

Analysis of the Current Situation and Influencing Factors of Positive Psychological Adaptation in Migrant Children

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Abstract: *Background:* With the acceleration of urbanization, the number of migrant children has risen sharply. How to improve the positive psychological adaptability of migrant children and ensure their physical and mental health has become an urgent social problem to be solved. *Objective:* To investigate the current situation of migrant children's positive psychological adaptation and analyze its influencing factors, and to provide a theoretical basis for migrant children's mental health management countermeasures, so as to improve the positive psychological adaptability of migrant children. *Methods:* In this study, a cross-sectional survey and random sampling method were used to conduct a questionnaire survey on 200 middle school students who met the definition of migrant children in 3 middle schools in Sichuan Province using the 'Adolescence Mental Health Diathesis Questionnaire' adaptation subscale. *Results:* This study found that girls were significantly higher than boys in emotional adaptation, boys were significantly higher than girls in interpersonal adaptation, and boys were significantly higher than girls in social adaptation. There was no gender difference in other factors in general. *Conclusion:* There were gender differences in positive psychological adaptation among migrant children. Front-line educators, social service workers, and relevant government departments should pay more attention to the gender differences in the positive psychological adaptation of migrant children, to improve the positive psychological adaptation ability of migrant children.

Keywords: Migrant Children, Positive Psychological Adaptation, Current Situation, Influencing Factors

1. Introduction

Migrant children are children and adolescents aged between 6 and 18 years old, who follow their parents to live in the city for more than 6 months and go to school normally [1]. According to the results of the seventh national census, China's floating population increased by 154 million, an increase of 69.73 %. In Sichuan Province, the population of separated households was 27.823 million, the floating population was 20.689 million, the inter-provincial inflow population was 2.59 million, and the intra-provincial floating population was 18.098 million. The flow mode of the population has gradually changed from individual flow to family flow, which makes the number of migrant children increase rapidly. Changes in the living and learning environment will make migrant children easy to lack a sense

of security and belonging, which directly affects the healthy development of migrant children and their families, and to a certain extent affects the stable development of cities and countries [2]. According to the "Report on China's Migrant Population Development", as of the end of 2018, there were 35 million migrant children in China, and the mental health problems of migrant children have gradually attracted more attention [3, 4]. Although population migration can improve people's economic level to a certain extent, cultural differences, lifestyle, and living environment changes make migrant children's positive psychological maladjustment a common problem [5]. In the context of the urbanization process in the world, migrant children, as a special part of society, will continue to exist, and their positive psychological adaptation has become the focus of continuous attention from all walks of life [6, 7]. The mental health status, living conditions, and future development of migrant

children will affect the overall pattern of social development around the world. How to ensure the healthy development of migrant children and improve their positive psychological adaptability has become an urgent social problem to be solved.

Compared with urban non-migrant children, migrant children will feel more discrimination. The complexity of migrant children's living environment and other factors aggravate the negative emotions of migrant children, and they are prone to psychological problems such as anxiety and depression [8-10]. Although there have been some achievements in the research on migrant children's mental health problems, most of them focus on negative psychological states such as anxiety and depression from the perspective of problems, and there are few studies on the positive psychological adaptation of migrant children. Therefore, from the perspective of positive psychology, this study discusses the current situation of migrant children's positive psychological adaptation and its influencing factors, providing a theoretical basis for the management of migrant children's mental health, and then providing countermeasures and suggestions for the construction of a social support system and the promotion of migrant children's social adaptation, as well as a certain basis for government departments to formulate policies and regulations on urban migrant children.

2. Subjects and Methods

2.1. Study Subjects

Middle school students meeting the definition of migrant children were randomly selected as research objects in 3 middle schools in Sichuan Province, and a total of 200 questionnaires were distributed.

2.2. Study Methods

In this study, a cross-sectional survey was conducted using

the 'Adolescence Mental Health Diathesis Questionnaire' adaptation subscale compiled by Professor Zhang Dajun [11]. The scale includes 6 aspects of physiological adaptation, emotional adaptation, interpersonal adaptation, learning adaptation, social adaptation, and life adaptation, a total of 22 items. The Likert scale was used for scoring, and the 4-point scale was used for scoring during the survey. "1" means "completely inconsistent", and "4" means "completely consistent". After a lot of verification, the scale has high reliability and validity. The Cronbach's α coefficient of the questionnaire in this study was 0.827.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

All data were processed and analyzed by SPSS 22.0 (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA) software. The counting data were expressed as n (%), and the measurement data were expressed as mean \pm standard score (SD).

3. Results

In this study, 186 valid questionnaires were recovered, with a recovery rate of 93%. There were 94 boys, accounting for 50.54%, and 92 girls, accounting for 49.46%. This study used an independent sample t-test to explore the gender differences in the positive psychological adaptation of migrant children. The results showed that there were significant differences between boys and girls students in some factors. Among them, girls were significantly higher than boys in the emotional adaptation of migrant children, boys were significantly higher than girls in the interpersonal adaptation of migrant children, and boys were significantly higher than girls in the social adaptation of migrant children. There was no gender difference in other factors. The overall demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1. The gender difference analysis of positive psychological adaptation of migrant children is shown in Table 2.

Table 1. The overall demographic characteristics of the sample (N=186).

	Items	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Gender	Boys	94	50.54
	Girls	92	49.46
Nationality	Han	169	90.86
	Others	17	9.14
Age	<15 years old	90	31.18
	≥ 15 years old	128	68.82
Grade	Junior high school	84	45.16
	Senior high school	102	54.84
Only child	Yes	53	82.49
	No	133	71.51
Migrant time	≤ 1 year	22	11.83
	≤ 3 years	25	13.44
	≤ 5 years	14	7.53
	>5 years	125	67.2

Table 2. Gender difference analysis in positive psychological adaptation of migrant children.

Variables	Boys (N=94)	Girls (N=92)	T value	P value
Physiological adaptation	3.01±0.62	2.83±0.63	1.964	0.051
Emotional adaptation	2.91±0.51	3.14±0.52	-2.792	0.006
Interpersonal adaptation	3.28±0.64	2.96±0.54	3.682	<0.001
Learning adaptation	2.91±0.58	2.86±0.56	0.598	0.551
Social adaptation	3.16±0.63	2.91±0.49	3.017	0.003
Life adaptation	2.81±0.59	2.72±0.59	1.040	0.300
Total score of positive psychological adaptation	2.91±0.38	2.87±0.37	0.727	0.468

4. Discussion

With the development of urbanization, migrant children live and study in different places with their parents or guardians. Changes in the environment make them easy to lack a sense of security and belonging, which directly affects the healthy development of migrant children and their families and also affects the stable development of cities and countries [12]. In the past, most of the studies on migrant children adopted the problem perspective. With the rise and development of positive psychology, some researchers began to study the positive psychological quality of migrant children in adversity [13-15]. This study investigated the current situation of positive psychological adaptation of migrant children and analyzed its influencing factors. It provides a scientific theoretical basis for the follow-up front-line education and social service workers to intervene and improve the positive psychological adaptability of migrant children, to further improve the psychological health level of migrant children.

This study found that girls were significantly higher than boys in the emotional adaptation of migrant children. However, Xu et al. found that there was no significant gender difference in the emotional adaptation of migrant children [16]. The results of this study were inconsistent with those of previous studies, which may be related to the different age stages of the subjects. The subjects of this study were junior high school and senior high school students. From the perspective of developmental psychology, the mental development of girls at this stage was more mature than that of boys, and their emotional adaptability was better.

The results of this study showed that boys were significantly better than girls in interpersonal and social adaptation among migrant children. This was consistent with the conclusions of many previous studies [17-19]. This may be related to the different social expectations of male and female gender roles, and the society gives men more responsibility for "outside" in China. With the increase of age, boys will be more active in interpersonal communication and other social activities. Compared with girls, boys were more suitable for interpersonal communication and other social activities.

5. Conclusion

This study found that among migrant children, girls were better than boys in emotional adaptation, while boys were

better than girls in interpersonal adaptation and social adaptation. Therefore, front-line educators, social service workers, and government departments should pay more attention to the gender differences in the positive psychological adaptation of migrant children, strengthen the guidance and education on the positive psychological adaptation of migrant children, improve relevant systems and policies, and provide guarantee for migrant children to receive a good education and integrate into urban life, so as to improve the positive psychological adaptation ability of migrant children.

This study also has some limitations. First of all, the sample size of the survey was small, and future studies will expand the sample size and select representative samples. Secondly, the results of the questionnaire were based on the self-report of migrant children. Future research will try to collect data from people who are more closely related to migrant children to expand the applicability of our findings.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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