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# UNIT 4 FACTORS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

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## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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Education aims at the development of the human personality. In the earlier units of this course you have studied various aspects of human development : physical, socio-emotional, moral, cognitive and linguistic. All these contribute to the formation of the individual personality.

The present unit shares with you information regarding the nature and concept of personality as well as a discussion of the factors influencing its development. We also discuss the various approaches to understand personality development. Your role as a teacher in the development of learner personality, especially during the period of adolescence, has been highlighted in this unit.

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## 4.2 OBJECTIVES

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

- explain the concept and nature of personality;
- describe various approaches to understand personality;
- describe and illustrate various factors affecting the development of personality;
- discuss the impact of the mass media on personality, especially during adolescence; and
- discuss your role as a teacher in facilitating the development of children's personality.

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## 4.3 CONCEPT AND NATURE OF PERSONALITY

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Personality is not a simple amalgamated view of various aspects. The process of its development is very subtle and the structure of its form is very complex. Attempts to analyse

and define the humanbeing and his/her personality have a long history both in Indian and western traditions of philosophy. The psychological explanations suggest a host of biological and socio-cultural factors which contribute to personality development.

### 4.3.1 Concept of Personality

The term "personality" is derived from the Latin word "persona" which means a mask worn by an actor while he plays a particular character on the stage. It suggests that the personality should mean the characteristic pattern or style of behaviour of the person as is revealed through his external and internal properties. The external properties of a person include his dress, speech, bodily actions, postures, habits and expressions. The internal properties are his motives, emotions, precepts, intentions, etc.

Personality is an all-inclusive concept. It is the sum total of an individual's properties as a distinct and unique humanbeing. The external properties are directly observed while the internal are only inferred from the pattern of overt responses. Thus, the image of an individual's personality is only created from observations and/or inferences regarding his response patterns. The concept of personality is a derived concept. In other words, the concept of personality is derived from the pattern of response characteristic of the individual. The derivation is possible in three ways :

The first is subjective, popular derivation based on subjective impressions formed by the individual's response pattern. It results in popular evaluative expressions like charming, dominating, weak or bold personality.

The second kind of conceptualisation of personality is based on an objective description of the overt responses of the individual. This view is held by behavioural psychologists and is best amenable to empirical research. However, it poses the difficulty that an overt response may occur in different individuals for different meanings. It seems to evade in-depth interpretations.

The third way is the organismic view which conceives personality as the inner pattern of a person's characteristics. An oft-quoted definition of personality calls it "dynamic organisation within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment." (Allport, 1961). It means that

- personality "resides" within the individual
- these systems are woven into an organisation
- the organisation of personality is not static but dynamic
- the organisational pattern determines the kind and degree of adjustment of the individual to his environment, and
- this adjustment-pattern is unique to the individual person.

Comprehensively conceived, Allport's definition of personality is therefore widely accepted.

### 4.3.2 Nature of Personality

Four fundamental qualities of personality have been identified from the organismic concept. These are consistency, the development of personality structure, potentiality for change and integration. Let us discuss each quality in brief.

**Consistency :** Consistency or stability is the hallmark of personality. A person is recognisable from situation to situation by the consistent characteristics that are reflected in his behaviour. Not that he behaves exactly the same way in every situation but his styles of action can certainly be identified.

**Development of personality structure :** Personality development is a natural quality of a growing organism. The path is from simple to increasingly complex. According to Henz Werner, at birth the mental organization of the infant spreads slowly. Through his interactions with the environment, the parts of the mental structure become progressively crystallized and differentiated from each other. The analytical stage is followed synthesis or integration when the differentiated parts become functionally organised. From a diffused mass through progressive differentiation to an integrated whole is, then, the course of development of personality structure.

**Potentiality for change :** Potentiality for change is another characteristic of personality. The

earlier psychoanalytical view did hold personality as a rigid structure. However, modern psychological, humanistic theories have demonstrated not only the human capacity for reorganisation but also the conditions that foster change.

Integration or organisation is the quality of the human personality, i.e., it occurs to human beings naturally and normally. It is the normal development outcome of personality structure. Disorganisation, i.e., the isolation of the functions of the individual parts from the total system is a pathological condition (Goldstein) of a psychological disorder.

**Check Your Progress 1**

- Notes : a) Write your answer in the space given below.  
 b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

Briefly define the concept of personality.

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## 4.4 APPROACHES TO PERSONALITY

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The field of personality has been approached in a wide variety of ways. Certainly, any theory of personality would require to explain both, its structure and its dynamics. But explanations can be categorised on the focus, whether the chief target is structure or dynamics. In this manner, the following approaches are identified in understanding personality.

- i) Explanation of structure
  - Bio-physical approach
  - Bio-social approach
- ii) Explanation of the dynamics
  - Psychoanalytical
  - Psychosocial
  - Social learning
  - Personological
  - Spiritual
  - Some concepts of significance

Within each of these approaches, different theorists have forwarded different explanations (built into systems which would require, for their understanding, readings of detailed texts). For our purpose, it would be sufficient to be cognizant of major propositions regarding personality and its development. Let us discuss each approach in detail.

### 4.4.1 Bio-Physical Approaches

The bio-physical approaches to personality assume that an individual's personality is determined by his biological and constitutional characteristics. This is done by popular wisdom. Popular wisdom relates joviality with fat people and impulsive anger with the lean and thin. Three propositions can be gathered from the literature as stated below :

**Hippocrates/Galen's proposition :** Personality is determined by "humours" (secretions of glands) blood (red, sanguine), phlegm, yellow (choleric) bile and black (melancholic) bile.

**Kretschmer's proposition :** Personality can be explained by reference to the body-build of the individual : short and thick (pyknic), slender and weak (aesthenic) and balanced physique (athletic).

**Sheldon's proposition :** Personality is determined by the nature of embryonic development which results in and is identified by over-development of the stomach (endomorph), or of the muscles (mesomorph) or of the head (ectomorph).

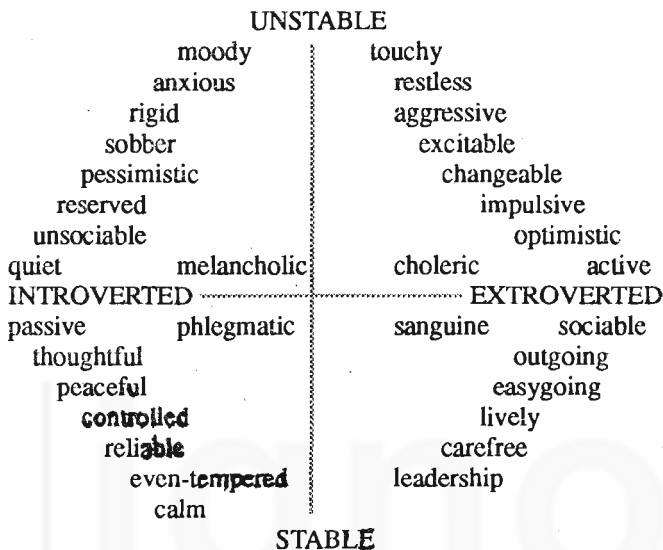
Obviously all the propositions above relegate the psychic systems within the individual.

### 4.4.2 Bio-Social Approaches

Bio-social approaches assume that personality is formed by the interplay between the individual's biological dispositions and the social-cultural forces impinging upon him. However, with their eyes set upon the derivation of structure, they studied personal characteristics and/or personality ratings of large samples of persons and subjected the data to statistical analysis.

Two prominent names in this category are Eyesenck and Cattell. Interested in a classificatory structure, Eyesenck derived a 2 × 2 structure formed by two polarities. Interested in an elaborate description of structure, Cattell derived a set of 16 factors, called "source-traits". Their propositions can be stated as below.

**Eyesenck's proposition :** The individual's personality can be explained by his position on two independent polarities, namely, extroversion - introversion and neuroticism - stability, which generate by their interaction the four types in the bio-physical Hippocrates - Galen's proposition as figured below.



(From Eyesenck (1965), Fact and Fiction in Psychology, Harmondsworth, Penquin, p. 54).

**Cattell's proposition :** The individual's personality structure can be explained by a psychograph or profile showing his positions on bipolar "source-traits" or "primary factors" (16 in adults, 14 in adolescents, 12 in children), each shaped by the interplay of heredity and environment differently, and described as below :

Low Score Description	Factor	High Score Description
Reserved, detached, critical	A	Outgoing, warmhearted
Less intelligent, concrete thinking	B	More intelligent, abstract thinking
Affected by feelings, easily upset	C	Emotionally stable, faces reality
Humble, mild, accommodating	E	Assertive, aggressive, stubborn
Sober, prudent, serious	F	Happy-go-lucky, impulsive, lively
Expedient, disregards rules	G	Conscientious, perserving
Shy, restrained, timid	H	Venturesome, socially bold
Tough-minded, self-reliant	I	Tender-minded, clinging
Trusting, adaptable	L	Suspicious, self-opinionated
Practical, careful	M	Imaginative
Forthright, natural	N	Shrewd, calculating
Self-assured, confident	O	Apprehensive, self-reproaching
Conservative	Q <sup>1</sup>	Experimenting, liberal
Group-dependent	Q <sup>2</sup>	Self-sufficient
Undisciplined self-conflict	Q <sup>3</sup>	Controlled, socially precise
Relaxed, tranquil	Q <sup>4</sup>	Tense, frustrated

From the 16 PF Questionnaire,  
(© 1956-1967 by the Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, Champaign, Ill.... USA)

An individual's psychographs or 16 PF profiles constructed on different occasions may vary for reasons of change in mental state or social role.

#### 4.4.3 Psychoanalytical Approaches

The psychoanalytical approach was posited by Freud to diagnose and treat the root psychic causes of pathological behaviours of psychic patients.

For diagnosis, Freud looked at the past history of the patient, and generated a lot of theory which may be stated in the propositions as follows.

- i) An individual's personality can be studied by digging up the long-forgotten memories of childhood, especially pertaining to breast-weaning, toilet-training and relationships with the parent of the opposite sex and the parent of the same sex.
- ii) Personality-formation can be explained by reference to the battle between the natural "id" of pleasure-seeking impulses and the individual's "superego" formed by internalisation of the external social-moral demands.
- iii) An individual's personality is determined by the furnishing of his "ego" (reality-self) trying to resolve the conflicts between the id and the super-ego by using a variety of techniques called "defence-mechanisms".

#### 4.4.4 Psycho-Social Approaches

Psycho-social approaches are an outgrowth of the psychoanalytical approach. Adler, for example, started as a co-worker with Freud but came to differ with him asserting that human life is not a battle between the id and super-ego but a conscious struggle to achieve superiority which can be facilitated by social factors. Later, Erikson forwarded his theory of psycho-social development through the entire life-span, including the (first) five stages analysed by Freud. their propositions are presented below.

**Adler's propositions :** An individual's personality can be explained by reference to the conscious struggle of his "creative power" of the instinct of self-realization to "compensate" for his inferiority in one area by gaining superiority in other areas or ways. Personality-formation of an individual can be supported by developmental guidance.

**Erikson's propositions :** The development of personality can be explained by reference to a series of crises emerging in the eight developmental stages of life, each preparing for the next in anticipation, as described below :

Stage	Crisis	Characteristics
1. Oral-sensory	Basic trust vs. mistrust	Infant totally dependent — mother's inconsistency generates suspicion and doubt through the rest of life.
2. Muscular-anal	Autonomy vs. shame, doubt	Toilet training and control, and through it asserting individuality. Success results in autonomy, failure in shame and doubt about its own abilities, persisting later.
3. Locomotor-genital	Initiative vs. guilt	Urge to possess opposite-sex parent and rival same-sex parent. Channeling of sexual needs into socially accepted behaviours results in initiative; failure in guilt, which persist.
4. Latency	Industry vs. inferiority	Typical primary school years, testing the competence of the child. Success leads to success; failure to inferiority.
5. Puberty and adolescence	Identity vs. role confusion	Return of sexual interest, heterosexuality. Concern for future roles and status, Clarity helps form identity; otherwise confusion persists and frustrates.

6. Young adulthood	Intimacy vs. isolation	If, and when, identity is found, one seeks to “find” someone else to share intimacies; failure results in isolation.
7. Adulthood	Generativity vs. stagnation	Reproduction and productive membership of society. Later complacency sets in and stagnation occurs.
8. Maturity	Ego-integrity vs. despair	Reflecting upon the life lived, integrating even death into that pattern; failure leads to despair and futility.

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#### 4.4.5 Social Learning Approaches

Social learning approaches are antithetical to the psycho-analytical and psycho-social approaches. The social learning approach of personality is rooted in the behaviouristic stimulus response (S-R) psychology and asserts that man, like any other animal, learns, to make responses to stimuli present or constructed in the environment. These theorists disregard the interpretations based on “psyche” because such interpretations are not empirical but fabricated only. Two propositions of this type are presented below for their significant import on the theory of personality.

**Cooley’s proposition :** Personality can be explained by reference to the “looking glass self” of the individual, his/her self-concept that develops on the basis of how other people of significance in the environment define him.

**Skinner’s proposition :** An individual’s personality is/can be shaped by manipulation of stimuli in small steps and provision of appropriate reinforcements.

#### 4.4.6 Personological Approaches

Personological approaches disapprove of both the psychoanalytical and psycho-social explanations, stating that human behaviour is determined neither by the instincts nor by social forces. They believe that the human being is an active creator of his/her personality, imbued with a “force for growth” within him/her. This characteristic makes human being different from the rest of the animal kingdom. Assuming a basic need for “self-actualization”, this group is also referred as “humanistic”. Rogers and Maslow are the best known in this group.

**Roger’s proposition :** The human personality is determined by the striving of the person to define, actualize, maintain and enhance his/her own growing “self” which maintains itself by the use of Freudian defence-mechanisms and which develops naturally when its “need for positive regard” by those significant around is fulfilled.

**Maslow’s proposition :** Individual’s personality can be explained and helped by making a reference to the fulfilment of his/her basic deficiency needs (D-needs) and meta-needs (B-needs) of the growth of his being as stated below :

Basic deficiency needs (D. needs)

- Physiological needs
- Safety needs
- Love and belongingness needs
- Esteem needs

Meta-needs (B. needs)

- Need for self-actualisation
- Desire to know and understand
- Aesthetic needs

#### 4.4.7 Spiritual Approaches

The spiritual development of an individual that has been the typical philosophic theme of Indian culture can be seen to come next to the concept of “self-actualisation” referred above. The spiritual development of personality is referred to in terms of “self-realisation”, which required to be differentiated from ‘self-realisation’. Self-actualisation is the ideal of realism which postulates that an individual possesses a self which is a potentiality waiting to become actuality. Self-realisation is, on the contrary, the ultimate goal of the spiritual philosophy of

idealism which postulates that the real-self of an individual is the divine or spiritual self which waits to be discovered, uncovered and realised. Indian thought has described the ultimate spirit as “sacchidananda” comprising “sat” (existence), “chit” (consciousness) and “ananda” (bliss). This divine spirit exists in man covered under fine kosha (sheaths), namely matter (annamaya), vital (pranamaya), psyche (manomaya), intellect (vijnanamaya) and bliss (anandamaya). Three model paths to realize the spirit (atman) are the intellectual (jnana yoga), the emotionall (bhakti yoga) and the actional (karma yoga), which represent the dominance of the three domains of mind cognitive, affective and psychomotor. These age-old explanations provide the base for modern Indian philosophy. Cenkner has identified, for example, ananda yoga (akin to bhakti yoga) in Tagore, karma yoga in Gandhi and internal yoga in Sri Aurobindo. Their propositions are stated below :

**Tagore’s proposition :** Human personality can be explained by reference to the development of the “physical man” into a “personal man” through sub-conscious experiencing of rhythm and harmony between man and nature (universe) resulting in the expression of “surplus” energy in man, his limitless potentiality.

**Gandhi’s proposition :** Personality can be explained by reference to the strivings or experiments of man in search of truth and “ahimsa” (universal love and concern) through actions characterised by selflessness and attachment (anasakti) which lead him to the divine state of “steady wisdom” (sthita-prajna).

**Sri Aurobindo’s proposition :** The individual’s personality can be explained by reference to his/her “evolution” from the biogenic matter-state to the supermind state which is achievable through integral yoga and which leads to the ultimate, divine “sacchidananda” state.

#### 4.4.8 Some Concepts of Significance

Besides the above-stated approaches and propositions regarding personality ranging from the bio-physical classification to the spiritual proposition of integral yoga, some concepts have a significant relationship with personality. The important concepts are as follows :

- Achievement motivation
- Locus of control
- Cognitive style
- Sensation seeking

**Achievement motivation :** Individuals can be differentiated as high and low on achievement motivation (n-ach). They differ in terms of (i) degree or achievement motivation, (ii) fear of failure (FF), and (iii) the value they attach to their achievements. Children who are reinforced for their successes, howsoever small, tend to become high n-ach whereas those who are punished for failures tend to become high FF or low n-ach.

**Locus of control :** Individuals can be differentiated as “externals” or “internals” on locus of control. Externals believe that life situations are controlled by chance, luck or authorities and tend to lack in motivation. Internals, on the contrary, believe that situations are within the control of the person and tend to become independent, dominant, initiative-taker and achiever.

**Cognitive style :** Individuals can be differentiated as “field-independent” and “field-dependent” in their cognitive style. “Field-independents” perceive easily the part and the whole separately and are found to be independent. Field-dependents fail to perceive parts hidden in the whole and became prone to social influences, what others say.

**Sensation seeking :** Individuals can be differentiated as high or low sensation-seekers (SS). High SS seek adventure, thrill, unusual experiences (may be musical or drugs) and dislike routine while low SS prefer simplicity and quietude. High SS have been found more creative and intelligent, independent and adjusted than the low SS. Sensory-deprivation has also been found to result in hallucinations, and for that reason the technique of deprivation of visual, auditory and tactile sensory experiences is used for brain washing.

### Check Your Progress 2

Notes : a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

List various approaches to personality. Discuss the approach that you find the most suitable to your own personality.

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## 4.5 FACTORS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

Really speaking, a humanbeing's personality is a product of his/her genetic endowment and cultural environment. As Cole and Bruce described, "from the moment of conception it grows 'whole', having within itself possibilities of developing into a dynamic, active, walking, talking, thinking, feeling humanbeing, provided that the environment furnishes the raw materials and the appropriate conditions of stimulation."

Differences in individual personalities are caused because (i) the possibilities within itself are different, and (ii) the provision of raw materials and appropriate conditions of stimulation by the environment vary widely. Guilford, for example charted the magnitude of similarity of pairs of children with respects of intelligence (IQ). Similarity in heredity varied from the same child (tested twice); to identical twins to only chance similarity in a pair of unrelated children.

The difference in commonality between the second and third pairs stated above demonstrates the role of the environment (rearing-practice) while the trend from pair one to pair seven shows the role of heredity. You will read about heredity and environment in Unit 8, Section 8.3 in detail.

If we look back at the propositions of personality presented in Section 4.4, there are a number of factors which influence the development of personality. The following are the main factors:

### 4.5.1 Heredity

Genetics, or the science of heredity, is a discipline contributing specific details of the impact of heredity on living beings. Baller and Charles have compiled some general statements about the inheritance of character that are relevant to behaviour of personality. Basically, we inherit "a tendency toward a certain structure" and "a tendency to function in certain ways". Specially these include the following.

Tendency towards a certain structure includes the following behaviours.

- A tendency to achieve a certain body-weight.
- A tendency towards a general body-type (i.e. skeletal structure, proportion of fat and muscle-tissue, and the length of limbs).
- Sex
- Appearance, i.e., skin, hair texture and colour, eye shape and colour, nose shape, ear shape, head shape.
- Internal structure, for example the size of the heart and lungs in proportion to the body, determining the capacity for prolonged physical effort.

Tendency to function in certain ways includes the following behaviours :

- Natural response i.e. functioning of the nervous system, intelligence, predisposition to react slow or quickly.
- Sensory efficiency i.e. keenness of vision, range of hearing, sensitivity of touch and smell.
- Operation of the "vegetative system" i.e., heart and circulatory system, digestive system, reproductive system, etc.
- Functioning of the endocrine system, i.e., glandular secretions, e.g., the thyroids control



the metabolic rate, the pituitary controlling growth, gonads controlling the sex-drive and sex characteristics and the adrenals controlling emotional “stir-ups”.

- Rate of physical growth
- Predisposition to certain characteristics.

Finally a note must be added that the effects of heredity on temperamental quality are not fatalistic as these are on the structural tendency. Medical and surgical interventions are being invented continuously to bring the functioning of hereditary systems and mechanisms under control. Plastic surgery, for example, brings change in the inherited appearance while hormonal treatment changes the functioning of endocrine glands.

#### 4.5.2 Environmental Factors

Technically, environmental factors start exerting their influence through the uterine environment during the prenatal stage. The dietary habits, the health of the mother, etc., may cause prenatal “insult” or damage to the developing organism. Some disabilities are inflicted upon the child by uterine environmental factors.

During the first month or so, varying cultural patterns can be seen to shape the physical appearance of the child. For example, tough-shaping by a strong massage of the infant’s body in the northern states of India and tender-shaping of the nose of the girl-child by strong-pressing in the southern states of India.

As the child grows, he faces and deals with several environment factors. The child gradually grows in complexity, supporting or contracting various factors as the environment may be varying kinds.

Let us discuss some of the environmental factors to see how they affect the growing personality of an individual.

**Rearing patterns :** Interactions between the infant and mother for satisfaction of biological needs play a significant role in personality development. Care and affection develop a sense of security. Over-indulgence or under-indulgence of the mother in breast-feeding would determine the “oral” personality and severity in toilet-training is the “anal” personality.

**Regularity** in feeding practices would develop in the child “basic trust” in the world, irregularity would yield “mistrust”. Similarly, toilet-training severity may cause the child to grow into a doubting and shameful person, training “at ease” develops autonomy.

**Parent-child interaction :** Once the child grows free of the needs of the mother, parent-child interactions assume social dimensions. Through the interactions, both the individual psyche and the social psyche are communicated to the child and the child develops in him/her “individuous” (individual self) and “socius” (social self). The effect of parents behaviour on the child’s behaviour is summarised in the following table :

**Table 4.1: Relationship between Type of Home and Child Behaviour**

Type of Home	Type of Associated Child Behaviour
Rejective	: Submissive, aggressive, adjustment difficulties, feelings of insecurity, sadistic, nervous, shy, stubborn, noncompliant.
Over-protective, “babying”	: Infantile and withdrawing, submissive, feelings or insecurity, aggressive, jealous, difficult adjustment.
Dominating parents	: Dependable, shy, submissive, polite, self-conscious, uncooperative, tense, bold, quarrelsome, disinterested.
Submissive parents	: Aggressive, careless, disobedient, independent, self-confident, forward in making friends, neurotic.
Harmonious, well-adjusted	: Submissive, good adjustment, calm, happy, compatible, cooperative, superior adjustment, independent.
Child accepted	: Socially acceptable, faces future confidently.
Parents play with child	: Security feelings, self-reliant.
Logical, scientific approach	: Self-reliant, cooperative responsible.

Consistent strict discipline	: Good adjustment.
Giving child responsibility	: Good adjustment, self-reliant, security feelings.

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The process of homo-formation of “socius” can be understood if we just look at the differences in children in a nuclear and a joint family. Generally a nuclear family is over indulging, self-centred, introvert and isolated while a joint family is social, extrovert, and accommodating.

Much of the child’s personality seems to be determined by the social class of the family. Generally, middle-class parents tend to develop in their children a sense of self-direction, the power of decision-making and an attitude that the situations or environment can be changed by manipulative efforts. Parents in lower-class homes do not have experience of building independence and controlling the behaviour of the child. The children of such families develop an attitude that the situations or environment are given and cannot be changed, thus a kind of external locus of control is built. The two classes of homes also influence the kind and level of achievement motivation in children.

At the broad socio-cultural level, the gender-roles are learnt by boys to become “boys” and girls to become “girls” as desired by culture. Every child loves to play with toys but we provide dolls or kitchen toys to girls, and trucks, cars or aeroplanes to boys. And just think of a situation when a child returns home complaining that it has been beaten by some other child of the neighbourhood. If it is a girl child beaten by a boy, how do we advise? If it is a boy child beaten by a boy how do we advise? And if we come across a girl child beating a boy child how do we react? The answers to these questions will reveal the way personalities are shaped unknowingly.

**Sibling relations** : Another environment is built in homes by brothers and sisters, called siblings, supporting and frustrating each other. Research studies have revealed that a sibling-less only child tends to become overprotected and self-centred unless the parents deal with the child differently. The eldest child happens to be an only child till the second is born when the first is “dethroned” from the function of solitary affection. It generally develops jealousy in him/her. Otherwise, the eldest child happens to be overtaxed by the aspirations and the demands of the parents.

Children in intermediate positions have mixed experiences and vary in their personalities more. However, they may tend to suffer more from inferiority feelings generated by comparisons. The youngest child is never deprived of the affection of parents and may turn into a spoilt if “babied” child. Some studies suggest that the first born children have contributed more geniuses while the last-born children tend to contribute some creative, expressive persons. These, however, remain unsettled issues.

**Neighbourhood** : The neighbourhood provides the first exposure of the larger cultural environment to the child. Since birds of the same feather flock together, neighbourhood families are not different in their social class, etc., and provide a smooth transition from home to culture. They share almost similar values and rearing patterns but expose the child to different family styles, and the child learns how to deal with the variety. The characteristics of neighbourhoods are that they are more objective than the parents, treat the child as a person and therefore they are both less approving and less critical, and with different emphasis in child-behaviour. You may recall your own childhood experiences of home and neighbourhood and describe the differences as well as how some neighbours contributed to the development of your personality.

**Peer group** : From the neighbourhood emerges the peer-groups. The first group of individuals of the same/similar age may be unrelated biologically but are related socially. Interacting with this group the child learns that he/she should give up a little of individuality to be accepted socially in the peer group. With the peer group, the child learns to take turns, to suppress his/her wish in favour of the decision of the group, to dovetail his/her activities with the activities of the group. And with the desire to be accepted, he/she moulds his/her behaviour to the standards set by the group which suggests to him continually what would please the group members.

Recall the actions that you did in your childhood to impress yourself upon your peer group

Why childhood alone, in adolescence and even later also this happens. The peer group persists as a factor of environment throughout life, of course changing with time and maturity, but forcing the individual to live up to his/her "reputation" in the group.

**School :** The first peer group of childhood is characterised by play and then the child is admitted to the first formal institution of the society, the school. The school is aimed to inculcate in him or her the behaviour patterns required in adulthood. The school environment makes him/her learn punctuality, regularity and scheduling by conditioning through the bell when to arrive, when to study various subjects, when to play and when to leave for home.

Academic learning is the major cause of schooling. But a lot is learnt through the school environment in its hidden curriculum. You come to learn the authority (of teachers and monitors), to respect rules and regulations, and also to doubt even the home. Just think when one learns the need to use clean drinking water for health and returns home to find the unhygienic practices of drinking water. What happens to a tribal child when the school insists on the use of standard language while he speaks to his parents in the tribal dialect? The same is the fate of the child going to an English-medium school demanding not to use the mother tongue. When the teachings and demands of the school conflict with the family respect, the child learns to conceal facts or to speak half-truths. Besides, each school also has its personality or style and develops in children the traits it holds important. These may be achievement motivation, creative expression, easy going happy-go-lucky or "who cares" (chalta hai) attitude.

**Mass media :** While school is the direct and responsible authority to communicate and train the child to the desires and demands of the standard form of culture, the mass media radio, television, the newspaper and the magazine or the comic, etc., communicate to the child the styles of the various sub-cultures in the total culture. Certainly the variety would make the child aware of other forms, objects and styles and create tensions in him. The manner ego reacts and adjusts to resolve these tensions determines his children and adolescents is fast-increasing and creating even social challenges, we may discuss it at length.

In general, it may be stated that heredity seems to be more important than environment in determining the individual's ability levels and physical characteristics while the other psychological, especially affective traits, are influenced more by the environment.

### Check Your Progress 3

Notes : a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with those given at the end of the unit.

Write down the name of the environmental factors affecting the growing personality of an individual.

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## 4.6 IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA ON PERSONALITY

Films, television, radio, newspapers and magazines are the most prominent forms of the mass media and each influences the behaviour pattern of persons in a different manner. So, let us look at each apart.

**Films :** Films create an environment in which one experiences a near real life situation empathically for about two hours and a half. Together they set a trend of life — some of love, others of social action and still others of religious life. The presentation may be "commercial" which attempts to attract a mass audience or "artistic" which attempts to paint subtle reality. Anyway, what the growing personality of childhood and adolescence finds in the films is portrayals of reality (which they believe are true), glamour of appearance, role models and villains, and varying patterns and styles of behaviour, how and whom to respect or fight. Basically Indian films have provided avenues or outlets inhibited by the culture, specially sex

and aggression. The impact of films is also on the increase since the trend of hero-portrayal has shown a shift from the mythological, historical, national and social to a matured individual, to a frustrated post-adolescent and to loving and tormented adolescent. Anyway, the films stir and motivate those more who are sensation-seekers.

**Television :** Television creates an entirely different sort of environment :

- One, through its serial presentations it encompasses one's thought by continual and prolonged discussion of the role-models and patterns of behaviour.
- Two, it forces you to tune in on time.
- Three, if one does not discriminate in viewing television, she/he simply gets engrossed by the visual stimuli only to find that time has been spent for nothing.
- Four, it turns the constant viewer into a passive person permitting no time and imagination to express oneself in one's own way: in other words, it tends to enslave.
- Five, it may so engross the school going children and adolescents that they start neglecting their education, if parents do not intervene.

And finally, the long arrays of advertisements initiate the child and the adolescent into exploring market products and change or develop food habits, bathing habits, clothing habits and the like. It may, in certain cases, build in some inferiority complexes.

**Radio :** Prior to the emergence of television, radio was the major mass medium, which in India has continued to be under the full control of the state. It, therefore, permits an environment which is controlled by the standard culture. The impact of radio relates therefore to social awareness, knowledge and role models and personal upbringing, besides entertainment.

**Newspaper :** Unlike the non-print media discussed above, the mass medium of newspapers has two basic characteristics:

- it is restricted to those who can read, and
- it reports and discusses reality.

Like films, it is a privately owned medium, so that each newspaper reflects and builds a particular ideology of thought or reality. It also motivates the development of regularity so that generally newspaper-reading becomes a habit of the individual. It develops in readers awareness and knowledge of the events across the world. The social events which suggest how values are changing fast, of heroes and villains, in the various arenas of human enterprise. It further tends to drive persons towards a critical analysis of the events, sharing views with others.

**Magazines :** The magazines differ from the newspaper in that it presents a collection of readings in a selective area. A magazine creates a selective environment whether it is of animal and nature, of fairies, of kings, of politics, of religion, of films or anything else. It, therefore, is an indicator and promoter of specific interests. Consistent and persistent interest in a magazine gradually builds in the individual typical attitudes and values communicated through the magazine.

**Check Your Progress 4**

Notes : a) Write your answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

Discuss the impact of TV on the adolescent personality.

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## 4.7 ROLE OF TEACHER IN DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENT PERSONALITY

With all these mass-media cropping up to engross the mind and time of the growing personality, especially during adolescence when the person is the most susceptible to being influenced, the role of the teacher in the school has to be redefined. By designation a teacher for this group is a subject-teacher, teaching Hindi, English, Kannada, Mathematics, Physics, History and the like. School systems in the west provide a psychologist to deal with the problems of development. The Secondary Education Commission (Mudaliar, 1953) provided for a guidance worker in the secondary school but the scheme was discontinued. With no provision for specialised services, the responsibility of guiding the development of the adolescent personality smoothly has to be shared by every teacher of the school. To do so, we require to understand the nature and needs of adolescents which are described and will be discussed in various units in this course. A short discussion follows in view of the personality construct.

Adolescence, basically, is a bio-social happening, i.e., a social creation on the basis of the biological stage of physical maturation, characterised by muscular and genital development. Since muscular strength develops, entry to the world of work is desired; and since genital development takes place, raising a family is desired. Both, the vocation and the family contribute, rather make, the identity of the person. For that reason alone, the period of adolescent personality is tormented by the crisis of identity vs. role confusion, according to Erikson.

If we look sociologically, adolescence does not happen to many in Indian context. Traditionally, in families inheriting a vocation from the father, a smooth transition occurs where the child learns his or her adult role from the parent of the same sex, gets married, trades and raises a family. Otherwise, the same happens in destitute homes where the condition of living forces the child to take over the adult role at the earliest. A significant reference sets the limit of age for the world of work at fourteen years. To those who are forced to work at or before this age, adolescence almost does not occur. Most of them also drop out of school prematurely for their "adulthood" is accepted by the family.

The problems associated with adolescence rest basically in the mentality of the middle class which has evolved with industrialisation and technology, and it is this group which forms the bulk of secondary school students. These children are refused "childhood" by their parents and yet "adulthood" is not granted to them. They are persons in waiting, in formation, preparing to carve out individual adult personalities. As has been stated earlier, middle class families force their children to develop initiative and independence, their behaviour towards the adolescent becomes erratic and inconsistent sometimes very affectionate, at other times very demanding. Tormented by this, the basic identity-question sprouts — "Who am I, child or adult, small or big?"

Consciousness of the biological changes in the appearance, another question starts perplexing adolescents: "How am I viewed by others?". Cognitively, formal logic is developed in adolescence and the logic raises another question of identity — there are hundreds of patterns of living in the society, "Which am I to become?". He explores the world around him for role models and if, and when, comes to learn their failings and the grim reality of the obnoxious society the most agitating question is raised, "Why should I become what the society desires me to be?"

The problems associated with adolescence, then, are that sexual maturation takes place but the sex role is denied, even its exploration and play is strictly prohibited and inhibited; muscular maturation takes place but work role is denied. The demand for independence from parental control turns them to peers, all facing similar problems. The total group of peers functions like a crowd for them providing opportunities for exploration — viewing movies, enjoying picnics, dances or dramas, and watching matches. Among these emerges a set of those sharing interests or aspirations in common. From the set, the individual finds a "confidante", the best friend, mostly of the same sex, with whom one can share all troubles and pleasures.

If we, as teachers, realise and visualise the problems and anxieties of these adolescents, which are growing larger day by day, then we would certainly feel like helping them. Basically, it will mean fulfilling their "need for positive regard", as Rogers puts it. To help them self-actualise, a teacher can serve, if possible, as a "friend, philosopher and guide". As a friend, you have to

accept his blowing hot and cold; as a philosopher, you have to present yourself to him as a role model as a person; as a guide, you have to provide him informations which parents refuse to give and which in society is not easily available to him. Specifically, it means providing sex education and career education which requires to be in-built in every subject of study to the extent possible. Interest clubs, hobby clubs, subject clubs or activity clubs, all provide opportunities for exploration of reality and role models. Every teacher, to his or her interest, can choose to work with adolescents in a club and guide. For their blowing hot and cold, Baller and Charles have compiled from studies communicative indicators of emotional stress and strain. These are listed below.

Communication pattern	Emotional state
Baby-like speech	Over-protection
Large variations in speech	Emotional deprivation
Stuttering/Stammering	Emotion(s) throttled down
High verbal output	Insecure, anxious
Low verbal output	Insecure, demoralised, convinced of inferiority
High verb-adjective ratio	Emotional instability
Word "salad", using new	Schizophrenic

The indicators may help you in identifying the problem of the adolescent to help in turn. In that humanistic way, human personalities help develop each other.

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## 4.8 LET US SUM UP

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In this unit, you have studied the concept of personality and its nature that it grows "whole" and integration is its norm, disintegration only a pathological condition. Several approaches have emerged to study personality, of which some have been referred to, namely : bio-physical approaches (Hippocrates/Galen, Kretschmer and Sheldon), bio-social approaches (Freud), psycho-social approaches (Adler and Erikson), social learning approaches (Eysenck and Cattell), psychoanalytical approach (Cooley and Skinner), personological approaches (Rogers and Maslow), and spiritual approaches (Gandhi, Tagore and Sri Aurobindo). Besides, personality can be studied through some specific traits of significance (achievements motivation, locus of control, cognitive style and sensation seeking).

A glimpse over all the theoretical propositions revealed that personality-formation is affected by heredity and a host of environmental factors, which chiefly include rearing pattern, family culture, sibling relations, neighbourhood, peer group, etc. The school and the mass media have emerged as strong effects. We have also discussed the impact of films, television, radio, newspapers and magazines separately. Finally, the phenomenon of adolescence itself has been discussed to identify our role as teachers in helping the growth of the adolescent personality.

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## 4.9 UNIT-END EXERCISES

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Attempt to answer the following questions and self-check your answers with the contents of the related sections.

- i) Interpret the organismic view of personality.
- ii) Explain the function of "ego" and state some mechanisms used by ego to defend itself against the pressure of "id" and "superego".
- iii) State the stages of personality growth according to Erikson and describe the crisis of the stages during school-years from age 5 to age 18.
- iv) Interpret the structure of psychological needs for personal development as suggested by Abraham Maslow.
- v) Compare the views of Tagore, Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo regarding the development of "Atman" or personality.

- vi) Describe some new concepts that have emerged in the personality theory.
- vii) Compare the effect of heredity and home upon personality development.
- viii) Discuss the role of school and teachers in personality development during adolescence.
- ix) Discuss the statement :  
“The mass media today exercise greater influence on the adolescent personality than school teachers.”

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#### 4.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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Baller, W.B. and Charles, D.C. (1961) : *The Psychology of Human Growth and Development*, New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Faw, Terry and Gary, S. Belkin (1989) : *Child Psychology*, New York : McGraw Hill.

Mc Connell, James V. (1977) : *Understanding Human Behaviour*. New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Spingler, D. Michael and Lieber, M. Robert (1989) : *Personality Strategies and Issues*. Books/Cole Publishing Company Pacific Grove, California.

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#### 4.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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1. The term “personality” derives from the Latin word “persona” which means a mask worn by an actor. Personality means the characteristic pattern or style of behaviour of the person as is revealed through his external and internal properties.
2. Bio-physical approach, bio-social approach, psychoanalytical, psycho-social, social learning, spiritual and personalogical.  
We think the most suitable approach in our personality is the spiritual approach which raises the concept of self-actualisation and self-realisation. This is our approach. You may differ in your approach.
3.
  - Rearing patterns
  - Parent-child interaction
  - Sibling relations
  - Neighbourhood
  - Peer group
  - School
  - Mass media
4. Adolescents start neglecting their education and develop changes in food habits clothing habits and bathing habits. Inferiority complexes may build up among adolescents.