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ANOTHER LOOK TO ADOLESCENCE: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Abstract

Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. An age, where life changes from every aspect i.e. the way we think, we behave, we speak, physical, mental or psychological changes. During adolescence, one is always in search of his/her individual identity and always wants to be center of attraction. Adolescence is a period where one develops curiosity to know everything, to do every denied thing, also development of will power, attitude and feeling of being the best in the world. It is this period which drafts the character, attitude and identity of the person. Adolescence is a period which is initiated from immaturity and ends into maturity. Our surrounding i.e. friends, family and society influences us and plays a major role in drives us to development of our good or bad character during adolescence. Also the realization of social responsibilities occurs during this period. This paper deals with adolescence and its problems and solutions. Also this paper highlights the physical and psychological changes occurring during adolescence.

Index Terms— Adolescence, attitude, changes, character, physical, psychological

Introduction

Adolescence is a period of transition when the individual transits from child to an adult, immature to mature. It is a period when rapid psychological and physical change in an individual. It is a period where individuals face many crises and dilemmas. It is a period of transition from dependency to autonomy. Adolescence is taken from a latin word which means to grow into maturity. It roughly corresponds to the teenage years.

This is the first of the many developmental stages of our life. It is transformation of child to adult by learning basic skills to become a responsible adult. During these phase, adolescents must integrate various roles into a consistent self-identity, it plays an important role in the formation of a pro-social adult.

During adolescence, the final decisions are taken by parents. For example, if an individual wants to go for movies, his/her parents want them to study. Parents claim that they have more practical knowledge and experience and tend to treat adolescent like children.

Adolescence is a sociological construct like other developmental phases in human growth and development, but unlike others it causes a lot of ambiguities. Adolescence like youth is a unique period of joy, vigor, opportunities as well as challenges as the individuals begins to appreciate more vividly in his/her environment in a more précised manner.

In essence, the meaning of adolescence and the ages at which it begins and ends differs from culture to culture, like most sociological phenomena. (Kimmel & Weiner, 1985), Eke(2004) observed that if the beginning of adolescence can be defined, the definition of its end is not really tidy. The difficulty arises from gross variability in the biological features of adulthood; namely menstruation in girls and breaking of voice in boys.

Scientists of Human Development separate the life span in to various stages:

Infancy

Childhood

Adolescence

Young adulthood

Middle adulthood

Senior adulthood

The Adolescence Transition Period

The adolescence transition period is also coined as a period of storm, stress and strain. It causes various and lot of ambiguities in life. It is a phase where one does not know where he/she stands and as a result the uncertainties create havocs in life.

Stages of Adolescence

First Stage:

Early adolescence generally secondary school years in which there is rapid intellectual and physical growth, confusion and a feeling of insecurity, as the person takes up adult sexual characteristics.

Second Stage:

The middle adolescence coincides roughly with senior secondary school age. Primarily the person seeks self-reliance and psychological independence from parents; becomes comfortably involved in expanding peer relationships, achieves the capacity for intimate friendship and learns to handle heterosexual relationships.

Third stage:

It is a stage of late adolescence. Child entering into high institution or is already there or is learning a trade is in this stage. At this point, it is expected that the young person may have formed a reasonably clear and consistent sense of personal identity and is committed to some fairly definite social roles, value systems and life goals.

Physical and Biological changes

Adolescence is biological in nature. It is marked by biological changes in girls and boys. As a matter of fact, just before puberty, a phase called pre-adolescent growth spurt occurs. For girls it occurs at an age of 9 to 12 and for boys at 11 to 14 years. During this period, secondary sexual characteristics emerge in individuals.

In girls, it is marked by rounding of hips, breast development with appearance of pubic hairs and menstruation and in boys it is marked by pubic hairs, facial hairs, breaking of voice etc. these changes are biologically induced.

The young person's reactions to physical changes may range from pleasure and pride expectation to fear and bewilderment. Good looks of opposite sex are often mentioned. In boys, body build, height and the like are often noted when boys are being sized up. Characteristic thing or feature of this period is increase in size i.e. weight and height.

The rapid growth of height and weight during adolescence is for 3-4 years, at an average of 12.6 years for girls and 14.6 years for boys. During this period it is not uncommon to gain a height of 8 inches and 18 to 22 kilograms weight per year. Muscular and skeletal development is much rapid. Legs usually grow more than hand and body stem anticipate by several years.

Various other physical changes are listed below:

Perspiration and Body odour

Voracious eating

Skin blemishes

Awkward and Clumsy postures

Ethnocentrism and self-consciousness

Increased sexual activity

Tiredness and laziness

Anti-Social Behaviour

Adolescence: Social

Adolescence is marked majorly by social changes for both boys and girls. Such factors as when adolescent gets first salary or first job, when he/she can vote, when he/she leaves home determines when his/her transition occurs from childhood to adulthood. The length of this period is a social phenomenon.

The problems adolescents face during the long period of growing up have social roots. Deviation and physical changes can create many problems. Society also creates problems for adolescents. Adolescents in western societies behave differently than adolescents in eastern countries owing to varying expectations, social norms and family structure.

Factors Affecting The Transition Period

Easy transition from childhood to adulthood will depend partly upon individual, partly upon individual, partly on obstructions or environmental aids and partly on their own experiences.

The factors affecting the transition period are:

Speed of transition

Length of transition

Discontinuities in training

Degree of dependency

Ambiguous status

Degree of realism

Motivation

As the barriers to growing up are lowered or removed by parents, teachers and society, the adolescent can move smoothly in the direction of reaching the goal of adulthood and motivation to make the transition is normally increased.

Parents- Children Relationships

Positive family relations promote the adoption of values. Also, the acceptance by adolescents of the values transmitted by the family is facilitated by the coherence that they perceive between what adults say and what behavior they practice. Another factor that facilitates the transmission of values is the consonance between the two parents.

Young people must be helped to develop social skills, and the development of all other skills allows them to live with awareness in every context of life. The key competences for lifelong learning are necessary for personal awareness and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment, essential in a knowledgeable society such as ours. They provide more flexibility for young students and workers to adapt more quickly to a changing world which is increasingly interconnected and competitive.

The key competences are all interdependent, and every time the emphasis is on critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision-making and the positive management of emotions. The eight key competences are: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, cultural and expression awareness.

Subsequently we need to focus on schools that, as secondary agencies of socialization after families should provide useful tools to detect risk factors and promote those of protection, to form men of tomorrow and provide the necessary soft skills, useful for every field of existence.

Adolescence becomes longer, and a new phase of the life cycle emerges: the phase of the young adult. It stands between adolescence and maturity, which includes the assumption of responsibility at both a

working and emotional level, making the whole process even more complex. The nuclear family models, stepfamilies or extended and those mono parenting spread out – with an increase of 22% over the past 5 years of marital separations - with all the challenges to be met by the children involved.

The 4As2PsAD- Model

The following are the inherent tasks of adolescents identified with the acronym, the 4As2PsAD-model (Havighurst, 1988).

A: Achieving new and more mature relationships with age mates of both sexes;

A: Achieving masculine or feminine social roles;

A: Accepting ones physique and using the body effectively;

A: Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults;

P: Preparing for marriage and family life;

P: Preparing for an economic career;

A: Achieving a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behaviour -developing an ideology;

D: Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour.

Mobile Mania

Cell phones in opinion of students are essential for communication and students addicted to mobile phones rates 64% in recent years. Students are connected to each other globally via World Wide Web and personal, face to face communication is disappearing. In a research, there were 68100 cell phones in India in 2000 while these rate grew to 78 million in 2010. Students use technology as a crutch to avoid true interaction. They use technology, internet and social media to post their new photos & status to achieve gratification.

Youth is passing through negative psychological effects of addiction to mobile phones such as chaos, disturbance and mental depression. 75% of the cell phone users ages between 12-17 years. They send/ receive 1500 texts per month. They use cell phones for various usages such as frequent texting, talking in late nights, social media, gaming but their major usage is to remain in touch with family/ parents.

They do not share cell phones and they have addictive pattern of behaviour. Their academic performance gets poorer due to extent usage of cell phones.

Conclusion and Outlook

As the period of adolescence is a challenge, the discussions related to it are also a challenge. This paper highlights every area connected to adolescence i.e. physical and mental growth, hormonal changes and habits, education and parents children relationships. He/ she should realize their moral and social responsibilities with a sense of commitment instead of turning to wrong path. Also the role of parents and families is crucial in development of character & identity of a person, also their central development by educating them to higher studies.

Parents can build positive climate in family. The educational institutes such as school must include not only subjects but also practical knowledge and experiments. There should be activities to strengthen relational, emotional, adaptive resources of children conducted with support of psychologists and educators. Also we can conclude that due to over usage of mobile phones, adolescents develop addictive behaviour and habits which disconnect them from their friends and family.

During the adolescence period, the growth of children can be done positively by proper counseling and creating positive environment and guiding them through practical knowledge which make them realize their social and moral responsibilities and thus guide them to a better life.

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Dr. Mitsu B. Patel
Assistant Professor
Department of Social work
Parul University
Vadodara, Gujarat, India

Mr. Jay G. Raval
Assistant Professor
Department of Humanities
MBICT Engineering College
New V V Nagar, Gujarat, India