

The Influence of Family Factors on College Students' Self-esteem

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Abstract: Self-esteem, generally refers to an evaluation made and usually held by individuals, which is one of the important factors affecting individual mental health. Nowadays, society pays more and more attention to college students' mental health. As an important index, self-esteem is of great significance to promote college students' psychological development and improve their self-esteem. Some researchers have pointed out that an individual's self-esteem level is affected by the family environment in which he grew up. As a system, the total body function of the family has a great influence on the level of individual self-esteem. In recent years, more and more researchers have found that there are certain limitations in the research paradigm of examining one or some family factors alone, so they turn to the family as a system, put forward the concept of family function, and investigate the influence of family as a system on individuals. This review selects the special group of college students as the research object, focuses on the impact of family factors on College Students' self-esteem, and discusses the relationship between College Students' self-esteem and family factors such as family background and family relations.

Keywords: Family Factors, College Students, Self-esteem

1. Introduction

People have paid increasing attention to students' mental health in recent years. Self-esteem is essential to personal self-awareness as an integral part of individual growth. Self-esteem development has extensive effects on individual emotional and social behaviors. It plays a role in self-evaluation and is one of the significant indicators of evaluating personal mental health [1]. Because their physical and mental health is easily affected by the external environment. During this period, the psychological development of college students is not fully mature, which is the critical stage of the formation and consolidation of self-consciousness [2].

Research has shown that Chinese college students' overall psychological level appears to be upward. But there are still college students suffering from depression and social phobia. The meta-analysis results show that self-esteem correlates with depression, anxiety, and interpersonal sensitivity [2]. People with high self-esteem usually have strong independence and sociability; they are always in high spirits, tend to surpass themselves, and show aggressive behavior [2]. That means they are highly adaptable, treat themselves and others tolerant, and generally feel good about

themselves. Instead, people with low self-esteem often feel lonely and depressed; they are prone to anxiety and vulnerability.

They are often self-critical, negative sink, produce an excessive defensive reaction, it's hard for them to reasonably accept themselves, so they are often susceptible to the interpersonal relationship [3]. Therefore, the influence of family factors on college students' self-esteem should be given more consideration. As a direct and most important environment for individual growth, family plays a crucial role in children's lives. Family relationships need to be readjusted by college students as their lives change after entering the university. On the one hand, college students require independence and autonomy, separated from the psychological dependence on their parents and separated from the internalized parental image; on the other hand, college students need a close emotional connection with their parents as a safe base to explore themselves and the external world [4]. Therefore, we should pay special attention to the impact of the family environment on college students.

Thus, this review aims to help college students understand their psychological state and self-esteem level, increase parent-child communication, improve the family education environment, promote the development of self-personality, and improve individual self-esteem.

2. Family Background

Self-esteem is the emotional tendency and value assessment of college students. The degree of self-esteem of college students is closely related to their psychological health and social adaptation. A large number of studies have shown that the self-esteem level of college students is influenced by school factors, social factors, and their factors, but also has a specific correlation with the family environment in which they grow up. Suppose parents can give their children more love, care, understanding, and support in family education. In that case, they are more likely to develop positive self-evaluation, affirm their value, and develop high self-esteem [5]. On the other hand, if parents teach their children in a punitive and harsh manner, their self-esteem level will be significantly lower. According to the survey, the parent's education level and social status have a particular influence on the self-esteem of college students. Usually, the higher the education level of parents, the higher the self-esteem level of college students, and the two are positively correlated; on the contrary, the lower the education level of parents or the poorer the family, the more college students will have low self-esteem and low level of self-psychological acceptance and are also prone to other mental health problems [6].

2.1. Family Functions

For most students, entering a new study life in college also means facing further challenges, which invariably increases college students' psychological burden and mental pressure. Relevant research scholars found that besides school, society, and students themselves, the family function also influences college students' personality and self-esteem, especially family closeness and adaptability. Family closeness mainly refers to the emotional ties among family members [7]. In contrast, family adaptability refers to the family system changing accordingly with the environment and the problems that arise at different developmental stages. In terms of the influence of family closeness on college students' self-esteem, the higher the closeness of the family, the higher the level of college students' self-esteem, the more their children enjoy the love and care from their parents at all times, and their psychological adaptability is more robust. Regarding the influence of family adaptability on college students' self-esteem, college students' self-esteem level and self-acceptance are also higher in families with a higher degree of adaptability. This is sufficient to show that family closeness and adaptability can predict college students' self-esteem levels to a certain extent. It is proved that college

students in families with higher closeness and adaptability also have higher self-esteem levels than those in lower families, which shows that family function is positively related to their self-esteem [8].

2.2. Family Socioeconomic Status

2.2.1. Parents' Education Level

Some domestic and foreign studies have focused on the role of the parental education factor of college students. The influence of parents' education level on the psychological symptoms of self-esteem of college students has been confirmed to some extent. The higher the education level of parents, the higher the self-esteem and psychological well-being of college students. Many parents of low-educated families will adopt extreme education methods due to the lack of education, which will inevitably cause psychological trauma to their children [9]. Then there is the fact that parents with lower knowledge will have high expectations of their children, hoping that they will all surpass themselves, which increases the pressure on their children and causes them to have more psychological symptoms. Moreover, there are some differences in the influence of fathers' and mothers' education levels on college students' self-esteem and psychological adjustment. The self-esteem level of college students in families where the mothers' education level is a bachelor's degree or above does not show an advantage, but the higher the father's education level is, the more pronounced the benefit is.

In terms of the influence of fathers' education level on college students' self-esteem, the higher the fathers' education level, the higher the college students' ability to adapt to and control their environment, the higher their self-esteem level, and the more precise their goal planning for their future life [10]. In terms of psychological symptoms, college students whose fathers' education level is high school or junior college have certain advantages, and they have better development of positive psychological functions and more positive self-acceptance and awareness; on the contrary, their children whose fathers' education level is not high have poor growth of psychological processes, and they are more likely to have psychological distress such as anxiety, boredom, somatization, and emotionalism in their study, life, and even work.

Analyzing the influence of mothers' education level on college students' self-esteem, in terms of psychological well-being, the lower the level of education of mothers, the lower the autonomy and psychological well-being of their children. If the mother's education level is college, bachelor, and above, the children's self-esteem and psychological well-being are stronger. In terms of psychological symptoms, the lower the education level of college students' mothers, the more sensitive these students are to interpersonal relationships and prone to negative psychological symptoms; the higher the education level of mothers, the stronger the college students' desire to express themselves in hostility, rebellion, and paranoia, and it is easy to see that the influence of mothers' education level on college students is more profound [11].

2.2.2. Family Economic Status

After related research, it is found that family economic status also has a more significant impact on college students' self-esteem levels. We generally mean parents' income and socio-economic status by family financial status here. It has been proved that low-income families or too affluent families can bring more psychological problems to college students.

Regarding the father's income status, the lower the father's socioeconomic status and the lower his income, the poorer the psychological adaptation ability of college students who grew up in this family environment. They have a higher susceptibility to psychological symptoms and attach great importance to the evaluation and opinion of others about themselves. These students have lower self-evaluation and self-worth. Furthermore, college students whose fathers' income and socioeconomic

status are in the middle range do not have high self-esteem levels. However, they have minor psychological symptoms, which also indicates that there is still room for improvement in developing positive psychological qualities in this group of students. College students with higher fathers' incomes and socioeconomic status have higher self-esteem, higher psychological adaptability, higher self-acceptance and value affirmation, and more goals for their lives [12].

It can be said that socioeconomic status reflects the social class of the family. Family income is reflected in fathers, but their mothers' income more extensively influences college students than the influence of their fathers' economic income and socioeconomic status. College students whose mothers' socioeconomic status and share of the family's income are higher have higher levels of self-esteem and are more expressive in symptoms such as somatization, paranoia, and obsessions [3]. Students whose mothers have lower income levels also have lower levels of self-esteem and show developmental disadvantages in their psychological functioning, have difficulties in handling some interpersonal relationships, and are also prone to depression, sensitivity, and other aspects of distress.

From this, we can see that individual college students with higher parental income and socioeconomic status occupy greater advantages in economic capital, social capital, and educated capital, and have more developmental capital compared with their peers, which can promote their healthy development. On the contrary, college students with lower parental income and socioeconomic status do not enjoy better resources and are prone to inferiority complex and vanity, which hinders their healthy growth [13]. This requires colleges and universities to do a good job in ideological and political education and mental health counseling for college students and to pay attention to the physical and mental development of poor college students.

In conclusion, college students' current self-esteem level and psychological adaptation are generally good, and most of them have high psychological well-being and solid psychological transformation. In contrast, a small number of students show poor psychological symptoms. Relevant studies have found that family background has a significant influence on college students' self-esteem, such as the higher the closeness and adaptability in family function, then the higher the self-esteem level of children in the family. The higher education and literacy level of parents have a more significant impact on students' self-esteem [14]. In addition, factors such as family economic income and parents' socioeconomic status also impact college students' self-esteem and psychological adaptation. The higher the parents and family's socioeconomic status, the more competitive college students growing up in this family are. The higher their self-esteem level and self-acceptance are naturally.

3. Family Relationship

3.1. Parent-Child Relationship

In the family relationship, the interaction and communication between children and their parents, the parent-child relationship, is one family factor affecting college students' self-esteem. Individual feedback on the success of others and experience based on self-concept, self-esteem reflects people's self-value and self-acceptance carrier; an excellent parent-child relationship can make children more positive understanding, more confident, that is to say, children's self-consciousness and self-evaluation have a positive role in promoting. Conversely, poor parent-child relationships can hurt self-esteem levels. Some scholars have summarized previous studies and pointed out that the indicators of parent-child relationship mainly include parent-child attachment, parent-child relationship characteristics (parent support, parent-child conflict, parental acceptance, and rejection), and parenting style [15].

Parenting style refers to a behavior tendency shown by parents in the daily life of raising and educating their children, which is an essential embodiment of their educational concepts and behavior.

Baumlinde divided family upbringing into autocratic, democratic, and indulgent. A study found that the self-esteem level of college students was significantly higher than that of authoritarian and indulgent college students [5]. And the parenting style has a better predictive effect on the development of children's self-esteem.

Most studies support that parents who adopt warmth and understand parenting can promote their children's self-esteem. At the same time, that "punishment and severity," "rejection and denial," "excessive interference," and "excessive protection" can adversely affect the formation and development of their children's self-esteem. Both paternal overprotection and maternal severe punishment and denial would reduce the self-esteem level of college students. Further research found that the rejection from their mothers has a more significant impact than their fathers' on children's self-esteem level [16].

Regarding gender differences, girls' self-esteem decreased more significantly when treated with harmful parenting methods [17]. The level of self-esteem is also different in their children's behavior and psychological performance. Research has found that parents' emotional warmth and understanding can reduce the occurrence of children's psychological abnormalities. In contrast, parents' severe punishment, refusal to deny, and mothers' excessive interference and excessive protection tend to cause children to have psychological behavior problems [18].

In terms of mechanism, the effect of paternal parenting style on self-esteem is achieved through the mediation variable of personality, which has a full mediation effect between parenting style and self-esteem [19]. Psychological resilience has a full mediation effect between parental support and self-esteem, but partly between parent-child conflict and self-esteem [20]. A negative parenting style may negatively affect the children's personality growth, reducing their adaptability and self-protection function. The formation of this bad personality will cause their low self-esteem level.

3.2. Parental Relationship

Parents are the enlightenment of individual education and play a decisive role in many aspects of their children. Studies at home and abroad show that college students who grow up in a good, supportive and sympathetic family atmosphere will have better personality development with high self-esteem. In contrast, those from autocratic and conflicting families will have low self-esteem. This is mainly because children from families with happy marriages feel a more harmonious family atmosphere and have more opportunities for contact and communication, which is easy for children to form a more positive understanding of the family and themselves.

On the contrary, children may blame the parental conflict themselves in a family environment of parental conflict. College students will generally have tremendous pressure and low self-esteem due to the lack of care.

4. Directions for Future Research

Existing studies mostly discuss the one-way effect of family factors (such as parental rearing patterns) on children, but do not place them in the family system to investigate the interaction between various subsystems [12]. Therefore, a more in-depth research is still needed in relevant research fields to pay attention to the interaction between systems.

Because of the above contents, some suggestions are put forward. First, in family education, parents should strive to establish close family relations with their children, create a relaxed and warm environment for them, and strive to promote effective communication and mutual acceptance between the whole family system. Second, pay attention to their emotional needs and treat them with a democratic and respectful attitude, understand them and give them full love and care. Finally, parents should often reflect on themselves, timely adjust and change the bad rearing style, to facilitate the all-

around and healthy development of College Students' personalities, thus improving their overall level of self-esteem.

5. Conclusion

On the whole, relevant studies show that family background has a very important impact on College Students' self-esteem. The higher the intimacy and adaptability in family function, the higher the self-esteem level of children in the family. In addition, the level of parents' education has a great impact on students' self-esteem. Family economic income and other socio-economic status factors also have a certain impact on College Students' self-esteem and psychological adaptation. In family relations, parental rearing style is an important indicator of the parent-child relationship. Parental conflict is used as an index to measure the impact of the parental relationship on College Students' self-esteem. Relevant studies show that parental marital conflict can predict the level of children's self-esteem, and there is a significant negative correlation between them.

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