Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Education Innovation and Philosophical Insights
DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.37408

Family Education and Adolescent Values: A Review in Developmental Psychology and Family Socialization

Yunkui Ma

JPED Academy, Beijing, China
mikema202608@gmail.com

Abstract. Family education serves as a crucial socializing environment for the formation of adolescents' values. This study employs a literature review method, integrating findings from developmental psychology, family socialization theory, and self-determination theory, to analyze the primary mechanisms through which family education influences adolescents' values as well as the applicable boundaries of these influences. The results indicate that parental behavioral modeling, emotional warmth, family functioning, rule explanation, and autonomy support are consistently associated with adolescents' moral values, fairness beliefs, prosocial behavior, self-concept, and school adaptation. The development of adolescents' cognitive abilities, autonomy needs, and social relationships facilitates the gradual transformation of rules — once primarily dependent on external constraints—into value judgments that can be understood, evaluated, and internalized by the individual. Family education practices should ensure consistency between words and actions, provide stable relationships and appropriate boundaries, and progressively expand adolescents' range of choices and responsibilities according to their developmental stage. The existing evidence is predominantly derived from relevant studies; however, cultural background, family socioeconomic conditions, and individual differences can influence the strength of these effects. Therefore, the conclusions drawn should avoid causal or simplistic interpretations.

Keywords: Family education, Adolescent values, Developmental psychology, Family socialization, Value internalization

1. Introduction

Values affect people's sense of responsibility, fairness, integrity, respect for others, etc. Adolescence is a time when changes in the body, the mind and emotions, a sense of self, and social relationships all undergo significant changes. At this time, adolescents start to compare the family's rules with the values promoted by schools, peers and online spaces in more and more detailed ways [1]. Family education at this time continues the socialisation function that occurred in childhood and also helps adolescents rethink and assimilate the values they have acquired so far.

Developmental research believes that the environment for raising children and adolescents is conducive to their all-around growth. Parental behaviour, parent-child interaction and family resources will all affect emotions, cognition and behaviour at different times [2, 3]. The enforcement

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DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.37408

of family rules, conflict resolution and division of labour are among the first and most frequent occasions for children to experience values. In their teens, they will have gained some knowledge about society through observation and begin to form their own opinions.

Other Chinese studies have also found that parental autonomous support is related to children's self-concept and the sense of basic psychological needs, and parenting styles are also linked to adolescents' moral values and beliefs in a just world [4-6]. Therefore, the effect of family education on values can be seen as a series of phenomena, such as behaviour modelling, emotional security, value internalisation and independent development. Based on the above evidence, this paper will investigate some problems in the practice of family education, such as outcome-oriented approaches, psychological control, and inconsistency between words and actions.

Another reason for the research value of this topic is that family influence is enduring and adaptable in time. Values are formed at various times in life, and the family's influence is also not immediate; rather, it is gradually built up through numerous interactions. The above methods can help distinguish among all sides of parenting, such as emotional support, behaviour regulation and psychological control, and avoid making a general comment on families based solely on educational results. To increase the explanatory power of the study, it is necessary to integrate the analysis of universal developmental needs with local cultural factors in Chinese families, such as family responsibilities, intergenerational relations and educational expectations.

Based on the above, this paper will collect literature that has been published in peer-reviewed journals over the past several years on developmental psychology, adolescence and family socialisation, etc. Research on the Influence of Family Background on Students' Grades, Identification of Potential Mediators, Consideration of Cultural and Individual Variations, Examination of the Foundation for the Research Design, and Construction of an Empirical Explanatory System.

2. Theoretical foundations and research methods

2.1. The developmental foundation for value formation

The formation of values starts in childhood and becomes more organised in adolescence as abstract thinking, the sense of self, and social comparison skills develop. In early childhood, children learn about rules through direct experience and consequence; for example, they learn that if they break a promise, there will be an impact. In adolescence, people can learn to compare rules in various environments, figure out what people want to achieve by making these rules, and set reasonable standards for values [1, 2].

2.2. Family socialization and value internalization

Family socialisation transmits values by means of modelling, reinforcement, explanation and other relations. The main way to turn external rules into one's own values is by internalisation. According to Self-Determination Theory, when the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are met, people are more likely to understand the reasons behind the rules and internalize them in their own systems. According to the results of a sample of Chinese children, parental autonomy support is positively correlated with self-concept and the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and parental control is negatively correlated with these two factors [4].

Internalisation of values also refers to the stability of moral judgments and behaviour. Longitudinal studies have found that authoritarian parenting by mothers is associated with lower

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.37408

levels of some aspects of moral education for adolescents, and there is a prolonged connection between family parenting styles and value development [5]. Therefore, the internalisation of values is a continuous process of moving from external conformity to understanding the origins of values, forming an identity, and taking responsibility for one's behaviour.

2.3. Evidence analysis framework

Adolescent values refer to the overall system of values that can be inferred from several indications, such as moral consciousness, belief in justice, prosocial behaviour, sense of social responsibility and self-esteem. The three kinds of research evidence are cross-sectional associations, longitudinal predictions and theoretical mechanisms. Cross-sectional studies will be conducted to find the reasons for this phenomenon; longitudinal studies will be carried out to observe changes over time; and theoretical mechanisms will be put forward to explain how family life affects values.

The selection of literature will be based on empirical studies that have specified the research subjects, family-related variables and outcome measures, as well as review articles. Studies that have larger sample sizes or longer follow-up periods will be given more weight in the analysis, and it will be verified whether the results obtained in the study are applicable to other circumstances. As parenting styles vary in scale, the values and age groups of indicators in the studies are also not the same; thus, this general analysis will focus on identifying common trends in all the studies rather than presenting them as universal rules.

3. The influence mechanism of family education

3.1. Behavioral demonstration

Parents' daily behaviour sets the model for the adolescents. The authority of the rules is based on how consistently the spoken demands and actual conduct align. How family members act during conflicts, commitments, resource allocation and error handling affects how much young people learn about honesty, respect and responsibility. When the family is healthy, there is free communication and emotional support among members; problems can be solved effectively together. Research on Chinese adolescents has found that good family life is positively correlated with altruism, and extraversion and perceived social support may be indirect mediators [7].

3.2. Emotional safety

Emotional safety can make young people feel safe enough to express their problems freely and discuss values openly. Humiliation, withdrawal from relationships and intense conflict can easily lead to avoidance and concealment; thus, the behaviour will be under the direction of others. Stable parental warmth can reduce the relational threat of mistakes and create a good environment for learning and adjustment. Longitudinal studies have shown that a high level of parental warmth during childhood and adolescence is positively correlated with prosocial behaviour [8]. Parental support and the prosocial behaviour of adolescents are likely to affect each other [9].

3.3. Autonomy support

Autonomous support is to offer some choices and responsibilities in a particular area for interpretation. Adolescents learn values through discussion of rules and practice how to handle the consequences of their own choices. Chinese research has found that autonomous support can be

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connected to basic psychological needs and self-concept [4], and it is positively correlated with prosocial behaviour among adolescents; however, the extent of this association is moderated by personality traits [10]. Therefore, as adolescents' abilities develop, family management should reduce the influence of external factors gradually and maintain the necessary boundaries for safety, health and legality.

3.4. Family functioning and contextual adaptation

Family functioning includes emotional closeness, communication, division of labour and conflict resolution. Sound family functioning can increase the chances of adolescents receiving support, observing cooperation and responsibility, etc. [7]. The meaning of parenting behaviour is also affected by cultural norms, urban-rural differences, family structure and so on. A large-scale study in China has found that authoritative parenting is positively correlated with people's sense of fairness in the world, and authoritarian and permissive parenting are negatively correlated with it; age, gender and place of residence are moderators of these relationships [6]. Therefore, family education should meet the common development needs of children and account for differences in culture.

Culture adaptation should distinguish between behaviour and the corresponding psychological basis. Although some parents are more involved in their children's lives due to a sense of responsibility and support, this also puts extra pressure on the child's other choices. When evaluating the developmental importance of such participation, people need to determine whether the adolescents feel respected, whether they can understand the reasons for the rules, whether they are given a certain number of choices based on their own ability, and whether they can talk about problems after a conflict. Based on the above relationships, it can be seen that cultural differences in parenting are not necessarily "lenient" or "strict".

4. Real-world challenges and optimization approaches

4.1. Results-oriented evaluation

Only academic achievements, rankings and external awards are used as the measures of students' morality and ability to cooperate, be honest and solve problems. An outcome-oriented mindset will increase the perceived cost of failure; thus, teenagers will be more afraid of criticism and less eager to improve their skills. Research shows that psychological control is related to avoidant achievement goals and poor school adaptation [11]. Sustained perception of parental psychological control is also associated with changes in adaptation over time during high school [12]. Intergenerational transmission of parental expectations and criticism is related to an increase in the level of perfectionism among young people [13]. Based on the above evidence, the focus of family assessment should be changed from a single result to several attributes that cover process, strategy and responsibility.

4.2. Psychological control

Psychological control can be exercised by inducing guilt, emotional withdrawal or denying a person's views, and it is often easy to affect behaviour and undermine adolescents' sense of autonomy and their ability to communicate freely. If the stage of development is different, direct management that worked well in childhood may no longer be suitable for the increased need for independence in adolescence. To improve this, one can limit the application of the rule, explain the

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.37408

reason for the rule, set negotiable items, agree on consequences, and specify when trust will be restored. The framework above can help to turn the demands from the outside world into reasonable and acceptable rules.

4.3. Consistency between words and actions

The actual behaviour of the family members will differ from what they say in terms of values. When adults keep their promises, admit their mistakes, respect others' boundaries and take responsibility for their behaviour, they offer a tangible example of responsibility for young people. The online environment has expanded the sources of information for young people, and it is now difficult for families to regulate the spread of values. Therefore, family education can focus on evidence-based judgment, comparison of perspectives and identification of interests; through joint discussion, it can help adolescents develop the skills of information screening and value judgment.

4.4. Development adaptation strategy

Family education strategies can be gradually adjusted to meet the cognitive, emotional and other needs of adolescents. Set boundaries by establishing rules, explain why there are these boundaries, provide limited options, accept responsibility for the consequences, and offer evaluations on preparation, problem identification, strategy modification and actual outcomes; continue to talk with families and schools about changes in academics, peer relationships, internet use and behaviour. In cases of chronic violence, serious conflicts or severe psychological problems, professional help from psychologists, social workers and doctors should be sought.

A Process-Oriented Assessment will have a more stable family feedback system. After an incident occurs, the family members will first verify the facts and ensure safety; then, they will analyze the reasons behind the behaviour, identify what is within their control, consider the consequences, and finally, together decide what to do next and when to check again. Thus, it is expected that students will develop self-regulation and improve their sense of responsibility in the learning process. The language of assessment should focus on specific behaviour and strategy, avoid general negative comments about the individual's character, and gradually increase the level of autonomy according to the actual results achieved by the adolescents.

5. Discussion

5.1. Evidence boundary

According to the research of other scholars, warm parents, autonomous-supportive families with good functions, and positive values are positively related; at the same time, psychological pressure and high expectations increase the risk of adaptation problems [4, 6-13]. The many forms of family education include modelling good behaviour to provide values for children, creating a safe and emotionally supportive environment for open communication, fostering autonomy by encouraging independence, and establishing a stable relationship system at home. The roles of these various paths are determined by the joint effects of school, peers, social circles, culture and so on.

The above ways work together. When behaviour modelling does not offer emotional safety, adolescents will only learn about power relations by observing; if the emotional support lacks boundaries, responsibility practice will be weak, and even if the rules are clear, they will not be internalised without explanations. The quality of family education should be judged in all aspects:

DOI: 10.54254/2753-7048/2026.37408

relationship, structure and autonomy. The above framework can integrate many research results on parenting behaviour and provide a common basis for comparing family life in different countries and at different stages of development.

According to the above results, correlation, prediction and causation should be distinguished. Cross-sectional studies cannot show the direction of the effect of family background on the lives of adolescents, and changes in these studies cannot be observed over time. Family education is also bidirectional; the temperament, behaviour and other needs for development of adolescents can affect their parents' parenting responses in turn. Evidence-based practice should be based on probabilities and reasons; it should not be attributed to any single family factor.

5.2. Research limitations

Most of the research in this area has been carried out in China and abroad; however, there are differences in research design, sample age and measurement tools, and not all indicators of values have been included in a single comprehensive explanation system. Some of the evidence come from the West, and their cultural suitability in China has not been well-understood after a long period of observation. Future research can add data on adolescents, parents, teachers and behavioural outcomes to track how the family environment and values change over time, learn about social behaviour in early adulthood, and compare the reasons for these changes in different families and economic situations.

6. Conclusion

Family education shapes the values of young people through behaviour modelling, emotional security, rule explanation, autonomous support and family participation in daily life. Rule-related experiences gained in childhood gradually become values that young people can understand, choose and accept during adolescence, and this happens in light of changes in cognition, exploration of identity and assimilation of external social information.

Effective family education should be consistent in words and actions, stable in relationships, ensure safety with appropriate boundaries, foster the development of an independent space suitable for individual growth to promote the practice of responsibility, and use an evaluation method that gives equal weight to both process and results. The family, school and society all affect the growth of adolescents, so the role of family education should be considered in light of all these interactions and individual differences. The future studies will collect long-term local data in China and various other kinds of observations to improve the accuracy of the reasons and suggestions.

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