ABSTRACT

In contemporary India, where economic development is prompted by a societal concern for a new generation, studies have been conducted in the field of developmental psychology, especially on how to build resilience in children. This study was conducted as a part of this initiative, and with an eye to understanding the impact of cultural identity on personal development.

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The rapid changes brought about by the technological and economic transformations in the modern world have had significant effects on the cultural development of youth. We need to understand the impact of these changes on the worldviews of children growing up in a prospering urban center in India that is also undergoing significant cultural changes.

The main research questions of this study were:

1. **What are the main cultural identity orientations of adolescents in India?**
2. **What are the differences between adolescents in Pune and those in other parts of the country?**
3. **What are the implications of cultural identity orientations on adolescents' personal development?**

METHOD

The current study was conducted in Pune, India. The sample consisted of 1,328 adolescents, primarily from English-medium schools. The data were collected in 2006 using a self-report questionnaire.

RESULTS

1. **Cultural Identity Orientations**

   - **Traditional Identity Orientation**
     - Emphasis on family, community, and tradition
   - **Modern Identity Orientation**
     - Emphasis on individualism, freedom, and modern values

2. **Relationships between Cultural Identity and Personal Development**

   - Adolescents with a traditional orientation showed higher levels of self-esteem and social competence.
   - Those with a modern orientation reported higher levels of motivation and engagement in spiritual practices.

3. **Cultural Identity and Economic Development**

   - Adolescents in Pune showed a higher degree of economic materialism than those in other regions.

DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that cultural identity orientations play a significant role in personal development and economic development. Adolescents with a traditional orientation may feel more secure and have higher self-esteem, while those with a modern orientation may be more motivated and engaged in spiritual practices.

REFERENCES


Fullbright Study and Design

- **Cross-sectional, school-based study**
- **Early adolescents (7th-9th graders)**
- **Urban middle-class students**
- **(95%) Hindu population**
- **Six private, English-medium schools in Pune, India**
- **N = 725 students interviewed in 19 focus groups**
- **University of Pune Colleagues**
- **Yogita Mohan, Mira Shukla, Mukti Shah, Ruhi Berry, Ayesha Gonsalves, Prabhat Sharma, Apeksha Gandhi**

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