

A Study of the Effects of Parenting Styles on Adolescent Mental Toughness and Countermeasures

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Abstract:

In the context of China's traditional culture, the importance of the family concept has always been highly valued, and the parenting style of parents, as the main role in the family, is the core of family education. Adolescent psychological capriciousness, as a key part of the adolescent mental health problems, has a far-reaching impact on the growth of adolescents. Adolescence is a critical period of individual development, which involves not only rapid physical development but also psychological and personality integrity. At this stage, a sense of security, as a basic psychological need, is crucial to the mental health of adolescents. In reality, many middle school students face a lack of security, which not only affects their daily lives but also has a negative impact on their social skills and psychological health. However, current research on the effects of parenting styles on adolescent psychological capriciousness and countermeasures is still relatively insufficient and needs to be explored in depth. In this paper, we will use the research method of literature analysis to study the effects of different parenting styles on adolescents' psychological tenacity.

Keywords: Family parenting styles; Chinese Adolescent mental toughness psychological research; Psychological research; Countermeasures study; Adolescent mental health.

1. Introduction

With the social and cultural changes brought about by reform and opening-up, market transformation, the one-child policy, and globalization, parents' educational values and parenting goals have shifted significantly. As a result, parents have adopted various

parenting styles to guide and influence adolescent development. Through these approaches, they intervene in multiple aspects of their children's growth. While most previous studies have focused on the influence of objective socio-economic conditions, this study will explore different perspectives in the literature from the viewpoint of educational psychology and

examine research on the psychological conditions of adolescents resulting from family parenting styles, leading to new conclusions.

Current research suggests that parenting styles can have a significant impact on adolescent psychological resilience. For example, adolescents growing up in an emotionally supportive and engaging family education are significantly more psychologically capricious; conversely, overprotective indifference and harsh punishment may weaken this quality [1]. The association between family parenting styles and adolescent psychological resilience has received widespread scholarly attention.

2. Literature Review

According to Darling and Steinberg [2], parents' parenting strategies constitute the emotional context of their interactions with their children. Baumrind categorised parenting styles in terms of "demands" and "reflections" [3]. In China, Zhang Lin et al. found authoritative parenting promotes adolescents' psychological resilience, while Skinner et al. emphasised six key characteristics for evaluating parenting styles [4,5]. In their study, Guo Yu et al. noted that family parenting styles in divorced families negatively affect adolescents' psychological willfulness [6]. Long Kebing analysed the multidimensionality of parenting styles and their impact on children's development in his review [7]. At the same time, Xu Hui et al. discussed the impact of family parenting styles on children's socialisation process comprehensively. A strong correlation between parenting styles and children's sense of security can also be observed in previous literature [8]. The study by Chen Yaqian and Wen Hui et al. pointed out that an upbeat, warm parenting style positively predicts a child's sense of security. In contrast, an indifferent parenting style is detrimental to the establishment of a sense of security [9,10]. Meanwhile, the family environment also affects the development of mental toughness, which is a key ability of individuals to face challenges. A positive family parenting environment encourages children to explore and practice courageously and strengthens their ability to cope with difficulties, thus improving mental toughness. As they grow older, adolescents face increasing environments and challenges. Meng Ziming's study showed that individuals with higher psychological resilience are able to adopt a more positive attitude and demonstrate a greater sense of security in the face of adversity [11]. Hamidreza Zakeri's and Wang Xiaolong's studies further found a significant positive correlation between parenting styles, psychological willfulness, and sense of security, which suggests that family parenting styles may indirectly affect an individual's sense of security through psychological

tenacity [12,13].

3. Case Study

3.1 Case Study One

Democratic Parenting Style Promotes the Development of Psychological Resilience

3.1.1 Case Description

Xiao Zhang, a typical adolescent, grew up in a democratic family environment filled with love and respect. In this family, Xiao Zhang's parents consistently upheld the principles of respecting their child and maintaining equal communication. Regardless of the magnitude of the matter at hand, they patiently listened to Xiao Zhang's opinions and granted him ample autonomy. Even when faced with Xiao Zhang's occasional minor mistakes, they adopted a patient and persuasive approach, guiding him to recognize the issues and encouraging him to seek solutions independently. This family atmosphere allowed Xiao Zhang to find the perfect balance between freedom and rules, shaping his independent and responsible character.

3.1.2 Analysis of the Problems

The democratic parenting style played a crucial role in shaping Xiao Zhang's psychological resilience, with his parents' respect and encouragement instilling more remarkable courage in him when facing difficulties.

Research by Tang Tian et al. indicates that parenting styles are closely related to the positive development of adolescents [14]. In Xiao Zhang's democratic family, his parents fostered his autonomy and creativity through respect and encouragement, enabling him to maintain a positive attitude when confronting challenges. This autonomy and positive mindset are essential to psychological resilience, helping Xiao Zhang persist and move forward in the face of adversity.

Zhou Hongru's study further reveals the relationship between middle school students' family parenting styles, self-efficacy, and psychological resilience [15]. In Xiao Zhang's case, the open communication atmosphere between him and his parents and their patient guidance when he made mistakes greatly enhanced his sense of self-efficacy. This self-efficacy made Xiao Zhang more confident when facing difficulties, believing in his ability to overcome challenges, thereby further improving his psychological resilience.

Moreover, the democratic parenting style cultivated Xiao Zhang's qualities of facing problems directly and courageously confronting challenges. When encountering difficulties and setbacks, Xiao Zhang does not choose to avoid

or give up but bravely faces the issues and seeks solutions. These qualities of confronting problems and embracing challenges not only contribute to his personal growth but also further consolidate his psychological resilience.

3.1.3 Suggestions

Parents should adhere to a democratic parenting style, respecting their children's opinions and choices and granting them sufficient autonomy. Simultaneously, they should maintain open and equal communication with their children, establish good parent-child relationships, and provide emotional support. Parents should adopt a patient and persuasive approach when dealing with children's mistakes, helping children recognize and correct their errors and fostering their psychological resilience and the courage to face problems directly.

3.2 Case Study Two: Authoritarian Parenting Style Inhibits the Development of Psychological Resilience

3.2.1 Case Description

Xiao Li, who grew up under an authoritarian parenting style, experienced a family environment with strict rules and restrictions. His parents often demanded unconditional obedience, lacking emotional support and communication. Throughout his upbringing, Xiao Li frequently faced severe criticism and punishment for minor mistakes, leading to a lack of confidence and coping ability when confronting challenges and difficulties. Consequently, the development of his psychological resilience was severely inhibited.

3.2.3 Analysis of the Problems

Authoritarian parents tend to strictly control every aspect of their child's life, neglecting the child's emotional needs and inner feelings. In such a family environment, Xiao Li long felt ignored and misunderstood, resulting in a lack of security. This observation aligns with Jiang Fei's research findings, which indicate that parenting style is a crucial factor affecting adolescents' mental health. Authoritarian parenting styles can easily make children feel suppressed, thereby impacting their mental health [16].

A sense of security is the foundation of psychological resilience. Children lacking security are more prone to feeling helpless and panicked when facing setbacks, making it difficult to cope effectively with challenges. Liu Chenxu's research also emphasizes this point, finding that adolescents under authoritarian parenting styles exhibit relatively weak psychological resilience when facing traumatic events [17].

Authoritarian parents often have excessively high expectations for their children and lack patience and tolerance.

Xiao Li gradually lost confidence throughout his growth due to frequent criticism and rejection. Self-confidence is a vital component of psychological resilience; children lacking confidence are more likely to give up when facing difficulties, lacking the courage to persist and strive. When confronted with life's challenges and setbacks, Xiao Li may not know how to cope effectively, lacking flexibility and adaptability. This further corroborates Jiang Fei's research results, which suggest that adolescents under authoritarian parenting styles are more prone to psychological issues when facing traumatic events.

3.2.4 Suggestions

Parents should enhance emotional support, providing children with sufficient care and support. Positive emotional exchanges can strengthen children's sense of security and belonging. This helps compensate for the emotional deprivation and lack of security caused by authoritarian parenting styles.

Through positive feedback and encouragement, parents can help children build self-confidence and believe in their ability to overcome difficulties. This aids in enhancing children's self-confidence and courage to face challenges.

Parents should appropriately loosen control when necessary, allowing children opportunities for autonomous decision-making and problem-solving. By accumulating practical experience, children can improve their coping and adaptive abilities. This helps cultivate children's autonomy and problem-solving skills.

Parents can also guide children to identify and express their emotions while teaching them effective emotional regulation strategies, such as deep breathing and relaxation techniques. These strategies can help children remain calm and rational when facing negative emotions, enhancing their emotional regulation abilities and psychological resilience.

3.3 Case Study Three: Overindulgent Parenting Style Weakens Psychological Resilience

3.3.1 Case Description

Xiao Ming, an adolescent raised in an overindulgent family, has been treated as the apple of his parents' eyes since childhood. His parents have been excessively protective, fulfilling almost all his needs, from expensive toys and the latest electronic gadgets to daily care and attention. Xiao Ming has never experienced life's hardships, as his parents have always cleared all obstacles for him in advance. However, this excessive care and protection have inadvertently weakened Xiao Ming's psychological resilience, leaving him ill-equipped to face life's challenges.

3.3.2 Analysis of the Problems

Under the overindulgent parenting style, Xiao Ming rarely has opportunities to make autonomous decisions or solve problems independently. His parents always arrange everything for him, from daily life to study plans, leaving him with no need to worry. This overprotection has led to Xiao Ming's lack of independence and autonomy. When faced with life's challenges and difficulties, he often feels at a loss and lacks coping abilities. This aligns with Yin Wangting's view that overindulgent parenting styles may limit adolescents' capacity for autonomy [18].

Since Xiao Ming has rarely experienced setbacks or failures, his ability to endure difficulties and employ coping strategies is relatively weak. When encountering slightly significant challenges, he easily becomes discouraged and frustrated, sometimes avoiding them altogether. Zou Xuehai points out that adolescents raised in overindulgent families often have weak resilience and struggle to adapt to complex and changing social environments [19].

Xiao Ming seldom needs to take on family or social responsibilities in an overindulgent family. His parents always shoulder everything for him, gradually causing him to lose awareness of responsibility and the willingness to take on responsibilities. This lack of a sense of responsibility leaves Xiao Ming lacking initiative and motivation when facing problems, making it difficult for him to form a positive and upward attitude towards life. Long-term overindulgence has caused Xiao Ming to develop a strong psychological dependence on his parents. He is accustomed to being cared for and protected, and when left to face life alone without his parents, he feels extremely anxious and at a loss. This psychological dependence not only affects Xiao Ming's ability to live independently but also weakens his psychological resilience.

3.3.4 Suggestions

Parents should appropriately loosen their control, allowing Xiao Ming opportunities to make autonomous decisions and solve problems. Giving him a certain degree of autonomy and a sense of responsibility can help him gradually build independence and self-reliance. Encourage him to participate in family and social activities to enhance his sense of social responsibility and teamwork skills. Parents should teach him how to cope actively and overcome challenges when facing difficulties. They can set moderate challenges and goals, allowing him to practice and strengthen his resilience and coping strategies through practical experiences. Simultaneously, provide sufficient support and encouragement to help him build confidence and maintain a positive attitude. Parents should gradually help him recognize the importance and necessity of responsibility. This can be achieved through assigning household chores, participating in community service, and

other means that allow him to learn to take on responsibilities and experience a sense of accomplishment and pride.

4. Conclusion

Through research, this paper finds that different parenting styles have a profound impact on the development of adolescent mental resilience. Democratic parenting style significantly promoted the construction of psychological resilience in adolescents, which showed that adolescents showed higher adaptability and resilience in the face of challenges. On the contrary, the authoritarian parenting style and the drowning parenting style inhibit the development of psychological resilience of adolescents to different degrees, resulting in them being more vulnerable and powerless in the face of difficulties. Therefore, the democratic parenting style is an effective way to cultivate the psychological toughness of adolescents, while the authoritarian parenting style and the drowning parenting style are not conducive to the development of their psychological toughness.

The results of this study fill some gaps in the research on the relationship between parenting style and adolescent psychological resilience and provide a new perspective for understanding the importance of family environment on individual psychological development. This discovery not only enriches the theoretical system of family pedagogy and psychology but also provides a valuable reference for follow-up research. This research result is conducive to the community paying more attention to adolescents' mental health problems, promoting the family, school, and society to form a joint force, and jointly creating a suitable environment for the healthy growth of adolescents.

Although this study has made some achievements, there are still some shortcomings. Future studies can further refine the classification and dimension of parenting styles and further explore the specific performance and development trajectory of adolescents' mental toughness under different parenting styles. At the same time, more diversified and refined research methods, such as longitudinal tracking research and multi-factor analysis, can also be adopted to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth research results. In addition, Related personnel should pay attention to the cultural and social background of macro factors, such as the impact on the relationship between parenting style and adolescent mental toughness, to further expand and deepen the research in this field. It is expected that future research will continue to explore and optimize the family education model and contribute more wisdom and strength to cultivating adolescents with solid psychological resilience.

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