

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL PSYCAP AND PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SKILLS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PARENTING STYLE

Cai WenMin, Roselan Baki

Abstract – Social skills are the abilities that children possess to adapt to social life and engage in social interactions, and they comprise a series of complex interpersonal behaviors. Social skills are significant for an individual's survival and development, as high social skill levels in children enable them to adapt to their environment and establish good relationships with peers. The factors that influence children's social skills can be categorized into two aspects: individual factors and social factors, among which the family is the most important social factor. Studies have shown that parents' psychological state significantly affects the development of their children, as their emotional state and stress level can negatively impact their children's development through parent-child interactions and the family atmosphere. Furthermore, parents' psychological state also influences their parenting style. This study aims to explore the relationship between parents' psychological capital, parenting style, and social skills in preschool children. Quantitative data on the psychological capital and parenting style of 302 parents of preschool children were collected through a questionnaire survey, and the social skills of these preschool children were measured through a questionnaire survey completed by their teachers. The results showed a significant correlation between parents' psychological capital, parenting style, and the social skills of preschool children. It was also found that parenting style played a partial mediating role between parents' psychological capital and preschool children's social skills. This finding is helpful for parents to better understand how their own psychological capital and parenting style can promote the development of their children's social skills, thereby assisting their children to adapt to social life more effectively.

Keywords – Parental PsyCap; Parenting Style; Social Skills

I. INTRODUCTION

Social skills refer to an individual's ability to learn socially acceptable behaviors and avoid socially unacceptable ones when interacting with others. Having good social skills contributes to students' academic success, learning outcomes, and ability to get along with peers and families (Gresham & Elliott, 2015; Lee,

Bierman, Heinrichs & Welsh, 2018). Children with skilled social skills know how to use a range of social behaviors (including tone of voice, gestures, facial expressions, body posturing, and cooperation with others) appropriately and respond effectively to possible conflict situations (Elliott & Gresham, 2008). According to Piaget, children under the age of six are not yet equipped to develop social skills. Preschool is an important period for the development of children's social skills, which is the foundation of children's good social and personality development.

Parenting style play a critical role in shaping children's social skills (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Kamble & Jadhav, 2017). Parenting style refers to the overall pattern of behavior that parents exhibit in raising their children. It includes a set of attitudes and practices that parents use to nurture and socialize their children, including discipline, communication, warmth, expectations, and involvement in their children's lives (Wang, Q. et al., 2021; Robinson, C. et al., 2022).

Parenting style is an important factor affecting children's socialization (Wang Yijing, 2017) Baumrind (1968) found that authoritative parenting, which is characterized by high warmth, high control, and open communication, was associated with positive outcomes in children's social development. Darling and Steinberg (1993) proposed an integrative model of parenting style and argued that parenting style is an important context that shapes children's social and emotional development. Baumrind (1991) found that authoritative parenting was associated with higher levels of social competence in adolescents, while other parenting styles, such as authoritarian and permissive parenting, were associated with lower levels of social competence. Maccoby and Martin (1983) examined the ways in which parent-child interactions influence children's social development, and found that warm, supportive parenting was associated with positive social outcomes, while harsh or neglectful parenting was associated with negative outcomes. These studies suggest that parenting style plays an important role in shaping children's social skills and emotional development.

Parenting style have a significant influence on children's social skills while there are many factors that have an influence on parenting styles. Belsky (1984) pointed out that there are three main domains that determine parenting styles, which are parents' personal psychological resources, their children's characteristics, and the stressors and supports from situational sources. These three domains ultimately affect children's

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development through the parenting process. Among these domains, the most crucial one is parents' personal psychological resources. These personal resources can affect the way parents interact with their children and the quality of the parent-child relationship, which in turn can influence children's development, including their social skills.

According to Belsky's theory, parents' personal psychological resources include a variety of aspects such as their emotional well-being, cognitive abilities, personality traits, and coping strategies. Individual's psychological capital can be considered a part of personal psychological resources. Psychological capital refers to an individual's positive psychological state of development, which includes four key components: self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2005).

Based on Belsky's theory, this study hypothesizes that parents' psychological capital will affect their parenting styles. Specifically, it is expected that parents with higher levels of psychological capital will have more positive and effective parenting styles. These effective parenting styles will, in turn, influence their children's social skill development, with children of parents who possess positive and effective parenting styles expected to have better social skills, such as effective communication, cooperation with others, and self-control. Furthermore, this research hypothesizes that parents' psychological capital has a direct impact on their children's social skill development. The higher the level of parents' psychological capital, the higher the level of social skills expected for their children.

This line of research can deepen our understanding of how family factors impact children's social skill development, and inform educators and parents on how to provide support and interventions to promote children's social skills. Moreover, this study can provide valuable information to policymakers in developing better policies to support children's social skill development.

II. METHODS

this study aims to explore the relationship between parents' psychological capital, parenting styles, and the social skills of preschool children. A quantitative research method will be employed which composed by three questionnaires namely, The Positive Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PPQ), Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ), and Social Skills Rating System (SSRS).

2.1 Participants

In existing studies on the relationship between parental psychological capital and parenting styles, Niu Yunxia (2015) found a correlation of 0.3 between the psychological capital of Chinese high school students' fathers and their parenting styles. The aim of the study is to determine the correlation between "parental PsyCap", "parenting styles" and preschoolers' "social skills". The aim is to get significant result ($P < 0.05$) with sufficient power (80%) to detect at least correlation of 0.4. Therefore, I used the GPower software to calculate the

minimum sample size, and the minimum required sample size for this study is 96.

The questionnaire survey in this study adopted Stratified Sampling to determine the sample. Stratified sampling is a commonly used sampling method in statistics, and it is widely used in practice. Its theoretical foundation can be traced back to the research of statisticians Neyman and Scott in the 1920s, who developed the principles and methods of stratified sampling. Since then, stratified sampling has been widely used in survey research, statistical analysis, quality control, and other fields (Cochran, 1977). In this questionnaire survey, the researcher selected kindergartens in three different areas (urban, town, and rural) of Chaozhou City, Guangdong Province, China, which is the first layer of stratification. Then according to the minimum sample size calculated in GPower software as 96, I have decided to select 100-120 children from each kindergarten as the research sample (i.e., 35-40 preschoolers in each of the three grades: small class, middle class, and large class), which is the second layer of stratification. Finally, the researchers distributed questionnaires to the parents and teachers of these preschoolers, who are representatives of the preschoolers and can provide information on parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and the preschoolers' social skills, which is the third layer of stratification. Using stratified sampling method can ensure that the sample represents the entire target population and can reduce errors and improve accuracy.

This study collected a total of 348 questionnaires (Each child has three questionnaires in total, including a parental psychological capital questionnaire, a parenting style questionnaire, and a social skills questionnaire) from three kindergartens in urban, suburban, and rural areas. After excluding invalid and questionnaires with missing values, the study finally obtained a sample of 302 children. Specific demographic information about the participants are on Table I.

TABLE I: SAMPLE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

| Category | Option | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Valid Percentage (%) | Cumulative Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Gender | Boy | 149 | 49.3 | 49.3 | 49.3 |
| | Girl | 153 | 50.7 | 50.7 | 100 |
| Age | 4-year-old | 102 | 33.8 | 33.8 | 33.8 |
| | 5-year-old | 101 | 33.5 | 33.5 | 67.3 |
| | 6-year-old | 99 | 32.8 | 32.7 | 100 |
| Family Location | City | 103 | 34.1 | 34.1 | 34.1 |
| | Town | 99 | 32.8 | 32.8 | 66.9 |
| | Village | 100 | 33.1 | 33.1 | 100 |
| Family Monthly Income (RMB) | Below 5000 | 47 | 15.6 | 15.6 | 15.6 |
| | 5000-10000 | 160 | 53 | 53 | 68.5 |
| | 10001-20000 | 83 | 27.5 | 27.5 | 96 |
| | Above 20000 | 12 | 4 | 4 | 100 |
| Primary Carer | Father | 23 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 7.6 |
| | Mother | 221 | 73.2 | 73.2 | 80.8 |
| | Grandparents | 58 | 19.2 | 19.2 | 100 |
| Mother's Age | Under 30 | 88 | 29.1 | 29.1 | 29.1 |
| | 31-35 | 149 | 49.3 | 49.3 | 78.5 |
| | 36-40 | 46 | 15.2 | 15.2 | 93.7 |
| | 41 and above | 19 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 100 |
| Father's Age | Under 30 | 138 | 45.8 | 45.8 | 45.8 |
| | 31-35 | 52 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 63.1 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-----|------|------|------|
| | 36-40 | 81 | 26.9 | 26.9 | 90 |
| | 41 and Above | 31 | 10 | 10 | 100 |
| Mother's Education Level | Senior High School | 95 | 31.5 | 31.5 | 63.2 |
| | Junior College | 67 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 85.4 |
| | Undergraduate or above | 44 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 100 |
| Father's Education Level | Junior High School | 110 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 36.4 |
| | Senior High School | 110 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 72.8 |
| | Junior College | 58 | 19.2 | 19.2 | 92.1 |
| Father's Occupation | Undergraduate or above | 24 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 100 |
| | Civil servant or employee in the public organization | 32 | 10.6 | 10.6 | 10.6 |
| | Workers | 99 | 32.8 | 32.8 | 43.4 |
| Mother's Occupation | Self-employed | 126 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 85.1 |
| | Owner | 3 | 1 | 1 | 86.1 |
| | Non-working | 42 | 13.9 | 13.9 | 100 |
| | Other | 60 | 19.9 | 19.9 | 19.9 |
| | Civil servant or employee in the public organization | 79 | 26.2 | 26.2 | 46 |
| | Workers | 85 | 28.1 | 28.1 | 74.2 |
| Father's Occupation | Self-employed | 32 | 10.6 | 10.6 | 84.8 |
| | Owner | 32 | 10.6 | 10.6 | 84.8 |
| | Non-working | 46 | 15.2 | 15.2 | 100 |

2.2 Instruments

The instrumentation of the questionnaire survey will use three questionnaires namely Positive PsyCap Questionnaire (PPQ), Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) and Social Skills Rating System (SSRS), whose participants are preschoolers' parents and teachers.

2.2.1 The Positive Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PPQ)

The Positive Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PPQ) developed by Zhang Kuo (2010) is used in this study to measure parents' psychological capital. PPQ is a self-report instrument which compose with four subscales and 26 items: six items for self-efficacy, six items for hope, seven items for optimism, and seven items for resilience. Every item is rated by Likert 5 from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (very true), with the total score between 26 to 130. The higher the score, the higher the level of psychological capital.

The PPQ has been shown to have good reliability and validity in previous research. The internal consistency coefficient of the PPQ ranges from 0.85 to 0.96, and the test-retest reliability coefficient is between 0.72 and 0.85 (Zhang Kuo et al., 2010). Regarding its validity, the PPQ has been found to have good construct validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity in various studies (Xiong, Chen & Chen, 2020; Qian & Han, 2017; Yang, Wang & Zhang, 2016).

2.2.2 Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ)

Parenting Style Questionnaire, compiled by Yang Lizhu and Yang Chunqing in 1998, consists of 40 items,

divided into five dimensions: spoiling, democratic, laissez-faire, authoritarian, inconsistent. The questionnaire uses a Likert 5-point scale, with 1 representing "never", 2 representing "rarely", 3 representing "sometimes", 4 representing "often", and 5 representing "always". The higher the score, the more prominent the mother's rearing style. This questionnaire is widely used in China because its language is appropriate for the Chinese context and it has high reliability and validity. In the study of Yang Lizhu (1998), the internal consistency reliability of the overall questionnaire of parenting style was 0.81, the internal consistency reliability of each dimension was 0.62, 0.81, 0.71, 0.54, 0.69, and the split half reliability of the questionnaire was 0.77. In this study, the internal consistency coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.70.

2.2.3 Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS)

The Social Skills Scale used in this study is the teacher version of The Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) developed by Gresham and Elliot in 1990, which is used to identify and evaluate behaviors related to the development of children's social skills for children aged 3-18. SSRS contains three subscales of Social Skills, Problem Behaviors and Academic Competence. Because the third one is only used to evaluate the academic Competence of primary and middle school students, the research objects are 4-6 years old children, so only two subscales of Social Skills and Problem Behaviors are used in this study.

SSRS consists of 40 items, which are composed of five dimensions: Cooperation, Self-control, Assertion, Externalizing Problems and Internalizing Problems.

Cooperation, Self-control and Assertion belong to the subscale of Social Skills, while externalization and internalization problems belong to the subscale of Problem Behaviors. The original SSRS uses three level of score: 0 means 'never', 1 means 'sometimes', and 2 means 'often'. In this study, in order to match the scale of parents, the Likert 5 score will also be adopted, with 1 representing 'never', 2 for 'seldom', 3 for 'sometimes', 4 for 'often', and 5 for 'always'.

The reliability and validity of SSRS. Gresham and Elliott reported reliability and validity in the SSRS Manual. The alpha coefficient of Social Skills is 0.86 to 0.94, and the Problem Behaviors are 0.74 to 0.89. Test-retest stability coefficient is 0.85, Problem Behaviors is 0.84.

Zhu Jingjing et al. (2017) tested the reliability and validity of SSRS teacher's form among preschool children in China. The study subjects were 903 preschool children aged 3-6 years from public kindergartens in Shanghai, whose teachers completed SSRS. The results showed that the internal consistency reliability of SSRS total scale was 0.86, Cooperation ($\alpha=0.88$), Self-control ($\alpha=0.87$), Assertion ($\alpha=0.82$), Externalizing Problem ($\alpha=0.83$), and Internalizing Problem ($\alpha=0.76$) were also reasonable. Two weeks later, the retest reliability of the total scale was 0.86, and the retest reliability of Cooperation, Self-control, Assertion, Externalizing Problem and Internalizing Problem was 0.88, 0.86, 0.84, 0.85 and 0.73, respectively. Zhu Jingjing et al. (2017) also performed

confirmatory factor analysis on SSRS data in the sample (N=903) using AMOS21.0, and the results showed that SSRS fit the five-factor model well ($p < 0.001$).

2.3 Data Analysis

The quantitative data for this study will be analyzed using SPSS26.0. The primary methods for quantitative analysis will include correlation analysis and regression analysis.

III. RESULTS

3.1 Correlation Analysis

3.1.1 The Correlation between Maternal Psychological Capital, Maternal Parenting Style, and Preschoolers' Social Skills

To understand the correlation between maternal psychological capital, maternal parenting style, and preschoolers' social skills, a comprehensive and dimensional analysis was conducted. In this analysis, the democratic dimension of maternal parenting style was reverse-scored, and the scores of the five dimensions of parenting style were added together. After the reverse-scoring of the democratic dimension, the total score of the five dimensions represented the overall status of maternal parenting style. According to Yang Lizhu (1998), the higher the total score of maternal parenting style, the more negative the parenting style. Specific details are described below.

The overall correlation between maternal psychological capital, parenting style, and preschoolers' social skills can be seen in TABLE II. The results show that there is a significant positive correlation between maternal psychological capital and preschoolers' social skills, and a significant negative correlation between maternal parenting style and preschoolers' social skills. From the magnitude of their correlation coefficients, it can be seen that there is a significant low positive correlation between maternal psychological capital and preschoolers' social skills, a significant weak negative correlation between maternal psychological capital and parenting style, and a significant weak negative correlation between parenting style and preschoolers' social skills. These results suggest that the higher the level of maternal psychological capital, the better the parenting style may be, which may lead to higher levels of preschoolers' social skills.

TABLE II: THE OVERALL CORRELATION BETWEEN MATERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL, PARENTING STYLE, AND PRESCHOOLERS' SOCIAL SKILLS

| | M(SD) | 1 | 2 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|
| 1 Maternal PsyCap | 90.79(14.86) | | |
| 2 Maternal Parenting Style | 81.43(14.79) | -.261** | |
| 3 Social Skills | 156.68(21.99) | .440** | -.200** |

Note: ** indicates $p < 0.01$; 1 represents "maternal psychological capital"; 2 represents "maternal parenting style".

Table: III shows the correlations between the dimensions of maternal psychological capital, parenting styles, and social skills of preschool children. The results indicate that the dimensions within the same scale are highly correlated, mostly showing moderate to low correlations, while the correlations between different

scales are mostly low or weak. Generally, the significant correlation coefficients are large, while the insignificant ones are small.

As shown in TABLE III, the dimensions of maternal psychological capital are weakly positively correlated with democratic parenting style and weakly negatively correlated with spoiling parenting style. The dimensions of maternal resilience, hope, and optimism are weakly negatively correlated with laissez-faire parenting style, while maternal resilience and hope are weakly negatively correlated with inconsistent parenting style, and resilience is weakly negatively correlated with authoritarian parenting style. Looking at the correlations between the dimensions of maternal psychological capital and parenting styles, maternal psychological capital is positively correlated with positive parenting style and negatively correlated with negative parenting style.

The dimensions of maternal psychological capital are weakly positively correlated with the dimensions of social skills of preschool children. Among them, the correlation between self-control and the dimensions of maternal psychological capital is the strongest ($r > 0.3$, $p < 0.01$), while the correlation between internalizing problem behaviors and the dimensions of maternal psychological capital is the weakest ($r < 0.2$, $p < 0.01$ or $p < 0.05$). The correlations between the dimensions of maternal psychological capital and the dimensions of social skills of preschool children indicate that positive maternal psychological capital has a positive impact on the social skills of preschool children.

There are fewer correlations between the dimensions of social skills of preschool children and the dimensions of maternal parenting styles. As shown in TABLE III, the social skills of preschool children are weakly positively correlated with democratic parenting style and weakly negatively correlated with spoiling parenting style. Assertion, self-control, and cooperation of preschool children are weakly negatively correlated with spoiling parenting style, while self-control is weakly negatively correlated with laissez-faire parenting style, and externalizing problem behaviors of preschool children are weakly negatively correlated with authoritarian parenting style. There is no significant correlation between the dimensions of social skills of preschool children and inconsistent parenting style of mothers. The correlations between the dimensions of social skills of preschool children and the dimensions of maternal parenting styles indicate that positive parenting styles have a positive impact on the social skills of preschool children, and vice versa.

TABLE III: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF MATERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL, PARENTING STYLES, AND PRESCHOOLERS' SOCIAL SKILLS

| M (S D) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1 0 | 1 1 | 1 2 | 1 3 |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

As shown in TABLE V, the democratic parenting style of fathers is moderately to lowly correlated with various dimensions of their psychological capital. The laissez-faire parenting style of fathers is weakly negatively correlated with the hope dimension, and the inconsistent parenting style of fathers is weakly negatively correlated with their self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism dimensions. The spoiling and authoritarian parenting styles of fathers have no significant correlation with their psychological capital. However, looking at the pairwise correlation between father's psychological capital and parenting styles, it can be seen that father's psychological capital is positively correlated with positive parenting styles and negatively correlated with negative parenting styles.

Except for the lack of significant correlation between father's resilience and externalizing problem behavior of children, all dimensions of father's psychological capital are weakly positively correlated with all dimensions of children's social skills. Among them, the correlation between father's optimism and children's social skills dimensions is the most significant, followed by self-efficacy. The correlation between father's resilience and children's social skills dimensions is the weakest. It can be seen from the correlation between the dimensions of father's psychological capital and children's social skills that father's positive psychological capital has a weak positive impact on children's social skills.

As shown in TABLE V, the correlation between the democratic parenting style of fathers and all dimensions of children's social skills is most significant, all of which are weakly or moderately positively correlated. The negative impact of the inconsistent parenting style of fathers on all dimensions of children's social skills is the most significant. The laissez-faire parenting style of fathers is weakly negatively correlated with cooperation, assertion, and self-control of children, while the authoritarian parenting style of fathers only has a significant negative impact on the internalizing problem behavior of children. The spoiling parenting style of fathers has no significant correlation with all dimensions of children's social skills. Looking at the correlation between the dimensions of children's social skills and father's parenting styles, positive parenting styles have a positive impact on children's social skills, and vice versa.

TABLE V: CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DIMENSIONS OF PATERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL, PARENTING STYLES, AND PRESCHOOLERS' SOCIAL SKILLS

| M (S D) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---------|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| 23 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | .0 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | .4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | .70 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | .22 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | .6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | .4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | .9 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | .4 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | .63 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | .* | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | .22 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | .3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | .6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3(| 1 | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | 8 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 62 | * | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
|) | * | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | . | . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .4 | 5 | 3 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5(| 6 | 5 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | 7 | 6 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | * | * | * | | | | | | | | | | |
|) | * | * | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | . | . | . | | | | | | | | | | |
| .8 | . | . | . | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5(| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
|) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | | |
| .3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4(| 1 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | 7 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| 66 | * | * | * | * | 3 | | | | | | | | |
|) | * | * | * | * | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .1 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| 9(| 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 7. | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 3 | | | | | | | |
| 71 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 2 | | | | | | | |
| 0 | 0 | 6 | * | 5 | 8 | 2 | | | | | | | |
|) | | | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .8 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| 5(| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 4. | 2 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | | | | | | |
| 47 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 5 | * | * | * | | | | | | |
|) | | | | | * | * | * | | | | | | |
| 15 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .2 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | . | . | 1 | . | 2 | 3 | | | | | |
| 9(| 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 1 | | | | | |
| 4. | 5 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 5 | | | | | |
| 18 | * | * | 8 | * | * | 7 | * | * | | | | | |
|) | * | * | | * | * | | * | * | | | | | |
| 39 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 3(| 8 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 4 | | | | | |
| 6. | 8 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 8 | | | | |
| 29 | * | * | * | * | 9 | * | * | 8 | * | | | | |
|) | * | * | * | * | | * | * | * | | | | | |
| 36 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 0(| 9 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 7 | | | |
| 1 | 7. | 3 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 8 | | | |
| 29 | * | * | * | * | 1 | * | 2 | 1 | * | 2 | | | |
|) | * | * | * | * | 6 | * | * | * | * | * | | | |
| 36 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .8 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 7(| 4 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 9 | 9 | 6 | | |
| 2 | 6. | 7 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 9 | |
| 66 | * | * | * | * | 7 | * | 3 | 1 | * | * | * | * | |
|) | * | * | * | * | 3 | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | |
| 25 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .9 | 1 | . | . | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 0(| 6 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | |
| 3 | 4. | 1 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 4 | |
| 36 | * | * | * | * | 8 | * | 6 | 3 | 9 | * | * | * | |
|) | * | * | * | * | 6 | * | 8 | 1 | * | * | * | * | |
| 18 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| .2 | . | . | . | . | . | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 8(| 1 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| 4 | 2. | 3 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 7 |
| 28 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | * | * | * | |
|) | * | * | * | * | 1 | * | 9 | * | * | * | * | * | |

Note: 1 represents "Paternal Self-Efficacy," 2 represents "Paternal Resilience," 3 represents "Paternal Hope," 4 represents "Paternal Optimism," 5 represents "Paternal Spoiling Parenting Style," 6 represents "Paternal Democracy Parenting Style," 7 represents "Paternal Laissez-faire Parenting Style," 8 represents "Paternal Authoritarian Parenting Style," 9 represents "Paternal Inconsistent Parenting Style," 10 represents "Cooperation," 11

represents "Assertion," 12 represents "Self-Control," 13 represents "Externalizing Behavior Problems," and 14 represents "Internalizing Behavior Problems." ***P < 0.01, *P < 0.05

3.1.3 The Relationship between Parental Psychological Capital, Parenting Styles, and Young Children's Social Skills

Parenting style is a combination of the father's and mother's parenting styles. The family's psychological atmosphere is also influenced by the joint effect of the father and mother's psychological capital. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the relationship between parental psychological capital, overall parenting styles, and young children's social skills. Using a univariate correlation test, a significant correlation was found between the psychological capital of fathers and mothers ($r=0.670$, $P<0.01$), as well as between their parenting styles ($r=0.288$, $P<0.01$). Therefore, the psychological capital scores of fathers and mothers were added together to obtain the parental psychological capital, and the parenting style scores of fathers and mothers were added together to obtain the parenting style of both parents. These two variables were then analyzed in relation to young children's social skills. The results (see TABLE VI) showed a significant positive correlation between parental psychological capital and young children's social skills, and a significant negative correlation between parenting style and young children's social skills. The size of the correlation coefficients indicates that parental psychological capital and young children's social skills are significantly positively correlated at a low level, parental psychological capital and parenting style are significantly negatively correlated at a low level, and parenting style and young children's social skills are also significantly negatively correlated at a low level. These results indicate that the higher the level of parental psychological capital and the better the parenting style, the higher the level of young children's social skills may be.

TABLE VI: OVERALL CORRELATION BETWEEN PARENTAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL, PARENTING STYLES, AND PRESCHOOLERS' SOCIAL SKILLS

| | M(SD) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| Parental Psychological Capital | 180.20 (26.89) | - | .48 | .38 | .30 | .32 | .39 | .26 | .21 |
| Parental Parenting Style | 172.28 (24.15) | -.48 | - | .36 | .33 | .28 | .35 | .23 | .20 |
| Social Skills | 156.68 (21.99) | .38 | -.36 | -.91 | -.86 | -.90 | -.58 | -.55 | - |

Note: 1 represents "Parental Psychological Capital," 2 represents "Parental Parenting," 3 represents "Cooperation," 4 represents "Assertion," 5 represents "Self-Control," 6 represents "Externalizing Behavior Problems," 7 represents "Internalizing Behavior Problems", 8 represents "Social Skills." ***P < 0.01, *P < 0.05.

3.2 The Mediating Role of Parenting Style

From the results of the correlation analysis among parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and

preschool children's social skills, it was found that there were weak to low correlations among maternal psychological capital, parenting styles, and preschool children's social skills, respectively. Similarly, weak to low correlations were also found among paternal psychological capital, parenting styles, and preschool children's social skills. When the total scores of maternal and paternal psychological capital and parenting styles were summed up separately and correlated with children's social skills, two significant correlations were found at low levels between parents' total psychological capital, total parenting styles, and their children's social skills. The above analysis suggests that higher levels of parental psychological capital and more positive parenting styles are associated with higher levels of children's social skills.

According to Belsky's theory of family systems, family structure is influenced by a variety of factors, including parents' personality, behavior, cultural background, social environment, and more. Belsky divides these factors into three levels:

(1) Parents' personality and cultural background, including their personality, values, cultural traditions, and more.

(2) Family interaction, including ways of communication, interaction among family members, family atmosphere, and more.

(3) External environment, including social culture, politics, economic factors, and more.

Belsky believes that these three levels of factors interact with each other to determine the structure and development of the family.

According to Belsky's theory, parents' personality and cultural background can affect their ways of family interaction. Therefore, if parents have high levels of psychological capital, such as high self-efficacy, resilience, hope, optimism, etc., they may show more positive and supportive parenting styles, which can help promote children's social skill development. Belsky's theory of family systems allows us to hypothesize that parents' psychological capital affects their parenting styles, which in turn affects children's social skill development. In other words, parents' parenting styles play a certain mediating role between parents' psychological capital and children's social skill development. This section aims to test this research hypothesis and examine the mediating effect of parents' parenting styles on the relationship between parents' psychological capital and children's social skill development.

According to the procedure of the mediating effect and related analysis results (Wen, Zhang, Hou, & Liu, 2004), the first step is to test the regression of maternal psychological capital on children's social skills, and obtain the regression coefficient *c*. If *c* is significant, move on to the second step. In the second step, the regression of maternal psychological capital on maternal parenting style and the regression of maternal parenting style on children's social skills are tested separately, and the regression coefficients *a* and *b* are obtained. If both *a* and *b* are significant, move on to the third step. In the third step, the regression of maternal psychological capital and maternal parenting style on children's social skills is

tested. If the regression coefficient of maternal psychological capital on children's social skills, c' , is less than c and significant, then maternal parenting style is a partial mediating effect, and the contribution rate of the mediating variable M can be calculated using the formula $M=ab/c*100\%$. If c' is not significant, then maternal parenting style is a complete mediating effect.

From TABLE VII, it can be seen that the regression coefficient of maternal psychological capital decreased from 0.650 ($P<0.001$) to 0.615 after introducing maternal parenting style, with a significant regression coefficient, indicating that maternal parenting style partially mediates the relationship between maternal psychological capital and toddler's social skills, with a mediation effect of 11.9%.

TABLE VII: MEDIATION ANALYSIS OF MATERNAL PARENTING STYLES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SKILLS

| Step | Dependence Variable | Independent Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | t | R ² | F |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | Social Skills | Maternal PsyCap | 0.650 (c) | 8.476 *** | 0.193 | 71.850 *** |
| 2 | Maternal Parenting Style | Maternal PsyCap | -0.260 (a) | -4.690 *** | 0.680 | 22.000 *** |
| | Social Skills | Maternal Parenting Style | -0.298 (b) | -3.543 *** | 0.400 | 12.550 *** |
| 3 | Social Skills | Maternal PsyCap | 0.615 (c') | 7.760 *** | 0.201 | 37.624 *** |
| | | Maternal Parenting Style | -0.136 | -1.713 | | |

*** $P<0.001$

According to the method described above, further tests were conducted to examine the mediating effect of father's parenting style between father's psychological capital and child's social skills, as well as the mediating effect of parental parenting style between parental psychological capital and child's social skills. The results are presented in TABLE VIII and TABLE IX.

From TABLE VIII, it can be seen that the regression coefficient of father's psychological capital decreased from 0.407 ($P<0.001$) to 0.217 ($P<0.01$) after introducing father's parenting style, indicating that father's parenting style partially mediates the relationship between father's psychological capital and child's social skills, with a mediating effect of 54.5%.

TABLE VIII: MEDIATION ANALYSIS OF PATERNAL PARENTING STYLES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PATERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SKILLS

| Step | Dependence Variable | Independent Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | t | R ² | F |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | Social Skills | Paternal PsyCap | 0.407 | 4.848 *** | 0.730 | 23.500 *** |
| 2 | Paternal Parenting Style | Paternal PsyCap | -0.404 | -7.224 *** | 0.148 | 52.193 *** |
| | Social Skills | Paternal Parenting Style | -0.549 | -7.158 *** | 0.146 | 51.237 *** |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|--------|------------|-------|------------|
| 3 | Social Skills | Paternal PsyCap | 0.217 | 2.509 ** | 0.163 | 29.219 *** |
| | | Paternal Parenting Style | -0.469 | -5.698 *** | | |

*** $P<0.001$,** $P<0.001$

Family parenting style is a synthesis of the father and mother's parenting style. The family's psychological atmosphere also depends on the joint effect of the father's and mother's psychological capital. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the relationship between parents' psychological capital, overall parenting style, and children's social skills. As can be seen from TABLE IX, the regression coefficient of parental psychological capital decreased from 0.318 ($P < 0.001$) to 0.227 ($P < 0.001$) after introducing father's parenting style, indicating that parental parenting style plays a partial mediating role between parental psychological capital and children's social skills, with a mediating effect of 45%.

TABLE IX: MEDIATION ANALYSIS OF PARENTAL PARENTING STYLES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SKILLS

| Step | Dependence Variable | Independent Variable | Unstandardized Coefficients | t | R ² | F |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | Social Skills | Parental PsyCap | 0.318 | 7.312 *** | 0.151 | 53.472 *** |
| 2 | Parental Parenting Style | Parental PsyCap | -0.431 | -9.465 *** | 0.230 | 89.584 *** |
| | Social Skills | Parental Parenting Style | -0.332 | -6.782 *** | 0.133 | 45.977 *** |
| 3 | Social Skills | Parental PsyCap | 0.227 | 4.695 *** | 0.192 | 35.632 *** |
| | | Parental Parenting Style | -0.211 | -3.905 *** | | |

*** $P<0.001$

According to the results of the above-mentioned mediation analysis, parenting style partially mediates the relationship between psychological capital and children's social skills, indicating the validity of the mediation model. Specifically, maternal parenting style partially mediates the relationship between maternal psychological capital and preschool children's social skills, with a mediation effect of 11.9%; paternal parenting style partially mediates the relationship between paternal psychological capital and preschool children's social skills, with a mediation effect of 54.5%; and the overall parenting style of both parents partially mediates the relationship between their overall psychological capital and preschool children's social skills, with a mediation effect of 45%. In terms of the contribution rate of parenting style mediation, the mediation effect of paternal parenting style is the largest between psychological capital and social skills. The mediation effect analysis of parental parenting style between parental psychological capital and preschool children's social skills confirms the research hypothesis to be true.

IV SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study explores the relationship between parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and social skills in preschool children. Through the use of questionnaires, quantitative data were collected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The data analysis process revealed 4 significant findings, which are presented and discussed in the summary section. Following the summary, the conclusion section presents the key insights drawn from the research findings and offers a comprehensive understanding of the overall study. The summary and conclusion collectively offer valuable insights into the complex dynamics between parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and the development of social skills in preschool children.

4.1 Summary of the Findings

4.1.1 *The Correlation between Parents' PsyCap and Children's Social Skills*

Parents' psychological capital and its dimensions are positively correlated with children's social skills and its dimensions.

The results of this study show that there is a positive correlation between parents' psychological capital and various dimensions of social skills in preschool children. The overall psychological capital of mothers is moderately positively correlated with the overall social skills of preschoolers ($r=0.44$, $p<0.01$), while the overall psychological capital of fathers is weakly positively correlated with the overall social skills of preschoolers ($r=0.27$, $p<0.01$). In other words, the higher the level of parents' psychological capital, the better the performance of preschool children in social skills. However, among all related studies in China and abroad, only demographic variables such as parents' education, family income, location, age, and parenting styles have been found to have an impact on the social skills of preschool children. No related studies have found the effect of parents' psychological state on children's social skills.

This study shows that each dimension of mothers' psychological capital is weakly or moderately positively correlated with each dimension of preschoolers' social skills. Among them, self-control in preschoolers has the strongest correlation with each dimension of mothers' psychological capital ($r>0.3$, $p<0.01$), while internalizing problem behavior in preschoolers has the weakest correlation with each dimension of mothers' psychological capital ($r<0.2$, $p<0.01$ or $p<0.05$). The correlation between each dimension of mothers' psychological capital and each dimension of preschoolers' social skills indicates that mothers' psychological capital has a low positive influence on preschoolers' social skills.

Except for no significant correlation between fathers' resilience and externalizing problem behavior in preschoolers, each dimension of fathers' psychological capital is weakly positively correlated with each dimension of preschoolers' social skills. Among them, fathers' optimism has the most significant correlation with

each dimension of preschoolers' social skills, followed by self-efficacy. The correlation between fathers' resilience and each dimension of preschoolers' social skills is the weakest. The correlation between each dimension of fathers' psychological capital and each dimension of preschoolers' social skills indicates that fathers' psychological capital has a weak positive influence on preschoolers' social skills.

In summary, quantitative research results indicate that parental psychological capital has a certain degree of direct impact on young children's social skills. This finding can be explained through "role modeling." Role modeling refers to parents as the primary role models for their children, where their level of psychological capital can demonstrate and influence children's behaviors. This viewpoint is based on social learning theory, represented by Bandura, and the parental modeling theory.

Social learning theory, proposed by Bandura, is a psychological theory that emphasizes how children acquire new behaviors through observing and imitating others' behaviors, cognitive processes, and emotional experiences. It suggests that children can learn by observing others' behaviors and outcomes, and apply these learnings to their own behaviors (McLeod, 2020).

The parental modeling theory is an applied area based on social learning theory, focusing on the influence of parents as the primary models for children's behaviors and values. This theory suggests that children can learn adaptive social skills and values by observing and imitating their parents' behaviors, and apply them to their own behaviors (Grusec & Davidov, 2013).

From the perspectives of these two theories, the direct impact of parental psychological capital on children's social skills can be explained. When parents possess high levels of self-efficacy, resilience, hope, and optimism, they are more likely to handle life's challenges and difficulties in a positive manner. Children observe and learn from this positive mindset and adaptive abilities, which results in them exhibiting better social skills in their own social interactions.

4.1.2 *The Correlation between Parents' PsyCap and Parenting Style*

There is a significant positive correlation between parents' psychological capital and their democratic parenting style, and a significant negative correlation between parents' psychological capital and their negative parenting style.

The psychological capital of parents is significantly related to their parenting styles. The results of this study show that there is a weak negative correlation between the overall psychological capital of mothers and their overall parenting style ($r=-0.261$, $p<0.01$), and a low negative correlation between the overall psychological capital of fathers and their overall parenting style ($r=-0.385$, $p<0.01$).

The study found that both mothers and fathers had significant positive correlations between their psychological capital and positive parenting styles

(democratic parenting styles) and negative correlations with some negative parenting styles. The various dimensions of mothers' psychological capital were weakly positively correlated with democratic parenting styles and weakly negatively correlated with spoiling parenting styles. Three dimensions of mothers' psychological capital - resilience, hope, and optimism - were weakly negatively correlated with laissez-faire parenting styles. Maternal resilience and hope were also weakly negatively correlated with inconsistent parenting styles, while maternal resilience was weakly negatively correlated with authoritarian parenting styles. Overall, mothers' psychological capital was positively correlated with positive parenting styles and negatively correlated with negative parenting styles.

Fathers' democratic parenting style was moderately to weakly correlated with the various dimensions of fathers' psychological capital, while fathers' laissez-faire parenting style was weakly negatively correlated only with the hope dimension. Fathers' inconsistent parenting style was weakly negatively correlated with their self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism dimensions. There was no significant correlation between fathers' spoiling or authoritarian parenting styles and their psychological capital. However, fathers' psychological capital was positively correlated with positive parenting styles and negatively correlated with negative parenting styles.

In summary, quantitative research findings indicate that parents' psychological capital has a direct impact on their parenting styles, with higher levels of psychological capital associated with better parenting practices.

To explain the relationship between parental psychological capital and their parenting styles, I believe it can be understood from the perspective of the essential characteristics of psychological capital. According to Luthans et al. (2008), psychological capital is a positive psychological resource manifested as a state-like construct in individuals during their growth and development. It is both a relatively stable personality trait and a psychological state.

There is relevant research suggesting that personality influences individuals' behavior, including parenting behavior (Chen Shimin et al., 2020). A meta-analysis study conducted by Prinzie, Stams, Deković, Reijntjes, and Belsky (2009) explored the relationship between parents' Big Five personality traits and their parenting behavior. The results showed a significant association between parents' personality traits, especially extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, and their parenting behavior. Parents scoring high on agreeableness and openness tend to show more care toward their children, while parents with lower openness and higher conscientiousness tend to impose stricter demands on their children (Metsapelto, Pulkkinen, 2003).

Prinzie et al. (2010) further investigated the influence of parents' personality traits on parenting behavior by using online daily diaries to continuously monitor parents' parenting practices. The research findings revealed a link between parents' personality traits and the level of daily parenting hassles they experienced. These analyses provide evidence that psychological capital, as a relatively

stable personality trait, influences individuals' parenting behavior.

Additionally, parents' psychological states also influence their parenting behavior. When parents are in a positive psychological state, their interactions with their children are more effective and nurturing. For example, when parents are more extraverted and experience positive emotions, they tend to be more sensitive to their children's needs and express more warmth. On the other hand, when parents score higher on neuroticism and experience negative emotions, they may focus more on themselves rather than their children and may employ punitive, avoidant, or overly controlling strategies (Aken CV, Junger M, Verhoeven M, et al., 2007). This demonstrates that psychological capital, as a psychological state, also influences parents' parenting styles.

4.1.3 The Correlation between Parenting Style and Children's Social Skills

There is a significant positive correlation between parents' democratic parenting style and children's social skills, while there is a negative correlation between parents' negative parenting style and children's social skills.

The parenting styles of the parents in this study showed a significant correlation with the social skills of their young children. The overall parenting style of mothers had a weak negative correlation with the overall social skills of their children ($r = -0.2, p < 0.01$), while the overall parenting style of fathers had a low negative correlation with the overall social skills of their children ($r = -0.382, p < 0.01$).

The results of this study show that the positive parenting style (democratic parenting style) of parents is significantly positively correlated with the cooperation, assertion, self-control, and problem behaviors of young children, and negatively correlated with some negative parenting styles. Specifically, the social skills of young children showed a weak positive correlation with the democratic parenting style of mothers, and a weak negative correlation with the spoiling parenting style of mothers for cooperation, assertion, and self-control. The self-control of young children was weakly negatively correlated with the laissez-faire parenting style of mothers, and the externalizing problem behaviors of young children were weakly negatively correlated with the authoritarian parenting style of mothers. There was no significant correlation between the various dimensions of the social skills of young children and the inconsistent parenting style of mothers. From the correlation between the various dimensions of the social skills of young children and the various dimensions of the parenting styles of mothers, it can be seen that the positive parenting style of mothers has a positive impact on the social skills of young children, and vice versa.

The correlation between the democratic parenting style of fathers and the various dimensions of the social skills of young children was the most significant, and all were low or weakly positively correlated. The negative

impact of the inconsistent parenting style of fathers on the various dimensions of the social skills of young children was the most significant. The laissez-faire parenting style of fathers was significantly weakly negatively correlated with the cooperation, assertion, and self-control of young children, and the authoritarian parenting style of fathers only had a significant negative impact on the internalizing problem behaviors of young children. There was no significant correlation between the spoiling parenting style of fathers and the various dimensions of the social skills of young children. From the correlation between the various dimensions of the social skills of young children and the various dimensions of the parenting styles of fathers, it can be seen that positive parenting styles have a positive impact on the social skills of young children, and vice versa.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the more positive the parenting style is, the better the development of children's social skills. Research has shown that parenting styles have a significant impact on children's individual development and adaptability (Booth, 1994). Different parenting styles can lead to different adaptation outcomes in children, and parenting styles can predict children's social adaptation (Ardelt & Eccles, 2001). Nelson et al. (2011) found that if parents adopt a positive parenting style, their children will have better adaptability and can predict that children will have positive developmental outcomes, while a high level of controlling parenting style will cause children to have maladjustment. Fathi and Taleb (2013) found that parenting styles have an impact on young children's social skills, and authoritative parenting style can significantly predict young children's positive social skills. Positive parenting style can promote the development of young children's social skills, while negative parenting style will hinder the development of social skills (Stright, Gallagher, & Kelley, 2008). A positive parenting style can optimize family functioning, promote the formation of good parent-child relationships, improve parents' educational effects, and thus benefit the development of young children's social skills (Matejevic, Jovanovic, & Lazarevic, 2014). The results of this study show that a democratic parenting style has a positive impact on the social skills and dimensions of young children. The more positive the parenting style is, the better the development of children's social skills, which also confirms previous research.

The survey results of this study on the relationship between parental parenting styles and the social skills of 3–6-year-old children show that parental parenting styles have a direct impact on children's social skills. When parents adopt a democratic parenting style, their children tend to perform better in areas such as cooperation, self-assertion, self-control, and exhibit less problematic behavior. The opposite is also true.

4.1.4 The Mechanism of Parenting Style

Parenting style plays a partial mediating role between parents' psychological capital and children's social skills.

This study explored the influence of parental psychological capital on children's social skills, as well as

the indirect effect of parental psychological capital on children's social skills through parenting behaviors, and explored the potential mechanisms underlying these effects. The results showed that parental psychological capital not only had a direct effect on children's social skills but also had an indirect effect on children's social skills through parenting behaviors. In other words, parental psychological capital influenced parenting behaviors, which in turn influenced children's social skills, with parenting behaviors partially mediating the relationship between parental psychological capital and children's social skills. These findings support the partial mediation effect model. Data analysis revealed that maternal parenting behaviors partially mediated the relationship between maternal psychological capital and children's social skills, accounting for 11.9% of the total effect; paternal parenting behaviors partially mediated the relationship between paternal psychological capital and children's social skills, accounting for 54.5% of the total effect; and overall parenting behaviors partially mediated the relationship between parental psychological capital and children's social skills, accounting for 45% of the total effect.

From the three mediation models, it can be observed that parental psychological capital indirectly influences children's social skills through parenting behaviors.

The underlying reasons for this phenomenon can be explained by Organizational Behavior Theory and Belsky's Family Process Model. According to Organizational Behavior Theory, in an organization, leaders' positive psychological capital creates a positive atmosphere for the entire team. Through encouragement, support, rewards, and other positive reinforcement methods, leaders stimulate employees to achieve higher job performance. If we consider the family as a work team, parents act as leaders. Parents' psychological capital not only creates a positive atmosphere for the overall healthy development of the family and promotes the emergence of children's positive emotional states but also facilitates the manifestation of positive parenting behaviors, which are conducive to the development of children's social skills. This aligns with relevant findings in team-related research, indicating that leaders' positive psychological capital facilitates the emergence of positive psychological states in team members and leads to better work performance (Ren Hao et al., 2014).

According to Belsky's Family Process Model, parents' psychological resources can influence children's development through the process of parenting. Belsky's research also partially supports the core aspect of his Family Process Model, which suggests that parents' personal psychological capital (psychological resources) can influence children's social skills (child development) through parenting behaviors (parenting process) (Belsky, 1984).

4.2 Conclusion of the Research

This study delves into the intricate interplay between parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and the social skills of preschool children. Through a comprehensive analysis of quantitative data collected via

questionnaires, a total of 4 significant findings were uncovered.

(1) There is a positive correlation between parents' psychological capital and children's social skills, indicating that parents with higher psychological capital tend to have children with better social skills.

(2) There is a positive correlation between parents' psychological capital and parenting style, indicating that parents with higher psychological capital tend to have more positive parenting style.

(3) There is a positive correlation between parents' democratic parenting style and children's social skills, while a negative correlation exists between parents' negative parenting style and children's social skills.

(4) Parenting style is a partial mediating factor between parental psychological capital and children's social skills.

These findings highlight the intricate relationships between parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and the development of preschoolers' social skills.

In conclusion, this research provides valuable insights into the intricate dynamics between parental psychological capital, parenting styles, and the social skills of preschool children in China. The findings emphasize the significance of parental psychological capital in influencing parenting styles and subsequently shaping children's social skills. Understanding and enhancing parental psychological capital can contribute to the promotion of positive parenting practices and the development of social skills in preschoolers. The findings of this study contribute to the existing literature and provide a foundation for future research in the field of early childhood development and parenting.

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