

Effects of Parenting Methods and Parent-Child Relationships on Adolescents' Personality and Psychological Resilience

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Abstract. Currently, the mental health and developmental status of adolescents have not received sufficient attention, playing a crucial role in their education and social adaptation. Parenting methods and parent-child relationships are among the most critical factors influencing the mental health and growth of adolescents. This study, involving 328 urban middle school teenagers of various ages, utilized a questionnaire to investigate the mental health and psychological resilience of adolescents at different ages. It explored the impact of parent-child closeness, parent-child conflict, and the changing relationships between parenting methods and parent-child relationships with age on the development of adolescent mental health and their Big Five personality traits. The findings revealed that (1) mothers have a greater influence on the growth of adolescents, especially during the teenage years, and (2) a close parent-child relationship positively affects the psychological growth of adolescents, while conflicting parent-child relationships have the opposite effect.

Keywords: Adolescent Mental Health Development.

1. Introduction

In recent years, adolescent mental health issues have become increasingly evident. The "Report on the Development of Mental Health in China (2019~2020)" indicates that in 2020, the detection rate of depression among adolescents was 24.6%, with a detection rate of 17.2% for mild depression and 7.4% for severe depression. As grades progress, the detection rates of depression show an increasing trend [1]. Numerous studies both domestically and internationally have demonstrated the significant impact of the family environment on the mental health of adolescents, with a positive family environment promoting their psychological well-being. The development of adolescent mental health involves stable internal factors, such as personality traits, self-perception, and cognitive styles, along with external factors like family and school environments. In comparison to stable internal factors, external factors, particularly parent-child relationships, offer more room for improvement, making the study of the influence of the external environment on adolescent psychological development more valuable. Psychologist Belsky introduced the concept of the "family system," emphasizing that research on the family environment should adopt a holistic approach, considering both the subjective and objective aspects of the family [2]. The subjective environment refers to aspects artificially formed during the child's interaction with parents, such as parent-child relationships, parenting methods, and parent-child conflicts. The objective environment pertains to material, objectively existing factors, such as parents' educational levels and family income.

With the establishment of child psychological counseling clinics, the number of middle school students seeking consultations has been steadily increasing in recent years. Given the rapid physical and psychological development of middle school students and their close associations with academic performance, parent-child communication, interpersonal relationships, and personality development, this trend has attracted widespread attention in society. Research indicates that unfavorable parenting methods of parents play a crucial role as a contributing factor to various psychological and behavioral issues in children and adolescents [3].

In the factors influencing the mental health of children and adolescents, family factors represent the longest-lasting environmental influence since birth. A positive family environment serves as a crucial foundation for the comprehensive psychological development of children and adolescents. The parenting methods within a family is a significant factor directly impacting the level of

psychological well-being in children and adolescents. The proactive parenting methods of parents holds a protective significance for the mental health of children and adolescents [4].

2. Method

2.1. Participant

The survey targets a total of 329 male and female middle school students in the three grades of middle school, 158 men, and 171 women. Students in each class of the year were selected from two middle schools in Jinan, Shandong, and a middle school in Xinyang, Henan. Among them, there were 296 urban youth, 33 rural youth, 243 only children, and 86 non-single children. The majority of students are 13 to 17 years old, and the average age is around 15.5 years old.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1 Parent-child Relationships

Adopting the Child-Parent Relationship Scale (CPRS) translated and adapted by Zhang Xiao et al. (2008) [5] from Pianta (1992) [6], fathers and mothers evaluate their relationships with their children separately. The original scale includes three dimensions: intimacy, conflict, and dependence. Due to the lower reliability of the dependence dimension, only the intimacy and conflict dimensions were utilized [5]. The intimacy dimension comprises 9 items, and the conflict dimension comprises 13 items. This study's data demonstrate a good fit to the measurement model of parent-child relationships. Parent-child relationship intimacy refers to parents' perceived warm and friendly interactions with their children, as illustrated by the example: "When I praise my child, he (she) smiles proudly." Parent-child relationship conflict refers to parents' perceived negative, antagonistic, and conflicting interactions with their children, exemplified by the statement: "When I am with other children, my child shows sadness or jealousy." The scale uses a Likert five-point scoring system (from 1-"Completely Inconsistent" to 5-"Completely Consistent"), where higher scores indicate stronger intimacy or conflict in parent-child relationships.

2.2.2 Parenting methods

Parenting methods refers to the relatively stable parenting attitudes and behaviors exhibited by parents during the process of raising and educating their children. Some foreign scholars believe that in family life, children learn a lot of alternative experiences by observing their parents' behavior and receiving information from them, which is a source of individual self-efficacy. There is a positive correlation between children's general self-efficacy and positive parenting methods such as parental warmth and understanding. On the other hand, children exposed to relatively negative parenting methods like rejection, denial, and harsh punishment generally have lower self-efficacy [7]. (Rated from 1-"Completely Inconsistent" to 5-"Completely Consistent"), higher scores indicate stronger intimacy or conflict in parent-child relationships. (End with a similar data assessment)

2.2.3 Teenage Big Five Personalities

Personality is the collection of tendencies in human inner activities during social interactions, possessing a specific organizational structure with dual characteristics of implicit and explicit manifestations. It is influenced by both genetics and the growth environment, directing, reinforcing, maintaining, or disrupting individuals' thought patterns and external behaviors [8]. The Big Five personality dimensions are Extraversion (E), Agreeableness (A), Neuroticism (N), Conscientiousness (C), and Openness (O). Agreeableness and Conscientiousness belong to the interpersonal dimension, Extraversion to the temperament dimension, Neuroticism to the emotional dimension, and Openness is closely related to cognition. (Rated from 1-"Completely Inconsistent" to 5-"Completely Consistent"), higher scores indicate stronger intimacy or conflict in parent-child relationships. (End with a similar data assessment)

2.2.4 Psychological resilience

Psychological resilience refers to an individual's ability to maintain good adaptation through self-effort in the face of crisis situations or stressful events. It is a combination of internal protective factors and external protective factors" [9]. It is a dynamic process that makes an individual's physical and mental health not affected by negative outcomes. Positive coping styles and positive emotions are effective components of psychological resilience. They can effectively reduce the risk of depression and promote individual prosperity, while also counteracting and buffering the negative effects of a series of future adverse situations. (From 1- "no match at all" to 5- "no match"), higher scores indicate a closer or more conflicting parent-child relationship. (Add similar data reviews at the end)

2.2.5 Parents' level of education

The different levels of education of parents are a remote influence, usually affecting the mental health status of young people through different parenting methods (positive or negative), different educational opportunities (more educational resources), etc. (From 1- "no match at all" to 5- "no match"), higher scores indicate a closer or more conflicting parent-child relationship (Add similar data reviews at the end).

Parents' level of education: The mother reports the level of education of the father and mother. The options for the original topics were "middle school and below," "high school/vocational high school," "college," "undergraduate," and "master's degree or above."

2.3. Procedures

The data was collected from late May to mid-June 2023. The data collection was completed uniformly by the students themselves in the form of an online questionnaire. The entire evaluation process went smoothly. The individual required time was about 15 minutes. The collection method was questionnaire collection, and a total of more than 300 valid questionnaires were collected.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data processing method uses SPSS software, and the SPSS 24.0 program is used to organize, count and analyze the data.

3. Results

Table 1 shows the overall data values:

Table1. Overall data

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Least value	crest value	mean	standard deviations
neuroticism	329	1.00	3.00	1.7401	.49869
conscientiousness	329	1.00	4.00	2.6469	.46473
extraversion	329	1.00	4.00	2.6304	.49828
openness	329	1.00	4.00	2.6274	.39875
agreeableness	329	1.00	4.00	2.9060	.63111
Number of valid cases	329				

3.1. Correlation analysis between variables

Table 2 shows the correlation analysis-Pearson correlation between the variables:

Table 2. Pearson correlation

	Neurotic	Conscientiousness	Extroversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Psychological Resilience	Education method	Close parent-child relationships	Conflicting parent-child relationships
Neurotic	1	.142*	.097	.225**	-.115*	-.457**	-.308**	-.156**	.404**
Due diligence	.142*	1	.615**	.656**	.342**	.274**	.265**	.285*	.018
Extroversion	.097	.615**	1	.636**	.482**	.319**	.314**	.337**	.029
Openness	.225**	.656**	.636**	1	.537**	.156**	.219**	.394**	.171**
Pleasantness	-.115*	.342**	.482**	.537**	1	.462**	.420**	.534**	-.118*
Mental Resilience	-.457**	.274**	.319**	.156**	.462**	1	.500**	.366**	-.405**
Education method	-.308**	.265**	.314**	.219**	.420**	.500**	1	.699**	-.459**
Close parent-child relationships	-.156**	.285**	.337**	.394**	.534**	.366**	.699**	1	-.065
Conflicting parent-child relationships	.404**	.018	.029	.171**	-.118*	-.405**	-.459**	-.065	1

3.2. Influence of family environment factors on adolescents' mental health growth

3.2.1 Relationship between parents' education level and adolescent psychological indicators

The following Table 3 shows descriptive statistics on six indicators for mothers with different levels of education. Among them, mothers were divided into 8 groups based on the level of education received by the questionnaire.

The results of the variance analysis are as follows:

Table 3. ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
Neuroticism	Between Groups	2.021	7	.289	1.174	.318
	Within Groups	74.051	301	.246		
	Grand Total	76.072	308			
Psychological Resilience	Between Groups	2.336	7	.334	1.069	.383
	Within Groups	93.942	301	.312		
	Grand Total	96.278	308			
Conscientiousness	Between Groups	4.155	7	.597	3.512	.001
	Within Groups	51.155	301	.170		
	Grand Total	55.333	308			

Extroversion	Between Groups	2.633	7	.378	1.728	.102
	Within Groups	65.518	301	.218		
	Grand Total	68.152	308			
Openness	Between Groups	2.250	7	.321	2.464	.018
	Within Groups	39.266	301	.130		
	Grand Total	41.517	308			
Agreeableness	Between Groups	3.785	7	.541	1.486	.172
	Within Groups	109.544	301	.364		
	Grand Total	113.329	308			

The analysis of variance results indicate that conscientiousness and openness have p-values less than 0.05, suggesting differences in conscientiousness and openness between different maternal education levels. If further investigation is needed to identify specific groups with differences, multiple comparison analysis is required.

According to the results of multiple analyses, we observed significant differences in conscientiousness between maternal education groups 1 and 2-6. There were no differences among other groups. Specifically, there were significant differences in the mean conscientiousness scores between mothers with no formal education and those with education levels of elementary school, junior high school, high school/technical secondary school/vocational high school, college, and undergraduate. For the openness index, significant differences were found between maternal education group 1 and groups 2-6, 8. There were no differences among other groups. In other words, significant differences were observed in the mean openness scores between mothers with no formal education and those with education levels of elementary school, junior high school, high school/technical secondary school/vocational high school, college, undergraduate, and doctoral degree.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Paternal Education Level.

The Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for six indicators under different levels of paternal education. Father's education levels were divided into 8 groups based on the questionnaire, following the same grouping method as for mothers.

The results of the analysis of variance are shown in the table above, indicating that the p-values for conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness are less than 0.05. This suggests that there are differences in the five indicators—conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness—among fathers with different levels of education. To explore specific group differences, multiple comparison analyses need to be conducted.

According to the results of multivariate analysis, we can observe that, for the conscientiousness indicator, there are significant differences between education groups 1 and 2-8. Additionally, there are significant differences between groups 2 and 8, groups 3 and 6, 8, groups 4 and 8, groups 5 and 8, and groups 6 and 3, 8. In other words, there are significant differences in the mean conscientiousness scores for fathers with no education and those with other education levels. Furthermore, there are significant differences in the mean conscientiousness scores for fathers with education levels of doctoral and other education levels (except for master's).

For openness, there are significant differences between education groups 1 and 2-8, as well as between groups 3 and 6, and groups 6 and 8. In other words, there are significant differences in the mean openness scores for fathers with no education and those with other education levels. Additionally, there are significant differences in the mean openness scores for fathers with education levels of junior high school and undergraduate. Furthermore, there are significant differences in the mean openness scores between fathers with education levels of undergraduate and doctoral.

Table 4. ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
Conscientiousness	Between Groups	5.934	7	.848	5.166	<.001
	Within Groups	49.399	301	.164		
	Grand Total	55.333	308			
Openness	Between Groups	3.913	7	.559	4.475	<.001
	Within Groups	37.603	301	.125		
	Grand Total	41.517	308			
Neuroticism	Between Groups	3.553	7	.508	2.107	.043
	Within Groups	72.519	301	.241		
	Grand Total	76.072	308			
Extroversion	Between Groups	5.327	7	.761	3.646	<.001
	Within Groups	62.824	301	.209		
	Grand Total	68.152	308			
Agreeableness	Between Groups	7.401	7	1.057	3.004	.005
	Within Groups	105.928	301	.352		
	Grand Total	113.329	308			
Psychological Resilience	Between Groups	3.507	7	.501	1.626	.128
	Within Groups	92.771	301	.308		
	Grand Total	96.278	308			

For neuroticism, there are significant differences between education groups 1 and 2, 4, 6, 8, as well as between groups 3 and 4. In other words, there are significant differences in the mean neuroticism scores for fathers with no education and those with primary school, high school/vocational school/technical school, undergraduate, and doctoral education. Additionally, there are significant differences in the mean neuroticism scores between fathers with education levels of junior high school and high school/vocational school/technical school.

For extraversion, there are significant differences between education groups 1 and groups 2-8, as well as between group 8 and groups 2-6. Specifically, there are significant differences in the mean extraversion scores for fathers with no education and other education levels. Additionally, there are significant differences in the mean extraversion scores between fathers with a doctoral degree and other education levels (excluding master's).

For agreeableness, there are significant differences between education groups 1 and groups 2-8, as well as between groups 3 and 6. Specifically, there are significant differences in the mean agreeableness scores for fathers with no education and other education levels. Additionally, there are significant differences in the mean agreeableness scores between fathers with education levels of junior high school and undergraduate.

3.2.2 Relationship between parent-child relationships (intimate/conflict), parenting methods and the six major indicators

In the correlation analysis, we observed certain correlations between the six indicators - neuroticism, conscientiousness, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and psychological resilience - and the independent variables: parenting methods, conflictual parent-child relationships, and intimate parent-child relationships. Therefore, based on the correlation analysis, we conducted further regression analysis to explore the specific impact of the three independent variables on the six indicators.

Table 5. Regression analysis

	Education method		Close parent-child relationships		Conflicting parent-child relationships	
	Beta Standardized coefficient Beta	t*	Beta Standardized coefficient Beta	t*	Beta Standardized coefficient Beta	t*
Neurotic	-0.105	-1.185	-0.060	-0.754	0.352	5.531
Conscientiousness	0.239	2.563	0.127	1.529	0.135	2.025
Extroversion	0.293	3.221	0.144	1.782	0.173	2.656
Openness	0.072	0.821	0.359	4.570	0.227	3.601
Agreeableness	0.035	0.418	0.506	6.874	-0.069	-1.167
Psychological Resilience	0.253	3.082	0.171	2.345	-0.278	-4.731

The regression results in Table 5, when regressing six indicators with three independent variables separately, show that only the regression coefficients of the psychological resilience indicator are all significant, and the overall model test also passes. The following is a detailed analysis of this model. The coefficient for parenting methods is 0.277, the coefficient for intimate parent-child relationships is 0.153, and the coefficient for conflictual parent-child relationships is -0.284. This indicates that both parenting methods and intimate parent-child relationships have positive effects on psychological resilience, while the coefficient for conflictual parent-child relationships is negative, suggesting a negative impact on psychological resilience, which is in line with conventional understanding. At the same time, for every one-unit increase in parenting methods, psychological resilience increases by 0.277; for every one-unit increase in intimate parent-child relationships, psychological resilience

increases by 0.153; for every one-unit increase in conflictual parent-child relationships, psychological resilience decreases by 0.284. It is evident that among the three independent variables, conflictual parent-child relationships have the greatest impact on psychological resilience, surpassing parenting methods and intimate parent-child relationships.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The data research results in this paper indicate that within parent-child relationships (conflict/intimacy), conflict relationships have the most significant impact on psychological resilience. Specifically, a conflictual parent-child relationship is highly correlated with adolescent mental health. Such conflicts can lead to a deterioration of the parent-child relationship, exerting adverse effects on the future growth, development, and character formation of adolescents.

The data research results in this paper also indicate a significant correlation between the level of education of parents and conscientiousness and openness. Naturally, the higher the level of education of parents, the more apparent the positive correlation with adolescent mental health development.

Countermeasures: The family environment is a crucial factor influencing the psychological well-being of adolescents, with parenting methods and parent-child relationships having a more pronounced impact. Therefore, as parents, it is essential to first learn and understand our children, respecting their feelings. Secondly, parents should actively acquire knowledge about adolescent mental health, enhancing their ability to identify psychological and behavioral issues in their children. Creating a harmonious, warm, and egalitarian family atmosphere is crucial. On this foundation, parents should consistently set sincere, civilized, rational, and trustworthy examples for their children, encouraging qualities such as self-esteem, self-love, self-respect, and fostering ambitious ideals.

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