

EDU-RC-2016

Psychology of Adolescents

Unit-4

Personality Changes During Adolescence:

No topic in the field of psychology is more fascinating than personality. Tremendous research has been done on the topic but no final conclusion has been drawn as regard the nature of personality. Etiologically the term “**personality**” is derived from the **Latin** word “**persona**” which was associated with Greek theatre in ancient times. Persona refers to a mask which worn by an actor for the purpose of playing a certain role on the stage. From this point of view personality refers to the outer appearance of a person. Even today for a common man personality means the effect which the individual leaves on other people.

According to **G. W. Alport** ‘*personality is the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to the environment.*’

According to **Morton Prince**, “*Personality is the sum total of all the biological dispositions, impulses, tendencies, appetite and instincts of individual and the acquired dispositions and tendencies*

Every human being possesses his own individual personality. A child, an adolescent, or an adult-all possesses their own unique qualities. These qualities or personality is reflected in all his activities and differs from individual to individual.

Adolescence is generally regarded as the formative period in a period’s life. In this period an individual physically transforms from a child into an adult. Personality development is how a person changes and grows in reaction to his environment or perceptions. Personality development occurs through interaction of hereditary and environmental factors. The personality of an individual forms during childhood and develops gradually. His personality also changes during adolescence like other changes in him. His habits, friends, society occupation etc influences the development of his personality

Some of the key areas of personality development that are valuable for adolescents include improving self confidence, self motivation, nurturing talents, overcoming peer influence.

Characteristics of Personality Changes during Adolescence:

Searching for Identity: Teenagers search for their own identity. They are busy working out who they are and where they fit in the world. This search is influenced by gender, peer group, cultural background, media, school and family expectation. His personality develops from this sense of “self or identity.” Positive sense of self leads to balanced personality and vice versa.

Seeking more Independence: The adolescents feel a growing need for independence. As a result they develop traits like autonomy, leadership quality and respect for individualistic

values. This tendency influences the decision they make and the relationship they have with their family and friend.

Develop the concept of Morality: The concept of “Right” and “wrong” develop in the adolescents. They develop a stronger sense of morals and values. They learn that they are responsible for their own actions, decisions and consequences. They question about more things. Consequences of action develop the sense of right and wrong among the teenagers.

Egocentrism: Egocentrism in adolescents develops a self conscious desire to feel important in their peer group and enjoy social acceptance.

Emotional Ups and Downs: Adolescents show a strong feeling and intense emotions in different times. Moods might seem unpredictable. This leads to increased conflict. They are more sensitive to other people’s emotions.

Self- Consciousness: The adolescents are self conscious especially about physical appearance and changes. Teenage self esteem is often affected by appearance or by how teenagers think they look. As they develop, they try to compare their bodies with those of friends and peers.

Changes in Relationship: Adolescents wants to spend less time with family and more time with friends. They indulge in conflict with their parents. Conflicts tends to peak in early adolescence. Sometimes some teens find it hard to understand the effect of their behaviour and comments on other people. These skills develop with time.

Sociability: Sociability trait increases in adolescent personality. Friendship becomes more important for adolescents. Peer pressure influences personality characteristics among them. Sometimes they get exposure to situations that are dangerous and harmful to their health and well-being e.g. smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, reckless driving or undesirable sexual behaviour etc.

Aware of Their Sexuality: The hormonal and physical changes experienced by teenagers make them more aware of their sexuality. It plays a dominant role during this transition period and is the source of a lot of questioning. Teens need specific and precise information about sexuality and as well as a supportive environment so that they can understand their own behaviour and feeling in term of love and sex.

Extroversion and Agreeableness: As a result of their extrovert and agreeable nature the adolescents are willing to maintain positive and reciprocal relationship with others.

New and Different Behaviour: Adolescent’s personality is marked by new and different kind of behaviour that may cause concern or confuse the family members. Sometimes the adolescents themselves don’t understand why their own behaviour is changing. As a result, teens need supportive adults to guide them through this challenging phase. Part of providing guidance is the ability to detect when adolescents need help, as teens are rarely able to recognise or verbalise their level of distress.

Factors influencing Personality

A. Biological Factors:

Physic: His height, physical appearance, weight, physical strength, general health, physical deformities and abnormalities influence his personality. A fat person may be lethargic, while a thin person may be active. Physically disabled person may feel inferior. Dark complexioned person may feel inferior in front of a fair complexioned person. All these factors may influence an individual's personality but it is not always.

Chemique: Chemique relates to the effects of ductless glands (endocrine gland) on personality development. Endocrine glands secrete hormones, which are responsible for our physical growth and mental development, but at the same time they influence our behavioural and personality also e.g. thyroid gland secretes thyroxin hormone, which controls the growth. When this gland is under active, the individual becomes lethargic and despondent. When this gland is over active the individual becomes restless, irritable, worried and unstable.

Nervous System: Sensory organs are gateways of knowledge. The efficiency of the sensory organs depends upon the well developed quality of the nervous system. Intellectual efficiency, physical power, patience, insight, adjustment, thinking and reasoning all depend upon the efficiency of the nervous system. Any injury to the nervous system will affect the personality of the individual.

B. Sociological Factors:

Home:

- Children of lovable parents naturally become lovable
- Over ambition of parents from their children result in failure, loss of respect, feeling of guilt and shame.
- Some parents prefer and love male child, which affects the development of the female child.
- Too many children in a family do not get adequate care, which affects the personality.
- Educational and Socioeconomic status of parents
- Other factors like techniques of child rearing, integration among family members, general discipline of the family etc also influence the family

School: There are various aspects in school system which is responsible for shaping the personality of the children. Personality of the head of the institution, teachers and other staff influences the personality of the student. School discipline, curriculum, method of teaching etc are some of the factors that may also affect the student's personality.

Culture: Culture influences the development of personality. Modern man is different from ancient man. Geographical environment is also responsible for cultural difference. This geographical variation causes personal variation among people.

C. Psychological Factor:

- Genius and mentally retarded differ in their personality due to difference in intelligence.
- Motivation makes personality difference as motivated people achieve more than less motivated people.
- Emotional maturity contributes to one's personality development. A person who loses his patience will be condemned by all.
- Creative people develop better personality than less creative people
- Sentiment and interest will also have the effect on personality development.

Role of Home/Family on personality development

1) The first environment, the child moves in, is his home. Here the child comes in contact with his parents and other members of the family. The parent's behaviour influences the personality development of the child.

2) Providing positive environment can make the children disciplined and develop a balanced personality. But deprivation of both physical and emotional needs at home may make the child insecure, nervous and shy, careless and disobedient.

3) As children are most influenced by their parents, their proper personality development can take place when parents communicate with them honestly about the events that occur in the family. They should be accountable for their actions so that children trust them.

4) Parents should always be aware about what their children are learning and doing and how their surroundings are affecting them.

5) Parents are the most influential persons to cultivate values in children. They can promote values like love, cooperation, tolerance, sacrifice, mutual understanding, self reliance etc. These values make the children more sociable.

6) Parents must also encourage independent thinking in their children. They must be able to reason and make their own decisions. Parent who participate in their children's play activities make them feel wanted and they also learn to act with responsibility.

7) Parents should teach their children about health, hygiene and also proper eating habits through good guidance and example.

8) To develop good personality parents must not criticise the children in public. Always finding faults in children will make them withdrawn, frustrated and even hostile.

Influence of School in Personality Development of the Adolescents:

John Dewey described school as a miniature society. It means school helps an individual to adjust himself in the society. A healthy academic environment, cordial teacher pupil relationship, reasonable discipline etc may develop healthy personality of the students. Now a days education is considered as child centric where all round development of personality of

the child receive utmost importance. The role of school in personality development of the child is described below

1. School is regarded as a controlled environment for educational development of the child.
2. The objective of school is to form social personality of the children.
3. Healthy school environment may develop certain good habits by controlling the instinctive behaviour and activity of the students which may positively influence the personality of them.
4. The subjects included in the school curriculum may develop the intellectual ability of the students which may positively influence the cognitive aspect of personality.
5. The co-curricular activities also influence the development of personality of the students in a positive way.
6. Healthy disciplinary standard in school may develop the qualities like self realisation, self expression self control etc in the student's personality.
7. The social qualities like friendship, brotherhood, sympathy, co-operation, competition, acceptance, leadership etc can be developed in the child's personality only through a healthy school environment.
8. Along with these the personality and qualities of the teacher also exerts a very powerful influence on the students personality.

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