SSGC8807 Academic Writing and Scholarship

Individual Assignment 2

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**Part One: The Anatomy of the Chosen Article from Assignment 1**

The chosen article entitled *Testing the Associations among Social Axioms, School Belonging, and Flourishing in University Students: A Two-Year Longitudinal Study* was published in *Applied Psychology: Health & Wellbeing (AP: HWB)*, which focuses on scientific research findings and practical applications in the fields of health and well-being. The journal welcomes submissions from various fields of applied psychology, with a particular focus on the application of psychological research to promote optimal functioning and well-being. Empirical studies are among the types of articles that the journal considers for publication. The article aimed to provide empirical evidence on how social axioms, which are generalized social beliefs, affect the well-being and sense of belonging of Chinese university students, which are relevant for the health area of applied psychology. The article also aimed to provide theoretical insights into social axioms theory and discuss its implications for educational interventions to enhance students’ well-being and belonging.

In the literature review section, the authors introduced social axioms as five-dimensional generalized social beliefs that guide people’s actions and interpretations of events. The first paper that defined social axioms (Leung et al., 2002) and that showed the cross-cultural reliability and validity of measure of social axioms were cited (Leung et al., 2012; Leung & Bond, 2004). However, temporal stability of social axioms at the individual level has been poorly investigated, as only temporal stability of social axioms at the societal level (Leung et al., 2012), and two dimensions at the individual level (Goodwin et al., 2012; Leung et al., 2010) were examined. The authors explained how social axioms can affect individuals’ well-being and flourishing (e.g., Hui & Bond, 2010), which are defined as optimal functioning and positive feelings (Diener, 1984). They also described how school belonging, which is a sense of attachment and identification with school (Goodenow, 1993), can connect to students’ well-being and flourishing (Jose et al., 2012). Although the relationship between social axioms and school belonging has not been investigated, the authors assumed that the two constructs are associated according to their definitions.

The authors justified their study by highlighting that social axioms have not been examined longitudinally among students, who are a vulnerable group facing various challenges that can affect their well-being. They also pointed out that school belonging is a key factor that can mediate the effects of social axioms on students’ well-being outcomes. They argued that understanding how social axioms shape students’ perceptions of school belonging and how these perceptions influence their well-being over time can have important implications for educational policies and practices. The authors reviewed previous studies that have explored the relationships between social axioms, school belonging, life satisfaction, and perceived general health among different populations. They identified some gaps and limitations in these studies, such as cross-sectional designs, inconsistent findings, lack of control variables, and cultural differences. They also discussed some theoretical models that link social axioms to well-being outcomes through psychological mechanisms such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, optimism, coping strategies, and resilience.

The authors stated their main research questions and hypotheses based on their theoretical framework. They specified what variables they would measure at two time points among a sample of Chinese university students. They presented several hypotheses across the relationships between social axioms, flourishing, and school belonging.

The discussion section summarized their main findings, limitations, directions for future research, and contributions to applied psychology. They highlighted that their study was one of the first to examine the longitudinal associations among social axioms, school belonging, and flourishing among students. They acknowledged that their study had some limitations, such as using self-report measures, relying on a single cultural context, and not controlling for other variables that might affect well-being. They suggested that future research could replicate and extend their findings by using different methods, samples, and cultures, and by exploring other mediators and moderators of the relationship between social axioms and well-being. They concluded that their study contributed to applied psychology by advancing our understanding of how generalized social beliefs influence individuals’ well-being over time.

**Part Two: The Literature Review of the Effects of Adaptive Eating Behaviors on Weight Loss of Physically Disabled Children and Adolescents**

Obesity is an increasingly prevalent public health concern in both developed and developing countries (Arroyo-Johnson & Mincey, 2016) which boosts the risk of developing severe physical health problems (e.g., cancer, Calle & Kaaks, 2004; type 2 diabetes, Stein & Colditz, 2004; cardiovascular disease, Field et al., 2001), mental health problems (e.g., depression, Stunkard et al., 2003; low self-esteem, Franklin et al., 2006; body dissatisfaction and eating disorders, Brownell & Walsh, 2017; He et al., 2017), and decreasing quality of life (He et al., 2016). Thirty-nine million children younger than five years old were overweight or obese in 2020, and more than 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016 (WHO, 2021). The prevalence of obesity doubled in over 70 countries from 1980 to 2015 and has continuously increased in most countries (The GBD 2015 Obesity Collaborators, 2017). In China, the prevalence of obesity among adults increased dramatically from 1991 to 2011, particularly among men (Mi et al., 2015). 24.35 billion RMB annual cost accounting for 2.46% of the nation’s health care expenditure was generated due to the increasing obesity rate in China (Qin & Pan, 2016).

Among obesity populations, physically disabled children and adolescents are about twice compared with non-disabled peers (Neter et al., 2011). According to previous studies, several reasons account for the higher obesity rate in physically disabled children and adolescents. First, it’s difficult for physically disabled children and adolescents to complete enough physical activities against obesity (Rimmer & Rowland, 2008). Besides, many physically disabled children are raised in poor families; therefore, a healthy diet may not be affordable for these children, and facilities for exercise are less accessible for them (Emerson et al., 2010). Moreover, disabled people frequently lack participation in social activities, which usually causes feelings of isolation, resulting in a risk of binge eating or other maladaptive eating behaviors to compensate for loneliness (Reinehr et al., 2010). However, problematic eating behaviors may trigger obesity (Warren et al., 2017).

Interventions that focus on developing adaptive eating behaviors (e.g., mindful eating and intuitive eating) were proved to show positive outcomes to tackle obesity-related behaviors, including binge eating and emotional eating (Warren et al., 2017). Mindful eating and intuitive eating are similar concepts that emphasize being aware of food choice, hunger and fullness and developing good relationship with foods instead of focusing on diets (Warren et al., 2017). Mindful eating can help individuals slow down consumption of a meal and recognize feelings of fullness to better control overeating (Lofgren, 2015). Besides, a slower pace of eating lessens overall energy consumption as individuals feel full before eating too much (Monroe, 2015).

As physically disabled individuals have more difficulties doing exercises to lose weight compare to non-disabled peers (Rimmer & Rowland, 2008) and may suffer distressing emotions such as sense of isolation (Reinehr et al., 2010) that may lead to disordered eating behaviors (Warren et al., 2017), adaptive eating behaviors focusing on awareness of internal feelings and sensations might be feasible for them to reduce obesity. However, to our best knowledge, previous treatments concerning obesity reduction on physically disabled people didn’t involve these interventions (Matizanadzo & Paudyal, 2021; McPherson et al., 2014).

In previous interventions, physical training, exercises, and diet education were adopted to lose weight, whereas the reductions in BMI or weight were not significant (Matizanadzo & Paudyal, 2021; McPherson et al., 2014) as physical activities and dietary intervention, which are closely related to obesity, might fail to be optimally combined in past interventions (Matizanadzo & Paudyal, 2021). Shortcomings of previous interventions were summarized in systematic reviews. It’s common to see small to medium sample sizes in previous studies (Matizanadzo & Paudyal, 2021; McPherson et al., 2014), and few set a control group (McPherson et al., 2014). Furthermore, previous research lacks long-term interventions in which most evaluated outcomes less than three months after interventions (McPherson et al., 2014). Additionally, the effect of parents who play a crucial role in children’s obesity intervention (Golan & Weizman, 2001) was underestimated.

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