

# What We Can Do to Help Our Children be Successful?

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**Abstract:** Helping our children become successful people has become a big problem to both teachers and parents. This article will talk about the history of nature and nurture and how people have changed their understanding of it over time. Understanding how nature and nurture affect human behavior and children's development will help both parents and educators change the education system to help more children be successful. Also, the way that the government supports the improvement of education will be discussed.

**Keywords:** Parenting; Education; Nature; Nurture

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The concepts of nature and nurture have been debated within psychology since the earliest theorists. People believed that humans previously grew up through nature; today, people think that they can use nurture to develop success for children. In the following paper, readers will learn the history of nature and nurture and how people use these concepts to improve the quality of life. Readers will learn how nature and nurture will influence child development. Also, readers will read about how Asian government improve their laws to help better child development by understanding the principles of nature and nurture. This paper will discuss how these concepts affect human behavior as well. The first section in this paper will talk about the process of nature and nurture and the history of these concepts. The way that knowledge of nature and nurture is used to create new technologies to make people's lives better will be included as well. In the second section, the development of children will be discussed. In this section, the process of human development, and how environment, nature, and nurture will influence children's development will be discussed as well. The next part will talk about how genetics and environment will affect human behaviors. Finally, relying on the development of children, how the policy and parenting styles are improved in Asian districts will be analyzed. Through all of the above, readers will have a better understanding about the history of nature and nurture and child development. It will help parents and educators think about how to improve children and help them reach achievement. Also, it will encourage scientists and inventors to invent more useful technologies.

## 1. The history and future of Nature and Nurture

Over history, humans have evolved to have different physical characteristics. Humans have debated whether or not these differences reflect differences in ability reference. It is unclear exactly when humans started noticing these physical differences and assigning meaning to them, and people have long debated whether our characteristics are innate or learned.

Gruber said that early in history, people believed that God gave them life and created a specific path that each person was destined to follow; humans did not have the ability to change this path<sup>[1]</sup>. This claim was an early form of the "nature" side of the nature versus nurture debate: if humans' paths were predetermined by God, then nothing they encountered in life would make a difference.

However, many people had a different opinion than what Gruber wrote about. For example, John Locke thought that only nurture mattered. Duschinsky states that John Locke believed that children are born unshaped and pure, and their environment would shape them differently. Also, they would have the ability to change their future path.

After centuries of debate, psychologists now know that both nature and nurture are important to a person's development, and neither can succeed without the other. Gruber states that more recently, scientists have found that everyone has the inborn ability to study new things, but each person's environment influences how this potential is used. For example, everyone has the ability to learn another language, but if we are not taught it by somebody who already knows it, this ability cannot be used because we do not have innate knowledge of the language.

Also, Plomin et al found genes play a decisive role in the development of children. Differences in genes can account for the different ways that children respond to environments. This literature has concluded that children's abilities and development depend on environment and heredity, but heredity plays a greater role in children. In general, the consensus at this point is that nature and nurture are, more or less, equally important.

People begin studying human biology in grade school. We are taught about genes and heredity and how these shape who we are as people. However, we do not learn as much about the power that our environment has over our development. In the education system, nature is focused on more than nurture, which can give people inaccurate information about how we become individuals. Galton said that while life is the product of the sperm and the egg, only family, environment, and parents' values can make humans different.

Galton's view was a more sophisticated version of John Locke's, stating that everyone is born the same but becomes different later on due to their environment.

Nowadays, people will find many reasons to justify their racial discrimination. However, they forget that everyone is born in nature and equal. Still, society has placed importance on distinguishing people based on their skin color, a practice which even young children have begun to learn.

People often say that infants are like a mirror of society, which can reflect social problems. Bar-Haim et al studied about several different months infants. They found six-month-old infants already have the ability to recognize different races by comparing their own face with that of someone of another race, and three-month-old infants can tell skin color differences among people. This shows that in the infants' world there was no difference between races beyond simply skin color. Adults use their nurture knowledge to teach children the different societal meanings that different races are correlated with. In extreme cases, this practice can lead to racism being passed down to children.

Knowing the history of nature and nurture can help people understand humans better and can also help scientists to improve our society. As our knowledge of nature and nurture has progressed, our technology has begun to incorporate these concepts. For example, according to Gruber, Siri, a general-purpose AI agent, represents nurture. It has a set amount of knowledge automatically programmed, and when it does not know an answer, it can search the internet to find this information. Google, on the other hand, is a search engine that represents nature. The results of a Google search change depending on what information is available. People are learning how to combine both nature and nurture to create useful technology.

## **2. How Nature and Nurture affect human behavior?**

In child development, knowing the power of nature and nurture can help parents and educators to understand children and help them develop better. Different genetics and environments will shape human behaviors differently.

McGur and Bouchard found during the Vietnam era, some people would choose to join the army, some would run away to other countries, some would receive higher education, and some would decide to drop out of school<sup>[2]</sup>. Nurture played a major role in which decision a person would make, as most people took whichever path their peers also took. For example, if someone's friend wanted to become a soldier and fight in the war, that person would likely choose to join them instead of running away.

Regarding antisocial personality, nature and nurture interact in an interesting way. In Levitt's research, he found biological inheritance can influence antisocial personality and violent behavior, but problem families can affect the living environment, education, and quality of life<sup>[3]</sup>. This shows that living environment and family environment will influence both humans' personalities and cause different behaviors. The consensus between McGur and Bouchard, and Levitt is that although genetics is important to determine one's abilities, the living environment will influence behavior.

Different social classes and living environments will cause different behaviors as well. Rowe and Rodgers found that higher social class parents will lead their children to have a better IQ than lower social class families. Also, higher social class families will teach their children how to take responsibility<sup>[4]</sup>. These researchers also found that higher social class children will have less misbehaviors than the lower social class children because they learned responsibility from their families. These higher social class children tend to think more clearly about what they are capable of. Also, that is the cause of the gap between the higher social class and the lower social class.

Without a living environment, parental educational level is another influencer on the gap between different social classes and family IQ differences. Rowe et al found that although higher education level parents will not influence their children's IQ, they will create a better environment for children and they will raise the mean IQ for the whole family<sup>[5]</sup>. This study shows that a better family environment cannot raise the IQ individually, but it can improve the whole family's IQ. Also, this causes the IQ gap between social-economic groups to widen.

## **3. Which take an important place in child development? Nature or Nurture?**

How to raise children successfully has become a major problem for both parents and educators. Wachs found that the ability of children comes from many aspects, and the development of these abilities depends on their parents. Wachs analyzed that children's abilities are nurtured, and parents' intervention will influence their development<sup>[6]</sup>. For example, parents may encourage their children to practice the piano, which will lead the child to develop their abilities. Beyond parenting differences, the environment is another important reason to influence children's intelligence. Both Steen and Kan, et al studied twins and their development. Through their studies, they found after those twins grew up, they had a 30% IQ difference by growing up in different environments. Through their studies, readers can see how the environment will affect children's intellectual development.

The environment will influence children's study ability as well. Sameroff Plug and Vijverberg had talked about how the environment affects children's development and their study abilities. For example, Plug and Vijverberg studied the relationship between parents' income and their children's academic abilities. They found that "To get an idea of the magnitude of ability and income effects, the ability elasticities range from 0.20 to 0.22. Income elasticities are much smaller and are between 0.04 and 0.05". This data analyzed that parents' income will influence children's abilities. On another hand, this data shows that if the parents spend more money on their children's education and on improving children's study environment, then the children will be more successful.

During childhood, the classroom environment is another important factor affecting children's development. Walker and Plomin stated that teachers and pupils' relationships will influence children's learning enthusiasm. For example, if teachers are helpful, fair, and willing to listen to students' voices, students will have more desire to study. However, if teachers teach the class with a negative attitude, students will feel lonely and unhappy during studying. Psychologists and educators spend a lot of time debating whether nature or nurture will work better on education. Through different data, they found they cannot compare which one is better. Zaky said that the nativists believed everything relies on biology and that the environmentalists believed that the environment causes the

different nurture development that makes children develop differently<sup>[7]</sup>. In the nativists' minds, they trust that biological factors have played a decisive role. Environmentalists think the power of nurture will influence childhood development. However, today people still cannot figure out which education system is better for children.

Raising children in nature or nurture has the advantage and disadvantage for children's development. At this time, educating a child becomes a gamble, will they succeed or not? For example, although nature can let children's abilities show earlier than others, parents will focus on the specific abilities and not discover new things, which limits their future opportunities. On another hand, if they raise children by nurture the children will receive both influences from their inborn abilities and the environments; meanwhile, this education system usually takes a long time. Children will either become successful or unsuccessful.

For example, Dai and Coleman studied several gifted kids, they found nature genetics affect the nurture conditions, but the natural abilities will emerge through nurture education. Dai and Coleman suggested to the parents and educators, which is although nature is very powerful, nurture education will limit how many natural abilities they can use.

#### 4. Nature and Nurture in Asia

Nature and nurture education systems come from past ideas. For example, in ancient China, the early Confucian moral education already talked about how important it is to teach and to develop people through nature and nurture. Murray said that early Confucians believed everyone was born intelligent. Moral education is the most important thing for everyone<sup>[8]</sup>. Through Confucian teachings, people can see that in ancient China people believed that moral education is the only way to lead a person to be successful. For example, Confucius believed that everyone is equal, and everyone has the power to become an emperor. But a good emperor needs a good moral to win people's trust. Having moral education can help people know how to become successful.

Today, people and the government understand how important it is to use both nature and nurture education systems to develop children. Dodge found in order to identify the weakness and strengths of children, practitioners have to assess both children's study abilities and learning environment in order to help educators to find the best education systems for children. In the United States, children can apply the IEP (Individual Education Program) to receive special education. Knowing students' studying abilities can help a teacher to plan their classes differently to the benefit of their students. This also creates a different study environment that can lead students to reach achievement easily. A good study environment can help students focus better, feel more comfortable, and provide the education they need as well. Heuser et al analyzed how the Japanese government gives more and more attention to having a strong STEM education system (educating students on sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics). The government analyzed that nature education was not good enough to let their children improve. They gave more competitive power to children let them improve themselves, even the gifted kids. Today, more and more people know nature education cannot lead them to be successful, so using nurture power to influence children can let them know there is no end to study, and as they study more, the more they will succeed.

#### 5. Conclusion

According to all of the above, readers can see the history of nature and nurture and how people think about them differently from the past to today. In the past, people believed that human beings are born a blank slate: either they would not have the abilities to change their lives, or nurture and education could change them. However, today, people find a balance between those two theories. People believed that everyone is born with natural abilities, but nurture can help inspire the ability. Both human behavior and children's development are connected to genetics and the environment. Parents' genes will influence children's study abilities, and the environment will influence both the development of children and their future. A better home environment can lead to a better personality, higher study interests, and less misbehaviors. knowing how nature and nurture work with children will help the government understand living environments and improve laws and national policies over time. Understanding the principle of nature and nurture will lead parents to understand children's development better and create a better environment for the children. Also, comprehending the theory of nature and nurture will encourage educators to change and improve their education systems to help their children reach these achievements. Overall, understanding what children are born with and the power of nurture can help children become successful people in the future. Finally, this understanding can help parents and educators to think about what they can do to help children discover their abilities.

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