

Heredity and environment have special significance in the field of education. On the basis of their variable experimental studies, the psychologists have proved that each child is the result of his heredity and environment. Keeping this conclusion in mind, the concept of individual differences and child-centred education was given importance and the effort for the child development was replanned. By the creation of variety and difference in curriculum, development of new teaching methods, programmed teaching and proper environment, the changes related to child development have become possible which are the result of heredity and environment.

### **Meaning of Heredity**

The word 'heredity' has been derived from the Latin word 'hereditas' which means that capital which a child gets from his parents as inheritance. On the basis of its etymological meaning, by heredity is meant such intellectual, physiological and other personality related traits which are transferred from one generation to the next. According to this mean, variable traits of a child are similar to his parents; for example the dark parents beget dark offspring, or the criminal parents beget a criminal offspring.

In order to further clarify the meaning of heredity, we mention here the definitions as given by various psychologists :

*"Heredity is the sum-total of inborn individual traits."* —**B.N. Jha**

*"One's heredity consists of all the structures, physical characteristics, functions or capacities derived from parents, other ancestors or species."*

—**Douglas and Holland**

*"Heredity refers to the transmission by the parents to their offspring of certain characteristics biological or psychological."* —**Gisbert**

*"Heredity may be defined as what one gets from his ancestral stock through his parents."* —**Peterson**

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*"Heredity is the transmission of traits from parents to offspring."*  
—**Ruth Benedict**

*"Heredity covers all the factors that were present in the individual when he began life, not at birth, but at the time of conceptions, about nine months before birth."*  
—**Woodworth**

*"Heredity is mainly a convenient term for the genetic relation between successive generations."*  
—**J.A. Thompson**

On the basis of the above definitions, we can conclude that the biological and other traits transmitted by the conception process are called heredity. It is due to heredity that similarities exist between various generations.

## Meaning of Environment

The meaning of environment can be described as something which surrounds us. Thus, any external object that surrounds us and has effect on us, is the part of environment. Some of the definitions of environment are as follows :

*"The environment is everything that affects the individual except his genes."* —Anastasi

*"Environment is an external force which influences us."* —Ross

*"The environment is anything immediately surrounding an object and exerting a direct influence on it."* —Gisbert

*"A person's environment consists of the sum total of the stimulation which he receives from his conception until his death."* —Boring

*"Environment covers all the outside factors that have acted on the individual since he began life."* —Woodworth

*"The term environment is used to describe in the aggregate all the external forces, influences and conditions, which affect the life, nature, behaviour and the growth, development and maturation of living organism."*

—Douglas and Holland

On the basis of above definitions, we can conclude that all those objects are included under environment which surround other objects and have effect on them.