



INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CHILDREN

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- Why children who are raised in the “same” family turn out so different?
- What factors shape the personality, preferences, aptitudes, inclinations of the child?
- How do “innate traits” interact with interpersonal and environmental factors?

Birth Order?

- Older child might be more controlling, orderly and in need of having things organized?
- Youngest child might be more dependent and “whining”?
- Middle child, “sandwich”, etc.
- No empirical evidence for this, but it may be a factor

Factors influencing child's development and character

- ***INNATE PREDISPOSITIONS***

- **GENETIC FACTORS, INHERITANCE**
- Evidence of genetic influence for intelligence, personality traits, and a number of disturbances.
- Eg anxiety disorders, dissocial behavior,
- Problems in relating and communicating, learning difficulties, attention deficit, etc.

Factors influencing...

- I. INNATE.... *TEMPERAMENT*
- Evidence of clustering according to:
- Interest in novelty, new stimuli
- Approach to new things, vs. cautiousness
- Rhythmicity in physiology
- Intensity of responses
- Reactions to frustration, etc.
- Temperament is not so stable...

Factors influencing...

- The “physiology” and functioning of the child... ***EG. SENSORY INTEGRATION FUNCTIONING***
- *How does the child react to stimuli?
(external and internal)*
- *How does the child process in the CNS?*
- *How does the child organize a response?*

Factors influencing....

- Modularity of the mind...
- Modules function with some autonomy re; mathematical ability, language processing, visual processing, management of auditory input, musical ability, etc.
- “Multiple intelligences”

Talents and challenges

- Eg. Graphic representation, artistic talent, different from language processing and organizational skills.
- Discrepancies in functioning, e.g. “auditory learning” vs “visual learning”
- “hands on child” vs. an intellectual, etc.

Resilience in the child

- Attitude, sense of humor, attractiveness
- Openness toward other people
- Ability to engage other people
- Cognitive style, intelligence
- Ability to elicit help and to be involved with others
- Reaction to adverse experiences.

Factors influencing development

- II. EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS. EG.
- **CHILD REARING STYLE**
- What characteristics are desirable in a child?

What do we want for our children?

What characteristics are fostered and discouraged?

Child rearing styles

- Largely influenced by cultural themes
- Largely influenced by individual experiences as a child
- Child rearing techniques are not “scientific”
- They are based on preferences and values, e.g. independence, autonomy, assertiveness, sleeping arrangements, discipline, etc.

Transgenerational myths and factors

- Fantasmatic interactions
- Transgenerational transmission of myths and “ghosts”
- Perceptions and reactions are heavily influenced by one’s own experiences and relationships
(Most parents who have been maltreated do not abuse their children)

Factors Influencing...FIT BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD

- Characteristics of the child *vis a vis* characteristics of the parent;
- How do they match? Or mismatch?
- Does the child do something the parent likes?
- Does child do something parent dislikes?

Mutual influences

bi-directional effects

- Child influences the parent
- Effect of child on parent
- Child brings about some characteristics of environment

- Parent influences child

Effect of parent on the child

Parent brings about some characteristics in the child.

Cultural and socioeconomic factors

- Particular features of the environment influence child rearing style
- Eg. Poverty. More likely to use coercive methods, more likely to use physical punishments, more stressful events.
- Chains of adversities are more likely

Socioeconomical factors

- Quality of child care
- Quality of parent's education
- Interest in language , narratives
- Knowledge of the emotional life of the child, etc.
- How busy are parents with work, duties,etc?

Cultural factors

- What is an ideal child?
- Should children be independent?
- Should children be obedient, dependent?
- Shy children, are they in need of help? (particularly if girls)
- How do parents reinforce or discourage characteristics

