

An Exploration on the Relationship between Self-Concept and Parenting Style on Teenager

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Abstract

To explore the relationship between self-concept and parenting style, and to provide bases for improving self-concept on teenager, a total of 1000 teenager were tested with self-concept scale and parenting style scale. Total self-concept, self-concept of social orientation and self-concept of personal orientation were associated with factors of parenting style, which could predict total self-concept, self-concept of social orientation and self-concept of personal orientation. Factors of parenting style had the effects on the extents of total self-concept, self-concept of social orientation and self-concept of personal orientation of teenager.

Keywords

Teenager, Self-Concept, Parenting Style

1. Introduction

Self-concept is a kind of self emotional experience in which I, as an object, can recognize and evaluate the society (including social groups and individuals), and it is a kind of positive self emotional experience of I in social life. Long-lasting self-concept is a kind of stable personality orientation. It is a multi-dimensional (social orientation and personal orientation) and multi-layer (total, general and special) system, including total self-concept, general self-concept and special self-concept. The abstract of self-concept varies at different levels. Family matters most among all factors which influence one's self-concept. Among all family factors, the parenting style is one of the most influential factors which affect children's socialization development and psychological health (Huang & Yong, 1998; Zhang, 1997). Parenting style is a behavior tendency that parents display in educating

and raising children in their daily life, and a comprehensive expression that they manifest in their educational concept and performance (Gao, 2003). Researches abroad and home indicate that children who are brought up in empathetic, supportive and rational family atmosphere tend to develop better personality, while those who are from autocratic, incompatible and conflicting family are prone to having pressure, and personality and behavior problems (Yang & Yang, 2004; Zhao & Shankou, 2006). This paper aims at exploring the relationship between teenager's self-concept and parenting style, and providing suggestions for improving teenager's self-concept. Object of the study is teenager between the ages of 14 and 23 in China, and it is the novelty of the present study.

2. Research Method

2.1. Subjects

The subjects are chosen from two universities and two middle schools by random sampling. 2000 questionnaires are distributed, with 1000 valid returned, in which male students are 593, while female ones are 407, aged from 14 to 23, with average age of 18.20 ± 1.07 .

2.2. Instruments

Self-concept scale and Parenting style scale are adopted in this research. Self-concept scale is designed by Huang & Yong (1998). This scale comprises 56 questions, which can be categorized into total self-concept, general self-concept and special self-concept. The answer items are divided into 5 scales, ranging from totally agree to absolutely disagree. The scale possesses fine validity and reliability. Parenting style scale is designed by Perris and revised by Yu Dongmei (Wang & Wang, 1999). This scale comprises 66 questions, including 6 factors in fathering scale and 5 factors in mothering scale. The scale possesses fine validity and reliability.

2.3. Data Analysis

The subjects, guided with the same instruction, are tested collectively in classes. All the tests are finished independently by themselves. The original data of the test was input into the computer and then analyzed with statistic software SPSS13.0. The study was approved by the local review board for human participant research and each participant provided informed consent prior to participate in the experiment.

3. Results

3.1. The Differences of Aspects of Self-Concept on Demographic Variant

T-test is adopted in analyzing the differences of aspects of self-concept on demographic variant. The result indicates: The t-test result of male students is higher than that of the female in the total self-concept, self moral concept orientation, self physical orientation and self psychological orientation. The results are shown as follow: male: total self-concept ($t(1000) = 2.25, p < 0.05$), self moral concept orientation ($t(1000) = 2.40, p < 0.05$), self physical orientation ($t(1000) = 2.01, p < 0.05$), and self psychological orientation ($t(1000) = 3.61, p < 0.01$). Meanwhile, the t-test result of female students is higher than that of male students in self-concept of family orientation, moral concept of social orientation. The results are shown as follow: Female: self-concept of family orientation ($t(1000) = 2.81, p < 0.01$), and moral concept of social orientation ($t(1000) = 2.54, p < 0.01$). For students under different parental marital status, teenagers growing up in single-parent has higher test results in self-concept of psychological orientation ($t(1000) = 2.08, p < 0.05$), and social-concept of psychological orientation ($t(1000) = 2.32, p < 0.05$). Besides, on the item of only child, non-only-child of the self-concept of social orientation ($t(1000) = 2.12, p < 0.05$) is obviously higher than only-child.

3.2. The Test Scores on Parenting Style and Self-Concept

The result of comparing different aspects of parenting style shows that mother's consideration father's consideration, mother's over-intervening, and father's protection rank the first four. From the result of self-concept, we can see that social-orientated total self-concept is higher than self-oriented total self-concept, family concept is higher than any aspect in special personal-orientated self-concept, and moral self is higher than any aspect in special social-oriented self-concept.

Table 1. Scores on different aspects of parenting style scale and self-concept scale ($\bar{x} \pm s$).

Aspects/dimension	Score	Aspects/Dimensions	Score
Father's consideration	2.58 ± 0.43	Social self	3.86 ± 0.64
Severeness of father's punishment	1.44 ± 0.29	Personal self	3.34 ± 0.59
Father over-intervening	1.98 ± 0.32	Interpersonal concept	3.65 ± 0.65
Father's preference	1.81 ± 0.49	Psychological concept	3.27 ± 0.71
Father's refusal	1.46 ± 0.40	Moral concept	3.56 ± 0.59
Father's protection	2.06 ± 0.49	Physical concept	3.44 ± 0.71
Mother's consideration	2.79 ± 0.44	Family concept	3.83 ± 0.69
Mother's over-intervening	2.14 ± 0.34	Interpersonal self	3.27 ± 0.63
Mother's refusal	1.54 ± 0.40	Psychological self	3.34 ± 0.61
Mother's punishment	1.36 ± 0.35	Moral self	3.80 ± 0.59
Mother's preference	1.85 ± 0.51	Physical self	3.00 ± 0.70
General self-concept	3.86 ± 0.64	Family self	3.40 ± 0.49

3.3. Regression Analysis of Self-Concept Scale and Parenting Style Scale

After tested by Pearson relevance and significance, the result indicates different degree of relevance between parenting style and total self-concept, social-oriented general self-concept, and personal-oriented general self-concept respectively. In order to further understand the relation between them, the researcher conducted regressive analysis of the data by taking total self-concept, social oriented self-concept, and personal oriented self-concept as dependent variants, and different aspects of family parenting style as independent variants.

Table 2. Regressive analysis of parenting style and self-concept.

Dependent variant	Involved independent variant	β	t	F	R^2
General self-concept	Mother's consideration	0.26	9.10**	38.80**	0.13
	Father's refusal	-0.11	-3.54**		
	Severeness of father's punishment	-0.07	-2.50**		
	Mother's preference	-0.05	-2.14**		
Social-oriented general self-concept	Mother's consideration	0.28	9.07**	30.53**	0.12
	Father's refusal	-0.14	-4.36**		
	Mother's over-intervening	-0.11	-2.81**		
Personal-oriented general self-concept	Mother's consideration	0.17	3.48**	20.86**	0.10
	Mother's preference	-0.08	-2.97**		
	Father's consideration	0.10	2.88**		
	Mother's refusal	0.12	3.11**		
	Mother's punishment	-0.11	-2.90**		

4. Discussion

The result of the research shows that the general self-concept of male students is higher than that of female ones, which is concordant with the result of Zhou's investigation (Zhou, 2005), but shows a difference with the result of Yang Yong (Yong & Huang, 1999) and Gu Haigen's research (Gu, 2002). This research indicates, similar to Zhou's research (2000), the reason why the general self-concept of male students is higher than that of female students may lie in the responsibility that the society endowed on males, or may be related to the different par-

enting style for males. Meanwhile, it reflects self-concept of moral orientation, physical concept and psychological concept of male students is higher than that of female ones, from which we can infer that male students concern more about their own moral, physical and psychological value, while female students concern more about their value in their family and social-oriented moral request. The research also shows that teenagers who are brought up in single-parent family care more about their personal and social oriented psychological demand, which may relate to their growing environment in which maternal or paternal love is insufficient. Therefore, they care more about their own psychological concept. Compared with only child, non-only child cares more about their social oriented self-concept.

Among all factors in parenting style, the score of parental consideration ranks top, followed by mother's over-intervening and father's protection, which is almost the same with the result of Zhang & Zhang (2005) and Han's research (Han & Li, 2008). Social oriented general self-concept is higher than personal oriented general self-concept, family concept is higher than any aspects of personal oriented special self-concept, and moral self-concept is higher than any aspect of social oriented special self-concept. These results show that in socialist country, teenagers idolizes collectivism, therefore, their social oriented general self-concept, family concept and moral self-concept is extremely salient.

The relevance analysis shows that general self-concept, social oriented general self-concept, personal oriented general self-concept are, to some extent, relevant to parenting style (Song & Feng, 2009). The further regressive analysis shows that general self-concept, mother's consideration, father's refusal, the severeness of father's punishment and mother's preference impose obvious regressive effect on general self-concept. Mother's consideration helps to improve teenagers' general self-concept, while father's refusal, severe punishment and mother's preference hinders the forming of general self-concept, which has been proved in previous researches. Mother's consideration, father's refusal, and mother's over-intervening has obvious regressive effect on social oriented general self-concept. Mother's consideration can promote teenager's social oriented general self-concept, while father's refusal and mother's over-intervening do harm to teenagers' growth. Parents' consideration, parents' refusal, mother's preference and punishment impose obvious regressive effect on general self-concept. The results indicate parents' consideration and mother's refusal can help to improve teenagers' personal oriented general self-concept, while mother's preference and punishment do harm to teenagers' development of personal oriented general self-concept. In the rearing style family of over-protection and authoritarianism, children have the lower level of self-concept (Liang, 2004).

The subjects are chosen from two universities and two middle schools by random sampling, the subjects should be widened. The result should be verified farther in the future.

5. Conclusion

1) There is a significant difference between male students and female students in their general self-concept, personal oriented moral concept, personal oriented family concept, personal oriented physical concept and social oriented moral concept. The difference between male and female in personal oriented psychological concept is very significant, the difference between single parent family and non-single parent family in personal oriented psychological concept and social oriented psychological concept is significant, and the difference between only child and non-only child in social oriented self-concept is significant.

2) Mother's consideration, father's consideration, mother's over-intervening and father's protection rank the first of four in parenting style. In different aspects of self-concept, social oriented general self-concept is higher than personal oriented general self-concept, family concept is higher than any aspect of personal oriented special self-concept, and moral concept is higher than any aspect of social oriented special self-concept.

3) General self-concept, social oriented general self-concept, and personal oriented general self-concept are, to different extent, relevant to parenting style. Self-concept, social oriented general self-concept, and personal oriented general self-concept can, to some extent, be predicted from parenting style.

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