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The Influence of Teacher Emotional Support of Career Optimism in Music Students: Self-Efficacy as a Mediator

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Abstract

Extensive research has demonstrated that teacher emotional support has a significant positive impact on students engagement and academic achievement. Compared with students studying other majors, music students have a separate tutor who is under a profound influence on the individual students during the undergraduate level. The aim of this study is to investigate in which self-efficacy and career optimism of music students is impacted by teacher emotional support. The research questions are: 1) Does the emotional support of professional tutors has a positive impact on the self-efficacy and career optimism of music students? 2) How exactly does this effect happens? 3) What kind of emotional support do music students need?

Participants were 360 music students majoring in music performance and music education from several regions in China, who had internship experience in related fields (e.g. private teachers, schools or orchestras), completed a set of questionnaires that included Teacher Emotional Support Scale, Self-Efficacy Formative Questionnaire, and the career optimism section of the Career Future Inventory (CFI). Based on the results of the questionnaire, three students with strong teacher emotional support and three who were weak were selected to conduct structured interviews to gain insight into the specific impact of teacher emotional support on self-efficacy and career optimism of music students.

The results show that teacher emotional support has a significant positive effect on music students' self-efficacy and career optimism, which plays a mediating role between self-efficacy and career optimism. Among teachers emotional support for music students, the academic support for students is particularly important.

Teacher emotional support has a significant positive impact on the academic self-efficacy and personal career development optimism of music students. Therefore, teachers' emotional care for music students could be emphasized. Appropriately changing educational concepts, encouraging students more and respecting students' personal development choices are conducive to improving music students self-efficacy and helping them maintain an optimistic attitude towards future career development.