

Mediatory Effect of Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy: A Study of the Relationship Between Social Adaptation and Life Attitude in Chinese High School Students

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ABSTRACT

China has the largest amount of individuals affected by auditory impairment. As education for the disabled rapidly develops, there is also an increasing proportion of students affected by auditory impairment attending high school and college. Although there are abundant studies regarding social adaptation and life attitude, the studies on graduating students with auditory impairment are still limited in the fields of cognitive science, sociology and specialized education. Regarding this fact, this paper presents a correlational study on the social adaptation of students with auditory impairment. As the aforementioned subjects progress into society after receiving education, they are likely to face more challenges in adapting to a larger social environment largely due to their disability. The study presented mainly focuses on the social adaptation ability of the students and other related factors, including life attitude, and the mediatory effects of the student's self-esteem and self-efficacy. The subjects included in the study are students in specialized schools distributed in Tianjin, Nanjing and Chongqing provinces. A random sample of 20 students are selected through year 10 to 12 to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of four sections: Social Adaptation Survey(SAS), Self-Esteem Survey(SES), General Self Efficacy Survey(GSES), and Life Attitude Survey(LAS), with a total of 65 questions.

Keywords : *Auditory Impairment, Social Adaptation, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Life Attitude, Adolescents*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the growth of hearing-impaired students, life attitude had been a feature under close introspection. Life attitude is defined by whether the individual has a sense of purpose, confidence in their future, and goals to achieve in life. It is commonly believed to be related to the success, achievements and well being in later life. A mediator that greatly affects life attitude is social adaptation. Social adaptation is multi-faceted concept delineating the ability of an individual to interact with social groups in respect to their age and culture, in other words it is the degree to which an individual is able to fit in to society. Low social adaptation will lead to neglect and self devaluation, which may cause further psychological complications that affect the quality of life. Social adaptation is shown to be negatively affected by discrimination and mistreatment from peers, social norms and policies that put the disabled at a disadvantage, as well as slower cognitive development due to limited communication time. Social adaptation is shown to affect self-esteem and self efficacy, as well as life attitude. [1]

Self-esteem is the concept of how individuals assess their own value and social position. Abraham Maslow views that sufficient self esteem is crucial to the self actualization—recognition of an individual's full potential, which defines the progress one can make in life.[2] Social adaptation is possibly a mediator of self esteem. Children who better fit into social groups and communicate with them would develop a sense of competence and recognize their own values, while children who are unable to adapt to the environment may develop a sense of inferiority, in this case low self esteem.(J. Jie et al, 2016) In this sense, self esteem is possibly also a mediator of life attitude. Social adaptation is also related to self efficacy. Self efficacy is a concept proposed by Albert Bandura, relating to the confidence of an individual in completing a certain task. According to the study by Li. Et al, it is a definitive factor with the subjective well being of adolescent students, with higher self-efficacy leading to better sense of well-being in society[4]. Higher self efficacy will lead individuals to take more risks and challenging tasks in life, which is a factor of life attitude previously defined.

Adolescence is a critical period when a student forms a constant view of their own self efficacy. It may be affected by many factors, such as family abundance, social connections and communication ability, which leads to the extrapolation that the self efficacy of hearing-impaired students can shape life attitude in ways differently compared to normal students. Thus self efficacy must also be a mediator of the life attitude for students with auditory impairment.

This study investigates the relationship between social adaptation and life attitude of high-school students with auditory impairment, and the mediatory effect of self-esteem and self efficacy on life attitude, to provide scientific evidence in understanding the psychology of adolescents with auditory impairments and in aid to develop methods to help the aforementioned group develop a positive life attitude through their education.

2. STUDY METHODS

2.1 Subject Selection

Based on volunteering, the survey is conducted in three schools specialized for students with auditory impairment located in Tianjin, Nanjing and Chongqing respectively. A total of 168 questionnaire were collected with 148 valid results. With a successful collection percentage of 100% and survey effectiveness of 88%.

2.2 Tools for research

Social Adaptation Survey(SAS): On the basis of “贵州苗族地区特殊教育学校苗族聋生社会适应行为研究” by Zhiqiang Wang. et al.(2008), SAS is devised to evaluate subjects’s social adaptation by presenting them with different scenarios relating to personal capability, personal habits and communication. There are a total of 25 questions in the questionnaire, based on a 5-point scale method, with 1-5 respectively representing “Highly Unlikely”, “Sometimes Likely”, “Moderately Likely”, “Likely”, and “Very Likely”. A higher score would demonstrate higher self-efficacy. The internal coherence of the questionnaire is 0.87, KMO being 0.83, and the result from the Bartett test being highly significant($p < 0.001$). This shows that the questionnaire has a high validity.[5]

Self Esteem Survey(SES): SES is developed by Rosenberg in 1965, initially employed to evaluate the self-worth and self-acceptance of adolescents. It is the most prevalent tool used to measure self esteem until today. In this study it is modified to fit the lifestyle of students with auditory impairment. The survey evaluates the subject’s self esteem based on confidence, self-cognition, and self-worth. There are a

total of 10 questions in the modified version, based on a 5-point scale, with 1-5 respectively representing “Highly Unlikely”, “Sometimes Likely”, “Moderately Likely”, “Likely”, and “Very Likely”. A higher score would demonstrate higher self-efficacy. The internal coherence of the questionnaire is 0.93, KMO being 0.89, and the result from the Bartett test being highly significant($p < 0.001$). This shows that the questionnaire has a high validity.

General Self-Efficacy Survey(GSES): GSES is a tool to evaluate self efficacy, developed by Thur. Et al. in 1982. In this study it is modified to fit the lifestyle of students with auditory impairment. The original version contains 30 questions, evaluating the subject based on their attitude towards their own behavior, self expectation and expectation on the outcomes of their own actions, with underlying factors being ability to overcome frustration and pursuit of personal ideals. There are a total of 10 questions in the modified version, based on a 5-point scale, with 1-5 respectively representing “Highly Unlikely”, “Sometimes Likely”, “Moderately Likely”, “Likely”, and “Very Likely”. A higher score would demonstrate higher self-efficacy. The internal coherence of the questionnaire is 0.91, KMO being 0.90, and the result from the Bartett test being highly significant($p < 0.001$). This shows that the questionnaire has a high validity.[6]

Life Attitude Survey(LAS): LAS employed in this study is developed on the basis of the questionnaire developed by Li Jie. Et al.(2013) in “Statistical Analysis of Life Attitude Structure and Scale of College Students.” In this study it is modified to fit the lifestyle of students with auditory impairment. and removed certain questions regarding college life. This questionnaire evaluated the subject’s life attitude based on life goals and self-evaluation. There are a total of 20 questions based on a 5-point scale, with 1-5 respectively representing “Highly Unlikely”, “Sometimes Likely”, “Moderately Likely”, “Likely”, and “Very Likely”. A higher score would demonstrate more positive life attitude. The internal coherence of the questionnaire is 0.90, KMO being 0.83, and the result from the Bartett test being highly significant($p < 0.001$). This shows that the questionnaire has a high validity.

2.3 Test procedure

The study is carried out by the Beijing GIVE Charity Club members, during the subject students’ class period after they completed their finals. Tencent Questionnaire is the software medium used for data collection. After the questionnaire is completed the subjects are given appropriate gifts. Invalid results and Outliers are removed based on human evaluation. SPSS26.0 and Amos26.0 are employed for data analysis.

3.RESULTS

3.1 Correlational Analysis Between Variables

The relationship between social adaptation, self-esteem, self-efficacy and life attitude are then analyzed based on different aspects and total scores. The results are shown in table 1. From table 1, the social adaptation of students with hearing impairment ($r=0.683$, $p<0.001$), Self-Esteem($r=0.630$, $p<0.001$), Self-Efficacy ($r=0.578$, $p<0.001$) display a positive correlation; Self-Esteem and Life Attitude ($r=0.502$, $p<0.001$) display a positive correlation, Self-Efficacy and Life Attitude ($r=0.743$, $p<0.001$) display a positive correlation.

Table 1: Correlational Studies (Represents a strong correlation when $p<0.001$)**

	Social Adaptaion	Self-Estee m	Self-Ef ficacy	Life Attitude
Social Adaptation	1	0.630**	0.683* *	0.578**
Self-Estee m		1	0.616* *	0.502**
Self-Effica cy			1	0.743**
Life Attitude				1

3.2 The Independent Predictive Effect of Social Adaptation and Life Attitude

For further understanding of the independent predictive effect of social adaptation and life attitude, a regression study is conducted with social adaptation as the independent variable and dependent variable, with age and geographic region controlled. The results of the analysis is shown in table 2. From table 2 the data shows that as the respective variables are controlled, both self-esteem and self-efficacy positively affect life attitude, with a coefficient of explained variation of 32.9%. This demonstrates that self-esteem and self-efficacy are capable of exerting strong influence on life attitude as mediatory variables, with stronger self-esteem/self-efficacy leading to a

more positive life attitude.[7]

Table 2: Regression analysis of the relationship between social adaptation and life attitude for students with hearing impairment

	β	t
Social Adaptation	0.210	8.493
	$\Delta F=447.2$	$\Delta r^2=0.05$
Adjusted r2		0.329

3.3 Examination of Mediatory Effect of Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy on Life Attitude

The correlational analyses above shows a strong positive correlation between social adaptation, self-esteem, self-efficacy and life attitude, which satisfies the conditions of mediatory variable examination. This study proceeds to use AMOS26.0 to respectively examine the mediatory effect on self-esteem and self-efficacy. In the examination two() were constructed, with social adaptation as latent independent variable, life attitude as latent dependent variable, self-esteem and self-efficacy as the mediatory variables. After age and geographic region are controlled, the model displayed a well fit, with a fit indices of $\chi^2/df=3.78$, RMSEA=0.03, NFI, IFI, TLI, CFI all between 0.93-1. As shown in Fig.1, there is a significant pathway coefficient between social adaptation and self-efficacy($\beta=0.21$, $p<0.001$), as well as a significant pathway coefficient between self-efficacy and life attitude($\beta=0.29$, $p<0.001$). Thus it can be said that self efficacy displays a positive mediatory effect on life attitude. It can also be seen that self-esteem displays a positive mediatory effect on life attitude.

4.CONCLUSION

4.1 Limitations

Before discussing the results, there are certain limitations to the study that have yet to be considered. When considering the mediatory relationship between self-esteem and self-efficacy on life attitude, the relative correlation and independence between the two mediatory variables have not been considered. If self-esteem and self-efficacy are under the effect of

same sources, the results of the study can be used to identify the fields of improvements for specialized schools and rehabilitation facilities, under the suitable scope. In the study by Michell A. Harris et al, the method meta-analysis with significantly larger samples (46,231) participants have been used. This method can be incorporated into further studies to obtain more representative results from regression analysis with less errors.

4.2 Relationship Between Social Adaptation and Life Attitude

The investigation showed a strong positive correlation between social adaptation and a positive life attitude. With the variables birth sex, age and the hearing ability of parents being controlled, social adaptation displayed a positive predictive effect on a life attitude, with higher social adaptation leading to a positive life attitude. This supports that as the student successfully adapts to their environment, they are more likely to maintain a proactive and hopeful life attitude. Since auditory impairment is an irreversible condition, social adaptation is a crucial factor for later success in life, given the rapid changes in a broad social context, as it establishes a positive feedback loop: Students that adapt effectively are more intent in communicating and learning with others, which will lead to further successful adaptation. On the other hand students that cannot adapt effectively are prone to loneliness and social neglect, as a result of ineffective communication.

Previous studies on social adaptation specifically regarding students with auditory impairment are limited. This study demonstrates that social adaptation affects the development of the students on a significant scale, which provides new insight into this field of study. This result also shows the importance of educationists and parents of students with auditory impairment to establish drills for students on social adaptation, communication and cognition, in order for them to maintain a healthy mind and positive life attitude.

4.3 Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Life Attitude

A positive correlation is observed between self esteem and life attitude. As the mediatory variable between social adaptation and life attitude, higher self esteem in students are also shown to predict a positive life attitude. This could be seen as achieving self-actualization as a result of fulfilled self-esteem. With a competent view of their own values and abilities individuals would believe that they are no less capable than normal students and would be willing to take their abilities into achieving further goals in life. Self esteem can be also seen as a

response to the differences between students with auditory impairment and students without. Students with higher self esteem are less likely to view their disability as inferior, thus it will enable them to better fit into society and establish clear views of their future life

4.4 Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Life Attitude

A strong positive correlation is observed between self-efficacy and life attitude. Higher self efficacy will lead to a more positive life attitude, including confidence in self and obvious goals in life. As aforementioned, self efficacy relates to the amount of communication the student can obtain and the efficiency of the interactions between the self and social groups. With more communication and involvement, the gap in self-cognition will be closed and they will perceive themselves as less different than normal individuals. This will lead to a higher self efficacy and a positive life attitude.

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