

A study on how parenting styles affect the
self-esteem of the young offenders
of The Youth Correctional Institution of Macao

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Abstract

The problem of youth crime has become more and more serious in Macao. According to related research, parenting styles have a profound influence on young people. Young people's self-image, self-value and self-esteem may vary according to different parenting styles adopted by their parents.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between parents' parenting styles and children's self-esteem. The subject of this study was all the young offenders in The Youth Correctional Institution of Macao. Both 'quality' and 'quantity' are considered in this study method, including a 'Parenting Style Table' and a 'Self-attitude Table'. The information of a total of 66 valid samples was analyzed and 4 of the samples were chosen randomly for further case study. This paper firstly discusses the outlook of the parenting styles used by the young offenders' parents. Then it looks at the relationship between young offenders' personal factors (sex, order in the family and the number of children in the family), family factors (social and financial condition, family structure, subject perception of parents' marital relationship) and parenting styles. Furthermore, it investigates the relationship between parenting styles and the young offenders' self-esteem. Based on the result of this study, a suggestion is made as a reference for teachers and the prevention of youth crime. The summary of the result of this study is as follow:

1. Most of the offenders' parents adopt 'neglecting' parenting style and very few parents adopt 'indulgent' way. In fact, no father has ever adopted 'indulgent' parenting style.
2. In the cases of both male and female offenders, most of the parents use 'neglecting' parenting style.
3. No matter the offenders are the eldest or the youngest in their family, most of their parents adopt 'neglecting' parenting style.
4. In the cases of family with one child, two children and five or more children, most of the fathers adopt 'neglecting' parenting style, with the 'five or more children'

families contribute to the highest percentage. Families with five or more children also take up the largest percentage of the 'authoritative' parenting style. Most of the fathers adopt 'authoritarian' parenting style are those who have three or four children. Most of the mothers adopt 'authoritative' parenting style are those who have three or four children. Most of the mothers who adopt 'indulgent' parenting style are those who have only one single child. And for most mothers who adopt both 'authoritarian' and 'neglecting' parenting styles, they have usually have five or more children in the families.

5. Most of the fathers who adopt 'authoritative' and 'authoritarian' parenting style are having a stepmother in the family. Most of the fathers who adopt 'neglecting' parenting styles are in a 'stepfather' family. Most of the mothers who adopt 'authoritative' and 'authoritarian' parenting styles are in a normal family. Most of the mothers who adopt 'indulgent' parenting styles are those in a 'stepfather' family. Most of the mothers who adopt 'neglecting' parenting styles are those in a 'stepmother' family.
6. When the social and financial condition of the family is in IV grade, most of the fathers adopt 'authoritative' parenting style; while the social and financial condition of the family is in V grade, most of the fathers adopt 'authoritarian' parenting style. In families with IV grade social and financial condition, most parents adopt 'neglecting' parenting style. Most of the mothers who adopt 'authoritative' and 'indulgent' parenting style are those in a family with IV grade social and financial condition. Mothers who adopt 'authoritarian' and 'neglecting' parenting styles are those with a V grade social and financial condition family.
7. In cases of neither satisfactory nor non-satisfactory parents' marital relationship, most of the fathers adopt 'authoritative' and 'authoritarian' parenting styles; while in cases of non-satisfactory parents' marital relationship, most of the fathers adopt 'neglecting' parenting style. Mothers who adopt 'authoritative' parenting style are those having non-satisfactory marital relationship. In cases of having satisfactory parents' marital relationship, most of the parents adopt 'indulgent' and 'neglecting' parenting styles; while in cases of having neither satisfactory nor non-satisfactory parents' marital relationship, most of the parents adopt 'authoritarian' parenting style.
8. The difference in mother's parenting style, but not father's parenting style, has a significant influence on the offenders' self-esteem.
9. The case study has found out that the offenders are most offended to their parents' restriction and requirement over them.