A Literature Review on the Influence of Parents on Children's Academic and Cognitive Development

Zihan Zhu

Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, University of Nottingham, Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China, 315100

hnyzz10@nottingham.edu.cn

Abstract. How parents can raise their children well has become a topical issue. To help address this professional issue, this essay reviews the interrelationships between parenting style, parental companionship, parental emotional stability, and family structure on the one hand, and children's academic and psychological development on the other. The paper attempts to explain the impact of parental behavior on adolescent development. The findings show that the authoritative educational style is positively related to academic achievement and children's psychological development, parental companionship and emotional management are also positively related to children's academic and quality development. The single-parent family, especially those lacking a father, shows a negative relationship with children's development. Therefore, parents are a vital aspect of effective education.

Keywords: Academic learning, Psychological development, Parenting style, Parental companionship, Parental emotional stability.

1 Introduction

Many educational perspectives can be said to adopt a mechanical view as it focuses primarily on the concept of learning and the child's agency [1]. However, a broader view of education, namely holistic education, may be more appropriate to the current form of education. According to Mahmoudi et al. (2012), "holistic education targets the broadest level of developmental cognition and emotion of the whole person", enabling students to better develop in all aspects of their lives [1]. In addition to this, holistic education can also focus on external factors such as parents. This point is reasonable. To ensure the child's all-round development, it is important to focus first on the influence of the parents, as they are the first teachers of their children, and by observing their behavior, the child may imitate and form his or her own ideas. Therefore, parents are an important aspect of a child's education, and it is one of their responsibilities to create an environment conducive to the child's academic and cognitive development. To raise awareness in society of the importance of proper parenting and to help parents recognize and correct any shortcomings in their parenting to help their children grow,

this essay will analyze four factors that are relevant to parents and draw relevant conclusions based on previous literature. This essay will firstly compare three different parenting styles. Then, parental companionship and parental emotional stability will be introduced and evaluated, followed by a discussion on the impact of the single-parent family on the child and the role of the father. Finally, an outlook for the future and the limitations of this essay will be pointed out. This study can better help parents to develop good educational practices, which are conducive to the development of their children, thus alleviating the problems related to child rearing in schools and society and is a reference for researchers in the child education profession.

2   Parenting Style

From previous research, parenting styles can be roughly divided into three general categories: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative. The permissive parenting method is mainly for tolerant parents who do not demand much from their children. Their parenting style is often non-demanding conduct, minimal parental control, and low levels, with a child-centered approach [2]. In contrast to that, authoritarian parenting style is very demanding and directive, and their parenting model combines high levels of control, strict coercive discipline, and aggressive behavior. This is where parents expect obedience without explanation and provide low levels of trust and engagement with their children [2]. The final authoritative parenting approach is demanding but responsive. Rather than restrictive, their discipline is controlling, and oriented towards the child's participation in family life. They provide the children with trust, support, and open communication [2].

Darling and Steinberg (1993) define parenting as "the combination of attitudes towards the child that are communicated, and which together create an emotional climate in which the parent's behavior is expressed" [3]. Multiple studies have shown that such an emotional climate is important for a child's all-round development. Different parenting styles tend to lead to completely different outcomes. In a recent review, the authoritative parenting method has been found to positively correlate with adaptive behavior and psychological adjustment, and negatively related to maladaptive behavior and mental disorders [2]. In a primary school survey in Guangzhou, which found that 25.37% of families choose an authoritative approach to education. In these families, there is usually a good atmosphere, thus, 87.08% of students are satisfied with their lives, while only 8.72% of students experience internet addiction and less than 3% of students have social anxiety [4]. Also, the relative control over the child allows for the child's initiative and is less likely to lead to rebellion. This means that the authoritative approach is flexible and allows for appropriate management of the child on the premise that the child chooses his or her interests. While the permissive style relies entirely on the child's self-motivation. If the child is not self-motivated, then the child is likely to relax about his or her studies, leading to a decline in performance. In addition, it is argued that parental control stifles the development of the child's self-will, which in turn affects the child's sense of well-being, and that relaxed parental control increases the child's self-confidence. To some extent, this argument is true. Nonetheless, research

has shown that permissive parents do not force their children to follow external conditions, which has a detrimental effect on subsequent social adjustment. This is because increased self-confidence can easily be associated with selfishness and narcissism and can be too self-absorbed to ignore the environment around them, and it is easy to attribute failure to the environment [5]. In this way, a tolerant management style is harmful to the child's cognitive development and subsequent learning and work, even if it is initially beneficial to the child's development. When it comes to the authoritarian parenting style, it is associated with higher school performance and obedience [6]. However, harsh parenting tends to breed rebellion and leads to despair, low self-esteem, and mental illness in children. Thus, it is obvious that authoritarian education is the best approach for most children.

3   Quality of Parental Companionship

Parental companionship refers to the material or moral support and assistance given by parents to their children through participation in their activities and positive parenting [7]. How they guide and communicate with their children is more important to their children's academic performance, and development. This is due to the fact that good parenting behavior has a positive impact on children's academic performance and the PISA report also found that high parental educational expectations are associated with higher motivation, higher engagement in learning, and greater academic resilience [7][8]. In addition, parental involvement can significantly improve children's learning behaviors, such as positive attitudes towards learning, willingness to complete homework, and persistence in learning [9]. This indicates that effective parental support has a significant impact on children's learning, self-esteem, self-awareness, emotions, intelligence, and social adjustment [7]. For example, as there are many uncertainties in online education, without parental involvement, children are likely to be distracted by many things, such as pop-up ads on the internet or chatting with classmates online. In this case, parental guidance is even more important, not only to help them develop good study habits but also to improve their relationship with their children.

4   Stability of Parents' Emotions

Parents are the providers of their children's physical, intellectual, and emotional security while children can acquire general life wisdom provided by their parents. This means that the relationship between parents and their children is important for the child's cognitive and emotional development as well as for the stability of the family. Also known is the lasting impact a parent's love can have and the fact that a warm connection can endure for a very long time [10]. In fact, even for independent adults, "parental relationships appear to be as important to their well-being as having a partner or best friend" [10]. More importantly, parents' emotional expressions influence their children's emotional development. According to Joseph and Varma (2017), children who have a secure attachment with their parents can lead to greater competence and

sociability as well as a greater ability to handle many types of relationships [10]. There-fore, if parents can manage their emotions appropriately, this could be a powerful tool to bring success and happiness to their children's lives. Nevertheless, uncontrollable emotions can manifest themselves through struggles and conflicts that may affect eve-ryday life. For example, if parents are constantly angry with their children, it is likely that the children will not feel confident about many things because they always feel that they are wrong. Not only that, but they may also be reluctant to communicate with their parents regularly because they are afraid that their parents will be angry with them, which eventually leads to a dislike of communication and low self-esteem. They are often characterized by high-stress levels and more depression, which is harmful to the development of social resilience. Thus, for children, the emotional control of their par-ents has a great impact on them. The more supportive and emotionally stable a parent is and the less he or she loses his or her temper with the child, the deeper the bond with the child, the better the family relationship, the more socially adjusted the child is, and the more confident he or she will be. Conversely, children tend to have low self-esteem and depression [11].

5   Family Structure

Single-parent families exist when a relative is the main caregiver of the child, such as a mother, father, or older sibling [12]. Also, research shows that nearly half of single-parent households are headed by women and live below the poverty line [13]. As a survey in secondary schools, it seems that students from single-parent families usually show more behavioral problems and receive less parental support at school [12]. Simi-larly, McLanahan and Booth (1991) compared children from one mother's families and two-parent families, concluding that one mother's family children are more likely to suffer from absenteeism or even drop out of school[14]. Data shows that by 2009, sin-gle-parent families had a 17% lower college graduation rate than their two-parent peers [15]. Even as adults, despite their low incomes, high poverty rates, high divorce rates, and use drug and alcohol, they are also more likely to engage in criminal behavior. These may be due to the lack of the function of the father. For children to achieve academically and socially, it seems important for their fathers to have an active role in their schools [12]. While everyone can contribute to a child's education, fathers are likely to have more positive impact when they are involved. Not only that, but it can also have an impact on their children's psychological, emotional, and psychological well-being [12]. In many cases, the absence of fathers from children's lives is a major contributing factor to child health issues, including juvenile delinquency, depression and eating disorders, teen suicide, and abuse [16]. All in all, children who grow up in single-parent families face a number of challenges, although many of them can manage well.

6   Discussion

The above classification does not cover all parent-related factors but only analyzes several significant external factors related to them. However, as each parent's salary, personality, and others differ, the conclusions drawn in this essay are only applicable to the majority of people, and many specific influences have not been specifically analyzed due to a lack of literature. Since the year of some literature is decades ago, the conclusions may also be different in modern times. In addition, the influence of parenting styles on children varies according to culture. Overall, many other different factors need to be analyzed about a child's cognitive development and the conclusions drawn vary from person to person as well.

7   Conclusion

This article argues that a child's development is closely linked to his or her parents. In addition to the child's own factors, parenting style, parental companionship, parental emotional stability, and family structure can all have a significant impact on the child. This essay begins by exploring three different parenting styles and comparing them with the authoritative approach which is more conducive to the child's social adjustment and academic performance. Secondly, the paper analyzes the impact of parental companionship on children, concluding that parental involvement in education can help children develop good study habits and improve their relationships with their parents. It then discusses parental emotional stability and why children with better family relationships have higher emotional intelligence and are more confident. Finally, the impact of the single-parent family on children as well as the importance of the role of fathers are discussed. It seems that children who only live with their mothers are more likely to behave badly in school and commit crimes. Even though a child's self and motivation are important, the role of the parents is essential as children develop many habits from an early age with their parents, and they develop themselves by imitating their parents' behavior. Therefore, parents need to focus more on the need to raise their children and give them enough company and encouragement to develop good qualities such as self-confidence and self-esteem. In the future, subsequent studies need to be conducted help correct incorrect educational behavior as well as to create a social environment that is beneficial to the child's all-round development by raising the awareness of parents, teachers, and others who are closely involved in the child's development. It is through the efforts of these people that a better environment for children can be created. Thus, future studies can explore some other external factors to reach a more precise conclusion about a child's learning and cognitive development.

Acknowledgment

References

1. Mahmoudi, S., Jafari, E., Nasrabadi, H. A., & Liaghatdar, M. J. Holistic Education: An Approach for 21 Century. International Education Studies, 5(3), 178–186. (2012).
2. Tagliabue, S., Olivari, M. G., Bacchini, D., Affuso, G., & Confalonieri, E. Measuring adolescents' perceptions of parenting style during childhood: psychometric properties of the parenting styles and dimensions questionnaire. Psicologia: Teoria E Pesquisa, 30(3), 251–258. (2014).
3. Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. Parenting style as context: an integrative model. Psychological Bulletin, 113(3), 487–496. (1993).
4. Peng, G. F., & Lin, J. Y. Analysis and reflection on the impact of family education on children's development. (2019, January 25). http://www.jyb.cn/rmtzcg/xwy/wzxw/201901/t20190125_212765.html
5. Barton, A. L., & Hirsch, J. K. Permissive parenting and mental health in college students: Mediating effects of academic entitlement. Journal of American college health: J of ACH, 64(1), 1–8. (2016).
6. Uji, M., Sakamoto, A., Adachi, K., & Kitamura, T. Psychometric properties of the Japanese version of the Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation-Outcome Measure. Comprehensive Psychiatry, 53, 600–608. (2012).
7. Song, F. F. The impact of parental accompaniment and student achievement goal orientation on student performance. Master's Thesis. Hangzhou Normal University. (2019).
8. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PISA 2012 Results: Ready to Learn: Students' Engagement, Drive and Self-Beliefs (Volume III): Preliminary Version. Paris, France: OECD. (2013).
9. Klimes-Dougan, B., Lopez, J. A., Nelson, P., et al. Two studies of low-income parents' involvement in schooling. The Urban Review, 24, 185-202. (1992).
10. Joseph, S., & Varma, P. The Effect of Parental Emotional Stability among Indian Adolescent's Psychosocial adjustment in Kerala, India. Scholar: Human Sciences, 9(1). (2017).
11. Boediman, L. M., & Desnawati, S. The Relationship between Parenting Style and Children's Emotional Development among Indonesian Population. Jurnal Ilmiah Psikologi MIND SET, 10(01), 17–24. (2019).
12. Ferrell, R. T. The effects of single -parent households versus two -parent households on student academic success, attendance, and suspensions. Lindenwood University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. (2009).
13. Martin, M. T., Emery, R. E., & Peris, T. S. Single-parent families. In M. Colemen and L. H. Ganong (Ed.), Handbook of Contemporary Families (pp. 282-301). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (2004).

14. McLanahan, S. & Booth, K. Mother-Only Families. In Booth (Ed.), Contemporary Families: Looking Forward, Looking Back (pp. 405-428). Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations. (1991).
15. Communications, N. W. Teens from Single-Parent Families Leave School Earlier. (2015, February 19). Www.nyu.edu. https://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2015/february/teens-from-single-parent-families-leave-school-earlier.html
16. Singh, A., & Kiran, U. V. Effect of single parent family on child delinquency. Int J Sci Re, 3(9), 866-868. (2012).