

A Review of the Impact of Parenting Styles on Adolescents' Self-Esteem

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Abstract. Negative parenting styles, which include excessive criticism, blame, negative evaluations, and punishment, have a negative impact on the self-esteem of adolescents. This approach can lead to adolescents doubting and negating their own worth and abilities, thus reducing their self-esteem. Research shows that adolescents who are frequently exposed to negative parenting styles are more likely to experience low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and other psychological problems. They may feel insecure and dissatisfied with their abilities and worth. Additionally, negative parenting styles can lead to strained relationships between adolescents and their parents, affecting the development of the parent-child relationship. The self-esteem issues caused by long-term exposure to negative parenting styles may persist into adulthood and have lasting effects on their lives and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, it is emphasized that parents and educators should avoid using negative parenting styles. Instead, they should adopt positive parenting styles, which involve giving children ample attention, encouragement, and support, and creating a positive family atmosphere. This can help adolescents develop positive self-awareness and self-esteem, promoting their healthy development. Additionally, providing psychological support and establishing good channels of family communication are important measures to help adolescents overcome the negative impacts of negative parenting styles.

Keywords: Parenting styles, adolescents, family, self-esteem.

1. Introduction

The family of origin is the first environment for the growth and development of adolescents, and the parenting styles of origin play a key role in shaping adolescents' self-esteem [1, 2]. Family of origin is a core concept in marriage and family therapy, which refers to the family where individuals are born and grow up. Studies have shown that the parenting styles in the original family are the key factor contributing to adolescents' self-esteem [3-5]. Children form a relatively stable way of perceiving the world and interacting with others in the long-term interaction process with their parents, which affects their adult emotional management, interpersonal communication, self-cognition, social adaptation, and other important abilities, thus affecting the healthy development of individuals [6-9]. Original family parenting styles mean that teenagers receive parents' care, support, supervision, and education in the process of growing up. Therefore, this article will discuss the influence of negative parenting styles on the development of adolescents.

The writing purpose of this essay is to try to prevent parents from providing a bad environment for adolescents and reduce the rate of teens suffering from mental diseases.

2. Method

A broad literature search was utilized in the academic databases of Web of Science and Google Scholar. The following search keywords, and their derivatives were entered: "parents," "parenting styles," "self-esteem," "family," and "adolescents." Studies had to (i) contain empirical data, (ii) have been published after 2000, (iii) mention about parenting styles and self-esteem, and (iv) the participants were adolescents.

3. Consequences of Negative Parenting Styles

3.1. Lack of Parental Companionship

Lack of parental companionship can lead to poor communication among teenagers. The detrimental effects of negative parenting styles, such as the use of criticism and comparison, can have a significant impact on a child's self-esteem and emotional well-being.

Firstly, it can lead to a lack of self-esteem in adolescents. Children who are consistently criticized and compared to others by their parents may experience excessive psychological pressure and learned helplessness, leading to a lack of confidence [2, 4]. They may develop a tendency to doubt themselves and struggle to make decisions, ultimately lowering their self-esteem and feeling unworthy. This often happens in an authoritarian family. Parents would try to control their children's behavior, and when their children's behavior does not meet their expectations or refuse to act the way they want, they would demean and punish their children. Eventually, teenagers are likely to doubt themselves unconsciously when they face similar situations where their parents abuse them, though their parents are not beside them [10]. For instance, Mary was once a child who always listened to her parents and never did something else except for studying. However, when she is in grade ten, she accidentally joins a club fair and develops an interest in drawing. When her parents discovered the hobby, they started to creep beside her room. They tear out all her drawings until she promises never to draw. From then on, though she secretly draws at school, she will stop when someone approaches her. Even though the person is just a stranger or does not really care what she is doing, she feels unsafe and not confident. She is afraid that the stranger might abuse her, just like her parents [11].

Secondly, it can cause the child to distance themselves from the outside world and their parents. The use of negative parenting methods, such as mocking, belittling, and constant comparison, can damage a child's motivation. The child may feel unable to meet their parents' expectations, leading to feelings of anxiety and distress. The conflict turns out to be a greater problem when children are at their puberty. During this period, teenagers develop independent thoughts and romantic relationships. Then, they no longer reach for their parents' satisfaction but try to act according to their own feelings. The parents will think they have lost control of their children, and they get stressed out. This can erode the trust between the child and their parents, leaving the child with a sense of insecurity and triggering rebellious behavior. Furthermore, when teenagers refute their parents, they turn out to develop social anxiety, which affects themselves and their relationships with friends. As a result, they refuse to communicate with their parents and others and experience increased feelings of loneliness and low self-worth [12].

Thirdly, negative parenting styles can also contribute to adolescents developing an inflated sense of self-importance. By neglecting the emotions and feelings of adolescents and lacking positive encouragement, these parenting styles may make adolescents feel that their efforts and achievements are not recognized [13, 14]. In order to protect their self-esteem, they may overemphasize their efforts and display an arrogant attitude.

In conclusion, negative parenting styles that involve criticism, comparison, and belittlement can have detrimental effects on a child's self-esteem, emotional well-being, and social development. Therefore, it is important for parents to adopt positive parenting styles that promote a nurturing and supportive environment where children feel valued, respected, and encouraged. This can help foster healthy self-esteem and overall well-being in adolescents.

3.2. Extreme Parenting Causes Rebellion

First of all, parents are biased for many purposes, such as fear that their children's mistakes will adversely affect them or have relatively high expectations of their children. Secondly, because children often learn through their parents' behavior, language, and so on [15]. So when parents display punitive emotions, compulsive and threatening language, or physical punishment, they are giving them the wrong model of how to respond in a punitive way when the kid feels wrath.

People's social behavior is learned through imitation, especially teenagers in the critical period of socialization. As for the imitation content, most of them are based on explicit behavior. This kind of explicit behavior covers everything from people's facial expressions, language, body posture, and action to behavior mode and so on [16]. If this time, parents make a wrong example, it will cause teens to copy their wrong behavior.

As a result, children learn how to be more rebellious, irritable, and impetuous when things go wrong. At the same time, children may face more aggressive parents. This is going to be a terrible cycle. If the family wants to improve this phenomenon, parents make a change is the decisive factor.

3.3. The Relationship Between Critical Parenting and Adolescents' Self-Esteem

The detrimental effects of negative parenting styles, such as the use of criticism and comparison, can have a significant impact on a child's self-esteem and emotional well-being. Firstly, it can lead to a lack of self-esteem in adolescents. Children who are consistently criticized and compared to others by their parents may experience excessive psychological pressure and learned helplessness, leading to a lack of confidence. They may develop a tendency to doubt themselves and struggle to make decisions, ultimately lowering their self-esteem and feeling unworthy [17].

Secondly, it can cause the child to distance themselves from the outside world and their parents. The use of negative parenting methods, such as mocking, belittling, and constant comparison, can damage a child's motivation [18]. The child may feel unable to meet their parents' expectations, leading to feelings of anxiety and distress. This can erode the trust between the child and their parents, leaving the child with a sense of insecurity and triggering rebellious behavior. As a result, the child may develop social anxiety, refuse to communicate with their parents and others, and experience increased feelings of loneliness and low self-worth.

Thirdly, negative parenting styles can also contribute to adolescents developing an inflated sense of self-importance. By neglecting the emotions and feelings of adolescents and lacking positive encouragement, these parenting styles may make adolescents feel that their efforts and achievements are not recognized. In order to protect their self-esteem, they may overemphasize their efforts and display an arrogant attitude.

4. Implications and Suggestions

4.1. Implications for Future Directions

Firstly, future research can explore the impact of parenting styles on adolescent self-esteem from multiple dimensions. In addition to negative parenting styles, factors such as positive parenting styles, supportive family environments, and other aspects of family education, such as family atmosphere, parental education level, and parent-child relationships, can be considered to gain a comprehensive understanding of the influence of parenting styles on adolescent self-esteem.

Secondly, future research can involve long-term tracking and observation of adolescent self-esteem development at different stages, aiming to investigate the long-term effects of parenting styles on self-esteem. This can provide a better understanding of the sustained impact of parenting styles on adolescent self-esteem.

Furthermore, it would be valuable to consider other variables in the family environment, such as parent-child communication, family support, parental emotional expression, as well as individual factors like self-identity and social identity, to explain the influence of parenting styles on adolescent self-esteem.

4.2. Suggestions

Firstly, adopt positive parenting styles. Positive parenting styles involve giving children ample attention, encouragement, support and creating a positive family atmosphere. Parents can help children develop positive self-awareness and self-esteem by praising, encouraging, and recognizing

their efforts and achievements. At the same time, it is important to avoid excessive criticism, blame, and negative evaluations to prevent negative impacts on children.

Secondly, establish good channels of family communication. Family communication is crucial for the development of adolescent self-esteem. Parents should actively listen to their children's thoughts and feelings, provide them with opportunities to express themselves and engage in positive interactions with them. Effective family communication can strengthen the parent-child relationship and enhance children's self-esteem.

Thirdly, provide appropriate support and guidance. Parents should offer appropriate support and guidance to help children overcome difficulties and challenges. They can encourage children to try new things and cultivate their confidence and independence. At the same time, parents should also give children appropriate autonomy, allowing them to make their own decisions and choices, thereby enhancing their self-esteem.

Fourthly, cultivate a positive family atmosphere. The family atmosphere plays a crucial role in the development of adolescent self-esteem. Parents can help children establish positive self-image and self-esteem by creating a positive, warm, and supportive family environment. This includes focusing on the interaction and emotional expression among family members, fostering family cohesion and a sense of belonging.

Lastly, provide psychological support. Adolescent self-esteem is closely related to their mental health. Parents can provide psychological support, including encouraging children to engage in appropriate hobbies and interests, nurturing their emotional expression abilities, and providing psychological counseling and support. This can help children develop positive self-awareness and emotional management skills, enhancing their self-esteem.

5. Conclusion

Negative parenting styles have a negative impact on the self-esteem of adolescents. Negative parenting styles include excessive criticism, blame, negative evaluations, and punishment. This approach can lead to adolescents doubting and negating their own worth and abilities, thus reducing their self-esteem.

Research shows that adolescents who are frequently exposed to negative parenting styles are more likely to experience low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and other psychological problems. They may feel insecure and dissatisfied with their abilities and worth. Additionally, negative parenting styles can lead to strained relationships between adolescents and their parents, affecting the development of the parent-child relationship.

Furthermore, the impact of negative parenting styles on adolescent self-esteem may be long-term. Studies have found that the self-esteem issues caused by long-term exposure to negative parenting styles may persist into adulthood and have lasting effects on their lives and interpersonal relationships.

Therefore, it is emphasized that parents and educators should avoid using negative parenting styles. Instead, they should adopt positive parenting styles, which involve giving children ample attention, encouragement, support and creating a positive family atmosphere. This can help adolescents develop positive self-awareness and self-esteem, promoting their healthy development. Additionally, providing psychological support and establishing good channels of family communication are important measures to help adolescents overcome the negative impacts of negative parenting styles.

In conclusion, negative parenting styles that involve criticism, comparison, and belittlement can have detrimental effects on a child's self-esteem, emotional well-being, and social development. It is important for parents to adopt positive parenting strategies that promote a nurturing and supportive environment where children feel valued, respected, and encouraged. This can help foster healthy self-esteem and overall well-being in adolescents.

Author Contribution

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

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