

The contribution of family and home environment to formation of personal identity...

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It was made evident that the majority of respondents' in the survey conducted thought that their personal identity was shaped by their family/home environment. According to the survey results, family taught them respect and values, providing them with moral and ethical guidelines, "a factor that you learn from every day", one respondent stated.

An article on the Australian Counselling website written by Narelle Gillies, who works as a Crows Nest counsellor with teens and young adults, showed that family is a very important factor of forming identity. Some areas that were identified as being significant contributions to identity include family systems, multiculturalism, neglect, parental anxiety or anger, and certain behaviours family members portray (Gillies, 2018). During childhood, the personality and values of one's parents can have a large impact on the formation of a child. The skills and personality traits children gain are foundational for learning throughout their childhood, therefore, a strong support system in early childhood can greatly affect their development (LAFORTUNE, 2014).

The two interviews conducted support the idea that one's family/home have a significant impact on the formation of their personal identity. Interviewee Annie Zoumis grew up in the Philippines and shares how her family affected her personal identity.

" My family/home has influenced who I am today. My family was very poor, my parents were uneducated and therefore I gained the ambition to do the best in life. I worked extremely hard to educate myself, I sent myself to school. I had one skirt, one shirt and one pair of shoes, each day I walked for

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kilometres to commute to and from school. I was very smart, top of my class but my parents couldn't even celebrate my achievement with me as they could not read. I made a life for myself, got married at 25 and moved to Australia where I now have two girls to show for the sacrifices and ambition to strive and break the poverty in my family, I made a difference."

Another interviewee, Michelle Holland, shared her childhood experiences of growing up in England. " I was a war baby and life was very hard, difficult and I was very poor. Because I was poor, I didn't have many opportunities in the sense of finding out who I was in a social manner as I didn't have many opportunities to interact in a social way, therefore also I found it very hard in my teenage years. I then met my husband and married, being 9 years older than me, he had a profession which was a great encouragement of us doing things together. He also liked to help people because his parents passed away. He was very devoted to helping people, which encouraged me to encourage people and this began to shape who I am and who I have become."

From both these ladies' experiences, key similarities can be identified, including living and moving abroad, poverty, and parental/family support. Mrs Zoumis did not receive any help or encouragement from her illiterate parents and living in poverty motivated her to work extremely hard to create a better lifestyle. Mrs Holland also lived and moved abroad, and being poor led to her feeling socially isolated. Both these women shared that getting married and moving to Australia was a massive support and achievement in

their lives where they love to help and encourage people in their local Australian community.