The general purpose of Adolescent Psychology: The African Perspective is to provide a comprehensive overview of selected facets of Adolescent Psychology as a field of study. Very few theories are exclusively concerned with the period of adolescence- even though most see adolescence as the pivotal period in the developmental progression. The book asks the controversial question whether adolescence exists or is just a Eurocentric invention. Second the Afro - conceptualization of Adolescence is debated in various schools of thought and the applicability of the various theories to Afro - Education. The book presents perspectives that span the whole continuum of Psychology in Africa but with a cosmopolitan touch and is valuable to University students in the Behavioral Sciences - both Psychology and Philosophy as well as Education.
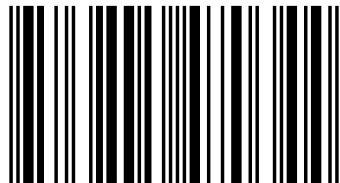
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Adolescent Psychology

The African Perspective

Mwale

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ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY

THE AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

BY

MARISEN MWALE

CONTENTS

DEDICATIONS

For Charles, Charmas, Wilson, Tolbert and late Simmy

And of course the boys

Tatenda, Thabiso, Perfect, Shaun, Benjamin, William and Gabriel

CHAPTER 1

SUCH IS THE PASSAGE OF TIME

Inspired by Charles Mungoshi's 'Ndiko kupindana kwemazuva'

As seasons of times alternate

So do the pages of a life

Summer paves way for winter

As joy is punctuated with pangs of sorrow

In full blossom four are the seasons of times

And such also are the markers of a life

As the trust and dependency of childhood

Is overshadowed by the hope and dread of adolescence

And the stability of adulthood

Is consolidated in old age tranquility

In consonance summer breeds winter

And autumn becomes harbinger to spring

When sometime you tear a while

Know morrow's morn jubilation will thee avail

For such is the passage of time

Marisen Mwale

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent psychology is a field of study within the major branch of psychology-
Developmental psychology- which also constitutes Child and Adult psychology.
Any concise definition of adolescence falls short of a comprehensive description of
the term because every definition reveals the bias or major interest of the author.
Often a technical term is invented in order to create a social condition and a social
fact and such has been true with respect to the term, 'Adolescence'. As defined by
the Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary [1977], adolescence refers to the,
'process of growing up' or to the 'period of life from puberty to maturity'.
Semantically the concept adolescence is derived from a Latin word *adolescere*
which means 'to grow up' or to 'come to maturity. If we start at the beginning as it
were and set out to define the construct adolescence from a psychological
perspective, then immediately two aspects become apparent:

- First – that adolescence as a period cannot even be defined in a way that
  makes it a period of development independent or immune of human
  judgment.

  In other words the question is as to whether adolescence is a *Social
  construction or Social representation*.

- Second – that adolescence usually has to be defined with the sort of
  ambiguity that has left the door open for rival theories of adolescence
  [Vaness, 1960].

Taking for example, Buhler's [1954] definition which has most likely reached general acceptance among developmental psychologists:

Adolescence is an in-between period beginning with the assumption of social maturity – that is with the assumption of social, sexual, economic and legal rights and duties of the adult.

The definition is biological at the outset, but except for the word 'sexual', its termination is entirely in social terms. In other words, the termination of adolescence is subject to the particular customs of the culture – it is cultural specific. Adolescence is thus subject to human judgment. It has the implication that adults can willfully prolong adolescence by decisions about what defines the termination of it. Adolescence as a concept is said to have appeared in literature in the 15th century. Prior to that during the *medieval period* children were treated as miniature adults. Children and adolescents were believed to entertain the same interests as adults and, since they were simply miniature adults, they were treated as such, with strict, harsh discipline. Neither the adolescent nor the child was given status apart from the adult [Muuss, 1989]. Adult requirements were put upon children and were enforced by stern discipline. According to this perspective denoted '**preformationism**' the child did not develop but was 'preformed'.

The difference between a child and an adult was considered to be only a quantitative one, not a qualitative one. It therefore followed that there was no consideration for the physiological differences in function between the child and the adult. The ideas of '**homunculism**' [*representations about a miniature man in a sperm that just grows quantitatively in the womb*] and '**preformationism**' were soon to be challenged by the beginning of modern science and advancements in the field of medicine. It was learned that young children have quantitative and qualitative characteristics of their own and are not miniature adults. During the 18th century Jean Jacques Rousseau offered a more enlightened view of adolescence.

Rousseau, a French philosopher, did more than any other individual to restore the belief that a child is not the same as an adult. In his book entitled **Emile** written in 1762, Rousseau argued that treating the child like a miniature adult is not appropriate and is potentially harmful. He believed that children up to the age of 12 or so should be freed of adult restrictions and allowed to experience their world naturally, rather than having rigid regulations imposed on them. In the philosophical realm therefore, it was Rousseau who postulated that 'nature would have children be children before being man and if we wish to prevent this order, we shall produce precocious fruits which will have neither maturity nor flavour'. Such social and historical conditions have therefore led a number of writers to argue that adolescence has been 'invented' [Finley, 1985; Hill, 1980; Lapsey, 1988]. These scholars argue that while adolescence clearly has biological foundations, nonetheless social and historical occurrences have contributed to the acceptance of adolescence as a transitional time between childhood and adulthood. This school of thought is denoted the **Inventionist View** of adolescence.

Adolescence is marked by two significant changes in physical development:

- First – physiological changes or dramatic changes in size and shape.

- Second – the inception of puberty.

According to G. Stanley Hall [1904], adolescence starts at the age of 12 or 13. In principle, at least, the outset of adolescence can be determined objectively, for example, by the presence of the gonadotrophin hormone in the urine. It lasts until anything from 22 to 25 [Kalat, 1990]. In other words, its termination is determined by the achievement of the society's criteria of psychological maturity. And so we have a biological definition of the beginning of adolescence and a sociological definition of its termination.

A South African psychologist by the name of Bame Nsamenang [1996], argues that adolescent psychology has since been a Eurocentric enterprise. This implies, regrettably, that research efforts have so far failed to capture what adolescence truly is in its global context. Instead, scholars have tended to create, or more accurately, to recast, the African or other non-western images of adolescence in the shadow of Euro-American adolescence.

Other authorities have more explicitly endeavored to define adolescence:

Stone and Church, 1973; Bandura, 1970; Ingersoll, 1981; Sisson, Hersen and Van Hasselt, 1987; Sprinthall and Collins 1988 state that,

- Adolescence is a stage in a person's life between childhood and adulthood.

Crider, Goethais, Kavanaugh and Solomon [1983] state that,

- Adolescence is usually defined as the period that begins with the onset of puberty and ends somewhere around age eighteen or nineteen.

Atwater [1992] states that,

- Adolescence is the period of rapid growth between childhood and adulthood, including psychological and social development.

Hopkins [1993],

- Defines adolescence as the period between childhood and adulthood with much personal growth- physical, psychological and social – that gives the period its special place within the field of developmental psychology.

Santrock [1993, 2001],

- Defines adolescence as, the developmental period of transition between childhood and adulthood that involves biological, cognitive and social changes.

In this context,

- Biological changes involve physical development.

- Cognitive changes involve thought, intelligence, and language.

- Social changes involve relationships with other people in emotions, in personality and in the social context.

BOUNDERIES OF ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence has been described as a transitional stage with uncertain boundaries. In other words, it is difficult to tell exactly at what ages adolescence begins or ends – its inception and termination is difficult to determine. Basically boundaries of adolescence mark the beginning and ending of key factors of development.

Atwater [1992] has demarcated the following boundaries:

- *Biological*: in this perspective adolescence begins at puberty and ends with the attainment of physical and sexual maturity.

- *Emotional*: in this perspective adolescence begins at the beginning of autonomy or independence from parents and ends with the attainment of a self-revised personal identity and emotional autonomy.

- *Cognitive*: in this perspective adolescence begins with the emergence of logical reasoning, problem solving and decision making skills and ends after attaining adult logical reasoning and autonomous decision making.

- *Interpersonal*: in this perspective adolescence begins with the shift from parents to peer orientation and ends with increased capacity for intimacy with peers and adults.

- *Social*: in this perspective adolescence begins with entry into personal, family and work roles and ends with the attainment of adult privileges and responsibilities.

- **Educational**: in this perspective adolescence begins with entry into secondary school and ends with the completion of secondary or college education.

- **Religious**: in this perspective adolescence begins with preparation for confirmation and adult baptism and ends with the attainment of adult status in a religious community.

- **Chronological**: in this perspective adolescence begins with the attainment of a given age associated with adolescence e.g. teen years and ends with the attainment of a given age associated with adulthood e.g. twenties.

- **Legal**: in this perspective adolescence begins with the attainment of juvenile status and ends with the attainment of legal status.

- **Cultural**: in this perspective adolescence begins with the training for preparation for ceremonial rites of passage and ends with the ceremonial rites of passage.

For practical purposes the beginning of adolescence remains closely associated with the beginning of puberty although it is no longer synonymous with it. It is however difficult to determine its ending since it merges into early adulthood.

CHAPTER 2

IF LOVE WERE

If love were a flower

I did let it blossom eternally all for you

If love were a dream

I did dream it all forever for you

If love were a race

I did run it for nothing less than gold all for you

If love were a treasure

I did search it the whole universe all for you

If love were a precious pearl

I did dive for it the deepest oceans all for you

If love were a song

I did sing it till my voice ran sour all for you

If love were a dance

I did dance it till my legs fell lame all for you

If love were a throne

I did settle for nothing less than kingship all for you

But alas love is just a mystery

Marisen Mwale

THEORIES OF ADOLESCENCE

Scientists approach the understanding of adolescence from different theoretical perspectives or points of view. As a result there are many theories of adolescent development. However, each theoretical perspective is based on particular assumptions to explain adolescent development. No one single theoretical perspective covers all aspects of adolescence. By examining particular contributions from several theoretical perspectives, one may be able to arrive at a more comprehensive and well – balanced understanding of adolescent behaviour.

THEORY 1 -THE BIOLOGICAL – MATURATIONAL THEORIES

Also denoted the Biogenetic Psychology of Adolescence - the perspective was pioneered by Gonzales Stanely Hall. Hall was the first psychologist to advance a psychology of adolescence in its own right and to use scientific methods in his study of adolescence. It can be said that he bridged the philosophical, speculative approach of the past and the scientific, empirical approach of the present. Because Hall's theory is probably the earliest formal theory of adolescence, he is dubbed the father of 'a scientific study of adolescence'. The theoretical perspective is based on the assumption that adolescence begins with the biological changes accompanying puberty. It is from this assumption that earlier views of adolescence assumed a direct link between biological factors and psychological development.

Hall expanded Darwin's biological theory of **evolution** into a psychological theory of **recapitulation**. The theory of recapitulation postulates that the experiential history of homo-sapiens has become part of the genetic structure of each individual. The law of recapitulation asserts that each individual, during his or her development, passes through stages that correspond to those that occurred during the history of mankind. In essence each person's psychological development recapitulates [or recaptures] both the biological and cultural evolution of the human species. The notion that '**ontogeny** [i.e. individual development] is a brief and rapid recapitulation of **phylogeny** [i.e. the evolutionary development of the human race]'. Ontogeny on the one hand therefore reflects development from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.

On the other hand phylogeny reflects the evolution of man from early man through the traditional primitive man to the modern man. Hall assumed that development is brought about by physiological changes. Further he assumed these physiological factors are genetically determined, that internal maturational forces predominantly control and direct development, growth and behaviour. There was little room in this theory for the influence of environmental forces. Hall saw adolescence as a time of '**storm and stress**' – or '**sturm and drang**' which mirrors the volatile history of the human race over the last 2000 years [Gross, 2001]. Hall's ideas were published in the two volumes set 'Adolescence' in 1904.

The storm and stress label was borrowed from the German writings of Goethe and Schiller, who wrote novels full of idealism, commitment to goals, revolution against the old, passion and feeling. Hall sensed there was a parallel - an analogy-between the objectives and themes of the group of German writers at the turn of the 18th Century and the psychological characteristics of adolescent development. According to Hall, the adolescent period of storm and stress is full of contradictions and wide swings in mood and emotions. Hall perceived the emotional life of adolescents as an oscillation between contradictory tendencies. Thoughts, feelings and actions oscillate between humility and conceit, goodness and temptation, and happiness and sadness. Energy, exaltation and supernatural activity are followed by indifference, lethargy and loathing. Exuberant gaiety, laughter, euphoria make place for dysphoria, depressive gloom, and melancholy.

Egoism, vanity and conceit are just as characteristic of this period of life as abasement, humiliation, and bashfulness. One can observe both the remnants of an uninhibited childish selfishness and an increasing idealistic altruism. Goodness and virtue are never so pure, but never again does temptation so forcefully preoccupy thought. Adolescents want solitude and seclusion, while finding themselves entangled in crushes and friendships. Never again does the peer group have such a strong influence. Apathy and inertia vacillate with an enthusiastic curiosity, an urge to discover and explore. There is a yearning for idols and authority that does not exclude a revolutionary radicalism directed against any kind of authority. In sum, G. Stanely Hall views adolescence as a turbulent time charged with conflict [Ross, 1972] – a perspective labeled the **storm and stress view** of adolescence.

Hall's analysis of the adolescent years also led him to believe that the time to begin strenuously educating such faculties as civility, scientific thinking, and morality is after the age of 15. However, Hall's developmental vision of education rested mainly on highly speculative theory rather than empirical data. While Hall believed systematic methods should be developed to study adolescents, his research efforts usually resorted to the creation of rather weak and unconvincing questionnaires. Even though the quality of his research was suspect, Hall is a giant in the history of understanding adolescent development. It was he who began the theorizing, the systematizing, and the questioning that went beyond mere speculation and philosophy. Indeed, we owe the scientific beginnings of the study of adolescent development to Hall.

The concept of adolescence as a period of storm and stress however raises several questions:

- First, is adolescence particularly stressful, or conspicuously more so than other age periods?

- Second, if it were conceded that adolescence is stressful, then how stressful is it?

- Third, is such stress attributable to physical changes that occur, or to society's failure to adapt to adolescents' needs?

- Finally, what special measures, if any should be taken to prevent or alleviate such stress?

Since Hall's time, most writers on adolescence have expressed similar views. Stone and Church [1989] for instance call adolescence a vulnerable period. According to these psychologists, adolescence is characterized by persistent feelings of exaggerated rebelliousness, emotional volatility, feelings that everybody is against one, and intense idealism. Fortunately, Stone and Church do conclude that most adolescents have developed 'a tough core of security, and an anchorage in reality, that permits them to withstand and thrive in the stresses of this period.' Gessell advocates that adolescence as a period is characterized by 'negativism, introversion and rebellion.'

Lewin advocates that adolescence is typified by marginality, ideological instability, extremism, expansion and increased differentiation of the 'life space'. Anna Freud [1968] advocates that adolescence is typified by 'psychological disequilibrium' resulting from sexual maturity and arousal of ego-defense mechanisms [e.g. intellectualism and asceticism]. She also viewed adolescence as a state of flux, alternating between periods of high enthusiasm and utter despair, between energy and lethargy, between altruism and self-centeredness. For Otto Rank a 'striving for independence', for Krestschmer and his followers an increase in 'schizoid' characteristics and for Remplan 'a second period of negativism, followed by ego experimentation and the formation of new self-concept'. Despite the significance that Hall's view on the study of adolescence had in his day yet many of his ideas have not stood the test of time and not all writers agree that normal adolescence is a period of storm and stress.

Cultural anthropologists and sociologists for instance have challenged this point and asserted that Hall's position was extreme and untenable. They further refuted the claim that the behavioural predispositions of physiological drives, as expressed in the recapitulation theory are highly specific. In his research, Albert Bandura a social learning theorist found that most young people with whom he had contact in the USA were not anxiety ridden and stressful. Bandura [1964] felt that the assumption of a tumultuous adolescence was a gross overstatement of fact. He argued that if society labels its adolescents as 'teen-agers', and expects them to be rebellious, unpredictable, sloppy, and wild in their behaviour, and if this picture is repeatedly reinforced by the mass media, such cultural expectations may very well force adolescents into the role of the rebel. In this way, a false expectation may serve to instigate and maintain certain role behaviours, in turn, and then reinforce the original false belief [Bandura, 1964, p.24].

Bandura's [1964] main point was that when society presumes adolescence to be a period of radical tension, it runs the risk of creating what he called a '**self-fulfilling prophecy**'.

The current views on adolescence in addition to that however adopt **a mediator effects** approach. This approach recognizes that the impact of puberty on overall development is mediated by other variables. In other words the experience of adolescence is heavily influenced by one's social and cultural environment apart from biological maturation [Atwater, 1992].

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Hall held that socially unacceptable types of behaviour – those characteristic of earlier historical phases- must be tolerated by parents and educators, since they are necessary stages in social development. He like Rousseau before him, and Gessell subsequently advocated childrearing practices of leniency and permissiveness. However, he reassured parents and educators that unacceptable behaviours would disappear in the following developmental stages without any corrective educational or disciplinary efforts. Teachers of adolescent pupils need therefore not necessarily brace themselves for the unpredictable challenges or negative behaviours posited by adolescents. Adolescent pupils may pose a new challenge academically and be impressive to teach due to their newly found abstract nature of thought and reasoning. Approaches of teaching adolescents need therefore be modified to suit the developmental period.

THEORY 2 - **THE PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORIES**

The perspective was pioneered by Sigmund Freud. Freud developed a comprehensive theory of psychopathology, of personality and of human development and founded the psychoanalytic movement. His theory was revolutionary and remains influential to this day. Psychoanalysis was based on concepts and on insights into the workings of the human mind that had received little systematic attention in pre – Freudian psychology. The new ideas of physics and biology which characterized the perspective emphasized energy and dynamics and were prevalent towards the end of the nineteenth century. Darwin's notion of evolution also influenced Freud's thinking and became part of his psychodynamic theory. Freud believed that all psychological events are tied to energy, drive and instincts based on biological characteristics. Freud is considered one of the most important and influential thinkers of the 20th Century comparable to Copernicus and Darwin. Copernicus changed our geocentric view of the world and Darwin man's conception towards God's creation. Like Copernicus and Darwin, Freud in turn made it explicit that humans were not the rational, logical, and intelligent beings they were believed to be but instead were irrational and influenced by hidden, unconscious motives of which they were often unaware. Freud implied that the crucial psychological reality is desire rather than reason. The significance of Freud's work is not limited to psychoanalysis proper but his ideas have also become influential in literature, art, advertisement, philosophy, sociology, medicine and education. ***Subliminal advertisement*** in marketing psychology which targets the unconscious mind is based on Freudian subconscious psychoanalytic perspectives.

THEORY

Freud regarded childhood as the most formative periods of human development. In other words, he believed that the dynamics of personality depend largely on how the sexual instinct [ID] and the [EGO] and [SUPEREGO] have been shaped during the formative years of childhood. In Freud's three dimensional or tripartite model of the mind, the ID which is biological in nature is the subconscious/unconscious part of the personality structure. Implying that part of the mind of which one is not aware but which can influence one's behaviour.

The **ID** upholds or represents the pleasure principle.

It is that part of the unconscious mind that contains irrational instinctual drives or appetites and impulses that motivate our behaviour. The ID can be thought of as the child part of the unconscious. It emphasizes on the immediate gratification of needs for example the sexual impulses and hunger. Because it forms the underlying motivations and drives of our actions, it is our spontaneous 'dangerous' side that wishes to follow the 'pleasure principle'. The ID might say: 'This is what l want, what l really really want'.

The **EGO** which is psychosocial in nature upholds the reality principle and tries to control the ID into reality.

The EGO functions to adapt the individual to reality – delays, inhibits, restrains and controls ID demands. The EGO is the rational, partly conscious part of the mind that makes decisions and copes with the external world.

The EGO can be related to the more grown-up side of our mind; it takes care of us, telling us we are doing ok. The EGO facilitates mediation with others and adaptation to our environment. The EGO says: 'l am, l can and l will'.

The **SUPEREGO** which is social in nature is the home of norms and ethical values of society and tries to bridge the gap between the ID and EGO. It represents the social-moral component in the personality- represents the ideal rather than the real and strives for perfection. It is the 'conscientious' side of our psyche. It contains internalized societal and parental rules and the taboos are translated into 'I should, I ought' and 'l must'. Like the ID it is unconscious. The SUPEREGO has two components- conscience and ego-ideal.

The **conscience** reacts to moral transgression by an individual through feelings of guilt.

The **ego-ideal** produces pride and satisfaction if the individual's behaviour conforms to acceptable standards.

It is hypothesized that the weakening of the ego as a result of ID demands and the subsequent inability of the Superego to bridge the gap between the ID and EGO is the major cause of psychological instability. The Freudian theoretical perspective emphasized that the intensified sex drive and resulting sexual conflicts arouse a lot of anxiety in adolescents. This anxiety in turn produces a variety of defense mechanisms such as repression, intellectualization, and asceticism for coping with stress in adolescence.

Central to Freud's psychoanalytic theory is the assumption that human beings have a powerful drive *[sexual drive]* that must be satisfied. As biological creatures, there is a drive in individuals to satisfy or serve these motives, yet society dictates that many of these urges are undesirable and must be retained or controlled. Freud further added that people are unaware that the biological instincts are the driving force behind behaviours. Adolescence proper, brought about by the biological maturation of the reproductive system is characterized by a rapid increase in sexual tensions demanding gratification. The sexual needs and fantasies become more explicitly concerned with tension release, and later, with the sexual union of male and female. However these inclinations are restrained by the social demands for adaptation to the moral values of society and the norms of the community.

The magnitude of this situation becomes obvious if one considers that pubescence requires for the first time since birth, that a basic biological drive, which acquires full strength only as a result of the pubescence growth changes, must be integrated into the personality structure of the young, still developing adolescent. This fact is complicated further by the traditional socio-moral-religious standards, which demand that the heterosexual gratification of this drive be postponed until marriage, often as long as 10 to 15 years after the drive acquires its full biological strength. In terms of psychoanalytic conceptualization, this means that the 'ID Impulses' seeking gratification with new urgency clash with the recently developed and still formative. 'Super-ego' producing guilty feelings because the superego finds the demands of the ID unacceptable. The EGO feels crushed between the two powerful contenders.

Thus the new balance between id, ego, and superego recently established during the latency period is suddenly thrown out of balance, producing conflict, turmoil, and psychological disequilibrium. These conflicts can be internal to the person- a struggle between temptation and conscience, or they can be external to the person – a struggle between parents and self. The EGO attempts to cope with these conflicts, on the one hand, by denying the demands of the ID through such mechanisms as repression or denial, or by quetining the superego through intellectualization, rationalization, asceticism, and repression. The identification of such defense mechanisms is one of Freud's major contributions to psychology. These defense mechanisms help the ego cope with anxiety, frustration and unacceptable impulses and help relieve tension and inner conflict. The most common defense mechanism, widely used by people is **rationalization**; a process in which one advances more or less plausible reasons to justify an act or an opinion concealing to others and even to oneself the true reason or motive. Also referred to as '*sour-grapes reaction*' based on the famous fable in which the fox who cannot reach the luscious grapes claims that he does not want them after all because they are sour. We often rationalize failure by blaming circumstances rather than ourselves. Rationalization aids the ego by providing an excuse for something unattainable, unpleasant, or unacceptable. Methods of rationalization are used, especially if we are criticized or called upon to explain unacceptable or undesirable behaviour. Adolescents use it vis-à-vis parents and students vis-à-vis their teachers. However frequent use of rationalization makes it impossible to learn from our errors, mistakes, or other shortcomings - one avoids ownership of deficiencies. By rationalizing, one is denying a personal responsibility for one's shortcomings. Students who fail the exam but blame the test or the teacher rather than themselves free themselves from anxiety but also absolve themselves from studying harder next time having convinced themselves that it was not their fault.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

A basic assumption of psychoanalytic theory is that all behaviour is meaningful. Even a grammatical mistake or a slip of the tongue is construed as a by-product of the subconscious/unconscious psyche. With respect to the curriculum, sporting activities and games are considered beneficial to the student from a psychoanalytic perspective. Through sublimation a defense mechanism involving channeling of disturbing sexual or aggressive impulses into 'acceptable' activities such as study, work, sports or other hobbies – 'sources of sexuality' are discharged and utilized in these other spheres so that a considerable increase of psychic capacity results. E.g. when football players are told to refrain from sexual activity prior to a game.

It is assumed that there is a connection between sexual energy and productivity in emotive arts e.g., music, poetry, painting, literature, and even sporting activities. The unconscious or subconscious comes to the fore in these emotive arts.

DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Are automatic, unconscious strategies for reducing anxiety.

Regression - return to behaviour of an earlier age during stressful times, to try to recapture security.

Repression - blocking from consciousness those feelings and experiences that cause anxiety. It is the purpose of all mechanisms of defense, and repressive components do accompany most of them. Deals with impulses from within while denial relates to those from the external world.

Denial - refusal to accept feelings and experiences that cause anxiety. This is the most primitive defenses of all. We refuse to accept that the source of our distress actually exists. Focus is on external reality unlike in repression where focus is internal but it serves a function similar to repression.

Displacement – is a very important psychoanalytic defense mechanism used to explain how the affect or libidal energy towards one object is transferred to a substitute object, which, while logically inappropriate, is a byproduct of unconscious thinking. An adolescent girl who experiences an intense fear of snakes may be displacing her underlying fear of a male's sexual organ.

Sublimation - connotes channeling disturbing sexual or aggressive impulses into 'acceptable' activities such as study, work, sports and hobbies. It is a specific kind of displacement. In sublimation the libidal instincts, rather than being displaced in neurotic behaviour are rechanneled into constructive and socially acceptable behaviour.

Introjections/internalization – with certain similarities to identification involves internalizing characteristics of other people into the protagonist's personality structure for defensive purposes.

Projection - involves attributing one's own unacceptable thoughts and motives to another person. It is the opposite of introjection in that one attributes or projects to somebody else unacceptable impulses of themselves.

Reaction formation – implies saying the opposite of what one really feels. It is a reversal in the opposite – the unacceptable impulse is repressed from consciousness but readmitted as its very opposite.

Intellectualization – implies indulgence in abstract intellectual discussion or work to avoid unpleasant, anxiety producing feelings.

Asceticism – is characterized by rigour, self-denial and mortification of the flesh due to fear of sexuality

THEORY 3 -THE ENVIRONMENTAL- THEORIES [BEHAVIOURISM & SOCIAL LEARNING]

BEHAVIOURISM

The major proponent of the theoretical perspective is B. F. Skinner. Before Skinner, Thorndike used the term operant conditioning to describe behaviour that is largely determined by its consequences. He noted that animals learned responses because they affected their environment. Following a particular behaviour led to a reward of some kind- for example, touching a latch resulted in food becoming available. The learning of a task was strengthened when an action resulted in reward. Thorndike termed this the '**law of effect**' and understood it in terms of trial and error on the part of animals rather than an innate intelligence, linking his observations with Darwin's theory of evolutionary selection. That is, species that adapt to their surroundings adapt their behaviour and therefore stand a greater chance of survival.

Skinner built on the work of Thorndike and it was his method of studying operant conditioning that was eventually widely adopted. The basic assumption in behaviourist theory is that development is learned and often changes according to environmental experiences. Therefore it follows that rearranging experiences can change the individual's development. For the behaviourist, shy behaviour can be changed into outgoing behaviour; aggressive behaviour can be shaped into docile behaviour; lethargic, boring behaviour can be turned into enthusiastic, interesting behaviour. Skinner described the way in which behaviour is controlled in the following way: The individual operates on the environment to produce a change that will lead to a reward.

Skinner chose the term **operants** to describe the responses that are actively emitted because of the consequences for the individual. Skinner's theory was based on the idea of reinforcements playing a motivational role in the learning of new tasks. The consequences- rewards and punishments- are contingent, or dependent on the individual's behaviour. For example, an operant might be pressing a lever on a machine that delivers a candy bar; the delivery of the candy bar is contingent on pressing the lever. In sum, operant conditioning is a form of learning in which the consequences of behaviour lead to changes in the probability of that behaviour's occurrence. More needs to be said about reinforcement and punishment.

Reinforcement [or reward] is a consequence that increases the probability of a behaviour recurring.

Positive reinforcement describes the strengthening of a response by the incentive of a stimulus as reward.

Negative reinforcement describes the strengthening of a response by removing an unpleasant stimulus [e.g. Loud noise in the library].

By contrast, **punishment** is a consequence that decreases the probability of a behaviour occurring. For example if someone smiles at you and the two of you continue talking for some time, the smile has reinforced your talking. However, if someone you met frowns at you and you quickly leave the situation, the frown has punished your talking with the individual. Behaviouristic tenets contributed to the development of social learning theory.

SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Some psychologists believe the behaviourists basically are right when they say development is learned and is influenced strongly by environmental experiences. But they believe Skinner went too far in declaring that **cognition** [or thought] is unimportant in understanding development. Social learning theory is the view of psychologists who emphasize behaviour, environment, and cognition as the key factors in development. While social learning theory develops its own theoretical constructs, of which *modeling* and *observation* are the most important, it draws freely on constructs of behaviourist learning theory, especially reinforcement. But even Skinner's concept of *direct reinforcement* is expanded to include important social dimensions – *vicarious reinforcement* and *self reinforcement.* The concerns of social learning theorists go far beyond those of the narrow connection between a stimulus and a response and include reciprocal or mutual socialization processes between adolescents and significant others e.g. parents and peers.

The social learning theorists postulate that we are not like mindless robots responding mechanically to others in our environment. Rather we think, reason, imagine, plan, expect, interpret, believe, value and compare. When others try to control us our values and beliefs allow us to restrict their control. Albert Bandura [1977, 1986, and 1989] and Walter Michel [1973, 1984] are the main architects of the contemporary version of social learning theory that was labeled **cognitive social learning theory.** Bandura believes much of our learning occurs by observing what others do.

Through observational learning [also denoted modeling or imitation or vicarious learning] we cognitively represent the behaviour of others and then possibly adopt this behaviour ourselves. For example an adolescent boy may observe his father's aggressive outbursts and hostile interchanges with people; when observed with his peers, the young adolescent boy's style of interaction is highly aggressive showing the same characteristics as his father's behaviour. Social learning theorists believe we acquire a wide range of behaviours, thoughts, and feelings through observing others' behaviour. These observations form an important part of our development. For adolescents, the peer group is most prominent in influencing behaviour and is more influential than parents and other significant others.

Social learning theorists also differ from Skinner's behavioural view by emphasizing that we can regulate and control our own behaviour [**self – regulatory mechanisms** and **self – monitoring mechanisms**]. In other words our cognitions [our thoughts] lead us to control our behaviour and resist environmental influences. According to Bandura, behavioural, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental influences operate interactively. Behaviour can influence cognition and vice-versa; the person's cognitive activities can influence the environment; environmental influences can change the person's thought processes; and so on. Like the behavioural approach of Skinner, the social learning approach emphasizes the importance of empirical research in studying development. This research focuses on the processes that explain development- the social and cognitive factors that influence what we are like as people.

EVALUATING THE BEHAVIOURAL & SOCIAL LEARNING THEORIES

The behavioural and social learning theories emphasize that environmental experiences determine development. These approaches have fostered a scientific climate for understanding development that highlights the observation of behaviour. Social learning theory emphasizes both environmental influences and cognitive processes in explaining development. This view also suggests individuals have the ability to control their environment. Criticisms of the behavioural and social learning theories are sometimes directed at the behavioural view alone and at other times at both approaches.

The behavioural view has been criticized for ignoring the importance of cognition in development and placing too much importance on environmental experiences. Both approaches have been described as being too concerned with change and situational influences on development and not paying adequate tribute to the enduring qualities of development. Both views are said to ignore the biological determinants of development. Both are labeled as reductionist, which means they look at only one or two components of development rather than at how all of the pieces fit together [a **holistic view** of development]. And critics have also pinpointed that the behavioural and social learning theories are too mechanical. By being overly concerned with several minute pieces of development, the detractors advocate that the most exciting and rich dimensions of development are missed.

***THEORY 4 -*THE CULTURAL – CONTEXT THEORIES**

Referred to as cultural determinism, the first pioneer of the theoretical perspective was Franz Boas who was a professor of anthropology at Columbia University. Boas was influenced by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. His theory of ***extreme cultural determinism*** postulated 'the independence of cultural determinism from race' and claimed that 'the social stimulus is infinitely more important than the biological mechanism.' Boas's theory had however not been scientifically or empirically tested – The testing ground for the validity of cultural determinism became adolescence. Specifically, whether adolescence proved a universal period of storm and stress, turmoil and crisis [biologically determined] or whether, as Boas assumed, a 'negative instance' could be found to demonstrate that adolescence could be a smooth, happy, carefree time, at least in some societies.

The task fell upon Margaret Mead a doctoral student of Boas's to undertake a field study in the South Seas to search for such a '**negative instance**', that is a counter-example in which adolescents did not categorically experience crises, nor storm and stress. Mead landed in 1925 in Pago Pago, Samoa, with the goal to determine whether adolescence turmoil was a universal product of puberty and hence biologically determined or could be modified by cultural context. In other words she set out to implore as to whether adolescence is a biologically determined period of crisis as advocated by Hall or simply a reaction to social and cultural conditions.

The goal of research was to determine whether adolescent turmoil was a universal product of puberty, and hence biologically determined, or could be modified by culture. In the research she conducted, it was conclusively established that the disturbances which vex our adolescents are ontological or culturally specific and not universal. In essence they are a product of civilization [Muuss, 1996].

It has been cited frequently as evidenced that;

- The turmoil
- The sexual frustration
- The storm and stress

Associated with growing up in the United States and considered universal by many of the major developmental psychologists of that time is far from being an inevitable, universal condition, and actually resulted from particular expectations, cultural settings, social environment, and childrearing practices. Mead's description of life in Samoa [1928/1950] a life characterized by;

- Carefree
- Unpressured
- Harmonious interpersonal interactions
- A lack of deep feeling being the very framework of all their attitudes towards life
- Without jealousy and stress
- Love and hate, jealousy and revenge, sorrow and bereavement, being a matter of weeks

In a nutshell, Mead described the transition to adulthood as smooth and unencumbered- not affected by conflict. Mead's perspective was challenged by an Australian anthropologist, Derek Freeman, in his book titled 'Margaret Mead and Samoans: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth' published in 1983. Freeman spent a total of six years in Western Samoa in the 1940s and the 1960s doing his research among the Samoans. According to Freeman's [1983] findings, the Samoans were more violent, sexually repressed, and fearful than what Mead had reported. Freeman argued that Mead had been overly concerned with emphasizing the role of culture, rather than biology, in human behaviour. Any explanation in biological terms of the presence of storm and stress in American adolescents was totally excluded. The conclusion to which Mead was led by her depiction of Samoa as a 'negative instance' was thus of an extreme order according to Freeman. Instead of arriving at an estimate of the relative strength of biological puberty and cultural patterns, Mead dismissed biology, or nature, as being of no significance whatsoever in accounting for the presence of storm and stress in American adolescence, and claimed the determinism of culture, or nurture, to be absolute [Freeman, 1983, p.78].

It should be pointed out however, that Freeman did not conduct his research with the same population that Mead had used in her studies. In their book, 'Adolescent Psychology: A Developmental View', Sprinthall and Collins [1988] defended Mead's work by pointing out that her work gave only a partial picture of Samoan life. Further they argue that her view that 'cultural norms and expectations help to determine the nature of adolescence has been widely supported by studies in a variety of cultures and Mead's work is still recognized as an important early statement of this idea' [p.13].

Ruth Benedict in trying to answer the question: 'what are the cultural differences that make adolescence a more or less generally difficult experience for young persons in Western society?'

'Concluded that the major determinant of the difficulty of adolescence was the extent to which socialization for adulthood was discontinuous in a society.'

By discontinuous Benedict referred to 'the necessity for an individual to learn a different set of behaviours, roles and attitudes for adulthood from the set learned in childhood'. Lloyd [1985] simplified Benedict's description by pointing out that the Samoan society was a perfect example of a continuous culture and the Western society could be viewed as a discontinuous culture.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Rapidity of social change, exposure to various secular and religious value systems [e.g. Scientology and Secular Humanism], and modern technology [e.g. the computer, internet, facebook, twitter and other social media, mobile phones and the i-pad] make what cultural anthropologists and sociologists call the pre-figurative or postmodern world seem overwhelming to the adolescent. The world seems far too complex, relativistic, unpredictable and dangerous to provide a secure frame of reference for the future.

The Educational curriculum therefore needs to be dynamic and vibrant enough to tally and be consistent with the changes in contemporary times. This is the computer generation- the generation of technology and scientific advancements and educational curriculums need to reflect such advancements which characterize adolescent cognition. The contemporary adolescent is also more globalized and connected to the entire world than did adolescents 20 or so decades ago.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT IS CULTURE

What is culture-----that is the question

Is culture that streak of folklore

That many have eschewed

Or the ever-fertile norm by whom all used to abide

Yah, even the most recalcitrant of society

What is culture----that is the question

What is culture

Is culture the panoply of anecdotes our teacher parrots

Or the gule-rhythm our religious preacher against preaches

Is culture the odd lexis-array whence many attain a name

Or the esteemed traditional drapery many do shame-

What is culture- that is the question

What is culture

Is culture upholding the heritage bygone

The family tree modernity threatens to hack down

The ancestral-root the grey heads hope sustain in vain

Or fond reveries of our past we hope dispel

What is culture- that remains the question

Marisen Mwale

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DURING ADOLESCENCE

PUBERTY AND PUBERTAL GROWTH

As noted in the introductory chapter to this book, the onset of adolescence is heralded or marked by two significant changes:

- Physiological changes in appearance
- The onset of puberty

Pubescence and adolescence have often been confused and considered as synonymous. However puberty can be distinguished from adolescence because for most people puberty has ended long before adolescence is exited or begins. Different authorities have attempted to define puberty differently:

Santrock [1993, 2001] states that puberty is a rapid change to physical maturation involving hormonal and bodily changes that take place primarily during early adolescence. **Slavin** [1988] defines puberty as a series of psychological changes that render the immature organism capable of reproduction. **Papalia** [1990] describes puberty as a process that leads to sexual maturity and the ability to reproduce.

HORMONAL CHANGES DURING PUBERTY

The same influx of hormones that puts hair on a male's chest and imparts curvature to a female's hips and breasts contribute to physiological and psychological adjustments in adolescence. Behind the first whisker or wet dream in boys and behind the first menarche and widening of hips in girls is a flood of hormones. Hormones are powerful chemical substances secreted by the endocrine glands and carried through the body by the bloodstream. The key to understanding the endocrine system's role in pubertal change is the **Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Gonadal axis**.

The hypothalamus is a structure in the higher portion of the brain, and the pituitary is the body's master gland. It is located at the base of the brain and its designation as the master gland comes from its ability to regulate and control a number of other glands. The term Gonadal refers to the sex glands- that is the testes in male and the ovaries in female. While the pituitary gland monitors endocrine levels, it is regulated by the hypothalamus. The pituitary gland sends a signal via gonadotrophin- a hormone that stimulates the testes or ovaries to produce other hormones. The pituitary gland, through interaction with the hypothalamus, detects when the optimal level is reached and responds by maintaining gonadotrophin secretion. There are two main classes of sex hormones that are manufactured after the trigger of the sex glands by gonadotrophin.

These are:

- Androgens
- Estrogens

Androgens are secreted primarily in male and estrogens in female. Current research, however, has been able to pinpoint more precisely which androgens and estrogens play the most important roles in pubertal development. In this respect, testosterone appears to assume an important role in the pubertal development of male. Throughout puberty, increasing testosterone levels are clearly linked with a number of physical changes in boys e.g. enlargement of genitals, increase in height and voice changes. In female, estradiol is likely the most important hormone responsible for pubertal development. The level of estradiol increases throughout puberty and then varies in women across their menstrual cycle. As estradiol levels rise, breasts and uterine development occur and skeletal changes appear as well. Note that both testosterone and estradiol are present in the hormonal make up of both boys and girls, but that testosterone is dominant for boys while estradiol is stronger in girls. Each of these hormones however is not solely responsible for pubertal changes; there are other hormones and variables responsible.

The hormonal changes in girls and boys trigger a process referred to as the **Adolescent growth spurt** marked by rapid physical and psychological changes. The growth spurt refers to the accelerated rate of increase in height and weight that occurs in adolescence. This physical change has many of the features of stage transition predicted by the *epigenetic landscape model*. There is a wide variation, both between and within sexes, in the onset and rate of change during the transition to adolescence. In boys, the growth spurt may begin as early as 10 years, or as late as 16 years. In girls, the same process only may begin as early as 8 years or not until 12 or 13 years. Other physical changes include increases in strength, a doubling in the size of the heart, greatly increased lung capacity and the release of sex hormones by the pituitary gland.

PHYSICAL CHANGES DURING PUBERTY

Puberty is not a single event. It is a series of changes involving almost every part of the body the final outcome of which being the ability to reproduce. It is popular acceptance by scholars that girls begin puberty at about one and a half to two years ahead of boys. In each sex the normal range of onset is approximately six years. Slavin [1988] adds that like the onset, the rate of changes also varies with some people taking only eighteen to twenty-four months to go through the pubertal changes while others may require six years to pass through the same stage. These differences in a way may mean that some individuals may be completely mature before others of the same age have begun puberty. Apart from nutrition and health other factors affect puberty's timing and variations in its make up. However the basic genetic program is wired into the nature of the species [Scarr & Kidd, 1983]. Another key factor in puberty's occurrence is body mass. Menarche occurs at a relatively consistent weight in girls. A body weight approximating 106 + or – 3 pounds can trigger menarche and the end of the pubertal growth spurt. And for menarche to begin and continue, fat must make up 17% of the girl's body weight. Both teenage anorexics whose weight drops dramatically and female athletes in certain sports [such as gymnastics] may become amenorrhaic [absence of or suppression of menstrual discharge]. In summary, puberty's determinants include nutrition, health, heredity and body mass. Puberty however is not a single sudden event as already alluded to. We know when a young boy or girl is going through puberty, but pinpointing its beginning and its ending is difficult. Except for menarche which occurs rather late in puberty, no single marker heralds puberty. For boys, the first whisker or first wet dream is the event that could mark its appearance but both may go unnoticed.

CHANGES IN GIRLS

The sequence of changes is as follows in girls:

- Initial enlargement of breasts------breast bud stage.

- Straight lightly pigmented pubic hair begins.

- Maximum growth rate is attained.

- Pubic hair becomes adult in type but covers a small area than in adults.

- Breast enlargement continues: the nipple and the area around it now project above the level of the breast.

- Menarche occurs.

- Underarm hair appears: sweat glands under the arms increase in size.

- Breast and pubic hair reach adult stage.

CHANGES IN BOYS

The sequence of changes is as follows in boys:

- Enlargement of the testes and scrotum begins.

- Straight lightly pigmented hair begins.

- Enlargement of the penis begins.

- Early changes in the voice occur.

- First ejaculation of semen occurs.

- Maximum growth rate is attained.

- Underarm hair appears and the sweat glands under the arms increase in size.

- The voice deepens noticeably.

- Growth of moustache hair, beard hair and pubic hair reach adult stage.

EXPLANATION

It may be noted that the sequence of events at puberty is generally the same for both boys and girls. However the timing and rate at which they occur vary widely. Changes take place in different organs of the body. Some organs are directly responsible for reproduction while others only show the physiological signs of sexual maturity. All organs necessary or directly responsible for reproduction are denoted **primary sex characteristics**.

In the female body structures involved are:

- Ovaries
- Uterus
- Vagina

In the male body, structures involved include:

- Testes
- Penis
- Prostate gland
- Seminal vesicle

During puberty these organs enlarge and mature.

There are also **secondary sex characteristics**.

These are physiological signs of sexual maturity that do not directly involve the reproductive organs.

Examples are:

- Changes in voice
- Texture of skin
- Pubic, facial, armpit and body hair

THE TRADITIONAL RITES OF PASSAGE

Western and most urbanized society provide no clear pattern of transition to adulthood. In contrast, many primitive societies have formalized *rites of passage*, or initiation ceremonies, to mark the adolescent's assumption of new, more adult social roles. Such ceremonies typically exist for both boys and girls. According to Santrock [2001] **rites of passage** *or* **rite de passage** refer to ceremonies or rituals that mark an individual's transition from one status to another, especially from childhood into adulthood. Among the Yao of southern Malawi such ceremonies include *Jando* for boys and *Msondo* for girls and among the Chewa of central Malawi the ceremonies are engulfed within the *Gule wa Mkulu* rituals. These ceremonies prepare adolescents for adult roles and responsibilities offering a formal phase of socialization. Thus, new roles are assumed by degree, causing minimal strain.

The social internship that precedes these *rite de passage* or developmental transition according to Nsamenang [1996] is designed to cultivate virtuous character and instill values of co-operation and generosity. Typically, the initiation of adolescent boys [*wonle ntsum* for the *Nso* of Cameroon or *Jando* for the *Yao* of Malawi], including circumcision, is a collective affair that marks the transition from the company of children and women to that of adult men. Circumcision as a prominent practice in rites of passage has both sexual and spiritual meaning. Circumcision may be done at the onset of puberty for hygienic reasons, to test the endurance of the youth, to reflect symbolic sacrifice, to sanctify procreation, to symbolize incorporation into the community, to represent symbolic castration by a father figure, or to express male envy of women's menstruation [Allen, 1967].

In some societies, the initiation of adolescent girls [*wonle ngon* in *Nso*] is subtler and less public as it focuses on training for proficiency in housekeeping and societal reproduction. The puberty rite marks the point at which adolescent boys and girls begin to take their place in the jural, cultural, and ritual affairs of the society, first, as their parents' representatives and later, in their own right, particularly for boys [Erny, 1987]. The specific form the rite takes varies across societies and has been reported in great detail by a vast but critical anthropological literature [Burton and Whiting, 1961; Erny, 1968; Harrington 1968; Jahoda, 1982; Whiting, 1965] that attests to the rite's social significance to the teenager's development. At maturity, an African adolescent takes on the adult roles for which he or she was being primed.

An adolescent does not, however, automatically attain adult status; full adulthood status requires being 'married with children' [Nsamenang, 1992 a]. The socialization of African youth is somehow changing, being affected by the consequences of schooling and the exigencies [*urgent demands*] of urbanization and commercialization. Among the Zuni Indians [Conger, 1984] and the Chewa of Malawi, the initiation rites of adolescents serve an important psychological function. Younger children are taught to fear the displeasure of 'scare *Kachinas* for the Zuni Indians, and *Nyau* for the Chewa,' or 'punitive masked gods,' employed in tribal ceremonies, if they behave improperly. Traditionally, when a boy is about 14 and considered responsible, he undergoes an initiation rite in both these cultures at which he is ceremonially whipped with strands of *yucca* by these 'masked gods'.

This ritual is not done as physical punishment, of which the Zuni or Chewa disapprove, but as a rite of exorcism, 'to take off the bad happenings,' and to make future events propitious [*favorable*]. Among girls, initiation ceremonies are likely to center around the onset of menstruation, 'which furnishes an obvious and dramatic signal of approaching physiological maturity'. Menarche for girls is considered a pubertal marker, while male pubertal development does not include such a distinctive marker. Also, for boys the rites of passage reflect an introduction to the more ethereal world of spirit and culture, while for girls the rites of passage are more likely to reflect natural phenomena such as menstruation. A common feature of such ceremonies in a large number of societies is the seclusion of the girl, especially from men.

This seclusion may last for only a few days or continue for several months. In many instances the secluded girl receives special instruction from an older woman in matters pertaining to sex and marriage. The teaching generally 'includes an explanation of the social regulations governing proper conduct in sexual affairs, a description and sometimes demonstration and pantomime [*play based on a fairy tale*] of the techniques of lovemaking, advice on how to get along in married life, methods of avoiding pregnancy, and what to expect in childbirth'. Information about modes of dress may be passed on as well during the ceremony, and spirituality is often included by associating femininity with the powers of the moon. In such rites, it is not unusual for the girl's clitoris to be removed. In fact genital mutilation is part and parcel of initiation in most societies in Kenya, Uganda and most African countries.

In some rites, girls are tortured or scared, while in others they are admired and celebrated [Opler, 1972]. Typically, the conclusion of the period is marked by a feast or dance, at which the girl, after bathing or going through ritual purification, publicly dons the clothes of a mature woman. [*As do the Yao after Msondo in Malawi*]. In a nutshell the rite de passage provides a forceful and discontinuous entry into the adult world at a time when the adolescent is perceived to be ready for change.

In western society however, a variety of laws according to Conger [1984] often internally inconsistent, are about all that the society have in the way of institutionalized patterns of recognizing the adolescent's increasing independence. Although universal formal ceremonies that mark the passage from adolescence to adulthood may not be prevalent in western society; certain religious and social groups do go through initiation ceremonies that indicate an advance in maturity has been reached. The Jewish bar Mitzvah, the Catholic Conformation, and social debuts, for example are typical of the rites. School graduation ceremonies come the closest to being rites of passage. The high-school graduation ceremony is especially noteworthy, becoming nearly universal for middle-class adolescents and increasing numbers of adolescents from low-income families [Fasick, 1988]. Nonetheless, high school graduation does not result in universal changes- many high school graduates continue to live with their parents, continue to be economically dependent on them, and continue to be undecided about career and life-style directions. Therefore the absence of clear-cut rites of passage makes the attainment of adult status ambiguous in most western societies.

CHAPTER 4

THE POWER OF CRITICAL THOUGHT

Need we thence meditate upon critical thought
Reflect a while about the power of strategy
Thinking far-far ahead
Far-ahead of the relentless antagonists
Weighing the pros and cons of your every move
In the likeness of the chess-master
Considering every circumstance a ploy on the chess board
Always averting – always dodging being checkmated
Circumventing the odds of fate always
Dictating the direction of battle odds always
Unequivocally guiding fortune
In every endeavor partaken
Strategy
That is the power of critical thought

Marisen Mwale

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT DURING ADOLESCENCE

Jean Piaget a Swiss Psychologist is credited for pioneering research theory in Cognitive Development. Characterized as a 'zoologist by training, an epistemologist by vocation and a logician by method', Piaget is best known for his contributions to developmental psychology. Piaget wrote about children's intellectual or cognitive development from the 1930s until the 1970s, and has been without question the most influential writer in this area. Piaget was the first psychologist to suggest that children don't just know less than adults but actually think in quite different ways. Piaget was a philosopher and a sociologist as well as a psychologist, but in psychology we are interested primarily in his work on how children think and acquire knowledge. He regarded himself as an interdisciplinary thinker; perhaps the identification 'genetic epistemologist' best described his orientation. Epistemology is the branch of science concerned with the methods, limits, and validity of knowledge. The term genetic is used in the sense of genesis or development; indeed, Piaget did not study the genes of his subjects, and the idea of genetic influences on the acquisition of knowledge applies only in a very broad sense. In regard to the nature – nurture controversy, Piaget was neither a **maturationalist** nor an **environmentalist**, but is better characterized as an **'interactionist'** or **'constructionist'**.

He postulated four stages of cognitive development:

- Sensorimotor

- Preoperational

- Concrete operational

- Formal operational

In this book we are more concerned with the stage of formal operations since it is assumed that adolescents operate within this domain.

STAGE OF FORMAL OPERATIONS

Piaget believed that from about 11 years of age children became capable of abstract or formal reasoning. The term formal indicates that children capable of this type of reasoning can focus on the **form** of an argument and not be distracted by its **content**. In other words what matters is form and logic rather than content. For example, if a child capable of formal reasoning is presented with the syllogism 'All green birds have two heads. I have a green bird called Charlie. How many heads does Charlie have?' he or she should be able to answer 'two' [Smith et al., 1998]. Before a child becomes capable of this type of reasoning they would be more likely to become distracted by the content and state that birds do not really have two heads.

Piaget's formal operations include, among others, the use of propositional thinking, combinatorial analysis, proportional reasoning, probabilistic reasoning, correlational reasoning, and abstract reasoning. With the progression through these stages, mental operations become increasingly more abstract, more complex, more logical, and the boundaries of mental structures become more permeable and thus, provide thought processes with greater flexibility. Adolescent thought is more abstract than child thought. Adolescents are no longer limited to actual, concrete experiences as anchors for thought. They can conjure up make-believe situations, events that are strictly hypothetical possibilities or purely abstract propositions, and try to reason logically about them. The abstract quality of the adolescent's thought at the formal operational level is evident in the adolescent's verbal problem-solving ability.

While the concrete operational thinker would need to see the concrete elements A, B, and C to be able to make the logical inference that if A = B and B = C then A = C – **[a transitive inference problem]** - the formal operational thinker can solve this problem merely through verbal presentation. Furthermore children who function at the concrete operational stage cannot solve the transitive inference problem if it is placed on a purely verbal and hypothetical plane e.g. 'John is taller than Mary, Mary is taller than Jane. Who is the tallest?'. They are unable to consider all possible combinations in relation to the whole problem [Harris and Butterworth, 2002].

Another indication of the abstract quality of the adolescent's thought is his or her increased tendency to think about thought itself. Adolescents do not simply think more abstractly, flexibly and speculatively about objects around them.
They also actually think about their own thoughts and thoughts of other persons. One adolescent commented, 'l began thinking about why l was thinking what l was thinking, then l began thinking about why l was thinking about what l was thinking'. If that sounds abstract, it is, and it characterizes the adolescent's enhanced focus on thought and its abstract qualities.

Accompanying the abstract nature of formal operational thought in adolescence is thought full of idealism and possibilities. While children frequently think in concrete ways, or in terms of what is real and limited, adolescents begin to engage in extended speculation about ideal characteristics – qualities they desire in themselves. Such thoughts often lead adolescents to compare themselves and others in regard to such ideal standards. And during adolescence, the thoughts of individuals are often fantasy flights into future possibilities.

It is not unusual for the adolescent to become impatient with these newfound ideal standards and become perplexed over which of many ideal standards to adopt. It is sometimes said that the adolescent's thought is more like a scientist's than a child's. This implies that the adolescent often entertains many possibilities and tests many solutions in a planned way when having to solve a problem. This kind of problem solving capability has been denoted **hypothetical deductive reasoning**. Basically this implies that in solving a problem, an individual develops hypotheses or hunches about what will be a correct solution to the problem, and then in a planned manner tests one or more of the hypotheses, discarding the ones that do not work.

Adolescents can thus think about possibilities, think through hypothesis, think ahead, think about thought and engage in **perspective thinking**. Closely related to thinking about thought, perspective thinking is the awareness that different people have different thoughts about the same situation or circumstance. This characteristic was demonstrated in some early studies by Jean Piaget. Piaget demonstrated repeatedly that young children tend to think everyone views situations as they do. He described these young children as egocentric because they were centred or focused on their own view. Adolescents, however, are more likely to recognize that others' viewpoints are different from their own. Therefore while children are **egocentric** adolescents are **socio-centric**.

According to Muuss [1996] adolescents not only think beyond the present but analytically reflect about their own thinking. Piaget calls this type of reasoning '**second-degree thinking**' which involves operations that produce 'thinking about thinking', 'statements about statements', or more significantly 'operations on operations'. The other distinctive property of formal thought is the reversal of direction between reality and possibility. A type of thinking which proceeds from what is possible to what is empirically real [Inhelder and Piaget, 1958]. Combinational systems of operations defined as the matrix of all possible combinations of all possible values of all possible variables inherent in the problem also constitutes formal operations. Combinational analysis can be exemplified by an experiment requesting to determine which combination of five chemicals produces a yellowish-brown liquid and which returns the liquid to its original colorless state.

With more reference to thinking through hypotheses, adolescents' abilities to think about different possibilities enable them to test hypotheses as part of solving problems, much as scientists test hypotheses in conducting research. The tendency of primary school children to be overwhelmed by the concrete details of the situation interfere with hypothesis testing. Compared with problem solving in primary school children, adolescent problem solving includes the ability to test hypotheses that seem impossible as well as those that seem to be a likely solution at the moment.

Yet another cognitive ability attained at this stage is propositional analysis entailing the ability to follow and understand logical deductions in the light of two premises ----- one specific, the other general ---- and a conclusion.

E.g.:

A] All human beings are mortal.

John is a human being.

Therefore John is mortal.

B] All planets orbit the sun.

The earth is a planet.

Therefore the earth orbits the sun.

EVALUATING PIAGET'S THEORY

It is widely agreed that some of Piaget's ideas are correct, for example that there are fundamental differences in the ways children and adults think. There is also some support for Piaget's idea of agency, that we are active in seeking out knowledge and constructing our mental representation of the world [Niaz and Caraucan, 1998]. Interestingly, whilst Piaget saw motivation as leading to learning, Bandura [1989] has suggested the opposite relationship – **self-efficacy theory**, in which successful learning increases motivation. In a review of the relationship between motivation and learning, Andreani [1995] has concluded that both views are partially correct and that learning and motivation each influence the other. Modern variations on Piaget's tests of children's thinking have produced mixed results.

Modern tests of formal thinking have suggested that Piaget was over-optimistic in suggesting that all or most people acquire the ability to think formally in their teens. In one recent longitudinal study Bradmetz [1999] followed 62 French children up to 15 years, testing them on a number of formal reasoning tasks. At 15 only one of the 62 was reliably capable of formal reasoning tasks. An important limitation of Piaget's theory is his lack of attention to the role of instruction by adults and other children in learning. A contemporary of Piaget, Lev Lemonok Vygotsky, addressed this by proposing that children acquire from adults and older children a '**mental toolkit**' with which they understand the world. Contemporary research seems to favor Vygotsky's position. For example, in the study by Li et al. children from better schools did better in conservation tasks, suggesting that the quality of instruction has an impact on cognitive development.

A small volume of research is still generated based on Piaget's ideas, and his theory can therefore be said to be of current as well as historical interest. Certainly his work has important practical applications in education but Piaget no longer dominates the field of cognitive-developmental psychology. Rival approaches include that of Vygotsky, who emphasizes as already alluded to the role of instruction from others in development, and the ***innatist modular*** approach, which emphasizes the activation of particular ***neral systems*** at different ages [as opposed to the individual] as an agent of learning. As well as this range of ***domain-general*** theories [i.e. theories that aim to explain all cognitive development] there are now ***domain-specific*** approaches to cognitive development, which just aim to explain particular mental functions. For example, much research is currently being undertaken into the development of theory of mind [children's understanding of the emotions and motives of others]. This provides an alternative explanation for the development of a child's ability to see other perspectives in contrast to Piaget's idea of egocentrism.

APPLICATION- THE IDEA IN ACTION

The major application of Piaget's ideas has been in education. Piaget's approach suggests that children learn best when allowed to construct their own schemas, and that the teacher's task is not to lecture but to set up situations where students can discover ideas for themselves [as happens when they are given internet search tasks]. This approach, sometimes called *child-centred learning*, or, *discovery learning* has been extensively introduced in the last 30 years. However research comparing traditional and child-centred methods shows no consistent advantage for either approach, or *cooperative learning* [as proposed by Vygotsky] at least in some situations. For example, Mevarech et al. [1991] compared the rates of learning of students who worked alone or shared a computer.

Those sharing the computer did significantly better, supporting Vygotsky's view over that of Piaget. Piagetian theory also has implications on what students are taught at school. The development of the National Curriculum was influenced by Piaget's theory: the Primary Curriculum begins with ideas appropriate to preoperational thinking and progresses to tasks requiring concrete operational thought. The secondary curriculum includes ideas and tasks that require formal reasoning.

ELKIND: IMMATURE ASPECTS OF ADOLESCENT THOUGHT

According to David Elkind [1967, 1976, 1978] two important aspects of thinking about the self and others that develop in adolescence are **egocentrism** and **perspective taking**.

David Elkind believes two types of thinking represent the emergence of egocentrism in adolescents. These are the **imaginary audience** and the **personal fable**. Imaginary audience is the belief that others are as pre-occupied with the adolescent's behavior as he or she is. Attention-seeking behavior, so common in early adolescence, may reflect this interest in an, imaginary audience, that is the desire to be noticed, visible, and on stage. Particularly during early adolescence, individuals see themselves as constantly on stage, believing they are the main actors and all others are the audience. The construction or representation personal fable on the other hand refers to the adolescent's sense of personal uniqueness and indestructibility. Their sense of personal uniqueness makes them feel that no one can understand how they really feel - their perception that they are special.

Another aspect of the personal fable involves the belief that one is indestructible. This results in feelings of invulnerability or insusceptibility and therefore risk – taking behaviors such as alcoholism, drug and substance abuse as well as sexual promiscuity. For reasons likely tied to an emerging interest in idealism and the ability to think in more abstract and hypothetical ways, young adolescents often get caught up in a mental world far removed from reality. This may entail the belief that things just can't or won't happen to them and that they are omnipotent and indestructible.

CHAPTER 5

THE POWER OF LOVE

As a fruit of instinct and not instruction

True love baulks not

Even in the face of hurdles myriad

Like a dream that has no ending

Love transcends trifle fantasy

Like a ware e'ermore to keep

The edifice of love pales not

Even in the wake of a deluge

Like a neonate e'ermore trustful of its mum

Love is sublimely optimistic

Like a dove e'ermore conscious of her dovelings

Love forfeits all and is not solicitous for her own pleasures

Like a rose e'ermore perennial

The petal of love never fades

Love is e'ermore credulous

Love is guileless

Love is selfless

Love is patient

You are the appellation of true love

Marisen Mwale

MORAL REASONING IN ADOLESCENTS

INTRODUCTION

The issue of rightness and wrongness is a complex phenomenon. Whether a given action is acceptable or unacceptable may depend on many factors including the specific circumstances involved, legal considerations and own personal code of ethics.

Moral development is the process by which individuals acquire a sense of right and wrong, to use in evaluating their own actions and the actions of others [Turiel, 1998].

Moral development begins early and continues throughout the life span. Theories of moral development attempt to find answers to moral issues and how children reason or respond to moral dilemmas and how their moral growth is stimulated.

PIAGET'S THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the earliest theories of moral development was postulated by Jean Piaget. Piaget theorized that the way humans think out moral issues depends on their level of cognitive development. In essence there is a direct relationship between cognitive development and moral development. According to Piaget young children are **egocentric**. That is to say they have difficulty taking others' perspective into consideration. This tendency is typical of children below the age of seven or in Piaget's pre-conventional stage of cognitive development. Children at this age generally believe that rules are inflexible mandates provided by some higher authorities, are arbitrary and cannot be changed. Breaking a rule will automatically lead to punishment.

Young children tend to judge the gravity or wrongness of an action depending on how much harm has been made regardless of the motive or intention behind an action. For instance a child who intentionally breaks 1 cup while trying to steal sugar is considered to have committed a lesser offense than another who breaks 15 cups accidentally while opening the cupboard door. Piaget called this kind of morality *heteronomous morality* or morality that is subject to rules imposed by others where a child shows blind obedience to authority. The child perceives justice as resting in the person of authority; this idea is referred to as 'ethics of authority'. The period is also referred to as *moral realism* or the *morality of constraint*, characterized by the view that rules are absolute.

After age eight children are able to understand that rules are not absolute but are rather formed through social consensus and are thus subject to change-----are tentative. In the case of infraction or violation of a rule, older children are now capable of considering whether the individual acted intentionally-----they consider the motive behind the action. Piaget referred to this stage as **morality of co-operation** ---the level at which children understand that people both make up rules and can change the rules, which are now seen as a product of people's agreements. This stage reflects the change to a social orientation, an 'ethics of mutual respect'. Moral judgments shift from an objective to a subjective orientation: the primary concern is no longer simply the objective amount of damage caused by the immoral act, but the intention or motivation now becomes more important. Children now appreciate the reciprocity of relationships.

For Piaget, the highest stage of moral development, characteristic of adolescence, is **moral autonomy**. Dependent on the attainment of formal or abstract reasoning ability, moral autonomy commonly begins at puberty. In a game situation, like *monopoly*, *chess*, *dominos*, *scrubble* or *drafts* – the adolescent reveals interest not only in the rules by which the game is played but also in possible new rules to make the game more interesting or more challenging.

KOHLBERG'S THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Kohlberg developed his theory of moral development in the 1950s with inspiration from Piaget's theory. One of Kohlberg's major contributions was to develop a series of moral dilemmas as a way of researching moral reasoning. This technique involves presenting children and adolescents with made-up hypothetical scenarios in which people have to make difficult decisions with a strong moral component. They are then interviewed about what decision they think the character in the scenario should have made and their reasons for believing this. Kohlberg [1963] investigated morality in 10 – 16 year-old boys, using a set of these scenarios. The best known of these is that of Heinz and the pharmacist:

In Europe a woman was near death from cancer. One drug might save her, a form of radium that a druggist in the town had recently discovered. The pharmacist was charging $ 2 000, for a small dose, ten times the drug cost him to make. The sick woman's husband, HEINZ, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what it cost [$ 1 000]. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said 'NO'. The husband got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

In the moral dilemmas like HEINZ's dilemma Kohlberg was not necessarily interested in the specific choices children or adults made but their underlying moral reasoning in those choices. On the basis of young people's responses to these dilemmas Kohlberg classified their moral reasoning into three broad levels of development.

The first level, he denoted *Pre conventional*, where moral reasoning is based solely on a person's own needs and perceptions.

The second level, he denoted *Conventional*, where the expectations of society and law are taken into account.

The last level, he denoted *Post Conventional*, where judgments are based on abstract, more personal principles that are not necessarily defined by societal rules.

Each of these levels was then divided into two stages.

LEVEL 1 – Pre conventional morality

This type of moral reasoning develops at the age of about 5 – 12 years. Morality is based entirely on external influences. During this period there is a shift from deference to authority based on the avoidance of punishment – the earliest conception of morality – to a realization that conformity brings rewards [a more advanced reasoning]. Children consider rules as absolute – acts are wrong because they are punished or right because they are rewarded.

Stage 1

The punishment obedience orientation

- Punishment and obedience are an individual's main concerns.

- The main motivation for obeying a rule is to avoid punishment and achieve gratification.

- Being right means obeying authority.

Stage 2

The instrumental-relativist orientation/ Personal reward

- The individual adopts an orientation of individualism and exchange.

- Rules are followed if they are in the individual's best interest.

- Deals and compromises with others are sometimes used to solve problems.

- Revealing a hedonistic orientation, morally right behaviour depends on what satisfies one's own desires.

- In both stages in level 1 the child is egoistic/ a hedonist.

- Everyone has the right to do what he wants with himself and his possessions, even though his behaviour conflicts with the rights of others.

LEVEL 2 – Conventional Morality

This orientation develops at 13 – 15 years. Moral judgments can now be applied to others. Although the reactions of adults are still important these are seen not in terms of reward and punishment but in terms of approval – being seen as 'good' is an important motivator. By the end of the conventional period morality is internalized [the child makes moral decisions based on their own judgment rather than the anticipated responses of others]. By this point the child has developed a respect for society and sees the law as very important. Judgments at this stage are based on the conventions of friends, family and society and on their approval.

Stage 3

The interpersonal-concordance orientation/Good boy or Good girl orientation

- Moral reasoning is guided by mutual interpersonal expectations and conformity.

- People try to do what is expected of them.

- The concern is to meet external social expectation.

- Concept of 'right' is there but nobody has the right to do evil.

- Intentions become more important in judging a person's behaviour.

Stage 4

Authority and social order-maintaining orientation/Law and order orientation

- Individuals place importance on the social system, including laws, and on fulfilling obligations.

- There is strong belief in law, order, duty and legitimate authority.

- The observance of the golden rule ----- ***do unto others as you would have them do unto you***------ is often the criterion in making moral judgments.

- Maintaining the established order for its own sake.

LEVEL 3 -------Post conventional morality

The orientation develops at around 16 – 20 years. This level is characterized by the awareness that people have a variety of values and opinions and that rules are to some extent arbitrary. There is a shift during this period from a stage of general acceptance of rules for reasons of impartiality and because they constitute a social contract towards the highest moral state, that of universal ethical principles [equality and respect for individual dignity]. This involves the realization that, although laws and conventions usually reflect moral principles, when they come into conflict the ethical principles rather than the rules must be upheld. Moral thinking involves working out a personal code of ethics or self accepted moral principles. Acceptance of rules is less rigid ---- one might not comply with some of the society's rules if they conflict with personal ethics. Kohlberg believed that only around 10 – 15 % of people achieved the highest moral state and acquired universal ethical principles.

Stage 5

The social-contract legalistic orientation

- People recognize and try to balance the importance of both social contracts and individual rights.

- Moral behaviour reflects a concern for the welfare of the larger community and a desire for community respect.

- More flexible understanding that we obey rules because they are necessary for social order but the rules could be changed if there were better alternatives.

Stage 6

The universal-ethical principle orientation/ Morality of individual principle and conscience

- Behaviours conform to internal principles [justice and equality] to avoid self-condemnation and sometimes may violate society's rules – motivation is feeling right with oneself.

- Individuals adopt an orientation towards universal principles of justice, which exist regardless of a particular society's rules.

- Reasoning assumes a conscience that is based on self chosen ethical principles that place the highest value on human life, equality and dignity.

- Civil disobedience is not out of disrespect for law and order, but out of respect for a morality higher than the existing law.

- Visionaries or moral leaders such as *Abraham Lincoln*, *Nelson Mandela*, and *Martin Luther* displayed this form of morality.

- Kohlberg also named *Jesus Christ* and *Mahatma Gandhi* as belonging to the group.

- In his later writings Kohlberg stopped referring to universal principles as the end-point of normal development and instead wrote of them as an ideal.

EVALUATING KOHLBERG'S THEORY

Kohlberg's theory has generated enormous interest and the approach still underlies a large proportion of contemporary research into moral development. It is the most nearly complete theory of moral development and psychologists have found that moral development in many situations seems to proceed roughly along the lines Kohlberg suggested even in other cultures such as Turkey and Israel. But the theory has not gone without any criticism:

- First, the scoring of scenarios which was central to his research method was somewhat subjective and can lead to errors of interpretation. Kohlberg used moral dilemmas or scenarios and respondents were categorized into a moral level or stage according to their response to the scenario or moral dilemma. There was no objectivity in such a criteria due to the fact that classifications depended on the researcher's perceptions of the response.

- Second, stages of moral development seem to be less domain general than Kohlberg's theory suggests [Kurtines & Greif, 1974]. The level of people's responses may vary depending on the particular scenario to which they respond. In essence given different scenarios or dilemmas, people's responses may render them classified into different stages which may rather compromise the reliability and validity of the theory. Further, evidence indicates that, contrary to the assumption of stage theories, people may regress to earlier stages of moral reasoning under certain circumstances such as under stress.

- Third, Kohlberg's own finding that people can regress in their behaviour points out the weak link that often exists between thought/reasoning and action/behaviour [Kurtines & Greif, 1974]. The link between moral thought and moral behaviour is often weak – thought/reasoning does not necessarily translate into behaviour. Kohlberg needless to say put too much emphasis on moral thought than on moral behaviour.

Moral judgment/reasoning/thought refers to the intellectual or reasoning ability to evaluate the 'goodness' or 'rightness' of a course of action in a hypothetical situation.

Moral behaviour refers to the individual's ability in a real – life situation to resist the temptation to commit immoral acts.

Someone may indeed nurture a higher level of moral development, but not act in ways consistent with that understanding. This inconsistency is an element of ***cognitive dissonance*** in social psychology reflecting a discrepancy often existing between attitude/thought/reasoning and subsequent behaviour. The implication here is therefore that people in essence often preach what they themselves do not practice.

- Forth, the theory was originally validated on a relatively small sample of white, middle – class American males less than 17 years of age. Thus the theory is androgenic or centered on males. Although some investigators have found cross-cultural support for Kohlberg's theory, others have found that in certain circumstances, such as the lifestyle of the communal Israeli kibbutz what is viewed as a higher level of morality differs from the value systems Kohlberg suggested.

Snarey [1985] concerning the theory's cross-cultural validity further reviewed 44 studies covering 26 countries and concluded that generally Kohlberg's theory could be applied to a wide variety of cultures. However, it was noted that not all cultures place the same value on the freedom to make individual moral choices, so postconventional morality may not be the universal endpoint of development as Kohlberg's theory seems to suggest. When Okwonko [1997] gave Kohlberg-type moral dilemmas to Igbo children in Nigeria she found that they often produced highly sophisticated answers that demonstrated advanced reasoning. However, because of Nigerian cultural values of obedience to parents, belief in a divine being and the close interdependence of all members of a community their answers did not fit neatly into Kohlberg's classification and could not be classified as postconventional.

- Fifth, the theory is ***ethnocentric*** [perspective biased towards one's culture and judging others basing thereof] and ***Eurocentric*** [that is biased towards the west] where people are generally individualistic hence lacking a cosmopolitan perspective. It may therefore not apply in communal or collective societies because of its parochial nature. It has also been argued that the scenario or dilemma responses were somewhat based on ***intuition*** – [that is knowledge or insight without conscious reasoning].

- Sixth, Kohlberg emphasized on cognitive reasoning about morality but overlooked other aspects of moral maturity such as ***character*** and ***virtue*** that operate to solve moral problems in everyday life [Walker and Pitts, 1998; Woolfolk, 2000]. The theory does not therefore differentiate between ***social convention*** and ***moral issues***.

- Finally, Kohlberg also failed to adequately reflect the connectedness with and concern for others in individuals. Carol Gilligan [1982, 1985] argues that Kohlberg's theory emphasized a ***justice perspective*** that is a focus on the rights of the individual rather than a ***care perspective*** that sees people in terms of their connectedness.

GILLIGAN'S ALTERNATIVE TO KOHLBERG'S THEORY

Carol Gilligan [1982] has proposed one alternative model of moral development arising from the criticisms to Kohlberg's theory. She suggested that women tend to have a different conception of morality than do men. According to Gilligan, whereas men tend to focus on abstract, rational principles such as justice and respect for the rights of others, women tend to view morality more in terms of caring and compassion. They are more concerned with issues of general human welfare and how relationships can contribute to it and be strengthened. In particular women seem better able to show empathy, or the ability to understand how another person feels, when interacting with others.

In general men tend to have a more competitive orientation, women a more co-operative orientation. Although Gilligan's early idea that men and women have entirely different moral orientations is considered extreme and not empirically substantiated, contemporary research does tend to support Gilligan's more moderate view that women place more emphasis on *care* and men on *justice* when making moral decisions. In one study Garmon et al. [1996] tested the moral reasoning of 543 participants aged 9 – 18 using a standard interview called the *Sociomoral Reflection Measure* and found that girls were more likely to refer to issues of care and idealism than boys. Gilligan conducted several studies before she came up with her stage theory of moral development for women. Unlike Kohlberg's study which used males only, Gilligan used adolescents both girls and boys aged 10 – 15 in her study. Thus her theory was not based on boys alone or androgenic. However like Kohlberg she also used hypothetical dilemmas.

One popular dilemma was the story of the porcupine, which went on like this:

A porcupine was seeking refuge from the cold and asked to share a cave with the mole family. The moles agreed but the cave was too small, such that each time porcupine moved, its spikes scratched the moles. Moles complained bitterly and asked porcupine to leave their cave but porcupine refused and instead asked the moles to leave if they felt uncomfortable.

When the adolescents were asked what they thought of the situation, boys were quick to seek justice; porcupine should leave because that is moles' house. Girls on the other hand looked for solutions that would take care of both of them – they suggested covering the porcupine with a blanket.

From this study Gilligan concluded that:

- Women are more concerned with caring than men.

- What looks like weakness in women portrays their moral strength – caring is more virtuous than justice.

Gilligan like Kohlberg also thinks that moral development has three basic levels.

 Level 1 – *pre-conventional morality* - reflects self – interest or a concern for self and survival.

Level 2 – *conventional morality* - reflects self-sacrifice or a concern for being responsible and caring for others.

Level 3 – *post-conventional morality* – reflects a universal care or a concern for self and others as interdependent.

Gilligan believed that Kohlberg underemphasized the care perspective in moral development of both males and females and that morality's highest level for both sexes involves a search for moral equality between oneself and others [Muuss, 1988].

MARISEN'S MODEL OF MORAL MATURITY

The model conceptualizes four statuses or categories of moral maturity. Statuse one which is the most mature statuse includes persons who are both morally wise and morally intelligent. Statuse two includes those who are morally wise but not morally intelligent. Statuse three includes those who are morally intelligent but not morally wise. Statuse four which is the least mature statuse includes those who are neither morally intelligent nor morally wise.

STATUSE 1

The morally wise and morally intelligent

This is the most mature statuse equivalent in orientation to Kohlberg's Post – conventional morality. The persons elicit an '*inner locus of evaluation*' when making judgements. They are in touch with their *'organismic valuing process'* and are fully functioning persons who are prone to self actualize. There is a congruency between their moral reasoning/thought/judgement and their moral behaviour/actions. They display no cognitive dissonance neither are they adept to introjected behavioural traits. They are fully themselves and they are not affected by external valuing processes.

STATUSE 2

The morally wise but not morally intelligent

This category ranks second in moral maturity. Although there might be no contingency between moral thought and moral behaviour in these persons they display higher levels of moral behaviour which may not be consistent with their lower level of cognitive development. This is the category of those who display wisdom especially in primitive societies where there is no formal education. Given Kohlberg like dilemmas, they may be categorized as displaying lower levels of moral reasoning possibly due to their cognitive maturity but when it comes to their actions or behaviours, they display higher levels of moral maturity. This is the category of the wise, the sages in primitive societies who display higher levels of 'UBUNTHU' in Afro-Malawian psychological terminology.

STATUSE 3

The morally intelligent but not morally wise

This statuse by virtue of its wanting in wisdom is ranked lower than the second statuse. In characteristics persons in this category display no contingency between moral reasoning or judgement and moral behaviour or actions. They display higher levels of cognitive development and reasoning and may elicit abstract thought processing akin to Piaget's formal operations but when it comes to moral behaviour there is a substantial inconsistency. Their behaviour is not contingent with their level of cognition. These may be denoted intelligent fools. There is often

cognitive dissonance or a weak link between their moral thought processes and subsequent moral behaviour. This is the category that is adept to risk taking behaviours and personal fables indulging in alcoholism, promiscuity, drug abuse and such other negative behaviours irrespective of their grounded knowledge of the plausible dangers of such. The category may include medical doctors who irrespective of their professional training may still be heavy smokers or alcoholics or may indulge in unprotected multiple and concurrent sexual debuts contrary to their training and exposure to the dangers of such conduct. The category may also include lawyers or legal practitioners who are caught up in criminal behaviors contrary to their professional training. The persons in this category may elicit introjected personalities and poor valuing processes and may not be their full authentic selves.

STATUSE 4

The not morally intelligent and not morally wise

This is the least mature statuse. The category of the amoral. The persons elicit no streak of moral reasoning or moral wisdom. This is the category that lacks the psychological phenomena of 'UBUNTHU' in Afro-Malawian psychology. They may not only be intellectually challenged and daft but also morally inept and remorseless. They are adept to criminality because of their moral disposition. In Kohlberg's conceptualization, they may elicit the egoism and hedonism typical of pre-conventional morality. The love for pleasure and the 'here and now' orientation/philosophy predisposes them to criminal behaviour.

CURRENT APPLICATIONS OF MORAL THEORY IN GENERAL

The cognitive-developmental approach remains the dominant way of looking at moral development, and Kohlberg-type dilemmas are still frequently used in research. The broad principles of Gilligan's moral orientation remain widely believed, although there is some criticism of her research methods, and there is still disagreement about the extent to which males and females differ in moral orientations. There are however, some exciting new directions in moral development research, addressing important aspects of moral development not easily addressed by traditional theory. For example, the development of children's theory of mind and the quality of family relationships have been implicated by recent studies in individual differences in moral reasoning. Although moral development is primarily of academic interest, there have been some practical applications.

In *criminal psychology*, for example, it has been proposed that one aspect of criminality is a lack of moral reasoning ability. Support for this idea comes from a study by Aleixo and Norris [2000] in which 101 male offenders aged 16 – 21 were assessed using Kohlberg type dilemmas, IQ and personality tests. The participants came out on average as less morally mature than the population at large, and of significantly lower IQ, suggesting that poor reasoning was indeed a factor in criminality. However, the criminals also differed significantly in personality from the population norm, so moral reasoning is not the only factor in criminal behaviour.

There are also pointers to a maturational lag in the development of the frontal lobe of the brain in criminals – the pre-frontal lobe of the brain is associated with impulse control and a lag in development suggests failure to control impulses hence criminality.

An understanding of moral reasoning has also proved useful in education, where a major task is to influence children's citizenship. The general idea that children's understanding of morality becomes more sophisticated with age is generally supported by psychologists, and has helped teachers to teach morality in a form suitable to the age of the children. Goodman [2000] has suggested that the approach to teaching morality at school must be tailored to the cognitive development of the children, and that younger children [who lack the subtleties of post-conventional morality] will benefit from knowing and sticking to firm rules. Once they achieve post-conventional morality, negotiation and an appreciation of moral relativism [i.e. the idea that morality is not fixed but changes according to situation] can be introduced.

CHAPTER 6

A SONG FOR ARUNA

If only, if only you were mine Aruna-
Those two sparkling and caring eyes
Like rare precious gems ever heralded
Pierce into me as though searching
Those full lips
Redolent with promises of wild passion
Perch on that ever blossoming countenance of yours
The torso
So sinister as of the world's greatest supermodel
Desperate for that lasting loving
The breasts
Two fully-blown water melons linger on your chest
As though beckoning for that tender fondling
If only you were mine Aruna
How dear and charming you are my fairy-lady
Your tender voice like a soothing romantic melody
Resonates in my ever yearning eardrums
Reminding me yet more of my desolate and miserable nights
If you really were mine Aruna
If only I knew back then, that you were but a superwoman
If only I forgot, only accepted
That you are now another man's possession
I would find peace with myself
Oh poor me, poor-poor Maestro-
The more I try to forfeit you, the more I deny
The thongs of that abject reality
That you surely can't be mine
Unshackle me Aruna, unshackle Maestro
From this forlorn craving for…..

PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DURING ADOLESCENCE

INTRODUCTION

THE SELF AND IDENTITY

Adolescents carry with them a sense of who they are and what makes them different from everyone else. This sense of who an individual is and what makes him or her different from others is referred to as ***self-identity***. Adolescents cling to this identity and develop a sense that the identity is becoming more stable. Real or imagined, an adolescent's developing sense of self and uniqueness is a motivating force in life. Two concepts comprise the representation ***self-identity*** – self and identity. Let us consider the self first before we turn our focus toward issues of identity.

THE SELF

Early in psychology's history, William James [1890] distinguished two intimately intertwined aspects of the self. The self as subject [the I self] and the self as object [the me self] and there are four major distinctions between the two aspects according to James:

- Firstly the I self is the actor or knower, the me self is the object of what is known or one's knowledge of oneself [an empirical aggregate of things objectively known].

- Secondly the I self is the active observer, and the me self is the observed [the object of the observing process].

- Thirdly the I self conveys the sense of independence, agency, and volition and the me self conveys a sense of dependency.

- Forth some researchers refer to the I self as the ***existential self*** and the me self as the **categorical self**.

Development proceeds in a sequence from the existential to the categorical self which is considered a duality according to Lewis and Brooks-Gunn [1979]. That is from a conception that I am, I exist, and to what or who I am [Lapsey & Rice, 1988; Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979]. The task of developing the I self that is the self as subject, is to develop the realization that it is 'existential' in that it exists as separate from others.

The me self, namely, the self as object, is referred to as 'categorical' in that the developing child must construct categories by which to define himself or herself [e.g., age and gender labels]. Lewis [1991, 1994] further refers to the I self as '*subjective self-awareness*' since when attention is directed away from the self to external objects, people, and events one is the subject of consciousness. In contrast, the 'idea of me' can also be described as '*objective self-awareness*' which involves focusing on the self as the object of consciousness. James also identified particular features or components of both the I self and the me self.

Components of the I self include:

1. *Self-awareness* that is an appreciation for one's internal status, needs, thoughts and emotions.

2. *Self-agency* that is the sense of the authorship over one's thoughts and actions.

3. *Self-continuity* that is the sense that one remains the same person over time.

4. *Self-confidence* that is a stable sense of the self as a single, coherent, bounded entity.

Components of the me self include the:

1. *Material me* – the body as flesh.

2. *Social me* – the self that interacts with others.

3. *Spiritual me* – what in theology is considered the soul.

Self-concept and self-esteem

An increasing number of clinicians and developmentalists believe that the core of the self – its basic inner organization, is derived from regularities in experience [Kohut, 1977; Strobe, 1988]. Individuals carry forward a history of experiences with caregivers that provide the adolescent with expectations about whether the world is pleasant or not. And in adolescence, the individual continues to experience the positive or negative affect of social agents. Despite developmental changes and context changes [increased peer contact, a wider social world] an important feature of the self's healthy development is continuity in care-giving and support. This is necessary especially in the face of environmental challenges and stresses. Many clinicians stress that difficulties in interpersonal relationships derive from low self-esteem. This low self-esteem in turn derives from a lack of nurturance and support [Bowlby, 1988; Erickson, 1968; Rogers, 1961; Sullivan, 1953].

Carl Rogers and Susan Harter's views of self-concept and self –esteem

Carl Rogers and Susan Harter's views have been instrumental in promoting the importance of self –concept in the adolescent's development and the role of nurturance and support in achieving a healthy self-concept. Like Sigmund Freud, Rogers [1961] began his inquiry about human nature with troubled personalities. He explored the human potential for change. In the knotted, anxious, defensive verbal stream of his clients, Rogers concluded that individuals are prevented from becoming who they are. Rogers believed that most individuals have considerable difficulty developing their own true feelings which are innately positive. As children grow up, significant others condition them to move away from these positive feelings. Parents, siblings, teachers, and peers place constraints on the adolescent's behaviour. Thus, Rogers believed that adolescents are the victims of ***conditional positive regard-*** meaning that love and praise are not given unless the adolescent conforms to parental or societal standards. The result, says Rogers, is that the adolescent's self-esteem is lowered. On the other hand when significant others accept each aspect of the adolescent as being a part of the adolescent then they are extending ***unconditional positive regard***. Rogers spoke of 'prizing' the adolescent and of accepting the adolescent as a worthwhile human being. To have *unconditional positive regard* towards another person means there are no conditions of acceptance. This calls for a non-judgmental attitude rather than a selective, evaluating attitude of accepting some aspects of the adolescent while rejecting others. Rogers also defined *unconditional positive regard* as a non-possessive, non-conditional 'caring', separate from the significant other's own needs, and in terms of valuing the adolescent as a separate person.

This encourages optimum self-expression and the development of a positive self-concept and high self-esteem. Rogers considered the congruency between the **real self**, that is, the self as it really is as a result of one's experiences, and the **ideal self** which is the self an individual would like to be. The greater the discrepancy between the real self and the ideal self, the more maladjusted the individual will be. To improve their adjustment, adolescents can develop more positive perceptions of their real self, not worry so much about what others want and increase their positive experiences in the world. In such ways, the adolescent's ideal and real self will be more closely aligned. Rogers thought that each adolescent should be valued regardless of the adolescent's behaviour. Even when the adolescent's behaviour is obnoxious, below standards of acceptance, or inappropriate, adolescents need the respect, comfort and love of others. This offering of positive behaviours without contingency, entails unconditional positive regard. Rogers strongly believed that unconditional positive regard elevates the adolescent's self-worth and positive self-regard. Unconditional positive regard is directed at the adolescent as a human being of worth and dignity, not to the adolescent's behaviour which might not deserve positive regard. Rogers had an optimistic view of humankind. He believed natural human characteristics to be positive, forward-moving, constructive, realistic and trustworthy. Every organism was construed as instinctively moving towards the fulfillment of its inherent potential. Unlike the psychoanalysts who considered the individual to be a mass of antisocial aggressive impulses that needs to be repressed, Rogers regarded the human being as having a deeper need for 'affiliation and communication with others'. To become 'fully socialized', he believed that a person needs first to be fully themselves. Each person is considered to be unique. Humans, adolescents inclusive are regarded in this perspective as complex and diverse, resisting diagnostic labeling or prescriptive interpretation.

Rogers therefore concluded and acknowledged that many aspects of a false self are formed by the individual's need to fit into family and society. Through the process of socialization and what Rogers termed 'conditions of worth' [the self-concept of the adolescent formed by parental and societal values], the potential to become a 'fully functioning' unique person is quashed. In an attempt to satisfy the need for positive regard, the adolescent learns to please others, understanding primarily what aspects of character and self-expression are acceptable to their parents and those around them. Alternations are made and those 'sides' of the self that are unapproved or rejected outright are gradually replaced by behaviour [as expressions of personality] that elicits approval. Problems arise when the self – [accepted and valued by significant others], first parents, then other social groups, friends or a partner – is incongruent with the '*authentic self*'. A state of incongruence becomes established within the individual's self-concept when feelings of inner experiencing are at odds with the self that is presented to the external world. The self-concept is how we learn to define ourselves to meet the criteria required for us to be loved and valued.

A 'fully functioning' person would demonstrate congruency between their inner world of feelings and sensations and outer expression, evident in emotions and behaviour. The congruent person – adolescents inclusive- has a strong self concept, is able to be open, honest with themselves and others, and to live spontaneously. Rogers identified two ways we make judgments or evaluations: from our inner '*locus of evaluation*' – the '*centre of responsibility*' which lies within us – and through '*external evaluations*'– the attitudes or belief systems of others [parents, society, etc].

When an adolescent acts on their own internal evaluations, those that come from feelings and intuition [gut feelings], they are in touch with the 'organismic valuing process'. This entails an authentic part of the self; not governed by the values of other people or by institutionalized values. The adolescent who loses touch with their '*internal locus of evaluation*' lives their life by people pleasing, continually focusing on externally defined beliefs and attitudes. The central essence is to help the adolescent reconnect with their inner valuing processes, to understand what they really feel, what changes they would like to make. The adolescent is then freed from *introjected* values and self-concepts, and begins to appreciate their individuality. The fully functioning or 'actualized' adolescent is in this way in touch with their inner world – the personal self-concept is extended not only to '*this is what I am*' but also to '*this is what I can become*'. Rogers talked of the individual becoming everything they 'can be', meaning having fulfillment, integration and acceptance of all the parts of their character, being able to find expression in love and work – to reach their full potential. It can be seen as impossible to reach this utopian state of personhood, but it is a striving, an ideal and a continuum. Rogers called it '**the good life**' – the world of the fully functioning person whose capacity for interpersonal communication is enhanced through positive self-concept and creative interaction with others. The main aim of 'becoming a person', in the Rogerian sense, is to be in a state of full experiencing; being congruent, able to act on our feelings, guided by our own organismic valuing processes, and living in the 'here and now'. The concept of 'person in process' is central to the approach.

Strength of perspective

The approach sensitized psychologists to the importance of:

- Self-perceptions.

- The considering of the whole individual and the individual's positive nature.

- And to the power of self understanding in improving human relations and communication with others.

Weakness of the perspective

Critics point out that while it is well and good to have a positive view of development, Rogers's view is almost, too optimistic, possibly overestimating the freedom and rationality of individuals. Critics also argue that the approach encourages self-love or narcissism. A major weakness is that it is extremely difficult to test empirically.

IDENTITY

Who am I? What am I all about? What is different about me? Not usually considered during childhood, these questions surface as common, virtually universal concerns during adolescence. Adolescents clamor for solutions to these questions that revolve around the concept of identity. According to James Marcia [1966] identity refers to an existential position, to an inner organization of needs, abilities, and self-perceptions as well as to a sociopolitical stance. It is further defined as an internal self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history. Identity structure is therefore dynamic and not static. Elements are continually added and discarded and over a period of time, the entire gestalt may shift. Viewed from this dimension, it is not entirely accurate to say that one 'has' an identity, any more than one 'has' formal operations, or 'has' postconventional moral reasoning. All three of these are inferred, underlying, and fairly stable structures whose referents are observable sets of problem-solving responses with structures changing gradually. According to Erickson [1961] in '*Identity – Youth and Crisis*' it is necessary to differentiate between *personal identity* and *ego identity*.

The conscious feeling of having a *personal identity* is based on two simultaneous observations:

- The perception of the self-sameness and continuity of one's existence in time and space.
- And the perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity.

Ego identity on the other hand concerns more than the mere fact of existence; it is, as it were, the ego quality of this existence. The ego is the conscious mind of the individual. Ego identity then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there is a self sameness and continuity to the ego's synthesizing methods, the 'style of one's individuality, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's 'meaning for significant others'.

Erickson and Identity

That today we believe identity is a key concept in understanding the lives of adolescents is a result of Erick Erickson's masterful thinking and analysis. Erickson [1950, 1968] believed identity versus identity/role confusion is the fifth of life's eight stages occurring at about the same time as adolescence. During adolescence, world views become important to the individual, who enters what Erickson calls a *psychological moratorium*------defined as a gap between childhood security and adult autonomy. Like all stages in Erickson's theory the stage is characterized by a conflict with the possibility of bipolar outcomes. Erickson suggests that the individual must actually experience both sides of the conflict and must learn to subsume them into higher synthesis. If the conflict is worked out in a constructive, satisfactory manner, the *syntonic* or positive quality becomes the more dominant part of the ego and enhances further healthy development through the subsequent stages. For Erickson, the growth of a positive self-concept is directly linked to the psychological stage resolution that constitutes the core of the theory. However, if the conflict persists past its time, or is resolved unsatisfactorily, the *dystonic* or negative quality is incorporated into the personality structure. In the case of adolescents, the dystonic or negative attribute will interfere with further development and may manifest itself in impaired self-concept, adjustment problems and possibly psychopathology. In essence this explains the interplay with risk-taking behaviour aptly typified by sexual promiscuity and deviance.

SOME CONTEMPORARY THOUGHTS ABOUT IDENTITY

Contemporary views of identity development suggest several important considerations:

- First, identity development is a lengthy process, in many instances a more gradual, less cataclysmic transition than Erickson's term crisis implies.

- Second, identity development is extraordinarily complex [Marcia, 1980, 1987]. Identity formation neither begins nor ends with adolescence. It begins with the appearance of attachment, the development of a sense of self, and the emergence of independence in the family, and reaches its final phase with a life review and integration in old age. Resolution of the identity issue at adolescence does not mean that identity will be stable through the remainder of life. An individual who develops a healthy identity is flexible and adaptive, open to changes in society, in relationships and in careers. This openness assures numerous re-organizations of identity's contents throughout the identity-achieved individual's life.

- Third, identity formation does not happen neatly and it usually does not happen abruptly. At the bare minimum, it involves commitment to a vocational direction, an ideological stance, and a sexual orientation. Identity development gets done in bits and pieces. Decisions are not made once and for all, but have to be made again and again. And the decisions may seem trivial at the time; whom to date, whether or not to break up, whether or not to have intercourse, whether or not to use contraceptives.

Marcia on Identity

In an extension of Erickson's work James Marcia [1966, 1980, 1991] proposed four statuses of adolescent identity formation, which characterize the search for an identity – ***identity achievement***, ***foreclosure***, ***identity diffusion***, and ***moratorium***. The identity statuses are four modes of dealing with the identity issue characteristic of late adolescents. The four kinds of identities are possible combinations of yes/no answers to two questions:

- Has the person engaged in an active search for identity?

- Has the person made commitment [for example, to values, to school, to a job or career path, to who he or she wants to be as a person, or to other aspects of his or her identity?].

Diffusion

Diffusion literally means confusion. The individual hasn't really started thinking about issues seriously, let alone formulated goals, or made any commitments and this represents the least mature statuse. Lacking direction; unconcerned about political, religious, moral, or even occupational issues; does things without questioning why; unconcerned why others do what they are doing. Identity diffusions are young people who have no set occupational or ideological direction, regardless of whether or not they may have experienced a decision-making period.

Foreclosure

Foreclosure literally means adopting another's position without forethought. The individual has avoided the uncertainties and anxieties of crisis by quickly and prematurely committing to safe and conventional goals and beliefs. Commitment to occupation and various ideological positions; little evidence of the process of self construction; parentally chosen rather than self chosen. Foreclosures are young people who have adopted the values of others without seriously searching and questioning; and they are foreclosed on the possibility of achieving own identity. Alternatives haven't been seriously considered.

Moratorium

Moratorium literally means a delay. The individual is at the height of the crisis and as described by Erickson, decisions about identity are postponed while the individual tries out alternative identities without committing to any particular one. Moratoriums are individuals who are currently struggling with occupational and/or ideological issues. Currently experiencing an identity crisis or turning point; no clear commitments to society; no clear sense of identity; actively trying to achieve identity.

Identity achievement

Achievement literally means success. The individual has experienced a crisis but has emerged successful with firm commitment to goals and ideologies. They have experienced a decision-making period and are pursuing self-chosen occupation and ideological goals. Firm and secure sense of self; commitments to occupation, religion, thought and cultural ideology, beliefs about sex roles and the like; the views, beliefs, and values of others have been considered but own resolution reached. This represents the most mature statuse. According to Kalat [1990] the individual has experienced several crises in exploring and choosing between life's alternatives but finally arrived at a commitment or investment of the self in those choices. Although identity moratorium is a prerequisite for identity achievement, Marcia doesn't see the four statuses as Erickson type stages.

An illustration of the answers to the two aforementioned questions resulting in categorization into a statuse may be as below:

Has the person made commitments to values?

Has the person engaged in an active search for identity?	*YES*	*NO*
YES	**Identity achievement**	**Moratorium**
NO	**Foreclosure**	**Identity diffusion**

Criteria for Identity Statuses

Identity Status

Position on Occupation and Ideology	I/A	F	I/D	M
Crisis	present	absent	present/or abs	in crisis
Commitment	present	present	absent	present/vague

Strengths of Marcia's perspective

There are two clear advantages of the identity statuses as an approach to research on ego identity.

- The first is that they provide for a greater variety of styles in dealing with the identity issue than does Erickson's simple dichotomy of identity versus identity confusion.

- Secondly, there are both healthy and pathological aspects to each of the styles, save perhaps the Identity Achievement status.

SEXUALITY AND ACHIEVEMENT

Among the many developmental events that characterize puberty and the onset of adolescence, none is more dramatic, or more challenging to the young person's emerging sense of identity, than the changes associated with sexual development. Bodily dimensions of boys and girls become increasingly differentiated. Boys develop broader shoulders and show a greater overall gain in muscle development, and girls undergo breast development and develop more rounded hips [Conger, 1984]. Girls experience their first menstruation and boys their first ejaculation. In both sexes genital organs – the penis and scrotum in boys and the clitoris, vagina, and labia in girls – increase in size, and pubic hair develops. All of these physical changes require new adjustments on the part of the young person and lead to a changing self-image. Furthermore, although sexuality in the broadest sense is a lifelong part of being human, the hormonal changes that accompany puberty lead to stronger sexual feelings. This is the case even though there may be considerable diversity in the ways these feelings are expressed in different individuals and in the same individual at different times.

Adolescents may find themselves 'thinking more about sex, getting sexually aroused more easily, even at times feeling preoccupied with sex'. Or they may find themselves exited by and involved in other interests, and not be particularly aware of sexual feelings. At the same age, one adolescent may be involved in sexual experimentation, another may not. One may be in love and going steady, another may feel that it is much too early for such commitments and may prefer to play the field.

Despite such individual variations, integrating sexuality meaningfully, and with as little conflict and disruption as possible, with other aspects of the young person's developing sense of self and of relations with others is a major developmental task for both boys and girls. How adequately this task is ultimately handled – the extent to which it becomes a source of joy or despair, of challenge and success, or failure and defeat – depends on many factors. These factors range from the complexities of early parent-child relationships to contemporary social standards and values [Conger, 1984]. In terms of a cross-cultural perspective, in a recent investigation by Daniel Offer and his colleagues [1988], the sexual attitudes of adolescents in 10 countries were sampled:

 Australia, Bangladesh, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Taiwan, and the United States.

Adolescents in two countries – Turkey and Taiwan – showed extremely conservative attitudes toward sex. In traditional cultures such as Turkey and Taiwan, adolescents felt very uncomfortable about sex and felt extremely anxious about it. Nonetheless, in all of the countries studied, having a boyfriend or girlfriend was viewed as important by the adolescents. This was especially so in West Germany [where 82% rated this important compared to only 73% of the United States adolescents]. Blum [1945] contends that sexual maturity brings in its wake a wave of disturbances not only in the sexual realm but also in the broader phenomena of social behaviour. The adolescent, flooded by his own resurgent impulses, must regroup the defensive forces of his ego in an attempt to meet his new onslaught.

According to psychoanalytic theory, individuals at any age may experience an inability to handle impulses, subdue anxiety or to delay gratification, however the maturation of sexual impulses, makes adolescence especially stressful. A review of research [Swanson, 1996; Rogers, 1969; Hill, 1998; Hendry, 2001] suggests that adolescent girls experience more emotional disturbances about sexuality than boys. Fiedenberg [1996] believes boys are more emotional and female less emotional than commonly believed. Boys are moodier, more intense, and more mystical almost. If either sex experiences stress due to sexuality, the question that may arise is what sort of help may be required? Is it society itself that needs adjustment for its failure to provide a suitable niche? ***Sexuality in definition is an aspect of self-referring to one's erotic thoughts, actions and orientation***. As children acquire knowledge about male and female and about the roles sexuality expects them, they also become increasingly aware of their own sexuality. During adolescence, the lives of males and females become dominated by sexuality. Sexuality as may be noted, involves the development of sexual identity, attitudes and sexual behaviour. Adolescence is a time of sexual exploration, experimentation and investigation into sexual fantasies and realities. Adolescents have high curiosity about their sexuality. They continually think about whether they are sexually attractive, whether anyone will love them or whether they will ever have children or whether it is normal to have sex. For most adolescents sexual experience can be both enjoyable and painful. However what is important is the development of correct sexual attitudes and responsible sexual behaviour among adolescents. The development of correct sexual attitudes and behaviour among adolescents is critical. Adolescents should be able to act responsibly and prevent themselves from the negative effects of sex such as unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and other social-moral problems.

CHAPTER 7

THE MALAWIAN FAMILY AND ADOLESCENTS

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with **criticism**, he learns to **condemn**.

If a child lives with **hostility**, he learns to **fight**.

If a child lives with **ridicule**, he learns to be **shy**.

If a child lives with **shame**, he learns to feel **guilty**.

If a child lives with **tolerance**, he learns to be **patient**.

If a child lives with **encouragement**, he learns **confidence**.

If a child lives with **praise**, he learns to **appreciate**.

If a child lives with **fairness**, he learns **justice**.

If a child lives with **security**, he learns to have **faith**.

If a child lives with **approval**, he learns to **like** himself.

If a child lives with **acceptance** he learns to find **love** in the world.

INTRODUCTION

In many societies including Malawi, families have undergone tremendous transformation in size, structure, and nature of relationships between parents and their youths. These changes have tended to affect adolescent trends of development significantly at home, and in the school and as they become adults. One thing that is noteworthy is the process of socialization between parents and their adolescents. Until recently, the process was viewed as a one way process in which adolescents were considered to be the product of their parent's socialization techniques. In contrast, the socialization process between parents and their adolescents is now viewed as reciprocal in which adolescents socialize parents and parents equally socialize adolescents. This process is known as *reciprocal socialization*.

Reciprocal socialization is dependent upon the nature of parent-adolescent and adolescent-parent socialization and the way that the relationship revolves. In Malawi, the family with its social structure has experienced a marked decline in reciprocal socialization. This, as may be conceived has resulted from socio-economic development and the influence from foreign cultures. For instance parents now spend less time with their adolescent children than before.

The major changes in Malawian families that have a major impact on parent-adolescent relations are:

- The working parents

- Growth of the nuclear family

- Divorce, single parenthood and foster parenthood

- Changing parenting techniques

- Gender issues in the family

The working parent

Socio-economic development in Malawi has led to urban growth and an increase in migration from rural to urban areas in search of employment and better life. However due to the decline in family income and the increase in poverty in most families both parents are forced to work in order to increase their income. Consequently, employment causes parents to leave their children unattended to or in the care of paid workers/housemaids. As may be appreciated, this is not the best for children since working parents do not have sufficient time to talk to their children and advise them-------hence leaving this big task under the responsibility of teachers and the school.

The growth of the nuclear family

Affluence especially in the urban areas and poverty in rural areas have forced many families in Malawi to have fewer children and small size families commonly known as the nuclear family. This development which happens to be becoming common in many urban dwelling families discourages the growth of the extended family system which provided for foster parenthood. As a result, a significant number of adolescents such as orphans and the disadvantaged children may not benefit from any form of parental care if the development of the nuclear family continues as a trend.

Divorce, premature death, and single parenthood

Another change in Malawian families that has significant impact on the development of adolescents is the increase in divorce, death of a parent and the resulting single parenthood and step parenthood. Single parenthood and foster parenthood have become a familiar experience to many adolescents in Malawi because of the rising divorce rate and premature death of one parent. Although divorce may come as a relief in strife-ridden families the great majority of adolescents find the separation of their parents and divorce a very painful and disruptive experience with long-term psychological effects. Single parenthood is an integral part in society directly resulting from divorce and premarital childbirth. However, it may come as a relief to note that the effects of divorce are not always bad. In some circumstances adolescents from divorced parents may experience less anguish than those growing up within intact conflict-ridden marriages.

Effects of single parenthood on adolescents

Single parent families may be created by death of a parent but in most cases they may result from divorce, separation and desertion [Papalia and Olds, 1990]. According to Atwater [1992] divorce and separation almost always bring drastic changes in the amounts and sources of income. For example, a typical single parent family tends to suffer from financial deprivation. This is particularly true in single parent families headed by women.

Here the absence of a father, as may be conceived, has the following implications:

- Less father support.

- Less family cohesion.

- More sibling conflict.

- More house hold responsibility.

As a result, young adolescents, according to Papalia and Olds [1990]:

- Feel anger, depression, guilt and despair.

- May worry about money or become very active sexually.

- May begin to compete with the parent of the same sex or play man or woman of the household.

Some effects of one-parent family on schooling which studies carried out so far indicate that students from one-parent homes:

- Achieved less in school.

- Liked school less.

- Had more problems with peers.

- Were likely to need disciplinary action than students with two parents.

Teachers therefore need to look at ways to co-operate with single parents so as to assist affected students effectively. Finally although most children and adolescents initially experience stress when their parents divorce and they are at risk for developing problem behaviours, divorce can also salvage children and adolescents from conflicted marriages. Many children and adolescents emerge from divorce as complete individuals. Furthermore, in general Papalia and Olds [1990] quoting Ruther [1983] state that children are better adjusted when they have a good relationship with one parent than when they have grown up in a two parent home characterized by discord and discontent. This is in support of the view many developmentalists in recent times adopted that single-parent children do not necessarily breed problem children.

Parent adolescent conflict and parenting techniques

Also noticeable, to a greater degree in Malawian families is an increase in parent-adolescent conflict. Conflicts with parents increase in early adolescence. Such conflict is usually moderate, taking the form of defiance toward parental orders. The increase in conflict can be associated with positive developmental function of promoting developmental transition that occurs when parents push an adolescent to leave home and become independent. It may also be noted that parents also tend to change their techniques of parenting from being authoritative to becoming more permissive or a mixture of the two extremes.

THE BALANCED ECOLOGY OF THE FAMILY

Social ecology implies a balance between love and limits; support and control –
There are basically four parenting techniques:

- Indifferent
- Autocratic/authoritarian
- Indulgent
- Authoritative

Indifferent parenting

- Parents give little support and control or non at all.

- Adolescents are ignored by the parent.

- Adolescents are treated as though they don't exist and thus engage in attention seeking behaviour either good or bad.

- Parents are mostly dysfunctional, alcoholic or drug abusers.

- Single parentage where the parent has to undertake a dual duty of roles may result in indifference.

- Adolescents are impulsive and more prone to delinquent behaviour.

- Adolescents are precocious--------they experiment with sex, drugs and alcohol.

Indulgent parenting

- Parents give high support but little control to their children.

- Material support is high.

- Parents don't set any rules or standards for their children.

- Adolescents lack self-control, are less mature and more irresponsible.

- Adolescents are more conforming to peers and less able to assume positions of leadership.

Autocratic/Authoritarian parenting

- Parents give a lot of control and little support.

- Parents give a lot of control and the child reacts rather than respond.

- Adolescents are more dependent and more passive.

- Adolescents are less socially adept, less assured and less intellectually curious.

Authoritative parenting

- There is a balance or equilibrium between support and control.

- Equilibrium creates the greatest self – concept.

- There is a sense of security in the family.

- Adolescents are socially skilled and self assured.

- Adolescents are adaptive and creative.

- Adolescents are responsible and curious.

THE SIX A'S OF POSITIVE PARENTING

Authority--------administered with love provides boundaries for making right choices and develops a sense of self-decisiveness.

Accountability---------by being accountable to children, parents teach them to be accountable, which develops a sense of self discipline and self control.

Affection---------caring words and actions develop a sense of lovability in the child.

Availability------taking time for the children develops a sense of importance.

Appreciation--------sincere praise and affirmation develops a sense of significance.

Acceptance-----------unconditional love develops a sense of security and self worth.

Love is the superstructure, supporting unit and protective covering of a family.

CHAPTER 8

PARADISE LOST

Need we lament for this Paradise lost

Or wait – wait still for those signs to manifest

They say the philosophy of a people

Is imprinted and yet embedded in their mentalities

The song, the dance, the belief – Culture

Is but a mirror of a people's decency

If envy, jealousy, hatred, greed were sing-song

Superstition, sorcery, magic were replete

Needn't art reflect such decadency

Not only for my people but even to I

For am I not of the same pedigree

I know not-

What went wrong in the first analysis

So I could glide such predicament

Know not why sometimes I happen to be happy

Know not why I even am in strife and pain

Yet my conviction not to recant abides

This faith I will keep to finality

And how I wish we were a people

A people who hoped to the end

For never would we wail for this Paradise lost

Marisen Mwale

SOCIALIZATION AND SOCIALIZATION AGENTS

THE PEER GROUP

In the first place, adolescents are neither children nor adults. As children reach adolescence, they spend more time with their peers. Peers in most cases are members of the same age and level of maturity. Such being the case they influence each other very much in most of their activities since they are away from adults. Adolescents are primarily influenced by their peers through the process of social comparison. Social comparison, according to Atwater [1992] means seeking out peers with whom to evaluate one's self, abilities, characteristics, and reactions. This process of social comparison is a life long process which involves everyone, that is, children as well as adults. This process becomes more critical during adolescence when individuals get busy establishing themselves and not simply refining themselves as in adulthood. It is worthy knowing that adolescents at this time cannot compare themselves with children because that would be retrogressive. Again they cannot make adulthood comparison because that would be inappropriate. As a result, they turn to their peers as a primary reference group for defining themselves and their social identities. The role played by peers in adolescence is especially critical.

Relations with both same and opposite-sex peers during the adolescent years come closer to serving as prototypes for later adult relationships in social relations, in work, and in interactions with members of the opposite sex. Adolescents are also more dependent upon peer relations than are younger children simply because ties to parents become progressively looser as the adolescent gains greater independence. In addition, relations with family members are likely to become charged with conflicting emotions in the early years of adolescence – dependent yearnings exist alongside independent strivings, hostility is mixed with love, and conflicts occur over cultural values and social behaviour. Consequently, many areas of the adolescent's inner life and outward behaviour become difficult to share with parents [Conger, 1984]. A mature, warm, interested, and above all, non-exploitative adolescent peer may play an important, sometimes crucial role in helping a boy or girl to gain a clearer concept of self, problems, and goals; a feeling of personal worth; and renewed hope for the future. Because of the heightened importance of the peer group during adolescence, motivation for conformity to the values, customs, and fads of peer culture increases during this period.

Peers belong to two groups ------*cliques* and *crowds*.

Cliques in most cases are small groups that meet mostly for personal communication and sharing. Members engage in activities which are usually spontaneous and membership is on the basis of similar interests, personality, schools, neighborhoods or religious affiliation. *Crowds*, on the other hand, are larger size groups that meet primarily for organized social activities like parties or dances.

Activities in this group usually occur during weekends. However, research has shown, that some adolescents do not either belong to cliques or crowds. These adolescents are known as loners or outsiders. Loners do not join groups. This maybe because they have either been rejected or choose to do so. Peer relationships whether in cliques or crowds have a tremendous influence on adolescents and some of these are:

- *Satisfying adolescent needs*

An adolescent may engage in activities like drinking or smoking, so as to win approval of his or her friends. If an activity is done, is acceptable and part of the group norms, the adolescent feels good, accepted, excited and wins companionship.

- *Peer relationships expose the adolescent to information about the world outside the family*

You may agree that adolescents come from different and varied environments as well as from different backgrounds. As they meet they share information with one another which may even include adult values. In addition, adolescents receive feedback about their abilities. In more elaborate terms, adolescents learn whether what they do is better or worse than what other adolescents do. Learning this at home can be difficult because of age differences among siblings.

- *Peer relationships may also be necessary for normal social development*

Adolescents learn for instance to be fair and just by working through disagreements with their peers. They also learn to be skilled and sensitive partners in intimate relationships with selected peers. These relationships if carried forward help from the foundation of later dating and marital relationships. Research has shown that in late adolescence, the crowd begins to dissolve as couples develop more serious relationships and make long-range plans that may even include engagement and marriage.

Other factors

Much as the above social aspects are appreciated, peer influence can also have a negative effect on adolescent development.

- The grouping into cliques or crowds means that certain adolescents are left out either through rejection or being overlooked by their peers. These tend to have feelings of loneliness and hostility and if this can continue, it can lead to individual subsequent psychological, health and criminal problems.

- As adolescents interact in groups, they have their own culture and this culture is sometimes regarded as a corrupt influence that undermines parental values and control.

- Peer relationships can introduce adolescents to alcohol, drugs, delinquency and other forms of bad behaviour.

SCHOOL INFLUENCE

As children become adolescents and as adolescents develop and become adults, they experience many transitions in schooling. Transitions from primary school to secondary school can have an effect on the adolescent child since he/she has to face new challenging tasks, make new friends, receive instructions from new teachers and so on. Everybody's life is affected in one way or another by teachers. As a teacher-learner you may wish to know that you will meet groups of individuals who are still searching for their identity, trying to seek approval, making new friends and even struggling with psychological changes taking place in their bodies. These are none other than adolescents. With the same concern, psychologists and educators have for some time tried to compile a profile of a good teacher's personality traits and some, among others, according to Santrock [1993] are:

- A good teacher should produce a sense of industry rather than inferiority in students.
- A good teacher is respected and trusted by the community and knows how to alternate work and play, study and games.
- A good teacher knows how to recognize special efforts and to encourage special abilities.
- A good teacher knows how to create a setting in which adolescents feel good about themselves and knows how to handle those adolescents to whom school is not important.
- A good teacher is affable but not lax, stern but not harsh.

It should be borne in mind that meaningful teaching can only take place when teachers understand the:

- Developmental characteristics of the group they are dealing with.
- When trust has been established.
- When adolescents feel free to explore, to experiment and make mistakes [Santrock, 1993].

Adolescents respond best to teachers who exercise natural authority based on greater age, experience, and wisdom rather than arbitrary authority or abdication of authority by being pals with the adolescents. A question may come to our minds what all these characteristics have to do with adolescent development in schools. It is pertinent to know that teachers are part of the schooling process. Apart from teaching, teachers also indulge in counseling as well as administrative work. All these take place within the school setting. If teachers know their roles and understand students' problems and background, they can offer necessary assistance which can later on assist the adolescent socially, morally and even academically. For adolescents, peer groups in schools are an important source of status, friendship and belonging. They are also a learning community in which social roles and standards related to work and achievement are formed. In general, we might say that schools provide the locus for many of the adolescent activities after school and during weekends. The peer group that an adolescent joins depends partly on the socio-economic status, partly on values picked up from home, and partly on their own personality. Teacher-learners need to know that an adolescent who joins a troublesome group will eventually become troublesome. Again if they join a group that has an interest in academic work they will also do the same and this can assist them to improve their academic performance.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA

The media of mass communication is yet another important aspect that has a bearing on adolescent development. Santrock [1993] argues that:

'If the amount of time spent in an activity is an indication of its importance, then there is no doubt that the mass media plays an important role in adolescent development'.

Research has shown that adolescents spend most of their time with some kind of mass media either as a primary focus or as a background to other activities. The question then is what these mass media are? These are like television, music media like radios, tapes, records and music videos and print media like comic booklets, newspapers, magazines and periodicals as well as the internet with its variant contemporary social networks such as facebook, twitter etc. These media of mass communication have positive as well as negative impacts on adolescent development.

Some of the negative implications of the media are:

- Watching of videos and television and use of the print media can lead to pollution of the mind. This happens when adolescents watch or read anything without censorship e.g. pornographic films and material.

- Certain plays on video and television can teach violence. Violence in some cases is depicted as a way of life and sometimes police are shown using violence in their fight against crime.

- Watching TV and video films can be deceptive as well. Santrock [1993] states that such media may teach adolescents that problems are easily resolved and that everything turns out all right in the final analysis. For example in a film, adolescents may watch a fight where someone is injured severely but after a few seconds he/she gets well. Real life is however different.

It might take an individual months or even years to recover or even fail to recover. Television and video can take adolescents away from the printed media e.g. books thus killing the reading culture. Research has shown that television can train adolescents to be passive learners and eventually lead to a passive life-style.

Much as the mass media may have negative implications, research has also shown that they also contribute some positive traits to adolescents for example:

- Music meets a number of adolescent personal and social needs such as,

  Mood control

  Silence filling

  Providing knowledge about the outer world

  Expressing adolescent concerns against authority

- Television and printed media also expose adolescents to the outer world different from the one they are living in, as a result they learn other cultures, clothing fashions, career possibilities and even patterns of intimate relationships.

- Mass media assist adolescents in improving their communication and writing skills.

- Watching a play for example or reading a novel can help them check their use of language and grammar and make necessary changes or adjustments.

CHAPTER 9

SEASON OF SORROW

Let's squat around this bonfire swallowing but our pride

Let's sing - sing a song ne'er ending casting our sorrows aside

We're but all a breed of a sublime pedigree

Though we slumber not in the divine den of modesty

We're but slaves in a diabolic web entrapped

An open book even our **godfather's** day hath remained

Need we therefore shun our olden prude

Relinquishing our age-old wise all in solitude

Young Africa- bury your hatchet and discard your rage

Old guards are no sheer burden but lighters for an age

There was a time- a time when we sought no reason

For the erratic pangs of our sorrow season

Wonder you not Africa for thy morn generations

Have but salvaged themselves not from vile pestilences

Marisen Mwale

PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES FACING ADOLESCENTS

Adolescents due to their developmental crisis are prone to succumb to a myriad of psychosocial challenges. Among the major challenges are:

- Juvenile delinquency

- Drug and alcohol abuse

- Early pregnancy

- Sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS

These are considered in this chapter.

JUVENILE DELIQUENCY

Juvenile delinquency refers to the predisposition to and indulgence in criminal or unlawful activities by children under the age of 18. According to the U.S Bureau of the census [1992] when just serious crimes are considered 28% of these were committed by persons under age 18. This included:

- 14% of all murders

- 15% of all rape cases

- 24% of all robberies

- 43% of car thefts

In the Malawian scenario, theft, vandalism, teasing and bullying are extremely rampant.

FACTORS CAUSING JUVENILE DELIQUENCY

A myriad of factors have been postulated as causing delinquency among adolescents. However there are three major categories of factors namely:

- Psychological

- Sociological

- Biological

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

There have been efforts to determine whether certain personality factors predispose the adolescent to delinquency [Holcomb et al 1991]. Generally speaking, no one personality type is associated with delinquency. Those who become delinquent are however more likely to be impulsive, destructive, suspicious, hostile, resentful, ambivalent to authority, defiant, socially assertive and lack self control [Ashfort et al, 1990]. Aggressive conduct is associated with delinquent behaviour. Delinquency is sometimes a manifestation of hostilities, anxieties, fears or deeper neurosis. In some cases, delinquency is the result of poor socialization that results in adolescents not developing proper impulse control [Sagi, 1982]. Healthy adolescents may also be mislead by others into delinquency.

SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS

Family factors, such as strained family relationships and lack of family cohesion, are important sources of delinquency [Kroupa, 1988]. Broken, dysfunctional homes have been associated with delinquency, but are no worse than, and sometimes not as detrimental as, intact but unhappy or disturbed family relationships. Family environment is more important in delinquency than family structure [Leflore, 1988]. One study demonstrated that parental controls are significant inhibitors of delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is distributed through all socio-economic status levels. Tygart [1988] for example found that youths of high socio-economic status [SES] were more likely to be involved in school vandalism than youth of low SES. Community and neighborhood influence are also important.

Most larger communities have areas in which delinquency rates are higher than in other neighborhoods e.g. shanty towns. Shanty towns are typified by antisocial behaviours as gambling, prostitution, theft and robberies, alcoholism and drug abuse. In Malawi such communities include Ndirande in Blantyre; Chinsapo, Mtandire and Mchesi in Lilongwe; and Masasa in Mzuzu. Some adolescents become delinquent because of antisocial influences of peers. A high degree of peer orientation is sometimes associated with a high level of delinquency. Modern youth are also influenced by affluent and hedonistic [pleasure seeking] values and lifestyles in their culture. Youth may be encouraged to keep late hours, get into mischief and become involved in vandalism or delinquent acts just for adventure [Renner, 1981]. Violent youth may also have been influenced by the violence they see in the media. May [1986] found that youths who behave in a violent manner give more selective attention to violent cues. They tend to choose to attend movies that are more violent, and imitate what they have seen and heard. Today's adolescents are also living in a period of unrest, disorganization, and rapid cultural change, all of which tend to increase delinquency rates. Alcohol and drug abuse tends to be strongly correlated with delinquency [Stuck et al, 1985]. The level of school performance is also correlated with delinquency. Inability getting along with teachers and administrators, difficulty adjusting to the school program, classroom misconduct, poor grades and a lack of school success are associated with delinquency.

BIOLOGICAL FACTORS

Biological causes may play a role in delinquency [Anolik, 1983]. Mednick and Christiansen [1977] showed that the autonomic nervous system in criminals recovers more slowly from environmental stimulation as compared to that of non-criminals. Slow recovery time reduces the ability to alter their behaviour through punishment; thus it becomes more difficult to unlearn delinquent behaviour. There is also a possibility that a maturational lag in the development of the frontal lobe of the brain results in neuro-physiological dysfunction and delinquent behaviour [Vooless, 1985]. The pre-frontal area of the brain is responsible for impulse control. Juveniles are not able to act on the basis of the knowledge they have – they are unable to control their impulses. According to Sheppard [1974] at least 25% of delinquency can be blamed on organic causes. Hyper-activity from hyper-thyrodism, hyper-glycemia and Diabetes mellitus or Type 2 diabetes can also result in delinquency. Other research indicates a definite relationship between delinquency and health problems such as neurological, speech, hearing, and visual abnormalities.

PREVENTION

There are several strategies that can be used to mitigate delinquency among adolescents:

- One way to prevent delinquency is to identify children [such as hyperactive ones] who may be predisposed to getting into trouble during adolescence and then plan intervention programs to help.

- Another preventive measure is to focus on dysfunctional family relationships and assist parents in learning more effective parenting skills.

- Anti-social youth may be placed in groups of pro-social peers, such as at day camps where their behaviour is influenced positively.

- Young children may be placed in pre-school settings before problems arise.

- Social skills training may be helpful with some offenders.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Drug and alcohol abuse is one of the risky-taking behaviours among adolescents. Drugs are capable of providing pleasure by giving relaxation and prolonged heightened sensation. Alcohol for example is posited to reduce anxiety. It is argued that this anxiolytic effect works in three dimensions-

- By impairing the encoding of information in terms of self-relevance --- intoxication decreases self –awareness.

- By effecting on attentional capacity.

- By effecting on the initial appraisal of stressful information [Sayette, 1993].

Needless to say drug and alcohol abuse stand as a high correlate in other risk behaviours like delinquency and promiscuity.

Drugs most commonly abused may be grouped into a number of categories:

- Narcotics

- Stimulants

- Depressants

- Hallucinogens

- Inhalants

Out of these groups the most frequently abused drugs and substances are alcohol, tobacco, marijuana in that order as well as cocaine although not very commonly abused. A number of psychological theories have been developed to explain alcohol use and alcoholism. Generally, these theories state that people drink alcohol to increase pleasant feelings [positive reinforcement] or to decrease unpleasant feelings [negative reinforcement]. An ***attributional self-handicapping model*** asserts that alcohol can be used in some cases as an excuse for undesirable behaviour or negative outcomes. This approach maintains self-perceptions of competence by providing external attributions for negative behaviour [e.g. I was drunk]. Alcohol is most effective as an anodyne, and is most likely to be consumed, following a stressful event [Volpicelli, 1987]. Often consumed to produce positive effects such as enhanced arousal and positive mood. Can enhance feelings of power – this euphoric effect generally appears while blood alcohol concentrations are rising [Marlatt, 1987].

ADDICTION AND DEPENDENCY

A distinction must be made between *physical addiction* or *physical dependency* and *psychological dependency*. Physical addiction is the body's physical dependency on drugs; such that the human body fails to function properly in the absence of an intoxicating drug. An addictive drug is one that causes the body to build up a chemical dependency to it, so that withdrawal results in unpleasant symptoms [Ralph & Morgan, 1983]. Psychological dependency is the development of a powerful psychological need for a drug resulting in a compulsion to take it [Capuzzi & Lecoqu, 1983]. Drugs become a means of finding relief, comfort, or security. The use of alcohol, for example becomes self-reinforcing when individuals come to believe that it enhances social and physical pleasure or sexual performance, leads to arousal, or to increase in social assertiveness, or reduction in tension [Webb et al, 1992]. Some individuals become psychologically dependent on drugs that are also physically addictive, such as crack cocaine, alcohol, heroin and nicotine. Dependence is strongly reinforced by the desire to avoid the pain and distress of physical withdrawal. Sometimes physical dependence is broken, but individuals go back to drugs because of psychological dependency on them. It is a mistake, therefore, to assume that the only dangerous drugs are those that are physically addictive. Youth are trying drugs at tender ages in both rural and urban areas in Malawi.

PATTERNS OF DRUG USE

Five patterns of drug use may be identified according to Pedersen [1990].

Social recreational use

Occurs among acquaintances or friends as a part of socializing. Usually this use does not include addictive drugs and does not escalate in either frequency or intensity to become uncontrolled.

Experimental use

Is motivated primarily by curiosity or by a desire to experience new feelings on a short-term basis. Users rarely use any drugs on a daily basis, and tend not to use drugs to escape the pressures of personal problems. However, if users experiment with physically addictive drugs they may become addicted before they realize it.

Circumstantial – situational use

Is indulgence to achieve a known and desired effect. A person may take stimulants to stay awake while driving or studying e.g. amphetamines or may take sedatives to relieve tension and go to sleep. Some persons use drugs to try to escape problems. The danger is that such use will escalate to intensified use.

Intensified drug use

Generally involves using drugs at least once daily over a long period of time to achieve relief from a stressful situation or a persistent problem. Drugs become a customary part of the daily routine. Use may or may not affect functioning depending on the frequency, intensity and amount of use.

Compulsive drug use

Involves both extensive and frequent use for relatively long periods, producing psychological dependence and physiological addiction with discontinuance resulting in psychological stress or physiological discomfort. The threat of psychological and physical discomfort from withdrawal becomes the motivation for continued use.

CAUSES OF DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ADDICTION

Family origin

The following family factors correlate closely with excessive drug use by adolescents while growing up:

- Drug abusers less likely to have open communication with parents [Kafia & London, 1991].
- Abusers are usually not as close to their parents, are more likely to have negative adolescent-parent relationships, and have a low degree of parental support.
- Abusers are more likely to have parents who drink excessively and/or use other psychotropic drugs [Mc Dermott, 1984; Wodarski, 1990]. Research by Sher [1991] indicates that children of alcoholics are at a heightened risk to develop alcoholism.
- Abusers are more likely to come from broken homes or not to live with both parents [Dolerty & Needle, 1991].
- Abusers' parents less often praise, encourage, and counsel as well as set limits to adolescents' behaviour [Noam et al, 1991].

These types of family situations create personality problems that cause individuals to be more likely to turn to drugs. Numerous other studies associate drug addiction and dependency with dysfunctional family relationships and personality problems.

Other social & psychological correlates

- Those who abuse drugs are more likely to have peers who use and approve of drug use.

- Abusers are more likely to be associated with deviant peers [Simons et al, 1991].

- Abusers are more likely to be in rebellion against social sanctions [Kaplan & Fukurai, 1992].

- Abusers are more likely to be truant from school [Pritchart et al, 1992].

- Abusers are more likely to have frequent sex, a greater number of coital partners, and show a greater percentage of unprotected sex [Jemmont et al, 1993].

- Research has also documented the relationship between certain personality traits such as impulsivity and habituation to stimuli and the development of alcoholism [Sher, 1991].

EFFECTS OF ALCOHOLISM ON ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR

Alcohol is an extremely powerful drug which is found in beer, wines and spirits such as whisky. It acts primarily to slow down the brain's activities. In low quantities alcohol is a stimulant. It has also been proven that alcohol consumption can reduce the risk of developing hypertension as well as heart attack. However taken in large quantities alcohol can damage or even kill biological tissues including muscle and brain cells. The major mental and behavioural effect of alcohol on adolescents is ***reduced skilled performance***. Skills of intellectual functioning such as reading, writing, memory and recall become impaired while behavioural control and judgment become less efficient. ***Delirium tremens or alcohol dependence syndrome*** characterized by strong addiction is the worst effect with an individual failing to function without alcohol. It is characterized by:

- Continued drinking despite aversive consequences

- Liver damage

- Peripheral neuropathy

- Memory loss

CORRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIV/AIDS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance abuse is directly/positively correlated with HIV contraction in youth. There are several direct links between the two among them being:

- First substance use can lead youths to contract STDs more especially AIDS with AIDS diagnosis compelling youth to start using substances as a coping mechanism.
- Second substance use affects a number of body organs which are also affected with the reduced immunity as a result of HIV hence may advance the HIV. HIV prevalence in injecting drug users is five to seven times higher than among the normal population.
- Third both casual and chronic substance users are more likely to engage in high-risk behaviours, such as unprotected sex, when they are under the influence of drugs and alcohol.
- In persons already infected, the combination of heavy drinking and HIV has been associated with increased medical and psychiatric complications such as:

    1. Drinking affects HIV medication adherence/compliance [prompts taking medications off schedule or even forgetting – abusers are less likely to adhere to their prescribed medication schedule].
    2. There are poorer HIV treatment [therapy] outcomes.
    3. Drug abuse and addiction can worsen the progression of HIV and its consequences especially in the brain.
    4. Studies have shown that stimulants can increase HIV viral replication.

- Fifth alcohol acts directly on the brain to reduce inhibition and diminished risk perception.
- Sixth people who strongly believe alcohol enhances sexual arousal and performance are more likely to practice risky sex and drinking.
- Lastly people deliberately use alcohol during sexual encounters to provide an excuse for socially unacceptable behaviours or reduce their conscious awareness [*Attributional self-handicapping model*].

Management of alcoholism

A number of pharmacological treatments continue to be developed to treat alcoholism. Disulfiram [antabuse] has long been used to deter persons from drinking. When alcohol is consumed, antabuse produces an accumulation of the toxic metabolite acetaldehyde, causing nausea and hypotension. If antabuse is reliably used these extremely unpleasant sensations act as aversion therapy----deterring an individual from drinking. Fluoxetine and naltrexone have been posited to reduce alcohol craving and drinking.

Psychosocial interventions

- *Relapse prevention*- involves providing and instilling skills and motivation to prevent regressing to alcoholism after therapeutical success.

- *Skills training*- involves inculcating life skills such as coping and self-efficacy to promote compliance to psychosocial regimens and relapse prevention.

- *Self help groups*- involves utilizing groups of peers who have also or are in the process of quitting or undergoing therapy to provide moral and psychosocial support.

- *Cue exposure*- is a form of therapy in which the patient is exposed to alcohol but is not allowed to drink for several occasions in order to develop aversion to alcohol.

- *Couples therapy/family therapy*- involves utilizing family members or other close significant others in therapy to provide moral and psychosocial support to the patient in the process of quitting.

- *Motivation enhancement*- based on the association between alcoholism and lack of self-esteem – motivation enhancement may be used to raise self-esteem and self-efficacy resulting in the urge to quit.

- *Alcohol expectancies*- involve reducing the anticipation and craving for alcohol in patients through psychosocial mechanisms.

TEENAGE/ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY

With their developing idealism and ability to think in more abstract and hypothetical ways, young adolescents may get caught up in a mental world far removed from reality. One that may involve a belief that things cannot or will not happen to them and that they are omnipotent and indestructible. These cognitive changes have intriguing implications for adolescents' sexuality and sex education. Having information about contraceptives is not enough – what seems to predict whether or not adolescents will use contraceptives is their acceptance of themselves and their sexuality. Most discussions of adolescent pregnancy and its prevention assume that adolescents have the ability to anticipate consequences. Discussions also consider adolescents' ability to weigh the probable outcome of behaviour, and project into what will happen if they engage in certain acts, such as sexual intercourse. That is, prevention is based on the belief that adolescents have the cognitive ability to approach problem-solving in a planned, organized, and analytical manner. However, many adolescents are just beginning to develop these capacities, and others have not developed them at all [Holmbeck, Gasseloski & Crossman, 1989]. The personal fable may be associated with adolescent pregnancy. The young adolescent might say, 'Hey, it won't happen to me'. The combination of early physical, maturational, risky-taking behaviours, egocentrism, the inability to think futuristically, and an ambivalent, contradictory culture makes sex difficult for adolescents to handle. The net increase in premarital sexual intercourse accompanied by a lack of efficient use of contraceptives has resulted in an increase in the incidence of out of wedlock pregnancies. Unmarried motherhood among young teenage girls is a tragedy in most instances.

HAZARDS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

The physical, economic, and social hazards that face young mothers and their babies have aroused the concern of many researchers. When the mother is younger than sixteen, her risk of dying during pregnancy or childbirth is extremely pronounced. Extremely young mothers face special risks because their pelvises are immature. The fetal head is often unable to pass safely through the immature pelvis, and so young teenagers are likely to have complicated deliveries and caesarean sections [Killarney, 1983]. No matter what the adolescent's age, her chances of developing complications are increased. Compared with other babies, more babies of adolescent mothers are still-born [*born dead*] and there are more cases of premature birth, low birth weight, respiratory distress syndrome, and neurological defects [Bolton, 1980]. Adolescents face further hazards if they breastfeed their babies. Even though they take dietary supplements, they tend to lose large amounts of calcium and other minerals from their bones [Thomas et al, 1982]. Because their bones are still growing, it is difficult for adolescent girls to take in enough additional calcium and phosphorus to meet the simultaneous demands of milk production and new bone growth. Other physiological problems include pregnancy induced hypertension, fistula, anemia, vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Economically most young mothers drop out of school and these young women find themselves trapped in economic insecurity.

HIV/AIDS AND SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE

Adolescents who are sexually active may be susceptible or exposed to sexually transmitted disease including HIV/AIDS.

STDs may include:

- Gonorrhea

- Chlamydia trachomatis

- Urethritis

- Chancroid

- Herpes

- Syphilis

- Donovanosis

- Warts

- Candidiasis

Statistically about 1 in 4 cases of gonorrhea involve an adolescent. Genital herpes is found in I out of every 35 adolescent cases. Syphilis and other STDs are also common among adolescents. Those between 20 and 24 years of age have the highest incidence of STDs followed by the 15- 19 age group. With their confounded risk perception, adolescents are vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS due to their involvement in unprotected sex. It has been argued that bearing in mind that most AIDS cases occur among the young adults [20-29 and early 30s] and that the incubation period for AIDS may be from a few years to up to 10 years [Wallis, 1987] many with AIDS may have been infected as adolescents.

PREVENTION OF STDS AND EARLY PREGNANCY

Sex education

Fears in some quarters that sex education courses increase sexual activity and pregnancy among adolescents seem groundless and unfounded. Compared with adolescents who have not had sex education courses, adolescents who have completed courses show no additional sexual activity. These students also are less likely to have intercourse without contraceptives [Zelnik & Kim, 1982]. But sex education by itself cannot solve the problem of teenage pregnancies. In the absence of a vaccine or efficacious cure, the prevention of the spread of HIV will for many people requires changes in risk-taking behaviour. Behaviour modification strategies depend on an appreciation of the complexities of social context, risk and relationships, as well as some impediments to discussing sex and negotiating safer sex practices. This includes an understanding of self-efficacy and social support as sexual behaviour is not necessarily the outcome of a consensual and rational decision [Wight, 1992].

Life options approach

Life skills such as assertiveness, communication, positive self concept, negotiation, decision making can help the adolescent to refrain from unprotected sexual debuts. Involvement of adolescents in activities as games, sporting activities, drama, and extracurricular clubs like AIDS Toto and Young voices can help ease the sexual tension and take their time from idleness and the drive for sex. This invokes the defense mechanism of sublimation by which adolescents may be encouraged to channel their sexual impulses into activities other than sexual risky behaviours as highlighted above.

Summation

- *Life skills*--------negotiation, assertiveness, refusal, communication.

- *Cognitive skills*------problem solving, critical thinking, decision making.

- *Coping skills*-------stress management, increasing internal locus of control.

- *Practical skills*-------abstinence, using a condom.

CHAPTER 10

A VALENTINE VERSE

This valentine sonnet I owe but no other woman

For in all rectitude no other- this forlorn longing mollify can

Words alone can't paint the depth of this my passion

For I have loved no other lady in such a fashion

Don't e'er let me fathom or entertain

My heart's yearnings are but in mere vain

Don't let this craving enthrall some ardent ovation

As is sing-song in sheer infatuation

Sages have but always sang- love is just but blind

But your sublime demeanor fades not in my numb mind

There is a season in life for love

And there is an era in life for your worthy to prove

But when to hunt – hunt and hunt you no longer could afford

Its time a valentine surprise one but deserved

Marisen Mwale

TEACHING AND LEARNING DURING ADOLESCENCE

According to Cole [1963] in his provocative book 'Psychology of Adolescence', there are some basic elements that teachers of adolescents need to bear in mind in the course of their profession. To begin with, adolescents of high school age are rather impatient of drill or monotony. They want an ever-shifting variety and excitement in their lives. The teacher who day after day simply assigns the next ten pages in the textbook allows the preparation of lessons to become unbearably monotonous. That does not imply that no drill subjects should be taught. Work involving drill should absolutely be directed toward some purpose the adolescent wishes to achieve. Thus the boy who has become interested in attending a foreign university willingly spends countless hours in mastering the necessary language. The girl with ambitions to become a private secretary will spend similar amounts of time in monotonous drill on stenography and typing. The point to remember is the difference in motivation between children and adolescents. Children will memorize addition combinations either to please the teacher or to have a gold star placed after their name on the chalk-board. During adolescence however, the students must be stimulated to drill themselves because they can see, through the drill and monotony, a goal they are eager to reach. The work in high school must be interesting.

This statement is not made in defense of painless education. Classroom work must compete with all the other things a boy or girl likes to do. The adolescent will spend time in studying only if the work is as interesting as the other things to which the same time might be put. If class work is not interesting it will be neglected in favour of athletics, extracurricular activities, individual schemes of various sorts, money-making tasks, reading of light fiction, dances, or other such diversions. The adolescent can no longer be controlled, as the child can be, by mere authority, and he is not yet old enough to be controlled by economic pressure. In the intervening years he will therefore follow his interests. It is part of the teacher's business to capitalize on them. Classroom work must furnish adolescents with an opportunity to exercise their minds.

Naturally, the assignments appropriate for the more capable are too difficult for the dull, but for pupils of all levels of ability there must be a real opportunity for mental effort. Boys and girls of this age spontaneously spend hours in solving all kinds of puzzles or in playing games that demand quick thinking and cleverness in outwitting one's opponent [e.g., chess, monopoly, scrubble and drafts]. Assignments therefore need to present puzzles that will intrigue the adolescent into thinking. Whenever possible, subject matter should be approached through the emotions and imagination rather than through impersonal logic. Adolescents are stimulated by anything in which there is a bit of romance. They show this inclination clearly in their choice of movies or reading matter and in their hero worship of some idealized historic or fictional character. The chemistry teacher might bring about more learning of chemistry if he would start his course with the reading of *Crucibles*; the biologist would be well advised to begin his elementary classes with the reading of *The Microbe Hunters*.

The languages teacher may read, ***Romeo and Juliet***. Such reading is stimulating to the imagination and ideals of youth and serves to maintain adolescent effort through the hours of drill. Naturally, a profound arousal of the emotions is undesirable, but too little stimulation is equally fatal to school work. One of the adolescent's favourite illusions is his conviction that he is now an adult. Pupils in high school should therefore be allowed, within reasonable limits, to plan their own work and the means of getting it done. Some guidance must, of course, be given – but primarily when asked for. Arranging his own work not only gives an adolescent a feeling of independence but arouses responsibility for getting the work done- This gives a sense of self-direction. Thus if an English teacher wants pupils to read part or whole of an epic, he may either assign a particular epic or he may tell the pupil to find out what epics there are and then to select for himself which one he will read. The second type of assignment is decidedly preferable. Discovery learning should be encouraged where students can do research on their own and present to their counterparts. The task of the teacher then becomes that of the 'translator or guider' – ***a didactic task***- who has to present the curriculum content on such a level and in such a way that it corresponds to the cognitive structure of the adolescent. The goal is to correlate the curriculum systematically with the adolescents' logical, abstract and deductive reasoning abilities as highlighted by Piaget's theories [Muuss, 1996]. More specifically, the formal operations found in the adolescent constitute the prerequisite for teaching geometry, proportionality, propositions, and probabilistic reasoning.

Sex differences between boys and girls may be there especially with boys performing better on some tasks that have a strong spatial reasoning component. However, overall, on all other basic abstract logical competencies sex differences are minimal or non-existent. Finally, teaching should emphasize, insofar as adolescents being taught can appreciate, the general implications, conclusions, and theories inherent in the facts under consideration. For the first time in his life, the high school pupil is able to regard a general principle as something more than a series of words to be memorized. When he discovers that theories give him an explanation of otherwise puzzling facts, he is eager to have more of them and thus achieve further enlightenment. Most adolescents want explanations of *why* things happen in contrast to the child who is content to know *what* happens. Teaching in high school, then, should have the following eight characteristics if it is to motivate the learner into getting his work done:

- It must relate drill to some desired purpose and must eliminate sheer monotony as much as possible.
- It must be interesting.
- It must give the adolescent mental exercise.
- It must stir his imagination.
- It must allow him to feel and develop his independence.
- It must socialize him.
- It must give him insight into his daily life.
- It must provide him with as many explanations as he can understand.

Work that lacks these characteristics simply does not get done because learning cannot be brought about without the earnest co-operation of the learner.

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