

A Study of the Effect of Family Structure on Adolescents' Commitment to Learning

Yicheng Cai

Walton School, Fuzhou, 350000, China

chengguozhu@hrgrp.cn

Abstract. Normalized population mobility leads to smaller family sizes, which in turn leads to changes in China's family structure, with nuclear and single-parent families becoming more common. Research has shown that family structure has an impact on parent-child communication and even on adolescents' commitment in learning, and the impact varies across different types of families. This study centers on the keywords of family structure and learning engagement by reading relevant literature in recent years. According to the study, it is found that adolescents aged 13-15 years old lack communication with their parents, which is often caused by inappropriate communication between the two parties, or other related reasons. Compared with other family structures, parent-child communication in nuclear families is more perfect because they have a simple structure, a better family atmosphere, and parents spend more time with their children. However, parent-child communication in single-parent families is less effective, and parental divorce also has a certain impact on communication, which affects the children's learning efficiency. From the above, it can be seen that family structure affects parent-child relationship, and a good family structure is conducive to the establishment of healthy parent-child relationship.

Keywords: Family structure, parent-child communication, earning inputs, parental relations, parent-child relationship.

1. Introduction

From time immemorial, the home has been the most basic unit of human life, the starting point and foundation of everything, in which the family structure also plays an essential part. A good family structure allows young people to grow up healthily and happily and lays a certain foundation for their good behavior. Changes in family structure often also affect adolescents' learning, which is often overlooked by many people. Most people feel that adolescents' learning ability is only related to their own ability, and has little connection with their families, but according to research findings, the influence of family structure on children should not be underestimated. A benign parent-child relationship will make a family better, and vice versa, it will only be worse. In a 2002 study, Wang Zhengyan showed that the direct effect of parents' education level on parent-child communication is small, and it mainly affects parent-child communication through family structure [1]. This shows that family structure affects parent-child relationship. However, the main task of current adolescents is to study, if parents do not communicate with their children in time or in an inappropriate way, it will affect their children's study. "Learning engagement is also one of the important indicators of students' learning process and one of the predictors of academic achievement [2]. It is closely related to the family, and learning engagement can be an important indicator of adolescents' mental health, which can reflect students' positive and healthy psychological status, and is conducive to stimulating students' stress resistance, optimism, and creativity and so on. Then, the above research shows that the influence of family structure on learning investment in the study of college students accounted for more than that of adolescents, in order to fill the academic gap, therefore, this study will use the method of literature review to explore the influence of changes in the family structure of adolescents on learning investment.

2. Introduction of research subject

Family structure is a kind of composition of family members and their interaction, mutual influence of a state, with a certain degree of connection and relevance. Generally, family structure can be divided into four types: nuclear family, main family, joint family and single-parent family. The family is also a major place of human life, which influences individual or collective development. The family structure plays an important role here, including the relationship between parents, parent-child relationship and so on. Engagement in learning is also an important indicator of a student's mental health, and it is related to the family. Family structure and learning input are also in a certain proportion, as well as the amount of influence of family structure on adolescents' learning input, this study aims to explore the communication and exchange of family structure on parent-child relationship, which in turn affects the learning input of adolescents (junior high school students) aged 13-15 years old. Secondly, this paper will use the method of literature review by reading the previous literature, conducting comparative analysis and discussion, and finally draw conclusions.

3. Impact of family structures

The nuclear family refers to the family composed of husband and wife and their minor or unmarried children. The family members constitute a stable triangular relationship. The nuclear family is the most stable of all family structures, compared with other family structures. The relationship of the nuclear family is simple, less dependence on family relatives, reducing some unnecessary conflicts and disputes, and is conducive to the cultivation of a good atmosphere in the family. In 2002, Wang Zhengyan, Lei Li and others put forward the research topic of parent-child communication of junior high school students in relation to the adaptation of the family environmental system, in which it is also mentioned that the family structure affects children's communication [1]. The object of the study is junior high school students, parents and teachers who answer the questionnaires. The scale of the research include parent-child and peer relationship self-assessment scale, selected from the "self-description questionnaire"; family functioning scales, such as the self-assessment scale and peer relationship, selected from the "self-description questionnaire". Rutter's Child Behavior Questionnaire, including family general health problems and family behavioral problems, which has good reliability and validity. The result of questionnaires were processed and analyzed with SPSS10.0 and LISREL8. The structure shows that middle school students communicate more frequently with their mothers than with their fathers. Mothers will behave more positively than fathers in terms of communication. Literature also analyzed the reasons why adolescents have little communication with their parents. One explanation is that there is no topic that can be communicated; the second is that both parties do not have the opportunity and it is difficult to get together in time; and the third is that most of the parents are unable to understand their children. Liu Chengwei examined the relationship between parent-child communication and learning engagement in a group of migrant children and the mediating roles of family closeness and peers in it, which used the FACESII-CV scale, Parent-Child Communication Scale, Peer Relationship Scale for Children and Youth, and the UWES-S Learning Engagement Scale (Chinese version) in the form of a questionnaire distributed to 1550 children and youth [2]. SPSS PROCESS 3.3 and descriptive statistics were used to summarize the results of the study. The study shows that parent-child communication can predict adolescents' academic engagement behavior, as well as family closeness mediates the relationship between parent-child communication and academic engagement, and they are a positive relationship. According to previous research, parent-child communication has an effect on learning engagement, and positive and effective parent-child communication can develop good learning habits, learning interests, etc., which ultimately leads to a higher level of learning engagement [3]. Both of these papers consistently suggest that the time, frequency, and initiative of communication between parents and their children are relatively small, thus leading to the children's communication is not active [1, 2]. Once there is a problem with communication, it may affect the children's learning input, and the latter also suggests that the parents' responsiveness is not strong,

which leads to a lack of knowledge of the children's learning. The lack of ability to play a role in supervising the children's learning, etc., which may lower the children's learning involvement in learning. Liu Hao said in a study that the short-term impact of parent-child separation is of high concern, but the long-term impact of parent-child is of low concern [4]. The main reason is due to population migration, with the development of society, many family members go out to work, resulting in the formation of the parent-child family separation. The study focuses on the analysis of the parent-child separation, the changes in the family structure of the child's mental health degree of the impact of the parent-child separation, suggesting that the main impact of parent-child separation is concentrated in the early childhood to adolescence, the main impact of parent-child separation is concentrated in the early childhood to the adolescent age. Impact is concentrated in early childhood to adolescence. This stage is the most sensitive period, will cause long-term negative impact, especially in adolescence. They are in a rebellious period, the critical period of growth. The lack of parental accompaniment, is a negative impact on the physical and mental health of adolescents, it also greatly also affects the learning input, which is a common phenomenon in our country, especially occurs in remote areas, where the children are more lack of parental care. Most of the parents do not really realize this problem. In summary, the present study find that parent-child communication, parent-child communication and parent-child interaction have a significant impact on the structure of the family, which in turn has an impact on learning engagement.

4. Impact of closeness

The degree of closeness between adolescents and their parents largely affects their relationship. In a study conducted by Lu Yang, it was indicated that the phenomenon of parent-child estrangement is more obvious in most of the families, and the degree of closeness of parent-child relationship is relatively low. It was also indicated that adolescents, no matter what situation they encountered, the first thing they think of is their friends and classmates, and their parents are the second one, which can be seen as the communication status of the majority of the families between the parents and their children, especially the single-parent families [5]. Parent-child relationship in single-parent families will be more serious. This shows that this is the communication status between parents and children in most families, especially in single-parent families. The phenomenon of parent-child relationship separation is even more serious in single family. Children get less care from parents. The study also pointed out that children in single-parent families lose the equilibrium mechanism, which can lead to the destruction of the parent-child relationship, such as parent-child conflict, parent-child separation, and so on, and compared with the children of the nuclear family [4]. The degree of parent-child separation between children and their parents is more serious. Compared to children in nuclear families, children in single-parent families are more likely to show a more severe degree of parent-child separation, which will have an impact on the mental health of the child, and thus affect the child's engagement in learning. Learning engagement is an important indicator of student learning, which includes psychological and behavioral measures as well as emotional and cognitive aspects [6]. Of course, the factors affecting students' learning engagement is far more than family factors, it also includes the family economy, school factors and so on. However, it seems that the family factor is the most influential and prominent aspect, the child in most of the time before adulthood is to live with their parents. The parents' words and deeds can influence on child's behavior. Parents' support of children's learning input can significantly promote the formation of stable learning confidence [7]. When the child encounters difficulties in learning, parents give timely help, participate in problem solving, provide solutions to the program, the child's learning input, good parent-child relationship helps parents' learning participation in the children's learning input to produce a positive impact on children's learning input, in the emphasis on performance. At the same time, it should be taken into account the child's feelings. In addition to emphasizing grades, it is also important to take into account the feelings of the child, so that the child's commitment to learning will be greatly enhanced.

5. Discussion and Suggestion

A study says that the communication between junior high school students and their parents is not optimistic [8]. Most parents lack experience and methods of communication with their children. They do not really listen to their children's inner voices, but just preaching and cursing, so that they slowly become alienated from their children, and their children are not willing to communicate with their parents. There are also parents because of work reasons, often separated from their children, resulting in the lack of love and care for the child. The child is not familiar with their parents, and over time their relationship will slowly become cold. And the lack of would be less. American family therapist Satya puts forward a "communication model that respects oneself, the child and the situation" - congruent communication [7]. First of all, parents need to respect themselves and follow their own inner thoughts, so that they can understand that the relationship with the child can make them feel happy and satisfied. For satisfaction, parents can meet their own sense of achievement through daily communication with their children to enhance the intimate relationship with their children. Then parents should respect the child's inner thoughts, think more differently, and understand why the child will produce this kind of idea. The children can be accepted by the tone of voice to communicate with them. The parents also need to give the courage to the child, and more to encourage them to do the things that they like to do. Good parent-child communication and parents' confidence in their children will help parents form a good parent-child relationship with their children [9]. Learning engagement is closely related to the family and is proportional to the family, in addition learning engagement also stimulates positive qualities such as optimism, resilience, and a sense of meaning in children [10].

6. Conclusion

To summarize the above, the present study can conclude that the current situation of teenagers' communication with their parents is still in a relatively unpromising state, parents and children have not looked at the problem directly, the parent-child communication in nuclear families is much better than that in single-parent families, which also affects their children's learning engagement. Parents should be more supportive of their children's learning and motivate them to improve their children's engagement in learning. "Family education is the starting point and foundation of everything. Good family virtues should start with parents, who should take up the responsibility of educating the family together. Parents' awareness of the responsibility of treating their children will be improved, their ability to empathize with their children and their understanding of their children will be improved, and parent-child relationship will be improved as well.

References

- [1] Lei, L. Wang, Z.Y. Liu, H.Y. Zhang, L. (2002). A study of middle school students' parent-child communication and its relationship with family environmental system and social adaptation. *Applied Psychology* (01), 14-20.
- [2] Liu, C.W., Wang, M.W. & Tang, M.Y. (2022). Parent-child communication and learning engagement in migrant children: the mediating role of family closeness and peer relationships. *Chinese Journal of Health Psychology* (08), 1261-1265.
- [3] Liao, Y.G. (2011). The moderating effect of college students' self-efficacy on the relationship between learning values and learning engagement. *Journal of Ningbo University (Educational Science Edition)* (05), 50-54.
- [4] Liu, H. (2023). Parent-child separation and physical and mental health: long-term effects of family structure. *Chinese Youth Studies* (04), 53-60.
- [5] Lu, Y. & Feng, X.T. (2022). The influence of family structure on parent-child relationship - An analysis based on data from the China Education Tracking Survey (CEPS). *Youth Quest* (06), 31-40. Doi:10.13583/j.cnki.issn1004-3780.2022.06.003.

- [6] Zhang, N. (2012). A review of domestic and international research on learning engagement and its school influences.... (eds.) Selected Papers from the 2012 Annual Academic Conference of the Committee on Evaluation of Basic Education of the Chinese Society of Education (pp. 28-39).
- [7] Tian, D.M. (2021). Strategies of middle school students' parents to support their children's learning input. Elementary and middle school mental health education (36), 69-71.
- [8] Huang, Z.R. (2023). Being a "growth-oriented" parent and making parent-child communication more effective: Parent-child communication group counseling for parents of middle school students. Mental Health Education for Elementary and Middle Schools (22), 33-38.
- [9] Yang, J.H. (2023). The influence of family structure on rural adolescents' externalizing problem behaviors: the mediating effect of parent-child relationship. Hubei Social Science (03), 48-58.
- [10] Fang, L.T., Shi, K. & Zhang, F.H. (2008). Reliability and validity of the Chinese version of the Learning Commitment Scale. Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology (06), 618-620.