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Research Article



A survey of Higher Vocational Students' upward Comparative Parenting

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Abstract: This study is aim at investigate the current situation of higher vocational students receiving upward comparative parenting and the differences in upward comparative parenting among higher vocational college students with different demographic variables. By using the self-designed upward comparative parenting questionnaire to survey 1075 higher vocational college students, the results show that: In general, higher vocational college students receive the highest frequency of upward Comparative Parenting (2.95 \pm 1.57) on the level of learning diligence, and the frequency of upward Comparative Parenting (2.62 ± 1.27) for male higher vocational students is higher than that for female students (2.39 ± 1.17) . The subjects from urban areas (2.56 ± 1.29) were significantly higher than those from rural areas (2.39 \pm 1.14). Conclusion: upward comparative parenting is a common phenomenon among higher vocational college students in China.

Keywords: Higher vocational college students; Upward comparative parenting; Difference comparison

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1 Raising the question

"As I grew up, 'children from other families' were everywhere, and may extend to high school and college." "said by a third-year middle school student in the interview, "From the beginning of primary school, my parents always compare me with other people's children. Sometimes the" other people's children "are specific people, while sometimes they are made-up.

In short, when I step back in study, or when they have some new requests to me, the" other people's children "will come out. He said, "at first, I was very angry. Why do my parents always think that other people's children are better than me? Why do they think they don't like me? But after they speak more about it, I feel annoyed and disgusted with their so-called" incentive "education."

"I've had a long-standing enemy called the child of another family since childhood. This child never plays games, he does not talk by QQ and he does not like shopping, while he studies every day. He is good looking, obedient and docile, he always gets the first place in the exam. there is a rich and serious boyfriend or girlfriend. Graduate students and civil servants have been admitted. He gets a salary of RMB 7000 monthly. He can cook, he can do housework, he can speak eight foreign languages. He only needs RMB400 to live when studying in other city "

Recently, this hot post is widely spread on the Internet and microblog, which arouses the same opinions of the netizens. On Sina micro blog, there are more than 16000 microblogs about "children of other people's families", and different versions have been derived. Netizens discus that adults always compare other people's children with their own children.

Although the intention of Chinese parents' comparison is to promote their children's growth, what are the characteristics of this comparative parenting? For example, how often do parents use this way in education? What aspects of children are often compared with others? What are the characteristics of different types of children in comparative parenting? At present, there are few studies on this phenomenon among students in higher vocational colleges. This study will use questionnaire to explore the above issues.

2 Literature review

2.1 Family parenting

Family parenting refers to the relatively stable behavior of parents in the process of raising and educating their children. It is the summary of the characteristics of various upbringing behaviors of parents^[1]. Family parenting has become an important topic that psychologists, sociologists and educators pay attention to when they study children's socialization. Chinese parents have always attached great importance to their children's family parenting. However, since the reform and opening up, with the acceleration of social progress and the diversification of values, many traditional parenting methods seem to no longer meet the current social needs. It needs in-depth study on what is more suitable for the contemporary society's family upbringing as well as what impact of the current family upbringing on children.

2.2 The Measurement of Parenting Style

At present, the measurement and research of family upbringing are mostly based on the background of western culture. For example, foreign scholars have developed and revised the EMBU^[2] and parent binding instrument PBI^[3] by understanding the local mainstream family upbringing, these methods are widely used at home and abroad. However, although they can accurately measure the parenting to their children in the Western cultural background, they cannot accurately cover the parenting in the Chinese cultural background. And due to the great cultural differences between China and the western countries, it is bound to affect the differences in family upbringing.

Chinese scholars have revised the EMBU, which mainly measures the parents' emotion and understanding, punishment and harshness, excessive interference and over protection, refusal and denial, preference to their children and so on. Now it has also been widely used by domestic scholars in the study of family upbringing. However, the scale still has defects, which contains too many articles and unstable structure. In recent years, in order to make up for the deficiency of EMBU, Chinese scholars have introduced and revised PBI. The original care and over protection dimensions of PBI have been revised into four dimensions: care, encouragement, autonomy and control. Some studies have also shown that the scale can also be divided into care, indifference / rejection, over protection and autonomy^[4-6].

Cheng Zaohuo, taking into account the huge differences between Chinese and Western countries in family upbringing, compiled the Chinese family upbringing style questionnaire (FUSQ), which contains 12 dimensions: acceptance-rejection, democracy-dictatorship, care -favoritism, encouragement-punishment, warmth- brutality, tolerance -indulgence, respect-humiliation, understanding-blame, expectation-and management and teaching - control^[7-8].

2.3 The study of the relationship between parenting uprising and mental health

There have been many studies in the past to reveal the relationship between the parenting upbringing and the individual mentality and personality development and social development, such as the impact of a healthy parenting upbringing on self-esteem^[9-13], the relationship between bad parenting upbringing and people's anxiety and depression^[14-15], in addition, the parenting upbringing and behavioral problems^[16-18], academic achievements^[19-20], social adaptability^[21-24], subjective well-being^[25-27] and integrity ^[28-29] are all related.

2.4 Upward comparative parenting

Although scholars in China have devoted to the localization of the study of family upbringing for a long time, the current measurement of family upbringing is still based on the theoretical framework of family upbringing of the western countries, which inevitably ignores some distinctive contents of Chinese family upbringing. China's family culture will be more collectivistic, and it is used to evaluate itself with collective attributes or goals, which means there will be more social comparison^[30].

That is to say, there is a common phenomenon in China's family parenting association, that is comparing one's own children with those of others. This is a unique aspect of Chinese family parenting. In the west, because its culture emphasizes individualism more and evaluates itself more by personal attributes and goals, the cultivation of western families focuses more on children themselves and less on the way of social comparison, that is to say, they seldom use the comparison with other family's children to educate children^[31].

Chen Xiao (2016) named this kind of phenomenon of comparison between their own children and other children's children as comparative parenting. According to their research results, it was found that the

comparative parenting of parents of most of the research objects belongs to upward comparative parenting, that is, to compare their own children's bad aspects with other children who do better in this aspect^[32].

2.5 The shortage of the research in the past and raising the questions

Based on the above research, it can be concluded that although domestic scholars have made considerable achievements in the study of the localization of family upbringing, there are still very few studies on the comparative upbringing with Chinese characteristics, especially the more general comparative upbringing. What are the specific ways to compare parents' upbringing? Are there any differences in the content of comparison between children from different regions and families? In what ways will they be more compared? This study investigates these issues.

3 Research methods

3.1 Research subjects

Using convenient sampling method, 4 classes of freshmen, 12 classes of sophomores and 1 class of junior were randomly selected from a vocational college in Guangdong Province as subjects. Through obtaining the informed consent of the students, a group questionnaire survey was conducted with the class as the unit. A total of 1200 questionnaires were issued, of which 1075 were valid. The results of the survey are as follow, 312 boys (29%), 763 girls (71%), 195 freshmen (18.1%), 830 sophomores (77.2%), 50 juniors (4.7%), with an average age of 19.52 ± 1.045 . Among them, 402 (37.4%) students are from the western Guangdong, 115 (10.7%) students are from the northern Guangdong, 202 (18.8%) students are from Pearl River Delta, 278 (25.9%) students are from the eastern Guangdong, 78 (7.3%) students are from the other provinces. 418 (38.9%) students are from cities, 657 (61.1%) students are from rural areas; 140 (13%) students are only children, 935 (87%) students are not the only children; 232 (21.6%) fathers with parentingal background at or below primary school, 479 (44.6%) junior high school, 138 (12.8%) high school or secondary school, 155 (14.4%) junior high school, 71 (6.6%) undergraduates and above. There are 405 (37.7%) mothers with parentingal background in primary school and below, 450 (41.9%) in junior high school, 89 (8.3%) in senior high school or technical secondary school, 107 (10%)

in junior college and 24 (2.2%) above undergraduate level.

3.2 Instrument

By using the self-designed upward comparative parenting questionnaireThrough the coding of the questionnaires, the initial questionnaire with 21 items was obtained.

150 questionnaires were initially sent out for preliminary test. 150 vocational students were selected by convenient sampling method for questionnaire survey. 125 effective questionnaires were collected and sorted out, with an effective recovery rate of 83.3%. There 60(48%) are boys, 65 (52%) are girls; 42(33.6%) freshmen, 42(33.6%) sophomores, 41(32.8%) juniors; 69(54.5%) urban students, 56(45.5%) rural students. There was no significant difference in gender and grade distribution (2 (5) = 1.153, P = 0.949). The age of subjects was between 18-24 years old (M = 20.32; SD = 1.83). The results showed that KMO = 0.904, Bartlett's chi square value was 1290.856, (P < 0.000), which could be used for exploratory factor analysis. The results of factor analysis show that 21 items are divided into two factors, and the variance interpretation rate is 60.130%. The items with load less than 0.4 and the items with load too close to the two factors are deleted, and finally 10 formal questionnaires with two factors are obtained.

In order to test whether the formal questionnaire has a certain degree of reliability and validity, the convenience sampling method was used to select 200 vocational college students for questionnaire survey. By collecting and sorting out, 178 valid questionnaires were obtained, with an effective recovery rate of 89%. There 83(56.6%) are boys and 95(53.4%) are girls; 63(35.4%) freshmen, 60(33.7%) sophomores and 55(30.9%) juniors; 108(60.7%) students from cities and 70(39.3%) students from rural areas. The age of the subjects ranged from 17 to 23 years old (M = 20.32; SD = 1.83). The results showed that α = 0.822, with high reliability. Amos21.0 was used for confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed that X2/df=1.643, RMSEA = 0.060, NNFI = 0.858, CFI = 0.772, IFI = 0.873, GFI =0.850, NFI = 0.833, all fitting indexes met the standard, with good structural validity.

3.3 Research process

After obtaining the informed consent of the subjects, each class will be given the same questionnaire by the main test, and the main test will read out the guidance to the subjects. The guidance includes the filling rules, the purpose of the test, the principle of voluntary filling and the principle of anonymity. The subjects are required to fill in according to their own actual situation, and the guidance will be recycled by the main test after filling in. The blank volume and the questionnaire with regular answers were eliminated, and the data was input with epidata3.1 to get the data needed in this study.

Table 1. The overall situation of upward comparative parenting

3.4 Data statistics and analysis

SPSS21.0 was used for data statistical analysis, which includes descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA.

4 Research Result

4.1 Overall condition

The overall situation of the upward comparative parenting of 1075 participants is shown in Table 1.

	Mean	SE
Q1. Be told directly that someone 's child is better than himself	2.71	1.51
Q2. Be told directly that someone 's child is harder to learn than himself	2.95	1.57
Q3. Be told directly that someone 's child spends less than their pocket money	2.07	1.48
Q4. Children who are directly informed of someone else's home are more obedient than themselves	2.55	1.67
Q5. Be told directly that someone 's children do more chores than themselves	2.72	1.70
Q6. Children who have been told directly that they almost never play games	2.13	1.61
Q7. Be told directly that someone 's children watch less TV than themselves	2.33	1.62
Q8. Elders talking to other children in front of you will think about the future	2.27	1.50
Q9. The elders talked about your child 's child in college in front of you	2.57	1.40
Q10. The elders are talented to talk about other children in your presence	2.27	1.45
Direct comparison	2.49	1.26
Indirect comparison	2.37	1.30
Total score	2.46	1.20

As can be seen from the above table, on the whole, the average score is 2.46, and the frequency is between once a semester and once every few months. Among them, academic projects still accounted for a high score, and the level of study diligence was compared the most, reflecting that although higher vocational students have experienced a difficult middle school life, their parents still think that their children are learning Not as diligent and dissatisfied as other children 's children. Even in indirect comparisons, parents will still refer to other children

who are admitted to good universities in front of their children as a hint of dissatisfaction with their children 's failure to pass the undergraduate degree. ; Secondly, the parents directly inform the children that others' children are more diligent in doing housework and more obedient.

4.2 Gender Difference

Through independent sample t test, the differences in the contents of the upward comparative parenting are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Gender Difference

Item	Gender	Mean	SE	t	р	Cohen's d
Q1	male	2.95	1.58	3.363	.001	0.22
	female	2.61	1.47			
Q2	male	3.09	1.54	1.846	.065	0.13
	female	2.90	1.58			
Q3	male	2.21	1.62	1.950	.052	0.13
	female	2.01	1.41			
Q4	male	2.76	1.70	2.548	.011	0.17
	female	2.47	1.66			
Q5	male	2.68	1.66	-0.453	.651	0.03
	female	2.73	1.72			
Q6	male	2.53	1.69	5.129	.000	0.35
	female	1.96	1.54			
Q7	male	2.49	1.59	2.058	.040	0.14
	female	2.26	1.68			
Q8	male	2.35	1.55	1.146	.252	0.07
	female	2.24	1.48			
Q9	male	2.72	1.48	2.205	.028	0.15
	female	2.51	1.36			
Q10	male	2.40	1.47	1.904	.057	0.12
	female	2.22	1.44			
Total Score	male	2.62	1.27	2.829	.005	0.19
	female	2.39	1.17			

In general, except for the household chores represented by Q5, the average scores of comparative parenting of male subjects were higher than that of female subjects, and the male subjects were significantly higher than the female subjects on the total score. Independent sample t the effect of the test is cohen's d = 0.19, which has a small degree of statistical effect. Among them, the biggest difference between men and women is the game played by Q6. The effect is cohen's d = 0.35, which has a small to medium statistical effect, followed by the comparison of academic performance Q1, and cohen's d = 0.22, which has a small statistical effect.

4.3 Regional Difference

The independent sample t test was used to compare the difference between the total scores of the upward comparative parenting of the subjects from the urban area and the subjects from the rural area. The scores were significantly higher than those from rural subjects (2.39 ± 1.14) , t = 2.14, P = 0.03 < 0.05, and cohen's d = 0.15.

5 Discussion

5.1 Overall Situation

From the above statistics, it is concluded that the degree of upward comparative parenting received by higher vocational students is lighter than that of middle school students in previous studies [33]. This may be due to the difference in sampling between the two. No secondary school students are burdensome, and contact with families is not as frequent as those of middle school students. The proportion of day school students is higher than that of higher vocational students. Therefore, secondary school students are more likely to be subjected to comparative parenting from parents than higher vocational students. But in general, it can still be seen that upward comparative parenting still has a considerable frequency among vocational students.

The most direct comparison content received by higher vocational students is "the children who are directly informed that their children study harder than themselves". It is not difficult to see that the parents of Wang Chengcheng have treated themselves after the fact that their children did not pass the undergraduate course. The child was dissatisfied when he didn't study hard enough at the beginning, and made himself look shameless in front of others because the child was not good enough^[34].

In terms of indirect comparisons, since higher vocational students have not been admitted to undergraduate studies, in the few occasions where university students have contact with parents, parents are more likely to discuss in front of their children that others' children have been admitted to good universities. As a way to imply that your children are not admitted to a good university.

5.2 Gender Difference

In terms of overall scores, the upward comparative parenting scores of male subjects were significantly higher than those of female subjects, and in each item, except for the frequency of household chores, the average scores of male subjects were higher than those of female subjects. Families in western Guangdong, eastern Guangdong and northern Guangdong have high expectations for boys, which may be affected by the patriarchal consciousness, which is interspersed with their marriage customs, gender expectations, birth etiquette, education and property Inheritance, etc. There are historical reasons for this: (1) the traditional small-

scale peasant economy; (2) in the intergenerational exchange, the daughter has less family responsibilities due to outmarry, so the family expects more from the boy^[35-37]; (3) In the traditional concept, only male offspring can truly inherit the line, and daughters have little role in family or family inheritance. And according to the marriage customs in Guangdong, a daughter needs to prepare a dowry that is worth more than a gift, so in a traditional Guangdong family, the daughter is a burden to the family. To sum up, most of the families in these areas hold the concept of patriarchalism. Therefore, families have stricter requirements on boys, and male subjects will be instructed by parents to communicate more frequently with other children 's children. Compare.

The item with the largest gender difference was "Children who were directly informed of other people 's family rarely play games", reflecting that male participants are more likely to be exposed to video games. According to relevant research, men are more likely to be addicted to video games than women^[38-39].

5.3 Regional Difference

The subjects from cities and towns were more frequently subjected to upward comparative parenting than those from the countryside, which differed from previous studies^[33], which may also be caused by the difference in the sampling objects of the two studies. In Guangdong Province, it is easier for families living in cities and towns to compare with other families, and it is easier to form a comparison style, so it is more likely that they will have more upward comparative parenting.

5.4 Innovation and Limitations

In this study, through the preparation and revision of the upward comparative parenting questionnaire, we investigated the situation of upward comparative parenting of higher vocational students, compiled an upward comparative parenting questionnaire that met the psychometric standards, and learned that Suffered from the detailed situation of parents' upward comparative parenting, and found that upward comparative parenting is a common phenomenon in current families. The survey results are more in line with the characteristics of family parenting in China today. Paying more attention to deficiencies than to publicizing strengths or enjoying achievements has led Chinese parents to remind their children of their deficiencies rather than affirm their goodness. However, if someone keeps telling you that you are worse than others, will it really promote your progress?

There are some deficiencies in this study. First of all, this study only collected the situation of upward comparative parenting of higher vocational students, and did not do research on their parents. Future research can be combined with the reports of parents, especially the motivation and motivation of parents for upward comparative parenting of their children. The factors of comparative parenting by parents can be compared with the differences between parental reports and higher vocational student reports, and the relationship between upward comparative parenting and mental health of higher vocational students, and a more comprehensive understanding of comparative parenting. Finally, future research can examine the relationship between upward comparative parenting and other psychological variables of higher vocational students, such as their relationship with academic burnout, psychological capital, and depression.

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