Self-development
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Introduction

- From a cultural-historical point of view, school is a fundamental setting for appropriation of cultural tools and these transform the way the subject perceives the world (Vygotsky, 1986).
- A considerable volume of research has shown the relationship between formal education and processes of memory, categorization, reasoning and problem solving (e.g., Luria, 1976).
- A considerable volume of research has shown that formal education may change the notion of one’s self towards higher independence and relatedness of self, school memories will display the highest autonomy, while family and friendship memories will display the highest autonomy, while family and friendship memories will point to higher independence; and 2. Looking at the time perspective of adolescent self-development, family memories will be recalled from the earliest age followed by school and friendship memories, mirroring our participants’ developmental trajectory.

Hypotheses and suggested model

- Based on the mutual interrelatedness of autobiographical memory and self-construct, and the assumption of school promoting an independent self, we asked adolescents to recall meaningful memories about their family, school and friendship, expecting the following:

1. Looking at independence and relatedness of self, school memories will display the highest autonomy, while family and friendship memories will point to higher independence;
2. Looking at the time perspective of adolescent self-development, family memories will be recalled from the earliest age followed by school and friendship memories, mirroring our participants’ developmental trajectory.

Results

- Participants: 22 Norwegian (M = 17.95), 40 Slovak (M = 18.2) and 52 Danish adolescents (M = 19.1) — together a sample of 114 adolescents (M = 18.56), balanced for gender
- Method: questionnaire in participants’ mother tongues asking them to recall memories about their family, school, and friends, which should be at least 1 year old and of a special meaning to them
- Variables: participant’s age at the time of recalled events (self-reported); other-self ratio (number of references to other people divided by number of references to oneself) (Wang & Conway, 2004)

Discussion

- Both of our hypotheses were supported:
  1. Participants did recall family memories from the earliest age, followed by school and friendship memories, following a developmental trajectory where the three settings shift in importance; and
  2. Looking at independence and relatedness of self, school memories will display the highest autonomy, while family and friendship memories will point to higher independence; and

References