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INFLUENCE OF INNER FAMILY FACTORS ON THE FORMATION OF INDIVIDUALITY

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The mental development of man in modern society, passing from the era of the "masses" to the era of individuals, is largely determined by knowledge of the fundamental laws of the integrity of the properties of a person as a subject of mental activity. In the modern world, the existing diversity of individuals is analyzed as the invaluable wealth of society.

Intensive knowledge of the laws of personality formation began in recent years in connection with the demands of practice. An individual approach to training and education, issues of career guidance, professional selection of personnel, labor efficiency, problems of psychosomatics are related to the individual characteristics of a person in their integrity.

The attention of foreign psychologists is mainly concentrated on the search for connections between parents and children in terms of certain abilities and on the search for correlations between the levels of development of abilities in children and various environmental elements (level of education and professional qualifications of parents, degree of complexity of the father's profession, socio-economic family
status, etc.) Most of these studies state that such factors are important for the formation of not only the absolute level of abilities, but also their individual characteristics.

So, for example, V. Weiss considers a number of works where positive correlations are found between the level of development of mental abilities and the social status of the family, between the giftedness of children and the level of complexity of the father's profession [1]. In all these works, despite the social differences in different countries and different study times, there are similarities in the following: from a third to half of all probands (prominent scientists and inventors) have fathers, whose profession can be described as highly intellectual, and, on the contrary, the percentage of fathers with a profession that does not require any qualifications, it is extremely small.

V. Weiss believes that highly capable children very rarely come from among low-skilled parents [1]. The reasons for this are not genetic, but rather socio-psychological. According to his observations, low-skilled workers may have highly capable grandchildren, but relatively rarely, highly capable children.

A special area of work is associated with the study of the influence on the development of intelligence of such factors as family size, order of birth, duration of intervals between childbirths [2, 3]. It was noted that low results for almost all types of intelligence tests accompany relatively large families, families without fathers and other unfavorable family circumstances. At the same time, the effect of the order of birth is also noted: the higher the birth number of the child, the lower his intelligence compared to the first-born.

Interaction with parents stimulates faster speech development than interaction with children. Firstborns always interact more with their parents, even when the following children appear. After this, the first-born, apparently, begin to play the role of intermediaries between parents and younger children, still more in contact with their parents. Siblings separated by a short interval of birth are similar in the situation of upbringing with twins, which affects their intellectual development negatively: it is known that if twins interact more with each other than with parents or other children,
there may be a lag in mental development. Similar explanations of the effect of the order of birth are considered the most consistent.

R. Zajonc and H. Markus proposed a model of intellectual development, according to which each family has a specific intellectual environment, an element of which is the individual experience of each family member [4]. Each family member affects the whole family, and the family affects him. From the model it follows that greater intellectual development should be expected in small families with a large difference in years between children. In this model, it is assumed that the influence of environmental factors on the child’s intellectual growth is not the same at different ages. So, the appearance of a second child in the family is more significant for a child of 3 years old than for a child of 12 years old, when the child has already reached a certain level of mental maturity.

So, the effect of the order of birth can be positive, negative and zero for the same child at different ages. If at first the intellectual environment for the first-born child is much better than for the second-born one, then over time the situation gradually changes to the opposite, and the intellectual environment favors the development of the second child. R. Zajonc gives an example: the first-born of 8 years old, having 4-year-old sibling, has the following intellectual composition: two adults, as well as one with a mental age of 8 years and one with a mental age of 4 years. After 4 years, the situation will change: two adults, one – 12 years old and one – 8 years old, which is much more favorable for the second child. The model of intellectual development predicts the negative effect of the order of birth for children tested at a very young age, a positive effect for children from 4 to 9 years old, a lack of effect for children from 9 to 12 years old and then an increasing negative effect.

V. Velandia et al. found that the effect of family size is observed in well-off families and is absent at the lowest socio-economic status [5]. Other authors have the opposite effect. E. Page and G. Grandon identified that 25 % of families with the highest socio-economic level, and in this group the effect of family size was not found [6]. The same study is mentioned in his review by M. Wagner and H. Schubert [7]. They note that in the study under study, families are unequal in size: 75 % of
high-income families have 2-4 children, and the same number of children in low-income families occurs only in 44% of cases. Therefore, “combining groups by socio-economic status, it is difficult to detect the influence of family size on mental abilities” [7].

There are also works that evaluate the relationship between the order of birth and creative abilities. M. Runko and M. Baleda write that there are three different points of view on the importance of the order of birth for creative abilities [8]:

1) first-born children are less able than middle and younger children, as they are more likely to conformism than other children in the family;

2) the first-born are more capable of middle and younger children, in particular with regard to fluency of speech;

3) the order of birth does not affect creativity.

The results showed that the only children have the highest test values, followed by the first-born, then the youngest children and, finally, the middle-order children. The number of siblings in the family matters: children who have more siblings have higher test values than children with one sibling (except for cases with single children).

At first glance, these results may seem to contradict the data of R. Zajonc. However, the authors of the study themselves note that R. Zajonc and X. Marcus studied learning abilities rather than creative abilities and, in addition, they estimated the difference in years between siblings. In this study, the intervals between births were not taken into account. Of course, further studies of the influence of family factors on the development of creative abilities are needed to determine how consistent the model of development of creative abilities with the model of intellectual development according to R. Zajonc.

References:


