



# Analysis of the Impact of Family Communication Styles on College Students' Academic Performance Based on Satya's Iceberg Theory

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**Abstract.** Parents' rearing style has a significant impact on children's growth, and communication is the most basic parenting style between parents and children, and the results of communication often implicitly influence children's behavior and thoughts. This paper adopts the method of literature reading analysis, consults relevant data, integrates and infers relevant conclusions from the data. The objective of the study is to explain the importance of communication style based on Satya's iceberg theory with college students as the main subject, and analyzes the influence of parent-child communication style on college students' performance in academics. Studies have shown that a good communication model will promote students to grow into a high self-esteem and confident person, so as to enhance their sense of self-worth and become a good person in the university.

**Keywords:** Satya's iceberg theory · family · communication styles · college students

## 1 Introduction

The family relationship is a complex communication relationship that is difficult to describe, has a traditionally unchangeable established identity, and does not change in the slightest because of widely differing values of the self. And, this established identity creates fixed patterns of communication and deep-rooted influences on all members. For example, parents are authoritative and children are well-behaved. As the younger members of the family mature and the older members age, the relational status of each other is changing again. And, as relational status changes, so do the needs and ego boundaries of family members. The family itself does not automatically develop into a form that suits all members, but is instead more influenced by traditional factors and social pressures. When children grow up to be [2] college students, needs naturally undergo transformation, and then communication between parents and college students again diverges due to changes in thinking, but the fixation of relational status leads to communication problems.

University is an important stage of growth and development for a person, and entering university means entering a completely unfamiliar and independent study and living space, when university students live independently under certain circumstances, but the ties with their families are not reduced. In a state where they are not fully connected with society, university students lack social experience and their cognitive ability is not yet mature, so they still need to communicate with their parents. The way parents communicate with their children is particularly important, which has a significant impact on college students' [2] self-confidence, study motivation, maintaining a good psychological state, and clarifying self-development goals. Through Satya's iceberg theory, we analyze the positive impact of family communication style on college students, which affects their academic performance.

## 2 Overview of Satya's Iceberg Theory

Vicenya Satya is the nation's most recognizable lead family therapist and has been called "the master family therapist for everyone". Her model is person-centered, focusing on "you and me" while caring more about "us", giving us a deeper sense of self-growth and family relationships. Iceberg theory [5] is an important idea in Satya's family therapy, but it is actually a metaphor that each person's "self" is like an iceberg. In the iceberg, the behaviors on the horizontal line are visible to everyone, which is a kind of surface behavior, but more importantly, what lies beneath the iceberg is the inner environment that is not easily seen, or even ignored and suppressed by the person himself. This inner such as coping styles, feelings, opinions, expectations, desires, and ego all play a role in the person's overall actions. What the iceberg shows is exactly a complete system, and when one part is affected by the outside world, all other parts change accordingly with it.

The first, coping. The mental thoughts we have about what happened should focus on how things happened, rather than focusing on what happened. When a person knows how to think for himself about the inner process, his behavior will naturally shift. We transform our coping not so much by discarding old ways of coping, but by adding new ways of coping, so that the options become more available and the horizon becomes more open. The second, feelings. We should recognize that the emotions themselves are our own, so we should take responsibility for them; we should not allow the bad emotions of others to affect us; the emotions of others need not be ours to bear. Emotions do not go away by repression, we need to know how to release them often, and we need to learn to live in peace with them. The third one, the point of view. Our own opinions are basically brought about by our life experiences, but these opinions, which are only our own definitions of things, are not the Torah or the whole truth. We should reject those absolutes of self-qualification and not impose rules that deny ourselves the relaxation we deserve; that will only limit our ability to make a full understanding of things. The fourth, expectations. We have countless expectations every day, but unmet expectations can make us feel stressed out. We should learn to let go of or lower those unmet expectations to the extent that we can achieve them; or we can find alternatives to current expectations so that we can stay motivated to keep doing what we want to do. The fifth, cravings, such as the need to be loved, accepted, respected, etc. If our cravings are not met, we may be

aggressive, cater to others, or choose to avoid them. Cravings are not taken from others, the only person who can satisfy your cravings is yourself, learn to accept yourself and give yourself a sense of belonging.

In this article, mainly to take the use by desktop research and literature reading analysis. Find relevant materials and books about Satya 's iceberg theory, study Satya 's model response posture, and carry out secondary sorting to obtain the impact of family environment 's ' consistent ' communication on college students, and the benefits of improving college students ' self-worth in this case.

### **3 The Use of Satya's Iceberg Theory in Communication Styles**

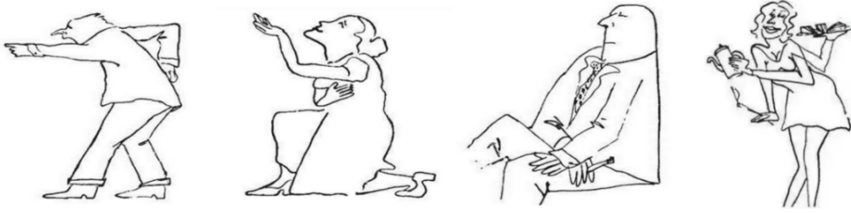
In the communication process, people usually focus on the visible "behavioral" part of the iceberg, often ignoring the hidden part of the iceberg underneath. In this way, people can communicate in a way that focuses on the appropriate aspects, resulting in positive and effective communication that brings real and positive emotions to both parties.

#### **3.1 Building Linkages with "Icebergs"**

Everyone has the same iceberg and the same emotional needs, and everyone is born with a strong desire for the world - a desire to be loved, a desire to communicate, and this desire is not met one by one, so the vast majority of people therefore suppress their desire, while the lack of effective communication between parents and children. The lack of effective communication between parents and children can lead to the opposite of what is expected. Most parents rarely listen to their children's real inner dialogue, and respond to them mainly through external actions. What parents must do is to form a connection with their children and spend time listening to what is really going on inside them. If parents can hear what they are thinking and feeling in their hearts, their children will be able to share their thoughts with you so that they can respond not only behavior to behavior, but more importantly, feelings to feelings, expectations to expectations, desires to desires, and other deep emotional responses.

#### **3.2 Satya Model Response Posture**

Satya states that the normal problem to be dealt with between people is that they come together because they have commonalities with each other, while at the same time developing together with differences. One should value each person for what they are. She wants to see that each person can affirm the meaning of self, can celebrate self, as well as can feel healthy, creative, strong, meek, beautiful and lovable. Satya studied the inner thoughts of eye sight, hearing, doing movement, touching, smelling, and communicating in numerous people and generalized the five major patterns of human psychological communication: pleasing, duty, hyper-rationality, interrupting, and practical but uniform response patterns. She found that the vast majority of people use these first four modes of expression to mask their weaknesses when faced with difficult interpersonal problems that need to be dealt with. Very few people are able to express themselves authentically and consistently.



**Fig. 1.** Satya Model Response Posture (made by the author)

In real life, due to some traditional experiences and experiences from the past and the bondage from family, people often have difficulty in presenting themselves in a better way, to be true to themselves and accept others. Satya found that people are used to avoiding problems by responding in the wrong way and therefore created [5] certain body movements to allow people to recognize the parts of themselves that they cannot notice and that are very visible to others. She exaggerates every message conveyed by the movements of the face and the voice through the whole body so as to give us a very strong impression (Fig. 1).

Communication patterns between parents and children can be divided into five categories. The first type of accuser. Refers to the condescending authoritarian and employee who sees a problem and starts accusing: “You never do that”, “Why do you always”, why don’t you ever”, etc. He feels that the answer to the question doesn’t matter and doesn’t have to be bothered by it, because what the accuser really cares about is imposing his own problems and responsibilities on others, not the desired answer. At the same time, they don’t feel like they mean anything. So, if you want someone to be submissive to you, you will feel like you have meaning. When they show submission, you feel empowered. The second type of pleaser. Talking in a pleasing, flattering tone, trying to please the opponent, expressing apologies or never resentment, and using language to show that he doesn’t do anything for himself, he always needs to be affirmed by others. You sympathize with others who are critical of self. You have respect for them because they talk to themselves, not caring how much they talk or how they talk. You will say “yes” to everything regardless of your own feelings or opinions.

The third type of hyper-rational person. Such people appear quite calm and collected, so much so that they can rival a real computer or dictionary. Their voice is monotonous and their utterances are quite abstract. The longest possible vocabulary is used, and although you can’t be sure of the exact meaning of it yet, it at least makes them sound intelligible. After they finish that sentence, no one will hear them again. Your mind must be focused on the fact that you can’t move your body easily, and be sure to choose the right words. After all, they can never go wrong. What is done, or said is irrelevant to what he is saying or doing. The fourth type of interrupter. This type of person is unable to respond to all points of view. Because their own feelings are all wrong. Their voice sounds like they are singing, but it is out of harmony with all the words and the volume is always high and low for no reason, because it lacks central content. He never speaks the right words, ignores everyone’s actual questions, and gives answers that may be irrelevant.

The fifth is the consistent type and also the most desirable method of communication, but in the survey through Satya, 4.5% of the people achieved this method of communication, while the first four categories have 95.5% of the communication methods used by the people, caused by the low self-esteem and low sense of personal value that they have been taught from childhood. This method of communication will be elaborated on in point three.

Satya believes that people should consider at least three options when they meet something that is difficult to accomplish, and that this choice is made by people themselves and not impulsively decided under the influence of inappropriate emotions. When we look at these things with an inappropriate perspective, we are always at one of the extremes. Simply put, Satya's model wants to avoid such extreme choices from arising, and instead have more possibilities to make choices, to make decisions in a more dialectical way.

## **4 The Impact of Communication Styles on the Academic Performance of College Students**

In the environment of exam-oriented education in China, most parents look only at how well their children study, and in their daily communication only focus on caring how well they study, thus evaluating whether a student is good or not. And when their children enter university life, most parents think that students already have the skills to live independently and do not need to continue to take responsibility for their students' education, and that the counselors and teachers in university are the ones who are concerned about students' growth, thus reducing the communication with students even more. At the same time, most college students also think that they, as an adult, can choose the path they want to take and do not need to report everything to their parents, so they actively reduce the communication with their parents, which leads to the lack of communication awareness. In modern society, there are even more college students who are only children and are more inclined to think for themselves, which is likely to cause communication problems in college life.

### **4.1 "Consistent" Communication Model**

The "congruent" perspective of Satya's communication model is particularly critical in family communication. Consistency has always been Satya's approach to active interaction in homeschooling. This model is based on enhancing one's own values and achieving equal interaction between oneself, others and the environment. The language of the subject of this model shows one's inner feelings, expressions flow and language are unified, inner harmony is harmonized, and self-worth feels good. Try not to point fingers in interactions; you can disagree with the other person, but don't accuse them; you can show concern without being ingratiating, but you don't need repressed emotions to care for the other person; you can communicate with people without being hyper-rational, with feelings and sensations, but don't simply reason; you don't interrupt, but don't be afraid to express yourself courageously. When people are more understanding of other people's coping gestures, and more aware of their own, they will find the resources in each

gesture and turn the problem into a positive resource to use. Consistent communication is not an effective means of persuasion, because when parents and children are communicating in consistency, this is when both parties meet on a real life level to truly express themselves, and it is the best and most effective mode of communication when both parties are communicating in consistency without triggering each other's psychological defensive systems.

In a state of consistent communication, as we value ourselves, others and situations more, communication with parents and children becomes more cordial, accepting, affirming and supportive, and it is easier to develop children who feel more responsible, cheerful, caring for themselves and others; more creative, more passionate, self-confident, accepting, more loving and balanced; with high self-esteem and social value. As such a child develops into a college student, [1] he or she will be better able to mobilize his or her inner potential and thus realize the purpose of increasing his or her value in life. They will also try to discover their own thoughts, feelings, expectations and desires by observing their own external behavior and those of others, thus creating a more intimate emotional connection with them. At the same time they will always be curious about the world, which will stimulate college students' intrinsic interest and motivation to learn and have more self-directed learning and self-responsibility, in which case their learning efficiency and performance will naturally rise, carrying out a virtuous cycle.

## **4.2 Communication Patterns and the Promotion of a Sense of Self-worth**

Our sense of self-worth comes from the interaction with our parents in our childhood family of origin. Self-worth [4] is enhanced by mending our understanding of our family of origin, by reconciling with our parents, by transforming old family rules that no longer fit, by seeing the uniqueness and uniqueness of our lives, and by recognizing ourselves as unconditionally valuable and worthy of being loved. A sense of self-worth is how we perceive ourselves and our value, which is a subjective response of the self to objective phenomena. When one gets along well in an environment, one usually believes that others are accepting of one's self and that one belongs. But when one wants to exist in a certain environment for a long time, it is easy to have conflicts and arguments with others. When we were children, we learned to use crying to get love from our parents if we could do so; we became accustomed to blaming others if we exchanged angry gestures for attention; we subconsciously repressed our emotions if we were forbidden to express them. When we grow up, we remain accustomed to communicating in the same way we learned as children, with the aim of gaining the love of others in the same way, when it becomes easy to clash with others in communication.

People with a high sense of self-worth usually have strong self-confidence, optimistic and positive about life; people with a low sense of self-worth will show low self-esteem and self-abandonment, not seeing hope in life. People with a low sense of self-worth have an empty bottle and can only get "freedom", "respect" and other desires from others to fill their bottle. In fact, the sense of value is not obtained through the giving of others, but through oneself. Whether we are cheerful, quiet, open, or shy, it is a tool to reach the world, and the tool itself is not good or bad, it just depends on how we use it. Therefore, don't base your excellence on what others think of you. Once your sense of self-worth

is based on external behaviors and what others think, you will never progress on your own, while forever being trapped in what others think of you. Everything others say or do about you will have a huge impact on you, especially your own emotions and the way you see yourself. Paying less attention to others is the best way to improve your sense of self-worth and allow your actions to please you.

At the same time, positive or negative communication styles have a significant impact on students' sense of self-worth [3], with parents using democratic and understanding communication styles having a more positive impact on students, an attitude that affects the child's outlook on life and values and further influences the student's academic and interpersonal skills at university. Thus, behavior is the outward manifestation of inner drives, i.e., a sense of self-worth is formed when the heart and the self are in harmony. Having a high sense of self-worth leads to abandoning unhealthy survival patterns to accept the existence of others' lives and appreciate the unique value of their lives. We are aiming for congruence between the table and the heart, a healthy survival posture. Parents who are constantly encouraging in their conversations with their children, boosting their sense of self-worth and stimulating their potential, can often rise to higher challenges in the future and perform at their own level of work and study better than other students. And on top of that, college students should believe that they are capable and gradually build a better sense of self-worth through their efforts.

## 5 Conclusion

Satya's Iceberg Theory gives family members insight into the various parts of the self so that they can find the underlying issues to address in communication. By moving from self-defense to self-discovery, people have the opportunity to truly open their selves and can let go of all their senses and feel free to see, read, feel, watch and write. With a good communication style and a heightened sense of self-worth, a person can live in the moment, can communicate thoughts, moods and feelings, can express expectations, but needs to pay attention to the other person's inner world with curiosity and empathy, before self-worth and the power of others can flow naturally into each other. It is in this condition that college students can have a positive effect on their selves, enhance their sense of self-worth, security and fulfillment, have expectations, see hope, and thus increase their academic self-efficacy. Family in the use of 'consistent' communication mode can give students a good state of communication, thus affecting the growth of students character and attitude towards things. On this basis, students have increased their sense of self-worth, can better play their dominant position in universities, and increase their academic performance.

In this study, in the process of searching for data and secondary collation, Satya's theoretical knowledge was increasingly understood, and the iceberg theory, family therapy mode and coping mode were understood at a deeper level. But it was mainly integrated and discussed through written materials, lacking practical application cases. Therefore, it is hoped that in the future educational environment, we can increase the communication between parents and children based on the Satya family model, cultivate a 'consistent' communication model, and apply the iceberg theory together with children. In this method, whether the growth of children have an impact, whether to become a

college student after their own academic more control, can be understood through field surveys to form a social survey to obtain practical materials, as this article more powerful argument.

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