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## **DEVELOPMENTAL ASPECTS IN MODELS OF BEHAVIOUR AND EDUCATION**

### **ASPEKTY ROZWOJOWE W MODELACH BEHAWIORALNYCH A EDUKACJA**

#### **Abstract**

The article points out the link between the evolutionary conditioned human personality development and their upbringing. Basing on this theoretical context can be derived the definition of relational bonding, behavioral relationships, especially in the early childhood, as well as other patterns of behavior during individual (human) development. The models of behavioral patterns are demonstrated in both negative and positive forms in the adolescent youth. Although high importance is assigned to the socializing influence in the adolescent age, the innate natural relations of the development and evolutionary determined specific signs of relational bonding play a significant role in this period of the human development. The undesirable formulas and various forms of problem behavior must then be solved through the reeducational upbringing processes, in particular using the interacting in the educational process, communication, "relational" education and cultivating personality formation. The goal of the education is the development and integrity of the personality.

**Keywords:** evolution, human personality, behavior models, education and upbringing process.

#### **Streszczenie**

W artykule zwrócono uwagę na powiązanie między ewolucyjnie uwarunkowanym rozwojem osobowości człowieka a jego wychowaniem. Na podstawie tego kontekstu teoretycznego można wyprowadzić definicję więzi relacyjnej, relacji behawioralnych, zwłaszcza we wczesnym dzieciństwie, a także innych wzorców zachowań w indywidualnym rozwoju człowieka. Modele wzorców behawioralnych są demonstrowane zarówno w formie negatywnej, jak i pozytywnej u dorastającej młodzieży. Chociaż duże znaczenie przypisuje się wpływowi socjalizacji w wieku dorastania, to wrodzone naturalne relacje rozwojowe i ewolucyjnie zdeterminowane specyficzne oznaki więzi relacyjnej odgrywają kluczową rolę w tym okresie rozwoju. Niepożądane formuły i różne formy zachowania problemowego muszą być wyeliminowane poprzez proces reedukacji, szczególnie z wykorzystaniem interakcji w procesie edukacyjnym, komunikacji, edukacji „relacyjnej”, poprzez pracę nad formowaniem osobowości. Celem edukacji jest rozwój i integralność osobowości.

**Słowa kluczowe:** ewolucja, osobowość, modele behawioralne, proces edukacji i wychowania.

#### **Introduction**

This paper connects the development of personality of children and evolutionarily conditioned upbringing. Ethological principles applied during upbringing are at the fore-

front of this approach, and it is upon this basis that attachments and in particular early behaviour in children are derived. Other patterns of behaviour during individuals' development are also marked by attachment and become part of observable external expressions. Behind many issues in parenting there are deeper internal reasons and even certain evolutionary factors which cause what is seen as externally apparent. This is not always the result of the influence of the social environment or the result of some purposeful educational guidance. Models of behavioural patterns appear in various negative and positive forms among adolescents. Even though adolescence is a very important period of socialization, during this time there are innate rules of development and evolutionarily conditioned features of attachment which play an important role. Unwanted patterns and various forms of problematic behaviour are then dealt with through re-educational practices of parenting, particularly through interaction in the upbringing process, attachment parenting, cultivation of the formation of personality, and through education at the cognitive level. The primary aim of education and the impact of parenting is holistic development and assuring the integrity of personality. Not so much scholarly attention is paid to the causes of problems determined by evolutionary patterns, and it is important to include all agents in upbringing and take into account the many factors that can make it more effective.<sup>1</sup>

### **Developmental (evolutionary and developmental) aspects of upbringing in early childhood and adolescence**

The best preparation of conditions for a child's upbringing is to create a healthy relationship between the caregiver and the child. Attachment is an embedded system in the brain that develops in a way that influences and organizes motivational, emotional, and memory processes in relation to significant caregivers<sup>2</sup>. It is the foundation of an interpersonal relationship which allows the

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<sup>1</sup> The paper is a publication output of VEGA grant project No. 1/0549/18: *Filozofické a kozmologické aspekty chápania evolúcie vesmíru a miesta človeka v ňom* (Philosophical and cosmological aspects of the evolution of universe and the place of a human being in it). The project's core platform is the interconnection of philosophical and special scientific areas of research and the attempt to reach an interdisciplinary solution. The focus of the project is on the formulation of an appropriate value and ethical foundation which can determine the attitude of humans to nature, the world, other people, and even to themselves. The project addresses the anthropic principle and the understanding of human nature, including the human interference in evolution. From the evolutionary, cosmological, and anthropological points of view, the project seeks to reformulate answers to the "goals" and "meaning" of the evolution of the universe and humans in light of the latest philosophical as well as physical knowledge. With an interdisciplinary approach and as a part of pedagogical research, this project seeks to find the place of human beings in the universe by searching for the meanings of our lives through upbringing practices which encourage the formation of values and moral and pro-social behaviour.

<sup>2</sup> D.J. Siegel, *The developing Mind*, New York 1999.

undeveloped mental and nervous system of children to use the capacity and functions of the more developed brain and mental processes of their parents to organize their own processes. This leads children to seek out the closeness of parents and establish communication with them, thus increasing their own chances of survival. Repeated experiences from these relationships are stored in their implicit memory in the form of settings and expectations and then gradually in the form of internal working models<sup>3</sup>. Attachment is a universal process in human development that first appears in early childhood in their relationships with caregivers and later on in relationships with their friends, partners, and their own children.

Several psychological studies monitoring the physiology of mothers and the prenatal development of children during pregnancy have identified the emergence and presence of this attachment, which later on deeply affects children's upbringing. The relationship begins with early bodily attachment and the first parental reactions to a child, the first smile, and the specific course of the emotional attachment between child and parent; it is most intensively built upon between the ages of seventh months and two years. The formation of this relationship continues with the formation of a child's relationship with the home environment and the people living in it. This process includes experiences with other pre-schoolers and subsequently with schoolmates, and is also related to the acceptance of one's own gender identity. The formation of this aspect of personal identity develops continually and intensively during puberty. It is during adolescence that attachment achieves its greatest strength through the creation of relationships founded on young love, dreams of the future, and the culmination of intimate relationships. This biologically and evolutionary life cycle is ultimately concluded with partnerships, marriage, and pregnancy as a shared experience for both women and men<sup>4</sup>.

The rapid development of attachment theory and scholarly interest in related issues of parenting were first presented in studies by scientists, biologists, and ethologists: most notably by the Nobel Prize winners Konrad Lorenz and Nikolaas Tinbergen. Through their observations, behavioural studies, and animal experiments, ethologists have shown that there are critical moments and periods in development when a newly-born offspring acquire a basic tendency towards its own behaviour and interactions in life through "imprinting" by continuous emotional attachment, observing maternal behaviour, and social learning. Ethologists primarily observed this phenomenon in the behaviour of birds (specifically wild geese). Compared to animals, humans are much more adaptable and flexible<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> V. Vavrda, *Otázky soudobé psychoanalýzy. Tradice a současnost*. Praha 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Z. Matějček, J. Langmeier, *Počátky našeho duševního života*, Praha 1996, p. 12

<sup>5</sup> The neurobiological foundations of attachment are extensive and highly interesting. This area is beyond the scope of the present paper, but it is mentioned here for a greater theoretical understanding.

Humans are thinking and sentient beings with authentic individual personalities. Due to their typically “human” nature, going beyond a purely sociobiological determination of behaviour in people is possible. Precisely for this reason, remedying the negative consequences of human behaviour is always possible thanks to meaningful guidance and purposeful upbringing. Humans can also overcome unfavourable aspects of development and their consequences through their own decision making, free will, correct parental leadership, and guidance. Personality development in humans, determined by the laws of development and specific environmental conditions, is neither pre-determined nor unchangeable.

Attachment theory explains many things, but it does not provide a complete answer to the questions of “What is a human being?” or “Where is life going?” Nor are educational and anthropological questions such as “What shapes a person?” and “How can one properly raise others?” answered.

Even though research and knowledge of prenatal psychology is highly speculative and experimental in some aspects, the prenatal period in a child’s development is of considerable interest when examining attachment theory. In principle, this knowledge is a scientific rationale for asking the ethical question of whether a foetus should be treated as a human being with all the observable psychological and physiological manifestations. The answer to this lies in the fact that a human foetus deserves moral respect because it carries the life and dignity of a human being. Respect for the foetus (and subsequently for young and mature individuals) can be shown in an attitude of responsibility for its upbringing.

According to Bowlby<sup>6</sup>, a child has a primary instinctive tendency to bond with the mother as an individual and establish a relationship with her that binds her to the maternal role. A child will signal to its mother the necessity for her proximity through different behavioural patterns (e.g., crying, being calm in her proximity, and smiling). This is a separate system of instinctive behaviour with its own regulations, similar to the regulation of food intake and sexual instinct. Attachment behaviour is activated by loneliness, a feeling of abandonment, a foreign environment, fatigue, and weakness felt during illness. Interactions with the mother develop a child’s “internal working models”, which then become specific behavioural models. Bowlby’s research, also supported by Ainsworth’s empirical studies, (Ainsworth, 1989)<sup>7</sup> confirmed that these internal working models, certain expectations, and the formation of behavioural patterns in relation to past experiences can be developed substantially at the end of the first year of life and then remain constant and stable for most children. They are stored in the implicit memory and even affect the formation of relationships in adulthood. Bowlby came to these findings upon the basis of his knowledge of psychoanaly-

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<sup>6</sup> J. Bowlby, *Childcare and the growth of love*, Middlesex 1980; idem, *Vazba : Teorie kvality raných vztahů mezi matkou a dítětem*, Praha 2010.

<sup>7</sup> M.D.S. Ainsworth, *Attachment beyond infancy*, “American Psychologist“ 1989, 44, 709–716.

sis. He drew a lot of inspiration and information from ethology, which programmatically supports evolutionary biology. Ethology suited his approach to assessing human behavioural problems. This required the study of the brain and a concentration of knowledge from neurobiology and neurophysiology. Working on the theoretical understanding of internal working models, Bowlby relied upon knowledge from the field of cognitive psychology. In the same way, evolutionary psychology proved to be useful within attachment theory in explaining the meaning of a child's real experiences with those who are close to them. The basic finding was that the real behaviour of the mother (parent) decided what type of attachment the child would develop. Is the mother available? Does she readily feel the needs of the child and respond immediately to them? Descriptions of several types of bonds have emerged from these characteristics, such as "safe", "uncertain", "ambivalent", "evasive", and "disorganized". This theory significantly influenced subsequent research and enriched theoretical work in psychology, psychopathology, psychodynamic schools, psychotherapy, neonatology, and paediatrics. It also had an impact on the pedagogical disciplines, trends in pedagogical and psychological counselling, and theories of parenting. Several international experts have responded to the findings of this theory. Czech and Slovak psychologists – most notably L. Langmeier, Z. Matějček, J. Prekopova, J. Šturma, J. Kovařík, Z. Dytrych, J. Dunovsky, and I. Štůr<sup>8</sup> – have dealt with attachment theory and consequently influenced developments in pedagogy.

### **The formation of personality and the attachment-based socialization of children within the family**

Attachment parenting is a relatively new concept and represents a particular direction in counselling and psychotherapy. It focuses on the development of the relationship between parents and children as a basic requirement whereby the children's biological, psychological, and social needs are met. A precondition for the healthy development of a child is a safe attachment to someone who is the most important support in their life. The fulfilment of basic needs and the formation of attachment are the primary tasks of parenting. The family and the family environment is a very important value for children. A child is born defenceless and is unable to walk or take care of itself. Without the help of adults, babies would die; they need family care, the satisfaction of daily needs (food, warmth, care, and love), and the safety of the home environment. Over time and as they grow up, children within the family begin to understand their own identity as an answer to who they are and who makes up their family, they gain an idea of where they belong, and they develop an individuality which allows them to resemble other family member in some respects but also differ from them. Fur-

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<sup>8</sup> J. Hašto, *Vztáhová väzba. Ku koreňom lásky*, Trenčín 2005, p. 12–19.

thermore, they understand they have power over their own lives and the ability to make decisions concerning everyday matters and situations with the support of respectful and loving people. Supporting such attributes is the foundation of the building of self-esteem in a child's upbringing, and they are most present in the original family environment; their provision in foster family care is limited.

Attachment is a universal process in human development which first appears in early childhood in a child's relationship to its caregivers and then during adolescence in friendships, romantic partnerships, and later on in relationships with one's own children. Developmental theorists argue that sensitivity and the general quality of care contribute to safe attachment relationships and the gaining of internal models of good relationships which are then transferred from childhood to future forms of attachment.

During adolescence the attachment system undergoes substantial transformations, but it can primarily perform a function as a protective factor. Bowlby<sup>9</sup> sees attachment as a protective system that has evolved to protect vulnerable offspring from danger and encourage their exploration of the environment. The quality of early attachments is considered to influence the development of later relationships with peers and romantic partners.

The balance between increasing independence and closeness to one's parents is a central feature of attachment theory and is especially relevant when children enter adolescence. Children and parents are more able to understand each other and reach an agreement on their relationship. Adolescents continue to perceive parents as a safe base for "exploring the world," and they take advantage of being able to temporarily return to parental safety as their parents will help them in times of threat, illness, fear, or stress. Emotional availability is a more frequent goal of the attachment system during adolescence than the physical proximity of the attachment figure. Attachment experiences provide a secure foundation for adolescents to explore their skills and experiences in different contexts, but these experiences also prepare adolescents to become socially connected with others and learn how to be a provider of care and protection to others.

The upbringing of adolescents is characterized by their tendency towards problematic and risky behaviour and the transgression of social limits and standards. According to Perkins and Borden<sup>10</sup>, factors of individual and contextual characteristics connected to risky adolescent behaviour can be placed into three categories: individual characteristics (gender, ethnicity, poor grades at school, low academic aspirations, negative expectations of the future, and low self-confidence); family factors (weak communication between parents and adolescent children, weak monitoring by parents, lack of parental support, and parents' addiction problems); and the extrafamilial context (negative relationships with

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<sup>9</sup> J. Bowlby, *Vazba...*

<sup>10</sup> D.F. Perkins, L.M. Borden, *Positive Behaviors, Problem Behaviors and Resiliency in Adolescence*. In : I.B. Weiner (ed.) *Handbook of Psychology*, New Jersey 2003, p. 373–394.

peers, a negative school environment, poor neighbourly relationships, and low socioeconomic status). Specific risky behaviour among adolescents includes sexual activity, substance abuse, delinquent and antisocial behaviour, and performing poorly at school. However, it should be noted that the presence of risk factors does not yet determine whether these adverse effects will occur; they rather indicate the increasing likelihood of their occurrence.

There are other peculiarities in relationship development during adolescence which affect communication and upbringing, which specifically concern the period of “young adulthood” between the ages of twenty and thirty-five years. The central question of this evolutionary period is “Am I loved and wanted?” The quality of an adolescent’s ego is represented by love and its value; social relationship elements focus on belonging and various patterns of cooperation (often through partner relationships and marriage).

According to Erikson's theory<sup>11</sup> of the eight stages of the life cycle, adolescents can be characterized as having a given developmental role in the fifth stage (identity vs role confusion) and sixth stage (intimacy vs isolation) of life. The conflict between intimacy and isolation occurs between the ages of nineteen and thirty-four years. The beginning of this stage also sees the conclusion of the conflict between identity and role confusion (Erikson, 1950)<sup>12</sup>. Young adults have a constant tendency to let their personal identities merge with those of their friends. The need to be integrated somewhere is dominant. According to Erikson, the need to confirm one’s own identity with the identities of others can actually isolate a maturing adult. This may arise, in particular, from a fear of rejection (such as by those of the same sex or their own parents). Experiences of pain, which in many cases is caused by the rejection of the ego, can seem unbearable. Erikson dealt with this issue in his work on the social psychological development of personality, and he confirmed the view that intimacy had its counterpart in being reserved, indicating a preparedness to isolate oneself and, if necessary, destroy those forces or people whose nature appears dangerous and whose presence encroaches into one’s own intimate relationships. It is in this area that determinants of problematic behaviour among young people can be found.

As is known, adolescence is a transitory developmental period full of changes, and this is particularly true when looking at the attachment system. Early adolescence begins with an enormous urge to be less dependent on the primary figures of attachment (one’s own parents). In late adolescence there is the potential for complete functional independence from one’s parents; indeed, adolescents assume readiness to become attachment figures for their own children. However, adolescence is not simply a transitory point between these two forms

<sup>11</sup> E.H.Erikson, *Dětství a společnost*, Praha 2002.

<sup>12</sup> E.H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, New York 1950, 1963.

of attachment engagement (Allen, 2008)<sup>13</sup>. Allen states that it is more of a period of intensive transformation in emotional, cognitive, and behavioural systems which are directly linked to attachment. These transformations happen as adolescents develop and transform from being recipients of care to independent adults and potentially care providers for their peers, romantic partners, and their own children. Thanks to the onset of formal operations in thinking, adolescents become capable of generalizing and abstract thinking when focusing on relationship figures. A small child may think of different relationship experiences without linking them together. By contrast, an adolescent can think of relationships in a more integrated fashion: "I can get help from people when I need it, but not from everyone. I have to be cautious about who I admit into my inner circle." Allen and Land<sup>14</sup> state that adolescence may initially appear to be a period of detachment from the relationship with one's own parents, as many adolescents experience these relationships as binding ones at a time when their own behaviour is directed towards more autonomy. They also state, however, that it is important to understand this tendency among adolescents as an expression of the developmental context and not as a sign that these attachments are no longer important to them. Attachment plays an important role in fulfilling developmental roles in this period. This is a period of transition from a life stage with intense attachment experiences (childhood) to the next life stage of intense experiences in new relationships (adulthood). Adolescence is a particular period with specific cognitive and emotional processes related to attachment.

According to Allen and Land, normative and individual changes can be considered within the context of the development of the attachment system. They claim that before researchers begin to address individual differences in attachment among adolescents, they should firstly acquire a basic knowledge of the normative development of the attachment system and the general changes in cognition, feelings, and behaviours that emerge during adolescence. This should be supplemented by communication with adolescents as well as another forms of educational activity.

### **Integral parenting and upbringing as an ideal**

Attachment parenting focuses on attachment as an extraordinary and unmistakable bond between parents and children. Children and (most) mothers are attracted to each other like magnets, with one not feeling complete without the

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<sup>13</sup> J.P. Allen, *The Attachment system in adolescence*. In : J.Cassidy & P. Shaver (eds.) *Handbook off attachment : Theory, research and clinical applications*. New York 2008, pp. 419–435.

<sup>14</sup> J.P. Allen, D. Land, *The Attachment system in adolescence*. In : J.Cassidy & P. Shaver (eds.) *Handbook off attachment : Theory, research and clinical applications*, New York 1999, pp. 319–335.



other. A solid bond begins to form during pregnancy, and after birth it develops and strengthens. A very important time for the proper bonding of a mother with her child is in the first three years of life. Many mothers intuitively practice principles of attachment parenting without being aware that this involves a philosophical change in their approach to raising a child. This is because attachment parenting is based on natural listening, understanding, and answering the needs of children. Attachment parenting tends to be most effective and of the highest quality when all its tools of cognitive, emotional, and motivational means of parenting are used. Well established attachments are firmly rooted in the consciousness and the subconscious minds of those they concern. They bring quality and new dimensions to the mutual relationship between parent and child and influence the quality and effectiveness of parenting. Many psychiatrists and psychologists agree that the most important factor of attachment parenting which affects the intellectual development of a child is the mother's sensitivity to the child's signals. Attachment parenting is primarily a type of communication between the mother (parent) and child. It is a way of caring for a child that develops the best that is within the child and in its parents. Attachment parenting is based upon communication and intuition. When raising a child, it is very important to know how to listen to them and understand their legitimate needs, while also listening to one's own instincts, intuitions, and heart, and understanding one's own needs. The effort associated with the practice of attachment parenting is rewarded in the form of accumulated trust between parent and child as well as in experiencing understanding, love, self-confidence, and independence. This is why the family unit has further functions which can be employed in a parenting role. From birth, and through attachment parenting, children are given natural intelligence and wisdom from older family members; they learn from their family to make decisions and recognize and evaluate the things and phenomena around and within themselves; they learn to determine between good and evil and accept life and moral principles; and they learn to value themselves and not allow themselves to be belittled or brought down by others. This way of parenting means total interaction and communication between adults and children. This is shown in the choice and way of using means, procedures, and methods of parenting which are beneficial for the child's survival and behaviour, which in turn will influence its own adult experiences and behaviour.

According to Čáp<sup>15</sup> types of parenting specifically affect different personality subsystems, which they develop and form in a complementary manner. The effect and impact of parenting can be seen in its strong influence on the formation of the moral qualities of the child, such as conscientiousness, endurance, self-control, and its overall role in character development. It has a strong influence on the formation of a child's psychological stability and resilience, and it

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<sup>15</sup> J. Čáp, *Rozvíjení osobnosti a způsob výchovy*, Praha 1996.

affects the formation of other subsystems of personality such as temperament, motivation, activeness, and traits that appear when communicating.

The Emotional Quotient (EQ) is an expression of human maturity which can be seen in the mastery of interpersonal relationships wherein relationships are successfully established, there is an ability to be open and inwardly “pure” (honest and consistent), and there is an ability to accept oneself and others just as they are. The path to EQ maturity is a natural one of personal growth and humanness, and this is the path taken by pedagogy. People who work on their EQ also improve their own social intelligence; they are easier to integrate into society, do not need alternative sources of personal development, and tend not to fall victim to addiction.

The cognitive intelligence quotient (IQ) primarily measures the ability of rational and logical thinking, spatial imagination, memory, and verbal and numerical expression. By contrast, EQ is practical and is more important for finding success and satisfaction in life (in terms of seeking value and meaning in life) than the cognitive properties which develop an individual’s personality. Emotional intelligence focuses on five main areas: understanding one’s own emotions (self-awareness), controlling one’s emotions, having the ability of self-motivation, being aware of other people’s emotions (empathy), and mastering the art of interpersonal relationships. However, parenting is more than simply developing the emotional intelligence of a child through attachment. Knowledge of emotional intelligence can be useful in the process of upbringing because the quality of parenting is primarily determined by the emotional and human preparedness of parents and caregivers in teaching a child to be aware of and distinguish between a range of deep emotions so that they become natural and acceptable for them. By developing emotional intelligence, a child can learn to express emotions and take responsibility for them, learning not to hurt others in emotional outbursts or transfer them to others and make them feel responsible for them. A brief summary of the above could be that IQ is good, EQ is better, and that IQ + EQ is ideal. This ideal is found in integral parenting, which is balanced and harmoniously develops all the components of a child’s personality, including cognition, emotions, motivation, and attitude, and which also educationally channels a child’s behaviour and actions.

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