

## Community Medicine

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## NATURE, NURTURE AND CULTURE: INFLUENCE OF VARIOUS FACTORS ON HEALTH



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## ABSTRACT:

Lifespan can be explained as the period of time of a person's life in which they live or expected to live. (Collins English Dictionary, 2017). According to Larkin (2013, p. 8), the life cycle is defined as different key stages from which a person passes through during the life. However, these stages are not only referred as childhood, adulthood and old age as the concept towards the meaning of age has been viewed differently between different cultures and different times. According to latest findings, different life events in an individual's lifespan plays an important role in influencing the physical, mental and psychological health of the person. The impact of life events can have different health impact on different people, for example in general, divorce can be stressful event for a person, but in some cases divorce can be more preferable option than a stressful marriage. So it also depends on how an individual cope with a specific life event.

## INTRODUCTION

According to World Health Organisation, WHO (1948), "Health can be defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease and infirmity". (World Health Organisation, 2006). Well-being can be explained as a positive feeling which a person experiences in the absence of ill health. It is linked with the accomplishment of an individual's own goals and by achieving these goals, the individual feels well and good. (Naidoo, J. and Wills, J., 2016, p. 3). The meaning of health promotion can be define as improving and encouraging the health status of the people and societies. "Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health". (World Health Organisation, 1986).

Nature can be defined as the impact of genetic inheritance and biological aspects that an individual carry with birth for example eye and hair colour and certain diseases such as Huntingdon's chorea. On the other hand, Nurture can be explained as effect of other external factors through which a person passes through the life time for example the impact on an individual due to certain environment and experience. (McLeod, 2007). In addition to genetic and environmental factors, health can also be affected by social and cultural factors during the life course. For example, poverty can have a major impact on someone's health as it can lead to stress. (Institute of Medicine, 2006).

Different life stages in a lifespan has a significant impact on individual's life and health. It has both positive and negative factors that can influence the physical, mental and psychological health of a person. The person's life can also be affected by many other factors such as the environment they live in, the culture they belong to,

their genetic inheritance that is nature, the impact of certain experiences and behaviours that is nurture and other social factors. The health of people is also affected by the food they eat. Healthy lifestyle that is doing sufficient amount of exercise and the intake of healthy diet can lead to a very healthy life. The most common causes for developing certain conditions such as obesity which can then lead to other chronic diseases, are lack of physical activity and eating oily food which stores in the body in the form of fats. Most of the people are involved in sitting jobs which make them less active. (Health direct, 2016). On the other hand, there are many benefits of eating healthy food and doing enough exercise as both contributes to healthy lifestyle which will be very beneficial. According to Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, CDC (2015), there is a less chance of getting cardiac events for example heart attack while doing the physical exercise. But if an individual suddenly starts more vigorous activity then the risk of getting hearth attack might increases. Hence, it is very important to start doing the physical activity slowly.

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