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## THE STUDY OF “ADOLESCENCE”

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### ABSTRACT

**T**he word, ‘Adolescence’ is derived from the Latin Verb, ‘Adolescence’ Meaning ‘to grow up’ into maturity. The psychologists have tried to interpret and clarify the term ‘Adolescence’. Rolf E. Muss has given comprehensive account of theories of adolescence in his book. ‘Adolescence’ is a pioneering effort in this field. But his definition puts adolescents under constant strife. But later on, the psychologists have proved this as wrong. Hall’s definition serves historical importance. Adolescence is a period of rapid change: physical, physiological, psychological, and social, a time when all sameness and continuities relied upon earlier are more or less questioned again.

**KEYWORDS:** Adolescence, physical, physiological, psychological, and social.

### INTRODUCTION:

Let us have a close look at some definitions of ‘Adolescence’.

### Jean Piaget :

The adolescent, unlike the child is an individual who thinks beyond the present and forms theories about everything. Delighting, especially, in consideration of that which is not. It is the age of great ideals and the beginning of theories as well as the

time of simple present adaptation to reality. Adolescence is a bridge between childhood and adulthood and is a period of rapid changes in almost all developmental dimensions: of growing to sexual maturity, discovering one’s real self, defining personality values and finding one’s vocational and social directions. It is also a time of testing of pushing against one’s capabilities and limitations as posed by adults.

The adolescent’s attempt to theorize is his search for identity. Adolescence is a transition period in the individual’s life. Piaget has summarized the features of adolescence in terms of physical growth and the mental and moral development of the individual. The

adolescent revolts against the norms and standards of adults. In short, Piaget defines adolescence from physical and sociological point of view.

### Encyclopedia of psychology :

‘Adolescence is the post pubertal period in which individual self-responsibility is established. The characteristics of physical maturity are already present. The psychic phenomena of puberty are gradually discarded. A search for freedom, and increasing self-confidence and self consciousness, are characteristics of this phase of development. The age ranges conventionally associated with adolescence are 12 to 21 years for girls, and 13 to 22 years for boys’.

This definition points out that



adolescence is different from childhood. The physical growth is followed by the awareness to emotional changes. The adolescent tries to assure his identity. His freedom is two fold. On the one hand, the adolescent frees himself from the childhood connections and on the other hand, he tests his growing confidence.

### **The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology Oxford :**

Adolescence is a transitional period of life between childhood and adulthood. There is more controversy than agreement among psychologists regarding the exact beginning and end of adolescence. Various physiological changes (e.g. growth of spurs, maturation of reproductive organs, emergence of secondary sex characteristics) and psychological changes (e.g. emergence of logical thinking), increased interest in sexuality and the opposite sex, pre-occupation with issues of identity, increased peer-conformity and increased responsibility have been identified as indicators of adolescence. However, no consensus exists on which changes define adolescence and which are frequent but non-essential characteristics of adolescence.

In practice, the study of adolescence encompasses all individuals who are psycho-socially neither unambiguously children nor adults. An individual may be said to enter adolescence when he or she no longer views himself/ herself as a child (nor wants or expects to be treated as such) or when others begin to expect more mature behavior from him or her than they do from a child. It is a time of rapid physiological and psychological change, of intensive readjustment to family school, work and social life and of preparation for adult roles.

This definition lists the indicators of adolescence. The psychological changes and the psychological changes define 'adolescence'. These changes contribute to the transformation of a child into an adolescent being. This stage paves the way for the adult life. The last part of the definition shows that 'adolescence' is a social phenomenon. The social institutions like family, school play an important role in the adolescent's life. This means that 'adolescence' is a culture-specific phenomenon.

S. S. Chauhan sums up the psychological and sociological interpretation of the term adolescence in these words:

According to the sociological interpretation of the word. 'adolescence' it is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood when a child moves from dependency to independency in his behavior, As we know that during childhood, the individual is completely dependent upon parents or other adults of the family for food, cloth, shelter and emotional support necessary for his survival and growth in the world. But during the late adolescence, he is relatively self-sufficient, and independent, able to provide for most of his own needs and ready to establish himself away from the parental home, but in our country, majority of adolescents are not in a position to earn their livelihood independently because of unemployment and thus the period of transition extends for Indian adolescents.

According to the psychological interpretation, adolescent may be viewed as young person in transition between the development as an individual and a period in which the individual learns to make adjustment to the needs of the self, others and the community.

Chauhan's sociological and psychological interpretations define 'adolescence' in the Indian context. He compares and contrasts 'adolescence' with 'childhood'. He wants the extension in age for the Indian adolescents. The economy of the nation controls the social behavior of adolescents. The psychological interpretation points out the adjustment efforts of adolescents.

The above cited definitions show that the adolescence period is an important time in the life of the individual. It is a transition period. It is open to both ways. It adopts some traits from childhood. At the same time this period shows some signs of adulthood. Adolescence is a bridge between childhood and adulthood. The voice of the adolescent is different from that of child. The adolescent strives for separate identity. Adolescents want to confirm their position in the society. In this attempt, both of them (society and adolescent) contribute to each other. The definitions in the previous pages speak about the psychological, social interpretations of the word, 'adolescence'. Adolescence involves not only in physical changes but also developments in an intellectual capacities, interest, attitudes and adjustments. The real problems of adolescence are emotional, social, moral and economic. The adolescents try to establish satisfactory relations with age-mates. They try to test their own set of values in confrontation with the society, The problems of the adolescents change from nation to nation.

The emotional and the intellectual make up of Indian adolescents is not like that of American adolescents. Their responses to the social stimuli are different. The problems of the adolescents have different dimensions in different nations. The Indian adolescent is a typical product of the Indian atmosphere. The socio-political factors and the Indian culture contribute to the value system of adolescents. The caste and the class of the Indian adolescents prepare the social behavior of the adolescents. They are sensitive to their environment. They establish their own code of conduct. The community offers social institutions which play a very important role in shaping the personality. It controls the behavior of young adolescents to some extent. The dreams of adolescent hint at their unfulfilled wishes and expectations.

#### **In the following novels, Anand's protagonists are adolescent characters:**

1. Untouchable (1935)
2. Coolie (1936)
3. Lalu Trilogy :  
The Village (1939)  
Across the black waters (1940)  
The Sword and the sickle (1942)
4. Morning Face (1968)
5. Confession of a Lover (1976)

The years of publication of these novels show that the 'adolescence' is the major concern of Anand for forty years. Most of the times, his adolescent characters are taken from pre-independence era. Even in his later novels like Morning Face and Confession of a Lover Anand gives pen-portraits of pre-independence Indian adolescents. His adolescents belong to the lower classes or to the middle classes. Bakha in untouchable is sweeper. Lalu in trilogy is a peasant lad suppressed under family loan, from Punjab. Krishan in Morning Face comes from Indian Middle class family. Krishan in Confession of a Lover is a Young middle class undergraduate. This selection of adolescent heroes from the lower or middle classes shows his sympathy with the poor. Anand gives physical descriptions of his adolescent characters.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

Most of his adolescents love poetry and that may be the consolation on their part to their problem. Bakha tries to memorise the folk-poems. He had often felt like reading Waris shah's Heer Ranja. Finally, the poet's solution to his problem impressed him. Lalu is fed on Punjabi folk-songs. The young rustic exploits this folk-tradition. Lalu-Maya affair echoes Heer Ranja episode. Krishan wrote poetry. Anand wrote to Cwasjee,

#### **CONCLUSION:**

The present this article 'The Study of Adolescents'. According to the writer adolescent has subordinated his early identifications to a new kind of identification. This period is a kind of transformation, period for the adolescent. The rapid changes in their physical appearances and in their emotional make up pose a number of problems for adolescents.

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