

Relationship of Toilet Training and Weaning Practices to Personality of Children

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ABSTRACT To study the relationship of toilet training and weaning practices to personality, 50 children were administered Early School Personality Questionnaire (ESPQ) and mothers of these children were given questionnaires on toilet training and weaning. Chi Square analysis reveals a significant association with age of weaning and children's intelligence, emotional stability or instability and tenseness, frustration or relaxed unfriustration. Type of weaning was found to be related to dependence or independence characteristics of personality.

Human development is determined by both physical environment and the family environment. Physical environment includes housing facilities and the physical surroundings of the child. Family environment includes the attitudes, personality make-up and child rearing practices of the parents. Besides disciplinary practices, toilet training and weaning practices used by the mothers also affect the development of the personality of the child.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study aimed at investigating the relationship of toilet training and weaning practices to the personality of the children. Each subject was tested on the tests measuring personality and each mother of these children was asked through questionnaires on toilet training and weaning practices.

The sample used for the present study consisted of 50 students who were in the age group of 6-7 years. Early School Personality Questionnaire consists of 2 forms (A₁ and A₂) has 13 scales or factors of personality.

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|----------------|--|----|---|
| B | Less intelligent, concrete thinking. | vs | More intelligent, Bright, abstract thinking. |
| C | Affected by feelings, emotionally less stable, easily upset, changeable. | vs | Emotionally stable, calm, faces reality. |
| E | Obedient, confirming, submissive, mild. | vs | Assertive, independent, aggressive, dominant. |
| I | Tough minded, realistic, self reliant. | vs | Tender minded, dependent sensitive. |
| O | Placid, secure, confident, untroubled. | vs | Apprehensive, depressive, insecure. |
| Q ₄ | Relaxed, tranquil, unfrustrated. | vs | Tense, over wrought, frustrated. |

Out of 13 scales of personality, 6 scales which seemed to be more relevant for the present study were used for statistically analysis. These scales were B, C, E, I, O, Q₄. Answer sheets for both forms A₁ and A₂ were used separately. The time required to complete the questionnaire was 30-35 minutes for each form depending on the maturity of the subjects. Answer sheets were distributed to the subjects for both A₁ and A₂ parts of the test. On each page of the answer sheet there were 18-22 boxes indicating responses to the corresponding number of questions. Each box contained A at the left and B at the right and children were to tick one.

The ESPQ has been designed to permit convenient hand scoring directly from the answer form. Raw scores for each scale or factors were obtained by counting the marks that appear in the appropriate set of holes in the stencil. Questionnaire on weaning and toilet training were given to the mothers of 50 children (who had been administered ESPQ). Quantitative scores were not given to answers to the questions on both the questionnaires. Categories or alternatives were used as such for statistical analysis, sometimes two categories were combined.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Relationship of toilet training and weaning practices to personality was found out by applying chi-square test. The scores of the subjects on ESPQ were split on the basis of arithmetic mean for 6 different scales of personality *i.e.* B, C, E, I, O and Q₄. The subjects falling above the mean scores of one factor personality were represented with one label and subjects having scores below the mean were designated with another label and the same have been used for analysis.

For toilet training and weaning practices, the frequencies for response categories of each item were found out. The values of χ^2 were calculated for four items, *i.e.* two items each for toilet training and weaning questionnaires.

Chi-square test could not be calculated for remaining items as some of the mothers did not give relevant answers on some of the items and as such these data did not meet the requirement of chi-square test. For these items on toilet training and weaning practices, percentage of responses of mothers were calculated.

**Table 1 : Item - Age at which toilet training was given
n=50**

S. Personality No.	Categories		Value of χ^2
	0 - 1 Year	1 Year +	
1. a) Aggressive	14	9	0.02
b) Submissive	17	10	(N.S.)
2. a) Abstract thinkers	20	7	3.63
b) Concrete thinkers	11	12	(N.S.)
3. a) Insecure	21	8	3.18
b) Secure	10	11	(N.S.)
4. Tense	13	9	0.14
Relaxed	18	10	(N.S.)
5. Dependent	17	14	0.19
Independent	14	5	(N.S.)
6. Emotionally stable	13	13	3.31
Emotionally unstable	18	6	(N.S.)

The values of chi-square test between age at which toilet training was given and six personality factors namely B, C, E, I, O and Q₄ were insignificant.

There was no relationship between accep-

tance of toilet training by the children and all the factors *i.e.* B, C, E, I, O and Q₄. Karland (1985) suggests that toilet training is not a major factor in child's upbringing and that it is the general family climate and relation between children and parents that are important to child development. Although a poor family climate for expressing feelings can be reflected by coercive toilet training.

Table 2 : Item - Acceptance of toilet training by the children

S. Personality No.	Categories		Value of χ^2
	Yes	No	
1. Abstract thinkers	21	4	0
Concrete thinkers	20	5	N.S.
2. Emotionally Stable	19	7	1.81
Emotionally unstable	22	2	N.S.
3. Aggressive	19	6	0.54
Submissive	22	3	N.S.
4. Dependent	25	6	0.003
Independent	16	3	N.S.
5. Insecure	19	4	0.08
Secure	22	5	N.S.
6. Tense	13	9	0.14
Relaxed	18	10	(N.S.)

d.f. = 1

Table 3 : Item - Age of weaning the children

S. Personality No.	Categories		Value of χ^2
	0-9 Months	9 Months+	
1. Abstract thinkers	7	19	3.85
Concrete thinkers	13	11	(S)
2. Emotionally stable	3	15	6.88
Emotionally unstable	17	15	(S)
3. Aggressive	10	15	0.09
Submissive	11	14	(N.S.)
4. Dependent	12	18	0
Independent	8	12	(N.S.)
5. Insecure	8	13	0.05
Secure	12	17	(N.S.)
6. Tense	13	8	7.24
Relaxed	7	22	(S)

d.f. = 1

Age of weaning and intelligence of the subjects were significantly related. There was significant relationship between age of weaning and emotional maturity of the children. Values of chi-square test were significant for factor Q₄ *i.e.* tense or relaxed personality.

There was no significant relationship be-

tween age of weaning and personality E, I and O.

Table 4 : Item - Type of weaning used by the mothers

S. Personality No.	Categories		Value of χ^2
	0-9 Months	9 Months+	
1. Abstract thinkers	19	6	3.13
Concrete thinkers	13	12	(N.S.)
2. Emotionally stable	16	9	0
Emotionally instable	16	9	(N.S.)
3. Aggressive	15	10	0.35
Submissive	17	8	(N.S.)
4. Dependent	22	7	4.22
Independent	10	11	(S)
5. Insecure	15	7	0.30
Secure	17	11	(N.S.)
6. Tense	13	9	0.41
Relaxed	19	9	(N.S.)

d.f. =1 S=Significant NS=Non-significant

There was significant relation between type

of weaning and dependence or independence or factor-I. There was insignificant relation between type of weaning and factors B, C, E, O and Q₄. Patricia (1983) studied prolonged breast feeding related to later solid food acceptance. Results indicated that infants fed for less than 3 months showed a better acceptance of solid foods at 18 months than those breast feeding for six months or more.

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