Punjabi Culture: An Indigenous Reflection

“ Every child born in this world has their own identity which is built and strengthened by various steps according to their culture” (Rundle,A., Shanski, D., 2015). Then, the baby’s shaped by the family, society, traditions and experiences where they raised up. It is also recognized that family has a great impact on the development of the early child after birth and they are considered as their first teachers. There are diverse culture and traditions in this world so that the nurturing of infants are different because they have different ways of upbringing by their families. Child development is based on the developmental sequence of the milestones and they all progress through various patterns in their environment. Similarly, Aboriginal children raised up by following their learning aspects. However, I belong to the Punjabi culture which is different from the Indigenous culture so I have a distinct upbringing as well as childhood learning in my family or community. I will describe the growth of infants in two different cultures such as First Nations and Punjabi.

There are a series of changes occur in every living organism go through from the beginning of life until the end, and these are different in every culture. For example, Indigenous people have different life cycle than Punjabi culture. First Nation people defined their life cycle with specific terms of directions such as north, south, east, and west. Life begins from the east direction as a baby and child in which families welcome their infants and welcome them like a new day. In this stage, babies start making bonds with their caregivers. The youth are considered as south in which they make their own decision for a better life and get the experience of new lessons and challenges for their survival. The west represents the adult who is the ideal people for their family, especially for their children. They provide a positive environment for them so that they become successful in future. The cycle of life is completed at the direction of the north which depicts the elders and during this, the elders might disappear physically, but we remember their words which are beneficial for us and help us to become a good human being. (Best Start Resource Centre, 2011).

Babies are welcomed by their families when they born and all members try to provide secure attachments to them. They did not describe their life cycle as First Nation people, but I know how the Punjabi masses are going through life because I am raised up in the Punjabi culture. Actually, it is somehow similar to the Indigenous people because there are the same stages of life start from the baby, young, adult and end at the elders. During the first stage of life, caregivers are responsible for the development of the child and they need to provide a safe and secure environment to the baby for his proper growth so that baby can make a positive bond with them. Then they are able to face various challenges and learn new experience from them for the easy-going throughout life. It helps them to make themselves a role model for their future generations and hence their vibes always remain still alive in the families hearts even if they are not physically present.

Prenatal care has a great impact on the five domains of child development in which the pregnant woman has to be a concerned with the wellness of the infants. It is very crucial in every culture whether Punjabi or Aboriginal. We all know that babies are very sensitive and when they start growing physically in the mother,s womb the outside environment also affects them. There are many things that are essential for the lady during pregnancy such as a

balanced diet, stress, environment and behavior. Proper nutrition is the basic block for the care of the baby in the womb because they totally depend on their mother. The mother should not contain any kind of drugs such as alcohol, smoking or marijuana, if they do this it may have an impact on the infants. There is a lot of evidence given by the scientists that around 50% of babies are born with diseases just because of the alcohol and smoke conserved by pregnant women. The family member and mother make sure that they are responsible for the protection and care of the baby so that they should create a positive and stress-free environment around the baby in the womb and the mother needs to stay without tense for her baby growth.

Babies are like diamonds for their families and it is very common when the newborn comes into this world they all are in full of happiness as well as thankful to the Creator and it happens in every culture. In the Early Childhood Education program, I came to know that parents or caregivers play an important role in the growth of infants. In Punjab, the name of the baby is taken from the holy book of the Sikh religion and there is one ceremony held by the family after one and half months of the birth of the baby when they introduce him to the community or relatives. The safe environment should be provided by the parents to the infants and make sure they fulfill the needs of the baby as we all know they are not able to speak. They express their emotions through five senses such as touch, smell, hear, sucking and seeing. I remembered that when my brother was a baby who is younger than me my mother always tried to made him happy and want to make close interactions with him. There is no special equipment used by the caregivers for the baby, they just hold the kids in their laps when they go outside which also helps in strengthening the bond between them.

On the other hand, there are different traditions followed by the First Nation masses for nurturing the baby. They also held the baby naming ceremony after birth to introduce the baby in society. The parents also responsible for their child progress and understand them that what they need or what is the reason behind their crying. There are distinct kinds of tools they use to promote the healthy growth of the baby. For instance, they use moss bag instead of diapers because the baby feel more comfortable in it and after it, they use a cradleboard for the baby and it helps them to explore the world through their senses as well as a strong bond with the parents. These practices have a contribution to healthy child development (Best Start Resource Centre, 2011).

Toddlers are very sensitive to learning and they also ready to explore the things in the environment. In this stage, children observe the activities occur around them and they follow them and their parents expect only positive learning or attitude from them for their success.

During my childhood, my mother favored healthy eating for me and avoid unhealthy food. She always wished to create safe surroundings for me to enhance my progress of mine. She used to play Punjabi soft music when I was playing and displayed things related to culture. On the other hand, Aboriginal people also use some traditional ways for the blooming of the children such as Moccasins, dancing and drums which help them to engage with the world in a good way.

To conclude, every single parent has a goal that their children will rise and shine in this world and they put enough efforts for the development of the babies in five domains whether they belong to different communities or cultures. They may use their different traditional ways for the upbringing of the infants, but the destination is the same where they want to reach. Parents are like the backbone of their children and they need to make sure that they valued the emotions of their babies and making feel them secure and safe. Indigenous children are same as others so

they also have interactions with their caregivers and there is no need to point out them or their cultural beliefs. Respect them and their community so that they do not feel any stress which may in result affect their development.

References

1. Best Start Resource Centre. (2011). A Child Becomes Strong: Journeying Through Each Stage of the Life Cycle
2. Rundle,A., Shanski, D. (2015). Manitoba First Nation Guide To Support Early Learning: Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc.