

# The Relationship between Parenting Style and Emotional Development during Adolescence: The Effects of Gender Difference

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## ABSTRACT

Adolescence is the transition period from childhood to adulthood, during which a series of significant changes are experienced. Teen emotional experience is an important part, and essential factors affecting adolescent emotional development are from parenting. Parents have a great impact on their children's lives, and they play an important role in the growth of adolescents. Each parent has a unique attitude, behavior habits, and a unique family background. Plus, the affection of every parent is also unique. The differences in parenting methods will also reflect the specific attitudes and behavioral habits under the various educational modes. The consequences of these effects will influence adolescents' behavioral habits, emotional development, and their social life during adulthood. This paper reviewed the relevant literature on parenting style and adolescents' emotional development through following aspects: gender differences, parental emotions, attachment style, and perception or thinking patterns. To study emotional changes in adolescence, this review studied two dimensions of development in male and female adolescents under different parenting styles and reviewed the effects of adolescent emotional function on adulthood. Furthermore, this paper explored how parental mood and parenting styles explain age differences in emotional experience. Finally, this review discussed the existing limitations in research focusing on the relationship between parenting style and adolescents' emotional development and gender differences. Future research can explore relevant causal relationships among those differences.

**Keywords:** *Adolescence, Parenting Patterns, Gender Differences, Attachment Relationships, Emotional Development.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the emotional development of teenagers has attracted social attention. The emotional development of teenagers is closely related to the parenting they received. Emotion is a general term for a series of subjective cognitive experiences, and it includes physiological state of a variety of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Parenting typologies, which explain the changes in parental responses and needs, reflects the interactive nature of parental dynamics [1]. Parenting style is the view, attitude, and stability of parents or other elders in the family. Some relevant studies have pointed out that parenting style plays a decisive role in the emotions of young children, because different emotions

develop gradually during this period. There are many ways of family upbringing and there have been some previous studies in this regard, such as Authoritative Parenting Style, Authoritarian Parenting Style, Permissive Parenting Style, and Uninvolved Parenting Style. These parenting styles can trigger different emotions in teenagers. For instance, Findings from a study suggest that the authoritative parenting style is associated with the lowest levels of depression [2]. Moreover, authoritarian parenting style is associated with poor social skills, low self-esteem, and high levels of depression [3]. The period of adolescence can be difficult for both parents and offspring. Therefore, understanding the approach of maintaining high quality parenting is particularly essential [1]. Furthermore, studying this

topic can improve emotional interventions for adolescents.

Differences in parenting styles can have an important impact on children. These influences from childhood and adolescence can affect them for life. Authoritative parents make demands and restrictions on their children, but also accept and support their child's views. The authoritarian parenting style of parents associate love with success and set high standards. It tends to inhibit children's self-expression and independence [4]. In the study by Rossman and Rea, authoritative parenting leads to better child adaptation and less externalizing problems [5]. Chen and colleagues conducted a study in the Asian context and found that social and school adjustment positively and adjustment problems negatively are related to authoritative style, whereas higher level of aggressive behaviors and lower social competency and academic achievement are linked with authoritarian parenting [6]. Permissive parents give their children a high degree of freedom and few limits on their behaviors [5]. These parents are nurturing and accepting. They don't force their children or control their behavior and regard their children as friends with few expectations or restrictions [4, 7]. Many studies have found that parental authority leads to emotional problems in children and is also positively correlated with academic performance. It can be found that the influence of parenting style on children may be related to gender. Students' problems with low attention, confidence, persistence, and involvement are due to mothers who are highly controlling and fathers who are less supportive [8]. The effects of parenting style may remain with children throughout their lives. It has an impact both on the area of a child's life and on academic achievement. In particular, more authoritative or permissive parenting is more harmful.

Research trends in this area of adolescent development are parenting styles, which focus more on parental behavioral patterns for adolescents' emotional development. More commonly, the correctness of the parenting style in some parents determines the adolescent development in different directions, and these studies suggest that parenting plays a decisive role in the child's mood [2]. In children's cognition, they tend to take their parents as a reference. Every move of the parents will affect the emergence of different emotions during this period, and different parenting methods are also accompanied by different emotional problems. Therefore, the way of parenting people is also very important for children's growth. In a relatively tolerant parenting model, where parents also accept the child while acting without forcing or controlling the behaviors, it reflects a positive developmental trend. Instead, relatively autocratic parents can cause more emotional problems, and the manifestation of academic performance is positively correlated. In relative comparison, over-tolerance and excessive authority are

the most harmful in parenting [4, 7]. More advanced puberty in girls aged 9 to 15 is more tension-related [9]. Regarding boys, more advanced pubertal stages were associated with more frequent stressful and depressed mood, whereas pubertal status was not significantly associated with the frequency of mood in girls [10]. These existing studies are more focused on parenting. This review aims to evaluate some existing studies to better understand the relationship of emotional development through following aspects: the effects of gender differences, effects of parental emotions, attachment style, and perception or thought patterns.

## **2. DIFFERENT EFFECTS OF PARENTING STYLE ON EMOTIONS OF MALE AND FEMALE ADOLESCENTS**

The frequencies of high-intensity emotion are affected by gender. Girls have a higher frequency than boys. Boys and girls may also interact differently with the respective parenting styles of the father and mother. In the study by Alison et al., the role of parenting style influences students' stress, anxiety, and depression [11]. Gender differences in children were evident, so boys and girls may be affected differently by parenting style. They surveyed 290 undergraduate students (58% female) found maternal parenting styles are more closely related to child outcomes than paternal styles are. Daughters were more likely to be influenced by maternal parenting styles, and more findings support that boys' outcomes are more dependent on maternal parenting, too. It was found that new students had to deal with the relationship between academic and social, so this also causes them to tend to suffer from depression. They used these variables to predict individual and collective models to ensure data persistence. Permissive mothering was significantly associated with stress and anxiety in daughters, but it was irrelevant to adjustment measures for sons. Authoritative mothering was significantly negatively associated with anxiety and depression in daughters, whereas authoritative fathering was related to depression in sons.

Academic burnout refers to students' negative attitudes towards schoolwork. It will make children lose enthusiasm for their studies and school activities and become distant and indifferent to their friends. Zhu and colleagues found fathers and mothers have different effects on academic burnout and engagement for boys and girls [12]. The purpose of this research is to study how parents predict the academic upbringing and academic performance of Chinese children, as well as the potential gender differences. In addition, the main division of labour in the family in terms of gender roles and gender socialization is different. Chinese society leads to different interactions between mothers and fathers with boys and girls at home. Therefore, the important thing is to investigate the parent-child relationship. Data from fathers and mothers of the same

child can be compared. It turns out that mothers were more involved in parental involvement and authoritative parenting. Adolescents perceived more maternal support. Practice and learn to participate in predicting more predictable parents. Parents' time and energy activities support active parents' support, especially for boys. The quality (skills) of parental involvement may be better than the quantity (taking time to help). Compared with fathers, mothers reported parenting and parental involvement, but children who received support from fathers (not mothers) predicted their academic performance. Besides, like girls, boys' boredom and laziness are more sensitive to the parenting methods of both parents. It is necessary to adjust the parenting method to express support according to the different needs and sensitivity of the children. Mothers are more involved and sensitive to their children's needs than fathers. Nevertheless, fathers are very important in adolescents' academic engagement.

Autonomy support is a parenting behavior to encourage the children to be independent and increase their confidence in making decisions and actively solving problems. For males, higher level of autonomy support means less dysphoria and social anxiety, and vice versa. Chrystyna et al. conducted a study to probe helicopter parenting and autonomy support on gender differences in college students' mental health and well-being [13]. And they explored the extent to which ethnic differences existed between parenting and college students' outcomes. Autonomy support was related to lower dysphoria. It showed that helicopter parenting was associated with lower levels of well-being for females only, and autonomy support was associated with less dyspepsia and social anxiety for males only. Besides, Hispanic students reported lower levels of autonomy support compared to non-Hispanic White students. Consistent with the research hypothesis, helicopter parenting is only related to female's lower levels of happiness. In contrast, autonomous support is only related to less irritability and social anxiety in men. Finally, no evidence of racial differences in these relationships was found. In summary, the results of the study indicate that although parental involvement is usually associated with active child adaptation, parenting has different predictions of well-being for males and females in adulthood. This research complements a growing body of research that highlights the harmful effects of helicopter parenting on the outcome of adult children. Boys tend to get more autonomy-support than girls. Besides, Permissive parenting (low control and moderate support) will increase depressive symptoms. Mothers' authoritarian parenting (high control and low support) will bring more anxiety and depression to girls.

### **3. THE ROLE OF ATTACHMENT STYLES AND GENDER DIFFERENCE**

According to the relationship between how parents were found, and the type of discipline used in the Baumrind's study, children in authoritative families would be more psychosocial and less prone to internalizing and externalizing problems [14]. Corporal punishment is associated with the development of aging emotions [15]. Structural equation analysis using the model in the Milon's study found that perceived nurture and discipline were associated with adult emotion regulation and, when simultaneously examined for perceived discipline, unrelated with emerging adult emotion regulation [16]. The results show that, When both were analyzed simultaneously, perceptual subject strategy changes the relationship between perceptual parenting and the emergence of adult emotional adjustment, especially in men. In contrast, pathways from perceptual parental patterns to emerging adult emotion regulation change significantly in females and appear to be stronger than those from perceptual discipline strategies to emerging adult emotion regulation. Disciplinary strategies between men and women were significantly associated with emotional adjustment, but the relationship is stronger than women. The results of this study suggest that parenting and disciplinary strategies are somewhat related to emotional adjustment for women, but parenting seems to have a stronger relationship than disciplinary strategies. And boys seem to have a stronger relationship with complaining about perceived disciplinary strategies than perceived parental methods.

The attachment theory developed by Balby's identifies four attachment patterns: intimate maintenance, safe haven, safe basis for care, and separation of pain. They recommend using the caregiver concept as a security basis, using harsh or insulting language, namely the security base and the insecure base [17]. In a Pakistani context, using a multiple regression analysis and an independent sample t-test, research shows that girls see their parents as a more authoritative presence [18]. Girls showed higher intensity to maternal attachment variables than father and companion attachment variables. In Webner suggested that girls had higher parental attachment relative to boys, there are also many differences in the behavior patterns of girls and boys in their daily life. Girls are more focused on relationship attitudes, indicating that they want to make some connection with their parents and family, and boys focusing more on self-dependence also means that they are relatively more independent [19]. Research showed that boys consider parents more authoritative than other parenting methods, but when children become adolescent, they spend more time with their peers [20]. Under the Pakistani culture, girls will get more protection from their home environment, they spend most of their

time with their families [21]. But boys can spend most of their time living with friends to strengthen their social behavior, and girls and boys have different views of their parents, boys' attachment to their parents and peers is different, and authoritative parents have positive effects on adolescent attachment relationships.

Rejection sensitivity is a person's propensity to perceive, anticipate and overreact to refusal. In the study, the effects of rejection sensitivity and attachment styles on student gender and different upbringing styles were explored [22]. The study sample set was randomly selected from the Faculty of Education, Mugra University (Turkey). The participants were 500 students (260 females; 240 males). Conclusions were drawn by a questionnaire form. Students with fear attachment types had significantly higher rejection sensitivity than other students. This group will shed their negative views of themselves and of others in ways to avoid intimacy. This means that this type of children cannot easily establish and maintain a relationship and being rejected is very sensitive to them. Moreover, boys had significantly lower levels of rejection sensitivity than in girls. It can also be said that girls with higher anxiety and rejection expectations than boys are a tendency to quickly perceive rejection, belonging to an extreme reaction. Rejection sensitivity includes insensitive, extremely insensitive, and insecure attachment, and tends to develop rejection sensitivity that can cause some damage to relationships. People without interpersonal skills are sensitive to rejection, and psychological theory regards a sense of belonging as a basic need, and perceived rejection is a highly disgusted experience where acceptance, recognition, support, and attribution inspire each relationship. Thus, rejection of sensitivity and insecure attachment may produce poor interpersonal problems [23].

#### **4. THE EFFECTS OF PERCEPTION OR THINKING PATTERN AND GENDER DIFFERENCE**

Adler was the first psychologist to emphasize the role of birth order in personality formation. Individuals have different birth orders and have different status in the family, thus forming different styles. Parents also have different parenting styles and attitudes towards children with different birth order, so that they have different psychological development. In the survey of Someya et al. on the emotional effects of parenting methods on gender differences and birth order, they examine the adolescent population with two siblings applied the Egna Minnen av Barndoms Uppförstran (EMBU) in Japan. For male subjects, the mother gives overprotection and emotional warmth, but in female subjects, it was the father who gives excessive protection and emotional warmth. The research selected some high school and university healthy volunteers to participate in the EMBU

study and all subjects were required to complete the EMBU uninterrupted. Father and mother was assessed separately for each subscale. The authors used a one-way ANOVA based on the gender differences of the subjects [1]. The results show that Japanese parents generally want older brothers and sisters to be role models for younger siblings, so they are more exclusive and harsher in raising their older brothers. Sisters get more emotional warmth from their parents than their brothers.

However, even without the effect of birth order, the male and female adolescents have different feelings at the same family. Cheng and Wu examined family socioeconomic status and children gender differences in Taiwanese adolescents. They chose two samples, and they are 598 Taiwanese students and 1153 Taiwanese students. The authors propose two hypotheses which hypothesis 1 is Taiwanese parents would have more excessive protection and rejection for boys and emotional warmth for girls and hypothesis 2 is adolescents with high family socioeconomic status would feel more emotional warmth and rejection than lower adolescents. The authors used sample 1 to correct the s-EMBU scale and verified sample 2 for the corrected model to explore individual views of parental parenting behavior. The results showed that the composite confidence of the subscales with revised rejection, emotional warmth, and overprotection were 0.84, 0.85 and 0.70. A strong correlation between exclusion and overprotection may impair discriminative validity. The three scales showed the values of the acceptable reliability of 0.85, 0.86, and 0.70 respectively in Sample 2. This study found that girls felt higher parental emotional warmth than boys did, but that parental rejection and overprotection were relatively low [2]. These results suggesting that a more authoritarian manner that parental parenting may manifest in boys.

The thinking patterns are diverse and the different thinking patterns can also affect the parenting style for children of different genders. Moreover, different parenting styles have different effects on the thinking patterns of male and female adolescents. Zhongyong thinking is the most mainstream Confucian thought and the most popular thought in China. The idea of the mean appeal people to make rational decisions after thinking about problems with diversified thinking perspectives. Hou et al. explored whether sex differences modulate the effect of parental modalities with Zhongyong thinking style of education on adolescent mood (depression and anxiety Symptoms) [24]. The authors assumed that gender (possible variables) had a direct or indirect route to regulating parenting to emotional distress, using the questionnaire method to volunteer college students from four universities, with 3,943 valid questionnaires and no statistical difference. The authors analyzed the statistical results which gender was recorded as female and male. It was found that male adolescents scored higher than female adolescents in parental rejection and over-

protection while women scored higher than men on parental emotional warmth and its overall harmony dimensions. What's more, the study found that the emotional warmth of parents is greatly related to the idea of Zhongyong thought and men are stronger than women [24]. This study showed that college students with the same enthusiasm for their parents develop more moderation thinking than women. Parents guide their child during adolescence that men are guided to be independent and autonomous, and women are guided to obey. Thus, men may think more about moderation than women when sensing the same degree of parental warmth.

## **5. LIMITATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION**

First, existing studies have examined many questions about parenting styles and emotional development of adolescents, but these studies have focused more on parenting style and adolescents as a unity. The direction for future studies is to explore the relationship between parenting style and emotional development of adolescents, including gender differences. Second, the measurements from these studies focus on a single point in time. To detect changes and explore closer relationships, follow-up studies could monitor the relationship between parenting styles and emotional development of adolescents over time. Third, existing research mainly measures one factor related to emotional development (e.g., the relationship between parenting style and child depression). This limitation provides an additional direction for future studies. Future studies can systematically explore the interaction of various factors in these relationships. On the one hand, it can bring more systematic and scientific research results.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This review summarized the relationship between different parenting styles and adolescent emotional development using gender differences as an entry point. The review evaluated the previous literature and found following results. First, in the different effects of parenting on the emotions of men and adolescents, the emotions of girls are affected by the mother's parenting style (authority), and the emotions of boys are affected by the father's parenting style (authority). Mothers are more involved in adolescent parenting than fathers. Moreover, boys' emotions are as sensitive to their parenting as girls in both parents. Helicopter parenting is only associated with lower levels of well-being in women, while autonomic support is only associated with less indigestion and social anxiety in men. Second, parenting is more emotional for female adolescents than disciplinary strategies in attachment styles and gender differences. However, for male adolescents, disciplinary strategies influence their emotions more than parenting

methods. For female adolescents, they are more attached to their families, and the boys are more attached to their friends. In addition, female adolescents have higher anxiety and rejection expectations than male adolescents. Furthermore, in the effects of perception or thought patterns versus gender differences, Japanese parents raise older brothers more strictly than their sisters, and female adolescents will get more emotional warmth than male teenagers. Female adolescents receive more parental emotional warmth than male, while their parents have lower levels of rejection and overprotection than males'. In the parenting of Zhongyong thought, parents provide independent guides to boys and obedient guides to girls, so boys are more rational than girls in the face of the same emotional warmth. Last, existing studies have the limitations of studying individual factors related with emotional development and future studies can systematically explore the interaction of various factors in these relationships.

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