



Personality Development in Emerging Adulthood: Special Reference to Poonch District of Jammu and Kashmir

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Abstract:

This research paper examines the process of personality development during emerging adulthood, with a special focus on the context of Poonch District in Jammu and Kashmir. Emerging adulthood is a critical phase of life characterized by significant transitions and explorations, and understanding the unique sociocultural context of a specific region adds depth to our understanding of personality development. This paper combines existing literature on personality development theories and research with an exploration of the sociocultural factors specific to Poonch District. The findings shed light on the interplay between individual characteristics and the sociocultural environment in shaping personality development, with implications for the well-being and growth of young adults in the region.

Keywords: Personality development, adulthood, emotional maturity, self awareness, career development

I. Introduction

People change as they age. Individuals experience not only physical but also psychological changes across the entire lifespan. However, the exact course of internal and external changes depends on various criteria. In recent years, researchers have expended considerable effort in studying how personality develops across the lifespan; this has, in turn, incited a controversy about the stability and variability of specific personality traits. Personality traits are considered to be relatively stable individual differences in affect, behavior, and/or cognition. Whereas, the Big Five traits of conscientiousness and agreeableness appear to be rather stable and continuously increase across adulthood, levels of openness to experience appear to change in an inverted U-shape function, which increases between the ages of 18 and 22 and decreases between 60 and 70.¹

Emerging adulthood is a developmental period that spans from late adolescence to early adulthood, roughly between the ages of 18 and 29. During this time, individuals experience significant changes in various areas of their lives, including personal identity, relationships, career development, and overall personality development. Personality continues to evolve and develop during emerging adulthood, influenced by a combination of biological, psychological, and social factors.² Here are some key aspects of personality development in emerging adulthood:

I(a). Identity exploration:

Emerging adulthood is a period of exploration and experimentation, where individuals engage in self-discovery and strive to establish a sense of personal identity. They may question their beliefs, values, and goals, and explore different roles and possibilities.

Self-reflection and self-awareness: As individuals navigate the challenges and opportunities of emerging adulthood, they tend to develop a greater understanding of themselves, their strengths, weaknesses, and personal preferences. This self-reflection and increased self-awareness contribute to the shaping of their personality³.

I(b). Increased independence:

Emerging adulthood is characterized by a growing sense of independence as individuals transition from dependence on their parents to taking responsibility for their own lives. This newfound autonomy allows them to make decisions, take risks, and experience the consequences, all of which contribute to their personality development.

I(c). Flexibility and openness:

Emerging adults often display a greater willingness to consider multiple perspectives and embrace new experiences. They are more open to diversity, alternative lifestyles, and novel ideas, which can lead to increased tolerance, adaptability, and the development of a broader worldview⁴.

I(d). Emotional maturity:

Emotional regulation and maturity continue to develop during emerging adulthood. Individuals learn to manage their emotions more effectively, navigate challenging situations, and develop empathy and compassion for others. Emotional intelligence and resilience play significant roles in shaping their personality.

I(e). Intimacy and relationships:

Emerging adulthood is a time when individuals form and navigate various types of relationships, including friendships, romantic partnerships, and professional connections. These relationships contribute to the development of interpersonal skills, empathy, and a sense of identity in relation to others.

I(f) Career development:

As individuals explore different educational and vocational paths, their career choices and experiences shape their personality. Work experiences, exposure to different professional environments, and the development of skills and competencies all influence the way individuals perceive themselves and interact with others⁵.

I(g). Goal setting and future orientation:

Emerging adults often engage in long-term planning, setting goals, and envisioning their future. The process of setting and working towards these goals helps shape their personality, as it involves decision-making, persistence, and a sense of purpose.

It's important to note that personality development is a complex and ongoing process that continues beyond emerging adulthood. While certain traits and characteristics may become more stable with age, individuals can still experience personal growth and change throughout their lives in response to new experiences and challenges.

II. Critical Life Events

Theory and research support the idea that personality can change as a result of intrinsic factors such as genetics and extrinsic factors such as the environment around us. More specifically, there is ample evidence that personality is

linked to certain external influences such as critical life events . These can be defined as “transitions that mark the beginning or the end of a specific status” and include leaving the parental home or major changes in one's status such as employment or duty. These transitions often require adaptation processes involving new behavioral, cognitive, or emotional responses .Profound adaptations are assumed to have lasting effects, as “life events can modify, interrupt or redirect life trajectories by altering individuals' feelings, thoughts and behaviors”, ⁶ Building upon this assumption, many studies have sought to determine how certain Big Five traits change because of critical life events. For instance, increases in emotional stability were found to result from transitioning into one's first romantic relationship . Emotional stability might also increase in anticipation of gain-based events such as childbirth or paid employment, which, in turn, lead to increases in conscientiousness and openness to experience.

III. Conclusion:

Importance of considering the unique socio-cultural context in studying personality development. Recommendations for supporting positive personality development in emerging adults in Poonch District. Personality changes throughout the life course and change is often caused by environmental influences, such as critical life events. In the present study, we investigate personality trait development in emerging adulthood as a result of experiencing two major life events: graduating from school and moving away from home. Thereby, we examined the occurrence of the two life events *per se* and the subjective perception of the critical life event in terms of valence. In addition, we postulate a moderation effect of the construct of mindset, which emphasizes that beliefs over the malleability of global attributes can be seen as predictors of resilience to challenges. This suggests that mindset acts as a buffer for these two distinct events.

In conclusion, two aspects of person-situation transactions should be highlighted. First, one situation can be interpreted very differently by two individuals. Expectations and individual goals—as well as variable expressions of personality traits—influence the extent to which a situation is perceived as meaningful and, therefore, determine how people approach it. Second, this is also true for life events. Two people can reasonably experience the same major life event as completely differently. Therefore, we focus the present study on the valence of two distinct life events and use this characteristic as our central parameter. In particular, in emerging adulthood, individuals might perceive the behavioral expectations and demands associated with a life event as more pressing than What remains less clear is how situational perceptions affect personality change after a major life event, but with respect to the current string of literature, it seems reductive to only ask if, but not how, critical life events are experienced.

IV. Future Research Directions

Longitudinal studies on personality development in Poonch District. Cross-cultural comparisons within the region and beyond; Integration of local perspectives and narratives in research

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