

The relationship between the peer relationship quality, social anxiety level, and parenting styles in adolescents

Zifei Wu^{1,a,#}, Mingyang Sun^{1,b,#}, Yilin Wang^{1,c,#}

¹21st Century International School, Beijing, China

^a3408334706@qq.com, ^bsmv070311@163.com, ^cWyl17611085511@163.com

[#]Co-first author

Abstract: This study focuses on the effects of different partner quality, parent-child relationship and parenting styles on adolescents' mental health. A total of 153 subjects from the ninth to eleventh grades of an international school in Beijing were selected to complete the questionnaire, and the data obtained were statistically analyzed using spss. The results of the study showed that parent-child relationship has an important effect on adolescents, and parenting style is more important in some qualities, so parents should get along with their children reasonably.

Keywords: friend-partner relationship, social anxiety, parent-child relationship and parenting style

1. Introduction

During the teenage years, adolescents are less reliant on their parents for support and begin to turn to their peer group for support [1]. As a result, peer relationship is a considerable portion of adolescent social relationships. Indeed, it has been proposed that the key social task of adolescence, compared with other stages of development, is to fully integrate with a larger group of peers. Because the peer relationship occupies a large proportion in the peer relationship, adolescents' peer relationship has a particularly significant impact on their mental health development, academic development and delinquent conduct. [2] For example, adolescents with friends who smoke are likely to smoke themselves or to take up smoking over time. [3] Furthermore, according to biological human development theory, the family circumstance is the primary environment affecting the growth and development of adolescents, and it will play a part in the forming process of peer relationship of adolescents. Therefore, our study mainly examines how the family environment affects the development of adolescent peer relationships.

2. Examination of variables in peer relationship

Adolescents are prone to social anxiety when building peer relationships, and social anxiety will further affect the possibility of building peer relationships. [4] Socially anxious adolescents using self-protective strategies frequently may evoke irritation in their peers leading to a decrease in peer acceptance, an increase in peer victimization, as well as making it more difficult to develop and maintain intimacy in close relationships. [5] Moreover, the quality of peer relationship is another important representative index of peer relationship. High quality of peer relationship is beneficial to facilitate adolescents to establish their own personalities and improve personal skills because peer influence is a tool for maintaining and increasing resemblances between friends and among affiliates. For example, a compatible partner, who also called rewarding partner can facilitate people to share positive experiences, make friends reward each other with laughter, praise, and affection. [6]

In a consequence, we mainly investigate adolescents' peer relationships by examining their social anxiety and peer relationship quality.

3. Family environment

Family parent-child relationship and parenting style are crucial factors affecting the social development of adolescents in the family environment. For one thing, in many situations, adoption of a flexible and warm authoritative parenting style is most beneficial for a child's social, intellectual, moral

and emotional growth. [7] In addition, Freud's emphasis on the importance of early parent-child relationships and his conclusion that children's experiences in early life can have lasting influences on later life have been especially influential[8]. In a nutshell, we mainly examined the influence of parent-child relationship and parenting style on adolescent friend-partner relationship.

4. Examining the social significance of family relationships (parent-child relationships and parenting styles) on adolescent companionship

The significance of the study is that our study provides evidence for the connection between peer relationship and parent-child relationship and parenting styles. Therefore, the results could provide guidance and advice to parents to facilitate in improving adolescent peer relationship, promote parents' understanding and practice of suitable parenting style, and take the initiative to help teenagers establish a benign relationship with friends.

Table 1: The relationship between grade and gender and social anxiety and peer relationship quality

		Social anxiety	Peer relationship quality
Grade M(SD)	Grade 9	1.75(0.52)	2.89(0.68)
	Grade 10	1.97(0.52)	2.81(0.55)
	Grade 11	1.89(0.42)	2.89(0.36)
F		2.286	0.287
p		0.106	0.751
Partial η^2		0.039	0.005
Gender M(SD)	Male	1.74(0.46)	2.78(0.65)
	Female	1.95(0.52)	2.89(0.49)
t		-1.155	0.25
p		-2.625	0.01**
Cohen's d		0.202	0.072

From Table 1, it can be seen that using independent t-test to examine whether boys and girls are differentiated in their behavior of Social anxiety and Peer relationship quality. Results revealed that social anxiety is significantly differentiated by gender, $t=-1.155$, $p=-2.625$, $\text{Cohen's } d=0.202$. Specifically, boy's ($M=1.74$; $SD=0.46$) social anxiety is significantly lower than girls ($M=1.95$, $SD=0.52$). However, Peer relationship quality is not significant differentiated by gender. Besides, we also used one-way ANOVA to examine the differences between grades in social anxiety and friendship quality. However, both Social anxiety and Peer relationship quality are not significantly differentiated among different grades (all $p>0.01$).

Table 2: The relationship between parental status and social anxiety and peer relationship quality

	Social anxiety	Peer relationship quality
Mother's education level	0.052	0.228**
Father's education level	0.034	0.164*
Annual family income	-0.09	0.065
Parents' academic expectations	0.016	0.256**
Parent-child relationship	-0.275**	0.434**
Authoritarian	0.282**	0.087
Authoritative	-0.239**	0.376**
Note: * $p<0.05$ ** $p<0.01$		

From Table 2, it can be seen that using correlation analysis to study the correlation between Social anxiety, Friendship quality, and Mother's education level, Father's education level, the Annual family income, Parents' academic expectations, Parent-child relationship, Authoritarianism, and Authority. The Pearson correlation coefficient is used to represent the strength of the correlation.

For Social anxiety, the results revealed that Parent-child relationship, Authoritarian and Authoritative have significant correlations with teenager's Social anxiety. Specifically, Parent-child

relationship is negatively correlated with social anxiety($r = -0.275$, $p < 0.05$), while Authoritarian and Authoritative are positively correlated with teenager's Social anxiety. However, we did not observed significant relationships between parents' education level, annual family income and education expectation with social anxiety(all $ps > 0.1$).

For the quality of peer relationship, the result revealed that Mother's education level, Parents' academic expectations and Parent-child relationship, Authoritative(Mother's education level: $r = 0.288$, $p < 0.05$; Parents' academic expectations: $r = 0.256$, $p < 0.05$; Parent-child relationship: $r = 0.434$, $p < 0.05$; Authoritative: $r = 0.376$, $p < 0.05$) all have significant correlations with adolescent's quality of peer relationship. While Father's education level has a relatively slight correlations with adolescent's quality of peer relationship(Father's education level: $r = 0.164$, $p < 0.01$). Specifically, Mother's education level, Father's education level, Parents' academic expectations, Parent-child relationship, Authoritarian and Authoritative are positively related with the quality of peer relationship(Mother's education level: $r = 0.288$, $p < 0.05$; Father's education level: $r = 0.164$, $p < 0.01$; Parents' academic expectations: $r = 0.256$, $p < 0.05$; Parent-child relationship: $r = 0.434$, $p < 0.05$; Authoritative: $r = 0.376$, $p < 0.05$) In addition, we did not found any relation between Annual family income and Authoritarian to do with the quality of peer relationship(for those two variables, $ps > 0.01$).

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of family factors, especially family condition and parent-child relationship on adolescents' peer relationship quality and social anxiety. The study results show that certain factors in the family are important factors affecting adolescents' peer relationship quality and social anxiety. In addition, we have also found the correlation between genders and grades in terms of peer relationship quality and social anxiety.

According to the research results, gender differences greatly affect the performance of adolescents in these two aspects. Girls have significantly higher social anxiety than boys. This may be due to the physiological and social differences between girls and boys.

The first aspect is physiological differences. There are significant differences in hormone levels between women and men, and there is a certain correlation between these differences and social anxiety. The generation of anxiety is related to the secretions in our body. For example, one of the stress hormones, norepinephrine experiments have shown that when faced with stress events, women's norepinephrine secretion is significantly higher than that of men. Excessive norepinephrine secretion leads to a stronger sense of alertness and tension. Therefore, when boys and girls encounter the same social dilemma, such as sending a message to someone but not receiving a response, girls may be more prone to worry and anxiety due to different levels of norepinephrine secretion. Social background also has a certain impact on individuals' social anxiety. In society, girls are generally considered more introverted and quiet. This may lead to girls being less daring to communicate with strangers they want to meet in school, leading to some social anxiety.

In this study, we also studied the relationship between adolescent social anxiety, peer relationship quality with family factors. The results show that parent-child relationship, authoritative and authoritarian of parents have a strong correlation with adolescents' social anxiety. Among them, the higher the parent-child relationship and authoritarian level, the less social anxiety the adolescents will have. This may be because when children with better parent-child relationship encounter social problems, they tend to turn to their parents more often than those individuals with less good parent-child relationships. [9] And experienced parents will give them effective guidance and advice, so that children can be more successful socially. Children who grow up in families with good parent-child relationships also tend to be more outgoing. They often have more courage and stress tolerance, therefore, they can communicate with strangers less effortlessly and have a more positive attitude to dealing with social setbacks.

Similarly, children raised by more authoritative parents are less likely to have social anxiety. Authoritative includes four secondary dimensions: warmth, reason, democracy and agreeableness. These four dimensions have a close negative correlation with adolescents' social anxiety. When there is warmth in the family, adolescents are more confident. When parents teach their children about life in a humane way, adolescents have more strategies for interacting with people. When parents respect adolescents' opinions, adolescents will become more assertive socially. When parents are not so easy to lose their temper with their children, adolescents can have a good temper in the process of interacting with people.

However, we found that the more authoritarian the parent, the more likely the teen was to have social anxiety. Authoritarian includes four secondary dimensions: command, corporal punishment,

unreasonable and verbal attack. The less their parents care for them and treat them inhumanely, the less social experience they gain from their parents and the more they lose confidence in interacting with others.

Based on the results of this study, we call on parents to establish a harmonious family relationship with teenagers, give positive recognition and praise to teenagers, and teach them the truth of life by softly speaking, rather than talking about corporal punishment. We want every teenager to get rid of social anxiety and be an optimistic and positive person.

We studied the effects of various family factors on the quality of adolescent friendships, some of which had a significant impact on the quality of adolescent friendships, namely parents' educational level, parents' academic expectations, and parent-child relationship. The results showed that these factors were positively correlated with the quality of friendship relationships.

The higher the educational level of parents, the higher the quality of children's friendship. Parents with a high level of education will have more insight and learning experience, so they can give their children more reasonable arrangements instead of blindly attending classes. As a result, children will have more flexible routines and the quality of friendships will be higher. In addition, knowledgeable parents have more ways to develop their children's social skills.

The higher the parents' academic expectations for their children, the better the quality of the child's friendship relationship. When parents have high expectations for their children, parents tend to provide better learning environments and conditions for their children. A better learning and academic environment means more harmonious relationships between students and greater peer recognition.

The closer the relationship between parents and children, the better the quality of the child's friendship relationship. Increased parental support and intimacy for adolescent children inhibits hostile behavior, and parental behavior predicts similar behavior toward close friends years later. This means that families with better parent-child relationships can improve the quality of their children's friendships. Conversely, parents offering less support increases the child's hostile behavior and decreases the quality of the child's friendship.

Based on the above research results, we call on parents to set a more reasonable time schedule for their children, so that children can use their time flexibly to socialize to increase the quality of friendship. In addition, parents can do their best to provide their children with a better learning and living environment, so that children can have a better social circle. At the same time, parents also need to give their children more companionship and pay attention to their attitude and behavior towards their children, because this will have a crucial impact on their children's behavior and personality.

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