

How Adolescents' Prosocial Behavior Be Influenced by Various Aspects from Family

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ABSTRACT

The role of family has been studied a lot to determine how it influences adolescent's prosocial behavior. It is very important to study adolescents' prosocial behavior because they are integral to promote positive youth development. This review reveals four core aspects of family that play the major role in the influence on adolescent's prosocial behavior. In the following context, how residential mobility, parenting style, parental attachment and parental socialization respectively impacts adolescent's prosocial behavior will be illustrated.

KEYWORDS

Adolescent, prosocially behavior, residential mobility, parenting style, attachment, socialization

ADOLESCENTS' PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

Definition of Adolescent's Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial behavior is defined in terms of consequences intended for another in which the behavior of the actor is directed toward promoting and sustaining a positive benefit for the help-recipient. Also, the behavior is performed voluntarily rather than under duress and is not motivated by the fulfillment of professional obligation. Activities such as donating, sharing, helping, assisting, and providing support to someone else are regarded as prosocial behavior, whereas paid activities in the service sector are usually excluded. Instead of studying across all stage of adult life, adolescent's prosocial behavior focuses on youth prosocial behavior during adolescent ages. Adolescent's prosocial behavior is one subject of prosocial involvement. In increasing number of places, such as Hong Kong, adolescents' participation in prosocial involvement are frequently and easy available. According to the general definition of adolescents' prosocial behavior, the term adolescents' prosocial behavior means adolescents' positive actions that benefit others, prompted by empathy, moral values, and a sense of personal responsibility rather than a desire for personal gain. So far how adolescents perceive prosocial involvement and develop positive prosocial behavior is examined by proven studies.

Since adolescents' prosocial behavior is one subject under prosocial behavior, it is the prosocial involvement presented and performed by adolescents. From the perspectives of evolutionary psychology, the development of prosocial behavior is particularly important during the early years throughout childhood to adolescence as young people still adapt to living in the social environment. Such prosocial behavior

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starts from age 12-18 months and continues to develop through adolescence by concerning with abstract prosocial values and norms such as guilt and positive affect. 18-month-old infants display their prosocial behavior by giving their toys to their parents or hugging someone who is crying. Around the age of 3 and 4, children's prosocial behaviors are more complicated with an elementary moral understanding of the world. During this developmental period, children starts to learn sharing, helping and adapt to in-group favoritism. The understanding of groups and peers complexes the prosocial behaviors by letting children reflect on self and others. After puberty, adolescents start to face the new form of prosocial behavior, such as civic engagement and volunteering activities [1]. Adolescents are socially independent, and they are very likely to participate in church groups, joining in sports team, and enrolling in school clubs and applying for social welfare organizations. All of these prosocial activities can contribute to a sense of belonging and make adolescents feel attached inside one group. The sense of belonging also leads to the development of self-identity at the early stage of one's life. The volunteering and prosocial activities in adolescence can also prepares adolescents to adult civic engagement to some extent.

Influencing Factors of Adolescent's Prosocial Behavior

Given the importance of and increasing public attention to the concept of adolescent's prosocial behavior, it is essential to acknowledge young people of the achievement of adolescent's prosocial behavior. Many researches have focused on how adolescents' prosocial behavior is developed. The result is that two main domains are put forward: situational variables and individual differences. As one perspective of prosociality, the findings of situation variables are about recipients' need and relationship with recipient and so forth. The other perspectives which are founded at all ages is sustainable individual differences. The temperament of adolescents, attributional style, empathic response and moral reasoning can affect individual's prosocial behavior. Since prosocial behaviors are aroused in the public context rather than private setting, the interactive and communicative environment of adolescents are at importance. As a result, for adolescents both school and family play major role of establishment of positive prosocial behavior environment. In the school, peer relationships, teacher-student relationships, and school education all affect adolescent' prosocial behavior.

From the family environment focused in this review, parents as the major individual differences, have the direct influence on the prosocial norms influencing adolescents. Parents are capable of setting examples that their next generations are prone to learn and imitate. McLellan and Youniss [2] found that parents who volunteer have children who volunteer, and Michalik's [3] study demonstrated that parenting practices and children's sympathetic responses are related to prosocial involvement. Until now, a number of findings proved that the role of parents is vital to promote adolescent's prosocial involvement.

THE ROLE OF FAMILY FACTORS ON THE ADOLESCENT'S PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

There are three major subjects to interpret individual difference: socialization; temperament and genetics. Certainly, socialization environment is complicated including family, school, and peers and so on. From the broadest perspectives, this

review studies how socialization is related to people's tendency to be prosocial. To be specific, we try to understand how the role of family as one aspect of socialization environment can affect prosocial behavior during adolescence.

The Influence of Residential Mobility on Adolescent's Prosocial Behavior

The residential mobility is a process that changes lives and neighborhoods. According to prior study, those who change residences frequently are main low-income house-holds, renters and younger families. They make frequent moves because of all kinds of social distress and economic issues as well. Residential mobility not only affects the pattern of neighborhoods from the general sense, but also affects every individual in the family, especially children. If we take children prosocial behavioral development into consideration, Whether or not residential mobility affects the prosocial behavior of adolescents? There were studies implying that residential mobility had positive effect on prosocial development as long as the total neighborhood's adolescence population was stable after emigrants and immigrants [4-5]. However, there were studies showing that moving hurt stability of neighborhood and only stable neighborhoods could foster stable peer groups and further increased prosociality [6]. To prove whether residential moves can influence further prosocial development of adolescents, one research tracked residential location between 2006 and 2009 in 397 adolescents in New York [7]. By comparing the role of five domain forms of social support in prosocial development for movers and non-movers, the result turned out that adolescent's prosocial development for those who moved to new neighborhood were influenced. Since there was no significant disparity between movers and non-movers in the response to all forms of social supports, it means that new moving adolescents have tried to adjust to the new neighborhood in terms of prosocial behaviors.

Taking the cultural disparity into account, some research in Asian are also examined. Odisha from Japan built a social dynamic model for prosocial behavior and the result showed that stable residence lead to a strengthening identity in the community and further created better prosocial behavior within the stable neighborhood [8]. Another Asian research was conducted by Chinese researchers who took 2013-2014 social solicitation as the quota of prosocial behavior and floating population in corresponding areas. The statistics result demonstrated that the amount of solicitation was positively correlated with the floating population of each area.

The Influence of Parenting Style on Adolescent's Prosocial Behavior

Both developmental psychologists and socialization theorist's claims that the role parents are vital for development of adolescents' prosocial behavior. Many studies have illustrated the importance of parenting style in the encouragement of adolescents' prosocial behavior [9]. In fact, parental support leads to positive psychological outcomes for adolescents, such as a sense of self-worth and security [10]. Currently there are two predominant parental style frameworks are defined with two dimensions. For the first framework, two dimensions of parenting styles are declaimed as warmth (or support) and control (or demandingness) [11]. In this norm, parental warmth is described as the positive, responsive and supportive parent-child relationship. Parental control, in contrast, means parents coercively impose strictness, behavior rules and high expectations on children. Another framework characterizes parents as authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful also in terms of two dimensions: responsiveness

and demandingness [12]. Like parental warmth, responsiveness refers to responsive parents who are prone to be warm and supportive toward children and not punitive or demanding. In other hands, demandingness refers to parental control and expectations towards children, and ruling children with specific standards [13].

Gustavo Carlo's longitudinal investigation followed 372 boys and 358 girls with a mean age of 10.84 years from a Spanish middle school community. They spent three years to complete a long-term measure of fathers' and mothers' warmth and strict control, sympathy, prosocial moral reasoning, and self-and peer-reported prosocial behaviors. The longitudinal evidence proved that parental (especially maternal) warmth, sympathy and prosocial moral reasoning are predictive of adolescents' prosocial behavior. Parental control, in contrast, was negatively and generally insignificantly related to prosocial traits [14]. Another cross-sectional study was conducted by Anna Liorca and her colleague aiming to analyze the influence of parental style effects on adolescents' prosocial behavior and aggressive behavior. 220 young offenders aging from 15 to 18 were recruited from Youth Detention Centre of Valencia. The participants had filled in self-assessment questionnaires in the classroom for 50 mins. Also, similar 220 non-offenders were involved to compose of comparison group. Via the application of instruments, such as PVA (physical and verbal aggression scale), IE (emotional instability scale), prosocial behavior CP, and child report of parental behavior inventory, the items and corresponding variables are collected and analyzed by descriptive statistics. The result supported the hypothesis that parental support was a motivator of prosocial and a protector against aggressive behavior. Besides, parental control could negatively influence emotional development in both offenders and non-offenders [15].

The Influence of Parental Attachment on Adolescent's Prosocial Behavior

Attachment theory is founded on comprehensive frameworks that are crucial for understanding later adolescents' social and emotional development. Attachment, as one particular aspect of the relationship between a child and a parent, aims to make a child safe, secure and protected [16]. Attachment is where children take parents as a base to explore safety and a source of comfort [17]. The theory categorizes child-parent attachment as four types: secure, avoidant, resistant and disorganized by the assessment in the Strange Situation (SS) [18]. In the SS procedure, children were left alone for a brief period and then reunited with caregivers. Children with secure attachment can maintain contact with caregivers after caregiver's brief separation. This kind of children may feel safe to understand other's emotions and are very likely to care for others throughout the lifespan. Children with avoidant attachment appear avoiding their caregivers after separation and remain focused on toys. They tend to be suppress their emotional needs by not expressing feelings. This is a pseudo-independence. As a result, children with avoidant attachment are reluctant to seek out other's help and less likely to support others. Children with resistant attachment have distress upon separation from caregiver. After caregivers return, children tend to continue distressed and are resistant to interact with caregiver, and even display distress and angry with caregivers. This type of children may suffer from insecurity, anxiety and dependency in adolescents' relationship development [19].

There is abundant evidence that predicting secure attachment promotes adolescents' prosocial behavior. Some researchers have found that children with secure attachment are more empathic [20]. There was a research that explored the relationship between

self-control, parental attachment and prosocial behavior among Chinese adolescents. Researchers enrolled 286 boys and 321 girls aging from 11 to 17 in the study and completed measures that assess parental attachment, self-control and prosocial behavior. The results showed that rather than paternal attachment, secure maternal attachment was the one that directly related to prosocial behavior. Besides, the results revealed the function of self-control as a mediator to link both maternal and paternal attachment and prosocial behavior [21]. Another research investigated the mediator of parental attachment and prosocial behavior was also conducted by Chinese researchers. They recruited 737 middle school adolescents and completed measures that assess parental attachment, psychological capital and prosocial behavior. Consistent with previous research, the analyzed result told us that with controlled age, sex and economic stage of subjects, parental attachment was positively related to prosocial behavior. Importantly, psychological capital mediated the association between parental attachment and prosocial behavior. Also, this research took deviant peer affiliation into account and found that this factor declined the influence of parental attachment on adolescents' prosocial behavior.

The Influence of Parental Socialization on Adolescent's Prosocial Behavior

The term socialization broadly refers to the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, language, social skills, and value to function as members in the community or a group. Adolescents are socialized by various factors, such as teachers and peers. Among the complex socializing relationships, one perspective regards parental socialization as an "adult-initiated" process by which children learn, imitate, and be trained to acquire the habits and values to adapt to the community and group [22]. Besides, Kuczynski and Grusec (1997) have claimed that parents are the most important influencing factor in the socialization of children primarily because parental socialization is not only an adaptive evolutionary strategy but also a biosocial system set up to favor the parent's influence on their children [23]. It is generally agreed that parental socialization determines various moral and emotional outcomes in children. There are three-dimension array to describe parental socialization: restrictiveness versus permissiveness, warmth versus hostility, and calm detachment versus anxious emotional involvement [24].

There was a study examined the influence that parental warmth/support and verbal hostility post on adolescent's prosocial behavior. 500 adolescents and their parents are engaged in the longitudinal study. There were two time-points in this project, namely, Time 2 and Time 3 which were approximately 1 year apart. Both questionnaire and observational ratings were used to measure prosocial behavior. Parenting was measure from dyadic interaction scale. Structural equation models showed that parental warmth was closely associated with adolescents' prosocial behavior. Importantly, maternal warmth was associated with prosocial behavior towards family, while paternal warmth was associated with prosocial behavior towards friends. The result also suggested that it was father hostility that influenced prosocial behavior rather than paternal warmth [25].

CONCLUSION

Both academic theory and empirical data support the hypothesis that the role of parents is one of the most important influencing factors for adolescents' prosocial behavior development. This is not surprising because adolescents will learn from their parents about their approaches of interacting with people and adapting to the community. Indeed, parents play various roles in the interactions with their children, including teacher, caregiver, playmate, and disciplinarian and attachment figure [26]. Thus, the importance of parental influence on adolescents' prosocial behavior will never be overstated. In this review, four major aspects of parental influence are given detailed explanation. One is residential mobility of the family. There have been some studies that show that the experience of relocation in adolescence can have an impact not only on the prosocial behavior of adolescents themselves, but also on the environment and stability of the entire residential community. The impact of residential mobility is complex because various factors are influential at the same time, such as moving distance, moving times, different races and cultures. As for the parenting style which is also proven to be associate with adolescents' prosocial behavior, it is positive to conclude that parental warmth/support are predictive to more prosocial behavior. In contrast, parental control negatively influences the adolescents' prosocial behavior development. The third subject is parental attachment where we can see the mediating effect of self-control and psychological capital play their roles. Positive mediators as self-control and psychological capital can positively mediate the association between parental attachment and prosocial behavior. However, the negative mediator like deviant peer affiliation declines the influence of parental attachment on adolescents' prosocial behavior. Besides, we realized that maternal and parental attachment influence adolescent's prosocial behavior independently. The last influencing factor is parental socialization which also sheds light on disparate influence of socialization of parents on the adolescents' prosocial behavior. It is of significance to divide maternal and paternal influence and conclude that maternal warmth was associated with prosocial behavior towards family, while paternal warmth was associated with prosocial behavior towards friends. In general, warm, supportive, responsive parents tend to positively influence adolescents' prosocial behavior. To develop prosocial behavior of adolescents, the indispensable to creating a positive parent-child relationship. For health development of adolescents' prosocial behavior, style of parental-child interaction should evolve as a consequence of behavior of both parents.

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