

「研究論文」

The links between parents' child rearing attitudes, children's social skills, and support giving and receiving in friendships among junior high school students

Hirokazu TANIGUCHI

(Department of Educational Psychology, Nagasaki University)

Abstract

The links between parents' child rearing attitudes, children's social skills, and support giving and receiving in friendships among junior high school students were examined, with particular emphasis on the mediating effect of social skills on the relation between parents' child rearing attitudes and support giving and receiving. The samples were 289 second- and third-year junior high school students who completed a retrospective measure of parental care and overprotection as well as self-rating measures of help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills and of support giving and receiving in a friendship during the preceding several months. More caring and less intrusive parents' child rearing attitudes were associated with higher levels of children's help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills, which in turn were related to more support giving and receiving in friendships. Thus, children's social skills mediated the relation between parents' child rearing attitudes and support giving and receiving in friendships.

Key words: parents' child rearing attitudes, social skills, social support, junior high school students.

Introduction

Parents' child rearing attitudes have been found to be linked with their children's social skills (Argyle & Henderson, 1985; Ladd & Price, 1986; Morishita, 1990; W.A. Scott, R. Scott, & McCabe, 1991; Togasaki & Sakano, 1997; Yano & Ura, 1996a; 1996b). It has been also found that social skills are related to support giving and receiving (Berg & McQuinn, 1989; Cohen, Sherrod, & Clark, 1986; Kikuchi, 1998; Procidano & Heller, 1983; B.R. Sarason, I.G. Sarason, Hacker, & Basham, 1985; Suzuki, 1992). These results suggest that parents' child rearing attitudes may impact on support giving and receiving among children through social skills.

Taniguchi and Ura (2001) examined the linkage among parents' child rearing attitudes, children's social skills, and support giving and receiving in children's friendships, with particular interest in the mediating effect of social skills on the relation between

parents' child rearing attitudes and support giving and receiving. The results indicated that among elementary school and high school students, more caring and less intrusive parents' child rearing attitudes are associated with higher levels of help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills in children, which in turn are related to more support giving and receiving in friendships. Thus children's social skills mediate the relation between parents' child rearing attitudes and support giving and receiving in friendships. Moreover, this mediating effect of children's social skills strengthens as children grow older.

In this study, another survey on junior high school students was conducted to examine the relations of parents' child rearing attitudes, children's social skills and support giving and receiving in their friendships.

Method

Participants and Procedure

The participants were 289 second- and third-year junior high school students (160 boys and 129 girls). Their average age was 14.0 years. Homeroom teachers distributed a questionnaire package to students either during a long homeroom period or after school. Before filling out the questionnaire, the students were informed that their responses remained confidential and would have no influence on their school records. They completed the questionnaire package at their own pace.

Measures

Child rearing attitudes. From the Parental Bonding Instrument (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979) with two subscales (the 12-item care scale and the 13-item overprotection scale), 10 care items and 10 overprotection items were selected and translated into Japanese. The care scale assesses each parent's levels of being affectionate and sympathetic, or cold and neglectful. The overprotection scale measures the degree to which each parent was intrusive and infantilizing, or having the composure of mind for independence and autonomy in their children. The participants were asked to respond to the items on the basis of the extent to which each item holds true for attitudes and behavior that their mother (or their foster parent in case of those with no mother) had shown towards them. Answers could range from *not at all true* (1) to *very true* (4). A factor analysis with varimax rotation and a fixed number of two factors was conducted with all the care and overprotection items. As a result, eight of the care items loaded higher than .40 on the first factor, while four of the overprotection items loaded higher than .40 on the second factor. Based on these results, two scores of child rearing attitudes were computed by summing the items that loaded higher than .40 for each

factor.

Social skills. From the Scale of Social Skill for Children (Shoji, 1994) consisting of four subscales for help-sympathy skill (14 items), assertion-activeness skill (11 items), tease-interference skill (five items), and rejection-disregard skill (six items), eight help-sympathy skill items and seven assertion-activeness skill items were selected. The Participants were asked to assess the extent to which each item would apply to them. Answers could range from *not at all true* (1) to *very true* (4). With all the help-sympathy skill items and the assertion-activeness skill items, a factor analysis with varimax rotation and a fixed number of two factors was performed. As a result, six of the help-sympathy skill items loaded higher than .40 on the first factor, whereas six of the assertion-activeness skill items loaded higher than .40 on the second factor. Upon these results, the both social skills scores were computed by totaling the items that loaded higher than .40 on each factor.

Support received from a friend. From the 16-item Scale of Expectancy for Social Support for Junior High School Students (Okayasu, Shimada, & Sakano, 1993), six items were selected. The participants were asked to choose their best friend and evaluate them on the basis of how often that friend had given support to them over the last several months. Since the original scale is a measure to evaluate the degree of expectancy for support, the original response options ranging from *not at all likely* (1) to *very likely* (4) were replaced by another set of options ranging from *never* (1) to *very often* (4), in order to quantify the support received. The total score of all the items showed the internal consistency of .89 for this scale.

Support given to a friend. Six items on the support received from a friend scale were modified to encompass support given to a friend, and to assess the actual support given. The participants were asked to choose the same friend whom they had chosen in rating support receiving, and to complete the items based on how often they had given support to their friend in the past several months. Answers could range from *never* (1) to *very often* (4). The summed-up score across items indicated the internal consistency of .89 for this scale.

Results and Discussion

First, the questions of whether parents' child rearing attitudes would relate to children's social skills, and whether children's social skills would be associated with their support giving and receiving in a friendship were examined. This study then reviewed whether children's social skills would mediate the relationship between parent's child rearing attitudes and support giving and receiving.

Correlations between parents' child rearing attitudes, children's social skills, and support giving and receiving in a friendship

Table 1 presents the correlation coefficients among all the variables examined in this study: parents' child rearing attitudes (parental care and overprotection), children's social skills (help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills), and support giving and receiving in a friendship. Parents' child rearing attitudes were significantly related to children's social skills. Parental care positively and significantly correlated with help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills ($r=.31$, $p<.01$, and $r=.33$, $p<.01$, respectively). Parental overprotection negatively and significantly correlated with help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills ($r=-.13$, $p<.05$, and $r=-.19$, $p<.01$, respectively). The children who retrospectively perceived their parents to have been caring and affectionate and not dominating or overprotective perceived themselves to be socially skilled. The results of this study also signified that parental care had stronger correlation with social skills than parental overprotection did. These findings suggest the possibility that parental care plays a more important role in their children's learning of positive social skills such as help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills than parental overprotection does.

Table 1 *Correlations between parents' child rearing attitudes, children's social skills, and support giving and receiving in a friendship*

Measure	Parental care	Parental overprotection	Help skill	Assertion skill	Support giving
Parental care	—				
Parental overprotection	-.32**	—			
Help-sympathy skill	.31**	-.13*	—		
Assertion-activeness skill	.33**	-.19**	.49**	—	
Support given to a friend	.23**	-.07	.61**	.45**	—
Support received from a friend	.33**	-.07	.59**	.37**	.72**

Note. Sample size ranges from 295-312. * $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$.

Children's social skills were found to be significantly related to support giving and receiving in a friendship. Help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills positively and significantly correlated with support giving ($r=.61$, $p<.01$, and $r=.45$, $p<.01$, respectively) and with support receiving ($r=.59$, $p<.01$, and $r=.37$, $p<.01$, respectively). The children who reported high levels of help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills gave more support to their friend and received more support from their friend than those who reported low levels. The positive correlation between social skills and support giving implies that both help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills promote prosocial behavior including support giving in friendships. Likewise, the positive correlation between social skills and support receiving indicates that children with

greater social skills are better able to mobilize available support from others. On the one hand, children with high help-sympathy skill shall receive more support from their friends by extending more support to them. On the other hand, children with high assertive skill shall receive more support from their friends through support seeking as a coping strategy, when they are confronted with stressful events.

The effect of parents' child rearing attitudes and children's social skills on support giving and receiving in a friendship

With an aim to clarify whether children's social skills mediate the relationship between parent's child rearing attitudes, and support giving and receiving in a friendship, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. At the first step of these analyses, the predictors of support giving and receiving, i.e. parents' child rearing attitudes (parental care and overprotection) were entered into the regressions, and then children's social skills (help-sympathy and assertion-activeness skills) were entered at the second step.

Table 2 Hierarchical regressions predicting support giving and receiving in a friendship

Measure	Step 1: Beta	Step 2: Beta	R ² change	F of change
Support given to a friend				
Parental care	.22**	.01		
Parental overprotection	-.02	.04	.05	7.44**
Help-sympathy skill	—	.55**		
Assertion-activeness skill	—	.32**	.35	82.13**
<i>F</i> (4, 285)=46.89, <i>p</i> < .01; cumulative <i>R</i> ² =.40				
Support received from a friend				
Parental care	.33**	.16**		
Parental overprotection	-.01	.04	.11	17.72**
Help-sympathy skill	—	.52**		
Assertion-activeness skill	—	.21**	.27	62.30**
<i>F</i> (4, 285)=43.79, <i>p</i> < .01; cumulative <i>R</i> ² =.38				

Note. Dashes indicate that the variable was not in the model at that step of the hierarchical regression analysis. **p*<.05, ***p*<.01.

The results are shown in Table 2. In the predictions of both support giving and receiving, the increments of *R*² induced by inclusion of social skills as the second step were significant. Furthermore, in predicting support giving, the beta weights for parents' child rearing attitudes became insignificant, when children's social skills were entered into the regressions at the second step. In predicting support receiving, the beta weights for parents' child rearing attitudes diminished. These results indicate that children's social skills do mediate between parents' child rearing attitudes and support giving and receiving in a friendship (see Baron & Kenny, 1986). Taniguchi and Ura

(2001) found that both parental care and social skills predicted support giving among elementary school students, while only social skills predicted support giving among high school students. In this study of junior high school students, only social skills predicted support giving, which is in line with the results of high school students. These results suggest possible intensification of the mediating effect of children's social skills in line with the growth of children.

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