

The Application of Horticultural Therapy in Shaping the Positive Psychological Qualities of Chinese Teachers' Children

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Abstract: As a special group of education objects, Chinese teachers' children are affected by the professional characteristics and ideas of their parents, and generally face greater psychological pressure. Their construction of positive psychological quality is relatively insufficient. The concept of horticultural therapy and experiential practical activities provide a new way to shape the positive psychological quality of Chinese teachers' children. It is particularly necessary to apply horticultural therapy to the children of Chinese teachers to improve their mental health. The combination of horticulture and mental health education of Chinese teachers' children helps to shape the positive and optimistic mentality of teachers' children, and helps to improve the communication ability and learning enthusiasm of teachers' children, which is of great value in shaping the positive psychological quality of Chinese teachers' children.

Keywords: Horticultural Therapy, Children of Chinese Teachers, Positive Psychological Quality

1. Introduction

Chinese public opinion generally believes that children of teachers should be better than their peers in all aspects and their development will be smooth because of the support of parents who are teachers. However, scholars have found that the parenting styles of teachers' parents, such as high authority, autocracy, and high academic requirements [1], often make the children of teachers suffer from greater psychological pressure, lack of positive psychological qualities, and have negative psychological emotions such as loneliness, inferiority, self-denial, sadness, anxiety, and depression, and even have a high proportion of suicidal tendencies [2]. Positive psychological qualities such as self-confidence, positive optimism, sense of responsibility and observation are important forces for individuals to overcome psychological obstacles and exert their potential, and are relatively stable positive psychological traits of individuals. With happiness, life satisfaction, mental health and other psychological factors significant positive correlation [3]. Positive psychological quality maintains and supports individual positive mentality, and can provide positive energy for individual healthy and happy growth and social harmonious development. Human's positive psychological quality is the core element of human survival and development. Horticultural therapy is an effective way to cultivate

positive psychological quality for teachers' children who are under psychological pressure and in a negative mood.

2. Horticultural Therapy and Its Effects

Horticultural Therapy originated in England at the end of the 17th century, and the first formal horticultural therapy program was developed and implemented in the United States in 1949. Since then, horticultural therapy has attracted people's attention and been actively used.

2.1. Concept of Horticultural Therapy

Different scholars and institutions have different views on the concept of horticultural therapy. Relf. D. [4] considered horticultural therapy to be the activity of achieving therapeutic effects through plants. Taiwan scholar Guo Yuren [5] believes that horticultural therapy is a method of using plants and horticultural activities as well as contact with nature to achieve therapeutic goals. Li Shuhua [6] believes that horticultural therapy is the application of plants and various activities related to plants to improve individuals' physiological, psychological and social adaptability, so as to improve their health and restore people's physical and mental functions. The American Horticultural Therapy Association [7] defines horticultural therapy as "an effective treatment for people who need to improve their physical and mental aspects by using plant cultivation and gardening operations to adjust their mental and physical aspects", which has been widely recognized by the academic community.

2.2. Effectiveness of Horticultural Therapy

As a medium of horticultural therapy, plants can not only absorb harmful substances in the air, purify the air, reduce noise, produce negative ions, which is beneficial to health, but also produce positive stimulation to people's brain through five senses such as vision, smell, hearing, touch and taste. The theory of psychological evolution [8] points out that in horticultural activities, people's attention is attracted by the plant landscape, and they will gain a sense of security, effectively improve negative emotions and stimulate positive emotions. Through sensory and behavioral stimulation training, horticultural therapy can strengthen the subjects' sense of hope and vitality, continuously improve the subjects' positive psychological quality, and achieve the purpose of psychological healing [9]. At present, horticultural therapy is applicable to a wide range of groups, which can relieve the pressure of work, study and life, stimulate people's positive emotions, enhance energy, enhance aesthetic taste, and make people love life more.

Horticultural therapy through sensory and behavioral stimulation training, strengthen the subjects' sense of hope and vitality, and constantly improve the subjects' positive psychological quality, so as to achieve the purpose of psychological treatment.

3. The Necessity of Applying Horticultural Therapy to the Positive Psychological Character Building of Chinese Teachers' Children

The characteristics of Chinese teachers' families and the uniqueness of horticultural therapy make horticultural therapy more suitable for resolving teachers' children's negative emotions and shaping their positive psychological qualities.

3.1. Characteristics of Chinese Teacher Families

3.1.1. Teachers and Parents Attach Importance to Face

Chinese teachers and parents tend to ignore their children's mental health conditions, and are more arrogant. When their children have low self-esteem, anxiety, depression and other negative psychological problems, they will think that their children are not sick and moan. Even if they find their children's psychological problems are more serious, they are reluctant to take their children to seek help from professional psychological counselors or psychologists out of face-saving psychology.

3.1.2. Teachers and Parents Have More Leisure Time

The family is a system, and the positive psychological quality of teachers' children cannot be shaped without the company and support of parents. Meanwhile, the negative emotions of teachers' parents caused by family and work pressure also need to be channeled and resolved in an appropriate way. Chinese parents who are also teachers have two days off every week and a longer cold and summer vacation. Compared with parents of other professions, they have more leisure time to heal together with their children, which makes horticultural healing, a long cycle and steady progress of healing, suitable for teacher families.

3.1.3. Teachers, Parents and Children Have Strong Learning Ability

Children of teachers and their parents generally have strong learning ability, and it is easier for them to understand and accept the new healing theory and method of horticultural therapy.

3.2. Uniqueness of Horticultural Therapy

There are many ways to shape the positive psychological quality of teachers' children. Horticultural therapy is more suitable for teachers' children and helps to develop their positive potential because of its characteristics and advantages such as openness, convenience, interest and wisdom.

3.2.1. Openness of the Environment

Horticultural therapy is generally carried out in a relaxing environment and atmosphere such as outdoor, through the interaction with plants to relax the body and mind, which is conducive to teachers and their children to unload psychological burdens and eliminate rebellious thoughts. Therefore, they would be more ready to cooperate with each other. Horticultural therapy enables teachers' children to relax, relieve pressure and deal with bad emotions in the process of going into nature and getting close to plants.

3.2.2. Strong Interest

With flowers and trees as the medium, horticultural therapy can fully combine the characteristics of the seasons and choose the favorite ways of teachers' children, such as plant planting and maintenance, plant extension, specimen preparation, etc., to carry out activities, which is highly interesting and can attract teachers' children to participate actively.

3.2.3. Intuitiveness of Feelings

Horticultural therapy takes plants as props, and teachers' children can intuitively perceive the indomitable vitality from the cycle growth of plants and the ups and downs of life from the change of plants, so as to obtain impressive experience.

3.2.4.No Side Effects

Horticultural therapy is a healing method that integrates psychology, botany, medicine and other disciplines. Also, it is a positive and healthy natural therapy, which will not bring negative psychological distress to teachers' children and parents, and has no side effects.

4. The Effect of Horticultural Therapy on Shaping the Positive Psychological Quality of Teachers' Children

Studies have confirmed that horticultural therapy can significantly reduce levels of repression, anxiety and depression [10]. Through horticultural therapy, contact with plants and nature can improve teachers' children's self-confidence, awareness and communication skills, cultivate sense of responsibility, adjust negative emotions, and build positive and optimistic attitude.

4.1. Help to Improve the Self-confidence of Teachers' Children

Engaging in gardening activities, close contact with green plants can release the pressure of study and work, relieve anxiety and stress [11]. Teachers' children, as subjects, need to participate independently in the process of horticultural activities, which satisfies their needs of autonomy and competency, which will make them get a sense of subjectivity and control. Success in different stages of gardening activities such as the gradual growth, flowering or fruit of their own plants, on one hand, can make them feel the joy of success; on the other hand, it enables them to find their own unique advantages, gain a sense of accomplishment, and gradually have a positive evaluation of themselves, improve self-acceptance, and thus help them improve their self-confidence.

4.2. Help to Enhance the Awareness of Teachers' Children

Sensory perception is an important way for individuals to know themselves and the external world. In the process of growing up, teachers' children tend to pay too much attention to their studies because of their parents' high requirements, ignore the external world and others' feelings, and their awareness is weakened. Participation in practical gardening activities can enhance the link between teachers' children and the external world. While participating in horticultural activities, teachers' children can observe the changes of plants at a close distance, touch the veins of plants or taste plants and their fruits, smell the fragrance of flowers, and fully activate their senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell to form an overall awareness of plants, thus helping to expand their sensory perception. It can improve the ability of detection, and at the same time increase the level of endorphins and other hormones in the body that can reduce depression and anxiety, and produce a biphasic adjustment effect on the mind and body [12].

4.3. Help to Enhance the Sense of Responsibility of Teachers' Children

Teachers' children participate in a series of horticultural activities with plants as a medium, such as completing soil allocation, sowing, cutting and plant dressing, witnessing the whole process of plants from sowing to flowering and bearing fruit. During the waiting process, they cultivate patience, a sense of responsibility and concentration, and realize that they should be responsible for what they undertake. Horticultural activities can make teachers' children understand that plants grow in a small ecosystem formed by sunlight, water, air, flying insects, etc., and help teachers' children to develop a systematic view.

4.4. Help to Shape the Positive and Optimistic Attitude of Teachers' Children

Horticultural therapy allows participants to observe the tenacious and vigorous vitality of plant growth, enabling them to get life education, realize the meaning of individual existence, and thus cherish life more [13]. Through the whole process of interacting with plants and physiotherapists, teachers' children can correctly understand the purpose and significance of my actions, have a certain determination ability in emergencies, have a good response ability to emergencies, promote their correct evaluation of themselves, an objective and comprehensive understanding of themselves, not inferior, and be able to accept themselves with a happy attitude. In the process of gardening, the relaxing environment, as well as the timely guidance of the physical therapist can help teachers and children adjust their expectations in time, have hope for the future, be able to maintain a dynamic balance with the surrounding environment, improve self-control, expand their life experiences, and build a positive attitude.

4.5. Help to Improve the Communication Skills of Teachers' Children

In the relaxed atmosphere of horticultural activities and accompanied by professional horticultural physiotherapists, teachers' children are more willing to take the initiative to talk about some negative emotions that they are not willing to tell their parents, psychological counselors, psychologists, etc., and actively open their hearts to seek help. Horticultural physiotherapists can timely discover, guide and communicate with parents to help them resolve bad emotions. It is also conducive to the improvement of teacher-student, parent-child and social relations by helping teachers' children to understand the changes of life from multiple perspectives, experience the challenges brought by life, and deal with the complex social life with a positive attitude. Some gardening activities that require the cooperation of group members can exercise participants' social ability and cooperation ability [14], which is beneficial to the formation of the collective concept and the concept of honor and disgrace. Moreover, the communication in the cooperation process can improve the communication ability of teachers' children, establish a good communication relationship, and shape a sound and positive psychological quality.

5. Ways of Implementing Horticultural Therapy to Shape the Positive Psychological Qualities of Teachers' Children

5.1. Guidance by Government Departments

Horticultural therapy is still a new idea and a new thing in our country, and the public lacks understanding of it. Government departments can use some effective ways, such as official media, parents' classes and other media, in the form of lectures, case sharing and other forms to introduce teachers, parents and the public about horticulture therapy and the importance of positive mental quality and other related ideas, so as to remove cognitive obstacles for the development of horticulture therapy. In addition, the government can lead the integration of resources, and set up horticultural therapy courses in some universities to train relevant talents.

5.2. Special Courses Related to Horticultural Therapy Are Offered on Campus

The children of teachers spend most of their time in school, and it is a better choice to carry out horticultural therapy activities based on the school, such as setting up horticultural courses in school, designing relevant textbooks, building horticultural gardens in school, optimizing campus landscape, etc., so that the children of teachers can interlude horticultural activities in the learning process of a

day at school, and get relaxed. Also, gardening activities help teachers' children to become meticulous, patient, friendly, good at observation and attain other positive psychological qualities.

5.3. Families Started Gardening Activities

Family is a child's first classroom. Teachers and parents can carry out home gardening activities with their children and plant and maintain plants at home. For example, family members can choose their favorite green plants as the "maintenance manager", observe and record, and make a photo album or documentary about the growth process of the plants to share. In addition, they can also use the leaves or petals of plants to make crafts, exercise children's creative ability and hands-on ability. Carrying out home gardening can not only beautify the family environment, but also promote the communication between family members and improve the parent-child relationship. A good family atmosphere also helps children to build a healthy and positive physical and mental state to a great extent.

5.4. Effective Use of Social Horticultural Resources

In recent years, the national and local governments have attached great importance to the construction of leisure garden landscape. There are many parks, landscape zones, nursery flower markets, etc., and some cities have also sprung up leisure agriculture such as paid farm planting. These social resources can also be used as sites for horticultural healing activities. In addition, some medical departments with conditions can establish horticultural therapy institutions, train professional horticultural therapists, and provide professional horticultural therapy services.

6. Conclusion

Chinese teachers and parents need to attach great importance to their children's psychological problems and the shaping of positive psychological qualities. The characteristics of teachers' families and horticultural therapy make horticultural therapy an effective way to dissolve teachers' children's negative emotions and shape their positive psychological qualities. The government, society, schools and families should work together to give full play to the role of horticultural healing in shaping the positive psychological quality of teachers' children.

As horticultural therapy is still in the exploratory stage in China, there is a lack of relevant literature on horticultural therapy in the group of teachers' children, which makes this research challenging. Moreover, the conclusions reached through qualitative analysis in this paper need to be verified in practice.

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