

# The Impact of School Environment on Personality Development in Adolescents: A Research Review

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**Abstract.** It is not well known how a person's sexuality and personality develop in tandem, especially throughout the critical years of adolescence when sexual behaviors in close relationships become increasingly widespread. In this paper, the researcher used a variety of longitudinal studies to examine the relationship between the maturation of a person's sense of self and their sexuality from childhood through young adulthood. Those who scored higher on the extraversion scale were also more likely to engage in traditional sexual behaviors, for instance, going out on dates. However, less conventional sexual behaviors were associated with less pleasant, less conscientious, and more neurotic personalities. In addition, the researcher uncovered evidence of correlative effects, with sexual experiences being associated with increases in extraversion and neuroticism and decreases in agreeableness. There was a genetic link between sexually typical behaviors and extroversion and a genetic link between sexually specific behaviors and affective personality traits. Common environmental influences predominantly accounted for correlations between sexually non-normative behaviors and personality and sexual behaviors and attributes linked to behavioral control. These findings draw attention to two personality processes that contribute to and shape adolescent sexual development: those governed by emotion regulation through genetics and those governed by shared environmental influences on behavioral regulation mechanisms.

**Keywords:** Personality, Sexual development, School influence, family and peer relations, cultural factors.

## 1. Introduction

Personality and sexual orientation significantly affect people's priorities and how they spend their time, money, and other resources. "Therefore, the lens through which the researcher perceive the world and make sense of their experiences is shaped by their unique personalities and sexual orientations. Most contemporary research describes personality and sexuality in ways that maintain them distinct yet connected, contrary to the assertions of specific earlier theories [1,2]. Nevertheless, one takeaway from these earlier theoretical frameworks is that sexuality and personality develop and alter in tandem throughout life. Therefore, the expression, psychological meaning, and consequences of various sexualities can only be understood in broader developmental circumstances [3]. Personality differences also become evident in infancy, although their manifestation, structure, and mean levels undergo significant development during a person's lifetime. This suggests that one's personality influences both the timing, frequency, and quality of sexual experiences, and that personality is shaped by one's sexual interactions. However, there has been a dearth of future research investigating the interplay between sexual development and personality. Furthermore, no one has spoken about their ties throughout adolescence, a period when sexual identity is formed and sexual behaviors related to romantic relationships begin to develop. Adolescent sexual development is essential for forming identities and the psychological adjustment of young people, making it a topic of great cultural interest that affects public health policies. Since this is a topic of considerable interest and relevance, studies examining the impact of background factors on the emergence of sexually explicit behaviors in adolescence are warranted. For instance, as for the understanding of the part played by one's personality in sexuality grows, the researcher may shift their perspective on whether or not teenage sexual practices should be seen as health risks or as natural, expected stages of development [4]. The school setting plays an important role in developing the personality of adolescents by providing a social and educational context that shapes their beliefs, values and behaviours. Through

interactions with peers, teachers, and other authority figures, adolescents are exposed to a range of social norms, expectations, and expectations that influence their sense of self, identity, and self-worth. Additionally, the school environment also provides opportunities for adolescents to develop social skills, problem-solving skills, and emotional intelligence, which are all essential for the development of healthy personality traits. However, the school environment can also have negative impacts on the development of personality if it is not conducive to fostering a positive and supportive learning environment. Factors such as bullying, discrimination, and a lack of supportive relationships can all contribute to low self-esteem, self-doubt, and a negative sense of identity for adolescents. According, this paper aims to explore several factors that influence adolescent's overall development with a focus on high school students' sexual development. The findings of this paper will help schools create a positive and supportive environment that promotes the healthy development of personality for adolescents.

## 2. Social Factors

### 2.1. Peer and Family Relations

Social experiences with other adolescents enhance adolescents' growing sense of self. According to Erikson, adolescence is defined by a conflict between introspection and the maturation of one's social roles. The essential questions in Erikson's theory of adolescence are, thus, "Who am I?" and "Whom do I desire to be?" Children of this age are susceptible to adopting their parents' values and sense of duty. Adolescents' identities often diverge from their parents and teachers but often coincide with their friends. This is to be expected given the growing significance of social relationships among adolescents.

Adolescents, in figuring out who they are, "place less importance on parental counsel and more on that of their friends" [5]. Teenagers often still love their parents despite spending less time with them. Warm and healthy parent-child relationships have been linked to positive results for children in the United States and other countries, including better academic achievement and fewer behavioral concerns at school [5].

G. Stanley Hall, an early researcher in the field of adolescent psychology, notably hypothesized that teenagers experience severe emotional and psychological upheaval throughout their formative years. Teenagers and their parents have frequent, although usually minor, disagreements [5]. In a study of over 1,800 parents of teens from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, Barber found that everyday issues such as homework, money, curfews, clothing, chores, friends, and other day-to-day concerns were the cause of conflict. Teenagers become less prone to these arguments as they age [5].

Adolescents are generally left unsupervised in their connections with their peers, even though they spend far more time with their friends than with their family. Whereas young children value friendship based on shared activities, adolescents place a premium on confiding in one another about their innermost thoughts and feelings. The adolescent years are characterized by the shift from primarily same-sex to mixed-sex friendship circles. Many studies have shown that teenagers prefer to behave similarly within their peer group, and this has been attributed to homophily and influence. A deviant peer contagion occurs when peers laugh at or otherwise signal support for poor behavior, enhancing the likelihood that the behavior will be repeated [5].

For better or worse, adolescents may learn valuable lessons from their contemporaries. Peer pressure, mainly when negative, may significantly impact adolescents, leading them to change their behavior compared to when they are with their families or on their own. When surrounded by their friends rather than their parents or other adult role models, teenagers are more likely to participate in dangerous behaviors, including binge drinking, drug use, and criminal activity. Because peers are such an essential source of social support and companionship at this period, research has shown that adolescents with positive peer connections are happier and better settled than those who are socially alienated or have conflicting peer relationships.

Working with schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District, researchers of the Peer Relation Projects looked into the idea that peer victimization may be decreased in racially and ethnically diverse schools because there is more likely to be a balance of power among groups in those circumstances. This research was conducted within the framework of the Peer Relations Project. Using the Simpson Index, these researchers evaluated the diversity in 99 classes across 11 middle schools (a tool used by sociologists, demographers, and ethologists to measure the relative representation of different groups). Based on the findings, Graham noted that children feel less exposed at various facilities. The researchers discovered that as diversity rose, all students—not only those from minority groups—were less likely to experience victimization, felt safer at school, were less isolated, and had higher self-esteem. According to Graham, the results suggest that variety may avoid certain prescriptive challenges associated with early adolescence.

Second, moving from middle to high school may be difficult for teenagers, mainly if their new school's racial makeup is different from the one they attended before. Moving to a bigger school and establishing new connections with students and instructors are distinct aspects of this shift. During this transition, adolescents often experience increased anxiety and loneliness, which has a negative impact on their academic performance. Again, the Peer Relations Project researchers looked at how school diversity could impact this experience. They looked at the experiences of pupils who transferred to high schools in Los Angeles that were either noticeably more diverse or less diverse than their middle schools. They discovered that pupils who moved to a school where their group was underrepresented felt less like a part of the community. Even at schools with a varied student body overall, a kid's transition was facilitated by a critical mass of peers from their ethnic group.

Unsubtle racial and ethnic discrimination is the third way a school's racial and ethnic makeup may affect adolescents' psychological development. Graham noted that discrimination had a negative impact on teenagers' mental health, academic motivation, and possibly their success as well. She revealed data showing that prejudice grows over the first two years of high school, is more prevalent in diverse schools than in nondiverse schools and is more often encountered by males than by girls (but experienced by groups not well represented in the diverse schools). Nevertheless, a school's instructors' ethnic variety may attenuate the negative impacts of prejudice.

Graham and her coworkers conclude by pointing out that the racial and ethnic makeup of a school may have psychological consequences on the children, who may subsequently perform below expectations or lose interest in learning. In order to understand the persisting performance disparity between African-American and Hispanic children and their classmates shown on the National Assessment of Educational Progress and other measures, researchers looked at psychosocial variables associated with worldviews regarding race and ethnicity. They discovered that a small fraction of students (about 10%) had negative worldviews that may be important after looking at several attitudes and beliefs that might impact academic ability [6]. They believe that the racial milieu is hostile, the school policies are unjust, and the punishments are severe. They encounter racial prejudice and do not trust the school's authorities. The researchers concluded that these worldviews are influenced in part by the ethnic diversity of schools and that they are likely to have an impact on academic success.

## 2.2. Student Teacher Relations

According to the research, teenagers' social, emotional, and behavioral development is enhanced when they form favorable relationships with their teachers. Adolescents should avoid harmful behaviors, including drug usage and sexual activity. Risky health behaviors, such as smoking, drinking excessively, using marijuana, thinking of suicide, having a first sexual experience, or committing violent actions, are less common among adolescents who have good connections with their instructors [7]. Greater levels of teacher-reported conflict in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades were connected with higher levels of hazardous conduct (such as smoking, drinking, fighting, and stealing) in sixth grade, according to to study by Ibrahim and El Zaatari. There was an inverse relationship between students' perceived social connectedness and their engagement in risky behaviors, with instructors rating students with stronger links to the community as less likely to engage in risk [7].

Establishing trusting relationships between students and teachers has been shown to affect students' sense of school community and pride positively. Teens in middle and high school who reported higher levels of school engagement also reported reduced rates of drug use, violence, gang membership, sexual debut, and suicidal thoughts [7].

Students in middle and high school who get much encouragement from their teachers had higher scores on a self-concept test that encompasses their sense of identity, intelligence, and social skills [7]. There is evidence that children in middle and high school who get positive feedback from their teachers are less likely to engage in disruptive behavior.

According to Quin et al., school is frequently the most prominent and influential institution in which young people are involved, and it serves as a robust framework for their development [8]. They presented three perspectives on how school influences adolescent risk behaviour. Researchers have summarized many aspects of education that may be important. Schools have a wide range of structural features (the socio-economic status of the population they serve, their size and the ratio of teachers to students, the size of the school and class, and the mobility of students and teachers.). Additionally, Quin et al added, there are microcontexts (such as classrooms, hallway interactions, cafeteria interactions, and bathrooms) and microsystems or networks (among specific groups of classmates, instructors, and other staff members) that can have a significant impact on an individual's experiences at school. These environments and networks may have unique qualities and differing standards of behaviour.

Each of these elements interacts with the others and influences how a person feels about school, how safe they feel and how the environment is generally perceived, how well relationships are formed, and so on. Jones hypothesized that these variables have an impact on taking risks as well as the emergence of both issues and competence. However, they are exceedingly challenging to study because the nature and makeup of groups change quickly, and many other characteristics may change over a school year. Quin noted that some studies had pinpointed connections between school structural elements and behavioral results [9].

Yu et al.[10] reported that schools are currently using various tactics to change children's social and behavioural outcomes. While few focus on behavior control, security and surveillance, counseling, or instructional programs, they contain initiatives to enhance instructors' instructional skills. Other strategies include initiatives aimed at improving the overall school climate as well as legislation aimed at addressing social structures and connections. Interventions seldom focus on the nature of the environment inside the school. While the effectiveness of these treatments at school varies with children's age and other criteria, they successfully reduce alcohol and drug use, drop-out rates, absences, and other driving problems [11]. However, overall impact sizes are small.

Research in this field has thus far been limited by methodological problems. Large school samples and short- and long-term longitudinal data for elementary and middle school would be required to produce further empirical evidence. The discipline currently requires more relevant and reliable contextual measurements, and theoretical modelling of the school environment is still in its infancy.

### 3. Culture Factors

In addition to biological and neurological processes, cultural factors may explain certain adolescent development aspects. Differences in social expectations, sexual orientation, and the development of a worldview are all realistic instances of how culture is taken up and transmitted in social situations and has far-reaching impacts on its practitioners. Fish and Russell point out that cultural factors significantly shape many aspects of individuality [12]. Teenage years vary greatly from one culture to the next. Teenagers' levels of autonomy and independence, and the behaviors deemed representative of those levels, vary widely among cultures.

Similarly, a teen's manner of life is profoundly affected by the responsibilities and roles she/he is expected to assume in her/his society. One indicator of "normal" adolescent behavior is how young people are expected to help out around the home [13]. Teenagers in certain cultures are responsible

for a disproportionate number of household chores, while those in others, particularly those from more wealthy homes, could enjoy greater independence. Household work and financial compensation may be distributed differently amongst families of varying socioeconomic positions, depending on cultural conventions and beliefs.

Adolescents' particular worldviews are formed via interactions with their social, familial, and cultural settings. Beliefs include those held towards religion, spirituality, sex, workplace ethics, and even politics. The positive and negative consequences of a culture's range of perspectives on adolescents' development may be seen in their beliefs, behaviors, and perceptions. Youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) are disproportionately affected by discrimination and bullying from their classmates due to the societal stigma that still surrounds these identities [13]. Many young people who identify as LGBTQ face social isolation because they are seen to be violators of gender norms. Queer and transgender youth may be more susceptible to these negative psychological impacts. Similarly, prepubescent girls are more susceptible to the psychological effects of sexual harassment and bullying due to the physiological changes occurring in their bodies.

#### **4. Economic Factors**

The Big Five personality model has become the industry standard for pigeonholing individuals [14]. Neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness have all been found frequently across many settings and groups, with significant correlations to other dimensions and observable behavior, suggesting they may have a genetic basis. The idea that the Big Five may represent a "grand unified theory" of personality is gaining traction in the scientific community [14]. Even though most Big Five research has focused on adults, there is growing evidence supporting the use of this paradigm with teenagers.

Academic performance, stress management, peer acceptability, future happiness, and professional success are some of the outcomes connected by adolescent research to the Big Five. Diener and Lucas found that high school grades were significantly correlated with teachers' assessments of students' conscientiousness as elementary and middle school students [15]. Conscientiousness correlates inversely with attention issues and adolescent delinquency and Rapeefavorably with academic success and IQ [15]. Rapee et al. found that school-aged children's conscientiousness was inversely associated with their trait of procrastination. Success in social settings was correlated with higher levels of extraversion. According to studies, adolescents with lower levels of agreeableness have more social and academic difficulties [16].

Furthermore, studies have linked receptiveness to increased academic achievement. In the research on the Big Five and coping strategies utilized by early adolescents, Van den Akker et al. discovered that neuroticism was positively strongly linked with the use of avoidant coping methods and detrimentally directly linked with the use of instant problem-solving [16]. In contrast, extraversion was correlated with support-seeking, and immediate problem-solving and conscientiousness were considerably correlated with active coping strategies. Because parents may spend more time and money on the education of their children if they come from a higher socioeconomic class, this variable has a significant impact on adolescents' personalities [17]. Among socioeconomic and social class factors, parental income seems to significantly impact adolescents' sense of self-worth [18]. It has also been speculated that a lack of care or a dysfunctional family environment contributes to maladjustment, behavioral difficulties, and drug abuse. An adolescent from a low-income home has his life values formed by his parents' hopes for him, and he lacks access to many resources that youngsters from more privileged families take for granted [19]. Poverty has a negative effect on parenting, family connections, and children's adjustment because it increases the likelihood of negative emotions and behaviors in adolescents, such as isolation, depression, disruptive behavior, and drug use.

## 5. Suggestions

In the United States society and economy, the education system is foundational. A distinctive feature of the nation is its mandatory education system, which gives every kid a solid public school education since education is a critical factor in success beyond high school [20]. However, American children perform at average or even below average relative to other countries in subjects such as arithmetic, science, and reading. In addition, the country is very different from other countries when it comes to the cost of education since it is reasonably high and often places students in debt. But with opportunities to graduate, the U.S. continues to attract students from around the world.. People who want to come to this nation to study face challenges due to present government policies. It causes analysts to worry that it would result in a decline in public support for American education, which would have a detrimental impact on the whole economy.

How may the US's educational system be improved remain arguable. It is the subject of numerous discussions that virtually invariably end in tension. The problem is intricate, and on top of that, there is a lot on the line [20]. Such a situation should encourage policymakers to participate, too. In reality, the whole system of education is strongly reliant on policy, thus those who determine policy should step up and accept the challenge if the change is needed. Here are some topics politicians and government representatives might consider choosing where to start.

A National Center for Education Statistics survey revealed that 14% of US schools were over capacity [20]. Low-income and minority children, who are overcrowded in public schools, are significantly affected by the issue. Sadly, the problem of overcrowding is not new; in fact, research conducted in the state of New York in 1990 discovered a correlation between overcrowding and worse success among kids from low socioeconomic backgrounds. In the research, overcrowding resulted in discouragement, overwhelm, and contempt in both the instructors and the pupils. Teachers frequently complain about a lack of resources, such as room and supplies. Lessons are delivered outside traditional classrooms, such as gymnasiums, forcing students to learn in less than optimal circumstances. Both kids and instructors experience increased stress levels as a result of this.

It has been repeatedly shown that crowded classes are less productive because instructors are overworked. Students lose interest due to not receiving the attention they may need, which sows the seeds of dropouts [20]. Therefore, it is suggested that policymakers handle this issue by creating master plans that leave no space for even a little bit of overpopulation. The procedure is time-consuming since it has to be continued and adequately maintained. Both the creation of new structures and the employment of more trained instructors are required.

Statistics on school financing in the United States are available, and the findings are depressing. States finance 44% of all education spending in the US, while over 34 states reportedly spend less on education than the national average, according to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. Local school systems eliminated a net total of 297,00 teaching positions during the years 2008 and 2016 [20]. The issue is one of priority rather than merely financial flow or the federal government's difficulty in raising money, considering that every state in the nation spends more on prison housing than on educating a first-grader.

A significant change in priorities, which may be accomplished by enacting a progressive tax system. The federal government should investigate taxing businesses and affluent people fairly so that a better education system can be supported. Another solution is to provide instructors with more cash and assistance. More should be done with educational financing than new school construction and facility upgrades. Quality may be raised by increasing teacher support, particularly in low-income communities. Because of the propensity for teachers to seek employment in wealthier communities due to better compensation and working circumstances, the quality of instruction in schools with lower incomes suffers greatly. Students who require a Leunghigh-quality education will benefit from enhanced education and teaching quality if it is possible to find a method for luring and keeping instructors in such places.

According to statistics, more than half of young African-American males who attended high school in metropolitan areas did not graduate. It is alarming that over 60% of these dropouts eventually end

up in jail or prison. The school-to-prison pipeline is a complex topic that has a significant impact on young African American males. They experience in-school detentions and zero-tolerance rules that carry severe penalties; these factors contributed to the Columbine massacre in 1999 [20].

These unsettling trends are now freely acknowledged, yet the problem is so severe that immediate action is required. The best method to protect young people from an ineffective legal system is to use restorative justice wherever feasible. Instead of depending primarily on detention and suspension, placing a stronger focus on other forms of punishment may result in a considerable increase in retention. In one instance, a high school district in California reportedly adopted restorative justice to resolve conflicts, which resulted in a drop in expulsions from 1,096 to 66 in only four years [20].

The authorities should also consider establishing a welcoming and inclusive school community. In actuality, schools now measure their effectiveness based on total student accomplishment, and pupils who lower that figure are more likely to be expelled or, worse still, shunned. Instead, schools should concentrate on creating a curriculum, and teachers should prioritize each student's growth in the classroom [20]. Police officers, school security guards, and zero-tolerance rules are less likely to be used in a school setting that fosters compassion and understanding. These all lead to a hostile atmosphere that inhibits the development of students.

## 6. Conclusion

Numerous factors that may have both good and negative impacts complicate the adolescent experience. Numerous studies have shown the links between financial difficulty, dysfunctional families, and various challenges for teenagers, including risk-taking. Although this kind of stress is likely to have a detrimental impact on parenting, effective parenting may also significantly impact children's development. Adolescents also tend to associate with peers who are similar to themselves and to grow more like those peers; in this case, the outcome may be favorable or unfavorable, but the actual processes behind these ambiguous associations have yet to be well studied. Similarly, close relationships with instructors and students at school may have a good impact. However, many middle and high school aspects make it difficult for such relationships to form. Communities may also include structural elements that promote healthy adolescent development, such as social networks and youth-focused resources. However, research still needs to provide concrete answers to the issue of how schools and communities may create more hospitable structures and cultures.

Last but not least, the rapidly growing range of media platforms and venues profoundly affects how adolescents experience adolescence. These implications include changing social standards for a variety of activities, including a relaxing of sexual attitudes and an increase in sexual engagement. In addition, the media provide a significant weapon for positively influencing young people. Interventions that deal with these factors may be directed at large populations or at particular families and people who have shown indicators of distress. Many of them concentrate on significant turning moments; similar to the speakers on certain risk behaviors, the speakers on outside influences emphasized the need to focus on the youngest adolescents before issues become more entrenched.

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