
Newsletter

Effects of Home Education on Child Human Capital Development

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AS a result of the execution of the *Home Education Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China* and the advancement of the policy to improve the collaboration among schools, families, and the community, the significance of home education for child development has been increasingly emphasized. Drawing on the longitudinal data from the China Education Panel Survey 2013–2015, this study seeks to systematically analyze the relationship between home education and child cognitive and non-cognitive development and reveal the mechanism underlying it. With a sample of 5,893 seventh-grade students selected from schools adopting random class assignment, which was meant to control for endogeneity bias, the researchers created value-added models for child cognitive and non-cognitive skill development and applied causal mediation analysis to explore the pathways through which home education affects child development. Home education was measured in two dimensions: home educational investment (time and money investment) and parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful).

Research Findings:

- Home educational investment was significantly and positively related to the child's non-cognitive development, but with no significant effects on their cognitive skills.
- Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting could significantly promote the child's cognitive development, with authoritarian parenting unusually showing a positive effect in the Chinese cultural context.
- Sub-group regression analysis showed authoritative parenting was effective in boosting cognitive and non-cognitive development among children with initially lower skill levels.
- Increasing home educational investment or adopting authoritative parenting could indirectly promote the child's cognitive and non-cognitive development by improving peer relationship quality and raising their educational expectations.
- Robustness analysis revealed that factors relating to the parenting style, such as parent-child relationships and parental educational expectations, was significantly and positively related to the

child's cognitive development, while time investment in home education primarily helped foster their non-cognitive skills.

Based on these findings, the study offers three insights: (i) It is important to enhance the quality of home education, paying attention to the content and depth of parent-child interactions, and underscoring high-quality companionship rather than focusing on mere material investment. (ii) Home education intervention programs should be provided for adolescents with initially undesirable abilities; scientific parenting be introduced to narrow the human capital gap. (iii) The community and schools need to improve their home education guidance services through efforts like home visits, training sessions, and "model family" selection to strengthen family-school-community co-education.

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