Investigation of the multiple relations between Emotional Intelligence, Social Skills and self-esteem with Family Communications among Deaf and Hard of hearing adolescents

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this research was to investigate multiple relations between emotional intelligence, social skills and self-esteem with family communications among deaf and Hard of hearing adolescents of Isfahan city. Data were collected from 106 deaf or hard of hearing student in special deaf school of Esfahan city using short form of emotional intelligence questionnaire, social skills inventory and Family communications Scale. Data were analyzed with using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that family communication was significantly and meaningfully associated with emotional intelligence ($r=379$, $p=.001$), social skills ($r=.333$, $p=.001$) and self-esteem ($r=.213$, $p=.01$). Also in multiple regressions analysis has been determined that among subscales of social skills, there is positive and meaningful relationship between social expressivity ($r=.288$, $p=.001$), social sensitivity ($r=.360$, $p=.001$), with family communications. According to this study, personal factors and family communications must be more considered in deaf and hard of hearing adolescents.

Keywords: family communications, emotional intelligence, social skills, self-esteem, deaf and hard of hearing individuals

INTRODUCTION

Effects of defective child especially deaf child or who has hearing defection, always have social and emotional reflections and it is a stressful experience for parents (Hintermair, 2006). Since deaf or hard of hearing person often retard verbal communication with other members of family, could stay in retreat and have not desirable social growth. This retreat tending could be tense; if they have no hearing defected parents or peers so that they could deal with them (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006).

In general, hearing loss in deaf and hard of hearing people minimizes the psychic-social linkage and causes to isolation and retreation, social anxiety and significant Degrees of depression. Deaf and Hard of hearing Teenagers and young persons have poor tendency for social dealings and communications with others especially with strangers and unknown persons and frequently prefer to communicate with family members and their deaf friends in school (Munoz-Baell & Ruiz, 2000). It seems that a person who suffer from hearing defection, the amount of his/her behavior and emotional problems depends on compatibility and acceptance from others specially family members within his/her environment (Hoemann & Briga, 1981; Moores, 1981, quoted of Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006). Generally, hearing parents with hearing defected child shame socially due to owing a deaf child that he/she is not able to communicate correctly and this shame may be lead to excommunicate the deaf child or teenager obviously or secretly (Nash & Nash, 1981) this causes to motor incompatibility and social retreat in deaf or hard of hearing person. Deaf teenagers who have deaf parents, have more social sophistication, are more compatible with
deafness and they control their behavior much more better that probably is due to apply sign language or gestures sooner (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006).

In this world family introduced as a correlative or dealing system that each member is in interaction with each other, so that any parameter that effects on one member, will effect on the other members and finally on whole family (Rieffe & Terwogt, 2007). In general, it could be said that family is made a group of persons which have emotional linkage with each other and deal with each other in emotions, thoughts and even behaviors (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004; Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1993, quoted of Prasitthipab, 2008). Based on Beaver’s model, two dimensions assumed about family functions: Family competence and family style. Family competence is related to structure, flexibility and notification way in family system. Families that have flexible structure are able to discuss, talk and have better operation encountering with stressful events. Family style mentions the satisfaction and gratification (Amado, 2005). Consistency and emotional reactions of family members of deaf or Hard of hearing teenagers or children depends on various parameters (Hagamen, 1980).

Families in compromising with deaf or Hard of hearing teenagers have problems and challenges, and seems that the degree of hearing loss in children has impact on their family communications (Watkin et al., 2007). Persons with medium and severe hearing deflection need more schematization, observation and supervision in their whole life (Werts, Culatta, & Tompkins, 2007). There are some researches about family communications of deaf and hard of hearing people that rely on the positive relationships among deaf and hard of hearing children with their parents and siblings. For example: Verte, Hebrecht, and Roeyers (2006), found that there was no meaningful difference between siblings people who have hearing problems with control (normal) group in social adjustment.

Antonopoulo, Hadjikakou, and Stampoltzis (2012), found that most of the training styles which used by the mothers of deaf or hard of hearing children was Authoritative parenting’s style and strict or permissive parenting’s styles were less prevalent among the mothers. In addition, siblings’ communications considered as important factors in how the parental style was. It seems that parameters such as emotional intelligence (Manuel, 2002), social skills (Webb & Baer, 1995) and self-esteem (Allen, Hauser, Bell, and O’Connor, 1994) could be effective in deaf and hard of hearing teenagers’ family communications.

**Emotional intelligence**

Based on Goleman’s theory (1995) emotional intelligence includes knowing and managing of personal emotions, sympathizing with others and manipulation of communications in order to be satisfied with them. In other word, one person with high emotional Intelligence combines 3 components of emotions successfully (cognitive, physiological and behavioral) (Huffman, 2008). Goleman, (1998) considered emotional intelligence as a general structure that could be the cause of the success of persons in various aspects of life. Goleman believed that persons who has higher emotional intelligence, has more ability in acquiring information and their life is more meaningful (Goleman, 1998). Bar-on believed that emotional intelligence is a collection of abilities and skills that mobilizes person for consistency with environment and success.

emotional intelligence Bar-On's model includes 15 components such as emotional Consciousness, strictly, self-sanctity, self-actualization, independence, sympathy, interpersonal relations, responsibility, solution of problems, fact poll, flexibility, tolerance of pressure, Impulsive control and happiness (Bar-on, 2011). Emotional intelligence is the ability of perception, evaluation and expression of emotions, and ability for gaining and producing emotions for facilitating cognitive acts, ability of perception of concepts about emotions of a person and others to catch effective social communications and growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Morand (1999) found positive relationship between emotional intelligence and family size. In Kaur and Jaswal's study (2005), significant and positive relationship was found between high performers for strategic emotional intelligence and family climate. Chan (2005) found that family hardiness could interact with specific components of emotional intelligence. Manuel (2002) found that parent models with methods like encouraging, giving rewards and guiding have crucial effects on matters of emotional intelligence, social activities and symptoms of depression.

There are some studies on emotional intelligence of deaf and hard of hearing of people. For example: The study of Hanafi Mohd Yasin, Bari, and Salubin (2012) on deaf children showed significant relationship between level of emotional intelligence with the level of academic achievement and level of behavioral problems. Cambra (2006) showed that emotions and feelings in deaf teenagers meaningfully determined by the degree of hearing loss, gender and age and caused meaningful differences which posed the needs for academic-social programs about keeping friendly relations and awareness of the social environment. Also the results of Farrugia and Austin’s (1980) study indicated that deaf students in residential schools and hearing students in public schools were the most similar in all areas of development.
Hard-of-hearing students and deaf students in public schools appear to demonstrate lower levels of self-esteem than other students. Deaf students in public schools also appeared to demonstrate lower levels of social, emotional, and mature behaviors. In a study which was done by Furstenberg and Doyal, (1994) Results showed that deaf and hard of hearing students generally scored high on the outcome competencies, and their emotional-behavioral functioning was within the normal range, and statistically significant correlations were found between many of the performance outcomes and emotional-behavioral functioning.

**Social skills and family communication**

Another construct that could be affective on family communication is Social skills that can be defined as the set of skills which people use to interact and communicate with one another. They are based on the social norms of our society and tell us what attitudes and behaviors are expected in a particular social situation and consider as normal acceptable behaviors (Patrick, 2008). Walker (1983) believed social skills as a collection of competences that allows the person to start positive social relations and keep them, participate in group and have a satisfactorily academic adjustment and effectively adapted with large social environment (Steedly, Schwarz, Levin, and Luke, 2008).

Basically social skills are a collection of abilities that leads to success in social life of a person. Each person for having successful life in a society, except of personal skills, needs other skills that we call them social skills (Westwood, 1997). Social skills are a set of adventitious behaviors that is learned from observation, modeling, exercise and feedback and include verbal and non-verbal behaviors which can improve and growth by treatment (Michelson, Sugai, Wood, and Kazdin, 1983). Treatment of social skills is a way for improving student’s social skills and is based on this principle that problems in social skills are often due to students who don’t know what to do in social occasions and could treat them for prevail on this problem (Mujis & Reynolds, 2011).

Almost all of studies emphasize on relationship between social skills and family relationships. For instance: In a study which was done by Jones, and Houts (1992) the results indicated that the effect of parental alcoholism on social skills of the adolescents must be considered in conjunction with specific types of family communication. Also Burke, Woszildo, and Segrin (2013) reached to this result that social skills and psychological problems of parents could be effective on anxiety, loneliness and social skills of their children. Engels, Deković, and Meeus (2002) found that parental attachment and parent-child relationship are associated with social skills and peer relations of adolescents. In a study which was done by Arroyo, Nevarez, Segrin, and Harwood (2012), Results of structural equation modeling indicated that, as predicted, parent and adult child shyness were negatively associated with their own social Skills. In addition, adult children’s social skills were significantly associated with perceived family communication, but their parents’ social skills were not.

There are some researches which were done on social skills of deaf and hard of hearing people. For example: Richardson and Woody (2001) showed that deaf students act like normal students about social relationship, even though carelessness and fear of failure was seen more among them. In another study by Lukomoski (2007), result showed that deaf learners themselves knew having more problems in life in comparison with normal learners and from the view point of gender differences, deaf females felt more anxiety than deaf males. According to Rieffe and Terwoget (2006), the deaf children show their anger more differently than normal ones and show less sympathy in comparison with normal children when somebody is hurt. Kremieyer, Crooke, Drye, Egbert, and Klein (2000) found that sign or gestural language has positive impact on relationships between deaf and hard of hearing students with their hearing classmates and promote their academic achievement.

**Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is literally defined by how much value people place on themselves. It is the Evaluative component of self-knowledge. High self-esteem refers to a highly favorable Global evaluation of the self. Low self-esteem, by definition, refers to an unfavorable definition of the self. (Whether this signifies an absolutely unfavorable or relatively unfavorable evaluation is a problematic distinction, which we discuss later in connection with the distribution of self-esteem scores. Self-esteem does not carry any definitional requirement of accuracy whatsoever. Thus, high self-esteem may refer to an accurate, justified, balanced appreciation of one’s worth as a person and one’s successes and competencies, but it can also refer to a n inflated, arrogant, grandiose, unwarranted sense of conceited superiority over others. By the same token, low self-esteem can be either an accurate, well-founded understanding of one’s shortcomings as a person or a distorted, even pathological sense of insecurity and inferiority (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003).

There are some studies that have been done on relationship between self-esteem and family communications. For example: Cooper, Holman, and Braithwaite (1983) reached to this result which children who
have little support from their parents, reported lower degree of self-esteem. According to the research of Demo, Small, and Savin-Williams (1987) self- perceptions of family relations, especially self- judgments of communication are important in predicting levels of self-esteem for both adolescents and their parents. Also Andrews and Duncan (1997) found that there is a relationship between self-esteem and family relations with drug abuse in adolescents.

Some of researches have been done on self-esteem among deaf and hard of hearing people. For instance: Brunner, Bostrom, and Mats (2007) in a research that investigated Self-Rated Mental Health, School Adjustment, and Substance Use in Hard-of-Hearing Adolescents resulted that Hard of hearing students with additional problems reported themselves as who have more problems in their educational settings and have poor self-reported mental health. According to the study of Van Gurp (2001), deaf students who are more successful in educational program, have better self- perceptions.

The Jambor and Elliot’s research (2005) showed that identification with the Deaf community significantly contributed to positive self-esteem and deaf students with greater degree of hearing loss and with bicultural skills that help them function in both the hearing and the Deaf community generally have higher self-esteem. Also Dessell (1994) in a study which was done on deaf children and their parents found that The parents who were best able to communicate by using sign language had children whose self-esteem scores were higher than those of children whose parents were less skilled in sign language. This study investigates the multiple relationships between emotional intelligence, social skills and self-esteem with family communications of deaf and hard of hearing adolescents, because until now, it hasn’t been found any study about this matter among IRAN’s adolescents.

**METHOD**

**Participants**

In this research, relation between emotional intelligence and social skills with Family communications among deaf and Hard of hearing students in Isfahan city is investigated. Participants of this research included 106 deaf and hard of hearing students (51 boys and 55 girls) of high school level (freshmen and junior) who were studying in special deaf school of Esfahan City.

**MATERIALS**

**Emotional intelligence questionnaire**

Short questionnaire form of emotional intelligence (Petrides & Furnham, 2001) is a self-evaluation scale. The main and first form have 144 items and 15 subscales of harmony, daring. Emotions and affects control, emotional adjustment, the comprehension of feelings and emotions, sympathy, happiness, Arousal, optimism, self-initiation, social skills, Self-honor, social competency and control of stress (Petrides & Furnahm, 2003). Short form consists of 30 items which is graded to each question on a seven point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Grading to items 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 22, 25, 26, and 28 was reverse. By collecting obtained scores from each item, the total score of each scale is obtained (Petrides & Furnahm, 2001). Cooper and Petrides (2010) reported internal consistency coefficient alphas ranging from 0.87 to 0.88 and provide extensive validity data. Cronbach’s alpha for the present sample was 0.65.

**Social skill's questionnaire**

Social skills questionnaire was made by Riggio in 1989. This questionnaire includes 90 items which is presented as a short self-report but comprehensive that measures social skills in two emotional levels (expressive, sensitivity, control) and social (expressive, sensitivity, control) and includes 6 scales. These scales consist of emotional expressive scale, emotional sensitivity, emotional control, social expressive, social sensitivity and social control. Answer were based on likert scale and scoring from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Riggio (1989) reported internal consistency coefficient alphas ranging from .87 to 0.88 and showed that all of this questionnaire’s scales have positive correlation with each other. Cronbach's alpha for the present sample was 0.85.

**Family Communication Scale**

Family Communication Scale is made on Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale. Parent-Adolescent Communication Scale has 20 subscales and it is made for evaluating relationships between adolescents with their families. Family communication scale is a shorted scale and can be used for various families. The questions of this
scale is included: communication style, expressing feelings, cooperation, sharing problems with each other, viewing with each other, answering honesty, perception of feelings each other, anger control & Genuine expression of emotions that For scoring items, the 5 degree scale of completely disagreed to completely agreed is used. With collecting the scores, the total of scores is calculated (Olson & Barnes, 2003). Cronbach’s alpha of this questionnaire for the present sample was 0.85.

**Research plan**

This research is a multiple correlation type. In this work, relation between emotional intelligence and social skills with Family communications among deaf and Hard of hearing students in Isfahan city is investigated. This plan was operated with justification from special education department of Isfahan city and education department of Isfahan Estate and corporation of teachers and managers of special schools.

**Tables of characteristics of the sample**

In this research, after collecting the questionnaires, the following data Obtained on The number and percentage:

| Table 1. Characteristics of the sample By Gender |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | Number | Percentage |
| Male | 51 | %48.1 |
| Female | 55 | %51.9 |

| Table 2. Characteristics of the sample by the education’ degree of Father |
|---|---|---|
| Education’ degree | Number | Percentage |
| Under diploma | 85 | %66.36 |
| Diploma | 22 | %20.8 |
| Upper diploma | 4 | %3.17 |
| Unclear | 8 | %7.5 |

| Table 3. Characteristics of the sample by the education’ degree of Mother |
|---|---|---|
| Education’ degree | Number | Percentage |
| Under diploma | 77 | %73.45 |
| Diploma | 15 | %14.2 |
| Upper diploma | 5 | %4.7 |
| Unclear | 9 | %8.5 |

**RESULTS**

To response to research questions, data was examined in two steps. The first step was to examine the inter correlations matrix between dependent and independent variables. The results showed family communication was significantly and meaningfully associated with social skills ($r=.333$, $p=.001$), social expressivity ($r=.288$, $p=.001$), social sensitivity ($r=.360$, $p=.001$), emotional intelligence ($r=.379$, $p=.001$), self-esteem ($r=.213$, $p=.01$). The results are presented in table 1.

| Table 4. Mean Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficients between research variables, N= 105 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variables | Mean | Standard Deviation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1. Family communications | 34.82 | 2.66 | 1 | 0.333* | -0.110 | 0.121 | 0.193 | 0.288* | 0.360* | 0.140 | 0.379* | 0.213 |
| 2. Total social skills | 281.07 | 19.70 | 1 | 0.514* | 0.715* | 0.404* | 0.713* | 0.204* | 0.588* | 0.530* | 0.600* |
| 3. Emotional expressivity | 46.08 | 4.99 | 1 | 0.378* | 0.038 | 0.284* | -0.148 | 0.174 | 0.183 | 0.129 |
| 4. Emotional sensitivity | 48.16 | 6.42 | 1 | 0.158 | 0.359 | 0.080 | 0.225* | 0.366* | 0.422* |
| 5. Emotional control | 46.6 | 5.84 | 1 | 0.060 | -0.082 | 0.161 | 0.392* | 0.328* | 0.351* |
| 6. Social expressivity | 46.97 | 4.99 | 1 | 0.016 | 0.417* | 0.384* | 0.384* |
| 7. Social sensitivity | 48.70 | 6.84 | 1 | 0.270* | 0.141 | 0.098 |
| 8. Social control | 42.29 | 6.61 | 1 | 0.254* | 0.587* |
| 9. Emotional intelligence | 129.57 | 17.01 | 1 | 0.384 |
| 10. Self-esteem | 42.83 | 6.13 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
Predicting Depression

Multiple regression analyses was conducted to responses research questions in relation to predicting family communication. Family communication was entered as a dependent variable, and social skills and its dimensions, self-esteem and emotional intelligence entered as independent variables. Summary data are presented in Table 2.

The results indicated a significant model fit, for each model, for model 1 F = 10.75, p = 0.002, and that the independent variable (emotional intelligence) included in the model was able to account for 14.4% of the variance \((R^2 = 0.144)\). For model 2 F = 9.93, p = 0.000, and that the independent variables (emotional intelligence and emotional sensitivity) included in the model were able to account for 24% of the variance \((R^2 = 0.240)\).

Table 5. Stepwise multiple regression of family communication based on social skills and its dimensions, emotional intelligence and self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SEB</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social sensitivity</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.313</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

According to the results of this research, there is a positive and meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence and family communications of deaf and hard of hearing students. Therefore, first basic hypothesis for emotional intelligence and family communications relationship of deaf and hard of hearing individuals was confirmed and demonstrated that emotional intelligence effects on family communications of these students. So, the family communications of these students are improved by increasing emotional intelligence. Results of this hypothesis are the same as results of Verte et al. (2006).

In explanation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and family communications of deaf and hard of hearing students, could say that, persons who have higher emotional intelligence, have more ability for establishing a correct emotional communication (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Goleman (1998) says that persons, who control their feelings and behave effective with others, have more rich life.

Also results show that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between total score of social skills and family communications of deaf and hard of hearing students of Isfahan city. Therefore, second basic hypothesis of research for relationship of social skills and family communications of these students was confirmed and demonstrated that social skills effect on their family communications. Results of this research hypothesis are the same as results of Arroyo et al. research (2012). Arroyo et al. (2012) found that there is positive and meaningful relation between social skills of teenagers and relationship with their parents.

Social skills have more dealing aspect and maximize the social revival and improve based on specifications and the environment that person is there (Michelson et al., 1983). So, persons who don’t have environments and occasions for exercising their social skills, are not able to begin emotional relationship with the persons who are in their environment (Lewis & Doornig, 1991). So that, hearing defected persons couldn’t have relationship with others correctly, could stay in retreat and have not found occasions for improving their social consistency (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006). However it seems that not only hearing deflection but also responses of people who are present in environment specially parents, determine the behavior problems in deaf and hard of hearing persons (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006). So, in confirmation of this result could be said that growth of social skills in deaf and hard of hearing teenagers can be considered by families that are faced with them.

Multiple Regression analysis was used for responding to this question which subscales of social skills have relationship with family communications. Based on results of multiple regression analysis in this research, subscale of social sensitivity has positive and meaningful relationship with family communications. Tress (2000) found that gestures like verbal communications are supportive for mothers and their teenager’s children and effect on dealing sensitivity in teenagers and mothers. The result of this research is the same as aforesaid research. Basically social
sensitivity as an ability for non-verbal signs decoding is including notification, finding other’s feelings and having correct reaction to them. So, deaf and hard of hearing children and teenagers which use visual and non-verbal signs with their parents, it could effect on their family communications. (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006)

Based on results of multiple regression analysis, Other subscale which has positive and meaningful relationship with family communications is social expression or assertive ability that enables person to operate for himself and express his/her feelings truly without violation with others and includes abilities such as ask and help others, saying No, gratitude of others (Segrin, Hanzal, Donnerstein, Taylor, & Domschke, 2007).

Result of this research is the same as results of Eisenberg et al. (2003) and Eisenberg, Liew, and Pidada, (2001). Both researches found this result that there is positive and meaningful relationship between the ability of honesty expression of emotions and sensations for parent-adolescent communication.

Social expression or assertive ability is an important successive parameter in interpersonal relationships (Segrin et al., 2007). deaf and hard of hearing teenagers, due to their parents, have more stress and worries compared with normal teenager (Hintermair, 2006). According to this work, assertive behaviors could be important in hearing defected teenagers about their relationships with their parents. It means that truly expression of emotions and helping behaviors within deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families could help to improve family communications.

According to the results of this study, there is meaningful and positive relationship between self-esteem and family communications of deaf and hard of hearing students. So the third basic hypothesis of research for relationship of self-esteem and family communications of these students was confirmed and demonstrated that self-esteem effects on their family communications. Results of this research hypothesis are the same as results of Andrews, and Duncan (1997) and Allen et al. (1994) that both of these researches showed that self-esteem and family communication are linked together.

In explanation of the relationship between self-esteem and family communications of deaf and hard of hearing students, we could say that, persons who have lower degrees of self-esteem have more problems in mental health (Brunnberg et al., 2007) and the higher self-esteem in these students could effect on their better relationships with their family members (Dessel, 1994; Allen et al., 1994).

Suggestions
According to the importance of aforesaid results, we suggested that emotional intelligence, social skills and self-esteem should be considered within deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families more.

Restrictions
For the reason of existing laws at schools; observation and interview with deaf and hard of hearing students is almost impossible.

The lack of availability to students’ families for interviewing and collecting more information.

The lack of collecting the information of research by the self-students and the lack of availability to other sources of information like interview with their friends and teachers.

REFERENCES


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