Family Research Assignment

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Child Development 357

December 5, 2013

**Introduction**

The family who participated was a mother and a daughter; the mother is 43 years old and the daughter is 18 years old and they are both Caucasian. The family I interviewed was my mother and my younger sister. I collected my data in San Diego, California on Monday November 25, 2013. The data collection took place inside their living room in their home.

**Summary and Comparison**

One of the most prevalent things I found throughout this process was how the developmental tasks related back to the adolescent. For example, the mother described that she enjoyed how her child isn’t as dependent on her at this age. This relates back to the developmental task of becoming autonomous which is defined as freedom from continual or pressing needs for reassurance and approval. The adolescent showed this through her interest in cosmetology school because she found a passion and is pursuing it whether or not anyone disagrees with that decision. Another developmental task that the adolescent showed was clarifying purpose which is defined as an individual formulating plans and priorities that integrate vocational and leisure-time interests. The adolescent also displayed this through her passion of cosmetology school; she did this by finding that “activity” that makes them feel good and in this case she wants to pursue it as a career. Another aspect of this interview I found important was when the parent discussed the internet being a strong barrier to effective parenting. This relates back to the unit on social media and more specifically it relates back to the reading *The Cyberbubble* written by Eugenides. Eugenides discusses how when teenagers take photos that they post them online for attention or reassurance that they look good from their peers (39). This relates back to the parent discussing all the different social media including snapchat which is an application on a phone where people can send pictures back and forth. The parent discussed how teenagers today are obsessed with it and are looking for approval which is why they partake in sending the pictures. In the article *Teens and Mobile Phones* its discussed that teenagers fully embrace texting to be involved within their peers especially girls (Lenhart, Ling, Campbell & Purcell, 2010). This was prevalent within the parent and child because they both described social media being an important force in the said adolescent’s life.

 **Reflection**

The process of collecting data has a lot of educational value to it. First of all, I learned how important it is to have a recording of interviews because it is hard to remember all the details of how someone verbally answers a question. Second of all, I learned how important it is to do the interviews separately because both parties were very passionate about their answers and having each other in the room could have skewed the answers each of them gave about each other. Another important thing I learned about data collection is how important accuracy is because when transferring from written over to the computer it’s very easy to make mistakes. I did it multiple times and it can mess up all the data reports so accuracy is one of the most important things to consider when punching all the data into the computer. Lastly, another important lesson I learned is to be very clear and direct when giving an oral interview. This is important because it’s easy to confuse the person who you are giving the interview to. Also, it’s very easy for the interviewee to go off on a tangent and not stay on topic if the interview is not very carefully directed down a certain path. Survey collection and interviews are a very useful tool is conducting a research project because it gets straight to the point of what specific topic is being researched and allows the researchers to direct the questions being ask which leads to more accurate findings.

I learned a lot about families with adolescents during this interview process. Even though I interviewed my own sister and mother for this research project, all the information was new to me because unlike my sister I have never lived with my mom full-time as a teenager. I grew up and lived full time with my dad while I went and saw my mom on the weekends. Therefore, I do not really know my mother as a full-time parent or what she is like. It was interesting to learn about mothers and an adolescent teenage girl because I have never experienced the high emotions of an extremely close relationship with a mother proximity wise and emotionally. It is also interesting to see how a typical adolescent teenage girl views relationships today and how she is always looking for someone new to talk to as she described to me when she was showing me certain parts of her survey. Also, I found it to be thought-provoking what the mother said about how the internet makes it difficult to parent effectively to a child. I never considered that to be a barrier for effective parenting but it completely is this powerful force having a lot of control over adolescent’s lives because any of their peers has access to them at any time. No conflict or friendships get left at school it does follow adolescent’s home and can be infectious in their lives.

References

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