

A Research on the Peer Relationship of Primary and Middle School Students and Its Impact on Self-learning Pressure and Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This article uses a quantitative research method to investigate the peer relationship of primary and middle school students, as well as their basic situation of learning pressure and learning motivation, explores the impact of peer relationship on the learning pressure and learning motivation of primary and secondary students, and draws the following conclusions: Most students are positive about their relationship with their peers. Regardless of whether the peer relationship is good or bad, the vast majority of primary and secondary school students are sure that the peer relationship is helpful for their studies. Some students have a utilitarian or instrumental tendency to subjective cognition of peer relationships. In the case of controlling other variables, good peer relationship has a negative impact on learning pressure, and good peer relationship has a positive impact on learning motivation. This study proposes the following suggestions: peer relationship should be used to focus on adjusting positive academic emotions to cultivate the learning motivation of primary and middle school students; intervening in the mechanism of peer relationship at an early age to maximize the impact of peer relationship on children's cognitive system force; teachers should try to build a good relationship with students, encourage and support students, and establish a harmonious relationship between teachers and students, and sports should be used to improve the learning mood of students in the meanwhile.

Keywords: *Words: Peer Relationship, Learning Mood, Learning Pressure, Learning Motivation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The learning pressure and motivation of students have always been the focus of attention of many students, parents, educators and society. In recent years, the declining physical problems of middle school students and the rejuvenation of some diseases have caused people to think. 'Some students may even suffer from fainting due to academic pressure[1], these problems gradually increase people's anxiety. Peer relationship is increasingly considered to be an important factor affecting students' campus life and learning. The atmosphere created by a good peer relationship is also conducive to improving students' learning environment. Peer relationship plays an important role in the healthy development and social adaptation of social ability, cognition, emotion, self-concept and personality of children and adolescents. "The behavioral characteristics and social cognition of children and adolescents are the main factors affecting peer relationships [2]." However, in the current educational reform, changes in objective conditions make more students need to adapt to this fast-paced social change as soon as possible, so it is very important for students to cultivate a good sense of social existence and establish a good peer relationship as early as possible. From the

perspective of peer relationship, this article uses the questionnaire survey method to enrich the relevant research on peer relationship and academic performance of primary and middle school students by studying the impact of peer relationship on the learning pressure and motivation of students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Zhang Wenxin holds the viewpoint that: "peer relationship mainly refers to a kind of interpersonal relationship established and developed during the communication process between peers or individuals with similar psychological development levels"[3]. Foreign research in the field of children's peer relations can be traced back to the 1930s. In the 1960s and 1970s, the role of peers in children's interpersonal skills was proved [4]. In the 1990s, researchers at home and abroad expanded their research into a wider field. Domestic research on peer relationships has been in existence since the 1960s, but it has also been a matter of concern for nearly a decade. Peer relationship has been increasingly valued by scientists in sociology, pedagogy and psychology. In the mid-1970s, developmental psychologists achieved fruitful results [5]. In the 1990s, the researchers introduced the main foreign

theories, carried out basic theoretical discussions and some related experimental studies [6]. Domestic research on peer relation has been increasing steadily since 2000. When researching peer relationship among middle school students, most researchers generally use personality scales as a measurement tool, some people use self-edited or revised foreign scales to measure peer relationships, and some people adopted the social measurement method [8] as well.

The learning burden refers to the learning pressure caused by the demands placed on the individual during the interaction between the individual and the environment. Starting from the system theory, the learning behavior of students is an inclusion system composed of the physical technology environment system, interpersonal relationship system, and the self-system interaction of students [7]. At the same time, learning motivation is the sum of psychological drive of learning subjects based on the judgment of learning behavior value, and it is a cognitive system composed of learning motivation, learning interest and learning attitude. This article focuses on the impact of social interpersonal relationship environment on the learning pressure and subjective learning motivation of students.

Studies have shown that during the growth of children, the influence of peer relationships also gradually increases, especially during adolescence [9]. There are also studies to analyze the impact of peer relationship on students' psychological state from the perspective of demand theory. Maslow divided human needs into five levels, from low to high, and he believes that all human needs are obtained through mutual interactions. "Only when an individual's physiological needs are met will there be safety needs" [11]. In the three systems defined by Yin Guoen (1993) as the source of learning pressure, physical and technical environment (A), social interpersonal relationship environment (B) and self-environment (C) interact with each other, affecting the academic pressure of students[12]. Please refer to the following figure (1) for details:

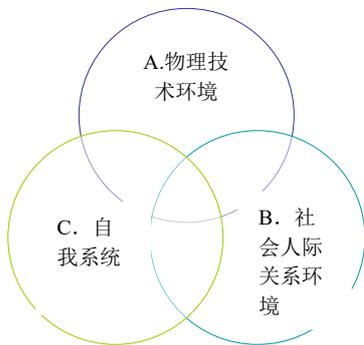


Fig.1. Three systems of learning pressure source

Zou Hong (1998) believes that the experience of peer communication is conducive to the development of self-concept and personality [2]; and bad peer relationship will hinder the health and growth of children and adolescents [8], leading to difficulties for young people to adapt in school [10]. The six kinds of learning pressures classified by Yin Guoen include the learning pressures caused by the social interpersonal relationship environment [13]. Wen Zer et al. (1995) believe that academic activities are influenced by many factors including achievement motivation, classroom behavior, teacher-student relationship, and learning prestige. Peer relationship has an influence on the self-concept, social ability and social development of adolescents [14]. At the same time, some foreign scholars have concluded that peer support and interactive learning are significantly related to academic emotions [15]. The research of Yan Hongqin (2008) proves that the dominant motivation of students' learning is internal motivation [16].

Unlike most studies that focus on external performance, this study lays emphasis on studying the academic emotions of students, and directly correlates peer relationships with the positive and negative academic emotions of students based on previous research results, and will further provide a basis for verifying the effect of peer relationship on the learning pressure and motivation of primary and middle school students.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study randomly selected a number of primary schools and junior high schools in Nanyang City, Henan Province, and studied students in urban, rural, and even more remote mountainous areas in XX City. In order to take into account the diversity of the survey sample, the research objects not only involve students in urban and urban schools, but also students in rural schools and left-behind students in smaller education units in some poor areas, thus ensuring the objectivity of the data to a certain extent. The questionnaire was uploaded to the shared network platform. After the investigators contacted the school and obtained consent, the teacher contacted students who were willing to participate to complete the questionnaire. The vast majority of interviewees directly accessed and filled in through communication tools such as mobile WeChat and QQ. A total of 782 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, and 761 valid questionnaires were recovered.

The questionnaire of the peer relationship survey comes from Fang Xiaoyi's revised version of the Zou Hong Peer Relationship Scale. The questionnaire mainly includes two dimensions, a total of 30 items, including the peer acceptance subscale, the communication fear subscale and the inferiority subscale. The questionnaire adopts a point scoring system. The four options of the questionnaire are "fully not conformed", "not quite conformed", "relatively conformed" and "fully conformed". From the first level to the fourth level, the learning motivation gradually increases and the results are divided based on this, with good reliability [16]. On this basis, the questionnaire

supplemented the other two parts as a basic situation and personal information survey, set up questions about social interpersonal relations, and added subjective questions, making the questionnaire content more comprehensive.

The process of processing data uses STATA14.0 to operate, and the data is processed by multiple linear regression analysis. The formula for multiple linear regression is:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \dots + \beta_k X_{ki} + \mu_{ii} \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, n;$$

where k is the number of explanatory variables, β_j ($j = 1, 2, \dots, k$) is called the regression coefficient.

In this study, the independent variable is peer relationship; the dependent variable is learning pressure and motivation; the control variables are gender, grade, accommodation, parental income level, parental education level, location of household registration, location of learning and living, etc.

4. RESEARCH RESULT

4.1. Descriptive Statistics Analysis

According to the research, it has been found that most students have a positive attitude toward peer relationship. Regardless of whether the peer relationship is good or bad, the majority of primary and middle school students affirm that peer relationship is helpful to school; some students have a utilitarian and instrumental tendency to subjective cognition of peer relationship. After collecting the answers, the vast majority of students generally use "very good", "relatively good", "get along well with each other", "make improvement together", "he is my example" when they think their peer relationship is rather good. At the same time, in the answers of primary and secondary school students, this good peer relationship has a relatively clear direction. Some students even directly indicate the names of students who have a good relationship with themselves. It can be seen that these students tend to communicate in small groups. In the effective questionnaire, only 7.62% of the students think that their peers are not helpful for their learning. At the same time, among these groups who have a negative attitude to peer relations, they still believe that peer relations should be helpful for learning. However, there are still some groups who think that peers are "useful", and some students answer "the relationship is not good, but useful", and "friends are the future wealth".

After statistical analysis of the data, it can be concluded that the peer relationships of most primary and middle school students are stable at normal levels. In the first four levels, 85.15% of the students can maintain a relatively stable peer relationship development. In the first two levels, 52.04% of the students have a good friendship. A small number of students (11.17%) had lower than average peer relationships, in which, 19 (2.50%) subjects showed

extremely poor peer relationships and high friendship fear status. According to the theoretical research of Zou Hong (1998), in the growth stage from childhood to adolescence, peer relationship really plays a role in students' academic achievements as early as the fourth grade [2]. The range of grades surveyed in this study is relatively wide, which can objectively reflect the influence of grades on the learning pressure and motivation of students. The results of the data show that peer relationship is related to student grades and has a positive correlation.

The survey shows that the overall distribution of the learning motivation of students is relatively even. According to the description of students, very few students attribute their daily learning status to no or little motivation (only 15 samples choosing 1 accounting for 1.97%; 60 samples choosing 2 accounting for 7.88%). At the same time, most of the students considered that their learning motivation is at a high or very high level (corresponding to options 3 and 4 respectively). The average value of students' learning motivation is approximately 3.42, which is stable above 3, indicating that the whole primary and secondary school students are full of motivation for their studies. The results show that the higher the overall peer review status, the more positive the classroom performance of the student group. In addition, generally speaking, students' classroom performance becomes more active as peer relationships increase.

The overall learning pressure of primary and middle school students is more evenly distributed, with less extreme cases. Those who feel no pressure to study and those who feel great pressure to study (corresponding to options 1 and 4) account for 20.1% and 18.2% respectively. The students who think that there is learning pressure and those who think learning pressure is high account for 61.9% of the total, and the number of the two is also average. With reference to Yin Guoen's influencing factor model, it can be analyzed that among the primary and secondary school students participating in the survey, the impact from the family is not necessary for the students' learning pressure, but it still cannot rule out the existence of some cases where families exert great pressure to students in studying.

4.2. Regression Analysis

In controlling variables such as the average income of parents, the average education level of parents, the relationship between teachers and students, and sports, through model analysis (shown in Table 1 below), it has been found that the peer relationship of primary and middle school students has a significant impact on student learning pressure and motivation.

Table.1. Analysis of the influence of peer relationship on learning pressure and motivation

	My learning pressure is high Coef(Std.Err.)	I am full of impetus for studying Coef(Std.Err.)
Peer relationship(worse)	0.017(0.002)***	-0.009(0.001)***
The average income of parents	-0.018(0.074)	-0.076(0.042)
The average education level of parents	-0.063(0.039)	0.023(0.022)
Loved sports	0.015(0.045)	0.180(0.026)***
Friendly teacher	-0.010(0.062)	0.501(0.036)***
Gender	-0.111(0.094)	-0.053(0.040)
Accommodation	-0.016(0.094)	0.172(0.054)**
Grade	0.001(0.018)	-0.006(0.010)
Living and learning location	0.086(0.063)	-0.011(0.036)

Note: *** stands for $p \leq 0.001$, ** stands for $p \leq 0.01$, and * stands for $p \leq 0.05$; standard deviations in parentheses.

For the collection of peer relationship data, due to option settings and scoring procedures, the score is negative. Therefore, research shows that: under the premise of controlling other variables unchanged, good peer relationship has a negative impact on learning pressure, and good peer relationship has a positive impact on learning motivation. Foreign studies have concluded in the early years that peer support and interactive learning are significantly related to academic emotions. Domestic research on peer relationships can even corroborate the impact of peer relationships on the academic performance of students. More psychology, social sciences, and biology research show that there is a connection between the two biological carriers. Therefore, it can be preliminarily judged that the two are theoretically related.

5. CONCLUSION

I. Use peer relationships to focus on adjusting positive academic emotions and cultivating learning motivation for primary and middle school students. From the research results, it can be found that the specific measures that act on the motivation of learning can more fully reflect their effects. A good peer relationship can effectively improve students' negative learning emotions, and cultivate learning motivation in a subtle way. Among the surveyed elementary and middle school students, some classmates are excluded and ridiculed because of their poor academic performance. Teachers and parents should pay more attention to students who are excluded from their classmates, and spread as many equal values as possible in the class, so that these students will not be unwilling to participate in school activities because of academic performance problems. Teachers can also set up help groups, ask the opinions of students who have strong learning abilities, and set up mutual learning groups. This way can help students regain the warmth of the class

collective, establish new friendships, gradually return to the class collective, and cultivate the motivation for independent learning. As for the class as a whole, in addition to the establishment of help groups, students can also form interest groups to share learning experiences with each other, help each other, and cultivate excellent students and help poor students.

II. Intervene in the mechanism of peer relationship at an early age, maximize the influence of peer relationship on children's cognitive system, and try to avoid individual utilitarian trends by enhancing peer care.

According to the existing research, when peer relationships starts to play a role in the academic aspects of primary and middle school students from the fourth grade. However, in the previous school age, peer relationship can also affect the learning status of students to a certain extent (mostly imitation between peers), and play a role in the formation of the self-concept and personal development of students. Therefore, allowing peers to intervene in the student's learning and interaction process at an early age can better cultivate the student's sense of cooperation, enable the student to better adapt to society, and play the best state in the collective, and can also let students make a preliminary preparation for the subsequent peer relationship to play a greater role in learning. At the same time, peer care can also improve students' empathy. Students are not only self-serving in their interactions, but more about mutual understanding, communication and help. When conditions permit, teachers can also organize class groups to carry out small "group building" activities in the form of games, extracurricular activities or sports, and focus on cultivating the collective sense of honor and collective consciousness within and outside the classroom.

III. Teachers should try to build a good relationship with students, encourage and support students, and establish a harmonious relationship between teachers and students.

Schools can encourage students to choose on-campus accommodation to cultivate better student friendships, or they can organize students to form study interest groups on their own, assign and discuss topics within the group. Each team member forms a report and summarizes it to the teacher. Teachers can allow students to form study groups freely, and students can freely choose and contact their ideal companions under the premise of free choice of each other. Students can also allow group members to vote anonymously to select the group leader, to a certain extent, to ensure that the group leader is recognized by the members of the group. In addition, the team leader needs to play a role model role. A team leader with a good quality of peer relationships can drive the enthusiasm of the students in the group and reduce the learning tasks to zero in the form of division of labor and cooperation in the group, which can reduce the individual learning pressure of the students, maximize the effective learning time in class, summarize the common problems of various groups and enable teachers to fulfill the teaching tasks in class efficiently. Teachers can also encourage groups to exchange views with each other, and cultivate an open and open learning atmosphere in the class.

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