

**GROWING UP  
IN THE KIBBUTZ**

***Comparison of the personality of children  
brought up in the Kibbutz and of  
family-reared children***

# GROWING UP IN THE KIBBUTZ

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## *Preface*

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Relatively few accounts of the development of children in the Kibbutz are available in the professional literature. Most of these accounts are descriptive, episodic and impressionistic; some of them are second-hand reports that have led to misconceptions concerning the child rearing process and the product of this process in the Kibbutz. Furthermore, authors have found it difficult to divorce their descriptions and interpretations of the behavior of Kibbutz-reared children and adults from their theoretical and ethnocentric biases.

The purpose of this volume is to present a systematic account of child rearing and education in the Kibbutz, and a systematic exploration and interpretation of the personalities of Kibbutz children at several age levels—from infancy to maturity. Moreover, this is a *comparative* study in which the Kibbutz child is assessed alongside the Israeli child born and reared in the conventional family setting. Thus, the Kibbutz child is not compared with the norms of Western society (which explicitly or implicitly have been employed by various observers) but with those of representatives of the broader culture which he shares.

The book consists of three parts. The first part (Chapters 1-3) sets forth a fairly detailed description of Kibbutz child rearing and education and, on the basis of current theory and available research,

raises a number of questions regarding the effect of these antecedent conditions. The second part (Chapters 4-8) presents the procedures of assessment and the methods of investigation employed, as well as the findings obtained with these operations. For four age levels, group comparisons of Kibbutz and parallel non-Kibbutz children, on a number of personality dimensions, are summarized, discussed and interpreted. In the last part of the volume (Chapters 9 and 10) the author attempts an integration of the findings—what the Kibbutz child's personality is like, and how it differs from that of the child reared in the nuclear family setting. The relevance of the findings to theory and their implications for child rearing and education in general are also included.

Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and others in the helping professions may find this book useful in gaining some perspective regarding the universality of principles we hold dear and immutable, but which, possibly, are culture-bound.

Cultural anthropologists may be interested in a psychologist's venture into the cross-cultural domain—exploiting the natural “laboratory” conditions provided by societies different from our own.

Educators will be interested in the results and implications of the “collective education” movement, unique and viable in its sixth decade of existence.

No work of this nature can be accomplished by one person, without the cooperation of many other individuals. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help of many friends and colleagues, here and abroad.

I am most grateful to the late Shmuel (“Milek”) Golan, pioneer educator and theoretician of the “collective education” movement whose personal interest, cooperation and stimulating conversations, as well as his writings (Golan, 1960), have greatly aided me in carrying out this project. Other leaders of Kibbutz education—Mordechai Segal, Gideon Levin, Ada Hagari and Menahem Gerson—have greatly facilitated the process of data collection. There are many others—teachers, metaplot and parents—too numerous to mention, without whose help my task would have been impossible. Thanks are also due to Dr. Gina Ortar, of the Hebrew University,

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A. I. RABIN

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## Contents

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Preface	v
1. <i>Introduction</i>	1
The Kibbutz Society (5), Resume (8).	
2. <i>Child Rearing and Education</i>	10
Infants (10), The Toddlers (14), The Kindergarten (16), The Children's Society—Primary School Years (20), The "Teens" in the Kibbutz—The Mosad (26), Kibbutz Coeducation (32), Training and Education Beyond the Secondary School Level (34), Summary and Recapitulation (36).	
3. <i>Problems Posed by Collective Education</i>	43
Clinical Observations (43), Maternal Deprivation (45), On the Consequences of Deprivation (54), On the Consequences of Kibbutz Child Rearing (57), Predictions from Psychodynamic Theory (59), Some Additional Factors (63), Summary (64).	
4. <i>Research Strategy and Methodology</i>	66
Psychological Research in the Kibbutz (66), Representativeness, Sampling and Controls (67), The Necessary Contacts (70), The Samples (71), Methods of Investigation (77), Statistical Treatment of the Data (92), Adaptation of Methods to Language and Culture (93), Summary (95).	
5. <i>Early Development: Infants</i>	97
Introduction (97), Test Findings (98), Brief Case Histories (104), Discussion (107), Summary (110).	

*Contents*

6. <i>Preadolescence: The Ten Year Olds</i>	112
The Drawings (113), Rorschach Method (117), Blacky Pictures (121), Incomplete Sentences (129), Integration of Findings (141), General Summary (144).	
7. <i>Adolescence: The Seventeen Year Olds</i>	145
Rorschach Results (146), TAT Stories (148), Incomplete Sentences (167), General Summary (179).	
8. <i>Young Manhood: The Army Samples</i>	180
The Samples (180), Incomplete Sentences (182), Summary (188), The TAT Data (190), TAT Summary (193), General Summary (194).	
9. <i>Summing Up</i>	196
Effects of "Partial Deprivation" (196), Adjustment, Personality Structure and Psychodynamics (200), The Drives (206), The Issue of Conformity (206), A Composite Sketch (207).	
10. <i>Epilogue: Some Implications</i>	210
References	215
Index	221

### *Acknowledgements*

Some of the tables in this volume are based entirely or in part on previous publications by the author.

Tables 5-2 and 6-3 are drawn from data reported in Tables 3 and 4, respectively, in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 1958, 28, p. 581. Table 6-10 is based on Table 5, *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 1959, 29, p. 177. Table 7-1 appeared as part of Table 5 in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 1964, 34, p. 498. Table 6-5 is drawn from Table I, *Journal of Projective Techniques*, 1957, 21, p. 151. Also, Tables 6-6, 6-7 and 6-8 appeared in the same journal (1958, 22, p. 331) as Tables I, II and III respectively.

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