

B.A, Part-I

Developmental Task

The term "developmental-task" was introduced by Robert Havighurst in the 1950's. According to R. Harvighurst, the term refers to tasks which arise in a social context during an individual lifetime. Since the 1950's the concept of developmental-tasks has become an important theoretical approach in educational science and in theories of growth and development - but not in social work and social pedagogy. A developmental task is one that arises predictably and consistently at or about a certain period in the life of the individual (Havighurst, 1948, 1953). The concept of developmental tasks assumes that human development in modern societies is characterized by a long series of tasks that individuals have to learn throughout their lives. Some of these tasks are located in childhood and adolescence, whereas others arise during adulthood and old age (see also Heckhausen, 1999). Successful achievement of a certain task is expected to lead to happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure may result in unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.

Developmental tasks arise from three different sources (Havighurst, 1948, 1953). First, some are mainly based on physical maturation (e.g., learning to walk). Another source of developmental tasks relates to sociostructural and cultural forces. Such influences are based on, for instance, laws (e.g., minimum age for marriage) and culturally shared expectations of development (e.g., age norms; Neugarten, Moore, and Lowe, 1965), determining the age range in which specific developmental tasks have to be mastered. The third source of developmental tasks involves personal values and aspirations. These personal factors result from the interaction between ontogenetic and environmental factors, and play an active role in the emergence of specific developmental tasks (e.g., choosing a certain occupational pathway).

This table lists the developmental Life Stages, and the corresponding Developmental Tasks associated with each life stage.

Developmental Tasks	
Life Stage	Developmental Task
Infancy (birth to 2 years)	Social attachment. Maturation of sensory, perceptual, and motor functions.

	Sensorimotor intelligence and primitive causality. Understanding the nature of objects and creating categories Emotional development
Toddler hood (2 to 4)	Elaboration of Locomotion Fantasy Play Language development Self-control
Early School age (4 to 6)	Sex-role Identification Early moral development Self-esteem Group play
Middle School age (6 to 12)	Friendship Concrete operations Skill Learning Self-evaluation Team Play
Early Adolescence (12 to 18)	Physical Maturation Formal Operations Emotional Development Membership in the Peer group Sexual Relationships
Later Adolescence (18 to 22)	Autonomy from parents Sex-role Identity Internalized Morality Career choice
Early Adulthood (22 to 34)	Marriage Childbearing Work
Middle Adulthood (34 to 60)	Nurturing the marriage relationship Management of household Parenting Management of a career
Later Adulthood (60 to 75)	Promoting intellectual vigor Redirecting energy to new roles and activities Adopting ones life Developing a point of view about death
Very old age (75 until death)	Coping with physical changes of aging Developing a psycho historical perspective

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