

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

The present paper focuses on the influence of socio-cultural factors in child development. The children are the future of every Nation and people have always strived for helping them to reach the most of their potential in the life span. Today's children have more complex needs which should be fulfilled for their proper level of development.

In this study the objective is: examine the influence of social and cultural cognition in child development and to identify socio-cultural factors influencing on child development.

A qualitative method and descriptive design has been employed in this research study.

The culture is created by human life; cultures can be defined as “the set of attitude, values, and behaviours shared by a group of people, communicated from the one generation to next generation”. It is a collective behaviour in context of ethnicity, traditions, dressing style, art & literature, language, religion, music and food etc. So, culture cognition have importance role in child development.

The term “cognition” is used within an information processing view of an individual’s psychological function in the study of social cognition the terms is used to explain attitudes, attribution, and groups dynamics. Social cognition is the encoding, storage, retrieval and processing of information about memories of the same species from a human perspective. The culture and social cognition is the relationship between human culture and human cognitive capabilities, that the culture cognition evolution proposes that human unique cognitive capacities are not solely due in large part to cultural transmission and evolution (Tomasello, 1999).

Culture includes physical and material elements of the environment in which the child is reared and develop as well as the factors of influence that are present in the tradition, morals, customs, beliefs, norms, values, attitudes and social motives. The Culture influence child development in various ways. The cultural factors include a like family, religion, school, mass-media, press, radio, TV, movies and other organised. And the child’s education in the school largely depends on the cultural cognition of the society e.g. his relationship with his peers and teachers are influence by the values of his culture.

Lev Vygotsky focused on the socio-cultural factors in child development which he considered the most valuable. He believed that higher mental processes of the individual have their origin in social processes. Vygotsky was sure that “learning was a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function”.

Jean piaget’s theory of child development is cognitive and is based on the system of stages of cognitive development of a child. Following these stages as: sensorimotor stage (0-2): at this stage children investigate the environment around them with the help of their sense. Preoperational stage (2-7years): at this stage children learn how to use language to describe objects in the world. Concrete operational stage (7-11years): at this stage children can already think logically and predict the sequence of their actions. Formal operational stage (11+years): at this stage children may think abstractly and can plan their action through hypothesis.

Jean piaget believes that children are no less intellectual than adult and indeed, children have more intricate brain abilities, but they think differently. So, if to take this suggestion as a starting point it is possible to overestimate our methods of teaching and educating.

Key words: socio-cultural, cognition, child development,

INTRODUCTION:

Children are the future of every nation and people have always strived for helping them to reach the most of their potential in the life span. The present days have more complex needs which should be fulfilled for their proper level of development. Child development is a dynamic process, interactive process of physical development, behavioural development, cognitive development, personality development, emotional growth and change. It describes the development of children throughout the life span, from birth to death. A lot of changes take place at various stages of life; Infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Child development is the basic fact of human existence and each person develops uniquely.

Socio-cultural factors are the larger scale forces within societies and culture that affect the thoughts behaviour and feeling of child development of those societies and cultures. Socio-cultural factors include language, law, aesthetics (appearance), religion, values, attitudes, social organization, family, community a person's role or status among others.

The home/family background:

The family is the foundation from which learning activities of any child take off. The type of family environment a child is born sets the limit for life's adjustment (Isangedigi 2011). In this discussion aspect of family background are limited to family socio-economic status, parent's educational status and parental discipline, adult predominance, difference in language and the culture of community where the child comes. Many studies the find out that family characteristic can significant affect in child development

Culture of the society:

Culture is very important in the society for child development. Some sub-culture regard aggressive behaviour as acts of self-defence and toughness (child militancy). Parents train their children to be tough and aggressive in order to survive in the midst of violent ethnic group. In the midst of plural marriages where there are more children than food supply, children must learn to eat at a speed that will give them an adage over the weak and slow eaters when all of them have to eat from a common fund of food supply. So cultural differences in interactions between adults and children also influence how a child behaves socially.

Religion:

Religion played a significant role in creating a sense of fatalism about child development that shaped the illness and caring experience. Any mother explained that life and death is in God control. Religion has been a controversial issue in the society. And Children who are socialized within religious families and communities often have beliefs and behaviours that conflict with those of the school. Religious fundamentalists often challenge the scientific theories taught by schools about the origin of man.

Language:

Language is one of the many ways through which culture affects in child development. As early as infancy, mothers from different cultures talk to their babies differently. German mothers tend to focus on their infants' needs, wishes or them as a person. Mothers of the African tribal group Nso, on the other hand, focus more on social context. This is the child interaction with other people. So, children develop receptive language abilities before their verbal or expressive language development.

Lev Vygotsky:

Lev Vygotsky focused on the socio-cultural factors in child development which he considered the most valuable. Vygotsky believed that higher mental process in the individual have their origin in social processes. Vygotsky development a system of higher mental functions. These functions are development from the cultural tool, which are got by children unconsciously, in the process of getting the cultural, historical and other information through the verbal and nonverbal interaction. According to Vygotsky, language as the most specific and important, On the one hand it is necessary mean to provide children with verbal instructions, while on the other hand it serves as an effective means for intellectual adaptation of a child.

Jean Piaget's theory:

Jean Piaget's theory of child development is cognitive and based on the system of stages of cognitive development of a child. It focuses on children from birth through adolescence & characteristics different stages

of cognitive development. Piaget's stages of cognitive development are age specific by important characteristics of through processes. So the important stages of cognitive development are given below.

Sensorimotor stage (Infancy-birth until 2years):

In this stage children investigate the environment around them with the help of their sense. They also start learning how to master the things around them. In this stage, which has six sub-stages, intelligence is demonstrated through motor activity without the use of symbols. Knowledge of the world is limited, but developing because it is based on physical interaction and experiences. Some symbolic (language) abilities are developed at the end of this stage.

Pre-operational stage (2 years until 6/7years):

In this stage, which has two sub-stages, intelligence is demonstrated through the use of symbols, language, memory and imagination which are developed, but thinking is done in non-logical, non-reversible manners. Specially, in this stage children learn how to use language to describe objects in the world. Egocentric thinking predominates in this stage.

Concrete operational stage (7 years to 11years):

During this stage children can already think logically and predict the sequence of their actions. Which is characteristics by seven types of conservations (number, length, liquid, mass, weight, area, and volume), and in this stage operational thinking developed (mental action, that are reversible) and egocentric through diminishes.

Formal operational stage (11/12 years to through adulthood):

At this stage, children developed the ability of abstract reasoning, hypothetical and contrary to fact information. They also become capable of evaluating the quality and logic of those thoughts.

Cognitive development is an important aspect of life, which processed through different stages. So it is the important for parents and teachers to help their children in their growth and development them positive environment to develop their mental abilities.

The concept of the development theory of Jean Piaget is that nature is dominant over nurture. Piaget believed that children are no less intellectual than adults, but they think different. From the very moment of birth of each child he has to do a lot of things: to understand how people interact and how the whole world work, therefore we suppose that mentally powerful.

Arnold Gesell's theory:

Arnold Gesell was convinced that heredity or nature has a primary influence on the development of a child. Gesell believed that the development of the child through either education or play should be spontaneous. He suggested that through the course of evolution children inherited some kind of code which prescribed their action and needs, so if a parents wants to help his children find his life path the most effective way would be to let the child choose it himself.

Vygotsky's thought that social learning should obviously precede the development piaget considered that learning was less important thing in the children development- the main influence instead he saw in nature. Also it is necessary to mention that Vygotsky paid much more attention to the socio-cultural factors in child development than other theorists. Al though the theories of Gesell and Piaget are alike in many aspects, the difference is that piaget underlined the major influence of sensorimotor stage on child development while Gesell believed much in heredity, i.e. Piaget maintained that the child cannot enter the next stage until he fulfils the previous one, while Gesell was sure that child would be whom he ought to be due to the biological scheme within his body.

OBJECTIVE:

In this study the objective is: to study the influence of social and cultural cognition in child development and to identify socio-cultural factors influencing on child development.

METHODOLOGY:

This paper is prepared maintaining qualitative method and descriptive of study.

CONCLUSION:

Socio-cultural factors are very important in brain- language interaction of child development. Indeed they can facilitate or even enforce the development of certain biological potential of the human brain. Another, a Socio-cultural factor plays a significant role in all aspect of children's socio-emotional developments. That the impact of cultural context on socio-emotional development is mostly happens through parental socialization practices and the later years, through peer interactions.

All the three theories of child development proved to be reusable and useful. We found out that Lev Vygotsky's theory was based primarily on socio-cultural factors of development. The theorist believed that learning preceded development and that made the main difference between his theory and the theory of Jean Piaget who was sure that the child's potential depended on the development of his senses and instincts first of all. Another prominent theorist Arnold Gesell was sure that nature dominated over nurture too and his key concept was that heredity was absolutely responsible for the development of particular child. Gesell and Piaget even developed their own systems of evaluating of either the stages of child development or the indicators of their growth. Although the theories differ in many aspects, every of them is directed on effective interaction between tutors and children and that is the key value of every of them. it is important to be able to realize the needs of children and adolescents to help them in reaching their potential. In this process it is necessary to each a well-organized interaction between cognitive, physical and emotional development of children.

Therefore, socio-cultural factors influencing child's attitudes towards and dissatisfaction with their bodies seem to play a role in determining the extent to which a real or imagined physical abnormality becomes a cause for concern and preoccupation.

So, social and cultural cognition should be honesty explained to human if there must be an improvement in child development. It is an importance role of socio-cultural factors influence on child development in learning.

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