Are Siblings Different as ‘Day and Night’? Parents’ Perceptions of Nature vs. Nurture

*Fatima Kamran, PhD
Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan

The qualitative study explored parents perceptions and attributions of personality differences among their children. Twelve parents were interviewed using Interpretative Phenomenological Approach. The analysis revealed that the parents attributed the siblings’ personality differences to a combination of biological vs. psychosocial factors. It revealed meaningful insights as reflected by the themes that revolved around nature vs. nurture, psychosocial influences, parental identification and role modeling, gender, birth order and role expectations. Interestingly, despite sharing the same genetics, living in similar environmental conditions, children tend to display diversity in their behaviors and overall personality. Parents sometimes describe their children as opposite as ‘day and night’ which raises a question to investigate the factors that cause such extreme diversity in their personalities. There is a need to further explore parental expectations and criteria for an ideal child as well as knowing about the relative contribution of nature vs. nurture factors in determining personality differences.

*Keywords.* Perception of parents, attributions, children’s personality, siblings