

The Relationship between Schizophrenia and Parenting Styles

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Abstract. Schizophrenia is a prevalent mental illness with a high recurrence rate, which has been highly regarded. However, the causes of schizophrenia are the focus of substantial research, but are still not clear. To understand what stimuli would lead schizophrenia to occur and recur, scientists have already researched numerous potential influence factors, not only external stimuli but also internal stimuli, and even both of them. This review will concentrate on one specific factor: parenting styles. Parenting styles are a potential influencing factor that has drawn large attention, which could be a cause of several kinds of mental disorders. Based on previous studies, the score of the scale about parenting styles has a positive correlation with both the occurrence and recurrence of schizophrenia. Thus, this review could conclude that parenting styles would influence the occurrence and recurrence of schizophrenia, which could be a specific field that future development of diagnosis and treatment could work on.

Keywords: Schizophrenia, Parenting styles, Parent.

1. Introduction

Schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder that attracts much clinical and research attention due to its high occurrence and recurrence rate. Thus, in recent years, the causes and treatments of schizophrenia have been highly regarded. Schizophrenia commonly occurs in young people, an important period highly influenced by family environment and dynamics. Therefore, this review will mainly focus on the effect of different parenting styles on schizophrenia. By examining existing evidence on how parenting behaviors (e.g., emotional overinvolvement, criticism, warmth, or neglect) may contribute to risk or protective factors for schizophrenia, this paper aims to identify or rule out parenting style as a relevant environmental factor.

2. Introduction of Key Concepts

2.1. Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia has five characteristic symptoms, including delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, catatonic behavior, and negative symptoms. According to the DSM-5, there should be at least two of the five characteristic symptoms that persist for a month, and at least one symptom among delusions, hallucinations, and disorganized speech should appear in those three to diagnose a schizophrenia [1].

2.2. Parenting Styles

Parenting styles usually consist of demandingness and responsiveness. The researchers usually categorize different parenting styles by using the Family Assessment Device (FAD) and Egna Minnen av Barndoms Uppfostran (EMBU). In the FAD scale, a higher score represents worse family function. In EMBU, which was edited by Dongmei Yue in 1993, parenting styles would be discussed as father's parenting style and mother's parenting style. Father's parenting style has six factors: 1. Emotional warmth and understanding; 2. Punishment and severity; 3. Excessive interference; 4. preference; 5. refuse and deny; 6. overprotection [2]. Mother's parenting style has five factors: 1. Emotional warmth and understanding; 2. Excessive interference and excessive protection; 3. refuse and deny; 4. Punishment and severity; 5. preference [2].

According to different results given by the EMBU, the parenting style could be distributed into different categories.

3. The Relationship between Schizophrenia and Parenting Styles

3.1. The Effect of Parenting Styles on the incidence of schizophrenia

To analyze whether different parenting styles would play a role in the occurrence of schizophrenia, one research study collected data from two groups of people: the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group contained 80 people who diagnosed with schizophrenia, and the control group contained 80 people who did not diagnosed with mental illnesses. All people in these two groups are selected with corresponding living area, gender ratio, and so on. Then, the researchers tested the FAD and EMBU and collected score of each individual in two groups. In this study, the experimental group has a significantly higher FAD score than the control group; significantly higher excessive interference and excessive protection, refuse and deny, and preference score in mother's parenting style in EMBU than the control group; and significant higher excessive interference, punishment and severity, preference, and overprotection in father's parenting style in EMBU than control group. In addition, the emotional warmth and understanding factor in both fathers' and mothers' parenting styles of the experimental group are significantly lower than those of the control group [3].

Another study with the same grouping standard shows the same result as the previous one, which is shown in the three tables below (See Table 1,2 & 3).

Table 1. The Comparison of FAD Score between Two Groups(x±s) [2].

FAD	Experimental Group(n=74)	Control Group(n=79)	t	P
Question Solving	2.09±0.70	1.70±0.59	9.39	0.000
Communication	2.30±0.70	1.53±0.61	21.99	0.000
Character	2.35±0.73	1.50±0.62	25.96	0.000
Emotion	2.40±0.76	1.48±0.67	19.39	0.000
Interference	2.48±0.75	1.36±0.58	27.73	0.000
Action	2.40±0.72	1.60±0.69	21.34	0.000
Total score	2.23±0.73	1.50±0.66	22.78	0.000

Table 2. The Comparison of EMBU Score between Two Groups(x±s) [2].

EMBU(Mother)	Experimental Group(n=74)	Control Group(n=79)	t	P
Emotional Warmth and Understanding	49.86±8.40	56.20±12.40	3.72	0.00
Excessive Interference and Excessive Protection	39.29±8.85	33.52±9.07	-4.02	0.00
Refuse and Deny	24.34±4.95	12.09±5.32	-5.91	0.00
Punishment and Severity	14.12±4.01	13.96±4.22	0.75	0.12
Preference	11.74±2.47	9.16±3.41	-5.4	0.00

Table 3. The Comparison of EMBU Score between Two Groups(x±s) [2].

EMBU(Father)	Experimental Group(n=74)	Control Group(n=79)	t	P
Emotional Warmth and Understanding	48.24±7.13	51.29±13.68	1.73	0.03
Excessive Interference	26.68±8.73	17.30±8.372	-6.82	0.00
Refuse and Deny	22.17±7.92	19.90±4.96	-2.13	0.33
Punishment and Severity	11.83±2.93	10.16±3.04	-3.47	0.01
Preference	13.41±5.59	9.32±4.05	-5.20	0.00
Overprotection	11.61±3.43	8.62±3.13	-5.66	0.00

Furthermore, one study shows that parents' marital status could also enhance the rate of occurrence of schizophrenia, which could help researchers confirm that schizophrenia is associated with parents having less parental care and emotional warmth from an other perspective [4].

Moreover, one study used a different grouping standard to test the correlation of parenting style and schizophrenia. The researchers in this study divided 120 children with schizophrenia into one experimental group and one control group. The experimental group contains children with symptoms, and the control group contains children who do not have any symptoms. In the end of the test, the father's parenting style in EMBU shows significantly higher value in preference in the experimental group than the control group, and there is no statistically significant difference in the mother's parenting style. However, the experimental group has significantly lower emotional warmth and understanding in the mother's parenting style than the control group, and that part has no statistically significant difference in the father's parenting style. In addition, there is a negative correlation between emotional warmth and understanding factor and schizophrenia symptoms, and a positive correlation between punishment and severity of the symptoms between the two groups [5].

To sum up, almost all of the studies used FAD and EMBU as the tools to identify the parenting style, although some of them include a few different methods, they could still make the same conclusion that people with schizophrenia usually live with the parent who has high control and little emotional warmth.

Thus, according to those studies, this review can conclude that parenting style could be a potential factor in the occurrence of schizophrenia.

Nevertheless, future studies in this field could make a development in case study, which could help researchers to better clarify this factor's influence.

3.2. The Impact of Parenting Styles on the Relapse Rate

One major focus of schizophrenia is its relapse rate, which has a significant impact on those who have the illness [6]. In this section, one study used the Social Support Rating Scale (SSRS), Family Environmental Scale-Chinese version (FES-CV), and EMBU to reflect the parenting style for each participant. 200 diagnosed cases of schizophrenia would be divided into two groups. The experimental group includes participants with no recurrence, and the control group contains participants with recurrence. To avoid confounding variables, each participant would receive a single type of anti-psychotic drug for the rest of the year after they are discharged from the hospital. In this study, the experimental group shows significantly higher scores in both FES-CV, SSRS, and EMBU [7].

Another study tested the influence of parenting style on the suicide ideation of schizophrenia, which is a kind of recurrent symptom. They divided 100 schizophrenia participants into two groups. The experimental group includes participants with suicidal ideation, and the control group includes the rest of the participants without suicidal ideation. During the research, they used the Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation (BSSI) to evaluate the suicide ideation, and used FES-CV to evaluate the parenting style. The study shows that the BSSI has a negative correlation with FES-CV in two groups [8]. Moreover, one study indicated that family intimate relationships play a role in the recurrence rate of schizophrenia [9]. Furthermore, one study demonstrated that if parenting style are categorized as 4 types: authoritative, democratic, permissive, and neglectful, the study would find that authoritative and permissive styles usually have a higher recurrence rate than other types [10].

Based on the above, with studies used some different methods and tested different aspects, all of the researches can reach the same conclusion. Therefore, this review can make a summary that the relationship between parenting style and the recurrence rate of schizophrenia exist. On the other hand, future studies could focus on whether differences in SSRS scores are associated with variation in BSSI values, which will reassure the existence of the relationship.

4. Discussion

According to the studies above, this review can make a conclusion that the parenting style does affect schizophrenia. Specifically, the negative correlation between them means that positive parenting style could help both the occurrence rate and recurrence rate decline. Thus, this review suggests that the family of schizophrenia should provide them enough parental care and understanding, but do not show excessive preference and interference. For instance, the main characters in the family like parent or sibling could regularly offer a time period for accompany, which could be helpful for the recovery of schizophrenia. Moreover, when consider about the factors cause schizophrenia, researchers should not ignore the parenting style as an important factor, and in the future innovation of the treatment of schizophrenia, scientists could consider parenting style as a potential focus of intervention. Furthermore, researchers could develop certain study on whether the parenting style influence schizophrenia on physiological field, such as the change in parenting style cause which brain structure or function change, or has no any influence.

5. Conclusion

This review made a summary about the research that discussed whether there is a relationship between parenting style and schizophrenia. Based on several studies, this review could demonstrate that the effect of different parenting styles on schizophrenia is statistically significant, and could be shown in different aspects. Therefore, scientists could identify the parenting style as one of the influencing factors, and focus more on this point in future study and clinical treatment, which may help the clinical development of schizophrenia more comprehensively and accurately.

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