

Influence of Family Upbringing Styles on Children's Personality

-- The Mediating Role of Social Adjustment

Sijia Li*

Hainan Normal University, Haikou, Hainan 571127, China

*202104090119@hainnu.edu.cn

ABSTRACT

Early childhood is a critical period for personality formation and development. This study aimed to explore the relationship between family parenting styles and children's personality, in addition to social adaptation's mediating function. The Early Childhood Parenting Styles Questionnaire, the Teacher Rating Questionnaire for Chinese Children's Personality Development, and the Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ) were used. The results showed that (1) there is a significant positive correlation between parenting styles and children's personality; (2) parenting styles have a significant positive influence on children's personality; (3) emotional symptoms, conduct problems, and peer interactions among the five dimensions of young children's social adjustment play a partial mediating role in the impact of familial parenting practices on kids' personalities and the overall traits of social adjustment form a masking effect in the process.

KEYWORDS

Family Parenting Styles; Personality; Social Adjustment; Children.

1. INTRODUCTORY

Personality refers to the enduring traits and styles exhibited by an individual, including personal inclinations, abilities, behaviours, or emotional tendencies[1]. Personality, as the cornerstone of an individual's existence and development, has long been a hotspot of competitive exploration by researchers from various disciplines. Scholars widely agree that childhood is the prime stage of personality formation and development, and the personality traits formed during this period not only lay the foundation for an individual's future development, but also profoundly relate to future academic, character, and even behavioural patterns, and provide valuable clues for us to see the possibilities of individual growth[2].

Children's personality development refers to children's emotions, feelings and their behavioural patterns, attitudes and perceptions expressed in their relationships with others, as well as the changes in these aspects with age, including children's attachment, social cognition, moral and pro-social behaviours, aggression, gender differences and gender roles and the development of children's self-systems[3]. Early childhood, as a critical period for individual growth and development, is equally important for personality formation. Therefore, the cultivation of a sound personality is very important for children. Therefore, exploring the influencing factors of children's personality can not only draw society's attention to children's personality development, but also help to put forward more systematic and scientific educational suggestions for cultivating children's sound personality, which

has enormous importance for the research of children's personality development. Based on this, this paper investigates the influence of different types of family upbringing styles on the formation and development of children's personality, and explores the mediating role of young children's social adaptive capacity between family upbringing styles and children's personality, to enrich the relevant research under this perspective.

2. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

2.1. Family Upbringing and the Child's Personality

Family upbringing style refers to the parents' upbringing concepts, upbringing behaviours and family rules for their children in the process of raising and educating their children[4]. American psychologist Baumrind has conducted a decade-long study on the relationship between parenting styles and children's personality development. Parenting styles are divided into four types: authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful[5]. Parents with positive parenting styles provide warm and emotional support to their children in their growth and development, which in turn leads to the formation of positive personality traits and interpersonal relationship traits, such as emotional stability and concern for others[6]; on the contrary, if parents hold inappropriate parenting styles over a long period of time, such as harsh punishment, refusal of denial, and over-interference, the more likely it is that their children will show loneliness, lack of concern for others, and poor adaptation to external environments. On the other hand, if parents hold improper parenting styles for a long time, such as harsh punishment, denial, and excessive interference, the more likely their children will show poor personality traits such as loneliness, lack of concern for others, and difficulty in adapting to the external environment, which may even lead to personality disorders and other problems in their children[7]. The above studies show that parenting styles are related to children's personality development, and that there are significant differences in the personalities of children raised in families with positive and negative parenting styles. With the development and progress of society and the openness and freedom of thought, the status quo of family education in China has changed dramatically, and a lot of practical problems have arisen, and different parenting styles affect the formation of children's sound personality. Based on this, this paper puts forward the following research hypotheses:

H1: There is a significant correlation between family parenting style and personality of young children.

2.2. Family Upbringing Styles and Social Adaptability

Social adaptation refers to the dynamic relationship between an individual and the social environment in the interaction with the social environment, through conforming to the environment, regulating the self or changing the environment, and finally achieving to maintain a harmonious and balanced relationship with the social environment, which is a comprehensive reflection of the state of psychosocial coordination of the individual in social life[8]. The stress buffer theory of social support holds that when an individual receives support given by the society, the individual will have a stress-relieving experience, thus forming a healthy personality[9]. Meanwhile, multiple investigations have demonstrated that the development of children's social competence deeply affects loneliness mood, academic achievement and personality development[10]. This implies that children's social adaptability is also one of the important factors affecting personality development.

In addition, children's social adjustment is not only intimately linked to how children's personalities grow, but also linked to family upbringing styles. Usually parenting styles have a great impact on children's peer interactions, authoritative parenting styles are conducive to young children's tendency to develop pro-social behaviour, while children growing up under authoritarian parenting styles, highly authoritarian parents tend to restrict young children's peer interactions, young children are

usually more aggressive, and they may lack the necessary social skills when interacting with their peers[5]. Relevant studies have also found that children who grow up under positive parenting styles are more confident, kind, have good social adaptability, and are warm and friendly to their peers when interacting with them, which makes them more welcomed and accepted in peer interactions; while negative parenting styles can lead to children's stronger aggression and emotional instability in peer interactions. More apathetic attitudes result in higher levels of rejection of children. It can be seen that parenting styles have a direct impact on the socialisation process of children. And children's socialisation is an important part of children's sound personality development[11]. Based on this, this paper proposes the following research hypotheses:

H2: Social adaptability mediates the relationship between family parenting styles and children's personality.

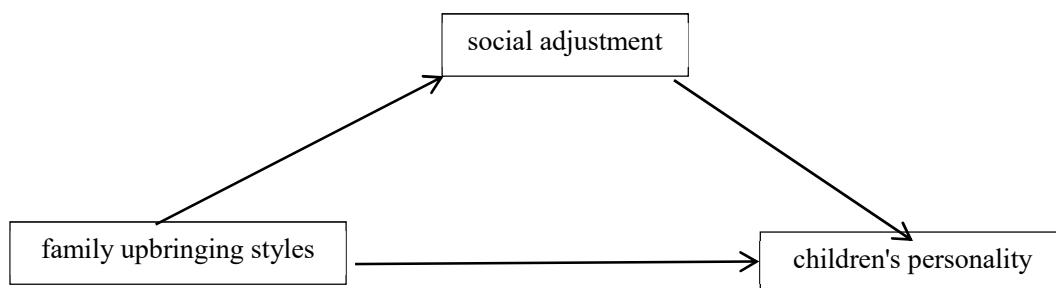


Fig. 1 Diagram of the hypothesised model of the relationship between family upbringing styles, social adjustment and children's personality

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Objectives

In this study, four kindergartens in Zhumadian City were randomly selected and 160 questionnaires were distributed. Data were collected by means of questionnaires filled out by parents of young children as well as teachers with classes, deleting questionnaires with regular answers (7.5%) and too many missing values (3.1%), and finally obtaining 143 valid questionnaires, with a validity rate of 89.4%. Of these, 48 (28 boys and 20 girls) were in small classes, 46 (21 boys and 25 girls) in intermediate classes, and 49 (24 boys and 25 girls) in large classes.

3.2. Research Tools

3.2.1. Questionnaire on Parenting Styles of Young Children

The Parenting Styles of Young Children Questionnaire developed by Yang Lizhu and Yang Chunqing (1998) was used, consisting of 40 questions with five dimensions: doting, democratic, permissive, authoritarian, and inconsistent. A five-point Likert scale was used to grade the survey. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the dimensions in this study ranged from 0.44 to 0.79, and the alpha coefficient of the whole questionnaire was 0.85. Validated factor analyses showed that the questionnaire structure had good fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 2.02$, CFI = 0.85, TLI = 0.84, and RMSEA = 0.04), proving that the questionnaire had the ideal index of reliability and validity.

3.2.2. Teacher Assessment Questionnaire on Personality Development of Chinese Children (3-6 years old)

The "Teacher-Assessed Questionnaire for Chinese Children's Personality Development (3-6 years old)" developed by Yang Lizhu et al. (2015) was used, with a total of 60 questions, including five dimensions: intellectual characteristics, conscientious self-control, extraversion, pro-sociality, and emotional stability. A Likert scale of 5 was used, with 9 questions reverse scored. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the dimensions in this study ranged from 0.83 to 0.94, and the validation factor analyses showed that the questionnaire structure had good fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 2.99$, CFI = 0.85, TLI = 0.84, and RMSEA = 0.06), proving that the questionnaire had the desirable reliability and validity indexes.

3.2.3. Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ)

The Chinese version of the Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ) developed by American psychologist Goodman (R) is used. The SDQ consists of five dimensions: emotional problems, behavioural problems, hyperactivity, peer relations, and pro-social behaviour. Specific questions include "Often upset, depressed or crying", "Frequently gets into conflicts or harasses other kids", "Easily distracted, poor concentration", etc. The SDQ is widely used internationally to assess children's behaviour. The SDQ is widely used internationally to assess children's behavioural and emotional problems and has good reliability and validity.

4. FINDINGS AND ANALYSES

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Of the 143 children investigated throughout this investigation, the children's mean age was 3.69, of which 73 (51.05 per cent) were boys and 70 (48.95 per cent) were girls; 48 (33.56 per cent) were in the small class, 46 (32.17 per cent) in the middle class, and 49 (34.27 per cent) in the large class; of these, for the length of time spent caring for the children, the parents collaborated 41 (28.67 per cent), the father more 4 (2.80%), mother more 73 (51.05%), and by grandparents more 25 (17.48%). Detailed information on specific children is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Overall descriptive statistics for the sample of young children

	Variable	quorum	per cent
distinguishing between the sexes	male	73	51.05
	women	70	48.95
classes or grades in school	small classes	48	33.56
	middle class	46	32.17
	foreign business manager	49	34.27
Length of time spent caring for children	parental coordination	41	28.67
	Father more	4	2.80
	Mothers more	73	51.05
	Grandparental care more	25	17.48

4.2. Correlation Analysis between Family Parenting Styles and Children's Personality

Current research has shown that the formation and development of children's personality is influenced by a variety of external factors, and this study aims to investigate the relationship between family parenting styles and children's personality development. Investigating the association amongst family parenting techniques and the five aspects of children's personalities—intellect, conscientiousness and self-control, extraversion, pro-sociality, emotional stability, and overall traits of children's personalities, and Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to indicate the strength of the correlations.

Table 2 shows that the value of correlation coefficient between parenting styles and intelligent characteristics is 0.620 and shows significance at the level of 0.01, thus indicating that there is a significant positive correlation between parenting styles and intelligent characteristics. The value of correlation coefficient between parenting styles and conscientious self-control is 0.634 and demonstrates validity at the threshold of 0.01, pointing to a significant positive association between parenting styles and self-control. There is a strong positive link between parenting styles and extraversion, as seen by the correlation coefficient of 0.676 between the two variables that is significant to the 0.01 scale. There is an important beneficial association between parenting methods and pro-sociality, as seen by the association rate of 0.677, which is substantial at the 0.01 levels. There is a substantial positive link of parenting style and emotional stability, as seen by the correlation coefficient value of 0.634, which is significant at the 0.01 level. The association of the coefficient's strength between parenting approach and total personality traits of children is 0.680 and it is significant at 0.01 level, thus indicating a significant positive relationship between parenting style and total personality traits of children.

Table 2. Correlation analysis between family parenting styles and children's personality

variant	upbringing	Intelligent features	conscientious self-control	extroversion	pro-sociality	emotional stability	General characteristics of the child's personality
upbringing	1						
Intelligent features	0.620**	1					
conscientious self-control	0.634**	0.906**	1				
extroversion	0.676**	0.918**	0.890**	1			
pro-sociality	0.677**	0.895**	0.878**	0.934**	1		
emotional stability	0.634**	0.842**	0.840**	0.870**	0.868**	1	
General characteristics of the child's personality	0.680**	0.961**	0.946**	0.971**	0.961**	0.923**	1
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01							

4.3. Regression Analysis of the Impact of Family Parenting Styles on Children's Personality

In order to further explore the relationship between family parenting styles and children's personality, the data were subjected to linear regression analysis with parenting styles as the independent variable and total children's personality traits as the dependent variable, and the results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 3. The model formula is: total children's personality traits = 50.994 + 27.084*parenting styles, and the model's R-square statistic is 0.463, signifying that parenting styles account for 46.3% of the differences in total children's personality traits. The F-test of the model was found to pass the F-test (F=121.373, p=0.000<0.05), which means that parenting styles must have an influential relationship on children's total personality traits, which means that there is significance in the algorithm's construction.

According to the last specific evaluation, parenting styles have a coefficient of association of 27.084 (t=11.017, p=0.000<0.01), indicating a substantial and beneficial link with children's total personality traits.

Table 3. Regression analysis of the effect of family parenting style on children's personality (n=143)

	Unstandardised coefficient		Standardised coefficient	t	p	Covariance Diagnostics	
	B	Standard Error	Beta			VIF	Tolerance
a constant (math.)	50.994	11.344	-	4.495	0.000**	-	-
upbringing	27.084	2.458	0.680	11.017	0.000**	1.000	1.000
R 2	0.463						
Adjustment R 2	0.459						
F	F (1,141)=121.373, p=0.000						
D-W value	1.886						
Dependent variable: total personality characteristics of the child							
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01							

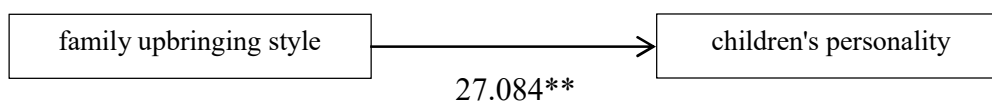


Fig. 2 Graph of the results of the model of family upbringing style and children's personality

4.4. Analysis of Mediating Effects

In order to investigate the mechanism of the influence of early childhood social adaptability on children's personality, this study carried out the Bootstrap sampling method of the product coefficient test for mediated effect analysis, constructing 10,000 samples to make judgements and using the confidence interval of parameter estimation not being zero as the criterion of significance. Specific analysis results are detailed in Table 4.

Analysing the results of the mediating effect measures in Table 5, it can be seen that the five dimensions of young children's social adaptation in terms of emotional symptoms, conduct problems and peer interaction problems have a partially modifying impact in the impact of familial environment upon kids' personality, with a mediating effect percentage of 49.739%, 19.346%, and 9.637%,

respectively; the mediating effect of the two dimensions of social behaviour and inability to pay much attention is insignificant; the total characteristics of social adaptation form a masking effect in this process, with a mediating effect percentage of 95.213%. Adaptive General Characteristics, on the other hand, formed a masking effect in this process, with an effect percentage of 95.213%.

Table 4. Results of the analysis of intermedation

	General characteristics of the child's personality				General characteristics of social adaptation				Emotional symptoms				conduct issue				social behaviour				Hyperactivity can't				Peer interaction problems				General characteristics of the child's personality																
	B	Standard Error	t	p	β	B	Standard Error	t	p	β	B	Standard Error	t	p	β	B	Standard Error	t	p	β	B	Standard Error	t	p	β	B	Standard Error	t	p	β	B	Standard Error	t	p	β										
a constant (math.)	50.994*	11.344	4.495	0.000	-	29.970*	0.963	31.118	0.000	-	8.021*	0.378	21.233	0.000	-	7.453*	0.427	17.455	0.000	-	1.816*	0.309	5.884	0.000	-	7.897*	0.422	18.700	0.000	-	5.103*	0.401	12.715	0.000	-	97.593**	31.463	3.100	0.002	-					
upbringing	27.084*	2.458	11.017	0.000	0.680	-2.605**	0.209	-12.481	0.000	0.724	-0.791*	0.082	-9.662	0.000	-	-0.631*	0.093	-6.657	0.000	-	0.221*	0.067	3.281	0.001	-	0.026*	0.008	2.96*	0.003	-	0.092	8.600	0.059	0.929	0.000	-2.632	0.009	-0.216	0.831	0.000	23.357**	3.519	6.637	0.000	0.587
General characteristics of social adaptation																																				8.537*	3.189	2.677	0.008	0.771					
emotional symptom																																				-17.032**	3.488	-4.880	0.000	0.536					
conduct issue																																				-8.506*	4.031	-2.110	0.037	0.269					
social behaviour																																				-4.811	4.240	-1.135	0.259	0.100					
Hyperactivity can't																																				-4.500	3.965	-1.135	0.258	0.152					
Peer interaction problems																																				-11.402**	3.723	-3.062	0.003	0.303					
R 2	0.463				0.525				0.398				0.239				0.072				0.349				0.047				0.564																
Adjustment R 2	0.459				0.522				0.394				0.234				0.065				0.345				0.040				0.541																
F Value	F (1,141)=121.373, p=0.000				F (1,141)=155.765, p=0.000				F (1,141)=93.354, p=0.000				F (1,141)=44.313, p=0.000				F (1,141)=10.918, p=0.001				F (1,141)=75.658, p=0.000				F (1,141)=6.927, p=0.009				F (7,135)=24.906, p=0.000																
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01																																													

Table 5. Summary of intermediate effect size results

term (in a mathematical formula)	Test Conclusion	c aggregate effect	a*b intermediary effect	c' direct effect	Effectiveness ratio formula	Efficacy as a percentage of
Parenting styles => total social adjustment => total child personality traits	masking effect	27.084	-22.239	23.357	$ a * b / c' $	95.213 per cent
Parenting styles => emotional symptoms => general child personality traits	intermediary	27.084	13.471	23.357	$a * b / c$	49.739 per cent
Parenting styles => character problems => general characteristics of the child's personality	intermediary	27.084	5.240	23.357	$a * b / c$	19.346 per cent
Parenting styles => social behaviour => general characteristics of the child's personality	Intermediation is not significant	27.084	1.063	23.357	-	0 per cent
Parenting style => hyperactive attention inability => general child personality traits	Intermediation is not significant	27.084	3.582	23.357	-	0 per cent
Parenting styles => peer interaction problems => general characteristics of children's personalities	intermediary	27.084	2.610	23.357	$a * b / c$	9.637 per cent
Effect share at masking effect refers to: ratio of mediated effect/direct effect						

5. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The results of the study verified Hypothesis 1 that family parenting styles significantly and positively predicted the formation and development of children's personality. The more democratic the family upbringing style, the higher the level of personality development of the children. For example, they show higher adaptability and coordination in problem solving; they have strong planning, perseverance, and are not influenced by external factors; they have a strong desire for expression and want to be praised by teachers; they have positive attitudes and behaviours in social interaction; they are cheerful and optimistic in their daily life and interactions and are willing to play with their peers, and so on. There is a close relationship between family upbringing and the various dimensions of children's personality. Through scientific and healthy family upbringing, parents can create a family environment conducive to the overall development of their children's personality and promote the overall development of their intellectual characteristics, conscientious self-control, extraversion, pro-sociality and emotional stability.

The mediating effects study described above confirms Hypothesis 2, that social adjustment plays a partially mediating role in the effects of family parenting styles on kids' personality. That is, family upbringing methods have a direct impact on how children's personality grow, and in turn can have an impact on the formation of children's personality by influencing young children's social adjustment. Family parenting style, as an independent variable, first positively predicts young children's social

adjustment. For example, democratic, encouraging and supportive family upbringing styles help young children to develop good social interaction skills, self-confidence and adaptability, while authoritarian, punitive and neglectful family upbringing styles may lead to social disorders, low self-esteem and adaptation difficulties. Young children's social adjustment, as a mediating variable, further affects their personality development. Young children with good social adjustment are more likely to develop healthy and positive personality traits, such as self-confidence, independence, and optimism, while those with poor social adjustment may develop negative personality traits such as low self-esteem, dependence, and anxiety. Family parenting styles not only directly affect children's personality development (e.g., through direct emotional support and behavioural guidance), but also indirectly by influencing their social adjustment processes.

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