

東大過去問 2021年 第1問

以下の英文を読み、10代の若者の気質の変化について、70~80字の日本語で要約せよ。句読点も字数に含める。

Consider a study of thousands of Dutch teenagers — the youngest were aged 12 at the start — who completed personality tests each year for six or seven years, beginning in 2005. The results seemed to back up some of the stereotypes we have of messy teen bedrooms and mood swings. Thankfully this negative change in personality is short-lived, with the Dutch data showing that the teenagers' previous positive features rebound in later adolescence.

Both parents and their teenage children agree that changes occur, but surprisingly, the perceived change can depend on who is measuring, according to a 2017 study of over 2,700 German teenagers. They rated their own personalities twice, at age 11 and age 14, and their parents also rated their personalities at these times. Some revealing differences emerged: for instance, while the teenagers rated themselves as declining in ability to get along with adults, their parents saw this decline as much sharper. Also, the teens saw themselves as increasingly friendly to each other, but their parents saw them as increasingly withdrawn. “Parents, as a whole, see their children as becoming less nice,” was the researchers' interpretation. On a more positive note, the parents saw their children's declines in honesty as less striking than their children did.

This mismatch may seem contradictory at first, but can perhaps be explained by the big changes underway in the parent-child relationship brought on by teenagers' growing desire for autonomy and privacy. The researchers point out that parents and teens might also be using different reference points — parents are measuring their teenagers' features against a typical adult, while the teenagers are comparing their own features against those displayed by their peers.

This is in line with several further studies, which also reveal a pattern of a temporary reduction in advantageous features — especially niceness and self-discipline — in early adolescence. The general picture of the teenage years as a temporary personality conflict therefore seems accurate.