
UNIT 1 PHYSICAL AND MOTOR DEVELOPMENT, PSYCHO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Psychosocial Development: Definition
 - 1.2.1 Psycho Social Development
- 1.3 Erickson's Theory of Psycho Social Development
- 1.4 Major Factors Contributing to Psycho Social Development
 - 1.4.1 Child Rearing Practices
 - 1.4.2 Temperament
 - 1.4.3 Relationship with Peers
 - 1.4.4 Pro Social Behaviour and Aggression
 - 1.4.5 Gender
 - 1.4.6 Play
 - 1.4.7 Sibling Relationships
- 1.5 Physical Development
 - 1.5.1 Early Childhood
 - 1.5.2 Late Childhood
 - 1.5.3 Major Changes
 - 1.5.4 Late Childhood or Preteen Years (9-12 Years of Age)
 - 1.5.5 Motor Development
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Unit End Questions
- 1.8 Suggested Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The optimal development of children is considered vital to society, so it is important to understand the physical, motor and social development of children as they grow up from an infant to a toddler to an adolescent to a young adult to an adult. A human child is unique in that unlike other species, they are dependent on adults for many years until they become adults. This is not so in the case of animals amongst whom, the moment they are born or a few days later they are almost independent of their parents. Increased research and interest in child development has resulted in new theories and strategies, with specific focus on strategies that would promote development of the child in different domains. In this unit we are going to deal with definition of child development, the process and growth of child development, the various factors that influence growth and development etc.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe key developmental concepts that impact the social, physical and motor development of children;

- describe the elements of social and emotional wellness in children;
- explain Erickson's eight stages of psychosocial development;
- identify key social and emotional needs of children; and
- analyse the role of socialising agents in creating self-awareness about the positive psychosocial and emotional development of children.

1.2 PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT : DEFINITION

Child development, in general refers to biological and psychological changes that occur in human beings between birth and the end of adolescence, as the individual progresses from dependency to increasing independence. These developmental changes may be strongly influenced by genetic factors and events surrounding the environment. Developmental changes may occur as a result of genetically controlled processes known as maturation, the interaction with the environmental factors and specific learning that takes place as part of socialisation. It may be added that development depends to a large extent on the interaction between the hereditary factors with the environmental factors. The environment here refers to many factors including family, school, peer, religious institutions, rituals, culture, norms and mores that are existent in the society within which the individual is growing.

There are various stages in child development and the progress made by the child in one stage influences the child's progressing to the next stage of development and the manner in which the child grows up in the present stage of development impacts the growth in the next stage. Thus each period is a continuum with individual differences regarding start and end with various levels of development between the beginning of the continuum and end of the continuum.

Useful understanding of child development requires systematic inquiry about developmental events. Different aspects of development involve different patterns and causes of change, so there is no simple way to summarise child development. Nevertheless, the answering of certain questions about each topic can yield comparable information about various aspects of developmental change. The following questions are relevant here:

- 1) What develops? What relevant aspects of the individual change over a period of time?
- 2) What are the rate and speed of development?
- 3) What are the mechanisms of development ?
- 4) Are there individual differences in the normal and relevant developmental changes?
- 5) Are there population differences in the various aspects of development (for example, differences in the development of boys and of girls)?

Empirical research that attempts to answer these questions may follow a number of patterns. Initially, observational research in naturalistic conditions may be needed to develop a narrative describing and defining an aspect of developmental change, such as changes in reflex actions in the first year. This type of work may be followed by correlational studies, collecting information about chronological age and some type of development such as vocabulary growth, and correlational

statistics can be used to state change. Such studies examine the characteristics of children at different ages. These methods may involve longitudinal studies, in which a group of children are re-examined on a number of occasions as they get older, or cross-sectional studies, in which groups of children of different ages are tested once and compared with each other, or there may be a combination of these approaches. Some child development studies examine the effects of experience or heredity by comparing characteristics of different groups of children in a necessarily non-randomized design. Other studies can use randomized designs to compare outcomes for groups of children who receive different interventions or educational treatments.

1.2.1 Psycho Social Development

The term psycho social development refers to the developing capacity of the child from birth through early years of life to

- i) form close and secure adult and peer relationships.
- ii) experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways.
- iii) explore the environment and learn in the context of family, community, and culture.

Early mental health or early social emotional wellness is concerned with developing the capacity of the child to experience, regulate, and express emotions from close and secure interpersonal relationships.

Human child depends heavily on adults to help them feed themselves, clothe and take care of all their needs. They cry which signals discomfiture in the child makes the parent run to the child and attend to the needs of the child. If none is available and the child's needs are not catered to not only there will be retardation in growth and development but also the child may not survive. Hence the maternal instinct and the family's care and concern allow the human child to be catered to and taken care of from birth to the time he grows up into adult.

Through close nurturing interpersonal relationships with parents, children learn what people expect of them and what they can expect from other people in the environment. Parents make sure that the child develops in a balanced manner as is required by nature and the society. They impart many behavioural requirements on the part of the child so that the child grows up as is required by the society. They promote healthy development by giving children the needed emotional support so that the children grow up emotionally healthy. They make every effort to prevent the occurrence of any kind social emotional problems in their children, yet due to many unexpected and unscheduled events that occur in the person's life, some parents do show certain aberrations in their behaviour towards their children which in turn may bring about social and emotional problems in children. .

The drive to explore and master one's environment is inborn in humans. Children's active participation in their own learning and development is an important aspect of their growth and development. These attempts on the part of the child make the child grow up into a healthy person who can deal with any kind of problems encountered in the environment. The context of family is where children learn to share and communicate their feelings and their experiences in regard to the varied aspects of life with significant others. A developing sense of oneself as a competent, effective, and valued individual is an important aspect of growth and development.

1.3 ERIKSON'S THEORY OF PSYCHO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

This theory considers the growth and development of individuals through eight stages. These eight stages put forward by Erikson are developmental stages which are dependent on each other, with the present stage of development being impacted by what had gone on in the earlier stages of development and what goes on in the present stage to affect the mastery of the next stage of development. In this theory, the focus is on how the individuals learn the ways and means of coming to understand themselves, and how they understand others in the environment and what meaning they have for the individual etc.

The theory suggests that developmental change occurs throughout the life span in 8 distinct stages. Erickson explains eight stages from infancy to late adulthood, through which a healthily developing human should pass. In each stage the person confronts and hopefully masters new challenges. The challenges of stages which are not successfully completed may be expected to reappear as problems in the future. Erikson's eight stages of man were formulated, not through experimental work, but through wide - ranging experience in psychotherapy, including extensive experience with children and adolescents from low - as well as upper - and middle - social classes.

Each stage is regarded by Erikson as a "psychosocial crisis," which arises and demands resolution before the next stage can be satisfactorily gone through. According to Erikson each stage brings with it problems and conflicts which have to be resolved by the individual and that too successfully. For this parental support and understanding are needed. Socialisation is the process through which the child is made to learn the varied methods of resolving the problems and conflicts and thus become ready for facing the next stage of development. In the process of growing up, if some of the conflicts of a particular stage remains unresolved this may emerge at a later stage in the adulthood and may create difficulties for the individual. The process of socialisation is a teaching learning process in which the parents teach the child many behaviours which are essential to progress in the society. This process of socialisation helps the individual to graduate from a totally helpless infant to a youngster who can manage his affairs with confidence and also contribute to the society.

Stages of development

According to Erikson the 8 stages of development are as given below. He visualised in each stage the conflicts that arise, the strengths that develop and the outcome that result from the crisis

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|---|--|
| 1) Infancy: Birth to 18 Months : | Ego Development characterised by Trust vs. Mistrust
Basic strength: Drive and Hope |
| 2) Early Childhood: 18 Months to 3 Years: | Characterised by Autonomy vs. Shame
Basic Strengths: Self-control, Courage, and Will |
| 3) Play Age: 3 to 5 Years: | Characterised by Initiative vs. Guilt
Basic Strength: Purpose |

- 4) School Age: 6 to 12 Years: Characterised by **Industry vs. Inferiority**
Basic Strengths: Method and Competence
- 5) Adolescence: 12 to 18 Years : Characterised by **Identity vs. Role Confusion**
Basic Strengths: Devotion and Fidelity
- 6) Young adulthood: 18 to 35 : Characterised by **Intimacy and Solidarity vs. Isolation**
Basic Strengths: Affiliation and Love
- 7) Middle Adulthood: 35 to 55 or 65: Characterised by **Generativity vs. Self absorption**
Basic Strengths: Production and Care
- 8) Late Adulthood: 55 or 65 to Death: Characterised by **Integrity vs. Despair**
Basic Strengths: Wisdom

Let us take up each of these stages and deal with them and understand them.

Stage 1: Infancy : (Birth to 18 months). Trust vs Mistrust

The first stage of Erik Erikson centers around the infant's basic needs being met by the parents. The infant depends on the parents, especially the mother, for food, and comfort. The child's understanding of the world and society comes from the parents. If the parents expose the child to warmth, regularity, and dependable affection, the infant's view of the world will be one of trust. If the parents fail to provide a secure environment to meet the child's basic needs, a sense of mistrust will result. According to Erikson, the major developmental task in infancy is to learn whether or not other people, especially primary caregivers i.e. parents, regularly satisfy basic needs. If parents are consistent in providing food and not make the child go hungry etc., if they are also consistent source of comfort, and affection, an infant learns to trust them as the child experiences that he can trust the mother figure to give the needed comfort as and when needed. This leads to the development of trust in the mother figure or the care giver person and generalises to others and other aspects in the environment including the self. Thus the child not only trusts the mother, but the world and one's own self also. If on the other hand the parents or the caregiver are not dependable or reliable, if they are neglectful, the infant instead learns mistrust, that is that the world is an undependable, unpredictable, and possibly dangerous place. The child, well - handled, nurtured, and loved, develops trust and security and a basic optimism. Badly handled, the child may become insecure and mistrustful.

Stage 2: Toddlers, (2 to 3 years): Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt

As children gain increased muscular coordination and mobility, they become capable of satisfying some of their own needs. They begin to feed themselves, wash and dress themselves. If parents encourage self-sufficient behaviour, they develop a sense of autonomy, a sense of being able to handle many problems on their own. But if parents demand too much too soon, refuse to let children perform tasks of which they are capable, or ridicule early attempts at self-sufficiency, children may instead develop shame and doubt about their ability to handle problems.

If the parents take good care of the child and bring up the child to cross the stage with ease and successfully, the child would emerge from this stage sure of self,

elated with the new found control, and proud rather than ashamed. As the child gains control over eliminative functions and motor abilities, it begins to explore the surroundings. The parental encouragement and patience help foster autonomy in the child. Highly restrictive parents, however, are more likely to instill the child with a sense of doubt and reluctance to try out or take up or face new challenges.

Stage 3: Pre school: (4 to 6 years). Initiative vs guilt

The young child is learning to master his surroundings and learning the basic skills such as throwing things down, see the things will fall, pick up and again throw down and enjoy that feeling of seeing things falling down with or without noise. They learn to have good grip on holding to toys and objects, manipulating them etc. They also learn that if they push things, they will move and if they roll things they will roll and if they spin things they would spin. They enjoy these discoveries and repeatedly do these things and get a control over the action of gripping, squeezing, pulling, pushing, rolling and spinning. These provide the child confidence that many things can be performed by one's own self and that they need not depend on parents for the same. They learn to clothe themselves, even take bath and take care of many of their personal hygiene and thus are ready to go to school. At this time the child needs considerable support from parents who should encourage the child's initiatives and make sure that the child's efforts are praised where it is due. At this time there is so much of exploratory activities in the child that certain actions may be harmful or injurious to the child which fact has to be kept in mind and parents must ensure that the child does not get into any such situation. They have to politely stop the child from doing certain things that are harmful by making him understand at his own level and in his own language. At no time the parent should make things so harsh and negative that the child starts feeling guilty at his initiatives. Also remember the child may feel guilty when his initiative does not produce the desired results.

According to Erikson psychosocial crisis occurs during the "play age," or the later preschool years, during which the developing youngster learns the following:

- i) to imagine, to broaden his skills through active play of all sorts, including fantasy
- ii) to cooperate with others
- iii) to lead as well as to follow.

If at this time the child is made to feel guilty the result would be that the child may grow up into a fearful youngster who depends heavily on parents and adult figures, and does not develop the needed play skills and imagination. This is the result of feeling guilty for taking so much initiative. That is the reason Erikson termed this stage as Initiative versus Guilt.

This is also the time when the child has to learn to judge, plan and deal with certain degree of complexities in life. Erikson says that this is the time the child learns to take initiative and prepares for leadership and goal achievement roles. Accordingly the child chooses activities which are somewhat at the level of risk taking behaviour. For example, going out of the home alone without any escort or trying some complex task which may entail injury to himself, etc. All these behaviours such as the risk taking behaviours could be encouraged under strict supervision of parents and care givers who should be able to make the child understand why it is risky and how it should be handled rather than admonishing and stopping the child from the activity. These would discourage the child to take

any initiative and may also produce guilt in the child that he or she had offended the loving parent. Some times as a reaction to the parents stopping the child from these risky activities such as not being allowed to go out etc. on one's own, it causes considerable frustration to the child who in turn may manifest aggressive behaviours, such as throwing objects, hitting, or yelling.

Sometimes children take on projects they can readily accomplish, but at other times they undertake projects that are beyond their capabilities or those which interfere with other people's plans and activities. If parents and preschool teachers encourage and support children's efforts, at the same time helping them make realistic and appropriate choices, children develop initiative and independence in planning and undertaking activities. But if, instead, adults discourage the pursuit of independent activities or dismiss them as silly, children develop guilt about their needs and desires.

Stage 4: Childhood (7-12 years) Industry versus Inferiority

Children at this age are becoming more aware of themselves as individuals. They work hard at being responsible, being good and doing it right. They are now more reasonable to share and cooperate. Children understand the concepts of space and time, in more logical, practical ways, beginning to grasp, gain better understanding of cause and effect and understand calendar time. At this stage, children are eager to learn and accomplish more complex skills: reading, writing, telling time. They also get to form moral values, recognise cultural and individual differences and are able to manage most of their personal needs. Children might express their independence by being disobedient, using back talk and being rebellious.

Erikson believes that if this psychosocial crisis is handled, successfully, the child will learn how to master the more formal skills of life such as the following:

- i) Relating with peers according to rules
- ii) Progressing from free play to play that may be elaborately structured by rules and may demand formal teamwork
- iii) Mastering social studies, reading, arithmetic.
- iv) Homework is a necessity, and the need for self-discipline increases yearly.

If the earlier stages of development had been mastered successfully the child will grow up confidently and will be able to master the tasks of this developmental stage which are relatively more difficult than the earlier ones as considerable cultural and familial expectations are involved. Such children grow up to become industrious, disciplined and confident of what they are doing. They are less rebellious as compared to the frustrated children. Where the developmental tasks of the earlier period have not been successfully managed, the child will grow up with timidity, fearfulness, lack of confidence and high dependency on parents and adult figures, thereby showing poorer performance in the school and also in their relationship to their peers. The shame and guilt filled child will experience defeat and inferiority.

Erikson viewed the elementary school years as critical for the development of self-confidence. Ideally, elementary school provides many opportunities for children to achieve the recognition of teachers, parents and peers by showing creativity and innovation in many activities such as drawing, painting etc. drawing pictures, solving addition problems, writing sentences, and so on. If children are encouraged

to make and do things and are then praised for their accomplishments, they begin to demonstrate industry by being diligent. If children are instead ridiculed or punished for their efforts or if they find they are incapable of meeting their teachers' and parents' expectations, they develop feelings of inferiority about their capabilities.

Stage 5: Adolescence (13 – 19 years) Identity vs. Role Confusion

It is well known that the stage of adolescence is relatively more stressful than all other stages of development and this is not different in the case of Erikson's stages of development. During the fifth psychosocial crisis the individual, that is, who is now in the adolescent stage of development, can answer who he or she is. However there appears to be considerable role identity confusion.

At this time the adolescent has clear ideas about what all he or she wants, what are future plans and what are the goals that need to be achieved and what kind of roles that they would like to play in the society etc. At this time the peer influence is also higher which assists in the adolescent to develop a clear identity about self. According to Erikson at this time a clear time perspective develops in adolescents, is more self confident and self assured and not to self conscious and self doubting as in the early years. They tend to experiment with different roles which are more positive than negative. He actually anticipates achievement, and achieves, rather than being "paralyzed" by feelings of inferiority or by an inadequate time perspective. In later adolescence, clear sexual identity, that is, manhood or womanhood is established.

Erikson is credited with coining the term "Identity Crisis" This turning point in human development seems to be the reconciliation between 'the person one has come to be' and 'the person society expects one to become. What is unique about the stage of Identity is that it is a special sort of synthesis of earlier stages and a special sort of anticipation of later ones. Youth is a bridge between childhood and adulthood, and thus has certain special significance to the young person.

Stage 6: Young adults(20-34 years) Intimacy vs. Isolation

As the identity confusion is resolved and the individual is clear about who he or she is, what the individual wants to do, what are the goals, and how to achieve the same etc. As this stage of development proceeds, the individual is ready to enter into the adult stage and master those developmental tasks which are characteristic of that period. This is the time when the person experiences true intimacy and true love. The person is now ready to start a long term relationship with a member of opposite sex and settle down to raise a family. At this time earning a steady income and an occupation become important for the individual. The intimate relationship has to be reciprocal and in this relationship the individual will be ready to make any kind of sacrifice and compromises that such a relationship requires.

This is the time according to Erikson one feels isolated due to intimacy. We are afraid of rejections such as being turned down or our partners breaking up with us. We are familiar with pain, and to some of us, rejection is painful; our egos cannot bear the pain. If people cannot form these intimate relationships, a sense of isolation may result

Stage 7: Middle adulthood (35-65 years) Generativity versus Stagnation

Generativity is the concern of establishing and guiding the next generation. Socially valued work and disciplines are expressions of generativity. During middle age the primary developmental task is one of contributing to society and helping to guide

future generations. When a person makes a contribution during this period, perhaps by raising a family or working toward the betterment of society, a sense of generativity or a sense of productivity and accomplishment result. On the other hand, a person who is self centered and unwilling to help society, feel left out and stagnated. Such a person feels dissatisfied and frustrated with the lack of productivity and meaningfulness.

Stage 8: Seniors, (65 years and above) Ego Integrity versus Despair

The developmental task of this age is retrospection. People look back on their lives and accomplishments. They develop feelings of contentment and integrity if they believe that they have led a happy, productive life. If their life has not been productive and satisfying, they may develop a sense of despair if they look back on a life of disappointments and unachieved goals. As the person grows older and looks back on his life in the past and finds that it had been successful, productive and meaningful, one feels good about it and feels a pride over the achievements. This leads to the development of integrity , whereas if a person finds that his life had been rather unsuccessful etc., he may become dissatisfied with life and develop despair leading to hopelessness and depression.

Thus in all the eight developmental stages, there are eight psychosocial crises and these have to be successfully resolved, the mature adult develops the peak of adjustment, that is, integrity. Such a person is able to trust others and self too, and is independent and dares the new. Such a person works hard, and has a self concept about which the person is happy and proud. Such persons are proud parents and grand parents and are proud of their grand children and help them too to grow in the healthiest possible manner both physically and psychologically. If on the other hand the psychosocial crises of the past have not been resolved, such a person may feel disgusted and depressed.

1.4 MAJOR FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PSYCHO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1.4.1 Child Rearing Practices

Child rearing practices are parenting practices which are the mechanisms through which parents directly help their children attain socialisation goals. A child's mind is considered to be fresh and tender so that it can be moulded to suit the society and the family.

Child rearing is a process. It involves planning, formulating, and implementing a programme of bringing up children in a certain way that is in line with the requirement of the family and society. In this process the child learns the moral values, ethical issues, expectations from the child by the family and society, and a set of patterns of behaviour which are essential for the proper growth and development of the child that would contribute positively to the family and the society. This process involves inculcating in children certain values, attitudes, opinions and beliefs through direct teaching, modeling, and imitation. These acquired patterns of behaviour are reinforced by the parents by praise and reward and where the child learns wrong patterns of behaviour, the same is punished. Thus through the process of rewards and punishment the child rearing practices inculcate in children the required appropriate behaviours and conduct that are in line with the social norms and family norms.

Competent parenting has been found to be related to a warmer, more accepting, and more helpful styles of parenting. Competent parenting is competence-inducing in that it is characterised by sensitivity to children's capabilities, developmental milestones and recognises the child's need for control and individuality and views the rights and duties of parents and children as complementary.

14.2 Temperament

This is the pattern of arousal and emotionality that are labeled as consistent and enduring characteristics of an individual. Temperament refers to how children behave. Temperamental differences among infants appear from the time of birth. Temperament shows stability from infancy through adolescence.

Research shows three profiles of temperament, viz., (i) easy babies (ii) difficult babies and (iii) slow to warm up babies.

Easy babies have a positive disposition, their body functions operate regularly and they are adaptable, while difficult babies have negative moods and are slow to adapt to new situations.

The third category that is the slow to warm up babies are inactive, showing relatively calm reactions to their environment. Their moods are generally negative, and they withdraw from new situations, adapting slowly.

No temperament is inherently good or bad and in most cases there is a combination of all these temperaments though one is more dominant than others. How well a person adjusts to the environment depends on the degree of match between children's temperament and the nature and demands of the environment in which they are being raised.

1.4.3 Relationship with Peers

Children first begin to show some positive interest in other infants as early as 6 months of age. If you place two babies of that age on the floor facing each other, they will touch each other, pull each other's hair, and reach for each other's clothing. In 10-month-olds, these behaviours are even more evident. By 14 to 18 months of age, two or more children can play together with toys, occasionally cooperating, but more often simply playing side by side with different toys, a pattern described as parallel play. By 3 or 4 years, children appear to prefer to play with peers rather than alone, and their play with one another is much more cooperative and coordinated, including various forms of group play. By age 3 or 4, more than half of children have at least one mutual friendship.

There is every reason to believe that early play with a peer is a highly important to learn and practice a host of social skills. Often, they have to learn to subdue their own desires in the interests of joint play, which requires some awareness of the other's feelings and wishes as well as an ability to modulate one's own emotions. Play with peers, especially play with friends, may be a crucial ingredient in the individual's psycho social development.

Peers become even more important among school-aged children. Indeed, for children aged 7 through 10, playing with peers takes up virtually all their time when they are not in school, eating, or sleeping. Shared play interests form the major basis of peer relationships among school-aged children. Furthermore, children in this age range define play groups in terms of common activities.

1.4.4 Pro Social Behaviour and Aggression

We will consider here two specific categories of behaviour, pro social behaviour and aggression. Pro social behaviour is defined as “intentional, voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another”. Variations in children’s levels of pro social behaviour seem to be related to specific kinds of child rearing practices. Children do support and share with one another, and they also tease, fight, criticise, and argue over objects and territory. However there is another side to this behaviour, which is aggression that has been studied in greater detail by researchers. Every child shows some aggression, but the form and frequency of aggression are not the same through out, but tend to vary considerably from age to age. When a child is only 2 or 3 years of age, they may show their anger through temper tantrums, by throwing things down and destroying or breaking their toys. Since this kind of aggression has a specific goal as for example making the mother give a chocolate or purchase a toy from the market, this type of aggression is known as instrumental aggression. Once the goal is achieved, the aggression disappears only to return when another goal has to be achieved. This is where the caregivers and parents have to be extra cautious not to allow such aggression to become a pattern of behaviour which may be rather too difficult to control at later ages.

1.4.5 Gender

The sense of being male or female, has effects on psychosocial development throughout life. It produces dissimilar worlds for members of each sex, even during infancy!

Infants’ behaviour is interpreted differently depending on gender. Male infants are considered to be more active and fussier than females. Also it is well known that there are typical gender related roles that one has to play in life depending on whether one is a male or female. This can be seen in children’s play, where boys are encouraged to play more vigorous games while girls are expected to play more docile and soft games. Depending upon the role a male or female is expected to take up in society, the play also is influenced by these factors.

Also girls and boys between the ages of 6 and 12 actively avoid interacting with one another and show strong favoritism toward their own gender and negative stereotyping of the opposite gender. Why is this preference for same gender playmates so very strong at this age? Eleanor Maccoby (1990), one of the leading researchers and theorists in this area, suggests two reasons.

- i) Girls appear to be “put off” by the typical boy’s rough-and-tumble play style and by the strong emphasis on competition and dominance that is so much a part of boy-boy interactions.
- ii) Also girls find it hard to influence boys.
- iii) Girls make polite suggestions to each other, a style of influence attempt that school-aged boys simply do not comply with very often.
- iv) Girls tend to withdraw into their own pairs or groups where their own “rules” of behaviour are familiar and effective. Indeed, boys’ preference for same-gender playmates is, even stronger than that of girls.

Furthermore gender segregation is even more pronounced in friendships among school-aged children. School-aged children spend more time with their friends than do preschoolers, and they gradually develop a larger collection of reciprocal friendships and pairs in which each child names the other as a friend or as a “best friend”. This number gradually rises through elementary school.

Also the qualities of the friendships girls and boys create differ. Boys' relationships are extensive while that of girls are intensive. Boys' friendship groups are larger and more accepting of newcomers than are girls'. Boy friends play more outdoors and roam over a larger area in their play. Girl friends are more likely to play in pairs or in smaller groups, and they spend more playtime indoors or near home or school.

Gender differences in actual interactions are also evident. Boys' groups and boys' friendships appear to be focused more on competition and dominance than are girls' friendships (Maccoby, 1990). In fact, among school-aged boys, there are higher levels of competition between pairs of friends than between pairs of strangers, the opposite of what can be observed among girls. Friendships between girls also include more agreement, more compliance, and more self-disclosure than those between boys.

1.4.6 Play

Play in the young children contributes to all domains of development. Through play, children stimulate the senses, learn how to use their muscles, coordinate sight with movement, gain mastery over their bodies, and acquire new skills. As they sort blocks of different shapes, count how many they can pile on each other, or announce that "my tower is bigger than yours," they lay the foundation for mathematical concepts. Researchers categorise children's play by its content and its social dimension.

Types of Play: There are three types of play, viz., (i) Make believe or Pretend play (ii) Functional play (iii) Constructive play

Nitu at 3, arranged for marriage of her doll. Nitin at 4, wore a kitchen towel and flew around as Batman. These children were engaged in 'make believe' play involving situations. They develop problem solving and language skills and experience the joy of creativity. They make "tickets" for an imaginary train trip or use doctor set to play doctor patient. The make believe play is one of four categories of play identified by Piaget and others as showing increasing levels of cognitive complexity (Piaget, 1951). In pretend play, children do the following:

- i) Try out roles
- ii) Cope with uncomfortable emotions
- iii) Gain understanding of other people's viewpoints, and
- iv) Construct an image of the social world.

Pretend play is also called fantasy play, dramatic play or imaginative play.

Functional play involves repetitive muscular movements such as rolling or bouncing a ball. As gross motor skills improve, preschoolers run, jump, skip, hop, throw, and aim.

The constructive play is one in which the child uses objects or materials to make something, such as a house of blocks or a crayon drawing. Four-year-olds in preschools may spend more than half their time in this kind of play, which becomes more elaborate by ages 5 and 6 years.

The Social Dimension of play

As children get older, their play tends to become more social that it is more interactive and cooperative. At first children play alone, then alongside other children, and finally, together.

Children become more social during the preschool years in imaginative play, which shifts from solitary pretending to dramatic play involving other children. Young children follow unspoken rules in organising dramatic play, i.e. I'm the daddy; you're the mommy. As imaginative play becomes increasingly collaborative, story lines become more complex and more innovative. Dramatic play offers rich opportunities to practice interpersonal and language skills and to explore social roles.

1.4.7 Sibling Relationships

Rivalry or jealousy is the key ingredient of sibling relationships. Certainly the birth of a new brother or sister radically changes the life of the older sibling. The parents have less time for the older child, who may feel neglected and angry. Such feelings may lead both to more confrontations between the older child and the parents and to feelings of rivalry with the new one.

Young brothers and sisters hit each other, snatch toys, and threaten and insult each other. The older child in a pair of preschoolers is likely to be the leader and is therefore likely to show more of both aggressive and helpful behaviours.

1.5 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

1.5.1 Early Childhood

Compared to infancy, body size increases more slowly during early childhood, and the child's shape becomes more streamlined. The brain continues to grow faster than other parts of the body. The cortex, especially, shows gains in myelination and formation of synapses, followed by synaptic pruning. Hand preference strengthens, a sign of greater brain lateralisation. In addition, connections between different parts of the brain increase. These changes support improvements in a wide variety of physical and cognitive skills.

Factors affecting physical growth and health in infancy and toddlerhood continue to be influential in early childhood. Heredity affects physical growth by regulating the production of hormones. Extreme emotional deprivation can interfere with the production of growth hormone, thereby stunting children's growth. Sleep difficulties, in the form of night waking and nightmares, are common during the preschool years. Appetite declines due to a slower rate of physical growth. Since caloric intake is reduced, preschoolers need a high-quality diet. Disease can lead to malnutrition, seriously undermining children's growth, an effect that is especially common in developing countries. Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of childhood death. Efforts at several levels, including laws that promote safety, improvement of community environments, and efforts to change parents' and children's behaviour, are necessary.

An explosion of new motor skills takes place in early childhood. Gross motor skills such as running, jumping, throwing, and catching appear and become better coordinated. Gains in fine motor development can be seen in preschoolers' ability to dress themselves, draw representational pictures, and print letters of the alphabet. As in other areas, heredity and environment combine to influence early childhood motor development.

Gains in perception continue during the preschool years. They are especially apparent in children's detection of the fine-grained structure of written symbols

1.5.2 Late Childhood

Physical growth during late childhood occurs faster than at any other time since infancy. Older children in late elementary and early middle school find it hard to adjust to their changing bodies and may feel self-conscious, fearful that everyone is staring at them. It is important at this time for the parents to be available to talk to their preteens about any questions troubling them. During this time, children are attending school and are becoming more active. There are several important physical changes that happen as a child moves through this stage. These changes are discussed below:

1.5.3 Major Changes

Increase in height and weight happens sporadically. There is a noticeable difference in height and weight amongst children. This is a natural occurrence but it can also be impacted by heredity and lifestyle. During this stage, a child's larger muscles are more developed than smaller ones. They can do things like run longer distances, throw a ball and catch it. As they progress, children can learn to do things like riding a bike and playing football which all require considerable motor skill and coordination.

In middle childhood, gross motor skills are more refined than fine ones. Children can do things like tracing objects but might have difficulty writing legibly and completing certain chores. Over time, this will improve and children will be able to write better, dress themselves appropriately and neatly make their own beds.

It is important that children get proper nutrition and exercise during this time. They should be eating a healthy diet and playing outside daily. It is common for children to experience muscle pain known as "growing pains." Children should also be taken to the doctor for yearly check ups and to the dentist every six months to ensure proper growth.

Life Skills

As children progress through middle childhood, they begin to become more independent with physical tasks. As they get older, they will be able to dress, eat and bathe on their own. Children can also start helping with cooking and other household tasks with supervision.

Parental Role

Supportive and encouraging roles of parents is needed during this stage of development. They must engage their children in arts and crafts and writing projects to help with fine motor skills.

1.5.4 Late Childhood or Preteen Years (9-12 years of age)

This period is also called as "puberty" and the youngster is called as a "Teen" or "teenager".

Although most children experience puberty between the ages of 9 and 12, some can start before age 9. On the other hand, there are some children who are late bloomers, not reaching puberty until age 13 or even later. If children are either early or late in going through puberty, it is important for parents to reassure their children that there is nothing wrong with them.

Physical Needs and Challenges

Because they're growing, preteens have a huge appetite and always seem to be hungry. Preteens have a greater need for sleep and may sleep later on weekends than when they were younger. Their skin starts to become oily, and acne may be a problem. As sweating increases, most preteens start using deodorant. Also, because of rapid growth, preteens can be clumsy and lack coordination.

Physical Skills

Many older children enjoy physical challenges in competitive games. By fourth grade children are more physically coordinated, able to kick, bounce, throw and catch balls. They can perform various rhythmic movements while following a pattern, as in line dancing. Children at this stage are expected to be able to perform in all the areas of fitness with some proficiency, exhibiting skills such as balance, coordination, speed, power and reaction time.

Sexual Development of Preteen Boys

Preteen boys go through rapid growth spurts in both height and weight. Their muscles start filling out and strength dramatically increases. The voice deepens and both underarm and pubic hair begin to appear and then thicken. Overall body hair also increases. Sexual organs including the penis, testes and scrotum enlarge, and preteen boys often experience their first nocturnal emissions.

Sexual Development of Preteen Girls

Although preteen girls continue to grow taller, they do so at a slower rate than earlier in their lives. Breast development begins. Most preteen girls experience their first menstrual period during this time. Underarm hair develops and thickens. Pubic hair starts to take on an adult triangular pattern. Preteen girls notice their hips start to widen. Fat deposits develop on the legs and buttocks.

1.5.5 Motor Development

At this stage they are able to produce highly skilled voluntary movements characteristic of later childhood and adolescence. The older children and adolescents retain some reflex movements in addition to developing voluntary movement.

Speed and pattern of development

Like physical growth, motor development shows predictable patterns of cephalocaudal (head to foot) and proximodistal (torso to back) growth and development.

The mechanisms involved in motor development involve some genetic components that determine the physical size of body parts at a given age, as well as aspects of muscle and bone strength. Nutrition and exercise also determine strength and therefore the ease and accuracy with which a body part can be moved. Opportunities to carry out movements help establish the abilities to flex and extend body parts, both capacities being needed for good motor ability. Skilled voluntary movements develop as a result of practice and learning.

Individual differences

Normal individual differences in motor ability are common and depend in part on the child's weight and build. However, after the infant period, normal individual differences are strongly affected by opportunities to practice, observe, and be instructed on specific movements. A typical motor development may be an indication of developmental delays or problems such as autism or cerebral palsy.

Cultural differences may encourage learning of motor skills like using the left hand only for sanitary purposes and the right hand for all other uses, producing a population difference. Cultural factors are also seen at work in practiced voluntary movements such as the use of the foot to dribble a soccer ball or the hand to dribble a basketball.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

Children go through the transition from the world at home to that of school and peers. Children learn to make things, use tools, and acquire the skills to be a worker and a potential provider. Children can now receive feedback from outsiders about their accomplishments. If children can discover pleasure in intellectual stimulation, being productive, seeking success, they will develop a sense of competence. If they are not successful or cannot discover pleasure in the process, they may develop a sense of inferiority and feelings of inadequacy that may haunt them throughout life.

This is when children think of themselves as industrious or as inferior. Early childhood is also called as “Pre-school age”, “Pre-gang age”, “Exploratory age” and “Toy age”. When children attend preschool, they broaden their social horizons and become more engaged with those around them. Impulses are channeled into fantasies, which leaves the task of the caretaker to balance eagerness for pursuing adventure, creativity and self expression with the development of responsibility. If caretakers are properly encouraging and consistently disciplinary, children are more likely to develop positive self-esteem while becoming more responsible, and will follow through on assigned activities. If not allowed to decide which activities to perform, children may begin to feel guilt upon contemplating taking initiative. This negative association with independence will lead them to let others make decisions in place of them.

In Late Childhood intelligence is demonstrated through logical and systematic manipulation of symbols related to concrete objects. Operational thinking develops, which means actions are reversible, and egocentric thought diminishes.

1.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What is psychosocial development?
- 2) Which are the factors affecting psychosocial development?
- 3) Critically evaluate Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development?
- 4) What are the major changes in the physical development of children?
- 5) What are the major changes in motor development of children?

1.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

Erikson, Erik H. *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton, 1950.

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