

The Influence of Parental Warmth on Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

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Abstract:

Childhood is a critical period of human development, where brings both opportunities and challenges due to the rapid physical and psychological development. Psychological problems also gradually emerge, and protecting children's mental health has become a global issue at present. The influence of parenting styles on children's emotional development has garnered increasing scholarly attention; however, the specific role of warm parenting remains unexplored. This article analyzes the impact of parental warmth on children's emotional regulation ability, and concludes that the relationship between parental warmth and child emotional regulation is not unidirectional but rather characterized by reciprocal influence. This interaction has a significant impact on children's own growth, family relationships, and social development. Based on this, this study proposes the following suggestions: parents should strengthen their awareness of warm parenting and deeply understand the roles of caregivers and companions. Schools and community organizations should attach importance to parental education and help parents learn supportive parenting skills. The country should increase economic support and foster a 'parent-friendly' social environment.

Keywords: Parental warmth; Parenting styles; Emotional regulation ability; Children's emotional regulation

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Childhood is a critical period for a person's lifelong development, where physical and psychological growth brings both opportunities and challenges. Emotional regulation abilities also develop rapidly during this period. With the rapid modernization of society and explosive growth of information, the in-

vidence of emotional problems such as anxiety and depression among children is constantly increasing. Protecting children's mental health has become a global issue. Good emotional regulation ability is an important indicator of mental health, and is considered as an important ability to improve the quality of children's mental health and cope with future challenges. As a micro-system of individual growth, family has a significant impact on children's emotional regulation ability.

1.2 Significance

This study attempts to investigate how parental warmth shapes the development of emotional regulation in children, providing a new perspective for the theory of children's emotional development and delving into the influence of external parenting behavior on internal psychological development. At the same time, it will also enrich the theory of family systems and clarify the contribution of parenting in children's growth process

Clarifying the relationship between parental warmth and children's emotional regulation, providing reference for family education practice, can help parents better realize that warm parenting is not only about giving children current care and a sense of security, but more importantly, helping them develop important emotional recognition abilities. At the same time, starting from the family to reduce children's emotional problems can also provides a new path to solve the increasingly growing emotional problems of children.

2. Concept Definition and Theoretical Basis

2.1 Concept Definition

2.1.1 Parental warmth

Parental warmth refers to the stable and supportive emotional attitude that parents convey to their children in their interactions, which is characterized by consistent affection and responsive care. Parental warmth refers to the positive emotional attitudes that parents can convey to their children, such as care and support, as well as and the receptive, sensitive responsiveness to a child's needs [1].

2.1.2 Emotional regulation ability

Emotional regulation ability refers to an individual's ability to regulate their own low or high emotional responses positively and negatively, which is aimed to maintain a good emotional state. Emotion regulation is the process in which individuals identify positive or negative emotions under certain goal guidance, and change or manage these emotions through certain strategies [2].

2.2 Theoretical Basis

2.2.1 Ecosystem theory

Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem theory conceptualizes development as the product of reciprocal influences across multiple, interconnected systemic layers, with each system nested to shape individual traits and behaviors. In family, the micro-system of children's growth, the attitude and

emotional response of parents towards children, as well as their parenting style, all affect children's emotional expression. At the same time, a high level of warmth can bring a sense of security to children. Children living in a safe environment are more likely to maintain emotional stability and regulate negative emotions. As important individuals in this environment, children also shape their parents' parenting attitudes and child-rearing practices, forming a two-way interaction between parents' warmth and emotional regulation ability.

2.2.2 Attachment theory

The attachment theory of Bowlby suggests that humans are born with a need for emotional connections and a desire for emotional communication with others. As important caregivers in early childhood, parents' parenting styles and attitudes can help shape individual children's attachment patterns. Warm parenting styles such as parental care, understanding, timely insight into children's emotional needs, and positive responses can help children establish a sense of security and form a secure attachment pattern. In this attachment pattern, children will not adopt extreme emotional expressions to arouse their parents' concern, but will actively seek ways to solve problems, with more positive emotions and less negative emotions.

2.2.3 Social Learning theory

Bandura's social learning theory proposes the concept of alternative learning based on direct learning, and it also suggests the consequences of others' behavior can have a reinforcing effect. In the family system, children master emotional regulation strategies by observing their parents' behavior as well as their emotional regulation techniques and methods. They try to apply them to their own practice after Observational Learning. At the same time, the positive emotional state of parents is also a substitute reinforcement for children. When parents effectively deal with their negative emotions and gain calmness, children will also benefit from their parents' stable emotions.

3. The Relationship Between Parental Warmth and Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

3.1 Positive Predictive Effect of Parental Warmth on Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

Strong parental warmth is considered a key factor in promoting the development of advanced emotional regulation skills in children. High levels of parental warmth can create a sense of security in children, which can regulate

their emotions [3]. At the same time, parental warmth can also alleviate children's emotional problems in anxious parenting environments and improve their emotional adaptability [4]. Mindfulness parenting, as a way of nurturing warmth, has been shown to have fewer emotional regulation problems in children of parents with higher levels of mindfulness [5].

3.2 The Reciprocal Effect of Children's Emotional Regulation Ability on Parental Warmth

The interaction between parental warmth and children's emotional regulation has been confirmed, and parents with higher warmth levels have stronger emotional regulation abilities in their children. The emotional regulation ability of children also positively predicts the warmth level of parents [6]. Internalizing problems stemming from child emotional dysregulation are a significant predictor of subsequent emotional dysregulation in parents [7]. The difficulty in regulating children's emotions will strengthen parents' development of stricter and less warm parenting styles [8]. In a study of premature infants, it was found that parental sensitivity responses and positive caregiving can facilitate the maturation of emotional regulation but also enhance the child's growing regulatory abilities, which then fuels more positive interactions, further reinforcing the system [9].

3.3 The Impact of Parental Warmth and Children's Emotional Regulation Interaction

The two-way interaction between parental warmth and children's emotional regulation ability is not only related to parental parenting styles and children's emotional abilities, but also has a profound impact on children's future growth, family harmony, and social development.

3.3.1 Impact on children's growth

The warm upbringing of parents not only directly promotes the development of children's emotional regulation ability, but also has a profound and long-term impact on their future development, which not only reflects their internal psychological state but also on their external behavior. For the development of internal psychology, children who receive parental warmth are also less likely to experience emotional problems in school [10]. For external behavior, parental warmth not only promotes the development of their emotional regulation ability and prosocial behavior, but also significantly enhances the generation of prosocial behavior in children with strong emotional regulation ability [11]. From this, it can be seen that whether children's psychological development is influenced by their emotional regulation ability, under the influence of parental warmth, good emotional regulation ability can

help children develop positive social emotions and behaviors.

3.3.2 Impact on family relationships

According to the Ecosystem Theory theory, each individual is influenced by other individuals in the system, and this influence is bidirectional. Parental warmth helps children develop good emotional skills, while children's good emotional abilities are also catalysts for parental warmth. The two-way promotion of the two forms a positive parent-child interaction and a warm and loving family atmosphere [6]. The relationship between parents and children is not only influenced by their own parenting styles, but also by the interaction patterns between spouses and children. The authoritarian parenting model with the lack of parental warmth can positively predict parent-child conflicts between spouses and children [12]. Warm parenting not only promotes the emotional development of children, but also plays a key role in fostering healthy family relationships and creating a harmonious family atmosphere.

3.3.3 Impact on social development

The positive emotional ability enhanced by parental warmth are often translated into more adaptive social emotions and proficient interaction behaviors in children. Within the domain of adolescent friendship quality research, findings indicate that positive parenting can affect the quality of friendships between children and their peers by influencing their emotional intelligence, enhancing their popularity among peer groups [13]. At the same time, parental warmth can positively predict that children will engage in more selfless behavior and less harmful behavior. Prosocial risk-taking behavior is a behavior that combines self sacrifice and social dedication, and positive parenting is believed to have a positive predictive effect on the increase of such behavior [14].

4. Suggestions for Countermeasures

4.1 Parents and Family Level

The warmth of parents not only affects their children's emotional regulation ability, but may also further lead to a series of internalizing and externalizing problems. Therefore, parents should strengthen their awareness of warm parenting, deeply understand that they are not only caregivers of their children, but also caregivers and companions. As the same time, they have the responsibility to provide a warm family atmosphere and environment for their children, and help to establish a secure attachment. When children have emotional regulation problems, parents should guide them to master emotional management

strategies and provide them with an “emotional scaffold”. In daily life, parents should also regulate their emotions, which is exceedingly important to set an example for their children. This progress help them complete alternative learning, eventually enhance their emotional regulation abilities.

4.2 School and Institutional Level

Schools should attach importance to parental education and provide opportunities for parents to learn and train through parent schools, helping them learn supportive parenting skills. At the same time, schools should also attach importance to the cultivation of children’s emotional abilities, organize some campus activities in schools to help children learn strategies and skills for emotional regulation. Teachers should help students realize how to face and understand their own emotions, and learn to co-exist harmoniously with them. Communities can establish family education service stations to provide assistance and guidance to parents, as well as a platform for mutual assistance and communication among families. Through the sharing of experiences between parents, they can learn warm parenting skills, help parents alleviate parenting pressure.

4.3 Government and Social Level

According to Ecosystem Theory, children’s growth is also influenced by the macro environment. Cultivating the next generation for the country is not only the responsibility of families, but also the responsibility of society. Therefore, attention should be paid to building a “parent friendly” society. At the policy level, parental allowances can be provided to alleviate the economic pressure of parenting, while also calling on enterprises and institutions to implement parental leave and provide more parent-child time for parents. At the same time, as an important means of value dissemination and output, mass media should promote and showcase warm and positive parent-child interaction images, providing schools and imitation examples for parents to carry out warm parenting. Strengthening the cultivation of family education mentors to provide assistance and guidance to more parents and families is also a significant way to increase warm parenting behavior.

5. Conclusion

This article investigates the relationship and impact between parental warmth and children’s emotional regulation ability, and concludes that parental warmth can positively predict children’s emotional regulation ability, while children’s emotional state also has a reverse effect

on parental warmth. This mutual promotion has been confirmed, but the mechanism of action between the two has not yet been determined. Therefore, future research should be conducted on their mediating effects and boundary conditions to clarify their conditions and processes of action. Children, as constantly developing individuals, still need to be researched to find whether there are differences in the focus of parental warmth and the ways in which it generates utility. As for the impact of the two-way interaction between the two on children’s growth, family relationships, and social development, parents, schools, and governments should make corresponding efforts in order to promote the development of children’s emotional regulation ability.

As for the shortcomings of the research, firstly, this study only demonstrated the correlation between parental warmth and children’s emotional regulation ability, but there is insufficient discussion on its mechanism of action and whether it is influenced by other conditions. Moreover, it did not consider whether the results produced by different gender combinations were the same, and whether parental warmth and maternal warmth would have different effects on children of different genders. Secondly, children are growing individuals, and the effect of parental warmth on their emotional regulation ability varies at different stages of growth. Further analysis is needed to measure these differences and find more targeted educational recommendations for parents of children of different ages.

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