

Environmental Influence on Adolescent's Personality

SEEMA OJHA

Assistant Professor

Department of Home Science, Govt. M.S. College, Bikaner (Rajasthan) India

ABSTRACT

Through this paper, I have shown the influence of environmental factors on the overall personality development of an adolescent. The factors are multiple, ranging from parents' supervision and involvement, socioeconomic influence, availability of media, and others. The conclusion portrays how the adolescent can benefit from the positive factors that help them understand themselves and can prove to be fruitful in the long run.

Key Words : Adolescents, Environmental influence, Teenagers, Educational institutions

Personality is a dynamic organization of an individual. Between the ages of 10 and 19, adolescence is a developmental stage that occurs between childhood and adulthood and is characterized by quick changes in social, emotional, and physical aspects of life. People go through puberty during this time, which causes hormonal changes, physical growth, and the emergence of secondary sexual traits. Adolescents experience substantial cognitive development at this time, improving their ability to think abstractly, make decisions, and establish their own beliefs.

They may experience mood swings, identity discovery, and a yearning for independence on an emotional level. On a social level, they are more impacted by their peers and relationships with people outside of their family. In order to assist teenagers in overcoming obstacles and develop a strong sense of self, parents, teachers, and society as a whole must provide advice during this critical stage that shapes personality, values, and future conduct.

Due to the rapid psychological, emotional, and social growth that occurs during this stage of life, adolescents' personalities are greatly influenced by their surroundings. People start to develop a stable sense of identity, values, and behavioural patterns during adolescence, which is a transitional time. The environment in which teenagers grow up has a big impact on how their personality traits

manifest and develop, even though biological variables like genetics also play a part. South *et al.* (2008) studied the relationship between parenting styles and self-criticism. Their findings showed that rejection and over-protection of parents are related to self-criticism, and that parental warmth is negatively linked to self-criticism.

One of the most significant contextual factors influencing an adolescent's personality is their family. Parenting practices, family dynamics, and the home environment shape behaviour, self-esteem, and emotional stability. While situations marked by conflict, neglect, or overcontrol may result in anxiety, violence, or low self-worth, supportive and loving families often promote confidence, resilience, and desirable social behaviours. Family dynamics play a critical role in personality formation because adolescents frequently emulate the attitudes and behaviours they see in their parents or other caregivers.

During adolescence, peer groups are also quite important. Teenagers are depending more and more on peers for emotional support and validation as they strive for independence from their families. Peer influence has the power to mould attitudes, interests, and actions. It can sometimes promote virtues like empathy and cooperation, but it can also result in dangerous habits like substance abuse or delinquency. Decision-making and

self-perception can be greatly impacted by the need to blend in and be accepted. While adolescents with suicidal tendencies report a lack of disclosure specifically towards family members, adolescents without suicidal tendencies report equal disclosure towards family members, friends, and other adults in their surroundings (Mittler, 2014).

Educational institutions and school environments greatly influence personality development. In addition to being places for academic instruction, schools serve as social hubs where teenagers engage with peers and authoritative figures. Self-confidence and leadership abilities can be strengthened by supportive school environments that promote involvement, creativity, and critical thinking. Negative experiences, on the other hand, such as bullying, pressure to perform well academically, or a lack of support, can impede emotional growth and cause stress or withdrawal.

Adolescent personalities are further shaped by culture and societal norms, which offer a framework of expectations, values, and beliefs. Adolescents' self-perception and social roles are influenced by their cultural background. For instance, individualistic cultures might encourage freedom and self-expression, whereas collectivist societies might stress teamwork and family responsibilities. As components of the larger social context, media and technology also influence identity, goals, and behavioural patterns.

Another important environmental factor is socioeconomic status. The way that environmental influences impact teenagers' personality development is greatly influenced by their socioeconomic level. Higher socioeconomic backgrounds frequently provide adolescents with better access to extracurricular activities, safe neighbourhoods, high-quality healthcare, and education, all of which can promote self-esteem, independence, and confidence. On the other hand, people from poorer socioeconomic origins could experience difficulties like financial strain, scarce resources, dangerous environments, and fewer educational possibilities, all of which can lead to behavioural problems, anxiety, or low self-esteem.

Parenting practices, peer relationships, and media

exposure are all impacted by these contextual variations, and these factors all have an impact on personality qualities like motivation, resilience, and social behaviour. It is crucial to remember that SES does not fully influence personality; adolescents can overcome socioeconomic disadvantages and develop healthy, well-rounded personalities with the support of supportive relationships, robust community networks, and positive role models. Teens from financially secure homes frequently have easier access to extracurricular activities, educational resources, and chances for personal development. On the other hand, those from underprivileged origins could experience stress, few opportunities, and unfavourable circumstances, which can have an impact on their self-esteem, drive, and general personality development.

In conclusion, a complex interplay between personal characteristics and environmental factors determines an adolescent's personality. Teenagers' thoughts, emotions, and behaviours are influenced by their family, friends, school, culture, and socioeconomic circumstances. Parents, educators, and legislators can establish supportive environments that encourage healthy personality development and equip teenagers for successful adulthood by being aware of these effects.

REFERENCES

- Institute of Medicine (US) and National Research Council (US) Committee on the Science of Adolescence. *The Science of Adolescent Risk-Taking: Workshop Report*. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2011. 5, The Influence of Environment. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK53409/>
- Mittler, Shlomit, Horesh, Netta, Maytal, Hilla Rubin and Toren (2014). Impact of environmental and personality factors upon adolescents before and after psychotherapeutic intervention. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, **55** (8) : 1791-1802
- South, S.C., Krueger, R.F., Johnson, W. and Iacono, W.G. (2008). Adolescent personality moderates genetic and environmental influences on relationships with parents. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.*, **94**(5):899-912
