

The Impacts of Parenting Style and Education Level of Parents on Learning Motivation

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Abstract: Learning motivation is a crucial factor that determines child adjustment and ultimately alters their behavior and mental health. To study different variables that influences learning motivation the most, this research focuses on parenting style and parents' education level to expand the object of study. The research developed thorough and complete analysis on previous studies which used different methodologies and perspectives to interpret their data. The paper concludes that the majority of previous studies agree that education level and parenting style have strong impacts on learning motivation of children, despite the fact that their causal relationship and direct influence still remained ambiguous. Findings prove that children tend to have higher learning motivation with parents who undertook higher education level, while authoritative parenting among all parenting styles promotes learning motivation the most. The results underlying various theoretical and practical implications from those studies reveal the relationship between learning motivation and parenting styles and education level. Suggestions and future research directions are also discussed. It is not yet clear which one of the conditions gives the strongest impression to learning motivation for the researchers, and therefore more attention are integrant for the good of both students and parents in terms of motivation of learning.

Keywords: parenting style, education level, learning motivation

1. Introduction

Learning motivation is a process that can be observed from many characteristics including effort, strength, and endurance though it usually works inside of your body. It is what starts your behavior and controls your behavior, more importantly, it stops and mediates it [1]. Weiner understands that motivation is the sort of metaphor that people are scientists who attempt to comprehend themselves and the surrounding environment based on this knowledge. The further behavior reaction is the consequence or outcome of the process. The cause, however, is the soul of motivation. The cause can be numerous variables, such as lack of effort, lack of ability, or bad luck given failure [1]. In this sense, the present study aims to investigate how learning motivation is influenced by the family environment including parenting styles and the education level of parents.

There are three kinds of parenting styles. The first one is authoritarian, which are parents that focus on obedience and punishment. Authoritarian parents are extremely strict. Children raised under authoritarian parents usually tend to be more aggressive and harder to make their own decisions

because they are used to listening to orders. The second one is authoritative parents. Authoritative parents are more generous who focus on relationships and enforcing rules. They are super supportive to children, and they set clear lines of rules by reasoning. The third one is permissive parents. Different from the other two parenting styles, permissive parents set no rules and allow children to do whatever they want, and thus children are grown to lack self-regulation.

The way this paper distinguishes the education level of parents will be based on a survey or inquiry completed by themselves. They will be generated into three categories, master or higher level of graduation, college level of graduation and below college level of graduation.

2. Relations Between Parents' Education Level and Learning Motivation

To further explore the extent of influence that the education level of parents has on learning motivation, a few studies that analyze the question from different angles can bring us new insights and thinking directions. For example, in the paper the authors explain how achievement motivation is being altered by the education level of parents. The authors first defined achievement motivation by "a inclination and self-governing for people to strive for success and prosperity", which includes competition for the greatest criterion [2]. The authors recruited two hundred male and female adolescents aged sixteen to nineteen years old from different high schools in the city. They are later selected in four groups based on their parents' education level, including post graduation, graduation, intermediate and high school. The authors decide to use the Deo-Mohan achievement motivation scale to test adolescents for their learning motivation and they use the test-retest method to ensure reliability [2].

The results show a clear positive correlation between either maternal education or paternal education and achievement motivation of adolescents. Compared with previous studies, there were a majority of studies indicating the positive relationship between parental education and achievement motivation; however, there were also some other studies reporting parental education is less effective on the motivation of adolescents than other factors like parent-child relationship, support, or involvement. As a result, while earlier studies aimed to examine both parents' influence together, Acharya and Joshi attempt to discover the influence separately on different areas, like academics, general interest, dramatics and sports.

In general, the experiment design is complete and thorough but a few more details can be better improved. For the sample size, it includes two hundred adolescents aged sixteen to nineteen years old high school students and it is rather a small sample size and volunteers can also be biased because volunteers may have strong inclination of either positive or negative motivation. There are more than one possible explanation for the result, including both genetic and environmental factors. For instance, higher education level is always closely related to higher intelligence, and thus when higher intelligence passes on to the next generation they can naturally inherit higher intelligence and achievement motivation. Also, stepping on to the environmental factors, well-educated parents know better how to teach and raise their kids. They can build a family with more warmth and love that can help their kids become more competitive in school performance. Therefore, the experiment cannot make a solid conclusion on what gives rise to the correlation between education level of parents and motivation in achievement.

In another article, the authors convene about two thousand middle-schoolers in grades eight from participate in the study. The authors ask students to do a paper pencil test and each test includes two parts, a reading test and a questionnaire. The authors use a splitting technique that half of the participants were first assigned to the reading test, and adversely the other half of students did another questionnaire first and come back to the reading test [3]. The participants were chosen to these two groups disorderly and their answers are analyzed by different techniques to reduce bias. Fortunately, the result shows that both the education level of parents and family socio-economic status have a

positive relationship with learning motivation. In contrast with previous studies on family socio-economic status (SES) and academic achievement which did not agree to each other, the authors made progressive development that they “discovered that the direct effect of SES, in contrast to indirect effect, took a larger percent of the total effect on reading ability and it can be clearly indicated that SES somehow took a influence on reading ability” [3].

Different from the first paper, the sample size in this experiment is more concise and larger enough to generate a convincing conclusion. Nevertheless, the experiment focuses on too many independent variables that need to be controlled and thus it is difficult to look for a direct causal relationship between one independent variable and learning motivation [3]. In other words, to some extent, every independent variable is somehow confounding variables to each other and thus leads to unreliability.

Iwaniec demonstrates the relationship between education level of parents and learning motivation in language. The participants were Polish students who are dedicated to learning English from both schools in rural areas and local city. The samples are selected because previous studies have not yet examined English learners in Poland. The authors recruited five hundred and ninety-nine Polish students who were learning English aged at fifteen and sixteen to participate in the study [4]. All of participants came from ten different schools and sex differences are under control. The data are collected by a self-reported questionnaire, in which students were responsible to answer a two-part test, while the first part includes self-rating motivational questions and the second part includes their background and context. The result shows that personal self-efficacy beliefs are most dominantly influenced by parents’ education level. The findings of the study sort of prove that the importance of family SES should not be ignored. It is the time for people to pay more attention to it even in the context of Poland which is an economically well-developed country. Though the study aimed to investigate language learning motivation, it can still somehow represent learning motivation partially. For limitations, the authors also indicate that a large percentage of participants from the sample are from rural areas, while students from large cities could produce different test results. Moreover, the data of parental education level is collected from questionnaires completed by students and thus there could be a variant coefficient between the actual parental education level and the data collection.

Similarly, in other studies, the authors also talk about various factors of parents including academic level and learning facilities that can affect children’s learning motivation [5]. It is not uncommon that a lot of researchers can see the connection between learning motivation and parents’ education level.

Furthermore, to meticulously distinguish the how parenting style can affect learning motivation, in terms of authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles, some papers have made progressive reports to their results. The authors aim to seek out the connection between parenting style and its influence in college students, including academic performance and intrinsic motivation. Expectedly, the authors found a positive curve of authoritative parenting styles. Participants from the study were mainly undergraduate students majoring in psychology in the United States and they voluntarily signed up to participate online. They were required to fill out forms in a given time, which are a set of questionnaires aiming at demography, parenting style, academic motivation and so on. The authors explained the data by examining regression analysis and pearson correlation to control bivariate variables like gender and age. In fact, the results point out that “both authoritative parenting and academic self-efficacy were excellent directions of academic performance” [6]. Combining the present study with previous ones, the current study makes a strong conclusion that supporting and involving parenting style can offer potent intrinsic motivation with warmth. The current study also unveils a clear connection between authoritative parenting style and academic performance while other two styles like authoritarian and permissive parenting showed no correlations. The study also has its limitations that cannot be ignored. For instance, participants in the study were mainly undergraduates, which means that their parents were well-educated and they had a better chance to

know how to teach their kids. Also, most of the participants were raised in European or American families and it is questionable to generalize the result to other ethnic groups.

Moreover, the authors focus on the relationship between parenting style and learning motivation in two countries, which compares the influence of parenting styles in different regions. Participants in this study were children from elementary schools in the US and Japan. They were asked to complete a paper-pencil based questionnaire including PAQ (Parental Authority Questionnaire) and academic achievement motivation questionnaire. The data were collected and Pearson's r were used to see the difference between countries and influences of parenting styles. The authors predict that authoritarian parenting will be associated with higher academic performance among Japanese children. The results indicate that contemporary children in the US have significantly perform distinctly much better than children in Japan in school, and children in the US associate strongly with authoritarian parenting styles. According to the authors, children in the United States tend to "perceive their parents as more authoritarian" [7]. Though previous researchers found that authoritarian parents always lead to negative academic performance for children, the present study demonstrates that the relationship between authoritarian parenting and academic performance is much more complicated. Children in the US have tremendously higher learning motivation than children in Japan because of cultural differences as well as aspirations coming from parents. There are also other factors including school environment or peer relationship impacting learning motivation of children.

In a longitudinal study that examining how prenatal autonomous and controlled childbearing motivation would affect later parenting styles and child adjustment, the authors comprehend the deep relationship of these within a period of two years reported by 326 Israeli mothers. By consenting to collect their data, participants will get compensations of cash for being part of the study. Mothers in the study reported their childbearing motivations and parenting styles via a specific scale questionnaire. The data is analyzed using IBM SPSS Amos 25.0 and the authors use maximum likelihood method to estimate standard errors and missing data. The results are partially consistent with the first hypothesis that prenatal autonomous childbearing motivation would lead to autonomy-supportive parenting style in later life which further lead to a lower level of behavior problems. In fact, the authors found out that autonomous childbearing motivation successfully lead to autonomy supportive parenting style within a 20 months period. However, there is no evidence of relations between autonomy support and child behavior problems. Also, the second hypothesis is fully supported by the result of the experiment. It predicts that prenatal autonomous childbearing motivation would lead to autonomy-supportive parenting style in later life which further lead to a higher level of behavior problems [8]. To be specific, pregnant mothers who were under high pressure tended to take higher risk of raising a child with behavior problems. Furthermore, the authors summarizes a positive correlation between autonomous and controlled motivation. The potential correlation is intriguing but makes sense because people are naturally to have more than one childbearing reason when they truly desire to have a baby while they perceive high pressure from the environment and surroundings. The authors also point out that child behavior problems can be somehow rooted in the stage that even earlier than the child is born [8]. Even though the authors did not find a clear correlation of prenatal motivations and child behavior problems, they concern prenatal motivations as a sufficient condition of resulting behavior problems. To conclude, the study demonstrate the prenatal motivations can have direct and strong effects on parenting styles and thus further take responsible for child adjustment.

Another paper underscoring self-efficacy and positive coping style can work as a mediator on the correlation of learning motivation and parenting style. Different from what other authors try to explain, this study stressed the importance of mediating effects including two other factors on the relation chain. The authors in the study shift their weights to nursing students in college. All participants in the study were from two undergraduate nursing schools in China and their data were collected in a

self-reported method. Through the study, the authors find out that a little more autonomy should be given to those nursing students while their intrinsic learning motivation increases with an increasing self-efficacy and positive coping style. In contrast, more control over them would lead to a negative impact on their learning motivation. Though this study did not consider longitudinal investigations, it still made it solid that parenting style, self-efficacy, positive coping style and learning motivation among nursing students are closely interacted with each other [9]. Similarly, in a study investigating the correlation of academic achievement and home environment, the authors claim that the participants' learning motivation is highly dependent on their home environment and it is extremely recommended that parents should pay more attention to play their own roles at home in order for the good of children's learning motivation [10].

3. Discussion

Based on the current research, it is evident to say that learning motivation can be both effectively influenced by the education level of parents and parenting styles. Learning motivation is yet a complicated and forward-looking area that needs more attention from the researchers. Still, from the previous studies discovered above, the authors have either aimed to point out the influence of education level of parents or influence of parenting style; nonetheless, it is scarce that which one of those have the strongest impact on children excluding other bivariate factors. In other words, it is barely possible for researchers to make it certain that learning motivation is mostly impressed by one necessary condition. Therefore, in order for the mutual benefit of students and parents, it is urgent for parents and instructors to attach importance to improving learning motivation for students as it is closely connected to performance in learning.

4. Conclusion

This study focuses on the impact of parental education and parenting style on children's learning motivation. The methods commonly employed in this line of research and the corresponding findings are reviewed and analyzed in the present study. The results shows that both parental education and motivation can have different degrees of influence on learning motivation. The results are verified by different methodologies and reproduced in different populations. In addition, future research directions are discussed, as well as what related educators can do to improve students' motivation.

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