

# Knowledge of Dimensions of Development for Complete Understanding of the Learner

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## ABSTRACT

Human development passes through four stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Each stage can be understood through the dimensions of growth and development i.e., physical, emotional, cognitive, moral and social development. Language and spiritual aspects are also considered in later stages. All dimensions of growth and development are interrelated, interdependent, complex and multifaceted. An individual has to be considered as one 'whole'. All the above developmental dimensions collectively develop a child as a whole by reflecting an unavoidable interrelationship and interaction among one another. To facilitate these developments, a teacher can play a significant role by planning teaching methods, strategies, activities and role modeling, accordingly. Understanding these dimensions is essential for overall well-being of an individual.

**Key Words:** Dimensions of Growth and Development, Interrelationship, Multifaceted, Whole.

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## INTRODUCTION

Man is a social animal with highest intelligence in the world. As age increases, development progresses in thoughts, behavior, interactions etc. The emotional balance, social maturity and mental operations of an individual decide his status in the society and give recognition to him. Language has an important role in the development of the individual. Particularly, the extent of vocabulary achieved at certain levels depends on the nature of the language.

Knowledge on the pattern of growth and development exhibited by individuals while passing through the different stages provides very useful data for parents and teachers to plan the development and education of children. The child understands the world and his society through his social development, intellectual power and language proficiency.

The major aspects like physical, cognitive, emotional, moral, social and language developments are discussed in this paper.

### Physical Development

The physical development of an individual includes all those of internal as well as external organs. The physical growth also determines one's attitude towards his classmates both in the classroom and on the playground. For example a boy/girl who is physically stronger than others may tend to boss over other children in the class and often develops an attitude to bully the weaker ones. A weak and short boy may tend to be submissive in the class.

Hence, physical development plays an important role in shaping one's personality structure. Factors like inheritance, nutrition, baby care, living conditions etc. affect the physical development of an individual. Among the factors that facilitate physical development are diet, games and sports, yoga, exercises and activities etc.

### Cognitive Development: (Mental Development)

*Cognition* is "the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses". It is related to how a person perceives, thinks, and gains understanding of his or her world through the interaction. Many factors such as intelligence, perception, memory, divergent thinking, reasoning, analysis, synthesis, decision making, problem solving, evaluation etc. are involved in this mental process.

Infants begin learning to use their senses to explore the world around them. By three months old, infants can recognize faces and respond to familiar sounds. At six months of age, babies enjoy hearing their own voice, recognize parents, fear strangers, distinguish between animate and inanimate objects. At 12 months of age, babies can follow a fast moving object and can speak two to four words. By 18 months of age, babies are able to understand about 10–50 words and identify body parts.

Between 18 months to three years of age, toddlers have reached the *sensory motor stage* of Piaget's theory of cognitive development and start to strive for more independence.

Pre-schoolers, age three to six, are very *self-centered*. They develop social interaction skills, such as playing and cooperating with other children their own age. School-age children, six to twelve years old, are able to use logical and coherent actions in thinking and solving problems. Their attention span increases with age, from being able to focus on a task for about 15 minutes at age six to an hour by age nine.

Adolescents, ages 12 through 19, are characterized by an increased independence for thinking through problems and situations. They understand pure abstractions, such as philosophy and higher math concepts. A major component of the passage through adolescence is a cognitive transition.

### **Emotional Development:**

To enhance the level of knowledge of an individual, emotions like that of love and affection, enthusiasm promote concentration and attention of the pupils. To reduce the knowledge level, emotions like that of worry, anxiety, pain affect the concentration and attention. The happiness of people depends largely on their ability to control emotions. There is no place for situations of emotional outbursts in a class room. Emotional maturity is a must for a teacher. Emotional adjustability is one of the very important elements of moral adjustment.

An emotionally matured person shows the following characters.

- Expresses his emotions in a socially desirable way.
- He is able to exercise control over his emotions.
- Sudden, inappropriate emotional outbursts are rarely found in him.
- He is able to hide his feelings and check his emotional tide.
- The person perceives things in their real perspective.
- He is not a day-dreamer and does not possess the desire to run away from realities.
- He is guided more by his intellect than his emotions.

### **Moral Development:**

Home is the first and best place for moral development. Religious beliefs and practices have an important role to play too. But, it is the teacher, who greatly influence the moral development by using narrations of stories of moral values, taking part in acts of social value for common good and respect individual child self respect etc. A child's moral behavior is regulated by the culture of the society in which he lives. The following points are to be followed for better moral development.

- Parents form basis for moral development of the child. Parent - child relations determine behavior adjustment of the child in the family as well as outside.
- Religion is also regarded as a primary moral institution.
- The peer groups satisfy various needs of the children like acceptance, achievement, affection, approval, belongingness, fame, recognition, expression of thought and opinion. The failure in activities also teach a moral lesson.
- The school curriculum, co-curricular activities and teacher's influence etc. have a great bearing on the moral development of the child.

### **Social Development:**

*Ability of a person to be able to deal independently or with others efficiently is social development* - Sorenson.

*Achieving maturity in social relations is social development* - Elizabeth Hurlock.

Social development means the ability of an individual to live, move and work as a member of a society with proper understanding. The process of becoming adjusted in the society is called socialization.

Social development is influenced by many factors that include the environment, culture, economic and social conditions of the family, school, peer group etc. Each one of these conditions and in combination with each other shape the sociality of an individual child.

The social development takes place in an individual in a phased manner. The various periods that a person passes through in the process of social development in his life are:

**Table 1: Period of Social Development**

| S.No. | Age (in months) | Social Development   |
|-------|-----------------|--|
| 1.    | 1 – 2 months    | Beginning of social behavior   |
| 2.    | 4 – 5 months    | Receiving sounds and words   |
| 3.    | 6 – 7 months    | Differentiation between family members and outsiders                         |
| 4.    | 7 – 8 months    | Imitation begins   |
| 5.    | 10 – 12 months  | Beginning of shyness and fear  |
| 6.    | 12 – 18 months  | Development of joy, love, jealousy, anger (Period of Social differentiation) |
| 7.    | 18 – 24 months  | Solitary play (don't allow others in their activities)                       |
| 8.    | 24 – 36 months  | Parallel play (play games in parallel to others)                             |
| 9.    | 36 – 48 months  | Social play ( play in groups)  |
| 10.   | 48 – 60 months  | Development of curiosity   |

When the individual grows into an adolescent and then into an adult, the social development takes a final shape. People with social maturity show the following characters.

- They share social responsibilities.
- They are friendly and cooperative with people around.
- Display emotional balance.
- Don't involve in anti-social activities.
- They adjust according to social conditions.
- They are not too sensitive or very much happy or dejected for simple reasons.

**Language Development:**

Language is the medium to communicate with others through oral and written forms. It enables the individual in the formation of concepts and helps in the analysis of complex sentences by giving the meaning, context, main theme etc. Language is an important tool for individual growth and social adjustment. Speech is one form of language. The development of vocabulary from the beginning stages is as follows.

**Table 2: Development of Vocabulary in Children**

| Age   |        | No. of words acquired by the child |
|-------|--------|------------------------------------|
| Years | Months |                                    |
| 0     | 10     | 1                                  |
| 1     | 0      | 3                                  |
| 1     | 3      | 19                                 |
| 1     | 6      | 22                                 |
| 1     | 9      | 118                                |
| 2     | 0      | 272                                |
| 2     | 0      | 446                                |
| 3     | 0      | 896                                |
| 3     | 6      | 1,222                              |
| 4     | 0      | 1,540                              |
| 4     | 6      | 1,870                              |
| 5     | 0      | 2,072                              |

One who has command of language can define his difficulties and problems which is the first step to their solution. It is through language that people are able to influence and persuade others. That is why most tests of language really test the ability to use language. children from higher socio -economic classes have better language development.

There are many important factors affecting the development of language like limited usage of language, cultural and environmental factors, higher expectations, lack of playing activities for nursery students etc.

### **Educational Implications:**

- The development of skeletal, muscular, nervous, digestive systems and the weight of the body, sense organs come under physical development. These are influenced by conditions present since the conception, how mother is taken care of by other and herself, besides her age and activities and so many other conditions.
- Emotional development is a powerful force in an individual's life. It's development depends on the love and affection and acceptance a child gets at home and by the members of the family and relatives. The school climate also adds to it. A teacher and the school play important role in the emotional maturity of a child. We know by our experience that the emotions like anger and fear, disable the individual to adjust to the environment. Hence, it is the responsibility of the school and the home to provide for healthy emotional adjustment.
- Moral development depends on the religious and family influences. When the beliefs and practices coincide it has a better influence otherwise not. Family has greater influence on moral development of the learner.
- The home, school and social environment have the responsibility of socializing the child by inculcating in him appropriate values, behavior patterns and the knowledge so that he adopts himself to become a good citizen. A teacher can mould the class environment effectively by treating all the students equally and friendly. An unhealthy school and other negative environmental influences result in social maladjustments like aggression, crime and indiscipline. If everything is good, children grow into good social workers like patriots and altruists.
- Teacher is the architect of child's language development. Teacher's communication should be correct and simple. The most important point to be noted is that their form of communication is correct and simple. They should speak very clearly and in a modulated voice. Their pronunciation should be very distinct and free from faults. They should correct meaning when they use new words.

### **CONCLUSION**

Experiential knowledge of the pattern of growth and development helps the teacher to arrange school programmes like curricular and co-curricular activities. Childhood (early childhood- 3-6 years and later childhood 7-12 years) extends to the onset of puberty. Sense organs and muscles grow to maturity and there is a significant change in the child's size, strength and motor skills that turn towards sexual maturity till the end of adolescence. At childhood stage, children experience intense feelings of love, affection, hatred and jealousy etc. They also feel a sense of autonomy, combat, shame, inferiority, and aggression. At the adolescence stage emotions like turmoil, stress, and self-love are at their peak. Stable emotions are important for a harmonious personality of an individual. A positive reinforcement to students may also help in encouraging morally desirable behaviors among them.

Cognitively too, children pass through different stages from infancy to adolescence. They move from egocentrism to decentration and lastly, abstract thinking. Morally, the children move from a stage of heteronomous morality to autonomous morality. In terms of psychosocial development, individuals experience eight stages as proposed by Erikson.

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