

Cultural influence in child-rearing-how does culture affect behaviour research pa...

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Child growth and mental health development in a multi-cultural world has many sides. There are numerous factors contributing to the development of a child. One of them is Culture. Ethnicity and culture play a pivotal role in the child-rearing methods adopted by families throughout the globe. Variations like techniques of discipline, expectations related to acceptance of responsibilities, and delivery of religious knowledge differ amongst families. Although parents' child-upbringing decisions and approaches may be impacted by their individual personalities and family situations, the family's cultural backdrop as well, will play the central role in how the family rears its children. In a child's early years, the parent is solely responsible for Cultural differences drive different forms of upbringing among children, and hence one tends to have mixed perspectives on how children grow in various ways. Culture shapes child rearing. Culture and ethnicity are known to have a significant influence on child-rearing strategies and approaches. There are many key factors which facilitate a child's mental health and overall personality, such as education, discipline, religion, expectations, and responsibilities. Other factors like economy, societal class, location, etc. constitute the secondary elements of shaping the child's development. Even the traditional family rituals and customs have a significant role to play in how a child is brought up. Several families place emphasis on major cultural factors deriving from their family history traditions. These traditions or customs commonly bring out the traits pertaining to a child's identity and personality. This paper focuses on how culture influences child upbringing and how a culture affects child's behaviour. It presents an overview on various cultures of the world and how child rearing is determined by effects

of cultural differences. In addition, the current study will put emphasis on how differences and similarities in specific cultures aid in moulding a child. Lastly, the paper ends with a brief discussion on the cultural differences in child rearing in countries like Latin America, America, and Japan, among other countries (McFarland, 2007).

Parenting varies as a function of education and culture. Parenting also depends on the nature of the caregiver's relation to the child, and setting in which the relationship occurs.

Child-rearing practice is best defined as "looking after children until they are old enough to look after themselves" (Cambridge Dictionary Online, 2011). Certain rewards as well as challenges are associated with child rearing. It is commonly said that "It takes a village to raise a child", which is extremely true due to the influence culture has on children. Childrearing practice is termed at methods applied in a family in order to provoke a certain nature or type of behaviour from a child. Every family has its own child rearing practice which is why each child has different traits associated to his/her individual personality. Parental practices differ between nations, social and economic classes, and families.

Differences in child-rearing are directly linked to differences in culture. For instance, European parents tend to feel more comfortable leaving their children alone unlike American parents who live hundreds of miles away from their families. Western European and American families strongly believe that individuals should live separately once they become adults, whereas Native American families stress on the social welfare of their children. Due to this conception, American parents have the tendency of

allowing independence as against Native American parents or other cultures who maintain that children should stay quiet and obedient. Another situation is that, adolescence in the United States seems to extend indefinitely, whereas in rural India, children as young as 7 are asked to work and support their families. Every child across the globe is unique in its own way since cultural has a major part in defining its personality. Irrespective of the vast differences in cultures, several similarities exist in child-upbringing, which are by-products of similarities in culture. Latin American parents exercise practices of breastfeeding on demand, co-sleeping, and always carry their babies. On the contrary, American parents make use of schedules and playpens to perform these same activities. Regardless of everything, there are many multicultural families using the same methods for achieving a defined goal (Factors Influencing The Child-Rearing Practices Of Chinese And East Indian Women With Children Aged 0-6, n. d.).

Similar to the parents in the United States, Japanese parents strongly insist on early education and usually enrol their children in preschools. Still, there are certain cultural issues involved in this scenario on how the child is raised. Japanese culture compels mothers to hug and indulge in their children, while children need to repay their mothers by serving and clinging to them. The strong and profound involvement of Japanese mothers in their children has been regarded as amongst the vital influencing factors to a child's mental health and overall success. Moreover, in the Japanese culture, there is a period in childbirth that demands strong and undivided attention from the mother, during which both hardships and pleasures is experienced by her. However, in American culture, the selectiveness off childbirth responsibility

fluctuates between caregivers.

As aforementioned, there are many contributing components that help mould a child into whom they will grow to become. One of the components is Religion, which again plays a major part in the process of child rearing.

According to child rearing practices of Christian parents, every child is taught to be spiritual and morally good. Spiritual leaders actively participate in child-upbringing mainly for instilling spiritual and religious practices within a child. Furthermore, religion or spiritual beliefs facilitate in raising a child and assists in shaping their identity.

Another crucial factor in child-rearing is parents' expectations. Parents set specific goals or expectations for their children for which they may go to any extent to have their children meet those goals and expectations. Some expect their children to be engineers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, while others might have very little expectation. Interestingly, Chinese parents, living in China as well as the Chinese Americans, start instructing their children about the importance of educational success from a young age, and stress that children's academic success will assist them in attaining success in the future. The parents also imbue their children with a respect for educators as well as the education field, underlining the prestigious place educators hold in the Chinese society.

In addition, there is another factor that comes in the form of Grandparents' role in childrearing. Grandparents play an influential role when it comes to the upbringing of a child and how culture can be instilled in him/ her.

Children who have lived with their Grandparents from an early age seem to know their culture better and behave more properly than children who don't

live with their grandparents. Grandparents are nothing but essential contributing elements in a child's life from where his raising is shaped. For example, Asian parents find it mandatory to have grandparents involved in their children's lives, as this involvement and indulgence becomes an inherent part of the child rearing process. Moreover, grandparents have a big share in the physical and educational development of their grandchildren (Rappeport, 2012). Several cultures witness grandparents choosing to live with their children in order to help raise and educate their grandchildren. Cultures wherein children receive guidance, discipline, instructions, and love from multiple sources raise children whose childhood includes a homogeneous child-rearing. In this context, even extended families have a contributing part childrearing in different cultures. In most cases, children of Arab families are often raised in an extended family that consists of parents' siblings and their families and other relatives. Their families normally include grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. By doing so, children receive love and discipline from all adults irrespective of which child belongs to the biological parents and which child belongs to a sibling or other relative. Children are able to develop a strong bonding and long relationships with their extended family, since several adults in the family serve as their "second parents".

Parental responsibilities vary from culture to culture; however, they have a significant impact on childrearing. In the Amish culture, children learn to be responsible at a young age. From a tender age, they start learning about responsibilities to their families, elders, and communities. Taking up chores and working hard is essential in the Amish society, right from an early age,

so children are made to support and contribute to their families. Such early-age responsibilities enable Amish children to develop a core constituent to their overall well-being and development that is carried forward into their adulthood (Socfamilylesley, 2010).

Different cultures place varying emphasis on the importance of Education for a child's development and behaviour. For instance, Asian students are shy, introvert and quiet in school. They don't prefer to make any eye contact with their teachers since it is seen as inappropriate or disrespectful. European and American students, on the other hand, are taught to actively get involved in classroom environment and are allowed to make direct eye contact with teachers as a way of showing respect. European and American teachers consider student involvement and participation as a mark of competence, engagement, confidence and mental growth (Rosenberg, et al, 2012).

In contrast to Asian parents, Hispanic parents seem to believe in imparting education to raise their children. Hispanic cultures view teachers as experts and will always depend on them for making educational decisions for their children. Similarly, the parents raise their children to respect the teachers, as a reward. However, European and American parents have more active involvement and participation in their child's classroom and educational activities by volunteering and helping teachers. As a matter of fact, these cultural differences in beliefs and values may cause teachers and educators to misjudge the value placed on education by non-European American families (Wise & Sanson, 2000). On the whole, it can be clearly stated that differences in cultures reveal different child rearing strategies adopted by parents worldwide, as far as education is concerned.

According to a research conducted by Maschinot (2008), various types of infant-mother interaction is observed at mealtime in many cultures. The study involved European American, Japanese American, Filipino American, and Hawaiian American families. The findings of the study revealed that Filipino American mothers were more caring, kinder, and directive with their infants, holding the babies in their laps and directing their day-to-day activities, while mothers in Hawaiian families allowed their toddlers to roam and walk around freely during mealtime and other family members had same amount of interaction with the toddlers as their parents. On the other hand, in Japanese American families toddlers were seated on high chairs and given proper chances for the toddlers to experiment with toys and other objects. Mothers in the European American families encouraged their children to be more creative and communicative, while Japanese American families laid extra emphasis on learned skills for their children. In these specific scenarios, child rearing was used as a means to attain a goal, thereby generating different outcomes of development for every unique child. (Maschinot 2008)

In conclusion, I strongly feel that childrearing practices and beliefs in various cultures are the by-product of the broad array of variety that our world holds. After studying the several factors and components that impact child development within multiple cultures, one can confirm that the steps parents embrace in raising their children have a substantial impact in their behaviour and identity as an adult. However, diversity is pleasing and it is what makes the world different and unique at the same time.

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