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EPS 701P: PSYCHOLOGY OF ADOLESCENCE

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UNIT ONE

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence defined

- The human race has a particularly long period of growth and apprenticeship between birth and physical maturity and adult competence. This is because the gap between the child and the adult in many respects are so great that they can scarcely understand each other. Within the process of developing from a child to an adult there is an essential period of transition called adolescence.

It is an obvious and important point of demarcation involving changes which are different from all others that occur in human development. These changes include

- Appearance of pubic hair in the armpit and private parts
- Chemical changes. For instance, as found in the chemical analysis of early morning urine.
- Physical changes: For example X-ray of hands and knees shows elongated bones.

However, the major and most conspicuous one is the attainment of **sexual maturity.** This change among others is so significant that in most cultures of the world, its advent is celebrated by various formal activities (rites of passage).

Even though adolescence is easily identified and has been recognized as an important stage of human development, its definition has become a complex issue. Two main reasons are responsible for this.

- The **purpose for which the definition is being made**, and this may depend upon the professional background of the definer. For instance, psychologists, physicians, sociologists and legal personnel may be interested in different conditions of the adolescent.

- **What the definer is perceiving** and this may differ from cultures.

A common ground can be identified, however, as a period between the attainment of sexual maturity that is puberty and the assumption of adulthood.

Adolescence is a transition period when the individual is trying to wean himself or herself from the family and become an independent person. However, there are still differences about the onset of sexual maturity as well as the beginning of adult status. There are also individual variations in the perceptions of adult status as well as cultural variations in the perception of adult status.

Though there are difficulties in establishing clearly defined chronological boundaries, there is very little disagreement when the advent of adolescence is considered biologically as the onset of physical maturity.

The terminal point for adolescence involves emotional and social maturity that is when the individual has acquired the requisite experiences, ability and willingness to play consistently the role of an adult.

Justification for the study of adolescence as a stage in human development.

In recent years there has been a substantial increase in the literature dealing with adolescence. This has necessitated the development of a separate psychology for adolescence. The justification for this special study is among others based on the following.

- The rate of change during adolescence is greater than at any other developmental period. This accelerated rate of change also comes with distinctive alterations in behaviour and psychological functioning.

- It is also important to study adolescence as a stage of development in order for parents and teachers to understand and know how to handle some perplexing adolescent phenomena such as resistance to values approved by adults, excessive conformity to peer group standards, adult-youth conflict etc..

- Adolescence represents a period whereby many choices with lifelong effects are made. For example occupational and marriage decisions. It is essential to understand the nature of adolescence so as to know their motivations which can be used to guide them in making essential choices. The complex nature of today's world complicates the options, choices, and uncertainties that confront them thus necessitating effective guidance of an informed nature.

- With so much interest in adolescence studies, so many theoretical viewpoints have been presented. There is the need to continue to analyse and integrate these different theoretical positions for a better understanding of adolescents.

Needs and developmental tasks of Adolescents

Though the social and personality needs of adolescents may be similar to those of individuals of other ages or developmental levels, the strength of these needs and their significance for behaviour may be somewhat different. Failure to meet these needs creates adjustment problems and eventually a distorted personality. Since all behaviours can be said to be motivated, one of the chief responsibilities of parents and teachers should be to help adolescents to satisfy their biological and acquired needs in ways which would be personally and socially rewarding

Physiological/physical needs

Adolescents the world over have much the same biological and tissue needs such as oxygen, food, water, activity, rest, sleep, sex etc. The way these needs are satisfied vary greatly in different cultures. Two of the basic physiological needs that we will focus on are **need for activity and need for sexual gratification.** However, the sex need which appears to be the most crucial and challenging of the needs of adolescents, is handled differently in different cultures.

In Ghana, pre-marital sexual intercourse is strongly frowned upon in the middle class societies, while in the lower class societies, parental attitudes toward such behaviour is more permissive.

Psychological Needs

- Among the personality needs that are urgent during adolescence are status, independence, achievement and a satisfying philosophy of life.

- **Status:** The adolescent wants to be recognized as an important member of his or her group and in his or her family. He or she craves to be seen and accorded the needed respect and recognition. Status in peer group is preferably more important to adolescent boys than status in the eyes of parents and teachers, though recognition from the latter sources is highly cherished by the adolescent in his or her search for status.

- **Independence:** The adolescent craves for to be weaned from parental restrictions and become a self-directed individual. He or she wants the right to give expression to his or her feelings, emotions and ideas.

- **Achievement:** Learning theorists have emphasized that learning is more effectively accomplished when the student's efforts are followed by a sense of or pride when his or her efforts are followed by a sense of achievement. The adolescent develops a sense of pride when his or her efforts are commended and recognized.

- **Satisfying Philosophy of Life:** Though the young child often asks questions and does some immature speculation about the nature of the universe and other beliefs cherished by people in his or her immediate environment, it is not until adolescence that he or she exhibits persistent and driving concern about the meaning of life. He or she has numerous gaps in his or her knowledge and wants them to be filled.

Developmental Task explained

- As the child grows toward maturity, the various stages he/she encounters have their demands. At some critical stages, these demands are even greater. Some psychologists have used the term "developmental tasks" to describe such demands upon the individual. Individuals at each stage of development including adolescence, must master these challenges in order to move to the next stage successfully.

An individual's ability to achieve these is essential for these reasons.

- They can affect his/her normal development
- They determine his/her acceptability within the society
- They determine his/her future success in other endeavours of life.

These tasks may be set by the biological requirements of the body, by socio-cultural environment or by both.

Havighurst (1972) proposed a developmental theory of adolescents development. He combined consideration of individual needs with societal demands. What the society demands constitute developmental tasks. These are skills, knowledge, functions and attitudes that individuals have to acquire at certain points in their lives through physical maturation, social expectations and personal effort.

- Mastery of these tasks results in maturity, and failure to master them results in anxiety, social disapproval and in ability to function as a mature person.

- Achieving new and more mature relationship with age mates of both sexes: In their social life, boys and girls no longer engage in the pre-adolescence one sex combat, but now heterosexual company appears to be enjoyable for many of them. Romance becomes a very important thing in life.

- Achieving a masculine or feminine social role: Adolescents attempt to try out new gender-based roles, sometimes putting out the ideas inti actions in many informal experiments. It is necessary to assist the adolescent to be able to achieve certain basic social roles that are expected of each sex. For instance in Ghana, there are certain social roles which are gender specific.

- Accepting one's physique and using it effectively: Adolescents encounter the problem of accepting their physical appearance especially if it is not the model they fancy.

- Emotional independence from parents and other adults: the adolescent must learn to achieve emotional independence from the home and the family. **This process however is not a smooth one, because young people and their parents approach the task with different views.**

- Selecting and preparing for an occupation/vocation. Adolescents have a strong desire to achieve self-sufficiency and become independent like adult members of the society. They, therefore crave for an occupation or vocation that will insulate them being financial dependent on their parents.

- Preparing for marriage and family life: Heterosexual relationships is one of the major concerns of the adolescent. This concern is manifested in their preoccupation with discussing issues concerning dating and the characteristics preferred in a potential marriage partner.

- Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence: Competence and excellence are highly esteemed values among adolescents.

- **Desiring and achieving socially responsible**: the adolescent greatly cares about the way he/she relates to others. These adolescents who are incapable of effective and satisfying relationship with others usually have low self-concept.

- **Acquiring a set of values and ethical system as a guide to behaviour**: The adolescent needs to have a set of values and ethical system to guide his/her behaviour. He/she is very idealistic and begins to question or criticize the ideas and opinions of adults who he/she sees as fallible.

UNIT TWO

- **SELECTED THEORIES ON ADOLESCENCE**

Biologically induced crises

The biological approach to adolescence maintains that the behavioural changes that occur during this period of development are completely conditioned by a series of physiological events which are caused by the functioning of the glands. The biological approach was therefore based on a number of assumptions. These include;

- Physiological factors are fully responsible for the psychological phenomenon of adolescence.

- The psychological consequences of physiological changes are uniform everywhere.

- Physiological changes influence behavioural changes which may directly result in personality changes.

- The nature of adolescence is similar in all cultures

The biogenetic theory of Stanley Hall

- Stanley G. Hall a main proponent of the biological approach, advanced the ideas that set the pattern for thinking on adolescence for a quarter of a century. He introduced Darwin's concept of biological evolution into psychological thinking in the form of a theory of recapitulation.

- Hall's position was that the developmental evolution of the human species was built into the genetic structure of each individual, so that, growth and maturity were simply a sequential unfolding or recapitulation of the stages which man had passed in his evolution from lower animal forms. From Hall's point of view, adolescents could be **viewed as a cross between savages and civilized people, with primitive and humane impulses in constant conflict** (Fuhrmann, 1986 p18).

- Hall as cited in Steinberg, (2002) believed that the hormonal changes of puberty cause upheaval, both for the individual and for those around him/her. Thus, from Hall's perspective, puberty was a period of emotional maladjustment and great upset.

- Because this turbulence is biologically determined, it is unavoidable and not subject to environmental influence. **The best that society can do is to find ways of managing the young person (Steinberg, 2002).**

- Hall believes that puberty was the period of emotional maladjustment and great upset. According to Hall, adolescence is a period of development filled with storm and stress. The storm and stress view in Hall's concept that adolescence is a turbulent time charged with conflict and mood swings. Hall's description of adolescence as a period of storm and stress was rather extreme. In Hall's view, adolescence was characterized by idealism, commitment to goals, revolution against the old and strong personal feelings.

- Hall's ideas were based on the assumption that development is controlled by genetically determined physiological factors. Hence internal maturational factors controlled and directed development, growth and behaviour. There is little room in this theory for the influence of environmental factors which means that development and its behavioural concomitants is an inevitable unchangeable pattern which is universal.

Being the first of its kind. Hall's theory naturally aroused a lot of concern amongst psychologists of the day. Some described it as a theory which was narrow in scope and lacked internal consistency. Other criticized him for using orthodox methods in his analysis of the problem of adolescence. They have challenged his position as extreme and untenable in the face of evidence. They further refuted Hall's claim that physiological drives in the adolescent are responsible for the specific behaviour dispositions.

Unfortunately, in this heated controversy, the main contribution of Hall's theory was lost. This was the fact that he identified adolescents as a distinct period of psychological development which can be explained using a general theoretical proposition. Though the theory failed to stand the test of time, it provided a unified and integrated conception of adolescence which unfortunately later investigations chose to ignore.

SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORY OF ADOLESCENCE

The question as to whether adolescence is a biological or psychosocial phenomenon has been a controversial one. Early theorists assumed that the pattern of development found in the Western cultures could be identified as a universal component of human nature.

However, cultural anthropologists have consistently emphasized that human behaviour, social institutions, religious beliefs, rituals and habits differ in various societies. To them, the social environment into which the child is born plays a tremendous role in his/her personality. They believe that human beings show far greater plasticity than other animals and hence the influence of their social environment is very important. As a result, they do not consider pubescenitc to be the cause of crises in adolescence characterisitcs.

Mead (1928) investigated and documented adolescent behaviour in Samoa. Since then, there has been a large body of ethnological data comparing the comparative psychology of adolescence. This attested to the belief of the socio-cultural theorists that the degree of conflicts, stress and difficulty experienced by adolescents was partly a result of cultural differences in the norms and restrictions regulating their behaviour and aspirations for mature status. this debunks the generally accepted idea that all adolescents behave the same way the world over. Socio-cultural theorists believe that the ethnic background also influences the behaviour of adolescents.

Mead's research revealed that conflict situation does not exist in the primitive Samoan society. There are mechanisms which make transition from adolescence to adulthood smooth. This means that conflict in adolescence come as a result of frustration. **Mead concluded that the basic nature of adolescence is not biological as envisioned by Hall, but rather socio-cultural.** She argued that when culture provides a smooth gradual transition from childhood, which is the way adolescents' are handled in Samoa, little storm and stress is associated with the period. Mead argued that cultures that allow adolescents to observe sexual relations, see babies born, regard death as natural, do important work, engage in sex-play, and know clearly what their adult roles will be, promote a relatively stress-free adolescents. However, in cultures in which children are considered very different from adults and where adolescents is not characterized by the aforementioned experiences adolescence is more likely to be stressful.

The ideas Mead put across in Growing Up in Samoa did not contain an explicitly stated theory of adolescent development. Ruth Benedict generalized such ethnographic materials into a theory of "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning". This provided an explicit theory of development from a cultural anthropological point of view. She explained that continuities exist when within the tribe a number of important norms and demands are the same for children and adults. Under these circumstances, development is planned and the child gradually learns modes of adult behaviour and is prepared to meet the demands of adulthood.

Discontinuities exist when the transition takes place in a society where there are differences in the basic norms and demands made on children and on adults.

Benedict's theory explained that where discontinuities exist, the individual, upon reaching "formal" maturity is yet unprepared to perform the role of an adult. This creates external conflicts. This occurs because experiences which are approved for adults are restricted or forbidden for children. Attitudes, values and skills that children have learnt must be unlearned when they become adults.

Benedict exemplified three specific aspects of discontinuities.

(i) Responsible vrs non responsible behaviour

(ii) Submission vrs dominance

(iii) Contrasted sexual roles

Cultural anthropological theory of Benedict assumes that cultural conditioning that is continuous in nature is marked by smooth and gradual. Whereas discontinuity in child rearing results in emotional strain. Societies that emphasize discontinuities are described as "age-grade societies since different behaviour are demanded by the society at different age levels. In such a situation, problems in adolescent development are natural.

Comparison of adolescents in primitive societies demonstrates that problems are either solved in different ways along the developmental line or may not exist at all. There are therefore, no problems that are inherent in adolescent's development. In the face of the substantial evidence presented by cultural anthropologists, it is clear that certain behavioural characteristics in Western civilization which were thought to be biologically induced were not necessarily inevitable.

Psychoanalytic theory of adolescent development

- It is similar to the biological approach in one respect. That is, it explain adolescence characteristics in relation to physiological changes occurring in their lives. However, **while the biological approach claims that in his/her individual development, the adolescent repeats the evolution of the human race, psychoanalytic theory believes that he/she rather retraces some previous experiences in his/her psycho-sexual development**.

- According to the psychoanalytic theory there are stages in psychosexual development and these are determined by the operation of the genes. This means that adolescence phenomena are universal since they are associated with the maturing of reproductive functions. For instance behavioural changes such as aggressiveness and awkwardness, emotional changes such as moodiness, anxiety and tension as well as social changes such as building up homosexual relationships and later heterosexual relationships experienced by adolescents everywhere.

Psychoanalytic theorists did not devote a great deal of systematic attention to the problem of adolescence. They attempted to fit the adolescence period into a general theory of personal development. Hence to analyse their ideas on adolescence would involve ideas from some earlier stages of life.

Freud (1917) a major proponent of this theory believed that personality has three structures: **the id, the ego and the superego.** The id is the Freudian structure of personality that consists of instincts, which are an individual's reservoir of psychic energy. In Freud's view the id is totally unconscious; it has no contact with reality. As the individual experiences the demands and constraints of reality, a new structure of personality emerges-the ego; the Freudian structure of personality that deals with the demands of reality. The ego is called the "executive branch" of personality because it makes rational decisions. The id and the ego have no morality-they do not take into account whether something is right or wrong. The superego is the Freudian structure of personality that is the moral branch of personality. The superego takes into account whether something is right or wrong.

According to the psychoanalytical theory, **developmental proceeds sequentially through five stages- oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital**, of these, the first three represent the phase of infancy which is particularly important in the development of personality. The fourth stage, which is latency is a period where primitive fantasies of the earlier stages as well as infantile sexuality (Oedipus and Electra complexes) of the phallic stage are repressed. It is believed that such repression is meant to provide the individual with some equilibrium that would enable him/her to withstand the incoming onslaught of adolescence with greater stability and security.

The genital stage marks the beginning of puberty and subsequent entrance into adolescence. Psychoanalytical theory believes that adolescence is a time when the developing child is faced with a "threat". The personality he/she developed and stabilized during the latency period is destroyed or weakened by the new instinctual impulses that occur within him/her. This is because the sexuality that is awakened results in increased nervous excitement, anxiety and other personality disturbances. The individual does not know how to cope with the outstanding power of lust that is evoked.

The Freudian theory suggests three main problems of personality that arise during the adolescent period of psycho-sexual development. These are;

- The anxiety and emotional stability associated with sexual repression

- The achievement of a desirable balance between repression of sex urges and the demands of conscience.

- The establishment of heterosexuality.

As a result of these psychological problems, the psychoanalytic theorists believe that during adolescence, a person is especially vulnerable to mental problems. In trying to cope with these however, as indicated earlier in the session, something about the individuals past becomes relevant. Freud himself stated that "**adolescents recapitulate infancy and the precise way in which individual will pass through the necessary stage of development in adolescence is to a very great extent determined by the form of his/her infantile development**". For instance, according to the theory, the Oedipus complex relation between a boy and mother, and a girl and father during the phallic stage would be revived during the genital stage but this time outward. This means that a boy's first serious love object is most likely to be a mature woman (mother figure) and a young girl an older man (father figure). However, strong friendship ties could bind boys and girls to their own sex with the possibility of inversion of the sex object (Lesbianism).

Another characteristic of adolescence as interpreted by psychoanalytic theory which is also related to the oedipal attitude is that the individual seeks the developmental task of independence at a time when he/she has the desire to maintain strong family bonds (oedipal bonds). The adolescent tries to turn his/her back upon immature relationship with his/her parents, creates for himself/herself a sense of worth and turn his/her efforts toward progressive enterprise of falling in love with all that is involved in building new and consistent relationship as he/she prepares to enter the adult world. According to Freud the emotional detachment which results, leads to resentment and hostility towards parents and others in authority. The successful achievement of this task would present him/her with a sound orientation towards his/her own generation and a normal adjustment to adult social reality. The striving for this is the cause of grief reactions which are new with him/her.

Anna Freud explains that this psychoanalytic position means that this inconsistent and unpredictable behaviour is normal in adolescence. For example, he/she loves and hates his/her parents, he/she alternates between dependence and revolt, he/she seeks a secure identity but equally tries to merge his/her identity with others, he/she is generous and unselfish but this alternates with self-centeredness and egoism. In fact occurring in the later period of life, such behaviour would be considered to be abnormal, but in adolescents it is so normal that the absence of such conflicts rather means that the child is in trouble.

Though Freud had frequently been criticized for his over emphasis on the biological and instinctual factors, he did not completely reject the operation of social forces. In this theory, environmental factors are secondary to innate tendencies but he does not deny their importance. Freud saw the crises in adolescence emanating from a dynamic struggle between the biological instinctual id forces and the socially oriented superego. However, several other criticisms of the psychoanalytic theory have been made:

(i) First the idea of latency period does not fit into research findings on sex behaviour during childhood. There is evidence that experimentation with sexual matters occurs throughout the entire elementary school period though it only becomes consistent after adolescence.

(ii) Secondly, there is a changing biosocial status during adolescence. It is not tenable to place the cause of problems in development during this period social on psychosexual maturation. The need to regulate the new sex drive is not more powerful than the other aspects of personality that require recognition.

(iii) Third, the idea that most adolescent's interests and activity are the result of repression f sex drive is both theoretically and practically unacceptable.

(iv) Also the fact that the adolescent normally illustrates sexual material in his/her artistic and literary activities does not sufficiently prove that they are expressing sexual tension. They may actually be displaying emotional reactions to the moral conflicts within the society which are generated by the problems. For instance, even though sex is frowned upon, there is significant adult sex activity.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

1. Parents and educators should provide as little frustration as possible by being sufficiently lenient, showing love and affection etc.

2. The redirection of sexual energy by means of sublimation can be found through sports and other social activities.

3. The provision of sex education for adolescents to help them cope with conditions created by new sex development.

4. The use of life history or background information to provide counselling

THE FIELD THEORY-KURT LEWIN

- Fundamental to Lewin is the view that adolescence is a period of transition in which the adolescent changes his/her group membership. While both the child and the adult have a clear concept of their group belongingness, the adolescent belongs partly to the child group and partly to the adult group. He/she is often treated in an ambiguous manner by his/her parents, teachers and other members of the society. Lewin therefore views the adolescent as a marginal person striving to leave a less privileged group for a more privileged group to which he/she has not yet been admitted
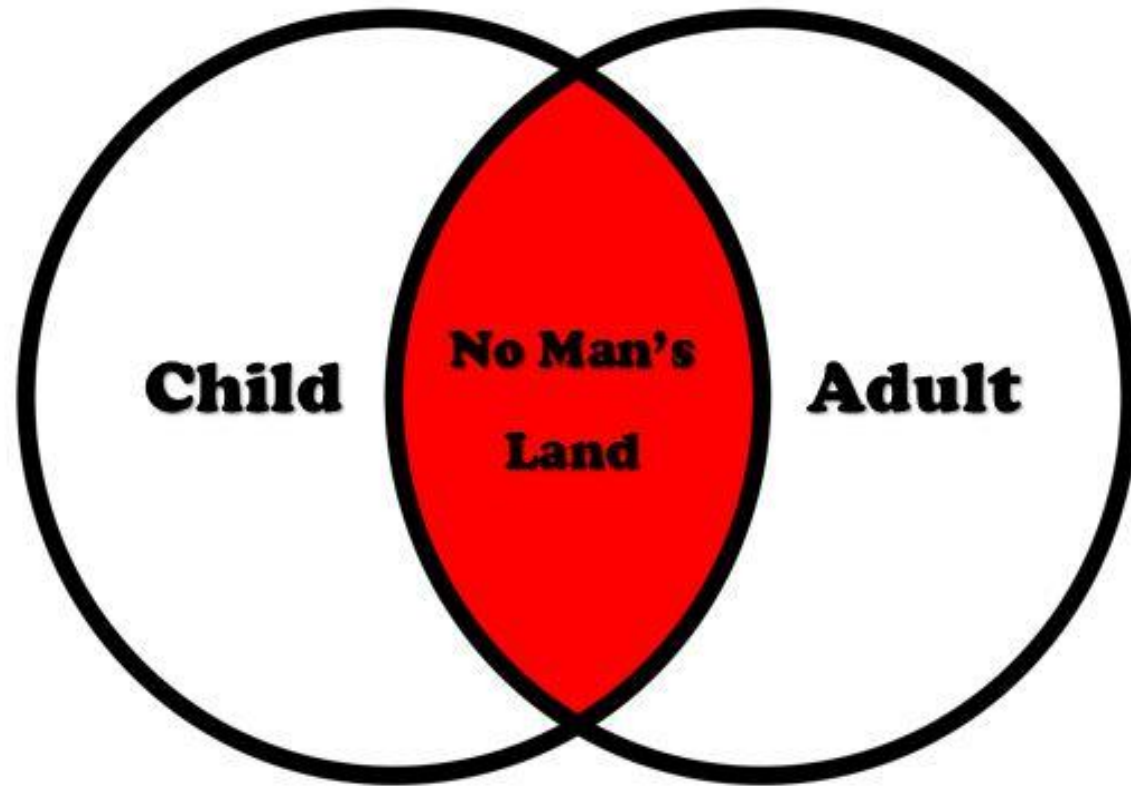
The adolescent in the diagram above lives in a no man's land

The adolescent in the diagram above is in a no man's land. He or she is neither an adult nor a child, but an individual who is caught in a field of overlapping forces and expectations. He/she is accepted neither as child nor as an adult, and therefore occupies a unique and stressful position as a marginal person. Certain childish forms of behaviour are no longer acceptable, whereas some of the adult forms are either not yet permitted or are new and strange and also may have some strings attached (economic strings, social strings etc). The adolescent from Lewin's perspective does not have a clear understanding of his/her status and social obligations and this uncertainty is reflected in his/her behaviour. **Lewin saw the transition from childhood to adulthood as a universal phenomenon since children become mature adults in all societies.** However, the shift from childhood to adulthood can occur in different patterns. It can take the form of sudden stuffs, or it can also be gradual shift especially if the children's group and adult's groups are not separated and defined as they are in more complex societies

It is in this context that Lewin attributed the existence of conflict in adolescence to the sharpness of the demarcation between the groups of children and adult in the society. In other words, in societies where norms and demands made on both children and adults are almost the same and continuous, and where the period of transition is relatively shorter, conflict is less likely to occur.

Lewin concluded that conflict and difficulties in development and up bring of adolescents are natural features which emanate from the specific social circumstances in which they find themselves.

OTHER VIEW POINTS ON THE CRISES IN ADOLESCENCE

- The work of earlier theorists like Hall and Mead prompted others to study the phenomenon of crisis in adolescence. One of them was Offer (1969) who saw the generalization of adolescence as a stage of storm and conflict as wholly inaccurate. He attributed the existence or otherwise of conflicts and difficulties to the mode of transition from childhood to adulthood.

Offer distinguished between three types of transition. These are; continuous, surgent and tumultuous transitions.

I. A continuous type is where transition is smooth and harmonious and the period of adolescence is devoid of conflict.

II. The surgent type where transition is slightly rough and slightly smooth and the period is characterized by slight conflict.

III. the tumultuous type of transition is rough and characterized by turmoil and rebellion.

Vygotsky (1933) and other Soviet Psychologists viewed conflicts in adolescence to improper upbringing in societies which do not have well defined approach for child training. He stressed that the antidote to the conflict and difficulties that characterized adolescence in some societies lie in the restructuring of the social environment in response to the dynamic changes in the social life, mind and personality structure of the adolescent.

T.V Dragunova (1972) making reference to the theoretical standpoint of several eminent psychologists provided an electric account of the concept of adolescence. He attributed the seeming conflict to two main factors.

i.   Rapid physical transformation

ii. Adult inconsistency and inflexibility.

To him, the dimensions of the conflict in adolescence are mainly social. They are occasioned by the following:

i. Awareness of adulthood

ii. Moments of changes in rights, obligations and privileges.

iii. Development of high receptiveness for assimilating adult norms and values especially those that distinguish adults from children eg. Dressing, alcoholic beverages etc.

iv. Striving to acquire qualities of an adult through self-training.

v. The adolescents' demand for a certain measure of equality with adults-protests against being supervised and punished like kids etc.

These issues create a **disequilibrium** in the previous relation between children and adults.

Obstacles to Adolescence Independence

1. Material dependence upon adults

2. Adult's inertia at reducing previous control. Some adults will still want to look on the adolescent as a child and do not want to grant him/her the rights and privileges.

3. Adolescents pretentions are often greater than their potentials which is often seen when they fail to fulfil responsibilities.

Evidently there are differences in the nature of the rights and the degree of independence of the adolescents but changes would occur sooner or later but what is important is who initiates the change?

If by adults, conflicts is contained. If by the child, probability of conflict is great. **When this happens, one of three variants of the conflict situation may occur.**

1. Deepening conflict
2. Sporadic conflict
3. Changed adult attitude

Positive aspects of the conflict

1. It causes a change in adult attitude toward the adolescent

2. Adolescents models upon adult norms, morality etc leading to a better personality formation.

3. It helps to draw plans and set goals for the future

Role of adults in preventing conflict

- **Adults should**:

1. Give considerable autonomy to the child and see one another as helpers with a relationship based on trust.

2. Adult should be active participants in the child's life with respect to his/her activities, interest and relations.

3. Consult adolescents on certain issues and questions.

4. Be a model for the adolescents

5. Include the adolescent in some of their interests and activities. This leads to process of collaboration where there will be common features in each others life.

UNIT THREE

DEVELOPMENTAL TRENDS IN ADOLESCENTS

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

It is characteristic of human beings to have a concept of physical self, including body image. This characteristic becomes highly manifested during adolescence. **Just prior to puberty there is an accelerated rate of growth and physical change.** This continues through the middle and later teens. There is at this period a comparative sudden appearance of secondary sex characteristics. To the adult observer, such sudden physical changes are interesting and humorous but to the adolescent, they are startling and disquieting.

If physical and psychological changes during adolescence were merely a matter of changing structure and function, we could simply describe and record them. However, actual structural or functional change is only the beginning from which evolves a social attitude towards self and others; and also a kind of behaviour which affects an adolescent's life.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

1. **The effect of deviation:** Since the growth spurt phenomenon is difficult even for the normally developing adolescent, the problem becomes compounded if the individual's growth is a marked deviation from what is happening to the rest of the peer group, (eg. excessive overall growth, or of some significant parts such as the breast or the penis etc).

2. **Rate of development:** Apart from the nature of growth, deviation can also occur in the rate and direction of growth. Bayley (1941) in a study of early, average and late maturing boys and girls noted that an individual's rate and direction of maturing may have significant effects upon his/her social acceptance and status, upon the efficacy of his/her participation in various activities and upon his/her emotional adjustment.

3. **Body image**: The idea of body image was first developed by Schilder (1935), Kolb (1959) and they stem from certain internalized psychological factors. Body image is influenced by the individual's personal perception of his/her body appearance and its functional ability, the concept of ideal body and cultural influences.

Zachry and Lightly (1940) opined that the body is a symbol of a self.

4. **Physical changes require revision in one's self-concept:** There is difficulty in adjusting to new physical realities. Adolescents overestimate the importance of physique and are less willing to accept changes in it. Changes that conflict with one's aspirations are more disturbing.

5. Concern about one's own body as it relates to others, (a) Interest in physique as it relates to sex appeal, (b) Concern about physical attributes of which he/she is ashamed.

6. The emergence of special facial features increases concern. For example, pimples, black hairs, beard, hips etc.

7. A changing voice

8. Rapid development of some parts of the body. eg. Long legs, big feet, too much fat. Indeed, to the adolescent, any slight anomaly represents a potential source of embarrassment.

9. Environmental or cultural preferences with respect to physique accentuate physical concern. For example where appearance, strength etc are held to be important. Eg. Children weights to have "macho" physical structure. In the Sahelian countries, girls with long necks are preferred, so a lady with a short neck becomes disturbed.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADOLESCENT (JEAN PIAGET'S VIEWS)

Most cognitive psychologists agree that as far as intellectual development is concerned, three (3) essential variables interplay. These are:

• The maturation of the nervous system

• Experiences in interaction with the physical reality

• The influence of the social environment

When the child enters the adolescence era, the maturational changes in the cortex and that accompanying puberty are responsible for changes in his/her thought process. Unlike the child, he/she now develops the capacity for what Piaget termed **"formal thought."**

Piaget indicates that the stage of formal operation is one in which the individual becomes increasingly capable of using abstraction and generalization in his/her conceptual framework. He agrees that cognitive growth is a sequential process which depends upon a suitable interaction between maturing potentialities and a responsible environment.

With respect to the maturing potentialities, Piaget proposes his phasic theory involving the sensori-motor, preoperational, concrete operation and formal operation stages which every individual develops through. In analysing the individual's responsiveness to environmental stimuli, he proposed the non- phasic developmental process involving adaptation through assimilation and accommodation.

It is important to note that although the process he suggests operates at all levels of development, when distortions or inhibitions of cognitive development occur at one stage, they can influence satisfactory development at the next. Hence the attainment of the abilities proposed for adolescence may be impeded by a lower qualitative attainment of concrete operational abilities.

The pre-adolescence child has a thinking process which is **based on reality and less on possibilities.** But the adolescent who has mastered formal operation is able to think of logical possibilities and furthermore to examine issues in a systematic way. For him, reality is secondary to possibility. This means that instead of deriving theory or propositions from empirical observations, formal thought begins with a theory or proposition and then seeks concrete application of these.

According to Piaget this type of thinking constitutes a turning point in the development of the structure of intelligence since it leads to an equilibrium that is both stable and flexible. Thus in formal operations, the adolescent no longer thinks in terms of concrete events or objects but can carry out abstract operations in his/her mind. This ability also makes it possible for them to analyse their own thinking and determine faults in them. In Piaget's analogy, he uses the concept "Schema" to mean an established behaviour pattern which is general in nature such as walking schema, sucking schema etc. Piaget's schema is an internalised structure.

- At adolescence however, he asserts that these schemata become developed and extended and thus can be used as interrelated logical systems. In this case they become operations. Operations are therefore more complex than 4 schemata and are logically arranged. An operation is a generalised meaningful understanding and so can be applied to a wider range of related problems. For instance, when a student memorises a formula and applies it in some identically stated problem, it involves the use of a schema. However, when he/she understands the relationship involved in the formula so well that he/she is able to identify its application even in different contexts he/she is doing operational thinking.

Since operational thinking involves meaningful thinking, it is not easily forgotten. An illustration for operational thinking is provided by Hunt to explain what he called the Principle of Combinatorial Operations. He assumed that animals were classified into two(2) classes.

1. Vertebrates(v) or Invertebrates (I)
2. Terrestrial (T) or Aquatic (A)

He stated that if children were asked to describe all possible combinations of animal life the concrete operational child would respond with four classes of animal life.

1. VT
2. VA
3. IT
4. IA

- The adolescent who possesses formal operations can make a better analysis and come up with sixteen (16) forms.

- Adolescents have the ability to base their thinking on purely verbal prepositions. They can thus make hypothetical deductions. This achievement fascinates them and they delight in speculations and criticisms. In many cases, however, their theories are an over simplification of reality. They often develop social and political theories and some have religious, philosophical and scientific theories as well. This preoccupation with theory can even be applied to girls' dreams of their future husbands which are frequently quite theoretical as is their concept of married life.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

- Implications for curriculum planning
- Gives the educator insight into the limitations and abilities of the - adolescents.
- Teaching within the child's ability. That is the teacher has to be skillful in maintaining balance between assimilation and accommodation to foster conceptual growth. Teaching from known to the unknown.
- Piaget's method of collecting data, that is through the clinical Method which involves an active search for the solution to problems is useful. Hence, problem solving approach should be used in teaching adolescents.

PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADOLESCENT

- Erikson **made a contribution to psychological thought by reorganising Freud's psychoanalytic theory to take account of criticisms made against it by the cultural anthropologists.** Though he built his theory along the psychoanalytic concept of ego he shifted it away from the-sexual conditions it utilized and rather emphasized the social conditions and organisations in which the ego must be rooted in order to develop normally. Since he was influenced by Freud, he proposed stages which were similar to Freud's psychosexual stages but he called them psychosocial stages in line with his direction of thought. Erikson's stages which he called the 8 stages of man were:

1. Trust vrs Mistrust
2. Autonomy vrs Shame and doubt
3. Initiative vrs Guilt
4. Industry vrs inferiority
5. Identity vrs Role Confusion
6. Intimacy vrs Isolation
7. Generativity vrs Stagnation
8. Ego integrity vrs Disgust/Despair

The central idea in Erikson's theory of ego development was that the individual was striving for the acquisition of ego identity which is accomplished in different ways from one culture to another. One thing that is common in all cultures is that when an individual receives consistent meaningful recognition of his/her achievements and accomplishments he/she develops a strong and healthy ego identity.

- According to Erikson pubescence with its resultant physiological and intellectual maturity introduces two influences on psychosocial development, which are qualitatively different from those experienced in earlier years. These are genital maturity and sexual awareness.

- These cause the emergence of new interpersonal dimensions, which result in an element of discontinuity in previous development. The adolescent now becomes preoccupied with what he/she appears to be in the eyes of the other and not what he feels he/she is. He/she therefore has to seek to establish his/her role identity. He/she frequently over identifies with movie heroes, group leaders, supporting champion's etc. to the extent that he/she loses his/her own ego identity.

- At this point, adolescents rarely identify with parents. They rather rebel against their dominance, their value systems and their intrusion into the adolescent's private life.

- The adolescent therefore separates his/her identity from that of his/her parents and finds social belongingness in the peer group. However, the adolescent has to integrate these different images of himself/herself into a whole that makes sense and that shows some continuity with his/her past whilst preparing for the future. If the young person succeeds in this integration he/she arrives at a sense of psychosocial identity, a sense of whom he/she is, where he/she has been and where he/she is going.

- Otherwise, he/she is unable to identify himself/herself and encounters role confusion. According to Erikson, whereas in the earlier stages of life, parents play a more direct role in creating crisis or tranquility in development for the individual, this is not so during adolescence.

- According to Erikson, whereas in the earlier stages of life, parents play a more direct role in creating crisis or tranquility in development for the individual, this is not so during adolescence. However, the preparation that a person had before entering adolescence is essential for success in attaining an integrated psychosocial identity. He states that if a young person reaches adolescence, with thanks to his/her parents, a vital sense of trust, autonomy, initiative and industry, then his/her chances of arriving at a meaningful sense of ego identity are much enhanced. Preparation for a successful adolescence and the attainment of an integrated psychosocial identity must therefore begin in the cradle.

- At adolescence, the search for identity is compounded by the fact that new pressure develops. The individual has to make decisions about future education, vocation, falling in love etc. It is thus a time for change. Teenagers may experiment with various sexual, occupational and educational roles as they try to find out who they are and who they can be. **This involves a reassembly or "an alignment of the individuals basic drives (ego) with his/her endowment and his opportunities (needs, skills, goals) and demands of adolescence and approaching adulthood"** or adolescents who cannot attain a sense of personal identity either because of an unfortunate childhood or difficult social circumstances a certain amount of role confusion emerges.

- This is a sense of not knowing what he/she is, where he/she belongs or whom he/she belongs to. Such confusion is a frequent symptom in delinquent young people, some of whom seek negative identity. This may sometimes be preferable to having no identity at all. In some cases, however, adolescents rather have the negative identity thrust upon them as in the case of mothers who force their daughters into prostitution. Erikson however emphasized that failure to establish a clear sense of identity at adolescence does not guarantee perpetual failure. He believes that life is in constant change and that it is always possible to find new solutions to the problems that the individual encounters.

HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONS

- One characteristic which distinguishes the adolescent from childhood is in the **nature of interest in the opposite sex**. When the transition from pre- adolescence unisexual to adolescence heterosexual socialization occurs is uncertain. However, we know that with the advent of puberty one outstanding characteristic of an adolescent's social development is his/her gradual growing interest in members of the opposite sex. This interest normally leads them to expand their heterosexual activities.

- The new sex urges which take place make them willing and anxious to relate with each other. Girls develop first and are therefore often more anxious and may need boys to develop the required social attitudes for heterosexual relations. Boys develop *the required social attitudes about a year later than girls. The* ease with which appropriate heterosexual relations can be attained though culturally related tends *to* vary between the sexes in the African society,

This is because whilst boys are often expected by parents to become independent, self-reliant and assertive, this is not so for girls. Girls are not required to abandon their dependence and submission to parents. They rather endure greater parental supervision and protection in matters involving the opposite sex. This situation often leads to conflict with parents which are more severe than the conflicts experienced by boys.

- **In many societies, heterosexual relations often begin with a group of girls interacting with a group of boys without any really identifiable hetero-sexual pairings**. During this time, adolescents are beginning to experience the reinforcement values of social interaction with members of the opposite sex. As they move toward early maturity, this reinforcing value is expected to increase. Along side this phenomenon, double dating occurs which develops into real dating much later within the adolescence period. Though there are wide variations in dating attitudes, **Douvan and Andelson (1966) note that older girls treat their partners better, feeling free to discuss their feelings, while younger girls tend to be over conscious over themselves and try to assume an air of indifference as a cloak to hide their real feelings.**

- **Individual differences exist in sex-social development as with other aspects of human development.** Boys and girls exist who are resistant to the opposite sex and heterosexual activity in opposite to those who are intensely interested in such relations. Though it may be assumed that lack of interest in the opposite sex is physically normal, it is nevertheless disapproved by most cultures. In most cases the condition is either a falsification by the person involved or a consequence of late maturation Late maturing children are not interested in heterosexual activity at the time when most of their age mates are very much interested. They may turn to younger children for social relations or under peer pressure participate in heterosexual activity even though uninterested and negativistic.

When late maturing adolescents eventually gain heterosexual interest, they often need help in adjusting. Sexually, mature adolescents who claim lack of interest in the opposite sex may do so for a number of reasons:

- **Inadequate early social training makes it difficult for them to cope with the necessary etiquette for heterosexual relations.**

- **Inability to adjust to the physiological changes of adolescence which makes some frightened, disturbed, embarrassed or disgusted.**

- **Inability to develop interest and participate in the new heterosexual activities of age mates.**

Whatever the reason, however, such an individual also needs help. In all cases the embarrassment and misunderstanding that goes with adolescence can be greatly reduced if parents and teachers accept the responsibility of providing the necessary sex education early enough. Unfortunately, the attitude that sex education is unnecessary still exists and adolescents are left on their own to cope with their severe adjustment problems.

UNIT FOUR

ADOLESCENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Parent-Adolescent personality differences

❑Parents feel that youth are crazy, reckless and naive and may get into trouble with the law. Youths feel their parents are overly cautious and worry too much.

❑Parents tend to compare today's youth and lifestyle to the way things were when they were growing up. Parents often suffer from cultural lag which renders them poorly informed.

❑Parents also become a little cynical about human character. Adolescents are still extremely idealistic and impatient with adults who are part of the establishment.

❑Adolescents grow to be wary of adults primarily because they feel most adults are too critical and won't understand them.

❑Aging adolescents become oversensitive about growing old. They focus more and more attention on staying young. If parents carry this insecurity in their dress and behaviour, they only succeed in attracting shame of their own teenagers and ridicule of other youths.

Table 1: middle-aged adult and adolescent personalities

Middle-aged adult generation	Adolescent generation
1. Cautious, based upon experience	1. Daring, willing to try new things, but lacks judgment based upon experience
2. Oriented to past, compares present with the way things used to be	2. Present is only reality. Past is irrelevant, future is dim, uncertain
3. Realistic, sometimes cynical about life, people	3. Idealistic, optimistic
4. Conservative in manners, morals, mores	4. liberal, challenges traditional codes, ethics, experiments with new ideas, life styles
5. Generally contented, satisfied, resigned to status quo	5. Critical, restless, unhappy with things as they are
6. Wants to stay young, fears age	6. Wants to be grown-up, but never wants to become old. Contempt for aged

Parent-adolescent conflict

• **Social life and custom**

Adolescents' social life and the social customs they observe probably create more conflict with parents than any other area. The most common sources of friction are;

➢Choice of friends or dating partners.

➢How often they are allowed to go out

➢Choice of clubs, activities, societies

➢Curfew hours

➢Choice of clothes, hairstyles

➢Age allowed to date, ride in cars, participate in certain events.

- **Responsibility**

Parents become the most critical of adolescents who do not evidence enough responsibilities. Parents expect adolescents to show responsibility in;

➢Performance of family chores

➢Earning and spending money

➢Care for personal belongings

➢Use of family automobile

➢Use of the telephone

➢Doing work for others outside the house

➢Use of family property or belonging

- **School**

School performance, behaviour at school and adolescents' attributes toward school receive much attention from parents. Specifically, the parent is concerned about adolescents;

➢Grades and level of performance

➢Study habits and homework

➢Regularity of attendance

➢General attitude toward school studies and teachers

➢Behaviour in school

- **Family relationship**

Conflict arises over several things;

➢Immature behaviour

➢General attitude and level of respect shown to parents

➢Quarrelling with siblings

➢Relationships with relatives, especially aged grandparents in the house.

- **Values and morals**

Parents are concerned especially with;

➢Drinking, smoking, and use of drugs

➢Language and speech

➢Basic honesty

➢Sexual behaviour

➢Obeying the law, staying out of trouble

➢Going to church

Adolescent-Parent expectations

This section explores the kind of parents that adolescents want and need.

- **Parental interest and help**

One of the ways adolescents know their parents care about them is by the interest they show in them and by the willingness to stand beside them and help them when needed.

Adolescents want affection from their parents. They especially resent parents who are away from home too much.

Other parents also overdo the companionship, trying to act like adolescents instead of being and adult with interest in the adolescent and willing to help.

The attention adolescents get from their parents depends partially on the birth order and spacing of the children

- **Listening, understanding and talking.**

One of the most frequent complaints of adolescents is that their parents do not listen to their ideas or try to understand their feelings and points of view.

Adolescents want parents who will talk with them, and not at them, in a sympathetic way.

One key to harmonious parent-adolescent relationships is communication. Research indicates that the respect parents show for adolescent opinions contributes greatly to the climate and happiness of the home.

- **Love and acceptance**

One way love is shown is knowing and then accepting adolescents exactly as they are, including their faults.

Parents must be determined to give affection and to see the child as a human being entitled to human attributes.

Adolescents do not want to feel that their parents expect them to be perfect before they will love and accept them.

Acceptance may also include *nurturance,* a parental attitude of warmth and helpful assistance toward the adolescent.

Rejection is the opposite, reflecting indifference, nagging, or hostility.

- Trust

Adolescents want their parents to trust them completely unless they have given their parents reason for distrust.

Some parents seem to have more difficulty trusting their adolescents than others do. Such parents tend to project their own fears, anxieties, and guilt onto the adolescent.

The most fearful parents are usually those who are most insecure or who had personal difficulties themselves while growing up.

For instance, mothers who conceived out of wedlock are those most concerned about their own daughters' dating and sexual behaviour.

- Autonomy

One goal of every adolescent is to be accepted as an autonomous adult.

Adolescents want and need parents who will grant them autonomy in slowly increasing amounts as they learn to use it, rather than all at once.

Too much freedom too quickly granted may be interpreted as rejection.

The opposite extreme from rejection is continued domination and the encouragement of over dependency. Parents who encourage dependency needs that become demanding and excessive, even into adulthood, are interfering with their child's ability to function as an effective adult.

- **Discipline**

There are four basic patterns of family control; autocratic, democratic, permissive and erratic.

Democratic control promotes adolescents independence and creativity.

Autocratic control usually produces a combination of rebellion and dependency. Adolescents are taught to be submissive, obey and to be dependent upon their parents.

Parental over control has been found to be related to low scholastic and educational performance.

UNIT FIVE

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN ADOELSCENCE

ADOLESCENTS AND SEX

Sexuality and Adolescence

- From all the stages of the adolescent's growth, the most intense is the increase of sexual urge and the new and often mysterious emotions and thoughts accompanying them.

- One important issue for both boys and girls at this stage is to manage to reconcile sexuality with the other sides of self-perception which is developing without conflicts and stress.

- This is not so easy in modern societies, where the roles of the sexes are changing all the time and a strange mixture of freedom and prudishness has spread.

Sexuality and Adolescence [contd]

- The problem is even more serious for the boys, leastwise the early years of adolescence.

- For reasons not completely understood – although organic (and harmonic) and psychological factors must be important – boys, mostly than the girls, sense their sexual urge more intensely and it is difficult to ignore them.

- For the girls, the sexual urge are more diffusive and vague and are mostly related to other needs such as the need for love, self-esteem, self-ascertainment and tenderness.

- For many girls at the beginning of adolescence, a limited and temporary denial of the sexual urge may be even more possible than the boys, "but it may also become a more relaxed way of adjustment".

Sexuality and Adolescence [contd]

- Besides all differences between them, both girls and boys are occupied with common issues around sex. They want to know more about practical issues such as
  - copulation,
  - onanism,
  - conception,
  - pregnancy,
  - birth control and
  - sexually transmitted diseases.
- Also, they wish to know how to place sex within their own frame of values so that they can be able to establish satisfactory and constructive relationships with individuals of the same sex and the opposite sex.
- Most young people have very little help on these issues from the controversial, full of conflicts and hypocrisy world they live in.

Sexuality and Adolescence [contd]

- During the first dates, around the age of 14-15, sex usually means touching.

- On average, boys start having sex earlier than girls, but by the age of 17, more than half boys and more than one thirds of the girls will have had sexual intercourse, while at the age of 18, the three fourths of the boys and half girls will have had sex.

- Probably, most adolescents are more sexually experienced and have greater knowledge than their parents used to have at the same age, but they tend to be really uncontrolled.

- Most adolescents continue wishing a loving relationship with a companion who would be important to them.

- Unfortunately, most adolescent sexual intercourses are circumstantial. Sex takes place without caution and so are the possible pregnancies that follow.

Adolescence and sexuality [contd]

- It is therefore important for the parents to teach their children practical knowledge on contraception before needed and not when it is too late.

- In Greece, only a few teenagers are very well informed about sexual issues, while most teenagers have adequate information.

- Also, city youngsters have the opportunity to familiarize with sexual issues at an early stage in contrast to other youngsters living in non-urban areas (villages - rural areas).

- It is completely groundless to believe that an undesired pregnancy can never occur.

Adolescence and sexuality [contd]

- The sad reality ascertains that many adolescent girls get pregnant every year. Pregnancy during adolescence constitutes a phenomenon which takes worrying dimensions globally.

- Exception to the rule is those countries which apply officially a program of sexual education. Juvenile mothers, with all those dramatic consequences the birth of a child from another "child" imply, grow in numbers continuously.

Sex Education

- Sex education should begin in:
  - the home before the child starts to school,
  - should be continued during the elementary school years,

- It should receive much attention by both the home and the school during the adolescent period.

- Adolescence brings many new problems of a sexual nature that are of only small concern to the child.

Transmitting knowledge and applying it in our way of life becomes the basic target for sexual education and aims at:

• Prepare the youngsters for adolescence and make then capable of accepting the physical and functional changes calmly and naturally without emotional judgments.

• Help adolescents realize the relation between sexual life, making love and human relationships and free them from fears disgrace and guilt.

• Help adolescents adapt associations and views on sexual life which would be in harmony with their own personality.

• Help adolescents make their own emotional and sexual choices. Teach them to respect those who choose to have a sexual relationship as well as those who do not.

• Stress the importance of responsibility and respect of sexual relationships both in and out marriage.

Lack of sexual education creates problems such as:

• Undesired pregnancy during adolescence with all those possible dangers may appear

• Transmitting sexual diseases

• Sexual abuse

• Ignorance facing sexual problems

Sexual education during adolescence is not a simple matter. It needs proper and coordinated effort in order to achieve the desired results. It is certain that it constitutes an imperative need.

Conclusion

- Sexuality is a physical and natural component of human nature and comprises an inseparable element of every individual's personality, whether an adolescent, a man or a woman.

- It is a basic need and side of human existence which no one can isolate from the other sides of life.

- It is a form of psychic energy we carry inside all the times as an expression of our existence.

- It actuates us to make relationships which offer us emotional security, warmth and happiness.

- It is a powerful force which influences our thought, our feelings, our sensitivities, our choices and our physical and spiritual health.

- Development of protocols concerning the care and promotion of adolescent sexual health

- Proper sexual history keeping

- Training of newly-employed health professionals on issues of adolescent sexual education

- Additional education for professionals in primary health care and midwifery – gynaecology departments.

- Secure convenient access of the adolescents to information related to sexual health

- Development, organization and proper function of the local and community services related to sexual health

- Information and prevention on contraception, sexually transmitted diseases and undesired pregnancy.

ADOLESCENTS AND DRUGS

INTRODUCTION

- Alcohol and drug use poses significant risks for the healthy development of adolescents, yet substances of abuse are often readily accessible at school, at home, and in the community.

Signs of intoxication vary by type of drug. Here are common signs a teen has recently used drugs or alcohol:

- Impaired judgment and motor skills
- Nausea and vomiting
- Lack of coordination
- More talkative than usual
- Rapid heartbeat and breathing
- Bloodshot eyes
- Visual or auditory hallucinations
- Marked difference in appetite

- Extreme moods, like euphoria or depression
- Slurred speech
- Agitation, irritability, anxiety, paranoia, or confusion
- Tremors, shaking
- Excessive energy or drowsiness

The following items are often used in connection with illicit drugs:

- Pipes and rolling papers
- Syringes
- Razor blades
- Small mirror or piece of glass
- Metal spoons or foil shaped into a bowl
- Small glass vials or plastic baggies

- Latex balloons
- Pacifiers, hard candy, lollipops
- Sugar cubes, Altoids
- Altered soda cans or bottles
- Empty medicine bottles/blister packs
- Excessive use of incense, cologne, or room deodorizers like Febreze

Alcohol

- Other names for alcohol: Booze, liquor, hard A, sauce

- Terms for intoxication: Drunk, wasted, tipsy, trashed, smashed, gone

- Common settings for alcohol use: Alcohol is consumed in a variety of settings where supervision is limited (e.g., friends' homes, secluded woods, or parks at night).

- Paraphernalia: Shot or bar glasses, a funnel with a long tube attached, product advertising

- **Lingering effects:** Consuming large amounts of alcohol can result in a hangover. Symptoms include: headache, nausea, dehydration and thirst, grogginess and fatigue, and sensitivity to light and sound.

Dangers of starting young:

- The younger someone starts drinking, the more likely it is that he or she will develop alcohol problems at some point in life.

- Because the adolescent brain is still developing, drinking at a young age can have serious effects on the brain, especially to the prefrontal cortex, which is involved in decision making and impulse control.

- Heavy drinking in the teen years is also linked to learning and memory difficulties.

Other information:

- Sweet malt liquor beverages are often an adolescent's first introduction to alcohol.

- Kegs (metal barrels containing 15 gallons of beer) are often found at large parties as they are relatively inexpensive and are a convenient mechanism for transporting large quantities of alcohol.

- A funnel with a long plastic tube attached, sometimes called a "beer bong," can be used to consume alcohol very quickly.

Overdose information:

- Drinking too much alcohol, especially in a short amount of time, can result in alcohol poisoning, a potentially life-threatening condition.

- Symptoms include vomiting, slow or irregular breathing, pale or blue skin, seizures, and unconsciousness.

- How much alcohol is "too much" depends on a variety of factors including age, weight, sex, rate of alcohol consumption, and whether or not the person has recently eaten.

- In addition, taking alcohol in combination with other drugs (either prescription or illicit) can enhance the effects of alcohol and increase the danger of overdose.

- For information regarding drug interactions, consult your pharmacist.

Effects of Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs on the Developing Adolescent Brain

- Risk-taking may be based in biology, but that does not diminish the possible unhealthy consequences of alcohol and other drugs and tobacco on the developing teen brain.

- Recent brain research with magnetic resonance imaging suggests that alcohol impacts adolescents differently than it does adults.

- Young people are more vulnerable to the negative effects of alcohol on the hippocampus—the part of the brain that regulates working memory and learning.

- Consequently, heavy use of alcohol and other drugs during the teen years can result in lower scores on tests of memory and attention in one's early to mid-20s.

Effects [contd]

- People who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to become alcohol-dependent than those who wait until they are 21.

- Teens also tend to be less sensitive than adults to alcohol's sedative qualities. Sedation in response to alcohol is one of the ways the body protects itself, since it is impossible to keep drinking once asleep or passed out.

- Teenagers are able to stay awake longer with higher blood alcohol levels than older drinkers can.

- This biological difference allows teens to drink more, thereby exposing themselves to greater cognitive impairment and perhaps brain damage from alcohol poisoning.

Effects [contd]

- There are also striking differences in the way nicotine affects adolescent and adult smokers.

- Nicotine results in cell damage and loss throughout the brain at any age, but in teenagers the damage is worse in the hippocampus, the mind's memory bank.

- Compared to adults, teen smokers experience more episodes of depression and cardiac irregularities, and are more apt to become quickly and persistently nicotine-dependent.

Effects [contd]

- Drugs such as cocaine and amphetamines target dopamine receptor neurons in the brain, and damage to these neurons may affect adolescent brain development for life in the areas of impulse control and ability to experience reward.

- Other effects of substance abuse in adolescents include delays in developing executive functions (judgement, planning and completing tasks, meeting goals) and overblown and immature emotional responses to situations

ADOLESCENTS AND PORNOGRAPHY

Introduction

Pornography has significant effects during all stages of family life.

A cross-sectional survey revealed that 87 percent of Australians aged 15 to 29 years had ever viewed pornography.

According to a large survey of American college students, 51 percent of males and 32 percent of females admitted to viewing pornography for the first time before they were 13 years old.

1. Effects on Adolescents

1.1 Sexual Development

<u>Pornography viewing</u> among teenagers disorients them during that developmental phase when they have to learn how to handle their sexuality and when they are most vulnerable to uncertainty about their sexual beliefs and moral values.

A study of 2,343 adolescents found that sexually explicit Internet material significantly increased their uncertainties about sexuality.

The study also showed that increased exposure to sexually explicit Internet material increased favorable attitudes toward <u>sexual exploration with others outside of marriage</u> and decreased marital commitment to the other spouse.

1.1 Sexual Development

Another study by Todd G. Morrison, professor of psychology at the University of Saskatchewan, and colleagues found that adolescents exposed to high levels of pornography had lower levels of sexual self-esteem.

Based on a national longitudinal survey of 12 to 17 year olds, Dr. Rebecca Collins et al reported that adolescents who viewed more sexual content on television were more likely to initiate sexual intercourse and progress to more advanced noncoital sexual activities over the following year.

Television that included only talk about sexual intercourse bore similar results to television that actually depicted sexual conduct.[7]

1.2 Mental Health

A significant relationship also exists between frequent pornography use and feelings of loneliness, including major depression.

Frequent pornography consumption alters the brain in ways similar to the neurological alterations of those addicted to:

- cocaine,
- alcohol, and
- methamphetamines.

Viewing pornography can engender feelings of shame:

2. Parental Involvement

Although U.S. adolescents indicate their preferred source of sexual information is their parents.

More than half of them report they have learned about intercourse, pregnancy, and birth control from <u>television</u> and

Half of teenage women report they first learned about intercourse from magazines.

2. Parental Involvement

A study of 1,300 eight- to thirteen-year-old girls found that, among those who engaged in "cybersex," 95 percent of the parents were completely unaware of their children's involvement.

Compared to adolescents who do not search for pornography online, adolescents who search for pornography online are about three times as likely to have parents who do not monitor their behaviour at all (or very little).

Compared to those who do not seek out pornography, those who seek Internet pornography are three times as likely to give a poor rating of their attachment to their parent.

CONCLUSION

Also, parents may disclose their struggle with the addiction to pornography to their children, intentionally or unintentionally, thereby distorting their children's sexual development

TEENAGE PREGNANCY

- Teenage pregnancy and the consequent motherhood are among the major societal problems confronting the contemporary global community. The problem has engendered as much analysis and policy discussion in Western Industrialised societies like the U.S.A. as in the less developed nations of Africa. In Ghana for example, one report estimates that nearly one-third ( ) of child birth recorded in public hospitals occurred to women under nineteen(19) years of age. (Xinhua, 1996). The situation is even more dramatic in the rural areas and small to medium sized towns which are often under represented in the hospital birth statistics.

CAUSES

- Buor Daniel(1994) in an article captioned, "Teenage Pregnancy, its reper-' cussions" was of the view that the eradication of cultural institutions with the dawn of modernization, urbanization, early marriages and financial hardships, peer group influence, lack of exposure of the youth to family sex education, rapid physical development of teenage girls, law level of female education, immoral behaviour of some parents and teachers, and myths on sexual abstinence were responsible for the upsurge of teenage pregnancy in Ghana in recent time.

1. **Modernization:** Buor (1994) explained that with the onset of modernization, certain traditional institutions gave way. These were considered inimical to social development and to the cause of the alien political hegemony. Among these institutions were puberty rites which hitherto served as a control mechanism to pre-marital sex.

2. The process of **urbanization** which augmented the coming of modernization has helped further degenerate traditional norms and values. The heterogeneity of the urban society has led to the emergence of urban subcultures which least juxtaposes with traditional institutions. The decadence of such traditional values has partly led to an increase in sexual activity among unmarried adolescents (Gyebi Garbrah, 1987). In Ghana, many urban dwellers face serious accommodation problems. This compels adolescents in such families to sleep away from home either with friends or with relatives. They end up falling into bad company and sometimes promiscuous lives.

3. Poverty: In the U. S. A. it has been reported that teenage pregnancy and child birth are disproportionally common among poor people of all races (Farley, 1995). A national Research Council (1985) report suggests that while a large number of teenagers of all classes and races are sexually active, most poor teenagers of all classes and races are sexually active, most poor teenagers maybe initiated into sex at a slightly younger age than the non-poor. Anderson (1991) also found that in poor neighbourhoods people experience less control over many aspects of their lives. Teenagers in the poor neighbourhoods, therefore, felt less control over whether or not they got pregnant and were less likely to try to prevent pregnancy

4. **Closely linked with poverty is economic hardships**. Economic hardships force girls into sexual relationship with men who get them pregnant. Parents and girls lack funds for their upkeep. Girls are inclined to accept the advances of their benefactors. There are also instances where due to economic hardships, some parents drive their daughters onto the street to look for money and fend for themselves. Sometimes, the business activities of some parents take them away from home for long periods and detract their attention from the moulding of their children's character. In some instances parents give out their daughters as maids in the households of educated people in the cities in the expectation that they would grow up with refined manners, good social skills and eventually find good suitors and family lives of their own. Such girls in most cases become victims of poor supervision and care by their guardians in the city.

5. **The Media is blamable for influencing negatively the sexual attitudes of the adolescent.** According to Phyllis Antwi(1995)," the media bombard our minds and portray unrealistic and clouded images of sex related issues without making known or showing the consequences of such acts." She explained that pictures which made sex look attractive such as boys and girls necking or kissing shown on screens without any reference whatsoever to the consequences become very deceptive and create a negative reflection on the way of adolescents' thinking.

6. **Putting teenage pregnancy into a historical perspective**, it is noted that in some traditional societies in Africa, girls are routinely given away in marriage at or shortly after puberty. The explanation offered for this is that in an environment with a high mortality rate and limited life expectancy, the procreative role of young women is deemed very essential and imperative. In some countries, girls and young women may not be given the opportunity to attend school and are expected to marry out at young age. According to Gyebi Garbrah, (1987) more than 30% of Ghanaian females between the ages of 15 years and 19 years have ever married.

7. Isolation of teenagers from family planning and sex education is causing teenage fertility. The argument some make is that the exposure of the youth to family planning and sex education will open the floodlights of immorality since they would have been aware of contraceptive methods. Another group is of the opinion that it would be better for teenagers to be made aware of contraceptive methods and encouraged to use them than for them to be ignorant and bear unwanted children or endanger their lives.

8. **Parental support to teenage girls**. Ankrah et al (1994) in a study found that some parents offered support for their teenage girls' pregnancy. Mari, one of the subjects of the study was cited as saying that her mother urged her either to learn a trade or find a husband, because she was not doing well at school. According to Mari, her mother was happy with her when she became pregnant since the ancestral line would be kept alive. To her, children are God's gift to mankind. She was willing to help her daughter to take care of the children and therefore urged her to have as many as she could.

9. Peer Pressure from teenagers attending co-educational institutions and having frequent associations with members of the opposite sex encourages early sexual experiences. Sex education is generally taught in schools among teenagers themselves. Many girls are pushed into sexual relations because as one victim puts it, " I was following what all my friends at school were saying and doing." Others feel that they will become objects of ridicule and scorn if they were in school without boy friends. Some girls who have reached puberty believe that up to a certain stage in life, **abstinence from sex could lead to mental instability**, thus, they are compelled to go for boy friends. In some instances, teenagers are strongly influenced by the myths surrounding virginity and moral chastity. It is believed among some that **abstinence from sex up to a certain age would result in some abnormal behaviour and physical morphological changes.**

CONSEQUENCES

1. **Most of the teenagers do not work and therefore have no money to take care of themselves while pregnant.** They usually suffer from under-nourishment and deliver babies with low birth weight less than 2.5kg with some of them dying soon after birth.

2. **Prolonged labour:** Most of the teenagers are not physically prepared for child bearing, they therefore suffer from a prolonged labour which most often results in the death of the mother and child or either of them.

3. **Abortions are often the result of unwanted pregnancies.** The teenager becomes a victim of abortion since she does not desire the pregnancy. Abortions are sometimes fraught with premature deaths of teenagers. Most teenagers abort through unorthodox means which often damages the womb and results in complications and death.

4. **Child abandonment and infanticide are common**. This is due to the fact that the child's parents are themselves children who are not prepared financially and socially to father or mother a child. Hence cases of dumping of unwanted infants into pit latrines, and drowning of unwanted babies are very common.

5. **The children of teen mothers are likely to suffer developmentally.** They are disadvantaged in cognitive development and in pre-school and elementary school functioning and are more likely to have learning and social adjustment problems as adolescence when compared with children boom to older mothers. They are also more likely to become teen parents themselves.

6. Population Explosion

7. Financial burden on government

CONTROL

1. Information, education and other outreach and counselling programmes for teenagers right from their homes and onset of their school life should be vigorously pursued.
2. Parents should as much as possible bring up their children in strict moral discipline. They need to be frank when answering or counselling their children on matters pertaining to their sexuality. It must be prompt, accurate and to the point. Preferably it should be given in simple, understandable terms without embarrassment.

3. Family life education should be encouraged in schools as well as the organisation of series of debates, symposia back education with films and video shows aimed at informing the youth about the dangers of early sex.

4. More young people should be encouraged to offer themselves as voluntary agents of the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) so that teenagers can always feel very free to interact with then.

THE BELIEF CRISIS (NIHILISM)

The adolescent's ability to reason in the abstract and to question the basis of the norms and values cherished by society presupposes the existence of a crisis especially when satisfying answers are not attained. To either believe or disbelieve what society stands for in his/her search for identity has an inevitable impact on the adolescent's personal adjustment. For, whereas the act of believing provides the energy as well as incentive for overcoming the obstacles which inevitably confront all youth, the disbelieving adolescent becomes anxious and thus loses his/her sense of direction.

- Mitchel (1975) was of the view that the inability to believe in self or what society stands for, forms the nucleus of the belief crisis in adolescence. Nihilism as a doctrine believes that there are no objective basis for assessing the rightness or wrongness of moral principles and actions.

Mitchel distinguished between three (3) types of nihillistic tendencies.

These are:

- Transitory, (ii) Reflective (iii) Psychogenic

TRANSITORY NIHILISM: This type of nihilism is nurtured by the moral structure. Though its repercussions could be serious, transitory nihilism is short lived and commonly subsides with increasing age. According to Mitchel transitory nihilism originates from the prolific mental growth during adolescence which provides the individual with facilities to handle problems requiring systematic analysis. With these mental skills, the adolescent reassesses society. He/she questions the authenticity of moral beliefs and values of society. Example Gerontocracy, i.e. The respect for the adult or the aged.

The adolescent is new to such ventures and does not know how to handle disillusionment. He/she is equally unskilled and unable to cope with the lots of information which his/her tender mind is exposed to. This leads to anxiety.

Theories of adolescence hold that at this stage of human development, the individual is afraid to be himself/her and at the same time afraid to be anyone else, Plunged into a chaotic situation of this sort, the adolescent feels helpless and believes for the first time that he/she and life are really "nothing" Those adolescents for whom this thought becomes an obsession, eventually realises that nobody is anybody and the conclusion they draw is that everything is nothing.

Mitchel identified social reality and the constant demand upon the adolescent to adjust to someone or something else as the factors that convince the adolescent that he/she is becoming less and less important.

Notwithstanding the fact that transitory nihilism exposes the adolescent to cynicism (self centred), skepticism and pessimism, it is believed that the adolescent stands to benefit from this experience:

First, it reduces the emotional pain that results from conflicting beliefs. Secondly, it serves as a source of philosophic and aesthetic beliefs which temporarily eases the painful characteristics of normal adolescent development.

It is therefore viewed as a temporary reaction to the stress facing the adolescent. It thus results in the maintenance of equilibrium within the adolescent.