

Effect Of Parenting Styles on Children's Prosocial Behavior

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Abstract. The aim of the review is to analyze the correlation between parenting styles and children's prosocial behavior development. Due to the observation of the lack of prosocial behavior in some children's lives, often with insufficient socialization, social difficulties, and other phenomena that affect future development, we want to figure out the best parenting style for children to grow up. Recently, under the increasingly severe challenge of children's psychological problems, it is important to review the impact of parenting styles on children's prosocial behavior. Through three databases, we selected literature related to parenting styles and children's prosocial behavior during the late 20 years for study, reference, and analysis. The result showed that authoritative parenting encourages the prosocial behavior of children, while authoritarian parenting hinders the advancement of children's prosocial behavior. After a series of analyses, we concluded that authoritative parenting is currently the most recommended parenting style for the development of well-rounded personalities and prosocial behavior in children. For children and adolescents who lack prosocial behavior, acquired education is helpful in improving their behavior and cognition. The findings indicated that parenting styles is essential for the growth of children's prosocial behavior.

Keywords: Prosocial behavior, parenting styles, children, family environment, parental importance, child imitation.

1. Introduction

In recent years, psychological research on children's prosocial behavior still needs further research. Therefore, under the increasingly severe challenge of children's psychological problems, it is extremely important to carry out research on the effect of parenting styles on children's prosocial behavior. This article will analyze the influence of parents' parenting style on children's prosocial behavior.

First, the result of studying the influence of parenting style on children showed that mothers of two siblings were more or less authoritative in parenting than mothers with siblings. Second, co-parenting is positively associated with authoritative parenting and negatively associated with authoritarian parenting, regardless of the parental or child's kinship status.

Prosocial behavior is a kind of behavior in line with social expectations, which can form and maintain a good relationship between people, so as to make the stable development of society. Recent research indicates that the connection among age and prosocial behavior is more intricate [1]. Caplan proposed that children's prosocial intentions become counter balanced by self-interest or other inhibitory factors with their ages [2].

The purpose of this article is to explore the influence of parenting styles on children's prosocial behavior, and to study how acquired education can improve the cognition and behavior of people who lack prosocial behavior. Due to the observation that some children lack prosocial behaviors in life, there are insufficient socialization, social difficulties and other phenomena, which affect the future development. It is hoped that parents can understand the need to raise their children in the most beneficial parenting style for children's growth and development and improve the behavior and cognition of children and adolescents who lack prosocial behavior through education.

2. Method

This article was searched and cited through three databases, including Web of Science, CNKI, and Semantic Scholar. Literature related to parenting style and children's prosocial behavior in the recent 20 years was selected for study, reference and analysis. The selection of keywords is based on the analysis and extension of the research theme, including "prosocial behavior," "parenting style," and "children." The study was included according to the following criteria. Studies must (i) include empirical data (including case studies), (ii) content published after 2003 (the last 20 years are more time-sensitive), and (iii) include theories and analyses related to parenting styles and children's prosocial behavior.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Parenting Styles

3.1.1 Definition and Framework of Parenting Styles

An eminent developmental psychologist at the University of California Berkeley, Diana Baumrind, has made significant contributions by classifying parenting styles into three distinct categories: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive [3].

Building upon Diana Baumrind's initial classification of parenting styles, researchers Maccoby and Martin further proposed the concept of permissive parenting into permissive style and neglectful style. This expansion created a four-parenting styles model [4]. According to previous theorists and researchers, we can summarize seven parenting styles: (i) Authoritative parenting. Authoritative parents are passionate and firm, encourage independence by example, treat their children in a relatively democratic manner, and are willing to listen to and discuss with their children, thereby increasing their child's social competence, responsibility, and democratic character [5]; (ii) Authoritarian parenting. Authoritarian parents are cold and controlling, unwilling to engage in discussions with their children. They believe that teenagers should unconditionally follow the rules set by their parents, which leads their children to become rebellious and possibly aggressive [5]; (iii) Permissive parenting. Permissive parents are warm and indulgent. This kind of parents do not like to refuse children and do not want to let children down, resulting in the children of tolerant parents' lack of boundaries and rules, showing a self-centered tendency, and interfering with the normal development of peer relationships [5]; (iv) Neglectful parenting. Parents who are not involved are not enthusiastic, and the interaction between parents and children is minimal, indifferent to the needs and whereabouts of the child, and often interested in their own lives. As a result, adolescents exhibit impulsive behaviors due to self-regulation problems [5]; (v) Attachment parenting. Child-centered rather than parent-centered parenting. The main idea is to keep the child as close to the adult as possible, breastfeeding on demand, holding, co-sleeping, and responding quickly to the child's crying [6]; (vi) Helicopter parenting, otherwise called overparenting, is a parenting style used by parents to describe the excessive intervention of parents in their children during early adulthood. LeMoyné and Buchanan describe helicopter parenting as parenting in which parents hover over their children, ready to make decisions and take responsibility for them [7]; (vii) Tiger parenting. Tiger education" mainly adopts the form of family education, in which parents jointly educate their children, in which the mother plays an important role of tutor and pays more attention to the development and success of the individual children [8].

3.2. Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial behavior is indeed a universal social phenomenon. It involves acts intended to benefit others without any direct personal gain for the perpetrator. These behaviors are voluntary and include acts of kindness, helping those in need, cooperating with others, and showing compassion. [9] Prosocial behavior plays a crucial role in forming and maintaining positive relationships between individuals. When people engage in prosocial behaviors, they promote trust, cooperation, and

reciprocity in social groups. It also benefits the overall well-being of both the giver and the receiver. Society often affirms and encourages prosocial behavior because it helps create a harmonious and supportive community. Acts of kindness and generosity can have a ripple effect that inspires others to engage in similar acts, creating a positive social norm. In addition to the benefits to individuals and relationships, prosocial behavior can have broader social effects. It helps develop stronger communities, promotes social cohesion, reduces conflict, and solves a variety of social problems. In general, prosocial behavior is an important aspect of human interaction and contributes to the positive development of society as a whole. A recent meta-analysis showed a significant positive correlation between parental behavior and children's prosocial behavior [10].

3.3. Effect of Parenting Styles on children's Prosocial Behavior

3.3.1 Positive Effect of Authoritative Parenting

Research has shown that understanding and trust are the bases of authoritative parenting, which is conducive to the formation and development of children's prosocial behavior. Authoritative parenting involves setting clear expectations and boundaries for children, while also responding to their needs and emotions accordingly. Parents who adopt this approach tend to communicate with their children in a warm way. They encourage independence, are always supportive, provide explanations for rules and decisions, and have open discussions with the child. Authoritative parenting helps children develop a sense of autonomy and self-regulation. It also fosters empathy, empathy and moral reasoning. Children who grow up with authoritative parents tend to internalize prosocial values and behaviors. They will empathize with others, understand the impact of their actions on the well-being of others, and voluntarily engage in helpful behavior. In addition, authoritative parents tend to build trusting relationships with their children. This trust makes the child feel safe in the face of moral dilemmas or conflicts. The open lines of communication fostered by authoritative parents enable children to develop problem-solving skills that promote prosocial behavior. Also, it's valuable to consider that while authoritative parenting is associated with higher levels of prosocial behavior in children, it is not the sole factor influencing these behaviors. Different factors like cultural influences, peer interactions, and personal temperament also contribute to prosocial behavior shaping. In summary, authoritative parenting benefits the development of prosocial behavior in children by fostering empathy, moral reasoning skills, and a sense of responsibility towards others [11].

3.3.2 Negative Effect of Authoritarian Parenting

Research has shown that authoritarian parenting, characterized by strict rules, strong discipline, threats, and punishment, is associated with the development of antisocial behavior in children. Authoritative parenting involves a high degree of control and strict demands from the parent, while providing little warmth or response. Parents who adopt this approach tend to place high expectations on their children and enforce rules through coercion, fear and punishment rather than support and understanding. Children who grow up with authoritarian parents may develop feelings of powerlessness and even resentment towards their parents. Using harsh discipline techniques can lead to anger, frustration and rebellion. This can lead to a lack of trust between parents and children and hinder communication. Authoritative parents tend to focus on obedience rather than compassion or moral reasoning. Children may learn to follow rules out of fear of punishment, rather than understanding the reasons behind those rules. This may limit their ability to internalize prosocial values, or consider the impact of their actions on the well-being of others. In addition, the use of verbal or physical punishment may induce children's aggressive or provocative behaviors. They might discover that aggression is an adequate way to solve problems or control others. This can lead to the development of antisocial behavior such as bullying, aggression towards peers or disregard for the rights of others. It should be noted that while authoritarian parenting is associated with higher levels of antisocial behavior in children, this does not actually intend that all children raised in this way will exhibit such behavior. Other factors, such as personal temperament, peer influence, and social factors, also play a role in shaping behavior. In conclusion, an authoritarian education based

on strict rules, mandatory discipline, and punishment can hinder children's ability to empathize, moral reasoning, and increase their aggression or resistance, which negatively affects the development of prosocial behavior [11].

3.3.3 Effect of Parenting Styles on Children's Prosocial Behavior

Research conducted across different countries and age groups consistently supports the notion that the authoritative parenting style yields better and more positive outcomes for children. Regardless of country and age, this approach has been linked to higher levels of emotional management and lower problematic behaviors [12].

Authoritative parenting promotes prosocial behaviors in children, while authoritarian parenting hinders the development of these positive social skills. Due to publication biases and a shortage of data, it is still unclear to what extent permissive and neglecting parenting is linked to prosocial behaviors. Neither the age of the child nor the gender of the child had any impact on the authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles. These findings show that two parenting styles will probably have similar effects on prosocial behavior throughout infancy, youth, and adolescence. Regarding their connections with prosocial behaviors, culture did not affect authoritative and authoritarian parenting [13]. The higher level of the authoritative parenting style, the more frequent the prosocial behavior of children since authoritative parents tend to make appropriate demands on their children, set appropriate goals, and pay full attention to their development. Also, when communicating with children, they listen to them patiently, encourage them, and allow them to make decision independently [14]. Therefore, children raised in authoritative parenting typically display a pleasant, upbeat, and self-assured attitude toward society and have more room to develop their personalities and healthy social skills [15-17]. In turn, the higher the score for the neglecting parenting style, the lesser the prosocial behavior since neglecting parents do not make significant efforts to support their children's development and do not make any special demands on them [14]. Children raised in this environment generally lack an all-around personality and lack knowledge of partnership and assisting others [18, 19].

Moreover, their self-control abilities need to improve. They are more vulnerable to social adjustment challenges and lose their passion for studying [18, 20]. Mostly, children who exhibit higher degrees of prosocial behavior have authoritative parents who are warm, caring, empathetic, and responsive to their children's needs instead of authoritarian, permissive, or neglecting parents [21].

3.4. Suggestions

3.4.1 Mindfulness Intervention to Prosocial Behavior

Mindfulness is defined as a non-judgment, present-centered states of mindfulness and consciousness [22]. Present study shows that mindfulness and prosocial behavior is related directly [23]. Empirical evidence supports the relationship among usual mindfulness, prosocial motivation and prosocial behavior [24, 25]. We suggest that, acting consciously through encouraging inhibition of automatic responses (such as negative internal reaction to the situation) and internal motivation of improving prosocial behavior to promote social mindfulness [26].

3.4.2 Solutions for Different Parenting Styles

Parenting through professional education characterized by strict rules, strong discipline, threats, and punishment can lead to antisocial behavior in children, and different solutions and recommendations should be made for parents with different parenting styles. Authoritative parents tend to enforce rules through coercion, fear, and punishment to control their children, which often has the opposite effect. They should choose to understand the child, communicate with the child more, set the right values for the child through communication, and tell the child what to do. In the case of authoritarian parents, they are more focused on the child's obedience to them. Hence, the child learns to follow the rules out of fear of punishment and does not understand why not, which limits their

ability to internalize prosocial values. Therefore, such parents should let their children recognize the problem and correct it reasonably.

Therefore, in order to prevent negative effects on children's prosocial behavior, hindering children's ability to empathize and moral reasoning. Moreover, developing children's aggression or resistance, parents should be careful not to use authoritarian education based on strict rules, mandatory discipline, and punishment. Parents need to understand their children, communicate with them more, and set up correct values for their children from an early age.

4. Conclusion

We draw the conclusion that there is a considerable positive association between parenting styles and children's prosocial behavior after a variety of analyses. Among the seven parenting styles, authoritative parenting encourages children's prosocial behavior, while authoritarian parenting hinders the advancement of children's prosocial behavior. Furthermore, children with authoritative parents have more room to grow their personalities and healthy social skills and normally show a pleasant, upbeat, and self-assured attitude towards relations.

To developed children's prosocial behavior, parents should be careful not to use authoritarian education based on strict rules, mandatory discipline, and punishment. Parents need to understand their children, communicate with them more, and set up correct values for their children from an early age. For children and adolescents who lack prosocial behavior, acquired education is helpful to improve their behavior and cognition. And mindfulness is straight related to prosocial behavior according to existing research results. On the whole, authoritative parenting is the most recommendable parenting style at present in order to develop children's well-rounded personalities as well as prosocial behavior.

Author contribution

All the authors contributed equally, and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

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