

CREATIVITY AND PERSONALITY OF ADOLESCENTS WITH REGARDS TO AREA OF RESIDENCE AND GRADE

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Adolescents:

Today, adolescence begins earlier and lasts longer than ever before. In our specific Indian culture, where the family relationships are very strong - even with the adolescents - this stage covers the second decade of life and lasts very long. From being a short, relatively insignificant transition, adolescence has now become an extended period of preparation for life, a time for the training and education, that provides option for the individual's future. Blos (1962), in his book 'On Adolescence', has called adolescence a "second individuation process". According to Erickson (1963), adolescence is the most decisive period in the formation of the adult personality. Adolescence means 'to emerge' to achieve 'identity'. Personhood is what we want the Adolescent to attain not only just in its physical or intellectual aspects but also in his/her whole humanhood, which includes the often neglected but equally important aspects, which are emotional or psychological, social and spiritual.

The time of growing up from childhood to adulthood is known as the Adolescence. It is a period of physical growth. However, it is more than that. It is a time for the maturing of mind and behaviors as well. The length of time for this period of development varies. Adolescence can start at nine (9) and end at eighteen (18). It can start at fourteen (14) and end at twenty five (25).

Adolescence is the most energetic period of development, ruled by the inquiring mind, roving curiosity, intellectual robustness and creative energy. It is in this period where the instinctual creativity of childhood is replaced by the rational creativity with the help of operational and formal thinking. The convergent style of childhood will be challenged and divergent options will start to rule and guide them. This immense productive force in them is of vital importance to both the individual and society. If these abundant human resources are properly managed and channeled, the integral development of the individual and society can be accelerated to a great extent. But unfortunately in the present educational systems and stressful social set -up, this potential natural grace is not properly developed or consiictively utilized and so is either wasted or converted into a destructive force.

Creativity:

Creativity is commonly referred to as the ability to generate ideas, insights, and solutions that are both original and feasible (e.g. Amabile, 1996; Sternberg & Lubart, 1996). As such, creative outcomes should be new and uncommon, yet also potentially useful and relevant; original but infeasible ideas are typically considered strange, whereas ideas that are feasible but not original are seen as mundane and, often, uninteresting. To understand the development of creative performance, this article builds upon the creative cognition approach, which identifies creative thinking as inherent to normal human cognitive functioning (Ward, Smith, & Finke, 1999) and emphasizes the dependence on fundamental cognitive functions, such as working memory and executive control (Nijstad, De Dreu, Rietzschel, & Baas, 2010).

Although the exact processes supporting creative outcomes are still under debate, there is growing consensus among scientists from social and cognitive (neuro)psychology that creative performance can be understood in terms of fast, implicit, and associative processing, and deliberate, effortful, and logical processing (Chaiken & Trope, 1999). This general notion has been further developed in the Dual Pathway to Creativity Model (De Dreu, Baas, & Nijstad, 2008), which describes creative outputs as the result of cognitive flexibility and cognitive persistence. Cognitive flexibility enables accessibility to multiple and broad cognitive categories, flexible switching between these categories, and a global processing style or broad focus (Forster, Friedman, & Lieberman, 2004). Cognitive persistence, in contrast, is associated with focused and systematic effort, in-depth exploration of a relatively small number of cognitive categories, and a local processing style or narrow focus (De Dreu et al., 2008). Indeed, a vast body of research has shown that creative performance can be achieved through both a flexible and divergent way of thinking as well as a persistent and systematic way of thinking (for a review, see Dietrich & Kanso, 2010). It is commonly assumed, as with other dual-process models, that creative outcomes are the product of both processing types, with different contribution ratios depending on the type of task to complete and individual functioning.

Creative Ideation Training in Adolescence:

Various studies have already demonstrated the effectiveness of training paradigms in improving creativity in both adults and children. However, relatively little is known about how malleable creative thinking is in adolescence. Training studies in other higher cognitive skills include working memory, executive control, and algebraic equation solving (Qin et al., 2004), and emphasize the training susceptibility regarding performance and brain function during adolescence.

In a comprehensive behavioral study (Kleibecker, De Dreu, & Crone, 2013a), we examined the development of two types of cognitive functions that represent creative potential: divergent thinking and insight. Divergent thinking is the most commonly tested function in creativity research and is considered an important component of the creative process, as it captures one's capacity to create novelty (Torrance, 1966). Divergent thinking tasks require the generation of multiple solutions to an open-ended problem (Guilford, 1967) and, being reflective of the cognitive flexibility pathway, divergent thinking has strong predictive value for creative success (Kim, 2008). Divergent thinking can be measured in different domains. We studied the Alternate Uses Task (AUT), which measures divergent thinking in the verbal domain, and the Creativity Ability Test (CAT), which measures divergent thinking in the visuospatial domain. The AUT explores a common task, which requires individuals to think of many unusual uses for a common object, for example, for a brick. The CAT involves pre-described rules that participants must adhere to when instructed to find as many matching figures as possible.

Adolescent Cognitive Development:

The changes in how adolescents think, reason, and understand can be even more dramatic than their obvious physical changes. From the concrete, black-and-white thinkers they appear to be one day, rather suddenly it seems, adolescents become able to think abstractly and in shades of gray. They are now able to analyze situations logically in terms of cause and effect and to entertain hypothetical situations and use symbols, such as in metaphors, imaginatively (Piaget, 1950). This higher-level thinking allows them to think about the future, evaluate alternatives, and set personal goals (Keating, 1990). Although there are marked individual differences in cognitive development among youth, these new capacities allow adolescents to engage in the kind of introspection and mature decision making that was previously beyond their cognitive capacity. Cognitive competence includes such things as the ability to reason effectively, problem solve, think abstractly and reflect, and plan for the future.

Although few significant differences have been identified in the cognitive development of adolescent boys and girls, it appears that adolescent boys and girls do differ in their confidence in certain cognitive abilities and skills. Adolescent girls tend to feel more confident about their reading and social skills than boys, and adolescent boys tend to feel more confident about their athletic and math skills (Eccles, Barber, Jozefowicz et al., 1999). This is true even though their abilities in these areas, as a group, are roughly the same (there are, of course, many individual differences within these groups). Conforming to gender stereotypes, rather than differences in ability per se, appears to be what accounts for these difference in confidence levels (Eccles et al., 1999). Adults can help to dispel these myths, which can lead adolescents to limit their choices or opportunities. For example, an adolescent girl might be encouraged to take advanced math or technology courses, and an adolescent boy to consider relationship-based volunteer opportunities such as mentoring—options that they might not otherwise consider.

Despite their rapidly developing capacity for higher-level thinking, most adolescents still need guidance from adults to develop their potential for rational decision making. Stereotypes to the contrary, adolescents prefer to confer with their parents or other trusted adults in making important decisions about such things as attending college, finding a job, or handling finances (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield et al., 1993). Adults can use this openness as an opportunity to model effective decision making or to guide adolescents as they grapple with difficult decisions.

Personality:

The broader aim of education is preparing the learners for harmonious living. Life has enormous significance. Each person has to develop fully to meet the challenges of life to contribute his might as a member of the society and live in peace within himself and outside. Hence the extent of the personality development in its multi facts during the process of formal education gains significance.

Personality refers to individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. The study of personality focuses on two broad areas: One is understanding individual differences in particular personality characteristics, such as sociability or irritability. The other is understanding how the various parts of a person come together as a whole.

The historical root of the term personality is in the Latin word "Persona" - The mask worn by the Greek actors was called persona. Personality in that sense means a cover for the real person behind it.

Trivedi et al. (1989) examined the role of personality traits and emotional problems of scholastic achievement. The results revealed that high achievers scored significantly higher on neuroticism as compared to low

achievers, whereas low achievers scored significantly higher on extraversion. High achievers score significantly lower than low achievers on somatic concomitant of anxiety.

Sontakey (1988) conducted a study on personality factors of high achievers and low achievers in biological sciences. These high and low achievers were identified from grades IX, X and XI of high school and higher secondary schools situated in Nagpur district. The study concludes that high achievers were more intelligent, possess brighter overall personality disposition tended to be less excitable. Besides, they found to be tough minded self-reliant, realistic in comparison to low achievers. The high-achieving boys were also intelligent, tended to be less excitable and vigorous and zestful than their counterparts i.e. the low-achieving boys. The high-achieving girls were also found to possess brighter overall personality disposition.

Johnson (1997) reported a study where they examined the relationship between specific personality traits, learning styles and academic achievement in gifted students. The students were categorized into two groups: achievers and underachievers. The two groups afforded an opportunity to examine differences in personality traits, learning styles and academic performance between the groups within the population. Results of the Spearman Rank Order correlation coefficients showed that there were significant correlations between ten personality traits and academic achievement and mean differences between the gifted achievers and gifted underachievers confirmed that these personality traits contributed to the academic achievement of these students. There did not appear to be a significant correlation between analytic and global perceptual tendency and academic achievement although the majority of gifted students were either highly flexible or more global than analytic. In addition, no particular point of decline in academic achievement was readily identified.

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