

A Correlational Study of Parenting Style, Family Atmosphere
and Emotional Stability of Senior Primary School Students in Macau

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Abstract

Children's emotion is important for their learning and health. Parents are important factor influencing their development. Moreover, family is the first environment and school which they contact and learn in lives. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the correlation between "Parenting Style", "Family Atmosphere" and "Emotional Stability of Senior Primary School Students"

This study was delineated by using twice stages study, a census and a cluster sampling method to the subject of this study in 22 full-day Chinese primary schools in Macau, collecting information by Self-Administered questionnaires from 822 full-answered questionnaires of primary six students (388 male, 434 female), using quantitative analytic method, any correlation between parenting style (spiritual reward, material reward, spiritual punishment, material punishment), family atmosphere (father-child relationship, mother-child relationship, communication and care and conflict among family members), student emotional stability (lack of hypochondriasis , happiness, self-autonomy, lack of anxiety, self-esteem, lack of obsessive thoughts and behavior, lack of guilt feelings). Based on the result combined the limitation and analysis of this study, a suggestion is made as a reference for relative counselors and professionals. The summary of the result of this study is as follow:

1. Distribution of "Parenting Style" : children know their parents tend to use less punishment of parenting style, whatever reward or punishment, both are tended to use more spiritual than material parenting style.

2. Distribution of “Family Atmosphere” : children know of father-child relationship and mother-child relationship are tended to be fair, communication and care among family members are fair also, but conflict among family members is less in Macau. The relationship between children and mother was better than the relationship between children and father.

3. Distribution of “ Emotional stability” : the emotional instability usually showed as lack of hypochondriasis 、 happiness 、 self-autonomy and lack of anxiety.

4. Lower correlation is statistically significant between personal background differences and emotional stability :
 - ‘children's school results’, ‘children's school conduct’, ‘Number of good friends’, ‘parents' educational level’, ‘talking time with parents’, ‘parents' marital relationship’, ‘satisfaction of parenting relationship’, ‘enjoyableness of parenting relationship’ are positively correlated statistically significant with children's emotional stability.
 - ‘parents' occupation’ and ‘parents' age are negatively correlated statistically with children's emotional stability.

5. Statistically significant of personal background differences between male students and female students :
 - Male students have significantly poorer school conduct than female students.
 - Male students have significantly less number of siblings than female students.
 - Male students' parents have significantly less row and conflict than that of female students.

6. Statistically significant of emotional stability between male students and female students :
 - Male students seem to be more emotionally stable than female, but statistically not significant.

- Female students have lower self-esteem than male students.
 - Female students have more guilt feelings than male counterparts.
7. Lower correlation is statistically significant between parenting style (including spiritual reward, material reward, spiritual punishment and material punishment) and emotional stability :
- Parenting style, including spiritual reward, material reward, spiritual punishment and material punishment were found to be positively correlated statistically significant with children's emotional stability.
8. Statistically significant of parenting style between male students and female students :
- Fathers tend to use less spiritual /material of 'punishment' towards female students than male students.
9. Middle correlation is statistically significant between family atmosphere (father-child relationship, mother-child relationship, communication and care and conflict among family members) and emotional stability :
- Family atmosphere including father-child relationship, mother-child relationship, communication and care between family members and conflict between family members all show positively correlated statistically significant with children's emotional stability.
10. Statistically significant of parenting style between male students and female students :
- Female students are closer to parents than male students.
 - Female students have better relationship with father than male students.