

Qu, W., Li, K., & Wang, Y. (2021). Early adolescents' parent-child communication and friendship quality: A cross-lagged analysis. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal*, 49(9), e10697. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.10697>

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Summary:

Literature Review:

This experiment was to see how parent-child relationships and friendship quality had an impact on each other in adolescents. Friendship is important because it can create a positive impact for both parties involved. When kids are young these relationships are formed through intimacy and being around each other constantly. The quality of these relationships are also important because it impacts self-worth and provides support for the individual. Better friendship leads to better mental and physical health. While a low friendship quality leads to negative behaviors and poor health. Parent-child relationships also have shown an impact on how an adolescent acts. A good-parent can lead to the child imitating their parents. Better support and relationships have been shown to produce better emotional adaptation (Qu, et al. 2021).

The researchers wanted to find if the parent-child communication of participants will predict their friendship quality in the following year. Researchers were also looking to see if the friendship quality in seventh grade would correlate with parent-child communication the following year. The researchers posed these questions because as the individuals enter puberty, thinking skills and self-awareness develop quickly. Due to this they believe that seventh graders will have better relationships and communication than when they are in eighth grade. Furthermore, they predicted that there will also be a difference among gender. They predicted that the friendship quality of girls will be higher than the boys, and that the parent-child communication of boys will be higher than that of girls (Qu, et al. 2021).

Method:

Of the participants, 439 were boys (52.1%) and 403 were girls (47.9%). The average age was 12.19 years at the time of taking the first test. To collect data the researchers used quantitative methods to collect information. The quantitative method was used through the friendship questionnaire and parent-adolescent communication scale. that they gave to the participants. The Friendship questionnaire had an 18 item scale used to score the quality of their friendships. The questionnaire was graded on a scale of 1-5. The higher the score the higher the friendship quality is (Qu et al. 2021) The Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale was a subscaled for mothers and fathers, and then was graded using a 5 point scale (1 being completely disagree and 5 being completely agree). The higher the score the better the communication. To grade both of these the researchers used SPSS 23.0 and Mplus 8.0 which are data analysis and predicting software. The questionnaire was given out to 1134 people, however the final sample only included 842 because the researchers only counted the people who took the first and second questionnaires. There were also some questionnaires that were not counted due to the invalidity (Qu, et al. 2021).

Discussion:

The authors of this study found that boys scored higher in regards to parent-child communication, whereas girls had higher friendship quality. They state that girls have more sensitivity in regards to their friendship quality, and boys consider their support from their parents stronger than the support they have from their peers (Qu, et al. 2021).

They also discovered that parent-child communication was better for those who were in seventh grade than in eighth grade. This information shows that the characteristics of parent-child communication and friendship quality are not always the same over time. The reason for the change may be due to the fact that the first time measured was in December, when it is still common to have strong relationships with those one went to elementary school with. This result in particular contradicted and supported two different previous studies (Qu, et al. 2021).

Some other results they found proved to be interesting as well. The relationships children have with both parents have importance in the development of friendship quality during adolescence. This was mostly in agreement with previous studies, though one study argued that it was father-child communication that mattered the most. This inconsistency was explained by cultural differences between China and South Korea. While the parent-child communication impacted friendship quality, friendship quality did not impact the parent-child relationship. Previous studies did not agree with this result, and the authors say the difference is due to different sample sizes. All of the research was limited by the use of only two times that they measured data, which could be improved by having more times in a future study (Qu, et al. 2021).

Evaluation:

Though the conclusions of the study seem logical, the data analysis was difficult to understand. The authors of this article utilized questionnaires to get results and then used this information to make points. However, the charts in the results section are complex and hard to understand (Qu, et al. 2021). It is possible that this is just due to my own lack of knowledge about statistics, but the entire section has a great deal of information that is not as clear as I think it could have been. Though some of the results the study came up with were new, some simply re-established previous studies. Parent-child relationships impacting friendship quality is information that was known previously (Qu, et al. 2021). However, some information was discovered during this case that contradicted other studies, which I found interesting. One such finding was a previous study that claimed only father-child relationships mattered, though this difference may be due to the research being conducted in a different country with a separate culture regarding parenting (Qu, et al. 2021). The conclusion did seem reasonable. Parent-child relationships being a major deciding factor in how friendships turn out is a logical thought process, and the gender difference conclusion was not expected, though it did make sense. The perspectives offered by this piece are definitely useful to consider, especially since they have an impact on most people (Qu, et al. 2021).

The article is able to apply to many people's everyday life, which I think is unique. Since the article talked about parent-child relationships and friendships, two very common types of relationships, it can be applied to all people. It is limited to middle school, since the authors themselves say it would be useful to look at more age groups than just middle school (Qu, et al. 2021). It could be utilized to help those who are struggling with creating strong friendships, particularly those in middle school. It would be easier to help students if those trying to help

have a starting point to work with, i.e. this study. Helping people understand themselves is another useful application, since it shows correlation between parent-child relationships and friendship quality, as well as the impacts of gender and the flow of time can have. It shows that there are many variables that impact how we form relationships, and it may allow for people to see if their relationships with their parents have impacted their friendships positively or negatively. With this knowledge, they can help themselves grow into better people and strengthen their friendships by their understanding (Qu, et al. 2021). This may not only impact friendships as well. Though the results showed that friendship quality did not impact parent-child communication, both of these can impact other types of relationships (Qu, et al. 2021). Since parents often are authority figures in a child's life, this could impact how they view their boss' at their jobs or their teachers. Friends can become significant others, which could be impacted in the same way friendship quality was. Researching these areas could be very interesting.

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