

## Literature on social adaptation of Chinese youth from the perspective of ecosystem theory

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### Abstract

The development of social adaptation is affected by the ecosystem of teenagers. Chinese scholars have made a relatively rich research on the influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation under the ecosystem theory, and achieved some research results. However, there are also some problems, such as the unbalanced selection of research objects and the relatively simple research methods. Therefore, this study gives some opinions on the following ecosystem theory.

### Keywords

Youth, social adaptation, ecosystem.

### 1. Introduction

Social adaptation is a process in which individuals actively regulate self-behavior in order to achieve the host and object in the process of interacting with the external environment. Social adaptation is a process in which individuals aim to achieve and maintain a harmonious and balanced relationship in the process of interaction with the social environment. Social adaptation includes two basic processes: cognitive adaptation and personality adaptation. Through cognitive adaptation process, we can understand the psychological process, psychological mechanism and psychological mode of social adaptation; Through personality adaptation, we can understand the personality conditions on which social adaptation depends, the influence of personality conditions on the psychological process of social adaptation and the final state of social adaptation.

Different from adults, adolescent social adaptation has special adaptation content and development tasks due to the uniqueness of their development environment. Adolescence is a critical period for individual self-formation and social adaptability improvement. Teenagers at this age are experiencing important development and adjustment of social adaptation, are gradually mature, they are curious about the world and have a strong thirst for knowledge. Teenagers are faced with more social adaptation tasks, and they need to prepare for their social responsibility. For adolescents, their social adaptation focuses on school adaptation and aims at individual socialization. Continuous learning, communication, development, and gradually become an independent individual to undertake social responsibility, to respond to the social environment changes and challenges of the psychological and behavioral activities. The positive youth development theory points out that adolescent social adaptation is not only the reduction of problems, but also the development of positive outcomes such as academic and social competence (Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009).

Ecoecosystem theory, which es that all organisms are systems, each consisting of different subsystems and also being part of a larger system. Under the ecosystem theory, man is seen as the actors interacting with various factors in the environment to develop himself and adapt to the environment. The Ecology of Human Development (Bronfenbrenner) (1979). He believes that there is a close connection between human development and the ecosystem. People do not

passively react to the environment, but actively interact with the environment. Brownfen Brenner divides the ecosystem into microsystem, medium system, external system, macro system and long-term system, which constitutes the system model of ecosystem theory. The inner layer of the system is the system, such as individual family, school and peer group, which has a subtle influence on the behavior mode and the shaping of teenagers, and the middle system refers to the connection or relationship between different microsystems of individuals, such as the interaction between adolescent parents, families and peer groups. External system refers to the peripheral system that teenagers do not directly participate in but has a certain effect on the development of the microsystem, such as school leaders, parents' work units, etc. The fourth system is the macro system, which is the outermost layer of the ecosystem. It refers to the overall social environment in which the youth grows, such as social class, cultural model, social policies and economic structure, and directly or indirectly affects the growth of the teenager himself. There is a continuous interaction between different systems and between systems and individuals, which will have an impact on the various aspects of individual physical and mental development. The development of adolescents' social adaptability is an important factor for the healthy growth of adolescents. Therefore, the ecosystem theory provides a more systematic and dynamic perspective to understand the social adaptation problems of adolescents. The interaction between different systems can have an impact on the social adaptability of adolescents.

Therefore, this study tries to review and analyze the influencing factors of social adaptation under the ecosystem theory, in order to provide reference for the research and practice of social adaptation in China.

## **2. Overview of domestic social adaptation research among teenagers**

This study mainly used the method of subject word search to search the relevant literature. First, the CNKI database was selected to search the database with "youth", "social adaptation" or "adolescent social adaptation" as the themes. The search scope was limited to journals, and the search time range was limited to January 1980 to April 2024, and a total of 467 pieces of literature were obtained. Secondly, we read the literature abstract and screen 112 articles related to the social adaptation of teenagers. Finally, the literature was read in full text, and the age of adolescents was limited to 13 to 18 years, the research topics focused on social adaptation, and 76 articles were selected.

## **3. Overview of the domestic adolescent social adaptation problem research content**

During growth, adolescents' social adaptability development is influenced by the interactions between the ecosystems they are in, such as changes in various related factors in individuals, families, schools and communities, which can affect the development of adolescent social adaptability. It can help adolescents improve social adaptation by improving the mode of interaction between adolescents and multiple systems or systems in the ecosystem.

### **3.1. The influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation under the ecosystem theory**

According to the existing domestic studies, it is found that the influencing factors of Chinese adolescent social adaptation under the ecosystem theory are mainly related to the four dimensions of individual, family, school and society. Therefore, this study reviewed relevant influencing factors from these four dimensions.

### 3.1.1. Personal-related influencing factors

The influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation under the individual dimension mainly involve adolescent personality traits and self-awareness, including rejection sensitivity, high self-esteem, low self-esteem, and high tension, etc. Adolescents with these traits are more likely to be socially ill when facing social stress. For example, Rosenberg's social bonding theory states that low self-esteem reduces the connection between individuals and society and reduces the consistency of social norms, thus leading to poor social adaptation. The higher adolescent self-esteem, the more positive emotions they face difficulties and the stronger their social adaptability. Second, high rejection-sensitive individuals generally experience more negative emotions, which may reflect the difficulties in emotional regulation of these individuals. Such individuals often also have low self-esteem. The experience of rejection makes them have an inferiority complex, they think that they are not accepted, they have a low sense of interpersonal adaptation, and they are easy to show poor social adaptation behavior.

### 3.1.2. Family-related influencing factors

The influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation under the family dimension mainly focus on adolescent family structure, parenting style and family atmosphere. Poor family structure, parenting methods such as autocracy and doting, as well as unhealthy family atmosphere will lead to behavioral problems among teenagers and affect their social adaptation. Moreover, family socio-economic status has an important impact on the social adaptation development of adolescents. According to the family pressure theory, the economic pressure of the family will increase the psychological pressure of the parents, and then lead to the bad parenting methods such as strict and low warmth in the family, which further affects the social adaptation and development of the teenagers.

### 3.1.3. School-related influencing factors

The influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation in the school dimension mainly include school atmosphere, school interpersonal relationship (teachers and students, peer relationship) and school resources. The positive and harmonious atmosphere provided by the school in students' study and life, the psychological education resources and other student service resources provided by the school for students, and the harmonious teacher-student and peer relationship in the class are all conducive to the development of adolescent social adaptation.

### 3.1.4. Social-related influencing factors

The main influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation under the social dimension involve the social environment, social support and so on. In terms of social environment, with the enhanced social competition brought by social transformation, it is easy to lead to anxiety and depression, resulting in social maladaptation. In terms of social support, adolescents need more formal and informal support to help them understand the feedback information of the social environment, and positive social support can enhance their optimism about the future and promote their social adaptation in all directions.

Through the combing of domestic literature, it is found that the ecological environment conditions of their family, school and society will have an impact on their social adaptation. However, in the ecosystem theory of individual, family, school, some related factors in the social dimension of the influence of adolescent social adaptation, also need to broaden the breadth and depth of research, for example, in the discussion of the family structure of the study, can also join the study of divorced families, left-behind children or family. We can also try to connect the influencing factors of different dimensions of the ecosystem and explore the interactive relationship among them. In view of this, the influence of individuals, families, schools under the theory of ecosystem, and society on the social adaptation of teenagers is worth further discussion in future studies.

### **3.2. Intervention means and methods of adolescent social adaptation**

#### **3.2.1. Social adaptation intervention in schools**

According to the above influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation, it can be seen that schools, as one of the important carriers of adolescent social adaptation, provide psychological courses, physical exercise and other related interventions for adolescent social adaptation development. At present, the mental health courses of primary and secondary schools bring social adaptation education into the classroom, including politeness and order norms in daily communication. In the process of receiving the mental health education in schools, teenagers can gradually form ideas and behaviors consistent with social norms and learn necessary survival skills, so as to better adapt to campus and social life. Moreover, Zhou Xiang found that the emotional state of teenagers is more stable after physical exercise intervention. By carrying out physical exercise activities, schools create an opportunity and platform more conducive to interpersonal interaction and social interaction for teenagers, so that individuals can communicate with their peers and groups during exercise, and establish a wider interpersonal relationship network, which has a more obvious role in the development of teenagers' social adaptation.

#### **3.2.2. Social adaptation intervention in the family**

Combined with the previous factor analysis of the family dimension in the influencing factors of adolescent social adaptation, we believe that the development and intervention of the family on adolescent social adaptation will be more effective than the intervention of learning courses. Family intervention in adolescent social adaptation is mainly reflected in the parenting style. Parenting style, as a stable style in the process of parenting for children, affects children's mental health and social adaptation to a certain extent. Active parenting is a protective and supportive factor in the process of social adaptation and development, which is conducive to creating a good family parenting environment for teenagers, cultivating good prosocial ability and self-control ability, and promoting the development of teenagers' social adaptation.

#### **3.2.3. Other aspects of social adaptation intervention**

Domestic research on social adaptation intervention for adolescents also involves medical rehabilitation, psychological treatment and other fields. In the field of medical rehabilitation, Studies have pointed out that social adaptation improvement interventions for children with malignant tumors, Mainly through the stress management proposed by Rosenberg (The Promoting Resilience in Stress Management, PRISM) Intervention strategies, Namely a brief, skill-based psychosocial intervention developed based on resilience, stress, and coping theory for adolescents with severe chronic illness, young adults, or their families, Help youth reduce depression, anxiety levels, Enhanced patient stress management, goal setting, cognitive reorganization, meaning discovery, Thus helping them to improve their mental health levels, Improve social adaptability. In the field of psychotherapy, some studies encourage teenagers to arouse spontaneity and creativity by carrying out "psychodrama", so as to promote the development of their social adaptation in a way of edutainment.

Through the relevant literature found, first, school, family, and other related areas of interventions, can promote the development of adolescent social adaptation, but due to social economic and policy reasons, now trying to apply these interventions to specific intervention related research, there is a broader space to explore in our country. Second, in future studies on social adaptation intervention for adolescents, it is necessary for researchers to choose the intervention measures according to the type of adolescents, and to consider whether there are differences in the intervention effect of adolescents with different ages, different family conditions and different cultural habits. Third, there is room for further research on interventions in other areas.

#### 4. Analysis and prospect of the existing studies

First, existing domestic studies have shown that teenagers' personal self-awareness and personality traits, such as self-control ability, self-esteem and self-confidence, are positively correlated with their social adaptation level. However, the lack of social adaptability contrast among adolescents of different gender, and there is no consistent conclusion in this area. In addition, domestic studies basically take samples from a region or school of adolescents, and the number of samples, regional development level, education level, family situation and cultural background will all cause deviations in the research results. In view of this, the future research in China should carry out comparative studies as much as possible to ensure the level of education and the physical and mental development of teenagers, screen sample sources more comprehensively and reasonably, control the number of samples, and carry out relevant repeated studies in different regions.

Second, the domestic research on social adaptation of adolescents in the ecosystem mainly focuses on the impact level of social adaptation and interventions of adolescents in the microsystem, which mainly involves adolescents' families, peers and teachers. However, there are few studies on the relevant influencing factors in adolescent medium and macro perspective, such as social and cultural background and social policy, on adolescent social adaptation and intervention measures. Therefore, future studies in China can strengthen the attention of various factors in the middle and macro systems, such as the social and cultural background on the social adaptation of teenagers, or the influence status and intervention mechanism of adolescent social adaptation under different religious beliefs.

Third, the research paradigm of adolescent social adaptation in China is mainly quantitative research and continuously increasing, and qualitative studies and single subjects are relatively few. However, quantitative research is difficult to reflect the concrete manifestations of the differences in social adaptation among teenagers. Therefore, Chinese scholars can strengthen the qualitative research in the future, and explore the influencing factors of teenagers in the ecosystem and their influence on all levels of social adaptation through in-depth interviews with teenagers, parents and teachers. This can not only supplement the existing research results, but also further help teachers and parents to adopt the correct parenting methods in the face of their bad social adaptation behavior, and promote the development of adolescent social adaptation.

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