

The Influence of Parenting Styles on Children's Emotion Regulation Ability within the Framework of Ecological Systems Theory

Hailun Liu

Guangwai Panyu Experimental School, Guangzhou 511431, Guangdong, China

Abstract: Based on theoretical framework of ecosystem, this study focuses on parenting styles of family, explores influence mechanism of it on children's emotional regulation ability, and verifies developmental differences of emotional regulation under different parenting styles through simulation experiments, with an influence model constructed, which covers variables such as parenting styles, emotional support of family, rule consistency of family, and support of ecological environment, with children's emotional regulation ability as dependent variable, and at same time established index and prediction model of ecological influence. A total of 200 children were selected as simulation samples, divided into four groups of parenting styles: 'authoritative', 'authoritarian', 'permissive', and 'neglectful', while overall score of emotional regulation, expression of positive emotions, control of negative emotions, emotional recovery ability and emotional stability were used as indicators for analysis, results show that children growing up under 'authoritative' parenting style have highest level of emotional regulation ability, followed by 'authoritarian' parenting style, while 'permissive' and 'neglectful' parenting styles are associated with relatively lower levels. Research conclusion holds that positive family parenting environment can effectively promote children's emotional development, thereby highlighting that collaborative support of family, school and society plays an important role in improving children's emotional regulation ability.

Keywords: Ecological Systems Theory; Parenting Style; Children's Emotional Regulation Ability; Simulation Experiment.

1. Introduction

Children's emotional regulation ability is an important factor affecting their social adaptation, mental health, and personality development. With the continuous advancement of family education research, parenting style has been recognized as a key environmental factor influencing children's emotional development[1]. Ecological Systems Theory emphasizes that individual development is shaped by the interaction of multiple environmental systems, including family, school, and society. Among these systems, the family serves as the most important microsystem in children's growth and has a direct impact on their emotional cognition, emotional expression, and emotional control. Therefore, exploring the influence of different parenting styles on children's emotional regulation ability is of great theoretical and practical significance for optimizing family education models and promoting healthy child development.

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1. Basic Connotations of Ecological Systems Theory

Ecological Systems Theory was proposed by Bronfenbrenner, who argued that individual development is the result of continuous interaction between individuals and their surrounding environment. The ecological environment consists of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem, among which the family is the most direct and important microsystem in a child's development. Children's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development is influenced not only by individual factors but also by multiple environmental systems, including family, school, community, and broader sociocultural contexts. In the

process of children's emotional development, the family environment influences emotional experiences and emotional regulation abilities through parent-child interactions, emotional support, and behavioral norms[2]. Therefore, Ecological Systems Theory provides an important theoretical basis for analyzing the relationship between parenting styles and children's emotional regulation ability.

2.2. Classification of Parenting Styles

Parenting style refers to relatively stable behavioral patterns and emotional attitudes that parents exhibit in the process of educating and managing their children, based on two dimensions of emotional support and behavioral control. Parenting styles are usually divided into four categories, namely authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful[3]. Authoritative parenting maintains a balance between care and discipline, emphasizing democratic communication and reasonable guidance, while authoritarian parenting emphasizes obedience and control, paying less attention to the emotional needs of children, permissive parenting gives children a high degree of freedom, but lacks necessary supervision and restraint. Neglectful parenting is characterized by insufficient emotional support and low parental involvement, with different parenting styles creating different growth environments, which in turn have different effects on children's emotional cognition, emotional expression, and emotional regulation abilities.

2.3. Structural Dimensions of Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

Children's emotion regulation ability refers to comprehensive ability of children to identify, express and control state of their own emotions in different situations^[4], and is also an important foundation of social adaptation and

psychological health, from structural perspective, this ability is mainly composed of four dimensions: emotional cognition, expression of positive emotions, control of negative emotions, and emotional recovery, with emotional cognition reflecting ability of children to understand emotions of themselves and others, and is most fundamental dimension, expression of positive emotions refers to ability to appropriately convey

positive feelings, which reflects emotional output of children. Control of negative emotions represents the ability of children to manage negative experiences such as anger and anxiety, while emotional recovery refers to the ability to re-adapt to the needs of the environment from state of negative emotions. These dimensions together constitute core elements of children's emotional regulation ability.

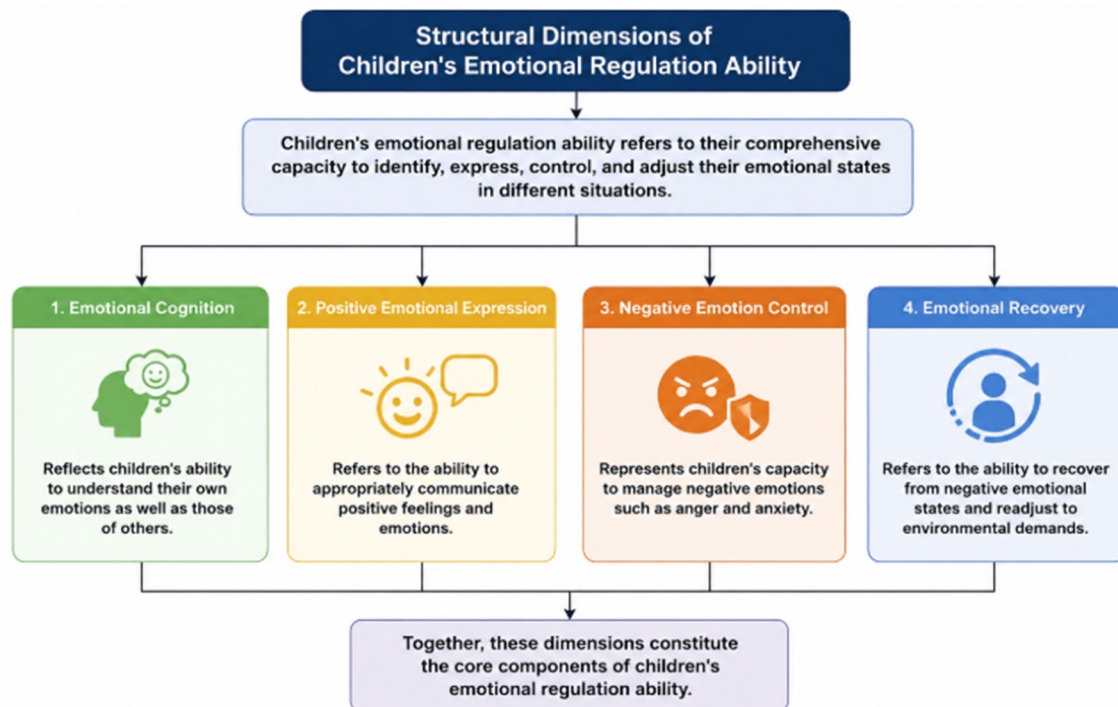


Figure 1-1. Structural Dimensions of Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

2.4. Mechanisms of Parenting Styles under Ecological Systems Theory

From perspective of Ecological Systems Theory, parenting style is a key microsystem factor that influences development of children's emotional regulation ability, and parents positively influence children's emotional development through emotional communication, behavioral modeling, and rule-making and problem-solving practices. Stable parenting style provides children with emotional support and gives them secure attachment relationships, helping them acquire emotional recognition and emotional management strategies, while, in contrast, negative parenting style may limit emotional expression, weaken self-control ability, and lead to social adaptation difficulties. Furthermore, parenting style can also indirectly influence children's emotional development through interactions between family and other environmental systems such as schools and communities, which further shape the development of children's emotional regulation ability, with parenting style therefore having both direct effects and ecological synergistic effects on the formation and development of children's emotional regulation ability[5].

3. Model Construction and Formula Principles

3.1. Research Variable Settings

This study established variables to explore the impact of parenting styles on children's emotional regulation ability,

and the dependent variable is children's emotional regulation ability ER, which reflects the development of children in emotional cognition, emotional expression, emotional control, and emotional recovery. Independent variable is parenting style P, covering four types of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Additional variables include family emotional support S, family rule consistency R, and ecological environment support E, with these variables being used to measure the comprehensive impact of microsystem and external ecological factors on children's emotional regulation ability.

3.2. Construction of the Children's Emotional Regulation Ability Model

Based on Ecological Systems Theory, this study constructs a multiple linear regression model. Children's emotional regulation ability ER is treated as the dependent variable, while parenting style P, emotional support S, rule consistency R, and ecological environmental support E are treated as independent variables. The model is expressed as follows:

$$ER = \alpha + \beta_1 P + \beta_2 S + \beta_3 R + \beta_4 E + \varepsilon$$

Where: ER = Children's emotional regulation ability; α = Constant term; $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Coefficients of the explanatory variables; P = Parenting style; S = Family emotional support; R = Family rule consistency; E = Ecological environmental support; ε = Error term. This model can be used to quantify the direct and comprehensive effects of parenting styles and ecological environmental factors on children's emotional regulation ability.

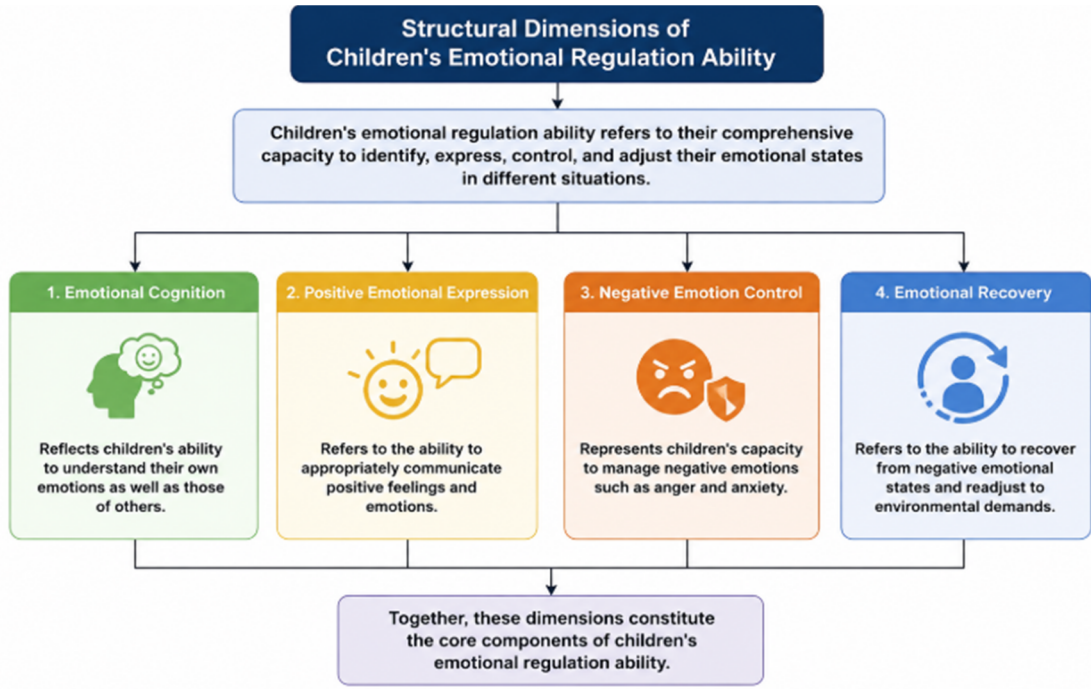


Figure 2-1. Structural Dimensions of Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

3.3. Ecological Impact Index Calculation Formula

To comprehensively evaluate the effects of family parenting and ecological environmental factors on children's emotional regulation, an Ecological Impact Index EEI is constructed as follows.

(1) Comprehensive Parenting Style Score

$$P = 0.4A + 0.3C + 0.2L + 0.1N$$

Where: A = Authoritative parenting score; C = Parent-child communication quality; L = Rule-guidance level; N = Reverse score of negative parenting. This formula reflects the overall positivity of parenting practices.

(2) Family Emotional Support Score

$$S = \frac{S_1 + S_2 + S_3}{3}$$

Where: S_1 = Parent-child emotional communication score; S_2 = Parental responsiveness score; S_3 = Child's sense of security score. This formula measures the level of emotional support provided by the family.

(3) Family Rule Consistency Score

$$R = \frac{R_1 + R_2 + R_3}{3}$$

Where: R_1 = Rule clarity; R_2 = Consistency of parental rule enforcement; R_3 = Child's acceptance of family rules. This formula evaluates the consistency and effectiveness of family behavioral norms.

(4) Ecological Impact Index Formula

$$EEI = 0.35P + 0.25S + 0.20R + 0.20E$$

Where: EEI = Ecological Impact Index; P = Parenting style score; S = Family emotional support score; R = Family rule consistency score; E = Ecological environmental support

score. The Ecological Impact Index reflects the combined influence of parenting style, emotional support, rule consistency, and the broader ecological environment on children's emotional regulation ability.

3.4. Emotional Regulation Ability Prediction Model

Based on the Ecological Impact Index, the prediction model for children's emotional regulation ability is expressed as follows:

$$ER' = \gamma + \delta \cdot EEI$$

Where: ER' = Predicted emotional regulation ability score; γ = Constant term; δ = Weight coefficient of the Ecological Impact Index; EEI = Ecological Impact Index. This model quantifies the influence of parenting styles and ecological environmental factors and provides a reliable basis for simulation experiments and intervention evaluations regarding children's emotional regulation ability.

4. Simulation Experiment Design

4.1. Experimental Subjects and Sample Settings

This study focuses on a group, using 200 participants as subjects of a simulated experiment, with samples divided by parenting style into four groups, covering four types of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful, with 50 children in each group. The assumed age of participants ranges from 6 to 12 years, which is a critical stage for the rapid development of emotional cognition, emotional expression, and self-control ability, and to ensure comparability, four groups maintained balance in age, gender ratio, and baseline developmental level, thereby introducing differences only in parenting styles and related ecological support variables. This sample design enables more intuitive comparison of impact of different parenting styles on children

's emotional regulation ability.

4.2. Experimental Variables and Parameter Settings

In this study, children's emotional regulation ability serves as the dependent variable, and parenting style serves as the core independent variable. Family emotional support, family rule consistency, and ecological environment support, these three are included as additional variables, with all variables being scored on a hundred-point scale, with a higher score indicating a more positive level of the corresponding factor. Characteristics of an authoritative family are high emotional support and high rule consistency, also reflecting high ecological support, while an authoritarian family is different, which presents low emotional support and high rule consistency. A permissive family is characterized by moderate emotional support, thus also accompanied by low rule consistency. Neglectful family is characterized by low emotional support, low rule consistency, and low ecological support, with the above parameter settings being incorporated into the "Ecological Impact Index" model, thereby simulating changes in children's emotional regulation ability under different family environments.

4.3. Simulation Experiment Procedure

(1) Data Initialization

An initial database is established based on the sample size of 200 children. Participants are classified into four groups according to parenting style: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Basic variable ranges are assigned to each group.

(2) Parameter Assignment

Based on the characteristics of different parenting styles, values are assigned to parenting style scores, emotional support scores, rule consistency scores, and ecological environmental support scores. This process ensures that each group reflects distinct family ecological environments.

(3) Index Calculation

All variables are substituted into the Ecological Impact Index formula to calculate the comprehensive ecological impact score for each child. The resulting index is then entered into the emotional regulation prediction model to generate predicted emotional regulation ability scores.

(4) Result Output

Random error terms are introduced to simulate individual differences among children, generating the final experimental dataset. Statistical analyses are then conducted on indicators such as overall emotional regulation scores, positive emotional expression, negative emotion control, emotional recovery ability, and emotional stability across different groups.

4.4. Experimental Data Generation Method

The experimental data were generated through simulation-based methods, first, based on theoretical characteristics of four parenting styles, ranges of means were established for each variable, with authoritative families being assigned relatively high scores in parenting style quality, emotional support, and rule consistency, while neglectful families scored relatively low on these variables, second, random fluctuations were introduced around group means to create individual-level data, which reflects realistic developmental

variability, third, generated scores of parenting style, emotional support, rule consistency, and ecological environment support were substituted into Ecological Impact Index formula, thereby calculating comprehensive ecological impact score for each child. Finally, the Ecological Impact Index was input into the emotional regulation prediction model, and a random error term was added, thus obtaining the final emotional regulation ability scores. This method not only reflects theoretical differences among parenting styles, but also preserves randomness and complexity of individual child development, and simulation results therefore enhance explanatory power and authenticity.

5. Experimental Result Indicators and Data Analysis

5.1. Evaluation Indicators of Experimental Results

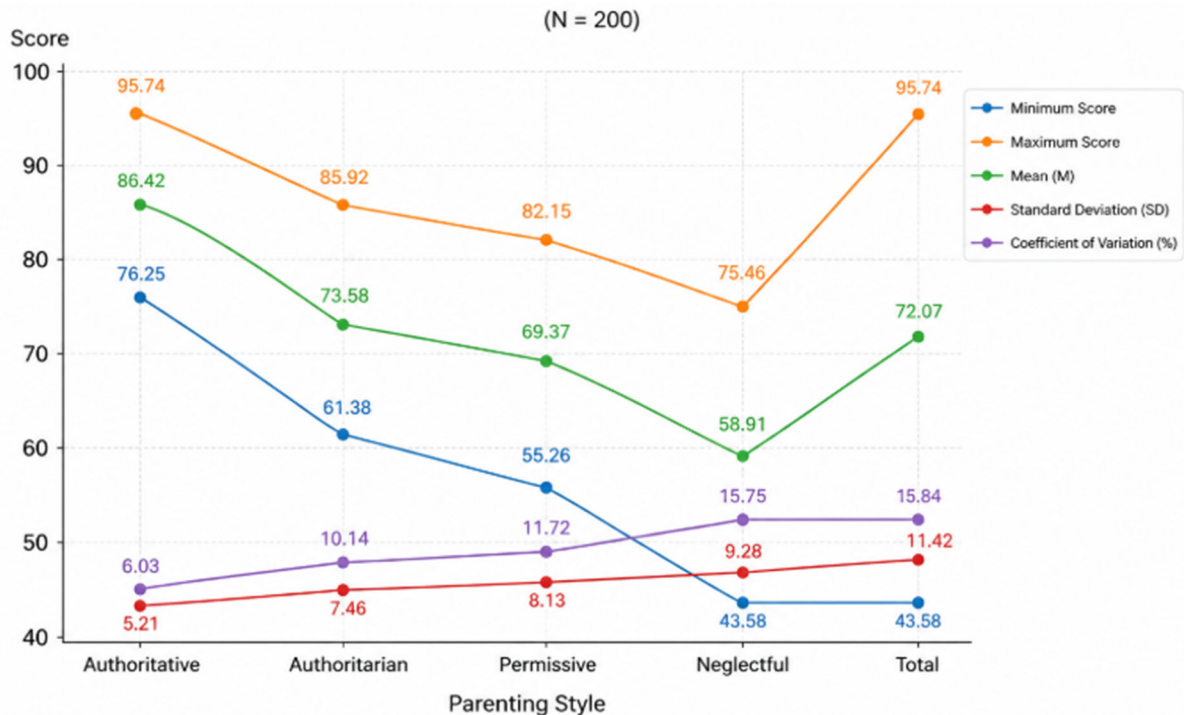
To comprehensively evaluate impact of parenting styles on ability of emotional regulation, this study established a multidimensional evaluation system, with evaluation indicators mainly including total score of emotional regulation, score of positive emotion expression, and score of negative emotion control, and also cover ability of emotional recovery and stability of emotional regulation, among them, total score of emotional regulation reflects overall level of children's emotion management, and score of positive emotion expression measures ability of children to express positive emotions such as happiness, interest, and satisfaction. Score of negative emotion control evaluates the ability of children to regulate negative emotions such as anger and anxiety, while the ability of emotional recovery reflects the speed at which children recover to a normal emotional state after experiencing negative emotions. Stability of emotional regulation is measured by standard deviation, which represents the degree of emotional fluctuation. These indicators comprehensively evaluate the ability of emotional regulation of children from perspectives of overall performance, specific abilities, and emotional stability, thereby providing empirical support for analyzing differences between different parenting styles.

5.2. Comparison of Overall Emotional Regulation Scores under Different Parenting Styles

The overall emotional regulation score directly reflects children's overall emotional management ability. To investigate the influence of different parenting styles on emotional regulation, this study conducted a statistical analysis of emotional regulation scores across four parenting style groups. Theoretically, authoritative families provide both emotional support and behavioral guidance, which facilitates the development of strong emotional regulation abilities. Although authoritarian families maintain strong behavioral control, they often provide less emotional support. Permissive families lack necessary supervision, which may weaken children's emotional management skills. Neglectful families generally show insufficient parent-child interaction and educational involvement, resulting in lower emotional regulation levels. The analysis of simulation data from 200 children clearly demonstrates the developmental differences in emotional regulation ability across parenting styles.

Table 4-1. Statistical Results of Children's Overall Emotional Regulation Scores under Different Parenting Styles (N = 200)

Parenting Style	Sample Size (n)	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Coefficient of Variation (%)
Authoritative	50	76.25	95.74	86.42	5.21	6.03
Authoritarian	50	61.38	85.92	73.58	7.46	10.14
Permissive	50	55.26	82.15	69.37	8.13	11.72
Neglectful	50	43.58	75.46	58.91	9.28	15.75
Total	200	43.58	95.74	72.07	11.42	15.84

**Figure 4-1.** Comparison of Overall Emotional Regulation Scores under Different Parenting Styles

As shown in Table 4-1, children from authoritative families achieved the highest overall emotional regulation score, with a mean of 86.42. The corresponding scores for authoritarian and permissive families were 73.58 and 69.37, respectively, while neglectful families recorded the lowest score at 58.91. The authoritative group also exhibited the smallest standard deviation, indicating greater stability in emotional regulation development. In contrast, the neglectful group showed the largest standard deviation, suggesting greater individual differences. These findings indicate that a positive and stable parenting environment significantly enhances children's emotional regulation ability.

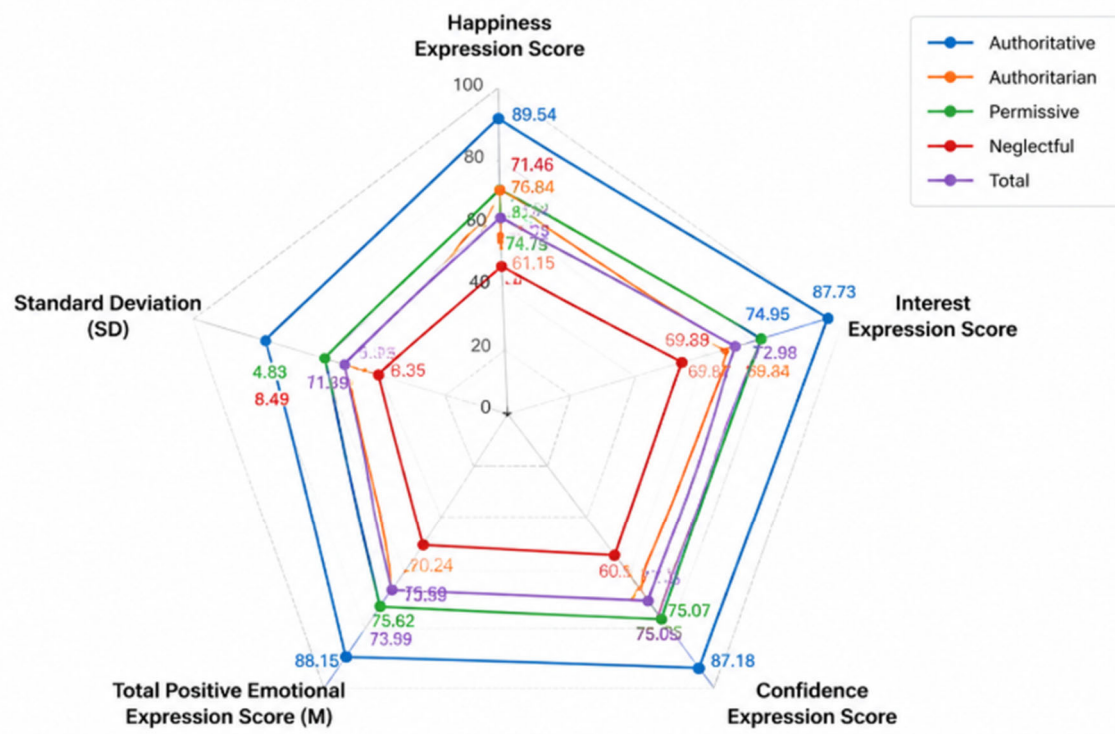
5.3. Comparison of Positive Emotional Expression under Different Parenting Styles

Positive emotional expression is an essential component of

children's social adaptation and psychological well-being. It primarily reflects children's ability to express positive emotions such as happiness, interest, satisfaction, and confidence. Effective positive emotional expression helps children establish healthy interpersonal relationships and improve social adaptability. Parenting style is a key factor influencing positive emotional expression. Authoritative families promote emotional expression through supportive communication and emotional warmth. In contrast, authoritarian families may suppress emotional expression due to their emphasis on obedience and control. Although permissive families grant considerable freedom, they often lack effective guidance, while neglectful families limit emotional development due to insufficient parent-child interaction. Therefore, comparing positive emotional expression across different parenting styles is of significant importance.

Table 4-2. Statistical Results of Children's Positive Emotional Expression under Different Parenting Styles (N = 200)

Parenting Style	Sample Size (n)	Happiness Expression Score	Interest Expression Score	Confidence Expression Score	Total Positive Emotional Expression Score (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Authoritative	50	89.54	87.73	87.18	88.15	4.83
Authoritarian	50	71.46	69.38	69.87	70.24	6.57
Permissive	50	76.84	74.95	75.07	75.62	7.21
Neglectful	50	61.15	59.84	60.06	60.35	8.49
Total	200	74.75	72.98	73.05	73.59	11.03



Note: All scores are on a 100-point scale. Higher scores indicate better performance.

Figure 4-2. Profile of Positive Emotional Expression under Different Parenting Styles

Table 4-2 shows that children from authoritative families achieved the highest total positive emotional expression score 88.15, significantly outperforming the other groups. Children from permissive families scored 75.62, which was higher than the score of 70.24 observed in authoritarian families. Neglectful families recorded the lowest score at 60.35. These findings suggest that family emotional support and positive interaction play a crucial role in promoting children's emotional expression. Through open communication and emotional sharing, authoritative families effectively enhance children's positive emotional expression, whereas neglectful parenting tends to inhibit emotional development.

5.4. Comparison of Negative Emotion Control under Different Parenting Styles

Control of negative emotions is an important dimension of children's emotional regulation ability, which refers to

children's ability to regulate and manage negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, and sadness, with effective control of negative emotions helping to reduce impulsive behavior, and can also improve the level of social adaptability and mental health. Parenting style has a significant impact on children's control of negative emotions, with authoritative families combining emotional support with behavioral guidance, helping children develop effective emotion management strategies, while authoritarian families, although reinforcing behavioral control, have insufficient emotional communication, which may hinder development of autonomous emotion regulation ability. Permissive families often lack sufficient guidance, leading to weaker emotion control ability, while neglectful families are unable to provide the support necessary for stable emotion management mechanisms, thereby making it necessary to conduct a comparative analysis of negative emotion control under different parenting styles.

Table 4-3. Statistical Results of Children's Negative Emotion Control under Different Parenting Styles (N = 200)

Parenting Style	Sample Size (n)	Anger Control Score	Anxiety Control Score	Sadness Regulation Score	Impulse Suppression Score	Total Negative Emotion Control Score (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Authoritative	50	85.43	83.75	84.28	83.98	84.36	5.06
Authoritarian	50	77.58	75.84	76.42	75.39	76.31	6.84
Permissive	50	64.37	62.58	63.95	62.84	63.48	7.93
Neglectful	50	56.42	54.89	55.67	56	55.74	9.15
Total	200	70.95	69.27	70.08	69.55	69.97	11.28

As shown in Table 4-3, children from authoritative families demonstrated the strongest negative emotion control ability, with a total score of 84.36. The authoritarian group ranked second with a score of 76.31, while permissive and neglectful groups scored 63.48 and 55.74, respectively. These findings indicate that reasonable family rules combined with positive

emotional support significantly improve children's ability to manage negative emotions. Although authoritarian parenting shows certain advantages in behavioral control, its overall effectiveness remains lower than that of authoritative parenting, highlighting the irreplaceable role of emotional support in emotional development.

5.5. Comparison of Emotional Recovery Ability and Emotional Stability under Different Parenting Styles

Emotional resilience refers to the ability of children, after experiencing setbacks and failures, to return to a normal emotional state when facing negative emotional stimuli, while emotional stability reflects the degree of emotional fluctuation, and these two indicators together represent the maturity of children's emotional regulation system. According to Ecological Systems Theory, family environment is a key factor affecting children's psychological

resilience and emotional stability, with authoritative families, through positive interaction and continuous support, strengthening children's sense of security and promoting the development of emotional resilience and emotional stability. Although authoritarian families can maintain behavioral order, they may weaken children's ability to regulate autonomously, while permissive and neglectful families, due to a lack of sufficient guidance and support, are more likely to lead to children's emotional instability, thereby prompting this study to compare children's emotional resilience and emotional stability under different parenting styles.

Table 4-4. Statistical Results of Children's Emotional Recovery Ability and Emotional Stability under Different Parenting Styles (N = 200)

Parenting Style	Sample Size (n)	Frustration Recovery Score	Recovery after Failure Score	Recovery from Interpersonal Conflict Score	Total Emotional Recovery Score (M)	Emotional Stability Score	Standard Deviation (SD)
Authoritative	50	87.26	86.54	86.45	86.75	88.13	5.21
Authoritarian	50	73.45	72.16	71.95	72.19	74.28	7.46
Permissive	50	69.18	68.07	68.36	68.54	66.92	8.13
Neglectful	50	58.44	57.69	57.33	57.82	55.41	9.28
Total	200	72.08	71.12	71.02	71.33	71.19	11.07

Table 4-4 indicates that children from authoritative families performed best in both emotional recovery ability and emotional stability, achieving a total emotional recovery score of 86.75 and an emotional stability score of 88.13. The authoritarian group ranked second, while permissive and neglectful groups scored relatively lower. In particular, children from neglectful families obtained only 57.82 in emotional recovery ability and 55.41 in emotional stability, suggesting that inadequate family support reduces psychological resilience when facing negative events. These results further confirm the positive role of a supportive family ecological environment in promoting healthy emotional development among children.

6. Discussion and Educational Implications

6.1. The Promoting Effect of Authoritative Parenting on Children's Emotional Regulation Ability

The findings indicate that children raised under an authoritative parenting style achieved the best performance in overall emotional regulation, positive emotional expression, negative emotion control, and emotional recovery ability. This can be attributed to the fact that authoritative parenting emphasizes a balance between emotional support and behavioral guidance. Parents not only provide children with sufficient care and respect but also establish appropriate behavioral boundaries through reasonable rules. During daily interactions, children are given more opportunities to learn emotional expression and emotional management skills, which gradually enhance their emotional cognition and self-regulation abilities. Furthermore, stable parent-child relationships strengthen children's sense of security and self-confidence, thereby improving their psychological resilience when facing stress and setbacks. Therefore, authoritative parenting represents an ideal family education model for promoting children's emotional well-being and should be

widely encouraged and implemented in family education practices.

6.2. The Influence of Authoritarian Parenting on Children's Emotional Expression

Authoritarian parenting emphasizes obedience and control, with parents typically managing children's behavior through strict requirements and discipline. The experimental results show that children from authoritarian families demonstrate certain advantages in negative emotion control; however, their performance in positive emotional expression and emotional recovery ability is significantly lower than that of children from authoritative families. This suggests that children raised in highly controlling environments may learn to follow rules effectively, but they often have limited opportunities to express their emotions. As a result, they may develop emotional response patterns characterized by suppression and avoidance. When children lack adequate emotional communication and opportunities for autonomous expression, the development of their emotional cognition and expression skills may be restricted. As they grow older, such suppressive parenting practices may also increase the likelihood of anxiety, tension, and other negative psychological experiences.

6.3. Negative Effects of Permissive and Neglectful Parenting Styles

In this study, both permissive and neglectful parenting styles have shown significant negative effects, while permissive families provide children with considerable freedom, but often lack necessary behavioral norms, and also lack educational guidance, which may lead to insufficient self-discipline, and strategies for managing negative emotions also become ineffective, with problems associated with neglectful parenting style being more prominent, as it has very limited emotional investment, and parent-child interactions are continuously decreasing, children in neglectful families often find it difficult to establish stable sense of security and emotional support, thereby producing

negative effects on development of emotion management ability. From experimental results, children from neglectful families scored lowest on all evaluated indicators and also showed greater individual differences. These results profoundly highlight adverse effects of insufficient parental guidance and lack of emotional investment on the emotional development of children.

6.4. Collaborative Support Pathways among Families, Schools, and Society

Ecological Systems Theory holds that the development of children is influenced by multiple environmental systems; therefore, emotional regulation ability should not rely solely on single efforts of the family, but should build a collaborative support system among the family, school, and society. Family should take on primary responsibility for emotional education, actively cultivating healthy emotional cognition of children through communication methods and emotional support, while school should integrate emotional education into daily teaching, enhancing children's regulation ability through mental health courses, group activities, and emotional training programs. Community, media institutions and relevant social organizations should provide professional guidance for family education, thus creating a social environment conducive to children's mental health, with participation of multiple parties building an ecological educational framework, which further promotes continuous development of children's emotional regulation ability.

7. Conclusion

Based on ecological theory, this study constructs a theoretical model to examine the influence of parenting styles on children's emotional regulation ability, and analyzes differences in functional development of children's emotions under different parenting styles through simulation experiments, with research results indicating that parenting styles have a significant influence on children's emotional regulation ability, which deserves in-depth attention. Among

four parenting styles, authoritative parenting is most conducive to the expression of positive emotions, control of negative emotions, and development of emotional recovery ability, while authoritarian parenting can effectively enhance behavioral control to a certain extent, but it is not conducive to healthy emotional expression, with permissive and neglectful parenting styles weakening children's emotional regulation ability to varying degrees in comparison. Research further confirms that family emotional support, consistency of rules, and ecological environmental support play important roles in the development of children's emotions, thereby highlighting that future efforts should focus on strengthening family education guidance, establishing collaborative education mechanisms among family, school, and society, to provide a supportive ecological environment for healthy emotional growth of children.

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