The Relationship between Family Social Economic Status and College Students' Reading Ability in China

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Abstract: This paper utilizes the structural equation model to explore the mechanism of family socio-economic status and how it affects college students' reading ability. 548 students were randomly selected from six universities in two provinces of China. The results show that the path coefficients of measured variables are as follows: family socioeconomic status' effect on reading self-efficacy was 0.19, reading self-efficacy's effect on reading interest was 0.52, reading interest's effect on reading self-efficacy was 0.81, and ability was 0.47. All of the path coefficients reached significant levels (p < 0.05). The results show that family socio-economic status influences reading interest through the complete mediation effect of reading self-efficacy, and reading interest influences the reading ability through complete mediation of reading self-efficacy. Family socio-economic status influences reading ability through reading interest and the reading self-efficacy cycle of interaction to achieve; the results support the family investment model.

1. Introduction

Reading ability is not only the basis of students' learning but also a channel for students to experience the external world. It is also an important tool for students to quickly grasp information, acquire knowledge, and apply skills in the era of knowledge economy [1, 2]. The foundation of higher education requires that students have the ability to read to become useful members of society because reading helps to absorb knowledge and form perspective and values. The university period is a crucial period for students to improve their reading ability, to obtain knowledge and information, and to read and concentrate on reading. Therefore, this study takes college students as the starting point and proposes factors that influence the reading ability of college students from the concept of constructing education.

With the current rapid economic and increasing gap between the rich and the poor, the gap in reading ability among college students has received social attention. Some studies have proposed that family socioeconomic status affects college students' reading ability. Family socioeconomic status is based on parental occupation, parental education level, family ownership, and other objective indicators to define the position of individuals or groups in society [3]. Parental occupation, parental education level, and family ownership are important factors affecting students' reading ability [4]. The family is also the basic unit of society, and it is an important unit that affects the thinking, concepts, and development of college students. The family unit is an important resource for the growth of college students and has an impact on the reading ability of college students. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to study how the social status of the family enhances the reading ability of college students.

The influence of family socioeconomic status on individual development mainly occurs through a series of mediator variables, such as parent-child interaction, parents' educational expectations, and learning input [3]. According to the family stress model and the family investment model theory, the family socioeconomic status reflects the economic, social, and human capital in the family environment. Families with low family socioeconomic status face problems, such as high economic pressure, family conflicts, and low educational resources, which can lead to negative

parenting behaviors and low academic achievement [5]. Families with high socioeconomic status are often better at material investment and emotional investment and positively produce and promote education [6]. In the relationship between family socioeconomic status and reading ability, the mediating role of parental characteristics (parental education, family income, and parental expectation) has been studied more from the perspective of family environment [7]. The mediating mechanism of studying children's own characteristics from the perspective of those children is less examined [3]. This study examines the influence of family socioeconomic status on college students' reading ability from the perspective of student reading interest and reading self-efficacy.

Interest is the psychological state produced by the interaction between the individual and the environment [8]. Interest is not an individual characteristic, but the result of the interaction of the individual and the environment. Social cognition theory is the basic theory of individual behavior, while individual behavior is influenced by internal factors and environmental factors [9]. Any two factors can interact and change constantly, and individual and environmental factors act together on behavioral decision-making [10]. Social cognition theory is widely used to understand and predict individual behavioral characteristics [11]. Reading interest as a student's individual behavioral characteristic plays an important role in the family environment and reading ability. Krapp and Schiefele found that reading interest affects students' ability to understand problems deeply, recall main points of view, and organize knowledge structure [12, 13]. Ryan believes that reading interest encourages students to excel and intensively process textual materials [14]. The cultivation of reading interest is mainly influenced by the family's socioeconomic status. For example, the more background knowledge a student has, the higher reading interest. Different family environments have a great influence on the reading ability and reading interest of individuals. When entering the university stage, students have access to a wide variety of books, and the distinction between reading ability and reading interest is obvious. Due to the different family environments, individual reading interests are different. The preference for reading is also different, which indirectly affects reading ability, and reading interest plays a mediating role in family socioeconomic status and reading ability [4]. Self-efficacy has been proposed by the American psychologist Bandura based on human nature, and its causal decision model (the interaction determinism among individual, environment, and action) refers to the confidence and belief of individuals using their skills to complete a job in the face of their environment [15]. Self-efficacy plays an active role in learning, behavior, and motivation. Reading has both learning and behavioral aspects, and self-efficacy plays a positive role in reading [16]. Reading ability is a manifestation of skills. Skills and confidence in using those skills are completely different traits. Thus, reading self-efficacy is a manifestation of control and reading ability. Self-efficacy is the individual's sense of control over the environment. The family's socioeconomic status is the environment of individual reading, and reading self-efficacy is based on the theory of self-confidence to deal with stressors in the family's social and economic environment. Reading self-efficacy affects reading ability, and also adjusts and adapts to the family's social and economic environment, acting as an intermediary.

In summary, family socioeconomic status affects college students' reading ability, reading interest, and reading self-efficacy. Reading interest and reading self-efficacy affect college students' reading ability and satisfy the conditions of examining mediator variables [17]. Therefore, this study speculates that reading interest and reading self-efficacy are the mediators of family socioeconomic status affecting college students' reading ability.

The family investment model focuses on material and emotional investment. There have been many studies on the mediating role of material investment [18], but there have been only a few studies on emotional investment as an intermediary. This study investigates non-material factors, such as reading interest and reading self-efficacy, focusing on emotional investment to explore the mechanism of the effect of family socioeconomic status on college students' reading ability. Objective material conditions can only indirectly affect reading ability, while reading interest and self-confidence have more direct and obvious influence on reading ability. Since interest is more important for autonomous behavior, reading, interest, and metacognition are highly relevant. Metacognitive operations occur only when individuals generate interest and confidence, and

metacognition is an important part of learning ability [19]. The study found that confidence has an important and long-term impact on children's motivation and behavioral development [20], which applies equally to college students. This study starts from the perspective of reading self-efficacy, traces the emotional investment in the socioeconomic status of college students, and then analyzes the psychological mechanism that affects reading ability during the growth of college students. Since the situation in the field of psychological research is more complicated, the intermediary research adopts multiple mediation models to clarify the problem [21]. This study uses multiple mediation models, but we will focus on the mediating role of reading interest, reading self-efficacy, and the intermediary action that occurs between family socioeconomic status and reading ability.

Based on the above analysis, this study intends to utilize family socioeconomic status as the independent variable, the reading ability of college students as the dependent variable, and the reading interest and reading self-efficacy as mediator variables to explore the mechanism of family socioeconomic status affecting reading ability. Our first research hypothesis (H1) is that family socioeconomic status affects college students' reading ability. Our second research hypothesis (H2) is that family socioeconomic status affects college students' reading ability through reading interest and reading self-efficacy; that is, reading interest and reading self-efficacy play a parallel intermediary role. Our final research hypothesis is that family socioeconomic status affects reading self-efficacy through reading interest, which in turn affects college students' reading ability, with the role of reading interest and reading self-efficacy as a chain intermediary or circular interaction.

2. Research Methods

2.1 Research Objects

The subjects came from two provinces with medium-level higher education development in China. Each province selected one of its public institutions, independent colleges, and private colleges. There were a total of six universities, and each school randomly distributed 100 questionnaires. There were a total of 548 subjects, of which 269 were boys (49.09%) and 279 were girls (50.91%). The students' hometowns spanned 26 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the Central Government and administrative regions.

2.2 Research Tools

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part was a questionnaire of college students' reading, including personal information (gender, urban and rural demographic information), family socioeconomic status, reading interest, and reading self-efficacy. The second part of the questionnaire was a test of students' reading ability.

2.2.1 Family Socioeconomic Status

Family socioeconomic status generally takes parental occupation, education level, and family income as the measurement indicators [22]. Here, parental occupation and education level were judged according to the answers provided by participants, and were classified according to the occupation classification of China [23], divided into 5 grades: temporary workers, unemployed persons, non-technical and agricultural workers; manual workers and self-employed persons, skilled workers and workers at the same level; general management personnel and general professional and technical personnel, transactional staff; middle management personnel and middle-level professional and technical personnel, assistant professionals; and professional senior management personnel and senior professional and technical personnel, professional executives. Parents' education levels included "Primary and Sub-prime," "Junior and Junior High School," "High School and High School Graduation or Secondary School," and "University" and "Graduate." Household income was measured by the number of household assets reported by the participants [24]. The family property involved included computers, air conditioners, self-owned houses, and automobiles. The number included "no," "one," "two," "three," and "more," while the household income was estimated by the single-parameter model of project response theory [24]. The

questionnaire had a total of 12 questions and was scored using the Likert five-level scale (1 = very disagree, 5 = very agree).

2.2.2 Reading Interest

The reading interest based on the family's social and economic status is manifested in the individual's active exploration, mastery of reading, and frequent reading of the psychological activity process, which is the individual's insistence on reading. Hidi believes that interest is the key to reading. Before reading, students evaluated the reading materials and decided whether or not to read them [25]. According to Hidi's research, the scale of this study was designed [26] to examine students' reading activities and eight subjects were designed for the perceived interest of the reading object and scored using the Likert five-level scale (1 = very disagree, 5 = very agree).

2.2.3 Reading Self-Efficacy

Bandura proposed that the construction of an effective self-efficacy scale was based on a conceptual analysis of domain-related functions [27]. For example, knowledge in the reading field defines the direction of performance measurement, and, therefore, reading self-efficacy should be based on task design in the process of achieving reading goals. Based on this, the reading self-efficacy indicators used in this study combined the advantages of three scales: the Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale [28], the College Students' Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire [29], and the General Self Efficacy Scale (GSES) [30], which was designed with 20 questions using the Likert five-level scale (1= Very disagree, 5 = very agree).

2.2.4 Reading Ability

The reading ability test was mainly carried out through the test volume. The selection of four texts in the test volume consisted of two literary classes and two information classes. The comprehension problems consisted of 24 questions, including acquisition and retrieval, integration and interpretation, reflection, and evaluation [31].

2.3 Procedure

The six universities conducted separate tests. The questionnaires were completed anonymously, and the subjects generally completed the test and questionnaire in about 25 minutes. The data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0 and Mplus 7.0 software. According to previous research experience, the distribution of median effect estimates is generally not normal distribution. As it is necessary to test the significance of mediating utility, we used the bias correction bootstrap method to test 2100 bootstrap samples. if the 95% confidence interval does not contain 0, then Explain that the parameter mediation effect is significant; on the contrary, it indicates that the median effect estimate is not significant [32].

3. Data Analysis and Results

3.1 Preliminary Statistical Analysis

This study first examines the normative and rational design of questionnaires and reading test papers. The questionnaires for college students' reading status totaled 4 parts and 42 questions, and the discrimination degree for college students' reading status questionnaires were all greater than 0.40. A total of 38 questions were above 0.60, and the discrimination degree was higher. The internal consistency of each questionnaire was good. Cronbach's α values of family socioeconomic status, reading interest, and reading self-efficacy were 0.732, 0.842, and 0.810, respectively. The reading ability test volume of college students was reasonable and the difficulty was moderate. The discrimination degree of 24 questions was above 0.40, and the KMO value was 0.831. These values demonstrate that the overall reliability of the scale was good and the internal consistency was good, which were suitable for research. The details of the study variables are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistical Variables (n=548)

Variable	1	2	3	4	6	9	10
Father's profession	1						
Mother's profession	0.45**	1					
Father's education level	0.45**	0.36**	1				
Mother's education level	0.41**	0.41**	0.69**	1			
Family ownership	0.40**	0.23**	0.36**	0.40**	1		
Reading self-efficacy	0.23**	0.15**	0.15**	0.15**	0.09	1	
Reading interest	0.21**	0.13**	0.23**	0.19**	0.03	0.55**	1
Mean	0.23	3.47	2.09	1.75	-0.53	30.78	26.12

Note. * p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001.

3.2 Mediation Effect Test

3.2.1 Intermediary Role Model for Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy 1

Family socioeconomic status will significantly affect college students' reading ability, but the internal mechanism of influence needs to be further explored. Family socioeconomic status affects reading interest, while reading interest significantly affects reading ability. Reading interest as an individual performance is in line with the conditions as a mediator, and reading ability is an indicator of the completion of college students' education. It is an important indicator in the field of education research, influenced by the outside world. Model 1 assumes that reading interest and reading self-efficacy play a parallel intermediary role in family socioeconomic status and reading ability. According to the mediation effect test procedure, the model was constructed using AMOS 17.0 and data analysis was performed. The data fitting in the structural equation model are shown in Table 2. The RMSEA, CFI, TLI, and other indicators are within a reasonable range, and the results show a good fit. The path analysis results are shown in Fig. 1.

Table 2 Model 1 Fitting Result (n=548)

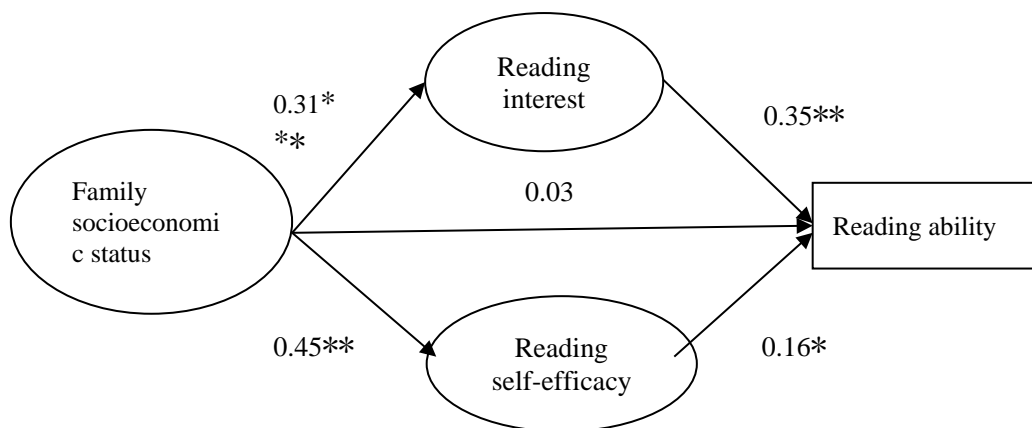| Fitting index	χ^2 / df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
Fitting result	4.50	0.08	0.91	0.97
Recommended value	2~5	<.1	>.9	>.9

Fig.1 Mediating Role Model of Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy 1

The study found that family socioeconomic status does not directly affect reading ability, but it does affects reading ability through the complete mediation of reading interest and reading self-efficacy. Through model fitting, we found that Model 1 was not ideal and needed to be improved. To some extent, the relationship between family socioeconomic status and reading ability will be affected by external factors, and there may be a complex relationship between reading interest and reading self-efficacy. Reading interest is generally regarded as an internal driving force, reading self-efficacy is an external expression, and reading interest affects reading self-efficacy. When students have a high sense of reading self-efficacy, they are more likely to recognize the importance of reading, and manifest that recognition into reading activities to improve reading

ability. The multiple mediation model has parallel multiple mediation and chained multiple mediation models. Therefore, when studying the mechanism of the influence of family socioeconomic status on reading ability, model 2 may be helpful, as it examines whether or not the family's economic and social status is realized through a chain mediation model of reading interest and reading self-efficacy.

3.2.2 Mediating Role Model of Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy 2

Although a part of the research conditions of Model 1, the direct influence of family socioeconomic status on reading ability was not considered in Model 2. The mediating effect of reading interest and reading self-efficacy was investigated, however, to increase the effect of reading interest on reading self-efficacy, and to explore the internal mechanism of reading interest and reading self-efficacy affecting reading ability.

Our study assumes that family socioeconomic status influences reading self-efficacy through the intermediary role of reading interest, which affects reading ability. The model has good fitting results, as shown in Table 3. The results of the path analysis are shown in Figure 2. Reading interest does not directly affect reading ability; however, the path coefficient of reading interest to reading self-efficacy was 0.89 and the path coefficient of reading self-efficacy to reading ability was 0.63. Reading interest played a partial mediating role in the influence of family socioeconomic status on reading self-efficacy, with a path coefficient of 0.25. The path coefficient of family socioeconomic status to reading interest was 0.27, and the path coefficient of family socioeconomic status to reading self-efficacy was 0.15. Therefore, it can be seen that family socioeconomic status affects reading ability through a chain of multi-mediation of reading interest and reading self-efficacy. Family socioeconomic status affects reading ability through the mediating role of reading self-efficacy.

Table 3 Model 2 Fitting Results (n=548)

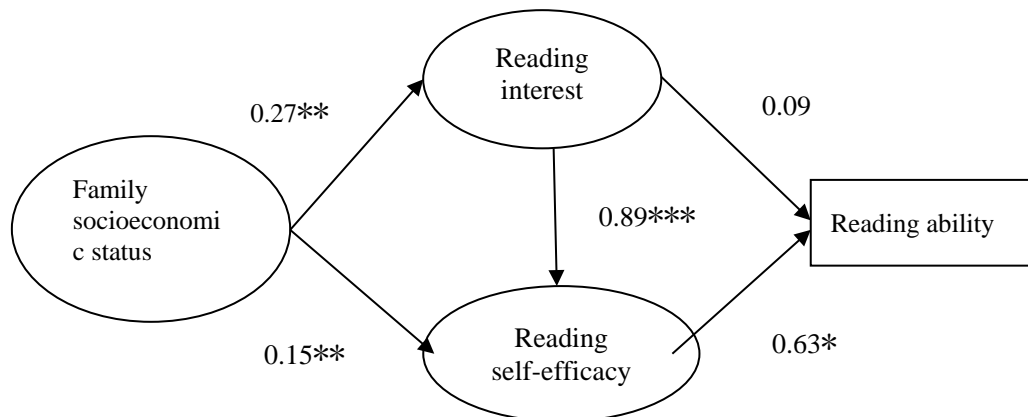| Fitting index	χ^2 / df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
Fitting result	2.63	0.05	0.93	0.98
Recommended value	2~5	<.1	>.9	>.9

Fig.2 Mediating Role Model of Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy 2

Some studies have suggested that self-efficacy can counteract interest, and that reading self-efficacy in this way also has an effect on reading interest. There is an interactive relationship between reading interest and reading self-efficacy. Therefore, based on Model 2, we can assume Model 3 in the study of the internal mechanisms of family socioeconomic status and reading ability, demonstrating that reading interest and reading self-efficacy have the possibility of acting intermediaries.

3.2.3 Mediating Role Model of Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy 3

According to the conditions of Model 2, to understand the mechanism of interaction between indicators, it is assumed that reading interest and reading self-efficacy play a mediating role in the

family socioeconomic environment and reading ability. The model results demonstrate a good fit, as shown in Table 4. The results of path analysis are shown in Figure 3. The family socioeconomic status does not directly affect reading interest, but it does affect the reading interest through reading the full mediation of self-efficacy. The path coefficient of family socioeconomic status to reading self-efficacy was 0.19. The path coefficient of the sense of reading interest was 0.52, the path coefficient of reading interest to reading self-efficacy was 0.81, and the path coefficient of reading self-efficacy to reading ability was 0.47. The dynamic cyclical effect between reading self-efficacy and reading interest plays a full mediating role in the influence of family socioeconomic status on reading ability. Therefore, we concluded that the influence of family socioeconomic status on reading ability is mainly achieved through the complete intermediary of reading interest and reading self-efficacy.

Table 4 Model 3 Fitting Results (n=548)

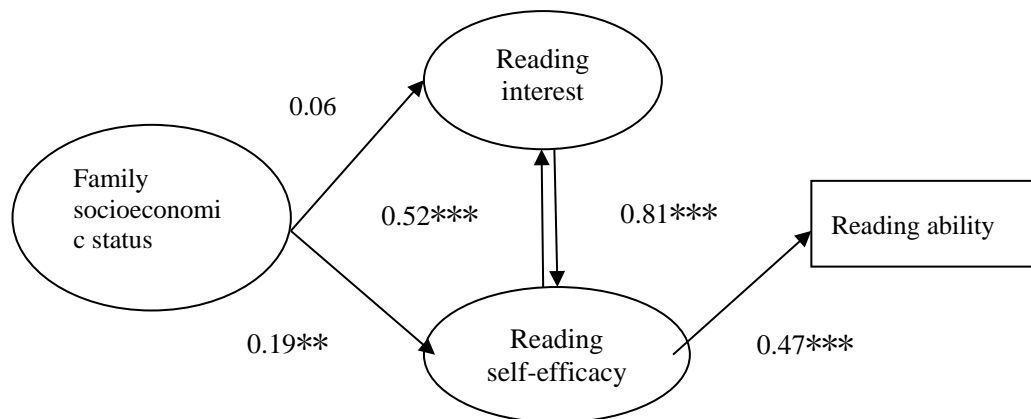| Fitting index	χ^2 / df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
Fitting result	2.65	0.05	0.94	0.93
Recommended value	2~5	<.1	>.9	>.9

Fig.3 Mediating Role Model of Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy 3

4. Discussion

The cultivation of college students' reading ability is of great significance to their careers and closely related to their family's social and economic status. Existing research tends to focus on the influence of reading ability of material conditions in family socioeconomic status. This study selects non-material conditions-reading interest and reading self-efficacy as intermediaries- to perform a systematic investigation of the family's socioeconomic status through the non-material factors on the reading ability of college students, to obtain research results.

4.1 The Mechanism of Family Socioeconomic Status Affecting Reading Ability and the Mediating Role of Reading Interest and Reading Self-Efficacy

As an important tool for students to acquire professional knowledge and other skills, it is necessary to have a certain reading ability. The university years are an important time for the individual to change and for learning ability to gradually differentiate. Good reading ability is the basis of learning. Studies on students' reading ability have shown that family socioeconomic status has profound implications for students' reading ability and has a wide influence. Family socioeconomic status is the main indicator for measuring students' learning situational variables. Family socioeconomic status will affect students' learning outcomes [33], and family socioeconomic status can predict students' reading ability [34]. In this study, we used college students as the research object, we conducted research based on individual characteristics, and we clarified the internal mechanism of family socioeconomic status on college students' reading ability. We found that the influence of family socioeconomic status on college students' reading ability is essentially through reading self-efficacy and reading the cyclical effects of interest dynamics.

Family socioeconomic status affects reading interest through the complete mediation of reading self-efficacy. Reading interest in turn affects reading self-efficacy, which affects college students' reading ability.

Using family investment theory to explain the impact of family socioeconomic status on reading ability, including material investment and psychological investment, showing better family socioeconomic status provides children with better and more comprehensive reading resources. Children are better at the time, quantity and breadth of reading. Psychologically, parents encourage and suggest the importance of children's reading, improve students' self-efficacy in reading, and stimulate students' interest in reading. Self-perception theory believes that when individuals understand their own attitudes, emotions, and other internal states, they can be judged by observing their own external behaviors and the results of external behaviors. This process is the individual's review of his previous behavior, which affects later behavior. The process of behavior is similar to the individual's observation of the behavior of others, in order to speculate on the inner thoughts and feelings of others [35], and it is why reading self-efficacy plays a vital role in improving students' interest in reading. When parents pay attention to reading frequency and duration, the child will speculate that he likes to read and slowly begins to love reading. The more time and energy students put into reading, the greater their interest in reading, and the more they react to reading itself, and the more their self-efficacy will improve. Therefore, we believe that family socioeconomic status does not directly affect students' reading ability, but instead, it is achieved by reading the dynamic cycle of self-efficacy and reading interest.

4.2 The Importance of Reading Self-Efficacy

Reading self-efficacy is an important factor affecting reading performance and plays a key role in the internal mechanism of family socioeconomic status affecting reading ability. Reading self-efficacy is the result of measuring your reading ability. The evaluation results in turn regulate the individual's choice of reading behavior and the size of reading input diligence, and to determine the ability of an individual to perform in a reading task. Reading self-efficacy is a dynamic process that changes with the acquisition and enhancement of reading information. The initiation and persistence of reading behavior mainly depends on the individual's expectation and belief in reading ability. The higher the reading self-efficacy and the higher the reading interest of the individual, the easier it is to succeed. That successful result will further strengthen the expectation of reading self-success. In this way, parents should lead by example and create a good reading environment for children, providing a large amount of family books, creating high-quality reading exposure, and developing good reading habits. Reading self-efficacy is not a skill or ability, but an individual's self-confidence in the ability to complete a reading task. Therefore, we believe that reading self-efficacy is more important for the improvement of reading ability.

4.3 Educational Enlightenment of Improving College Students' Reading Ability through "Reading Interest" and "Reading Self-Efficacy"

This study demonstrates the importance of reading interest and reading self-efficacy in improving college students' reading ability. Family socioeconomic status is inherent in students and difficult to change. However, it is possible to improve reading self-efficacy by stimulating reading interest. The greater the reading self-efficacy, the stronger the reading ability of college students. The ability can be gradually improved through training or encouragement. In family life, parents can enhance their reading comprehension and enhance their reading ability by encouraging children. Reading self-efficacy affects individual behavior choices. Students are, to some extent, a product of the family environment. Students choose specific family reading activities and reading environment by reading self-efficacy. A variety of reading choices cultivate different reading abilities, reading interests, and family social environment, and affect their outlook on life and values. When college students feel that they have higher self-efficacy in reading, they will be more energetic and more interested in reading, achieving greater results. Therefore, we propose that reading interest and reading self-efficacy have a good educational research value for improving college students' reading ability.

In summary, this study analyzes the mechanism of the influence of family socioeconomic status on reading ability, first confirming that the relationship between reading interest and reading self-efficacy will affect each. More importantly, when the two interact, the family's socioeconomic status does not directly affect reading ability, and the mediating role of reading interest in the family's socioeconomic status and reading ability disappears. However, the interaction with reading self-efficacy achieves the impact on reading ability. The results of this study theoretically enrich the intrinsic mechanism of family socioeconomic status affecting reading ability and provide empirical experience for future research. In addition, the practical value of this research is also worth promoting. The leisure time of contemporary college students is more occupied by mobile phones and computers. Reading self-efficacy is one of the important factors to improve the reading ability of college students, attract more students to pay attention to reading, and help them to break away from the virtual world,

4.4 Research Limitation

There are still some limitations in this study that need to be improved in the future. First, as a cross-sectional study, it only focuses on a sample of college students, failing to track the reading ability of elementary, middle, and high school students. This selection limits the breadth of research results, from the perspective of development, the relationship between family socioeconomic status and students' reading ability in different time periods is studied. Second, this study only used the questionnaire method, and there were no observational data. Although the scale used in the study has good reliability and validity, the social recognition degree that the questionnaire method may cause may affect the accuracy of the results. In future research, a variety of research methods should be used to study the developmental characteristics of individual reading ability, including questionnaire, observation, measurement, cognitive, and neuroscience.

5. Conclusions

This study explored the influence mechanism of family socioeconomic status on college students' reading ability through structural equation modeling, and we have obtained some valuable conclusions. First, family socioeconomic status affects reading interest through the complete mediation of reading self-efficacy, and reading interest affects reading ability through the complete mediating effect of reading self-efficacy. In addition, the influence of family socioeconomic status on reading ability is realized through the cyclic interaction between reading interest and reading self-efficacy, thus the result supports the family investment model.

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