

A STUDY OF FAMILY PARENTING STYLES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN X PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN SHANDONG PROVINCE, CHINA

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the current situation of the family parenting styles of university students at X private universities in Shandong Province and whether there are differences in the family parenting styles of university students under different background variables. This study used the Family Parenting Styles Scale. There are 357 students from X private universities in Shandong Province. The study was conducted with the students at X private universities. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA and regression analysis were applied in the process, and the results showed that: 1) The overall mean score of family parenting styles of university students in X private universities in Shandong Province was 3.67. Students at X private universities in Shandong Province showed a high understanding of family parenting styles in the research. 2) Family parenting styles of students of different genders showed significant differences in autocracy ($t=5.234, p<0.001$), neglect ($t=4.501, p<0.001$), spoiling ($t=5.343, p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($t=6.775, p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($t=6.302, p<0.001$). Family parenting styles of students who are only children or not are significantly different in autocracy ($t=6.772, p<0.001$), neglect ($t = 6.874, p<0.001$), spoiling ($t = 9.445, p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($t = 11.456, p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($t = 6.990, p<0.001$). There is a substantial difference in autocracy ($F= 26.886, p<0.001$), neglect ($F=18.889, p<0.001$), spoiled ($F=12.557, p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($F=22.678, p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($F=23.556, p<0.001$) by parents with different education level. Recommendations based on the study results, universities should: 1) conduct personalized psychological counseling and 2) tutoring, strengthen emotional support and family communication, and 3) promote students' autonomy and self-confidence.

Keywords: University Students, Family Parenting Styles, Shandong Province

Introduction

In recent years, China's higher education has entered a stage of popularization and development,

with more youth entering campuses reshaping the structure and characteristics of the student body, impacting the original academic standards, teaching, and talent cultivation methods, and so on. The mental health level of university students is on a downward trend, and psychological problems have gradually come to the forefront. An unhealthy psychological level has become an important factor in destroying social harmony and has become the focus of social concern. Family parenting styles are an important factor affecting individual socialization and one of the key factors shaping individual character and behavior.

Scholars point out that in the stage of university students, individuals are in the important period of self-knowledge, self-exploration, and life planning, and the influence of family parenting styles on university students is more significant. As the basic unit in the process of socialization, family plays an irreplaceable role, and research shows that inappropriate family parenting styles are important reasons for the formation of some undesirable personality traits in their children, which may also lead to their children suffering from mental illness (Harkness, 2012). Family parenting styles are concerned with the influence of the family environment on individual personality and behavior, so it is important to understand the influencing factors of family parenting styles and to understand and categorize the parenting styles of university students in advance for their future development. This study takes X, a private university in Shandong Province, as the research object to investigate and study the family parenting styles of students. This study is important for how to promote individual mental health, develop good character and behavior, and improve the quality of education.

With the development of society and the improvement of education, the influence of parents' education level on their children's education is getting more and more attention. It has been found that parents' education level has a significant impact on children's educational expectations, educational style, and educational environment (Zhao, 2021). The relationship between university students' parenting styles and self-harmony. Self-harmony refers to the consistency and integration of an individual's cognitive and emotional experiences in the inner world. Studies have found that parenting styles have a significant impact on university students' self-esteem (Zhao, 2017). Self-esteem is an individual's evaluation and cognition of his or her value, which plays an important role in an individual's psychological health and social adaptation. Scholarly studies have explored the correlation between university students' self-harmony and family parenting styles. Self-harmony refers to the degree of integration of individuals in self-perception, self-evaluation, and self-regulation. Based on the foregoing, this study focuses on the study of the relationship between family parenting styles of university students in an X-school in Shandong Province, and the following questions are formulated as the basis for the subsequent study:

- (1) What is the current situation of university students' family parenting styles?
- (2) Are there differences in the family parenting styles of university students in an X university

in Shandong Province under different background variables?

Research Objectives

By organizing the literature university students' family parenting styles differ on demographic variables such as gender, whether they are only children, and parental education. The related research is insufficient and lacks quantitative analysis. Therefore, this paper will take university students as the research object, investigate the current situation of family parenting styles of university students in X university in Shandong province by quantitative method, using questionnaire method, and understand the level of differences in different demographic background variables, and put forward countermeasures for the differences, to improve the psychological quality and comprehensive ability of the university students, and to promote their all-round development and social adaptability. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- (1) To explore the current situation of family parenting styles of university students.
- (2) To analyze whether there are differences in family parenting styles of university students in X universities in Shandong Province under different background variables.

Literature Review

Research on Family Parenting Styles

Family parenting styles are defined as educational activities that take place in family life that are centered on the parent-child relationship and aimed at developing people who need society. The effectiveness of family parenting styles depends not only on the educators, i.e. parents' educational motives and educational contents, but more importantly on the parenting styles; good parenting styles are conducive to children's socialization. Family parenting styles, also known as parenting styles, were used by Baumrind in the 1960s to explain children's social adjustment. In the late 1980s, Baumrind used the concept to explain children's social adjustment, and in the late 1980s, he applied it to the development of adolescents. Scholars share the same view of family parenting styles but with a different emphasis. Family parenting styles are the sum of the attitudes that parents transmit to their children during the parenting process, as well as the emotional climate that is transmitted through parental behavior in the process and are highly stable. Scholars also believe that family parenting styles are the specific ways and methods used by parents in the process of educating their children. It is a generalized embodiment of the characteristics of parents' education and upbringing of their children. Family parenting styles reflect both the parenting behavior and parenting views, as well as the parents' feelings towards their children, and are an important part of the child's developmental environment. Family parenting styles refer to a set of behavioral patterns centered on the parent-child relationship and the inherent behavioral tendencies of parents in the process of raising and educating their children. It is

determined by the parenting attitudes of the parents and is jointly influenced by their personalities, parenting concepts, and their behavioral habits.

Related Theoretical Research on Family Parenting Styles

Since the 1980s, there has been new progress in the study of parenting styles, and scholars have begun to explore the deep-rooted causes that affect parenting styles. Social ecologists, in their studies of the family environment, distinguish two levels of the external environment of the family: the intermediate system and the external system. Psychologists have conducted large-scale studies of family parenting styles since the 1840s. The first psychologists in the United States (Symonds, 1949) recognized that the two basic dimensions of dominance and submission, and acceptance and rejection, could be used to argue for the effects of family parenting styles on children. As a result, some psychologists started to study the dimensions of family parenting styles, for example, Sears & Feldman (1958) believed that family parenting styles could be studied according to the dimensions of warmth and indifference, tolerance and strictness; Baldwin (1963) believed that family parenting styles could be divided into the basic dimensions of emotional warmth and hostility, and attachment and interference. Scholars have comprehensively explored the factors influencing family parenting styles from factors outside the family system, such as socio-cultural background, social class, socio-economic status, social support, etc. on the one hand, and some factors inside the family system, such as the behavioral characteristics of the parents and children, and the emotional relationship between parents and children on the other hand (Harkness, 2012). Research on parenting styles began in the late 1980s, and initially, the studies were fragmented, mostly defining parenting styles from a purely typological perspective. After the 1990s, it started with systemic theory, emphasizing different perspectives and aspects to grasp the complex of parenting styles.

Research Development of Family Parenting Styles

Early research on family parenting styles, the unidirectional view of parental influence on children permeated the research thinking of scholars in the early studies of children's socialization, who endeavored to seek parental determination of children's parenting dimensions or patterns (Feiyan Duan & Hui Li, 2012). Western psychologists have adopted different research orientations when studying the impact of family parenting styles on children's socialization. One orientation is to look at the dimensions of parenting behaviors and explore the effects of a particular behavioral dimension or specific parenting methods under the behavioral dimension on children's development. Another orientation is to typify and model family parenting styles. The most representative of these is the study of the famous American psychologist Baumrind, who rated parenting behavior from four dimensions: control, requirements of maturity, clarity of parent-child interactions, and parenting, and classified parenting styles as authoritative, tolerant, and autocracy.

Researchers during this period have explored the influences on family parenting styles and

parenting behaviors in a more comprehensive way, both from a broader level outside the family system, such as socio-cultural background, social class, socio-economic status, and the stress and social support experienced by parents, and from some factors within the family system, starting with children's characteristics. For example, Baston's study found significant differences in mothers' responses to children's gazing at others in three countries: The United States, France, and Japan. In Japan, which has a collective value orientation, mothers encouraged and guided their children's gaze at others, while in the United States and France, which have an individual value orientation, mothers did not respond significantly to their children's gaze at others.

Summary of the Reviewed Literature

The literature focuses on the influences of family parenting styles and how they affect the healthy development of individuals. Family parenting styles play a crucial role in an individual's mental health and behavioral development. Existing studies have shown that family parenting styles not only directly affect the mental health of university students, but also have a profound impact on their future development. The purpose of this paper is to explore the various influencing factors of family parenting styles and their role in the healthy development of individuals. Family parenting styles are influenced by factors, including students' gender, whether they are only children or not, and their parents' education level, etc.

These factors work together to determine the way parents choose to raise and educate their children. The study found that students' gender has a significant impact on family parenting styles. Traditionally, parents may adopt different parenting styles for boys and girls, e.g. boys may be encouraged to be independent and strong, while girls may be required to be gentle and submissive; whether or not they are an only child is also an important factor that affects family parenting styles. Only children usually enjoy more family resources and attention, and their parents have higher expectations of them. Parents with higher education pay more attention to communication with their children and adopt a democratic approach to education, encouraging independent thinking and independent decision-making, whereas parents with lower education may tend to adopt an authoritative approach to education, emphasizing obedience and discipline, whereas parents with lower education may tend to adopt an authoritative approach to education, emphasizing obedience and discipline. and emphasize obedience and discipline.

To sum up, family parenting styles play a crucial role in the healthy development of individuals, and their influencing factors are complex. Therefore, parents should attach great importance to their parenting styles of raising and educating their children, and help their children form good behavioral habits by improving the family environment and parent-child relationship, to promote their healthy growth and comprehensive development.

Methodology

This study used the literature method, questionnaire survey method, and statistical analysis method. The survey respondents of this study are X private university students in Shandong Province, China, which is the parent group, the number of X university students is 29,980, according to Morgan's table calculation, the required sample size is 400, the sample size collection across the various majors and grades of a university school, the sample selection is representative and universal.

This study adopts the convenience sampling method, by contacting the instructors of each major category to participate in the survey of Shandong Province X private university students issued questionnaires, and in the specified time to recover the questionnaires and collation, 400 questionnaires were issued, collated, and sifted out of the questionnaire to determine the number of valid questionnaires 357, the effective recovery rate of 89.25%, to carry out the subsequent statistical analysis. The instrument used in this study to measure family parenting styles among university students in X private universities in Shandong Province was derived from the EMBU (Egna Minnen av Barndoms Uppdostran), a questionnaire developed in 1980 by the Swedish psychiatrist Perris (1980) and others to evaluate parenting attitudes and behaviors. A 5-point scale is used, which is never, occasionally, sometimes, often, and always. The EMBU scale has good reliability, with an average internal consistency coefficient of 0.75, an average split-half reliability of 0.76, and a retest reliability of 0.70. Family parenting styles are divided into five dimensions, namely, autocracy, neglectful, spoiled, trust and encouragement, and emotional warmth, with a total of 5 dimensions, namely, autocracy, neglectful, spoiled, encouraging, and emotional warmth, with a total of 5 dimensions and a total of 21 question items.

Results

Demographic Analysis of Questionnaire Participants

This study takes X private university students in Shandong Province as the research object. Through the questionnaire survey, a total of 357 valid questionnaires were collected. The specific distribution of the sample in terms of demographic background such as gender, parental education whether only child, etc. The statistics show that 175 male students, accounted for 49.02% of the sample size, and 182 female students, accounted for 50.98% of the sample size. This is in line with the actual situation, indicating that the proportion of female and male students in the survey sample is balanced. In terms of whether they are all children, 199 students are only children, accounting for 55.74% of the sample size; 158 students are not only one child, accounting for 44.26% of the sample size. In terms of parents' education, there were 233 people with less than a bachelor's degree, accounting for 65.27% of the sample; 22 people with a master's degree or higher, accounting for 6.16% of the sample; and 102 people with a bachelor's degree, accounting for 28.57% of the sample. The distribution of education

shows that parents' education varies.

Current status of family parenting styles of university students

The current status of family parenting styles of university students in X private universities in Shandong Province was investigated using descriptive statistical analysis. According to the analysis results in Table 1, the overall average score of family parenting styles of university students in X private university in Shandong Province is 3.67. Among them, the average score of the emotional warmth dimension is the highest, 3.81; the average score of the autocracy dimension is the lowest, 3.56. The survey results show that the family parenting styles of university students in X private university in Shandong Province scored high in emotional warmth trust and encouragement, but still need to be strengthened in autocracy and spoiling, as Table 1 shows.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Family Parenting Styles

Dimension	M	SD	Interpretation
Autocracy	3.56	1.01	High
Neglect	3.66	0.99	High
Spoiling	3.56	0.91	High
Trust and encouragement	3.76	0.88	High
Emotional warmth	3.81	0.86	High

Independent samples t-test for family parenting styles for students of different genders

Table 2: Gender-specific Effects on Family Parenting Styles

Dimension	Gender	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Autocracy	Male	3.636	1.114	5.234	<0.001
	Female	3.657	1.028		
Neglect	Male	3.882	0.818	4.501	<0.001
	Female	3.756	0.978		
Spoiling	Male	3.946	0.823	5.343	<0.001
	Female	3.879	0.799		
Trust and encouragement	Male	3.910	0.567	6.775	<0.001
	Female	3.766	0.875		
Emotional warmth	Male	3.687	0.891	6.302	<0.001
	Female	3.665	0.885		

The results of the independent samples *t*-test under the gender variable are shown in Table 2. From the data, family parenting styles of university students of different genders in autocracy ($t=5.234$, $p<0.001$), neglect ($t=4.501$, $p<0.001$), spoiling ($t=5.343$, $p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($t=6.775$, $p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($t=6.302$, $p<0.001$) have significant differences.

Independent samples t-test for family parenting styles for students who are only children or not

The independent samples *t*-test was used to analyze the differences in family parenting styles of university students by only-child status as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Impact of Being an Only Child on Family Parenting Styles

Dimension	Only Child or Not	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Autocracy	Yes	3.551	1.022	6.772	<0.001
	No	3.542	1.013		
Neglect	Yes	3.556	0.919	6.874	<0.001
	No	3.776	0.905		
Spoiling	Yes	3.871	0.933	9.445	<0.001
	No	3.756	0.802		
Trust and encouragement	Yes	3.345	0.801	11.456	<0.001
	No	3.543	0.802		
Emotional warmth	Yes	3.557	0.805	6.990	<0.001
	No	3.538	0.863		

Table 4: The Impact of Different Parental Education on Family Parenting Styles

Dimension	Education	M	SD	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Autocracy	Below Bachelor's Degree	3.663	1.032	26.886	<0.001
	Bachelor's Degree	3.324	1.002		
	Master's degree and above	3.254	1.011		
Neglect	Below Bachelor's Degree	3.553	0.899	18.889	<0.001
	Bachelor's Degree	3.776	0.879		
	Master's degree and above	3.443	0.890		
Spoiling	Below Bachelor's Degree	3.669	0.911	12.557	<0.001
	Bachelor's Degree	3.533	0.898		
	Master's degree and above	3.547	0.876		
Trust and encouragement	Below Bachelor's Degree	3.456	0.877	22.678	<0.001
	Bachelor's Degree	3.577	0.899		
	Master's degree and above	3.633	0.845		
Emotional warmth	Below Bachelor's Degree	3.642	0.906	23.556	<0.001
	Bachelor's Degree	3.566	0.998		
	Master's degree and above	3.623	0.887		

The results of the one-way ANOVA analysis in a demographic context are shown in Table 4. It can be seen from the data that there is a significant difference in family parenting styles among parents with different education level ($p < 0.001$). There is a substantial difference in family parenting styles among parents with different education levels. Specific analyses showed that: there were significant differences between parents with education level on autocracy ($F = 26.886$, $p < 0.001$), neglect ($F = 18.889$, $p < 0.001$), spoiling ($F = 12.557$, $p < 0.001$), trust and encouragement ($F = 22.678$, $p < 0.001$), and emotional warmth ($F = 23.556$, $p < 0.001$). Through LSD analysis, it can be found that under different levels of parental education, it shows that master's degree and above have a greater influence on family parenting styles of university students than families with undergraduate education. Also, a master's degree and above is higher than families with undergraduate education levels. The influence of family parenting styles of parents with a bachelor's level of education is greater than that of those with less than a bachelor's degree. Therefore, the specific comparative differences can be regarded as master's and above > bachelor's degree > Below Bachelor's degree.

Discussion

Overall analysis of family parenting styles of university students

According to the results of this study, university students' family parenting styles have the highest scores for emotional warmth and lower scores for autocracy and spoiling. Each temperature in descending order is emotional warmth, trust encouragement, neglect, autocracy, and spoiling. Although emotional warmth is higher in the family parenting styles of university students in X private universities in Shandong Province, neglect, autocracy, and spoiling are also present consistent with the scholars' findings.

The highest score of emotional warmth indicates that most students feel support and care from their families. Such a family atmosphere contributes to a child's mental health and self-esteem and helps students perform better in their academic and personal lives. Trust and encouragement came second, indicating that parents provide enough support and encouragement while giving their children freedom and independence. This type of parenting helps to develop autonomy and self-confidence in children. Although neglect scored low, it still exists. This means that some families may not pay enough attention to their children in certain areas and may neglect their children's emotional needs or lack care at certain critical times. This situation may hurt a child's emotional development and mental health.

Differences in family parenting styles of university students across contexts

1) Discussion of differences in *t*-test with gender as a background variable

In the *t*-test with gender as a contextual variable, there is a significant difference in family parenting styles between students of different genders, indicating that male and female students receive different parenting styles in their families. This is in general agreement with the findings of Chen (2017), Chen (2020), Smith (2020) et al. This is because the influence of culture and traditional beliefs can show differences. In some traditional cultures, gender role expectations may lead parents to adopt different parenting styles for boys and girls.

2) Discussion of *t*-test differences in the contextual variable of whether or not they are only children

In the *t*-test with whether or not an only child is the background variable, there is a significant difference in family parenting styles between only children and non-only children. This is generally consistent with the findings of Wang (2019), Zhao (2021), Wang (2019), Wang (2018) and others. The impact of family structure on family parenting styles can be seen by analyzing the significant differences in family parenting styles between only children and non-only children. Only children may score higher in emotional warmth, trust encouragement, and coddling due to enjoying more family resources and attention, non-only children may score lower in these areas due to the need to share resources with their siblings but may perform better in family harmony and cooperation. These differences provide important references for understanding and optimizing family parenting styles in different family

contexts.

(3) Discussion of Differences in ANOVA with Parents' Educational Level as Background Variable

In a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with parental education as the background variable, the study found significant differences in family parenting styles among students with different parental education. This is in general agreement with the findings of Zhang (2021), Wang (2019), Zhao (2017) et al. Highly educated parents usually scored higher in emotional warmth trust and encouragement because they possessed strong emotional expression and psychological qualities and were better able to understand and satisfy their children's emotional needs, as well as value their children's autonomy and independence and support their children's development through encouragement and trust.

Conclusions

The study found that:

1) the overall mean score of family parenting styles of university students in X private universities in Shandong Province was 3.67. Students at X private universities in Shandong Province showed a high understanding of family parenting styles.

2) There were significant differences in family parenting styles among university students of different genders in autocracy ($t=5.234, p<0.001$), neglect ($t=4.501, p<0.001$), spoiling ($t=5.343, p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($t=6.775, p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($t=6.302, p<0.001$). There is a significant difference between the family parenting styles of university students who are only child or not, in terms of autocracy ($t=6.772, p<0.001$), neglect ($t=6.874, p<0.001$), spoiling ($t=9.445, p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($t=11.456, p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($t=6.990, p<0.001$). Significant differences existed. There is a substantial difference between parents with different education level on autocracy ($F=26.886, p<0.001$), neglect ($F=18.889, p<0.001$), spoiling ($F=12.557, p<0.001$), trust and encouragement ($F=22.678, p<0.001$), and emotional warmth ($F=23.556, p<0.001$).

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