

Study of Parenting Styles of Multi-child Families in Different Eras in China

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Abstract: In recent years, with the continuous adjustment and changes in China's birth policy, the model of the multi-child family has returned to the public eye. Unlike traditional family upbringing, the parenting concepts and methods of today's large families are more varied. In family education, children's development is generally influenced by the "enriched environment", and children in multi-child families are exposed to a richer interpersonal and emotional environment. To help parents provide children with a better environment and educational resources, adjust parenting styles, and face the challenges of education nowadays, the study analyzes the parenting experiences and educational styles of multi-child families in different eras through a literature review and interviews, and it is found that the social, economic, and cultural backgrounds of different eras have important impacts on the educational styles of multi-child families. The study found that the social, economic, and cultural backgrounds of different eras would have a major impact on the educational styles of families with many children. Based on the results of this study, it is possible to draw general inferences about the future parenting styles of families with many children: while the state and society increase their support for families with many children, families with many children also pay more attention to their children's family education and endeavor to promote the all-around development of young children's bodies and minds.

Keywords: Family education, Large families, Parenting styles.

1. Introductory

Multi-child family upbringing, i.e., having two or more children in a family, is a form of family education that has gradually evolved in line with social progress and changes in family attitudes. It is of profound significance to understand and study multi-child family upbringing for the purpose of improving the quality of family education and fostering the healthy growth of the next generation. With the continuous adjustment of China's policies and the diversification of family structures, family education plays a vital role in individual and social development. As a typical family structure, the study of family upbringing in multi-child families helps to provide more comprehensive theoretical and practical guidance on family education. By studying the differences in parenting styles of multi-child families in separate eras, we can understand the relationship between the evolution of family education styles and social changes and is used as a basis for multi-child family parenting today and in the future. To summarize, understanding and studying the ways of educating families with numerous children can help advance the development of relationships between children, enhance the quality of family education, and provide a reference for family education policy formulation and practice.

2. Parenting Styles in Families with Many Children

2.1. Overview of parenting styles in large families

The family is the first station for the growth of young children. With the continuous liberalization of the birth policy, some families in China have begun to change their mode from

the traditional "three children in a family" to "four children in a family", "five children in a family," or more multi-child families. " Or five or more families with numerous children. This is distinct from the traditional family model, in which the parents pay full attention to one child. In addition to the parent-child and husband-and-wife relationships, there are multiple two-way role relationships in a multi-child family, namely, the relationship between the parents and the first child, the relationship between the parents and the second child, and the relationship between siblings. Parents or caregivers adopt different methods and strategies for raising their children to meet distinct needs.

2.2. Multi-child family upbringing in the 1970s

In order to respond to the wishes of the masses of people and to adopt the principle of public voluntariness as far as possible, in 1973 China formed a family planning policy centered on the principles of "late, sparse, and few", i.e., "encouraging young people of both sexes to marry late and to have children late, encouraging couples to lengthen the interval between births, and encouraging a couple to have fewer children". " That just says it is preferable for each couple to have one child, or at most two, and the interval between births must be at least three years. This not only satisfied the fertility requirements of women who wished to have children but was also consistent with population control at that time. Therefore, in the 1970s, large families usually consisted of two children, and parenting styles were mainly based on traditional family values and educational concepts. Parents or caregivers usually emphasize discipline and rules for their children and develop their character and habits through strict discipline. They may resort to harsh punishments, such as corporal punishment or frequent verbal reprimands, to ensure that the children follow the family rules. At the same time, multi-child families at this time focus on

fostering a sense of community in the family, and mutual support among family members is of great importance, which helps to enhance parent-child relationships and family cohesion.

2.3. Multi-child family parenting in the 21st century

Years of family planning policies have slowed China's rapid population growth, but the continuing low fertility rate has made the country's demographic problems increasingly prominent. In 2013, China began to make adjustments, starting from the "two-child", i.e., both couples with one child having two children, to the "full two-child", and the number of multi-child families is also rising compared to the end of the last century. After entering the 21st century, with the development of society and the updating of scholastic concepts, the parenting style of families with many children has also undergone some changes. Parents or dependents began to focus on the unique needs of each child. They focus more on the material needs of the children, such as making every effort to give each child the best educational resources and meeting the material needs of each child in the family within their means.

2.4. Parenting styles in large families from the 1920s to the present day

The results of the 2020 census showed that China's fertility rate had dropped to a very low level of 1.3 and that the process of population aging was gradually accelerating. In order to deal with this pressure, the fertility policy has changed from a "two-child policy" to a three-child policy. In our current society, the advance of science and technology and the explosive growth of information have led to greater changes in parenting styles. The parenting style of modern multi-child families pays more attention to equality and democracy, emphasizing equal communication and cooperation among family members. Parents play a more active role in their children's upbringing and build a closer relationship with them. They will accompany their children to learn, play, and explore together, and participate in household chores and decision-making together, so as to cultivate a sense of responsibility, independence, and autonomy in their children. Secondly, today's parenting styles for overweight families also concentrate more on an individualized approach to education. Parents will pay greater attention to the interests, talents, and developmental needs of each child and adopt different educational approaches and methods according to the characteristics and needs of atypical children. Such personalized education can better meet the developmental needs of each child and stimulate their potential and creativity.

3. Comparison of Different Parenting Styles Adopted by Different Generations of Caregivers in Large Families

3.1. Commonalities

Multi-child families have some common parenting styles across the ages, reflecting the continuity of core values and educational philosophies in family education through changes. The core objective of family education is to improve children's personalities and values. Whether it was a multi-child family in the 1970s or at the beginning of this century

and now, parents pay serious attention to the progress of their children's morals. They focus on the development of the whole person, focusing not only on academic ability but also on inner qualities. Supporting people generally give priority to the education and training of their children. Whether it is a multi-child family in the past or the present, parents generally give top priority to their children's schooling. They give their children varying degrees of attention and care, and they provide learning environments and resources. At the same time, they are more or less engaged in their children's learning and growth processes, communicating and interacting with them. Norms and discipline are also common denominators in home schooling. Both in the past and in the present, parents of families with many children are seriously concerned about discipline. They require their children to abide by family rules and discipline and promote a sense of responsibility and self-discipline. For example, they set the children's working hours, clarify the division of labor among family members, and limit the time spent using electronic devices. In addition, a certain amount of cooperation and joint effort between parents is common to most parenting styles in various families. Both in the past and now, most parents form a synergy and share the responsibility of home schooling. They cooperate, support each other, and work together to improve educational programs and goals. They divide up the work and coordinate with each other to ensure that their children are educated and cared for.

3.2. Differences

3.2.1. Influence of the social context

As society continues to evolve and change, people's attitudes and lifestyles have changed markedly, and this has had a direct impact on the parenting styles of families with numerous children. In the 1970s, when society was more conservative, family education focused on discipline and rules, and during this period, China implemented a planned economy and large-scale collectivization of the countryside. Parenting styles in larger families emphasized collectivism and shared work and valued collective interests over individual progress. Both the family and the school concentrate on fostering a sense of community and discipline in children. At the same time, the traditional family structure has slightly changed, and the traditional family model of the man's role outside the home and the woman's role inside the home has gradually been broken. Women began to come out of the home and participate in communal life, which also meant that the responsibility for upbringing in the family began to be divided between parents. Parents began to participate equally in the upbringing of their children. With China's reform and opening-up policies, society has changed dramatically. Parenting styles in multi-child families began to focus on personal development and autonomy. Parents encouraged their children to continue to pursue dreams and interests and provided more educational opportunities and resources. From the 1920s to the present, the pace of social change has accelerated even more. The trends of globalization and pluralism have intensified the diversity of societies and placed new demands on the parenting styles of families with numerous children. Family education needs to pay more attention to cultivating children's cross-cultural awareness and communication skills in order to adapt to societal environments in diverse cultural contexts. At the same time, social changes have brought more opportunities and challenges, and parents need to guide their children to face

competition and pressure correctly and to cultivate their adaptability and innovative spirit.

3.2.2. Economic capacity

In multi-child families in separate eras, pecuniary ability is an important influencing factor that plays a key role in parents' choices in parenting styles. As times have changed, people's economic conditions have evolved, which has had a marked impact on the parenting styles of families with numerous children. In the 1970s, due to the relatively low economic level, various families had limited financial means. During this period, families with numerous children usually faced economic pressure and were unable to provide richer material conditions and educational resources for each child. As a result, parents tend to adopt special parenting styles, such as perhaps focusing more on labor education for their children or giving only individual children the opportunity to receive an education, with those who fail to get the opportunity to receive an education working part-time jobs or other means of increasing the family's income and contributing to the rest of the family. As China's economic policies continue to be adjusted and the fiscal situation improves significantly, parents are paying greater attention to their children's education and personal development and are striving to provide better educational resources and opportunities for each child in the family. They may pay more attention to developing their children's academic abilities and professional skills. Countless families can provide better material conditions and educational resources, but at the same time, they confront the problem of overprotection and spoilage. Some parents may rely too much on financial means to solve problems and neglect their children's self-development and independent thinking skills. For instance, they may hire tutors to help their children with their studies, ignoring the advantages of potential cooperation that a larger family provides for children.

3.2.3. Cultural orientation

In different eras, family upbringing is affected by societal mores, cultural traditions, and policies and regulations that vary. Family upbringing in the last century was generally oriented toward traditional culture, in which the upbringing of families with numerous children focussed on filial piety and family values. Parents focus on cultivating filial piety and respect for elders in their children and on the communal interests and stability of the family. They may pay greater attention to the transmission of family traditions and family values and teach their children to follow outdated concepts. For instance, the ideas that the eldest son is expected to contribute to the family in a multi-child family and that male descendants are best able to pass on the family lineage were all concepts promoted by family upbringing at the time. The modernization of society has led to changes in the parenting style of substantial families; in this century, society has gradually moved to focus on personal growth and self-fulfillment. In this era, parents pay more attention to the development of their children's personal abilities and independent thinking. They encourage their children to pursue diverse hobbies and promote their specialties. For example, parents will explore distinctive children's talents in music, dancing, painting, etc. and encourage children in the family to participate in different training courses and interest groups. At the same time, society is now oriented toward paying more attention to all-round development and social responsibility. Parents want their children to have not only excellent academic performance and personal abilities but

also a sense of social responsibility and concern for others. Most parents use the atmosphere of their enormous families to promote a sense of teamwork and listening skills.

4. Advantages and Disadvantages of Parenting Styles in Multi-child Families in Different Eras and Their Recommendations

Mutual aid and cooperation between siblings in the multi-child families of the 1970s is a lesson to be learnt by today's families. Owing to the scarcity of various resources, mutual help and cooperation among siblings were shared in multi-child families at this time. Most of them take care of and help each other, learn to share and resolve conflicts, and initially enhance the spirit of teamwork. Meanwhile, in multi-child families, which are mostly influenced by habitual attitudes, the older children are usually able to deal with their younger siblings as they grow up with them. This situation allows children to develop social skills and skills for getting along with others through interaction with their siblings. However, in a multi-child family, where parents' limited resources and attention may not be fully equal to each child, avoiding favoritism and unfair behavioral treatments is something that deserves the attention of today's parents.

With a certain amount of material satisfaction, the parenting style of the turn of the century for large families was more concentrated on ensuring educational resources for each child. Parents were offered an educational environment and resources for each child in the family. To a certain extent, this kind of upbringing can ensure that each child in a family with many children receives the same educational treatment, but it should be noted that parents should pay attention to the children's psychological needs in upbringing and, at the same time, provide moderate guidance so that they understand the importance of responsibility. On the other hand, as people's material standard of living rises, the cost of raising a large family is also gradually rising, and how to utilize limited resources to maximize the educational advantages for a large number of children is also a problem that needs to be considered by the breadwinner.

Since 2020, the parenting style of enormous families has become more concentrated on the principles of equality and democracy. Parents are prepared to listen to and show greater respect for the wishes and choices of each child, giving priority to the development of independent thinking and problem-solving skills. The advantage of this parenting style is that it fosters independence and creativity in children, enabling them to become autonomous and adaptable individuals. However, the disadvantage is allowed be too permissive, resulting in children lacking a sense of rules and discipline. Parents are invited to raise their children in a way that respects their wishes and choices while giving them appropriate guidance and discipline so that they understand the balance between personal freedom and responsibility.

5. Development of Parenting in Large Families

It is anticipated that in the future, parenting in considerable families will receive more social and resource support. 2021 Since China began to implement the three-child policy and supporting measures in 2021, it has not reached the expected results. Some studies have shown that what affects fertility

intentions is mostly the influence of fertility costs, family attitudes, and marital emotional pressure. In order to truly promote the growth of the number of families with many children, the national level may introduce policies to improve the maternity insurance system; social forces will strengthen infrastructure construction and improve universal childcare services; and within the family, there will be a greater pursuit of division of labor and companionship and appropriate sharing of childcare costs with elders. Therefore, the costs of childbearing and child rearing in families with many children may no longer be borne solely by the family itself.

As times and society change, the ideology and methods of family education in families with many children are undergoing constant change, and the importance attached to them by parents and caregivers will continue to increase. Family education is showing more and more significance in social competition. In the past, more responsibility for education was borne by the school and society, but with the advancement of society and the updating of the concept of education, people have started to realize that family education is also an indispensable part of education. Parents will pay greater attention to each child's learning, provide more educational resources and support, and at the same time pay more attention to the children's physical and mental health, creating a truly beneficial environment for the children's growth and development.

6. Conclusion

The results of the study on the didactic styles of families with numerous children show that there are significant differences and changes in family education styles across different eras. The customary family education style focuses on discipline, filial piety, and the transmission of traditional values, while the contemporary family education style pays more attention to the development of individuality, respect for children's wishes, and the cultivation of independent thinking skills. The allocation of parents' time and resources is also a point of difference in the way we educate multi-child families. In traditional families, parents usually devote more time and resources to their adolescent sons or daughters, while in contemporary families, parents pay more attention to treating each child equally. In addition, parents' concepts and methods of education have also changed in the way they instruct multiple children in families at different times. In traditional families, parents generally adopt a strict approach to education, while in progressive families, parents pay more

attention to cultivating their children's unconventional thinking abilities and autonomy.

The study found that there are differences in the didactic styles of huge families in terms of competition and cooperation among siblings. In traditional families, competition between siblings is common, and parents will encourage competition among their children with a view to stimulating their drive and motivation to work. However, in modern families, parents place more emphasis on cooperation and mutual assistance between siblings, encouraging them to grow up together and promoting a sense of teamwork and cooperation.

To summarize, the results of the study on the edifying style of multi-child families show that there have been important changes in the family education style over different eras. The traditional family education style focuses on discipline, filial piety, and the transmission of traditional values, while the inventive family education style pays more attention to personality development, respecting children's wishes, and cultivating independent thinking. However, different family education styles have their advantages and limitations, so future research should be devoted to exploring how to fully utilize the advantages of different family education styles and overcome their limitations so as to provide more scientific and effective education styles and methods for families with many children.

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