

Child Rearing Practices in Punjab

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Abstract:

In this research paper entitled “child rearing practices in Punjab” an attempt has been made to find out and discuss different child rearing practices, comparing them with our own society and with other. That’s how infants are taken cared? What type of swaddling they do? Cradling? And other things. After infancy entering into early childhood how the child is learning the culture and the practices. Learning of value and the effect of the environment is also important. Different authors have given theories of personality development. And many anthropologists did fieldwork and tried to find the relationship between the child rearing practices and individual personality development. The personality building is one of the important part of life and it starts when a person is born. The different child rearing practices actually help in the personality building of the child. Every culture has its own child rearing practices and when we talk about the Punjabi culture, it is different from the other cultures. There are different methods of child rearing practices which have different impact on the child personality building. In Punjabi culture, the stages of rearing a child start from infancy where feeding, cradling and swaddling are the important activities. Then in early childhood toilet training of the child starts which is helpful in the personality build. The qualitative anthropological techniques were used to collect empirical data.

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Introduction

When a child is born, he gains an identity from the society that he is born in. This inference might be physical, racial, religious, sexual and geographic. In most cases it is all of these and more. The implied identity might decelerate the person's struggle towards the attainment of the idea that defines him, since as he becomes acquainted with the world, he has to find a personality, and the implied identity is in most cases more cases more tangible than the intrinsic one, and hence overwhelms it. A natural painter might never pick up a paintbrush and natural poet might never write a verse, yet they continue to be painters and poets in essences. The intrinsic nature in all cases remains what a person aims at nurturing and realizing.

Child rearing practices are done differently in different societies. And these different practices help in building the every individual personality and it has a lot of effect on it. The relation of mother and child is essential because it makes the personality of that child. It is now acknowledged that infants produce elementary forms of planned or controlled actions almost from birth (P.Pick, 2006). Here I am going to discuss about the child rearing practices among Punjabi people. Child rearing in Punjabi societies is also different from other societies. There is some sort of theme behind swaddling, cradling and other trainings. And the development of child in early childhood.

Research Site

This research was conducted at Park View Town, situated on the Park Road Islamabad, Pakistan. There was a big market

known as “Chataha Bukhtawar”, a very popular place, the majority of the people recognize this area because of this market. In Park View Town total numbers of houses were 52. This was a small town. People living here were migrated from different cities of Pakistan mostly from Punjab. They belonged to different ethnic groups which includes, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtoons and few Afghani people.

Methodology

Anthropological methodology is different from its perspective and had a wide range of application. During the research, qualitative anthropological techniques were used to collect comprehensive and detailed data which mainly include in-depth interviews and participation observation. In most of the anthropological researches the non probability sampling technique was used. For the purpose of this research the judgmental/purposive sampling was used. The data were collected from the women. The data presented in this article were collected from Park View Town, Islamabad. Only Punjabi families living in the town were taken as a sample. The total number of Punjabi households was 21 and from that 15 respondents were selected as a sample for in-depth interviews through purposive sampling. During the interviews, an effort has been made to acquire information regarding different child rearing practices done by the Punjabi people and how it helps in personality building of that child.

Results and Discussion

“Childhood doesn’t exist-we create it as a society” (Neaum, 2010). When a child is born, he is tagged by name and in Punjabi culture different ceremonies are held, naming ceremony itself is a big ceremony. The 6th day after the birth hair of the baby is removed and equal to the weight of that hair silver is given to poor people. Then *aqeeqa* is done in my society.

The situation of child care in all society is made up of many things operating beside the socioeconomic climate just described there are cultural, psychological and religious system which structure are base for values and beliefs related to child rearing parents have a set of childhood beliefs and practice that are driven from customary culture. (Nat J. Colletta, 1996)

Age of infancy is from birth to 2 years. This age is very sensitive age because baby needs a lot of care. Baby only sleeps and when he is hungry, he cries and fed by the mother. In infancy, child is being taken cared by mother very properly, because if he is not being cared properly certain death can be the cause. In our society when a child is born both mother and child health are important. Their skin to skin contact is very essential and so is in Punjabi culture. Head molding of the baby is another important practice in Punjabis. It makes baby face structure beautifully. For long nose, baby's nose is being pressed because it makes the baby's face feature more fine-looking.

Feeding

Breast feeding is considered as the best feed. Mothers eat good and healthy food so that baby also gets healthy milk from the mother. In Punjabis, the bottle feed is taken as harmful and unhealthy when I interviewed women's there view was same. According to them feeder nipple is made up of plastic and it contains germs and make the baby's throat sore. Another amazing answer was that teethes of the baby will not grow properly. So the breastfeeding is the easiest way of baby's food. It also gives the sense of love, care and trust from the mother to child. And also skin to skin contact. My mother gave me the breast feeding and as it gives the sense of care and love and show the attachment to the mother. My relationship with my mother is very strong and its effect on my personality is being humble and more emotional. The relation between child and mother has its own importance because it is the first step in developing the personality of the baby. In the book of child

rearing practice of Punjabis writer has interviewed a woman and she responded. Traditionally, babies were breast fed and mostly on demand. This was one of the reasons why young mothers were encouraged to drink a lot of milk and special food addition was also prepared. (Jagjit Singh Dosanjh, 1996).

Cradling

Babies are normally being cradled in the afternoon when the mothers are busy with their work. Many of the mothers make cradle with a piece of cloth tied with bedside. This cradle makes baby feel that he is still in mother's arms and he will not be scared. This type of cradling is very famous in Punjabi culture also so. One of my respondents said, "when I was small my mother used to put me in the cradle. Its impact on my personality, I never feel afraid of sleeping alone. The confidence level is built up."

Swaddling

Swaddling is another practice of child rearing and it varies from one society to another and the reasons of swaddling also vary. At night baby is swaddled so that he can sleep comfortably and cannot feel alone. One of the main reasons of swaddling is that baby growth should be perfect and legs of baby remain straight. Baby is being swaddled till the age of 6 months after that infant baby is not swaddle because he starts crawling. One of my respondents said, "I was being swaddled till the age of 3 months. My mother used to swaddle me so that my height should grow faster and the bones should remain straight.

Toilet Training

Toilet training in our society starts from the age of 6 months. Normally it starts in the summer because in winter babies are packed in pampers or nappies. The early toilet training is the first step of baby to learn the value. In Punjabi culture toilet

training is very hard. Mothers tries that child should learn toilet training as soon as possible.

Early Childhood

From the age of 2 to 6 years children are weaned especially before they start going to school. At the time of early childhood child is in pressure of learning the value system. As the child grows, social circle of child increases and the behavior of the child also becomes different. The child wants to become independent and do things by himself. His imagination power become stronger and he feels relaxed in fantasy. The child relation with the family gradually becomes problematic. The child ceases to associate himself with his role in the family as his social world expands through peer interactions, sports and so forth. The family may remain the most important society for the child, but it is not the only one, and the child can conceptualize itself apart from family.

Early childhood years are important in a child's life. This is because the rate of growth is quicker during these years. At this step personality variation among children become increasingly obvious. These become fine definite by the time child attains the age of six (Gupta, 2009). Early childhood training is the step of making good personality of a person. After the child's birth, children try to immerse in the language and literacy of their family. As infants respond to their parents and siblings, try to speck by the age of 12-18 months, toddlers use the words or language and the gestures which are recognized by the mother especially. Those vocabularies after few years emerge in proper language and continue to develop. The infants and toddler years are vital for development, the stand for literacy establishment. (Young, 2000).

One of my respondents reported, "When I was at the age of early childhood, I used to be very creative. My mother used to give me coloring books, paints and also the story books these all things were creating my imagination more strongly. I start sleeping separate at the age of 4. In my culture Punjabis child

used to sleep with their mothers till the age of 10 but I didn't." In Punjabi culture child has completely learned toilet training. The child can change their clothes, eat food by himself. The mother starts giving training of sleeping separately. At this age child is very naughty so mother always has to keep an eye on them, so that unintentionally he can't harm himself. Most of the activities of this age kids are playing. Most kids are indulging in watching cartoons and learning the values, norms.

Personality Development

In infancy rearing practice are almost universal, but them behind these practices are different and which affects the personality of the child as in our society, skin to skin contact is very important for building the good personality of the baby because of more skin contact they become emotional. In European societies this contact is not very important that's why they are more frustrated and angry. During infancy, child rearing is characterized by diffused, constant care, earlier trainings, warm relationship between mother and child these all things are socializing. In early childhood if mother ignores the child's personality starts getting ruined. He shows angers, break things. Sometime they start fighting with their age mates. The mother needs to give more attention to the child at an early age, so that child personality should not be shattered. From the birth of child the traditions into which he is born shape his knowledge and activities. When he starts talking he become the part of his culture, when that child grew up he became able to be a part of other activities, its behavior are his habits, its attitude his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities, every child how is born in his group will share all these things. There is no social problem it is more present upon us to recognize. (Benedict, 1946)

Conclusion

The human baby is one of the most immature newborns in the creature kingdom. The infant is born into a mini society, the family. This little society provides the child with an identity. The child's relation to that society is at first not problematic for the reason that the society is narrow, inflexible, and well-defined and the child holds the two basic attitudes that make the individual. First the child is equated with his place family. Secondly, the child believes fulfillment to be contingent on performing his role in the family. The infant socialization is a mutual course where both the adults and infant make involvement in the relationship. Infancy and the childhood training make the personality. The relationship of the child and mother affects a lot. Child rearing practices had become more accommodating where as in the previous centuries, children were fated silence and family style were same and strict, by the end of 18th century child rearing practice point toward a level of understanding tolerance among parent and spoilt egotism among children. So when the time passes and the social changes occur in the society it also affects the family structure and sometimes the practices also.

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