

Educational anxiety and expectations of middle-class Chinese families Under the promulgation of the double reduction policy

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Abstract:

In the context of the policy issued by the Ministry of Education of China to reduce the academic pressure of primary and secondary school students, families across the country are increasingly anxious about education. On this basis, this study has determined to study the educational anxiety and educational expectations of middle class families in China. Using 2021 data from the China Family Data Tracker, this paper analyzes the data of middle-class families in China to explore what factors contribute to educational anxiety and expectations. The results show that family income and the number of family members have no influence on educational anxiety and expectation, and this anxiety will greatly affect children's mental health development, which needs social attention.

Keywords: education anxiety, education expectations, education attention, middle class

1. Introduction

Educational anxiety refers to "individuals' inability to achieve their goals or overcome obstacles, resulting in a setback of self-esteem and self-confidence, or increased sense of failure and guilt, forming a state of nervousness and fear"[1]. Generally speaking, educational anxiety mainly refers to individuals in the process of education or over-worrisome of educational outcomes[1,2]. The resulting tension, anxiety, irritability, fear and other emotions, including students, parents, teachers and other education participants.

After the popularization of nine-year compulsory education, the number of people enjoying basic education has been increasing. At the same time, with the continuous growth of China's population, more and more parents begin to worry about their children's future, and then turn to the pressure on their children's academics. In order to make children adapt to social development faster, parents began to require them to achieve excellent academic results, which is reflected in the purchase of school districts and the training of cram schools[3].

In 2022, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued opinions on further reducing the burden of students' homework and off-campus training in the compulsory education stage, requiring all regional departments to conscientiously implement it in accordance with the actual situation. However, parental anxiety has not shifted, but has been increasing. In the context of the general improvement of children's academic requirements, Chinese middle class families hope to achieve upward mobility through their children's education, and at the

same time, parents have increased their investment in children's education and training.

2. Literature review

The ideal social class structure is considered to take "middle-income group" and "social class" as a term with the characteristics of China's social development, and China is also regarded as an olive-type social structure based on this[1-3].

Since the reform and opening up, unlike the "class" in the West, which divides finance and power as the standard, the "class" is more inclined to bring a series of benefits to social and economic development, and to take "production relations as the basis for division". There are different degrees of stratification, which has resulted in the phenomenon of stratification, and the proportion of medium-sized income groups has increased significantly, and the level of development gap between urban and rural areas has been significantly reduced by all members of society according to reputation, power and wealth and the living standards of residents[5].

In China, the middle class is the majority of the population, and they have a lot of education problems, especially about education anxiety and education expectations.

Because educational anxiety has been discussed as a social phenomenon in previous studies, because there are few academic definitions about it. In the existing literature, there are three main reasons for parents' education anxiety.

(1) Competitive pressure: China's education competition is fierce, and middle-class families generally believe that

education is the key to children’s future success. They are worried that their children will lag behind their peers in the fierce competition, so they are very strict with their academic requirements.

(2) Social expectations: Society also has high expectations of middle-class family children, hoping that they can become the backbone of society. Parents bear the pressure of their children’s future development, hoping that they can receive better education to realize their social status and family social recognition.

(3) Income and education burden: Middle-class families have relatively high incomes, but they also face a greater education burden. They not only have to pay high tuition fees, but also bear the cost of various training courses and extracurricular activities for their children, which makes them have higher expectations for education and increases the pressure on education.

For the above reasons, parents’ anxiety will be directly reflected in their children’s spirit and studies. It is expressed as an expectation of education for children[4].

3. Question conjecture

I will further study what factors will affect educational anxiety and educational expectations, and explore whether the anxiety and expectations generated by parents will be fed back to children, if feedback plays a positive role or reverse mental stress.

The themes of this study are defined based on politics, culture, and history:

- (1) The impact of the “internal volume” environment on the educational expectations of middle-class families.
- (2) The change of domestic reformed education policy.
- (3) How educational anxiety is reflected in the family and how the impact on children is presented.

After the subject of the investigation was determined to be the middle class, I made two assumptions and prepared to use the following data analysis to verify the rationality of the hypothesis.

- (1) Educational anxiety and educational expectations are positively related to the income of family
- (2) Children’s mental health problems are positively

related to educational anxiety and educational expectations

4. Data selection

According to the data of Chinese Family Panel Studies Children’s Bank in 2018, the researchers explored the impact of economic and non-economic factors on parents’ education expenditure on their children and whether parents’ education expenditure has a negative impact on children’s psychology. The interviewed children will identify 34 phrases in the cognitive part of the questionnaire. The system scores within 0-34 points according to the number of phrases correctly recognised by children, and the test ends when the three words are wrong in a row. In order to ensure the fairness of the score, the starting point of the test for children in different grades is different.

In first experiment, for the family’s economic situation, researchers mainly measure it through family income, real estate stocks and other family property and family education expenditure. Non-economic factors mainly look at the parents’ education level (years of education, cognitive test scores), the expectations of children’s education level, and the process of participating in children’s education.

In addition, the researchers also controlled variable ,like gender, grade, household registration nature and province of the children interviewed[6].

In second experiment, the family sample data used were the data integration resources of cfps’ 2018 survey on middle-class families and the emotional self-assessment scale filled out by adolescents about academic pressure. The mood self-rating scale includes a variety of negative emotions and is graded from low to high on a scale of 1 to 10. The interviewers selected the corresponding answers according to their different family backgrounds and drew conclusions. The data used are time-sensitive, authoritative, inclusive of the population, and have a strong persuasive and representative role.

5. Data analysis

Table 1. Relationship between educational anxiety and expectation and family members

Source	coefficient	std.err.	t	p> t
tb4-a18-m	-416.8174	271.2643	3.92	0.148
Tb4-a18-f	1064.053	496.1404	9.95	0.000
familysize18	4936.277	2524.696	152.54	0.000
	385128.8			0.000

Table 2. The relationship between educational anxiety and expectation and family income

Source	coefficient	std.err.	t	p> t
pd503r	0003902	0000205	19.02	0.000
-cons	-6.605062	0201679	-327.50	0.000

The independent and dependent variables of the two pictures are family income, parents' expenditure on education, parents' education level, and parents' expenditure on education. Parents' expenditure on parents can be reflected in the amount of parents' education expectations.

Research shows that in terms of family expenditure and parents' education level, the P value of the two pictures is close to 0, which also shows that the amount of family income and the education level of parents have no significant impact on parents' education level[1,2].

In terms of the family's economic situation and the way parents raise their children, there is no significant relationship between family income and parents' expectations for their children's education level and their participation in children's education, and there is little connection between the family environment. That is to say, the economic situation of the family will hardly affect the importance that parents attach to their children's education. In fact, the data shows that parents of high-income families devote less energy to their children's education[6].

In terms of non-economic factors, parents with higher education level seem to invest more in their children's education and training, but because this relationship is not very significant, we can't determine whether education level is the most important factor affecting parents' educational expectations and anxiety.

After completing the questionnaire survey of parents, the researchers used the questionnaire to investigate the impact of the family's education expenditure on their children's academics.

From the results of the questionnaire, it can be seen that parents' academic requirements for their children will be fed back to their children's daily life, causing psychological problems.

However, it is obvious that the mental health problems of parents and children are positively related to educational anxiety and educational expectations.

6. Conclusion

The results show that the educational anxiety and expectations of middle-class families are not significantly related to the amount of family income or the number of

family members. And family anxiety and expectation can cause harm to teenagers' psychological problems.

Educational anxiety not only has a serious impact on the physical and mental health of students, but also inhibits their interest and motivation to learn. Students in an anxious state often feel a lot of pressure, unable to concentrate, and are prone to learning difficulties and learning burnout. This situation not only hinders students' academic development, but may also cause other psychological problems, such as depression and inferiority complex, and even lead to a vicious circle of learning.

That is to say, in daily life, even if parents are anxious because of the involution they should maintain a good attitude to look at their children's learning problems, pay more attention to their children's daily life, and ensure that their children have negative or even extreme thoughts because of anxiety.

The emergence of educational anxiety is mainly caused by overloaded education models. The current education system pursues grades and rankings, putting great pressure on students, forcing them to face a surge in homework, competitive upward pressure and endless extracurricular activities. This kind of education that overemphasizes competition and examinations deprives students of their autonomy and creativity, causing them to fall into a whirlpool of anxiety.

Modern society is paying more and more attention to education, and parents and students have higher and higher expectations for education. However, at the same time, educational anxiety also follows. This article will explore the causes, performance and impact on students of educational anxiety, and call for effective measures to reduce the stress of educational anxiety.

Also, the education should all the people in the society do hard work, not only parents ,but also the teachers and government manger meant.

To be honest, it is difficult for children to realize, In order to reduce educational anxiety, parents should realize that education should be a process of cultivating students' all-round development, rather than just focusing on scores and competition. We need to get rid of the overloaded education model, pay attention to the physical and mental health of students, and provide them with a comfortable learning environment. Only in this way can we cultivate

more confident and creative students and make greater contributions to the development of society. Help the next research to explore how to treat the problem of social education with a normal perspective, overcome the negative impact of anxiety, and establish a correct concept of education.

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