination or adoption) brings changes in dynamics of household life for homosexual couples as well. A specialization of roles develops in both heterosexual and homosexual households. In homosexual couples, even though chores and decisions are shared, the childrearing burden tends to fall more on one member of the couple while the other is likely to spend more time in paid employment. The evolution of the relationship between homosexual couples when children arrive appears to be more similar to that of heterosexual couples.

Children of homosexual and heterosexual couples appear to be similar irrespective of how they are reared. Research shows no difference in adjustments of children raised in heterosexual households as compared to those of homosexual households. However, the children of homosexuals face greater challenges from the society which is deeply prejudiced against homosexuality even now.

7.3.4 Staying Single: Wanting to Be Alone

For some individuals, to live alone is a conscious, self-chosen path through life. In the last several decades, living alone (without a partner), has increased quite significantly. There are several reasons why people choose singlehood.

1. Those who choose to stay single view marriage negatively. Rather than viewing it into idealized terms they focus more upon marital conflict and divorce rates, concluding that there is a high risk of forming a union for lifetime with someone. 2.Others view marriage as being too restrictive. These people consider personal change and growth to be of great value which can get affected in a long-term commitment implied by marriage.

3. Some people may not be able to find someone appropriate to spend their remaining life with. They value their autonomy, freedom and independence.

   Even Though there are advantages of singlehood, there are its drawbacks as well. Single people, especially women have to face stigma from the society. There can also be a lack of someone to accompany and have sexual outlets along with the feeling of less financial security.

Check your progress

1. What are the various types of relationships that young adults enter into? Write your answer with suitable examples.

2. Write a detailed note on early marital conflict.

3. Does family size influences early adulthood? Explain in brief.

7.4 Summary

Early adulthood is a period which involves less amount of visible growth as compared to other stages. However, these changes not to be ignored are equally important for one's development. Throughout the unit we came across individuals reaching at the peak of their health and intellect, while arriving into a period of life where true independence is not only a challenge but a goal. Moving forward we also encountered some significant issues of early childhood dwelling into various spectrum of life like forming relationships, falling into love, searching for a career and eventually getting married. We also looked into factors that give rise to loving relationships and regarding how we consider the choices for whether to marry and whom to marry and also the essence of good and not so good marriages and their affecting factors.

We also discussed factors that people consider in choosing careers and the features of careers that make them satisfying. Before we move on to middle adulthood in the next chapter, recall the prologue that began this chapter, about factors affecting them.

We also looked upon social clocks of young adult, regarding what makes them happy. Their happiness being mainly related to psychological factors such as independence, self-esteem, competence and relationships with others. We also understood how young adults respond to their need for friendship and intimacy and how the liking switches to loving, relating to Erikson's stage of intimacy -versus-isolation, with those who can are able to create and develop an intimate relationship with others are found to have resolve this conflict.

We learnt about different kinds of love and its differentiation as given by Psychologist Robert Sternberg. He characterized love having three components of love having passion, intimacy and decision/commitment followed with combination of eight types of love by which evolvement of relationship dynamically takes place.

We saw how spouses are chosen by young adults. Wherein in some cultures love being a crucial factor to select a partner while other cultures emphasizing on other various factors. Amongst which filtering model suggest that potential partners are initially filtered on the basis of compatibility. While homosexuals usually seek for the same qualities in relationships as that of heterosexuals.

We saw how infant's attachment styles are related to their romantic relationships as adults. Research indicated attachment styles during infancy affects the nature of one's future romantic relationships of adults.

We described the kinds of relationships that people enter into during early adulthood and what makes these relationships work or may lead to its cessation. Even though cohabitation is popular, marriage remains to be the most attractive

option. It was also seen that the partners in successful marriages display attraction visibly to one another and also has communication which is less negative and view themselves as two independent individuals rather than interdependent couple. While divorce being quite prevalent affecting half of the marriages.

We described how the arrival of children affect relationships during early adulthood. With the average size of family decreasing due to changing roles of women. It is also seen that arrival of children bring pressure into marriages by changing the focus of partners to themselves, their roles and increasing responsibilities.

We also compared gay and lesbian parents to that of heterosexual parents. It was seen that homosexual parents have more similarities than differences as compared to heterosexual parents. When gay and lesbian parent's bare children, there are similar changes that occur as in that of heterosexual couples.

Lastly, we understood why being single during early adulthood is chosen over getting married as singlehood has been a choice made by an increasing number of people. This maybe because of the willingness to seek independence and attempts to avoid hazards of marriage.

7.5 Question

1. Explain intimacy, liking and loving. Elaborate your answer with suitable examples.

2. Why choosing a partner plays an important role in early adulthood? Explain in detail.

3. a. Describe attachment style and romantic relation.

    b. Write a detailed note on parenthood.

4. Discuss early marital conflict.

5. Write a note on

    a. Passionate and companionate love

    b. Sternberg's Triangular Theory

    c. Dual earner couples

    d. Staying single wanting to be alone

7.6 References

Feldman, R. S. &Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India Education services Pvt. Ltd

❖❖❖

8

SOCIAL & PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY ADULTHOOD - II

Unit Structure

8.0 Objectives

In this unit we shall focus on:

➢ Why people work and association of satisfaction to work.

➢ Understanding the role of work and how one picks a job.

➢ Understanding personality and its theories.

➢ Understanding the need for a mentor and role it plays in an employees work.

➢ Describing the gender roles that play a role during work.

8.1 Introduction

Till now we discussed about the other vital transitions taking place during adulthood. Moving forward, we will be discussing another most vital change that takes place in a young adult's life, viz., **career consolidation**. During this period of life, young adults become centered on careers. Early adulthood is a period of decisions that will have lifelong implications. The career path that we choose goes beyond deciding how much money we will earn. It relates to our status, our sense of self-worth and the contribution that we will make in life. That means the decisions about the career influences the shape of our identity too. There are many factors that play a role when one has to choose their career.

8.2 Work: Choosing on A Career

Early adulthood is a phase for most of us to make decisions which will have lifelong implications. The most critical decisions is to choose a career path. Depending on the choice that one makes about his career will determine how much money he/she will earn, what will be his/her social status, sense of self-worth and his/her contributions to life. Along with the mixture of parenting, relationships and their determination to coordinate work and family life generates few of the utmost challenges of the life of an adult. Working is a primary source of accruing financial resources. Depending on what work one does determines a wide area of their social relationships, satisfactions, challenges, hassles or frustrations and activities of daily life. Finally, work acts like an expression of an individual's identity and helps experience sense of personal value and status socially. As we'll see later during later adolescence, we will come across the developmental task of career choice, where there is an emphasis over the link between decision making regarding career and other aspects of individual identity. Herein we have a focus over one's adaptation towards work, where we see demands of work placing various challenges and opportunities for development. The concept of work itself is complex, each job role puts the person into a different context psychosocially, with a unique mix of resources, strains and expectations.

8.2.1 Identity during Young Adulthood: The Role of Work

Vaillant (1990) conducted a longitudinal study on young male adults and found that in early 20s, the men tend to be influenced by their parents' authority, but in their late 20s and early 30s, they start acting with greater autonomy. They marry and have children, but at the same time, they also focus on their careers – the period of **career consolidation**.

These people work very hard as they are moving up the corporate ladder. They tend to be rule followers and conform to norms of their professions. Vaillant stated that work plays a very important role in the lives of young adults in career consolidation stage and it is as important as Erikson's intimacy vs. isolation stage of psychosocial identity.

Work helps an individual create their own independent identity after separating it from their dependent family identity. As soon as an individual reaches the stage of adulthood, various responsibilities come about taking care of their career, family as well as their partner. It is more than complex as it seems to be. Since choosing a job is something that may not be an easy decision to make.

Young adulthood is a stage of development marked with career consolidation. This is a stage which is experienced between the ages of 20 to 40, where career becomes the focus for the young adults. Individuals, conform to the norms of their profession and tend to become stickler for rules or rule followers. The tendency of displaying the independence and questioning seen earlier, now tends to change after throwing themselves into their work.

However, critics point out that these findings cannot be generalized for various reasons. First of all, there is a criticism about his sample. He took a large sample for the study, but all were men and highly restricted and unusually bright people. One wonders, what would have been the results, if he had taken a sample of both males and females with average intelligence. Now days, women form a significant portion of work force, so ignoring them is a major flaw of this study.

Secondly, the study was done in 1930. Since then the societal norms have gone through a sea change and there is every possibility that now people do not consider work as important as they used to consider in 1930s.

Picking an Occupation: Choosing Life's Work

Picking up an occupation in early adulthood can be a complex decision to make. Some people are clear right from their childhood about what career they want to pursue and they work towards it, for some others it is a matter of chance, and many of them remain indecisive for a long time, weighing their options. There are number of factors that come into play when choosing a career and maintaining it for the rest of their lives.

Ginzberg's Career Choice Theory:

Ginzberg was of the opinion that people typically go through a series of stages while choosing a career. First of all, they go through the **fantasy period,** right upto the age of 11 years. During this period, they easily make choices about careers,

without paying much attention to skills, abilities required for the job or availability of those jobs. These choices are made on the basis of whatever takes their fancy at that moment. These choices are very fickle and after few days they discard them and take fancy for some other occupation. For example, a person may decide to become pilot in spite of having weak eyesight. After few days, he may decide to become a soldier, in spite of being short in required height for the job. In nut shell, we can say they live in their fantasy land of occupations.

The Tentative period – The tentative period spans from late childhood to adolescence period. During this period, people become more practical. They think about the requirements of various jobs that interests them. They not assess their own abilities and skills for those jobs, but they also match them with their values and goals to judge how well any of these jobs will satisfy their goals.

The Realistic period – The realistic period is marked with early adulthood. In this period, young adults explore specific career options either by taking training for them or by getting firsthand experience on them. They narrow down their choices after exploring various career options and finally settle down with one choice of career and pursue that relentlessly.

This theory appeals to common sense but critics are of the opinion that it is oversimplification of choosing a career. Just as Vaillant's study was criticized on the basis of sample, Ginzberg's study too suffered from the sample flaw. He took sample from middle socioeconomic levels and did not consider lower socioeconomic levels. Middle socioeconomic levels by default have more choices than lower socioeconomic levels. In fact, very often, lower socioeconomic levels do not have any choice and have to take up any career that comes their way. So it is not justified to generalize his findings.

The second criticism against his theory is that ages associated with every stage are too rigid. For example, a person from lower socioeconomic level, may be required to support family income from an early age and therefore drop out of school at a much younger age. Such a person will make career choice at a much younger age than the realistic period. Another criticism is that economic shifts have caused many people to change their careers at different points of their adult lives. For instance, a man who is already 40 years and was working in a factory may suddenly find himself without a job due to layoff policy of the company and may change his career at that stage and become a tea vendor or taxi driver to sustain himself and his family. So career choices are not fixed, they can change at any time in life depending upon circumstances.

Holland's Personality Type Theory

Holland was of the view that career choices are influenced by the personality of a person. If the personality of a person matches with a particular career, that person will enjoy his career and is likely to stay on it much longer. On the other hand, if the match between personality and career is not good, that person will be unhappy and is more likely to shift to another career.

Holland proposed that there are six personality types that are important from the point of view of career choice. These are-

1. Realistic – Realistic people are down to earth, practical problem solvers, and physically strong, but their social skills are mediocre. They make good farmers, laborers and truck drivers.

2. Intellectual – Intellectual people are oriented towards theoretical and abstract . They are not particularly good with people but they make good scientists as they are suitable for math and science.

3. Social – People having social personality tend to have high verbal skills and interpersonal relations. Such people are good at working with other people. They make good sales persons, teachers and counselors.

4. Conventional – Conventional individuals prefer highly structured tasks. They make good clerks, secretaries and bank tellers.

5. Enterprising – These individuals are risk takers and take-charge types. They are good leaders and may be particularly effective as managers and politicians.

6. Artistic – Artistic types use art to express themselves, and they often prefer the world of art to interactions with people. They are best suited to occupations involving art.

Holland's theory is very popular with career counsellors. One of the reasons for this popularity is that this theory does not provide only one personality type. The measurement scales based on Holland's theory give scores on each personality type. The assumption is that all individuals have all six types of personality types but they differ in the degree to which they have each one of these personality types.

Though this theory is very popular, but it has its own share of criticism. One of the criticism is that in real life, there are many people who take up careers that do not match with Holland's personality typology.

Career Choices, Skill Development, and Government Policies in India

India is one of those fortunate countries whose young population outnumbers the greying population. This young population can be the biggest driver of economy upliftment if it is utilized properly. It is very important that this young population is equipped with appropriate skills before it enters the work force.

A survey conducted by Ministry of Labour and Employment, Govt. of India in 2011-12 showed that unemployment rate in our country was much higher for graduates (9.4%) than for illiterates (1.2%). This highlighted the need to enhance the employability of the educated youth. Govt. of India constituted the National Policy on Skill Development in 2009 to fill the gap between education and employability. Apart from that, many employment generation programs are run by the government such as Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana, Prime Minister's Employment Generation Program, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, etc.

However, the current vocational education of India has a limited capacity and vision required by the people. Many of these existing programs are paradoxically non utilized. There are several reasons for it, such as –

1.) There is a problem of attitudes – Generally, in India, vocational education is associated with blue collar, low status jobs.

2.) The structure of vocational education - The existing structure of vocational education is not well connected with other higher education possibilities.

3.) Informational lacunae - Vocational education has two types of informational lacunae. One, Students do not know what job opportunities are there after doing a particular vocational course, and secondly, they do not know who can give information about the job opportunities after doing a particular vocational course. So, they do not have information and they do not know from whom they can get that information about the potential job opportunities after doing vocational courses.

4.) The link between vocational courses and labour market is very weak.

5.) Self-employed people who form the major portion of informal economy and also the major chunk of population is weak in providing training to these young people.

Aggarwal et.al. (2012) highlighted certain key features that can help in bridging the gap between the needs of the industry and students. These key features are –

1.) Many students in our country depend on their parents and family members to help them in making career decisions. It is important to increase the awareness of not only the students but also of their parents about various job opportunities after vocational courses.

2.) Previously, it was a social norm as well as a forgone conclusion that the young person will follow the footsteps of his parents. However, this study has shown that this trend has changed now and nearly 77% students do not want to pursue their parents' occupation. This indicates that the aspirations of the current youth have changed. There is weakening of caste-based occupations and increase in technology advancement is limiting the utilization of inter-generational knowledge transfer.

3.) Study also underlined another change, i.e., youth from lower socioeconomic strata showed more keenness to pursue higher education than youth from higher socioeconomic strata. The reason is that high performers have high employment opportunities and low performers have lower employment opportunities. Those who do not get jobs, enroll for higher education to pass their time.

The study looked at other factors that influence students' career choices. Some of them are parents, teachers, older siblings, friends, media and school career advisors

Keeping in mind above factors, it can be said that some of the obstacles in the path of successful implementation are-

1. students' opinion about the vocational education as being compromise over mainstream education

2. their aspirations to have 'prestigious' careers

3. a lack of intersection between students' aspirations and specific job sector requirements.

Gender and Career Choices: Women's Work

A generations ago, many women who entered early adulthood assumed that being a house wife is the most suitable and best job for them. Even those who sought jobs outside their home were restricted to certain professions. For example, till 1960s, in US, social norms divided the jobs gender wise. For instance, professions such as police officer, construction worker, lawyer were considered to be men's jobs and secretaries, teachers, cashiers and librarians were considered to be females' jobs. Individuals were selected for job according to the societal traditional view, regarding what the two genders were best suited for.

Like traditionally women were found to be appropriate for professions that were associated with **communal professions** – occupations related with relationships, as nursing. While, men were found to be appropriate for **agentic professions** (getting things accomplished). Communal professions were paid less and had lower status than agentic professions.

However, in today's time discrimination based on gender is way lesser than it was decades ago. It is now punishable if there is gender role prejudice practiced. Opportunities received by women are greater now as compared to previous years. Number of women working outside the home have increased despite of low status and pay than that received by men.

Though women have more opportunities than before and are likely to be in almost every profession that was considered to be male dominion, there are still notable gender differences. For instance, male bus driver will be given full time job while female bus driver will get part time job.

In many professions, women still earn significantly less than men in identical jobs. The glass ceiling effect is still there in many organizations, where female are not given top most positions. Very often people who operate glass ceiling do it very subtly and themselves may not be aware of how their actions are discriminatory against women and minorities.

8.2.2 Why Do People Work? More Than Earning a Living

People may work to earn themselves a living yet the reality might happen to be different. There are many reasons that young adults may seek a job.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

People work to receive rewards that are concrete or to achieve extrinsic motivation. **Extrinsic motivation** can be defined as a state which would drive people to obtain rewards that are tangible, such as prestige or money. On the other hand, individuals may also work for their own enjoyment towards their job, for rewards that are not financial but personal. This is called as **intrinsic motivation**.

Western societies subscribe to Puritan work ethics, i.e., a notion that work is important in and of itself. Working is a meaningful act that brings psychological and even spiritual wellbeing and satisfaction.

A sense of personal identity is also achieved by work. For instance, things that people say when they meet someone for the first time. After mentioning their name, where they reside and most likely, what they do for a living. Indicating what people do shows who they are. Since so much time is spent in work settings, work is a central element in people's social life. It also consists of forming social

relationships with other friends and social activities which may later spill onto other areas of one's life. Social obligations like annual parties, formal dinners related to work are also to be followed.

Finally, a factor in determining status is the kind of work that people do. This status is the role that person plays according to the evaluation made by the society. For Example, doctors and lawyers are considered on top of hierarchy whereas, dishwashers and waiters fall at the bottom of it.

Satisfaction on the Job

The status associated with particular jobs affects has an impact on work. Satisfaction tends to be higher when the status of the job is high. Status of the major wage-earner is likely to affect the status of other family members. In order to determine work satisfaction, status is not the only aspect, it depends upon number of factors like the nature of the job. Some firms also have work conversations and sales supervised including monitoring emails and web use by number of employers. Such jobs tend to produce employee dissatisfaction.

Job satisfaction is greater when employees can contribute to the nature of their jobs and feel that their opinions are valued. Jobs that provide variety, require different skills are more preferred than others. Lastly, more the influence that employees have over others (directly or indirectly) greater job satisfaction will be.

Check your progress

1.   How people look upon career in early adulthood?

2.   Is gender matters in choosing a career? Write your answer with suitable examples.

3.   Write a detailed note on the role of work.

8.3 Summery

To sum up, we explored the vital transitions taking place during adulthood, most importantly work along with its atrocities and advantages. Since this period is the one when most of the decisions that are made are implied to have a lifelong implication. Amongst which we came across making a choice of career to be one of the most critical decisions. We also saw how various roles that career plays in the lives of young adults by affecting in multiple arenas like that of their status, identity and contributions of life.

Even families play a vital role when it comes to making a choice of career. It has been noted that young adults are likely to choose careers that are of the same level

of social class as that of their parents. Given that these findings were old the trend has changed today due to increase in the level of education influencing their goals. In a way, influencing the motivation of the individual.

We also discussed about the impact that gender has upon work choices and work environment. However, gender stereotypes and prejudice still being a problem in the workplace and for prepping for selection of careers. Many women decades ago thought that they were having jobs which they'd be best suited for, i.e., being a housewife. Even those who sought jobs outside the home were restricted to certain professions as per the societal views. Lately, discrimination based on the basis of gender is way lesser than it was previously. Opportunities received by women are greater than that of men.

We also came across the factors influencing choice of career during early adulthood. Even personality has an influence over the job choice that an individual makes. Personality types as proposed by John Holland postulated how individuals could be most successful when they are able to match their job and to be most satisfied with the match they make. Holland's personality types were namely realistic, intellectual, social, conventional, enterprising and artistic. However, there are drawbacks too as not everyone would fit neatly into specific personality type. One of the models by suggest individuals moving through three stages in order to choose a career, the fantasy period during youth, the tentative period during adolescence and the realistic period during young adulthood. While other model which attempted to match personality types of individuals with suitable careers. Young adulthood as considered to be a stage where consolidation of career takes place becomes a central point of life. Transformation takes place in numerous ways but dropping down the old ways of behaving and adopting the new ways to function in life. According to researchers, career is a stage of development which involves young adults defining their careers and themselves. Since, work becomes an important decision of life, picking an occupation becomes a complex decision. Hence, numerous factors play a role when choosing a career and maintain the rest of the life. some may attribute their career choice over financial rewards associated with it while others maybe more concerned with factors like that of community service and other numerous variables.

Lastly, we answered the question why people work and elements of a job which brings satisfaction. That is by both extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Work not only helps determine one's status but also their personal identity and social life. Job satisfaction can be viewed as a result of various factors. From one's nature of job, status of job, one's input into work, variety of one's responsibility to influence that one has over others. While job satisfaction is something which can be derived from

work and is determined by the status of work that one performs. Hence, job satisfaction is higher when the status of the job is high and vice versa. Not only the status but also the nature of the job determines one's satisfaction from the job.

8.4 Question Pattern

1. Explain Ginsberg's career choice theory.

2. Describe Holland's personality type theory.

3. a. Why do people work? Explain in brief.

    b. Write a detailed note on satisfaction on the job.

4. Write a note on how gender plays a role when it comes to work.

5. Explain in brief intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

8.5 References

Feldman, R. S. &Babu, N. (2018). Development across the Life Span. (8th Ed). India: Pearson India Education services Pvt. Ltd

❖ ❖ ❖

Curiginal

Document Information

Analyzed document	Psychology SYBA Paper III Developmental Psychology (1)-6-149.pdf (D113147632)
Submitted	2021-09-22 07:07:00
Submitted by	Pandit Rajashri
Submitter email	rajashree@idol.mu.ac.in
Similarity	12%
Analysis address	rajashree.unimu@analysis.urkund.com

Sources included in the report

W	URL: https://www.chegg.com/flashcards/exam-5-1eb2f270-e997-4f3f-9cac-48dcd4f1e841/deck Fetched: 2020-12-07 03:10:55	▦	45
W	URL: https://quizlet.com/ca/303861382/lifespan-final-exam-weeks-9-13-flash-cards/ Fetched: 2020-12-15 22:19:00	▦	2
SA	**Impact_of_SocialChange_ReCorr_final01.05.18.docx** Document Impact_of_SocialChange_ReCorr_final01.05.18.docx (D38578230)	▦	1
W	URL: https://www.studymode.com/essays/Adolescence-Developmental-Psychology-1511401.html Fetched: 2019-11-12 19:22:01	▦	10
W	URL: https://quizlet.com/62388025/psychology-final-flash-cards/ Fetched: 2019-10-27 14:31:44	▦	2
W	URL: https://quizlet.com/8372217/psych-ch-16-flash-cards/ Fetched: 2019-11-06 15:27:35	▦	18
W	URL: https://quizlet.com/492486174/101-d-final-flash-cards/ Fetched: 2021-09-22 07:08:00	▦	126
W	URL: https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health Fetched: 2021-09-22 07:08:00	▦	1
W	URL: https://quizlet.com/343677618/psych-test-11-12-flash-cards/ Fetched: 2021-09-22 07:08:00	▦	13
W	URL: https://ecampus.ius.edu.ba/course/psy215-adolescent-psychology Fetched: 2021-09-22 07:08:00	▦	1
W	URL: https://findanyanswer.com/how-do-you-interact-with-peers Fetched: 2021-09-22 07:08:00	▦	2
W	URL: https://www.brainscape.com/flashcards/final-866599/packs/1255759 Fetched: 2020-07-13 11:40:28	▦	1