

Locus of control and family stability in elementary school students

Locus de control y estabilidad familiar en estudiantes de educación básica

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Abstract

The objective of the study was to determine the incidence of family cohesion in the formation of locus of control in students of a primary school in the canton of Quevedo, province of Los Ríos, Ecuador. A population of 190 individuals was considered, divided into 90 students (47%), 90 parents (47%), and 10 teachers (6%), to whom a two-question survey was administered, with possible answers: "agree", "maybe", and "disagree". Forty-eight percent of the students considered that interpersonal relationships influence the development of their personality and interpersonal relationships, while 53% indicated that they were capable and prepared to defend

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their personal interests. As for the parents, 57% considered that inter-family communication facilitates interpersonal relationships in an optimal way, and 34% considered that their constituents feel that the events in their lives are determined by the people who have authority over them. Forty percent of the teachers maintained that students' personal actions determine their present and future, while 60% shared the idea that the number of friends a student has is "maybe" determined by his or her likeability. Children and adolescents should consider that a person's actions will always have consequences, so they should be the ones to make the most appropriate decisions, based on prior guidance from their parents or guardians.

Keywords: Authority, self-esteem, family, personality, interpersonal relationships.

Resumen

El objetivo del estudio fue conocer la incidencia de la cohesión familiar en la formación del locus de control en estudiantes de una escuela de educación básica del cantón Quevedo, provincia de Los Ríos, Ecuador. Se consideró una población de 190 individuos, divididos en 90 estudiantes (47%), 90 padres/madres (apoderados) de familia (47%), y 10 docentes (6%), a quienes se les aplicó una encuesta de dos preguntas, cuyas posibles respuestas fueron: “de acuerdo”, “tal vez”, y “en desacuerdo”. El 48% de los alumnos(as) consideraron que las relaciones interpersonales influyen en el desarrollo de su personalidad y en las relaciones interpersonales, mientras que el 53% señalaron ser capaces y estar preparados para defender sus intereses personales. En cuanto a los apoderados, el 57% consideró que la comunicación interfamiliar facilita las relaciones interpersonales de manera óptima, y el 34% consideró que sus representados sienten que los acontecimientos de su vida están determinados por la gente que tiene autoridad sobre ellos. El 40% de los docentes sostuvieron que las acciones personales de los alumnos determinan su presente y futuro, mientras que el 60% comparte la idea que la cantidad de amigos que posee un estudiante “tal vez” está determinada por su simpatía. Los niños y adolescentes deben considerar que las acciones de una persona, siempre tendrán consecuencias, por lo que deben ser ellos quienes tomen las

decisiones más oportunas, basadas en una orientación previa de sus padres o apoderados.

Palabras clave: Autoridad, autoestima, familia, personalidad, relaciones interpersonales.

Introduction

Family cohesion is a conglomerate of elements united by procedural norms and efficient situations in constant internal interaction, where the individual obtains his first experiences, values and thoughts of the world. In this sense, family cohesion is important to face internal multiplicities and the environment itself, where the conflicts of daily life, including ailments in some member that integrates it, can change it or conversely it can follow its course already determined in society (Buitrago Matamoros et al., 2017; Cárdenas-Loor et al. 2021a).

Concomitant with the above, Cárdenas-Loor et al. (2021b) mention that at present, young people develop in a changing environment, where the organization, distribution and functioning of the family have changed, conceiving new forms of correspondence within the family system and therefore, new ways of distinguishing this relationship by the subject, and therefore it is necessary to know what is the appreciation of the adolescent community on the complacency they have with their family.

It is plausible to imagine that there are families that in the process of their development, endogenous problems have led to failures, however, the positivist attitude can also contribute to improvements and in their daily life teaching-learning process, individuals acquire skills that prepare them to face crisis situations, where it is necessary to show mental strength before and after the crisis (Cárdenas-Loor et al., 2021c).

In recent decades, work has been done insistently on an element of personality, called Locus of Control, or control of internal versus external reinforcement, within the field of psychology. However, its practical application in educational environments, is still insipient, so it is necessary to know to what extent family cohesion acts on the

locus of control, including student performance in learning processes (Cobb-Clark, 2015).

This article shows the results of a study carried out with students of the ADONAI School of Basic Education, where the development of their personality, autonomy, recognition of their principles, and the results of their behavior were analyzed and contrasted with family cohesion and locus of control. Therefore, the incidence of family cohesion in the formation of the locus of control in the students of the ADONAI School of Basic Education was studied.

Materials and methods

Place and target population of the study. The research was conducted at the ADONAI Private Educational Unit, located in the canton of Quevedo, province of Los Ríos, Republic of Ecuador. A population of 190 individuals was considered for the study, divided into 90 students (47%), 90 parents (47%), and 10 teachers (6%) to whom a survey consisting of two questions was administered (Table 1).

Table 1. Survey consisting of perception questions asked to students, parents and teachers of the ADONAI Private Educational Unit.

No.	STUDENT SURVEY	ALTERNATIVES
1	Do you consider that interpersonal relationships influence the development of your personality?	Agreed
		Perhaps
		Disagree
	Do you consider that you are usually capable and feel prepared to defend your personal interests?	Agreed
		Perhaps
		Disagree
No.	PARENT SURVEY	ALTERNATIVES
1		Agreed

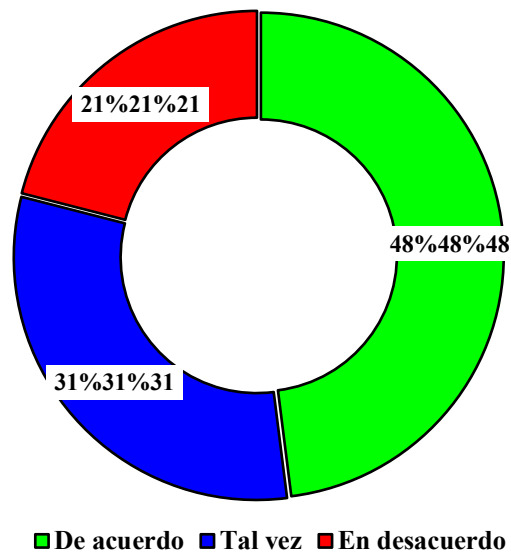
	Do you think that communication in the family facilitates the relationship with people in an optimal and satisfactory way?	Perhaps Disagree
	Do you think your client has come to feel that what happens in his life is very much determined by the people in authority over him?	Agreed Perhaps Disagree
No.	SURVEY OF TEACHERS	ALTERNATIVES
1	Do you believe that the lives of your students are determined by their own actions, such as, for example, considering that having few or many friends depends on one's destiny?	Agreed Perhaps Disagree
	Do you consider that for your students the number of friends you have is determined by your own likeability?	Agreed Perhaps Disagree

The results were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools (percentages and arithmetic means), and the figures were designed using the Excel spreadsheet.

Results

Influence of interpersonal relationships on personality development. Forty-eight percent of the students surveyed considered that interpersonal relationships influence their personality development; however, 31% considered that interpersonal relationships do not always have an impact on personality, while 21% strongly disagreed (Figure 1).

Appreciation (%) of the students of the ADONAI Private Educational Unit on the influence of interpersonal relationships on personality development.



Ability and preparedness to defend students' personal interests. Slightly more than half of the students surveyed (53%) indicated that they are capable and prepared to defend their personal interests, while 41% were hesitant, answering "maybe". A low percentage of students (6%) indicated feeling unable to defend themselves.

Inter-family communication and optimal and satisfactory interpersonal relationships. Figure 3 shows that 57% of the parents consider that inter-family communication facilitates interpersonal relationships in an optimal and satisfactory manner, while 24% showed doubts in this regard when they answered "maybe". Finally, 19% of the parents surveyed did not agree that inter-family communication facilitates interpersonal relationships.

Perception of the influence of authority over events in their constituent's life. Thirty-four percent of the parents surveyed felt that their constituent has felt that what happens in his or her life is very much determined by the people in authority over him or her, while 47% stated that "maybe" this could be happening, indicating doubt in this regard. The remaining 19% indicated that they do not agree that authority has influence over events in their child's life.

The lives of your students are determined by their own actions, e.g., to consider that having few or many friends depends on one's destiny?

Figure 5 shows that the majority of teachers believe that the personal actions of students do indeed determine their present and future. In this sense, 40% of the teachers agree and the other 40% think that this may be so. However, a minority (20%) do not agree that students' actions influence their present and future life.

Most of the teachers share the idea that the number of friends a student has "maybe" is determined by his or her likeability, however, 20% agree with this thought and the remaining 20% consider themselves in disagreement.

Discussion

Considering that self-control is a subjective representation of individuals' own abilities to control or modify important events in their lives, this belief becomes the basis of behavior, and constitutes the previous step for the planning and execution of purpose-oriented actions. In this sense, when there is the conviction of a person's own security to carry out an action, it is easier to reach the desired goal (Carrillo-Álvarez & Díaz-Barajas, 2016).

In this sense, González-Hernández, & Alto-Gil (2019), point out that interpersonal relationships in the personality development of children and adolescents, will always have a significant degree of incidence, to such an extent that an adolescent will almost always relate socially with his environment, so he will have to compare, judge and decide who to follow, whether or not to obey and for, above all, what consequences to assume in life. The results achieved in this research, where most of the students agreed that personal relationships influence the personality development of adolescents, are concomitant with what was expressed by González-Hernández, & Alto-Gil (2019). Among one of the challenges faced by children and adolescents in their academic training, is the conviction to defend their personal interests, detecting that in the ADONAI Educational Unit, more than half of its students are able to do so. For Gómez de la Torre-Vargas (2018), this intrinsic sense of each student, obeys to the fact that the social ties of every individual are

sustained by the bonds they can develop, and that the strengthening of family cohesion always predominates, so that children and adolescents can develop personality traits, such as the locus of control that will allow them to interact in their environment, without fears or prejudices.

Family communication is surely a determining condition for the establishment of adequate relationships (friendships), and this human value was reflected in the students analyzed, where 57% of them agree that relationships in the family are important to generate lasting friendships. This thinking externalized by the students is also reported in the scientific literature, where researchers such as Esteves-Villanueva et al. (2020), Garcés-Prettel et al. (2020), agree that the family bond depends on the parents, who, in general, are the ones who preside and lead a household, highlighting that by this means the children create sustainable relationships and can choose which ones are more convenient according to their priorities.

It is plausible to understand the apprehension of parents regarding their children leaving the comfort and security of their home to begin or continue their academic education, but this event, in addition to being part of the stages of life of every individual, is necessary to strengthen their self-sufficiency, always within a framework of respect generated by an authority, whether at home or at school. This affirmation is concomitant with 48% of the parents studied, who agree that (educational) authority has an influence on the events in the life of their child. In this sense, parents should instill in their children and, at the same time, provide them with the necessary tools to strengthen their personality, always giving priority to their needs, giving priority to personal needs rather than those of others (Marín-Iral et al., 2019).

For Pire-Rojas & Rojas-Valladares (2020), responsibility is part of the life of every individual since he/she has the capacity for discernment, and is a function of age and roles in society. From this point of view, children and adolescents have responsibility in some aspects of their lives, depending on their physiological maturity. In this sense, the responses of the teachers in this study reflected that 40% "agreed" and another 40% thought that "maybe" the actions (responsibilities) of the students determine their present and future

life. Children and adolescents should understand that a person's actions will always have consequences, so they should be the ones to make the most appropriate decisions, based on prior guidance from their parents or guardians (Rojas-Avilés et al., 2021).

Finally, from the teachers' point of view, 60% of them considered that "maybe" interpersonal relationships between children and adolescents are determined by their own likeability. However, from the psychological point of view of children and adolescents, the fact that "the nicer you are, the more friends you will have", could generate self-esteem problems, as stated by Naranjo-Pou et al. (2020a). In this sense, children and adolescents should understand the importance of trying to be authentic and not pretend to be comfortable in situations that generate contrary emotions, because they want to be accepted by their peers in certain groups (Naranjo-Pou et al., 2020b).

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