

IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON THE PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

Children born and live not only in a society but also in a specific part of it. This paper identifies major socio-cultural factors affecting child's personality development and different recommendation are proposed, focusing on parents reason ability toward children education, governments role in providing quality education to all school children.

INTRODUCTION

The term personality connotes, physical attractiveness, charm good nature, case of manner, "outgoingness" or any other form of behaviour or attitude that induces a favourable impression. Even word or phrase that indicates a way, in which an individual acts at a given situation, is a description of one aspect of personality. Personality is the "quality of individuals habits thought and expression, his attitudes and interest, his manner of acting and his personal philosophy of life (Woodworth, 1997).

Personality is the individual's relatively distinct and consistent manner of perceiving, thinking, feeling and behaving. This pattern of existence is some times used to infer the fundamental essence of the individual functioning in the physical, psychological, and social worlds (international Encyclopedia of sociology, 1995).

The development of personality is conceived primarily as a process of learning which arises when the infant's innate behavior repertoire is exposed to environmental circumstances. Personality and character develop chiefly during the impressive years. Everyone is born with heredity and potential that is shaped and molded by surroundings or culture. Heredity and environment both play a major part in the development of a person's total personality. Attitudes, habits and interest as well as character and conscience including the morals as spiritual ideas, standards, life's values and mode of social expression are all integral parts of personality (Harris, 1995)

The aspects of the existence of an individual are numerous, most of which are genetically determined and in the majority of cases, environment has a critical role in the completion of what nature has started. Personality and its changes over life span are a good example of such a phenomenon. Personality is defined as the distinguishing characteristics of an individual which differentiate him/her from others when displayed in a wide variety of situations and circumstances especially social ones (Connell, 1985). In fact, the development of personality which is the outcome of the interaction between genetic make-up of an individual and his environment, starts parentally or even before conception since genetics has something to do with it. In children, personality has a considerable potential for growth and changes i.e. very flexible, but it is rigid i.e. unalterable in adults. Personality and its development are under the influence of some determinants.

Nurture as biological development and rearing of a child. That is genetic as the determining factor in child growth and upbringing. The importance of inheritance in the determination of individual differences in physiognomy and physique has seldom been seriously questioned. But there has been much less certainty about the degree to which individual differences in social behavior and intelligence might also be generally determined. Genetic variables contribute significantly to the development of intelligence and social behavior.

Nature refers to all other factors that affect the growth of the child. Nature could also be seen in terms of all extended factors that surround and enhance human growth and development apart from heredity or biological factors. This includes food, rest, exercise, personal hygiene, among others. To grow big and strong and to be healthy, the child has to have good balance diet food from the time he is born. Environment is considered the major extrinsic one (Richardson, 1990.). Cultural, racial, socioeconomic, educational, social guidance and health conditions could be environmental factors playing a critical role in personality development.

(Atkinson, 1996). Parental education, health and emotional states, social interactions are other factors which influence personality development. Several theories were stated explaining the development of personality, each of which dealt with the concept personality development from a different point of view.

The Learning theory is another theory of personality development that is concerned mainly with child and his social background and which rose the idea that behavior is modified by experience (Theodore, 1983). The psychoanalytic development theory was modified by Erik Erikson and Stack Sullivan. The later emphasized the importance of interpersonal transactions between parents and child and the child's development in a. Erikson formulated eight stages development focusing upon the specific develop mental tasks of each phase (psychosocial crisis). Generally, the life cycle is divided into eight developmental stages. These stages were: infancy, toddlerhood, Preschool child, school child adolescence young adulthood, middle years and old age...

The adolescence stage of growth and development, which represent the industry vs role confusion stage of the psychosocial theory of development, occur from 12 to 20 years of age (Theodore, 1983). Adolescence is a transitional stage between childhood and adult life and is characterized by rapid physical growth and psychological, mental and social maturity (Peter, 1993). This stage of development officially begins at puberty and ends with person achieving a level of maturity enough to deal with and manage realities of life and be able to bear responsibility of him/her self and his/her actions. The developmental tasks faced by the child at this age are accepting changes in the body and appearance, developing appropriate relationships with males and females role of the same age, accepting the male and female role appropriate for one's age, becoming independent from parents and adults, developing morals, attitudes, and values needed for functioning in society

The child usually identifies himself/herself with numbers of his/her family in an all-or-none fashion. He/she interiorize in similar fashion many of the standards which the family as a group upholds. He/she is "all for" some features of the family situation and those who belong to familiar relations. On the other hand, he/she is "dead set" against other aspects of what goes on in the family and some of the characteristics of members of the family. The child's philosophy is a kind of absolutism which makes over his/her world into black and white, good people and bad people. Many parents fail to train their children in that independent and responsible action which the latter need if they are to assume easily their adult roles during adolescence.

