

How Do Parents Influence Identity Development in Adolescents?

Lara Chouman

Arabian Education Development- Company managing the five Al Tiitiha Private Schools in
the UAE

Abstract

It is common knowledge that the process of identity formation and development is influenced by many factors throughout a child's life, specifically during the transitional stage from childhood to adulthood. The purpose of this study is to examine how parents influence identity development in their adolescent children. Specifically, parents and their adolescent children were invited to provide their perceptions and understanding of this process. Data was collected from these participants using a qualitative research approach, where semi-structured interviews were conducted. The themes emerging from data collected from parent interviews include: personal experiences and differentiation of self, parenting styles, and parents' beliefs and actions; while interviews with adolescents revealed their perspectives about definition of self and family interactions. A discussion of the relationship between these themes and identity development is presented along with suggestions for further research.

Keywords: Identity development, Differentiation of self, family interactions.