

Personality and Individual differences among Children and Adolescents: Literature in Psychology

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Abstract- Background: Personality refers to the enduring characteristics and behavior that comprise a person's unique adjustment to life, including major traits, interests, drives, values, self-concept, abilities, and emotional patterns. Literature which intertwines within such fields as history, philosophy, sociology, psychology and so on is a discipline wherein language is used as a medium of expression so as to interpret man, existence and culture, personality and individual differences which have always been studied and discussed by writers, philosophers, artists, psychologists and psychiatrists.

Objective: The objective of this experimental type research is that how Literature affects the psyche of Children and adolescents leading to the development of personality and individual differences among them

Method: The research had Participants from age group 7 to 18years. The participants were experimented using Observation, Interview and Questionnaire method.

Results: With the above experiment it is clearly seen that children who were shown diverse perspective of Literature and Language turned out to be more responsible, caring, understanding and developed problem solving behavior, whereas those who were not given these privileges were turned out to have just the opposite kind of perspective towards life and people around them.

Discussion: Literature can help children develop positive self-concepts through content and also through activities, which may follow the sharing of a book (Giorgis et al., 2009, p. 179). A child's personality development is part of who they are and who they can become; therefore, selecting the right book for a certain child could help the child deal with a problem or situation they are dealing with at that exact moment.

INTRODUCTION

Personality refers to the enduring characteristics and behavior that comprise a person's unique adjustment to life, including major traits, interests, drives, values, self-concept, abilities, and emotional patterns. The field of personality psychology studies the nature and definition of personality as well as its development, structure and trait constructs, dynamic processes,

variations (with emphasis on enduring and stable individual differences), and maladaptive forms.

The word "personality" stems from the Latin word *persona*, which refers to a theatrical mask worn by performers to play roles or disguise their identities. Examples of personality can be found in how we describe other people's traits. For instance, "She is generous, caring, and a bit of a perfectionist," or "They are loyal and protective of their friends."

Types of Personality:

- Type A: Perfectionist, impatient, competitive, work-obsessed, achievement-oriented, aggressive, stressed
- Type B: Low stress, even-tempered, flexible, creative, adaptable to change, patient, tendency to procrastinate
- Type C: Highly conscientious, perfectionist, struggles to reveal emotions (positive and negative)
- Type D: Worrying, sad, irritable, pessimistic, negative self-talk, avoidance of social situations, lack of self-confidence, fear of rejection, appears gloomy, hopeless.

The study of personality and individual differences is an integral field of analysis in psychology. Every single person is unique in the combination of their personality traits and how they behave individually in social situations. Individual differences are related to mental abilities, vocational interests, religious beliefs, political attitudes, and sexuality. These can be predictors of work, education, and broader life outcomes as well as cognitive ability.

Personality psychology is just one aspect of psychological analysis. If we're to consider both nature and nurture, social psychology is the scientific study of how other people's thoughts and behaviors, as well as societal norms, and our environment may also have an effect on our own thoughts and behaviors.

LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY

Literature which intertwines within such fields as history, philosophy, sociology, psychology and so on is a discipline wherein language is used as a medium of expression so as to interpret man, existence and culture, personality and individual differences which have always been studied and discussed by writers, philosophers, artists, psychologists and psychiatrists. There is a very strong correlation between literature and psychology for the fact that both of them deal with human beings and their reactions, perceptions of the world, miseries, wishes, desires, fears, conflicts and reconciliations; individual and social concerns, by means of varied concepts, methods, and approaches.

An author represents life according to his/her objectives, perceptions, ideologies, and value judgments and opens the doors of the unknown and invisible worlds to readers not only by arousing feelings and emotions but also by helping them to discover the meaning of life and existence

Clearly, literature enables individuals to know and question their identities by raising consciousness and awareness. It is to be noted that man

and existence have always been fundamental elements in most scientific studies, fine arts and literature.

David Lodge in his work titled *Consciousness and the Novel Connected Essay* explains the meaning of literature as follows: "... literature is a record of human consciousness, the richest and most comprehensive we have. Lyric poetry is arguably man's most successful effort to describe quail. The novel is arguably man's most successful effort to describe the experience of individual human beings moving through space and time".

Joseph Conrad in the preface of *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, comments on the significance of the writers and the written texts in human life: "My task which I am trying to achieve is by the power of written word to make you hear, to make you feel- it is before all, to make you see. That and no more, and it is everything" (Preface). Personal history is actually one of the major elements that the reader learns through literature. As for the personalistic knowledge literature provides, it is claimed that "... Even when the ostensible subject of fiction is science itself, it is always a personalistic kind of knowledge that we obtain from it".

The earliest origins of psychology are found in the writings of the ancient Greek philosophers about the

nature of life, particularly in the work of Aristotle" who used the term psyche to refer to the essence of life. This term is translated from ancient Greek to mean 'mind,' but it is closely linked in meaning to the word 'breath'" (Lahey). Keeping the ongoing debates in the field of psychology, dating back to Aristotle, in mind, it can be pointed out that "... Modern psychologists study the same actions, thoughts, and feelings that fascinated Aristotle.

The meaning of psychology in literature is explained by Wellek and Warren (1963: 81) as follows: "By 'psychology of literature', we may mean the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature, or, finally, the effects of literature upon its readers.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this experimental type research is that how Literature affects the psyche of Children and Adolescents leading to the development of personality and individual differences among them.

METHOD

▪ Total Number of participants

50 students participated in this experimental type research.

▪ Type of Interview

The interview was an Observation and Questionnaire form of interview.

▪ Population type and survey

The research had Participants from age group 7 to 18years. The participants were experimented using Observation, Interview and Questionnaire method.

The participants were; students from over 3 schools across Pune, India. The experiment took place by dividing the participants into 2 groups, 25 participants in each group. Both the groups were sent in 2 different rooms and for next 3 hours they were being kept engaged.

One group was narrated with value adding story, shown moral videos in mandarin, French, Dutch, Korean and English, and was given a novel-type story book to read.

The second group was sent to the room where they were made to show videos without sound, made them

communicate with their friends in a language the comfortable and do whatever they felt like.

RESULTS

After 3 hours, each of the group were observed by us, the first group’s participants had a more graceful and

smart walking style, they answered certain questions in a much smarter way than the second group.

This experiment was done on a regular basis for a week and then the Observation was noted in the following week- Total 2 weeks of Observation and question answering

The following are the characteristics shown among the participants of both the group:-

Age group	GROUP 1 (Room A)- With Literature 25 participants	GROUP 2 (Room B)- Without Literature 25 participants
7- 9 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helped friends - Involved in sharing and caring - Better communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Didn’t involve in helping - Made fun of friends and teachers - Bullied classmates
9-12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helped their friends with coping with their adolescent changes with body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involved in body shamming and - Rude behavior with friends and teachers
12-15 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed a sense of responsibility for taking up careers and job - Talked in a wise and mature way towards their partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Still skeptical about their future - Were not involved in having serious relationships - Had a thinking of mom-dad feeding entire life
15-18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learnt to control their tantrums - Started being polite with teachers and students - Involved themselves in societal help campaigns like NGOs - Parents thanked for the change seen in their child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teenage tantrums and aggressiveness was prevalent and increased - Bullied children and made fun of teachers - Involved in teenage fights and violence.

RESULTS

With the above experiment it is clearly seen that children who were shown diverse perspective of Literature and Language turned out to be more responsible, caring, understanding and developed problem solving behavior, whereas those who were not given these privileges were turned out to have just the opposite kind of perspective towards life and people around them.

Therefore it is clear that how Literature affects the psyche of an individual in order to have a heavy influence upon the Personality and Individual differences among them. So, it’s evident that Literature plays a vital role in shaping an individual in a positive way.

DISCUSSION

Personality development is the development of the organized pattern of behaviors and attitudes that makes a person distinctive (Laberge, 2006). Adults, especially parents and teachers, are principal components of these environments and therefore play a powerful role in helping or hindering children in their personality and

cognitive development (Morrison, 2007, p. 99). According to Erikson (2007), children’s personalities and social skills grow and develop within the context of society and in response to society’s demands, expectations, values, and social institutions, such as families, schools, and other childcare programs (pp. 98-99). Children personality does not occur over night.

Literature can help children develop positive self-concepts through content and also through activities, which may follow the sharing of a book (Giorgis et al., 2009, p. 179). A child’s personality development is part of who they are and who they can become; therefore, selecting the right book for a certain child could help the child deal with a problem or situation they are dealing with at that exact moment.

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