

# Human Development

## NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

### Question 1. What is development? How is it different from growth and maturation?

**Answer:** Development is a process by which an individual grows and changes throughout the life cycle.

- The term Development refers to the changes that have a direction and hold definite relationship with what precedes it.
- includes changes in size (physical growth), changes in proportion (child to adult), changes in features (disappearance of baby teeth) and acquiring new features.

Development includes growth as one of its aspects.

#### **Growth:**

- Growth refers to an increase in the size of body parts or of the organism as a whole.
- It can be measured or quantified, e.g. growth in height and weight.

**Maturation:** refers to the changes that follow an orderly sequence and are largely dictated by the genetic blueprint which produces commonalities in our growth and " development.

### Question 2. Describe the main features of life-span perspective on development.

**Answer:**

- The term development means a progressive series of changes that occur as a result of maturation and experience.
- Development implies qualitative changes in behaviour.
- Development does not consist merely of adding inches to one's height or of improving one's ability.
- It is a complex process of integrating many structures and functions.

The study of development according to the Life-span perspective (LSP) includes the following assumptions:

- **Development is life long** i.e. it takes place across all age groups starting from conception to old age. It includes both gains and losses, which interact in dynamic (change in one aspect goes with changes in others) ways throughout the life-span.
- The various Process of human development i.e. **biological, cognitive and socio-emotional are interwoven in the development** of a person throughout the lifespan.
- **Development is multi-directional.** Some dimensions or components of a given dimension of development may increase, with others show decrement, e.g. the experiences of adults may make them wiser and guide their decisions. However, with an increase in age, one's performance is likely to decrease on tasks requiring speed, such as running.
- **Development is highly plastic**, i.e. within a person, modifiability is found in psychological development, though plasticity varies among individuals.
- Development is **influenced by historical conditions**, e.g. The career orientation of school students today is very different from those students who were in schools 50 years ago.
- Development is the **concern of a number of disciplines**. Different disciplines like psychology, anthropology, sociology and neuro-sciences study human development with different perspectives.
- **An individual responds and acts in a particular context**, e.g. the life events in everyone's life are not the same such as death of a parent, accident, earthquake etc affect the course of one's life as also the positive influences such as winning an award or getting a good job.

**Question 3. What are developmental tasks? Explain by giving examples.**

**Answer:**

- A task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to happiness and to success with later tasks.
- Some tasks arise mainly as a result of physical maturation, such as learning to walk.
- Others develop primarily from the cultural pressures of society, such as learning to read; and still others grow out of the personal values to read.
- Still others grow out of the personal values and aspirations of the individual, such as choosing and preparing for a vocation.

**Purposes of Developmental Tasks :**

- Developmental tasks serve three very useful purposes.
- They are **guidelines** that enable individuals to know what society expects of them at given ages. Parents, for example, can be guided in teaching their young children different skills by the knowledge that society expects the children to master these skills at certain ages and that their adjustments will be greatly influenced by how successfully they do so.
- Developmental tasks **motivate individuals** to do what the social group expects them to do at certain ages during their lives.
- Finally, developmental tasks **show individuals what lies ahead** and what they will be expected to do when they reach their next stage of development.

**Question 4. 'Environment of the child has a major role in the development of the child'.**

**Support your answer with examples.**

**Answer:**

- Environment of the child has a major role to play in the development of the child because it includes the surroundings in which the child develops various cognitive and motor skills. It also influences the physical development of the child according to the limits set by genetic characteristics.
- The socio-economic and cultural environment has a major role in the development of the child's process, e.g., a child who is sent to school is able to develop characteristics of confidence and self-reliance more easily than a child who does not receive education. Thus, environment plays a vital role in the child's development.

#### Question 5. How do socio-cultural factors influence development?

##### Answer:

- Environmental factors are those factors which act upon the organism from outside and influence its structure and behaviour.
- After birth the infant is exposed to a complex external environment with its variety of physical and chemical energies, as well as the social forces which arise from contact with other human beings.
- The environment differs and so also the effect on individuals. Different individuals within the same environment also differ. They develop different interests and attitudes, and they identify themselves to different groups- religious, political and recreational.

Man's genotype serves as a 'potential' source for his development of behaviour. Realisation of these potentialities, however, depends upon the interactions of the genotype with his environmental factors.

A child with average potential intelligence but a 'fertile' co-environment would do better in life. If the environment is congenial, the development is positive while it takes a negative turn if the environment is unpleasant.

#### Question 6. Discuss the cognitive changes taking place in a developing child.

**Answer:** Piaget's given four types of stages for cognitive development:

1. **Sensorimotor Stage:** (Approximate age is of 0-2 years). In this stage infant explores the world by coordinating sensory experiences with physical actions.
2. **Preoperational Stage:** (Approximate age is of 2-7 years). In this stage symbolic thought develops and helps to expand his/her mental world. There are two features of preoperational stage:
  - **Egocentrism (self-focus):** children see the world only in terms of their own selves and are not able to appreciate other's point of view.
  - **Centration:** focusing on a single characteristic or feature for understanding an event e.g. a child may insist on drinking a "big glass" of juice, preferring a tall narrow glass to a short broad one, even though both might be holding the same amount of juice.
3. **Concrete Operational Stage:** (approximate age is of 7-11 years).
  - It is made up of operations-mental actions that allows the child to do mentally what was done physically before.
  - Concrete operations are also mental actions that are reversible.
  - Concrete operations allow the child to focus on different characteristics and not focus on one aspect of the object.
  - The child can reason logically about concrete events.
  - This helps the child to appreciate that there are different ways of looking at things.

4. **Formal Operational Stage:** (Approximate age is of 11-15 years). The adolescent can apply logic more abstractly, hypothetical thinking develops.

**Question 7. Attachment bonds formed in childhood years have long-term effects. Explain taking examples from daily life.**

**Answer:**

- Attachment bonds formed in childhood years have long term effects because these are notably developed between the parents and children. These bonds determine the level of trust and perception of the world during the formative years of childhood, e.g, a child growing up in a secure family, with sensitive, responsive and affectionate parents will is not them.
- The child will also make decisions in his/her life with the parents and thus, have a good relationship. However, a child who does not have a steady and good relationship with the parents will lack communication.
- Problems of juvenile delinquency are after related to the lack of attachment of an individual towards his/her parents.

**Question 8. What is adolescence? Explain the concept of egocentrism.**

**Answer: Adolescence:** The term adolescence comes from the Latin word “adolescere”, meaning “to grow” or “to grow to maturity”. The term ‘adolescence’ includes mental, emotional and social maturity as well as physical maturity.

1. It is the **transition period** in a person’s life between childhood and adulthood.
2. It has been regarded as a period of **rapid change**, both biologically and psychologically. Though the physical changes that take place during this stage are universal, the social and psychological dimensions of the adolescent’s experiences depend on the cultural context.
3. It is a time of **search for identity**. They begin to crave identity and are no longer satisfied to be like their peers in every respect, as they were earlier, e.g. They try to establish themselves as individuals by the use of status symbols in the form of car, clothes and other readily observable material possessions.
4. Adolescence is the **threshold of adulthood** they are anxious to shed the stereotype of teenagers and to create the impression that they are adults, e.g. dressing and acting like adults, they start engaging in smoking, drinking, drugs and in sex. Egocentrism: (self-focus) Children see the world only in terms of their own selves and are not able to appreciate others point of view. The egocentrism of early childhood is especially pronounced in the first year or two before children begin to play with other children-the age of parallel play.
  - Boys tend to be more egocentric than girls, partly because they sense they are often parental favourites and partly because they are given more privileges. While all children tend to be egocentric, there are certain ones whose environment encourage greater egocentrism than is found in the average child of the same age level.  
Adolescents develop a special kind of egocentrism.  
According to DAVID ELKIND adolescents develop two components of egocentrism:
    - Imaginary audience
    - Personal fable.

1. **Imaginary audience:** adolescent’s belief that others are as occupied with them as they are about themselves.  
They imagine that people are always noticing them and observing each and every

behaviour of theirs.

2. **Personal fable:** it is adolescents sense of uniqueness. It takes them think that no one understands them or their feelings.

**Establishment of identity:** Adolescence is the stage when primary task is to establish an identity separate from their parents.

Identity refers to knowing who am I? what are the commitments and beliefs are.

- In the establishment of identity children may develop conflict with their parents and may develop "Identity Confusion".
- Such adolescents may at one time complain of being 'treated like a baby' whereas on other occasions treated like 'grown ups'.
- This identity crisis involves searching for conformity and sameness in on self and trying to get a clear sense of who am I? where I am going in my life?

Adolescence is **a period of storm and stress: It is period of uncertainties occasional loneliness, self doubt, anxiety, conforming to peer pressure and concern about themselves and their future.**

**Question 9. What are the factors influencing the formation of identity during adolescence? Support your answer with examples.**

**Answer:** The formation of identity during adolescence is influenced by several factors:

1. The **cultural background**, family and societal values, ethnic background and socio-economic status all prevail upon the adolescents' search for a place in society.
2. **Increased interactions** with peers provide them with opportunities for refining their social skills and trying out different social behaviours.
3. **Peers and parents** are dual forces having major influence on adolescents. Generally parents and peers serve complementary functions and full fill different needs of the adolescents.
4. **Vocational commitment** is another factor influencing adolescent identity formation.
5. To achieve a sense of identity, children must have an **inner assurance** that they get this feeling of assurance, they are secure.  
e.g. Career counselling in schools offers information regarding appraisal of the students for the formation or search of identity.  
e.g. In some cultures freedom is given to the young people to choose an occupation, whereas in certain other cultures the option of making this choice is not given to the children.

**Question 10. What are the challenges faced by individuals on entry to adulthood?**

**Answer:** An adult is generally defined as someone who is responsible, mature, self-supporting and well-integrated into society.

- In early adulthood, two major tasks are exploring the possibilities for adult living and developing a stable life structure.
- A transition from dependence to independence should occur.

**Career and work:**

- Adults get new responsibility at work.
- They have to adjust with new challenging situations.
- There are apprehensions regarding differences , adjustments, proving one's competence and coping with expectations and both employer and self.

**Marriage, parenthood and family:**

- Adults have to make adjustments while entering a marriage relation and to know their spouse and cope with each others' likes/dislikes. Responsibilities have to be shared if both are working.
- Parenthood is a difficult and stressful transition in young adults. It depends on factors such as number of children in the family, availability of social support, etc.