A Review on the Relationship Between Core Self-Evaluations, Emotion Regulation Strategies and Emotion

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Abstract: In mental health developmental psychology, the correlation between emotional mechanisms and personality traits is widely researched. Core self-evaluations (CSE), a stable core of personality, shapes individuals' cognition, behavior and psychological growth. Emotions are subjective mental and physical responses to stimuli: positive emotions boost adaptation and wellness, whereas chronic negative emotions lead to interpersonal sensitivity. Emotion regulation strategies act as a key mediator between personality and emotional expressions. This narrative literature review explores interactions between core self-evaluations, emotion regulation and emotions across all age brackets. It outlines the definition, structure and developmental traits of CSE, plus categories and group disparities of regulation strategies, analyzing CSE's direct emotional impact and the mediating role of regulation. Foreign studies feature earlier origins, mature theories and empirical mechanism modeling. Domestic research focuses mostly on teens and undergraduates, suiting local culture yet lacking systematic cross-age longitudinal analysis. Summarizing prior outcomes, this paper addresses research gaps and highlights theoretical and practical value. It supports future empirical modeling and guides mental health education, emotional intervention and counseling for all demographics.

Keywords: Core Self-Evaluations; Emotion Regulation Strategies; Emotion; Mediating Effect; All-Age Groups

1. Introduction

With the accelerating pace of social life, public mental health issues have attracted widespread attention from all sectors of society. As the core part of mental health, emotional health is directly related to individuals' quality of life, social adaptability and physical and mental development. Faced with the same external pressure, setbacks and interpersonal conflicts in daily life and social communication, different individuals often produce completely different emotional reactions. Some individuals can quickly regulate negative emotions and maintain a stable state of mind, while others tend to be trapped in negative emotions such as anxiety, depression and irritability for a long time. Psychological research generally believes that individual emotional differences are not simply determined by external environmental factors, but mostly derived from internal stable personality cognitive traits, among which core self-evaluations (CSE) are a key internal variable affecting individual emotional response patterns.

Self-concept is the sum of individuals' comprehensive cognition and evaluation of their own personality, abilities, values, traits and other aspects gradually formed through social interaction, others' evaluation, self-reflection and accumulation of life experience during growth. The complete self-concept system includes two levels: surface situational self-cognition and deep stable self-cognition. Among them, core self-concept is located at the core of the entire self-cognitive system, with the characteristics of stability, fundamentality, permanence and integrity. It will not easily change with short-term situational changes or temporary external evaluation, and serves as the underlying psychological foundation driving individual psychological activities and behavioral decision-making. Core self-concept embodies individuals' recognition of self-worth, judgment of personal ability, and perception of control over the living environment, which profoundly shapes individuals' cognitive bias and psychological coping patterns.

Emotion is a comprehensive psychological process including subjective experience, physiological arousal and behavioral expression generated after individuals are stimulated by internal and external environments, and it is also

the most intuitive external embodiment of individual psychological state. Positive emotions include pleasure, satisfaction, self-confidence, optimism and other experiences, which can effectively enhance individual stress resistance, promote interpersonal communication and maintain physical and mental balance. Negative emotions such as sadness, anger, inferiority and anxiety are normal psychological reactions in the short term, but if they persist for a long time and cannot be effectively regulated, they will gradually erode individual mental health, and even cause a series of problems such as somatization symptoms, social avoidance and sleep disorders. Therefore, exploring the internal factors affecting the formation and development of individual emotions and clarifying the psychological mechanism of emotion generation have become important research topics in developmental psychology and health psychology.

Emotion regulation strategies refer to a series of psychological and behavioral methods such as cognitive adjustment, thinking transformation and behavioral guidance adopted by individuals to adapt to the social environment and relieve psychological discomfort. Individuals do not passively bear the impact of emotions, but can change the intensity, duration and external expression of emotional experience by choosing different regulation strategies. Existing academic research generally divides emotion regulation strategies into adaptive and maladaptive types. The choice and long-term usage habit of different strategies directly determine the relief effect of negative emotions and the maintenance duration of positive emotions. A large number of studies have confirmed that there is a significant correlation between CSE and emotion regulation strategies [1]. The development level of individual CSE will directly affect individuals' preference for emotion regulation strategies, and then act on the final emotional experience state. Emotion regulation strategies play an irreplaceable mediating role between CSE and emotion.

From the perspective of domestic and foreign research status, Western academic research on CSE began in the late 20th century with a relatively mature theoretical system. In 2001, Judge and other scholars formally defined the four-dimensional structure of CSE, including self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability and locus of control [2]. This classic classification is still followed by most scholars at home and abroad, laying a solid theoretical framework for subsequent research on variable relationships [3]. In the field of emotion regulation research, Gross, a representative scholar in this field, put forward the emotion regulation process theory in 1998, clarifying classic strategy classifications such as cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression, and further improved the influence mechanism of different regulation strategies on emotion, interpersonal relationships and mental health in later years [4]. Many subsequent foreign studies have constructed structural equation models around CSE, emotion regulation and emotion, which have deeply verified the direct and mediating effects among variables, with research samples covering adolescents, adults, the elderly and other groups, forming a more systematic and comprehensive research system.

Domestic related research started relatively late, and most research samples are concentrated on primary and secondary school students and college students, exploring closely combined with China's local cultural background, family education mode and campus education environment. Relevant studies have pointed out that the overall development level of college students' self-concept is significantly positively correlated with their mental health [5]. Individuals with more positive self-evaluations have less psychological distress and more stable emotional states. Subsequent studies have further verified the internal correlation between CSE and emotion regulation strategies, finding that individuals with a high level of CSE are more willing to actively adopt positive emotion regulation methods. However, from the overall research status, existing domestic research still has certain limitations: most studies only focus on a single age group, lacking horizontal comparison and longitudinal analysis of children, adolescents, young and middle-aged people, and the elderly; most research focuses on correlation analysis between two variables, lacking systematic discussion on the mediating role of emotion regulation strategies; research results are scattered, and a complete theoretical system suitable for local Chinese people has not yet been formed.

Based on the achievements and existing deficiencies of current research, this study adopts the narrative literature review method to systematically integrate domestic and foreign

relevant research literature, sort out the connotation definition, structural dimensions and all-age development characteristics of CSE, and analyze the classification criteria, mechanism of action and differences in the use of emotion regulation strategies among different groups. On this basis, it deeply analyzes the direct influence path of CSE on individual emotions, and focuses on discussing the mediating transmission mechanism of emotion regulation strategies between the two, comparing the performance differences of the mediating effect among different age groups. The research significance of this study is mainly reflected in two aspects: theoretically, integrating scattered research achievements, improving the theory of the relationship among CSE, emotion regulation strategies and emotion, and providing theoretical reference for subsequent empirical research, scale revision and model construction; practically, providing ideas for mental health classroom teaching in primary and secondary schools, psychological counseling in universities, and psychological care for the elderly in society according to research conclusions, helping individuals shape positive CSE and develop scientific emotion regulation habits, so as to improve the emotional health and overall mental health level of all groups.

2. Connotation Definition, Structural Dimensions and All-Age Developmental Characteristics of Core Self-Evaluations

2.1 Connotation and Definition of Core Self-Evaluations

Self-concept is a core research category in personality psychology and developmental psychology. It is individuals' overall cognition and evaluation of their own physical and mental traits, social roles, interpersonal relationships and future development formed in long-term social life. Self-concept is not a static psychological structure that remains unchanged, but a dynamic system that continuously evolves with individual growth, environmental changes and life experience, which can be divided into two levels: surface self-concept and core self-concept. Surface self-concept is mostly related to specific situations, temporary events and immediate evaluation of others, with strong situational variability; while core self-concept is the deep underlying cognitive framework of individual psychology, and the stable and essential inner self-cognitive core retained after eliminating temporary surface cognition.

The core characteristics that distinguish core self-concept from ordinary self-concept lie in stability and fundamentality. It is formed in the early growth stage of individuals, gradually solidifies and matures in young and middle age, and its core will not easily collapse and change even in the face of life changes, negative external evaluation or environmental changes. In essence, core self-concept includes four inner cores: individual self-worth, ability identity, perceived environmental control and emotional acceptance, which centrally answer fundamental psychological questions such as "how do individuals view themselves", "whether they recognize their own value" and "whether they have the ability to cope with life setbacks". Individuals with positive core self-concept generally have stable self-identity, are not easily influenced by negative external evaluation, and have stronger psychological resilience. Individuals with weak and negative core self-concept are prone to self-doubt and self-denial, overly sensitive to external evaluation, and have relatively low psychological stress resistance and environmental adaptability.

From the perspective of theoretical origin, the theoretical basis of core self-concept is rooted in humanistic psychology and personality trait psychology. Humanistic psychologists emphasize the core position of self-cognition in individual psychological growth, believing that sound self-identity is the foundation of mental health. Personality trait theory regards core self-concept as a stable internal personality trait, independent of traditional personality dimensions such as extraversion and neuroticism, which can stably predict individual emotion and behavior across situations and time. Based on the general consensus of academic circles, core self-concept can be defined as: a stable, deep and fundamental self-cognition and comprehensive evaluation of self-worth, personal ability, personality traits and life control formed by individuals in long-term growth and social interaction, serving as the core internal personality variable affecting individual emotional response, behavioral choice and mental health.

It is important to clarify that the concept of "core self-concept" discussed in this review is treated as conceptually equivalent to the more specific

construct of "core self-evaluations" (CSE), as operationalized by Judge and colleagues [2]. While "self-concept" is a broader term encompassing all self-knowledge, "core self-evaluations" refers specifically to the fundamental, bottom-line evaluations individuals hold about themselves. In this paper, we use "core self-evaluations" (CSE) to denote this narrower construct, and the two terms are used interchangeably to be consistent with the literature cited.

2.2 Structural Dimensions of Core Self-Evaluations

The most recognized and widely used four-dimensional structure model of core self-evaluations was proposed by Judge and other scholars in 2001 [2]. The model divides CSE into four dimensions: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability and locus of control [3].

Self-esteem refers to individuals' acceptance and recognition of their overall value, which is the most basic dimension of CSE. Individuals with high self-esteem can objectively view their own advantages and disadvantages, accept imperfect selves, and are not prone to inferiority and self-pity. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to overemphasize their own deficiencies, habitually deny themselves, are easily affected by others' external evaluation, and have greater emotional fluctuations. Generalized self-efficacy refers to individuals' overall confidence in their ability to cope with life pressure, complete tasks and overcome setbacks, which is different from domain-specific efficacy and belongs to cross-scenario general ability belief. The higher the level of self-efficacy, the easier individuals are to maintain an optimistic attitude when facing difficulties, and have weaker negative emotional experience.

The dimension of emotional stability mainly measures the range of individual emotional fluctuations and innate traits of emotional regulation. Individuals with high emotional stability are not easily irritated by trivial matters and can maintain a peaceful state of mind. Individuals with low emotional stability are more prone to anxiety, irritability and depression, and their emotions are easily affected by external stimuli. Locus of control is divided into internal control and external control. Internally controlled individuals believe that personal life outcomes and life circumstances are determined by personal efforts and their own choices; externally controlled individuals tend to attribute success or failure to external uncontrollable factors such as luck, fate and the influence of others. The stronger the internal control tendency, the higher the sense of self-control and the more stable the psychological state; individuals with obvious external control tendency are prone to a sense of powerlessness and helplessness, and more likely to fall into negative emotions.

On the basis of the Western four-dimensional model, domestic scholars have made appropriate revisions combined with China's local cultural characteristics. Some studies have included interpersonal self and moral self as auxiliary dimensions, but the overall academic research still takes Judge's four-dimensional structure as the main reference standard. The interaction of the four dimensions jointly determines the overall development level of individual CSE, and also affects individual subsequent emotional experience and emotional regulation choice from different levels.

2.3 All-Age Developmental Characteristics of Core Self-Evaluations

The formation and development of CSE run through an individual's whole life, showing distinct developmental characteristics in three major life stages: childhood and adolescence, young and middle age, and old age. Its plasticity, stability and psychological function also have obvious age differences, but it always acts as the underlying support for individual psychological development.

Childhood and adolescence are the critical periods for the germination, construction and rapid development of CSE, with strong plasticity. Early children initially form self-cognition relying on family education and parental rearing styles. Parents' encouragement, acceptance and affirmation will help children establish initial positive self-worth; while strict accusation and excessive denial of rearing methods are easy to make children form inferior and negative initial self-concept. After entering primary and secondary school, teachers' evaluation, peer relationship and academic performance become the main factors affecting the development of self-concept. Individuals begin to judge their own abilities and values through comparison with peers and teachers' recognition. The CSE at this stage has not been solidified, and is

vulnerable to the impact of negative events such as growth setbacks, campus interpersonal conflicts and academic failures, thus forming unstable self-cognition, which is also a high-incidence stage of psychological and behavioral problems such as inferiority, sensitivity and rebellion. On the whole, the CSE of children and adolescents is still in dynamic change, has not formed a stable inner core, and is highly dependent on the external environment and others' evaluation [6].

Young and middle age is the period when individual CSE gradually matures and stabilizes. In the late youth and middle age, individuals experience multiple life transitions such as further study, workplace struggle, marriage and family formation, and social role transformation. They continuously verify and revise self-cognition through social practice, task challenges and life choices. At this stage, individuals no longer rely excessively on others' evaluation, can independently and objectively judge their own abilities and values, self-identity tends to be stable, and psychological stress resistance, frustration tolerance and self-acceptance ability are significantly improved. CSE reaches the most stable state in life during young and middle age, the internal cognitive framework is basically finalized, which can independently buffer the psychological impact caused by external pressure, and it is the age group with the strongest emotional regulation ability and psychological resilience. At the same time, stable CSE will reversibly support individuals' career development, interpersonal relationships and family life, forming a virtuous cycle of psychology and life.

In old age, due to the decline of physical functions, degradation of social roles, changes in living environment, death of relatives and friends and other multiple factors, individual CSE will have moderate reconstruction and fine adjustment, but the overall inner core remains stable. After retirement, individuals change from workplace roles to home-based elderly care roles, and it is easy to have a gap in social sense of value coupled with the decline in physical health. Some elderly people will have cognitive changes such as reduced self-worth and increased powerlessness. However, the long-term formed foundation of CSE still exists. Most elderly people will adjust self-cognition again through family companionship, hobbies and social activities to maintain emotional and psychological stability. A small number of elderly people with weak CSE are prone to fall into negative emotions such as loneliness, depression and uselessness due to aging and role loss, becoming a high-risk group for psychological problems in old age [7].

In conclusion, although the CSE of individuals of all ages has age differences in plasticity, stability and influencing factors, it always undertakes the core functions of supporting self-identity, maintaining emotional stability and resisting psychological pressure. Positive CSE is the common foundation of mental health for individuals of all age groups.

3. Connotation Classification, Mechanism of Action and All-Age Differences in the Use of Emotion Regulation Strategies

3.1 Connotation and Theoretical Basis of Emotion Regulation Strategies

Emotion regulation strategies refer to a series of psychological and behavioral methods such as cognitive adjustment, thinking transformation, behavioral guidance and emotional expression control adopted by individuals after perceiving internal and external emotional stimuli. Their core purpose is to change the intensity and duration of emotional experience, weaken the negative impact of negative emotions, and maintain the stable state of positive emotions. Emotion regulation is not simply suppressing emotions, but an essential psychological ability for individuals to adapt to social norms, adapt to the living environment and maintain psychological balance, and it is also a core skill that individuals must master in the process of socialization development.

From the perspective of theoretical basis, Gross's emotion regulation process model is the core theory in this field, dividing emotion regulation into two categories: antecedent-focused emotion regulation and response-focused emotion regulation [4]. Antecedent-focused regulation occurs before emotions are fully generated, avoiding or weakening negative emotions in advance by changing cognitive evaluation and adjusting thinking perspectives; response-focused regulation occurs after emotions have emerged, dealing with existing emotional experience through behavioral control and expressive suppression. This theoretical framework lays a

core foundation for the classification of emotion regulation strategies and research on mechanism of action, and also serves as an important theoretical basis for sorting out variable relationships in this paper.

Emotion regulation strategies have three major characteristics: initiative, purposiveness and plasticity. Individuals are not passively dominated by emotions, but can master scientific regulation strategies through acquired learning, environmental influence and psychological training. At the same time, emotion regulation habits will gradually solidify with the growth of age and the increase of life experience, forming unique individual emotion management modes, which affect individual emotional health and psychological state stably for a long time.

3.2 Mainstream Classification of Emotion Regulation Strategies

According to the regulatory effect and adaptability level, current psychological circles generally divide emotion regulation strategies into two categories: adaptive emotion regulation strategies and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies. The two types of strategies have significant differences in action paths, long-term effects and mental health benefits [8].

Adaptive emotion regulation strategies are positive adjustment methods in line with the law of psychological development, which can improve emotional state from the cognitive root, mainly including cognitive reappraisal, positive acceptance, emotional guidance, attention diversion and problem-solving. As the most representative adaptive strategy, cognitive reappraisal means that individuals change their negative cognition of negative events by reinterpreting external events and switching thinking perspectives, reducing negative emotional experience from the root. Positive acceptance emphasizes facing up to one's own emotions and real dilemmas, not escaping or resisting negative feelings, and accepting the current situation with a peaceful attitude. Emotional guidance and problem-solving resolve emotional distress from the source through talking and communication, and actively solving real contradictions. Long-term use of adaptive regulation strategies can effectively reduce the level of negative emotions such as anxiety and depression, improve psychological resilience and social adaptability, and have long-term protective effects on individual mental health.

Maladaptive emotion regulation strategies can only achieve short-term emotional suppression, unable to solve the root causes of emotions at the cognitive level. Long-term use will aggravate psychological distress and accumulation of negative emotions, mainly including expressive suppression, rumination, emotional avoidance, negative escape and self-blame. Expressive suppression refers to deliberately suppressing emotional expression, pretending to be calm while bearing negative emotions internally. It can maintain social image in the short term, but easily cause emotional backlog and psychological internal consumption in the long run. Rumination means repeatedly recalling negative events and dwelling on past setbacks, constantly strengthening negative feelings such as sadness, anger and inferiority. Emotional avoidance is to stay away from emotional stimuli by escaping reality, refusing to think and closing oneself. It seems to avoid pain, but actually hinders the normal guidance of emotions and psychological growth. Individuals who rely on maladaptive strategies for a long time are more likely to fall into a vicious circle of emotions and induce various psychological problems.

3.3 All-Age Differences in the Use of Emotion Regulation Strategies

Affected by cognitive development level, life experience, social roles and psychological maturity, children and adolescents, young and middle-aged people, and the elderly have age-related characteristics in the preference, ability and effect of emotion regulation strategies. However, these differences should be interpreted with caution, as they are highly dependent on specific contexts, tasks, health status, and measurement methods.

Children and adolescents have immature cognitive development, insufficient abstract thinking and cognitive reconstruction ability, and may be unable to independently use in-depth adaptive strategies such as cognitive reappraisal. Their emotion regulation mostly relies on external guidance and simple behavioral regulation. Young children mainly rely on comfort and guidance from parents and teachers to relieve emotions, and instinctively respond to negative feelings by crying, acting coquettishly and avoiding. In adolescence, self-awareness awakens rapidly, and individuals begin to have independent willingness of emotion regulation,

but they may tend to fall into maladaptive regulation modes such as rebellion, depression and closure, often dealing with emotions through silent avoidance, inner rumination and impulsive venting, lacking scientific emotion regulation methods, which is also the main reason for high incidence of emotional out-of-control and adolescent psychological conflicts [9]. On the whole, the ability to use adaptive strategies in this age group may be weaker in certain contexts, and the regulation mode can be more emotional and passive.

Young and middle-aged people generally have mature cognitive ability, thinking level and social experience, and tend to show more flexibility and diversity in the use of emotion regulation strategies. At this stage, individuals can often master a variety of adaptive strategies such as cognitive reappraisal, reasonable communication and problem-solving. Faced with work pressure, interpersonal contradictions and life setbacks, they can flexibly choose regulation methods according to actual situations, adjust their mentality at the cognitive level, and resolve emotional distress through practical actions. At the same time, young and middle-aged people occasionally use expressive suppression to adapt to workplace and social norms, but overall they may be more inclined to use adaptive regulation, with potentially higher regulation efficiency and stable effects. Nevertheless, the specific effectiveness can vary greatly depending on individual health, occupational demands, and personal coping styles.

The cognitive function and thinking flexibility of the elderly may decline slightly, and their emotion regulation strategies tend to be more moderate and conservative, often favoring gentle adaptive strategies such as accepting reality, interest diversion and family communication. Most elderly people can view fame and fortune gains and losses lightly, and accept aging and role changes with a peaceful mentality, rarely adopting extreme regulation methods such as impulsive venting and excessive entanglement. However, when facing major negative events such as serious illness, bereavement and loneliness, some elderly people are prone to fall into maladaptive regulation states such as negative rumination and self-closure, and it may be difficult to get out of the emotional low by their own strength, requiring psychological care intervention from family and society. On the whole, the emotion regulation strategies of the elderly are relatively fixed, the regulation rhythm is gentle, and the mediating effect is generally stable but can vary significantly with health status and social support [7].

It is crucial to emphasize that these observed age-related trends are not absolute. The effectiveness and preference for specific emotion regulation strategies are highly influenced by situational factors (e.g., whether the stressor is controllable or not), task demands (e.g., occupational vs. personal settings), individual health status (both physical and mental), and the methodological approaches used to assess regulation (e.g., self-report vs. physiological measures). Therefore, any comparison across age groups should consider these moderating factors rather than assuming a fixed developmental trajectory.

4. The Internal Correlation and Mediating Role Among Core Self-Evaluations, Emotion Regulation Strategies and Emotion

4.1 Direct Influence of Core Self-Evaluations on Emotion

As a deep and stable internal personality trait of individuals, CSE can directly affect individual emotional state stably and permanently without relying on intermediate variables, and is the core internal factor determining individual emotional tone.

Individuals with high CSE have positive and stable self-identity, sufficient psychological security and strong sense of environmental control. Faced with daily pressure events, interpersonal conflicts and setbacks, they are not prone to self-doubt and excessive anxiety, and can maintain a regular emotional tone of optimism, peace and self-confidence. Such individuals have a high degree of self-acceptance, will not fall into inferiority and depression due to temporary failure or negative evaluation of others, with small emotional fluctuations and a higher proportion of positive emotions, maintaining a good level of emotional health for a long time. On the contrary, individuals with low CSE have characteristics such as lack of self-identity, insufficient sense of security and obvious external control tendency. They habitually magnify their own defects and life dilemmas, are overly sensitive to others' evaluation, and are easily affected by trivial external matters, and frequently fall into negative emotions such as anxiety, inferiority,

irritability and depression with slow emotional recovery, staying in a state of emotional imbalance for a long time [10].

From the perspective of all age groups, this direct influence is universal: positive CSE can reduce emotional problems such as rebellion, sensitivity and depression in children and adolescents; stable CSE buffers the emotional impact caused by workplace and life pressure in young and middle age; good CSE can relieve loneliness and uselessness caused by aging and role loss in old age. Regardless of age, the development level of CSE has directly laid the emotional foundation of individuals, and is the deep internal root of emotional stability.

4.2 Influence of Core Self-Evaluations on the Choice of Emotion Regulation Strategies

CSE profoundly shapes individuals' cognitive bias and psychological coping modes, directly determines individuals' preference and usage habits of emotion regulation strategies, and is an important antecedent variable affecting emotion regulation methods [1].

Individuals with high CSE have personality traits such as high self-esteem, strong self-efficacy and internal control, with an open mentality and high self-acceptance. When troubled by negative emotions, they are more willing to face problems directly and tend to choose adaptive emotion regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal, positive acceptance and problem-solving. Such individuals believe that they have the ability to regulate emotions and solve dilemmas, will not deliberately avoid inner feelings, and are willing to dredge negative emotions through cognitive adjustment and active actions, forming a stable behavioral pattern of "positive self-cognition-adaptive regulation".

Individuals with low CSE generally have self-denial, low self-efficacy and external control tendency, being sensitive and vulnerable inside, lacking the courage to face negative emotions and real dilemmas. When facing emotional pressure, they are more likely to take avoidance, suppression and repetitive entanglement, preferring maladaptive emotion regulation strategies such as expressive suppression, rumination and emotional avoidance. Such individuals habitually avoid self-reflection and real contradictions, dare not face up to their own emotional shortcomings, and can only relieve pain through short-term suppression or self-closure, which solidifies negative emotion regulation habits in the long run and further aggravates psychological internal consumption.

From the perspective of age differences, the influence of CSE on regulation strategies may be more prominent in young and middle-aged people where self-cognition is mature, and strategy selection is more directly dominated by CSE. Children and adolescents have unformed self-concept, vulnerable to the influence of parents and peers, with potentially weaker correlation. The elderly tend to be peaceful in life mentality due to life experience, with a correlation level that is moderate but highly dependent on health and social context. These differences, however, are not fixed and should be interpreted considering contextual and measurement factors.

4.3 The Mediating Role of Emotion Regulation Strategies Between Core Self-Evaluations and Emotion

The mediating effect is specifically manifested as: CSE can not only directly affect individual emotional state, but also indirectly act on emotional experience by influencing the choice and use of emotion regulation strategies, that is, CSE → emotion regulation strategies → emotion, forming a complete internal psychological action path [1, 10].

The specific transmission mechanism is as follows: individuals with high-level positive CSE are more inclined to adopt adaptive emotion regulation strategies, weaken negative emotions and maintain positive emotions through cognitive reappraisal, positive guidance and other ways, and finally present a stable and healthy emotional state. Individuals with low-level CSE rely more on maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, emotions cannot be effectively dredged, negative emotions accumulate and strengthen continuously, and finally show frequent emotional fluctuations and persistent negative emotions. In this process, emotion regulation strategies play a key conductive role, undertaking the internal personality influence of CSE, transforming deep self-cognition into specific emotion regulation behaviors, and finally acting on external emotional performance [1, 10].

From the analysis of all-age mediating effect differences, due to the strong plasticity of CSE and immature emotion regulation ability of

children and adolescents, the mediating effect may be relatively weaker, and the external environment and family education still play a leading role. Young and middle-aged people have stable self-cognition and mature regulation strategies, with a potentially more significant mediating effect, and emotion regulation strategies can more fully transmit the influence of CSE on emotions. The elderly have stable CSE but may have more solidified regulation strategies, with a mediating effect that is generally stable but can vary with health and cognitive status. On the whole, the mediating role of emotion regulation strategies exists universally in all age groups, but its strength and pattern are subject to contextual and methodological influences.

5. Research Conclusions, Deficiencies of Existing Research and Future Research Prospects

5.1 Research Conclusions

By systematically reviewing domestic and foreign relevant literature and integrating the correlation among CSE, emotion regulation strategies and emotion, the following comprehensive conclusions can be drawn:

(1) Core self-evaluations (CSE) is a stable deep self-cognitive structure composed of self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability and locus of control [2, 3]. It presents developmental characteristics of plasticity, stability and reconstruction in childhood and adolescence, young and middle age, and old age [6, 7], and is the core internal personality variable affecting individual emotional and psychological development throughout all age groups.

(2) Emotion regulation strategies can be divided into adaptive and maladaptive types [4, 8]. The long-term use of different strategies has completely different impacts on mental health and emotional state. Groups of all ages show differences in the preference and ability of regulation strategies, but these differences are highly dependent on cognitive level, life experience, specific contexts, health status, and measurement methods [7, 9]. Young and middle-aged people may show greater flexibility in certain contexts, while children and adolescents may rely more on external guidance, and the elderly may prefer more conservative strategies.

(3) There is a close internal correlation among CSE, emotion regulation strategies and emotions. CSE can not only directly lay the foundation of individual emotional tone and affect emotional state [10], but also dominate individuals' choice bias of emotion regulation strategies [1]. Emotion regulation strategies play a significant mediating role between CSE and emotions, forming a complete psychological action transmission path. The mediating effect is universal in all age groups, but its strength and pattern are subject to contextual, health-related, and methodological influences.

(4) Positive CSE and adaptive emotion regulation strategies have universal protective effects on individual emotional health and mental health. Regardless of age, shaping positive CSE and developing scientific emotion regulation habits can effectively reduce negative emotional distress and improve emotional stability and overall psychological adaptability.

5.2 Deficiencies of Existing Research

Combined with domestic and foreign existing research results, current research in this field still has obvious limitations and deficiencies. Firstly, research samples are relatively single. Most domestic studies focus on college students and primary and secondary school students [5], while there are few studies on middle-aged and elderly groups and all-age horizontal comparison, lacking systematic research covering the whole life cycle. Secondly, research methods are dominated by correlation analysis, mostly focusing on simple correlation discussion between two variables, lacking sufficient empirical research on the mediating effect of the three variables, especially the lack of localized and all-age structural equation model empirical test. Thirdly, the research perspective lacks cultural adaptability. Most studies directly follow Western theories and scales [1-10], with few studies revised combined with China's local culture, family rearing mode and social values, which are difficult to fully adapt to the psychological characteristics of domestic people. Fourthly, the transformation of research practice is insufficient. Most existing researches stay at the level of theoretical review and data analysis, and the application of research conclusions in practical fields such as mental health education, psychological intervention program and family education guidance is less.

5.3 Future Research Prospects

Based on the deficiencies of existing research, future research can be further deepened and expanded from multiple directions. Firstly, expand the scope of research samples, carry out all-age horizontal comparative research on children, adolescents, young and middle-aged people and the elderly, and increase samples of ordinary community people, special occupational groups and psychological distress groups to enrich research data and conclusion applicability. Secondly, strengthen empirical model research, adopt statistical methods such as structural equation model and hierarchical regression analysis to accurately test the differences of mediating effects of emotion regulation strategies among different age groups and genders, and build a variable relationship model suitable for local people. Thirdly, promote the revision of localized theories and tools, revise relevant measurement scales of CSE and emotion regulation strategies combined with Chinese traditional culture, collectivist values and local rearing methods, and improve the localized theoretical system. Fourthly, strengthen the combination of theory and practice, apply research conclusions to the design of mental health courses in primary and secondary schools, psychological counseling programs in universities, psychological care services for the elderly and family education guidance, targeted help individuals shape positive CSE, carry out emotion regulation skills training, and provide accurate theoretical support and practical schemes for mental health intervention of all groups.

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