

A Study of Socio-Cultural Background and Intelligence



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ABSTRACT

Among all the cognitive ability intelligence is the most important one. There are a host of studies dealing with the relationship between socio-cultural factors and intelligence. The society is divided in different class groups. High class society and family has its own distinctive features clearly different from low class and middle class family. This class culture of the family affects the development of intelligence along with other cognitive abilities. Pareek (1970) has said that children of poor families are deprived of the minimum adequate provisions for physical life as well as of adequate sensory, cognitive, social and emotional stimuli necessary for the development of a normal individual. Therefore, living under the conditions of poverty has been found to result in a steady decline of the IO (Datta, 1967; Jones, 1954; Jordon, 1933).

Keywords : Adequate Sensory, Cognitive, Social, Emotional Stimuli

I. INTRODUCTION

The studies conducted almost agree on the point that favourable socio-cultural conditions favours the growth of intelligence whereas unfavourable conditions are found to hinder its growth. Some early studies have clearly shown positive relationship between socio-cultural factors and intelligence (Anastasi, 1956; Anastasi and Angelo, 1952; Auld, 1952; Baird, 1967; Baughman and Dahistorm, 1968; Bonney, 1944; Brembeck, 1966; Clark et al, 1965; Dandes and dow, 1969; Dockrell, 1959; Bells, 1948; Elder, 1968; Ellis et al, 1951; Estvan, 1952; Eysenck and Gookson, 1970; Gilliland, 1951; Gottesman, 1965; Gough, 1946; Haggerty and Nash, 1945; Havighurst et al. 1947; Himelweit and whitfield, 1944; Lesser et al, 1964; Louvinger, 1940; Maddy, 1943; Majoribanks, 1972; MC carthy, 1952; Moss and Kagan, 1958; Murray, 1949; Sharma, 1975; 1978; Schulman and

Havighurst, 1947; Stennett, 1969; Tulkin and newbrough, 1968). Economic disadvantage has been found to be positively associated with IQ (Tamas, 1983; zigler, Abelson and Seitz, 1973). Basavan and Rani (1984), on the other hand, found that social and economic factors had no effect on intelligence. However, social disadvantages affected verbal and numerical ability. Brembeck (1966), Jensen (1961), Kennedy et al (1963) found that children from socio-culturally deprived homes perform comparatively better on non-verbal tests but they do not perform comparatively better on non-verbal tests but they do not perform well when verbal tests are applied (Bernstein, 1960; Rath, 1975). It is because verbal development of such children is impaired (Eeutsch et al. 1968). Frenk (1967) and Reissman (1962) pointed out that such children were characteristically physical learners. Estes (1953) found that the middle class children were superior in verbal section of intelligence to lower

class children. Bernstein (1960) observed that the combination of non-verbal orientation and an absence of conceptualization might very well account for lower Intelligence in lower class children.

The relationship of socio-culture and intelligence is further influenced by the increase in the age of the child. Mohanty (1980) pointed out that the intellectual performance of socio-culturally advantaged children were significantly better than their disadvantaged counterparts and this difference increased with age. Roberts and Robinson (1952) found a significant difference between upper and lower classes in intelligence at the age of 10. Similarly Estes (1953) observed that upper class children were superior to lower class children in intelligence at the age of 7.5 years but the difference was not found at the age of 10.5 years. Bayley and Jones (1937) suggest that differences in intelligence begins to crystallized at the age of 2 to 3 years. Tymchuk (1972) has observed that socio-culturally retarded children come from intellectually restricted environment. This affects their works during testing situation. Wylie (1963) has found that children of lower class make more modest estimates of their educational ability than children of high class level. Beilil and Gotkin (1964), Bernstein (1961) and Killer (1963) have maintained that lower class youngster beyond his 1st year has little opportunity to develop at an optimal rate in the direction demanded for later adaptation in school and in the highly technological culture now a days, hence, his performance is low on intelligence test. Tyier (1965) has found that children of lower class perform about 1 SD below the general population mean and upper middle class children about 1 SD above it on standard intelligence test. Havighurst et al (1951) say that upper middle class and lower class children live in different kinds of homes, so they are differently acquainted with different materials. Middle and

upper class children belongs to scout groups, games and movies are more common, go church and school more so if a test item is related with these things. Middle and upper class children will do better than lower class children.

Osborn (1943) has listed some stimulating conditions in the home and family of socio-economically upper class, such as, higher education of parents, living in larger towns, small family, larger income of parents, modern convenience etc. Bloom (1964) has also presented a list of some stimulating conditions in the home of culturally advantaged children. These are:-

- (a) Parent's high intellectual aspiration for the child;
- (b) Reinforcement furnished by parents for intellectual performance.
- (c) Opportunities provided in the home and in the school;
- (d) Value beings placed on intellectual performance in the home;
- (e) Intellectual work being emphasized in the home.

These stimulating conditions are present in upper middle class family hence the children of this class show superior intelligence to their lower class counterparts.

The middle and upper class family culture is such that helps the children in their schooling. They get more or less similar experience in their home and school. So the school is an extension of their family culture. On the other hand lower class family culture is opposed to the school experiences.

Therefore, students of upper and middle class do better in schools. Also the test items are heavily loaded with school experiences. It is the main cause behind the better performance of upper

and middle class children on intelligence tests.

In a recent study sharma and Singh (1995) found no significant difference between the students of upper and lower classes. They were of the opinion that class culture is not so much important in our society now a days, therefore, there is no difference between the two groups with respect to their intelligence.

Reversed phase

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