

# The nature-nurture controversy essay samples

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The nature-nurture debate is a common topic that has dominated many psychological discussions in trying to comprehend the human behavior. In addition, the debate also tries to perceive the various feelings that humans develop and the causative factors behind their formation. The basic elements of this controversial topic include the influence genes have on human behavior, feelings they develop and ideas that they generate, In addition, the topic tends to compare the role of genes to the effects that the surroundings have on a person. As such, some psychologists suggest that people's environment can have a profound influence on their behavior, perception of things, feelings or ideas. Over the past several decades, the topic has been under discussion, but the answer seems not to be found yet as to whether nature is to blame for people's behavior, the environment they are in or perhaps the two factors (Guo, 2005).

Some scientists view the debate from one perception by believing that a human's persona is triggered by the hormonal sequences or genetic formations in their bodies (Agin, 2010). For example, they perceive that women act in some way because of their anatomical makeup, and so do men. However, some psychologists argue that a person's behavior can be instilled by environmental factors surrounding an individual especially from a tender age. Culture, for instance, is a great influence that many scientists point out to be among the leading nurturing factors. Experiments, by contrast, have revealed that some nature cannot work without nurture, for example, normal visual or smell cannot be established sans exposure to the proper stimuli (Moore, 2003).

## **Studies on Nature-Nurture**

The following are a combination of two studies done with the very intention of determining the link between nature and nurture in human behavior. The controversial topic is surrounding different areas of life; hence, the chosen area of parenting is only a fraction of the areas affected by nature and nurture factors. The first study is a journal article presentation by Eleanor E. Maccoby, where she investigates whether parents have a greater influence on their children than the young ones' genetic makeup (Maccoby, 2000). Her introductory part consists of inquisitive statements that point out the various theories about what influences children the most, for example, the environment or their genetic formation. Consequently, it all trickles down to nature versus nurture in children's behavior, and the impact parents have in their young ones' lives. In the study, Eleanor's method involves making comparisons between the relationships that parents have with their children. The aim is to determine the intensity of the parents' influence over their young ones (Maccoby, 2000). The main trait under scrutiny is the behavior that the children display when they are around their parents and away from them.

The second study is an article by Courtney Janaye Grenke named Nature versus Nurture: A Study of Adopted and Biological Children and their Behavioral Patterns (Grenke, 2012). In the article, Courtney's focus is to differentiate the behavioral aspects between biological and adopted children. The main concern is whether the genetic makeup prevails over the environment that the children are exposed to in determining the reasons behind their behavior. Courtney's method is similar to that of Eleanor, which

also involves making comparisons between different situations. In Courtney's article, she has made comparisons between the behavior of children living with their biological parents and those living with foster families (Grenke, 2012). Indeed, the two groups of children have different traits, but there is no definite way of determining whether nature is responsible or the nurturing they are exposed to during their development.

One of the major similarities between the two studies is the recognition of the effects that parenting can have on children, which in this case is either nature or nurture (Maccoby, 2000). As such, both articles talk about the genetic makeup being the natural influence that children are exposed to during their growth and parenting is the nurturing influence they face as they grow up. However, the main interest of both articles is which of the two factors is extensively influential in the child's life. Another important similarity between the two articles is the use of statistics to cement the evidence of the discussion (Grenke, 2012).

The main difference between the two studies is the area of focus, where Eleanor concentrates on parenting and genetic effects on children who live with their biological parents (Maccoby, 2000). The second article, by Courtney, is a clear comparison between nurture and nature but focusing on children living with their biological parents and those from foster homes. Courtney's aim is to unravel whether the conditions around the children or their genetic makeup is responsible for their persona (Grenke, 2012). Eleanor concludes her article by pointing out that genetic influence is essentially strong on a child's persona (Maccoby, 2000). Her remarks are attributable to the studies she exploited in her article, for example, the

examination of twins and their behavior. However, she is keen to recognize that the nurture, for example, parenting also has a strong impact on children's behavior. Courtney ends her article with a similar inconclusive point of view where she states that adopted children are at a higher risk of influence by the nurturing influences rather than their nature (Grenke, 2012). However, it is crucial to consider other factors that may modify an adopted child's behavior such as changing the environment.

## References

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