

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE THIRD-YEAR SPEECH THERAPY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS MAJOR

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ABSTRACT:

This study examines the relationship between Quality of Life and student attitudes towards their Speech Therapy major, in addition to evaluating the overall Quality of Life of students in this field. A purposive sample of 101 third-year students was utilized for the research. Data was collected using a Quality of Life scale and a specialized questionnaire designed to measure student perceptions of the Speech Therapy major. The results revealed no statistically significant correlation between the Quality of Life and the attitudes of students towards their major. Additionally, the study identifies a notably high level of Quality of Life among students pursuing Speech Therapy.

Keywords: Quality of Life, Student Attitudes, Speech Therapy Major.

جودة الحياة وعلاقتها باتجاهات طلبة السنة الثالثة نحو تخصص الأروطونيا

شلابي سهيلة

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ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى الكشف عن العلاقة بين جودة الحياة واتجاهات الطلبة نحو تخصص الأروطونيا بالإضافة إلى التعرف على مستوى جودة الحياة لدى الطلبة، وتكونت عينة الدراسة من 101 طالبا تم اختيارهم بطريقة قصدية، وطبق عليهم مقياس جودة الحياة واستبيان خاص باتجاهات الطلبة نحو تخصص الأروطونيا من إعداد الباحثة، وبعد إجراء المعالجات الإحصائية أسفرت نتائج الدراسة على أنه لا توجد علاقة ارتباطية بين جودة الحياة والاتجاهات نحو تخصص الأروطونيا لدى طلبة السنة الثالثة أروطونيا كما أن مستوى جودة الحياة لدى طلبة الأروطونيا مرتفع.

-الكلمات المفتاحية: جودة الحياة، الاتجاهات، الأروطونيا

1- Introduction and problematic:

Speech therapy, a distinct discipline within the social sciences, plays a crucial role in addressing language disorders and facilitating rehabilitation for children with special needs. This demographic includes individuals with autism, intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, and learning disabilities. Speech therapy students, uniquely positioned due to their direct interactions with these diverse groups, face multifaceted challenges physical, psychological, and emotional. Hence, their well-being and quality of life are of paramount importance in both educational and societal contexts.

The significance of fostering a positive attitude towards speech therapy cannot be overstated. Positive attitudes enhance motivation, ease academic challenges, and increase satisfaction within the field. These attitudes, influenced by individual needs, desires, and emotional states, are critical determinants of students' psychological motivation and academic success.

Positive or negative attitudes arise from various factors, including comfort, satisfaction, and fulfillment of needs. A positive attitude reflects psychological well-being, happiness, and contentment, indicating a student's self-assessment of their life quality.

The concept of quality of life, integral to Positive Psychology, has evolved significantly, especially since the early 21st century under Martin Seligman's leadership. This field represents a shift from focusing solely on disorders and challenges to encompassing positive life aspects, such as emotions, happiness, optimism, self-satisfaction, and fulfillment. (Seligman, 2002, 4).

Quality of life, a dynamic construct, combines psychological, social, and personal factors, representing a comprehensive view of mental well-being. It focuses on individuals' perceptions of their psychological state, their role in its development, and the quality of their social interactions (Diener, 1999, 273).

The relationship between quality of life and students' attitudes towards their academic disciplines has been extensively studied. However, this interplay within the Speech Therapy context remains underexplored in localized research. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the positive aspects of students' lives, their subjective perceptions of quality of life, and how these relate to their attitudes towards majoring in Speech Therapy.

The exploration of quality of life among students in various academic settings has been a focal point of several studies. Al-Sayed (2010) conducted a notable research at King Faisal University, focusing on special education students. This study revealed a significant positive correlation between quality of life and positive attitudes towards the field of special education, highlighting the importance of life satisfaction in educational settings.

Adding to this research domain, Mansi and Kadhem (2006) embarked on developing a comprehensive quality of life measurement tool for students at Sultan Qaboos University. Their study, emphasizing the need for a scale with strong criterion and content validity, uncovered a notable relationship between higher income levels and improved perceptions of quality of life, suggesting socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in students' life satisfaction.

Kadhem and Al-Bahadli (2006) extended this investigation to university students in Oman and Libya. Their research examined the influence of various factors, including country of residence, gender, and academic specialization, on quality of life. The findings indicated high scores in areas such as family life, social interactions, and education, contrasting with moderate levels in general health and leisure time, and lower scores in psychological well-being and emotional aspects.

Tempski et al. (2012) shifted the lens to medical students in Brazil, exploring how their quality of life is intertwined with their medical education. This study highlighted the challenges faced by these students, such as intense academic pressure and emotionally

demanding situations, which were linked to a lower quality of life. Conversely, factors like effective teaching and efficient time management were associated with enhanced life quality.

Furthermore, Hani's study (2015) explored the relationship between quality of life and academic major satisfaction among university students. It concluded that there was no significant link between these variables, indicating that quality of life and academic satisfaction might be influenced by different factors across various academic disciplines.

In a different context, Jamal's research (2016) assessed the quality of life and counseling needs of high school students in As-Suwayda Governorate, Syria. The findings showed that while overall quality of life was rated as moderate, a significant negative correlation was observed between quality of life and counseling needs, suggesting that higher life satisfaction might reduce the demand for counseling services.

EL-Nader (2017) investigated this aspect among students at Al-Balqa Applied University's scientific colleges. The study, which considered variables like gender, academic major, and participation in physical activities, found a high level of quality of life among students.

In a similar context, Al-Dahni (2018) examined the perceived quality of life among female students at education colleges in Yarmouk University, Jordan, and Hail University, Saudi Arabia. This study aimed to discern differences based on factors such as university affiliation, academic major, and income level. The findings indicated a moderate quality of life, with variations observed based on university, academic progression, and income level, but not academic major.

Ibrahim's 2022 study delved into students' attitudes towards psychological and educational counseling at Al-Onaizah Colleges, assessing its correlation with their quality of life. The study revealed significant correlations between attitudes towards counseling and quality of life, highlighting gender-based differences in these attitudes and perceived quality of life.

Zarouk's 2022 research focused on the relationship between quality of life and satisfaction with academic majors at Muhammad Sadiq bin Yahya University. This study, however, did not find a significant correlation between these aspects and reported no gender-based or major-related disparities in quality of life.

These studies collectively underscore the nuanced and complex relationship between quality of life and academic attitudes, emphasizing the need for further exploration, particularly in the field of Speech Therapy.

Thus, the present study aims to assess the quality of life among third-year Speech Therapy students at a university setting, exploring the potential association between their quality of life and attitudes towards their major. Guided by two primary research questions:

- is there a significant relationship between quality of life and attitudes towards the Speech Therapy Major among third-year Speech Therapy students?
- What is the prevailing level of quality of life within the third-year Speech Therapy Major students?

2-Hypotheses:

- There is a significant correlation between quality of life and attitudes towards the Speech Therapy Major among third-year students.

- the level of quality of life among these students is high.

3-Objectives:

- elucidate the relationship between the quality of life and attitudes of third-year Speech Therapy students towards their field.
- assess the level of quality of life within this specific student cohort.

4-Significance:

The significance of this study lies in its potential contribution to the field of positive psychology. It seeks to bridge a gap in the existing literature by examining the relationship between quality of life and attitudes towards the Speech Therapy major, thereby enhancing understanding within the Speech Therapy academic community.

Moreover, this study is noteworthy given that there haven't been many previous studies examining the relationship between students' attitudes toward majoring in speech therapy and life quality. It is regarded as one of the first research on the relation between these two variables.

5-Study terminology:

5-1 Quality of Life:

The concept of 'quality of life' is diverse and intricate, as highlighted by Titman et al. (1997), who emphasized the challenges in defining it due to its complex nature. Etymologically derived from the Latin 'Qualitas,' it refers to the inherent characteristics that denote excellence and precision. The Oxford dictionary characterizes quality of life as a state marked by exceptional excellence or value. It embodies a set of universally recognized standards for excellence (Bakheet, 2012, 15).

Taylor (2005) interprets quality of life for students as their capacity to achieve educational competence and excellence, leading to life success and satisfaction in academic pursuits. This encompasses educational proficiency and the accomplishment of high-quality life tasks.

Mansi and Kadhem (2010) view quality of life as an individual's sense of satisfaction and happiness, arising from the fulfillment of their needs within a supportive environment, including access to high-quality health, social, educational, and psychological services. This definition also entails effective time management and utilization.

Expanding this concept, Taylor and Rogdan (1990), along with the World Health Organization (Khamees, 2010, 158), describe quality of life as an individual's contentment with their life circumstances, involving happiness, self-satisfaction, and enjoyment of life. The WHO defines it as "an individual's perception of their position in life within the context of cultural and value systems, in relation to their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns." It is a comprehensive construct that includes physical and psychological health, social relationships, personal beliefs, and their interaction with environmental factors.

Quality of life, therefore, is a multifaceted concept that reflects the fulfillment of individual needs and is pivotal for achieving psychological well-being. It symbolizes a state of physical and mental health, encompassing positive emotions like happiness, self-contentment, life satisfaction, and social connectivity. Additionally, it involves autonomy in

decision-making, goal-setting, and meeting personal needs, enabling individuals to realize their aspirations and address life's challenges effectively.

In the context of this study, quality of life is operationalized as the score obtained by university students on the quality of life scale utilized in this research.

5-2 Attitudes Towards Major:

The concept of 'attitude' is a complex construct pivotal to social psychology, drawing from diverse cognitive, psychological, and sociological disciplines. In education and psychology contexts, 'attitude' refers to an individual's stance or reaction toward a particular object, topic, or issue, which can range from acceptance to rejection or opposition. These responses are shaped by personal experiences and the specific contexts tied to the object or issue (Shehata and Al-Najar 2003,16).

Andersen (2005) describes 'attitude' as a collection of consistent, interrelated responses that exhibit stability and continuity. Historically, scholars like Herbert Spencer emphasized its significance in forming accurate judgments (Al-Gharbawi, 2007,7). Allport adds that 'attitude' is a state of nervous and psychological readiness, shaped by past experiences, which directs an individual's responses to different situations (Al-Barawi, 2013,50).

In this study, attitudes towards the Speech Therapy major are defined as the thoughts, perceptions, and emotions students hold regarding this field. These attitudes are quantified using the Attitudes Toward Speech Therapy Major Questionnaire developed specifically for this research.

5-3 Speech Therapy Major:

Speech Therapy is a scientific discipline focused on studying both normal and pathological linguistic and non-linguistic communication in children and adults. Its primary objective is diagnosing and treating speech, language, and communication disorders, employing specialized methods and techniques for rehabilitation and correction. The field also involves studying language acquisition, its contributing factors, and is crucial in predicting and preventing language disorders (Rekza and Jinan, 2018,7).

7-Study Design and Methodology:

7-1 Study Design:

The researcher relied on the descriptive correlational approach due to the nature of the topic, which requires finding the relationship between quality of life and the attitude of third-year Speech Therapy students towards their major.

7-2 Study Boundaries:

-Spatial Boundaries: This study was conducted at the University Morsli Abdullah, Tipaza, within the Institute of Social and Human Sciences.

-Temporal Boundaries: This study was conducted during the academic year 2022/2023. from April 8, 2023, to May 30, 2023,

-Human Boundaries: the study targeted third-year Orthophonia students, totaling 101 students.

7-3 Study sample:

The study included a purposive sample of 101 third-year Speech Therapy students, aged 21 to 35 years. A demographic breakdown of the sample by sex is provided:

Table (1): The distribution of the sample members according to the sex

sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	02	1.98
Female	99	98.09
Total	101	100

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 22 outputs)

7-4 Study instrument:

Two instruments have been used in the study, as mentioned below:

7-4-1 The Quality of Life Scale:

The first instrument used was the 'Quality of Life Scale for University Students,' developed by Mansi and Kadhem (2010). This scale, designed to assess the quality of life among students, consists of 60 items distributed across six dimensions. These dimensions include general health quality, family and social life quality, education and study quality, emotional quality, mental health quality, and time management and utilization quality. Each dimension is represented by an equal number of positively and negatively framed items.

-Psychometric properties of the scale:

The Quality of Life Scale boasts strong psychometric properties, validated through both content and criterion-related validity. The reliability coefficients for its six dimensions vary between 0.62 and 0.85, with an average of 0.75, and the overall scale reliability is noted to be 0.91. To ensure the scale's appropriateness for the Algerian academic context, it was reviewed by seven expert judges, who confirmed its suitability, internal consistency, and reliability for use in this study.

- Calculating the Reliability and the Validity of the Quality of Life Scale:

- Calculating the Validity of the internal consistency of The Quality of Life Scale:

it displays how each item relates to the scale overall. The Pearson coefficient has been used to demonstrate this consistency, and the results are displayed in the table below:

Table (2): Displays the Validity of the internal consistency of the Quality of Life Scale

item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation
1	0.439*	13	0.410**	25	0.187*	37	0.002	49	0.125*
2	0.530**	14	0.303*	26	0.419*	38	0.564**	50	0.567**
3	0.511**	15	0.131*	27	0.594**	39	0.015	51	0.405*
4	0.207*	16	0.334**	28	0.530**	40	0.553**	52	0.172*
5	0.423*	17	0.370*	29	0.295*	41	0.120*	53	0.214*
6	0.392*	18	0.300*	30	0.599**	42	0.564**	54	0.317*
7	0.294*	19	0.291*	31	0.402*	43	0.015	55	0.128*
8	0.308*	20	0.168*	32	0.470*	44	0.553**	56	0.523**
9	0.117*	21	0.590**	33	0.215*	45	0.261*	57	0.254*
10	0.337**	22	0.094	34	0.224*	46	0.479**	58	0.710*
11	0.256*	23	0.310*	35	0.456*	47	0.189*	59	0.266*
12	0.353**	24	0.267*	36	0.710**	48	0.520*	60	0.650**

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 22 outputs)

The internal consistency reliability of the Quality of Life Scale was evaluated using the Pearson correlation coefficient. This assessment correlated individual items with the overall scale, leading to some items being identified as statistically non-significant. Specifically, items 20, 22, 39, and 43 did not show significant correlations, while items such as 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 41, 45, 49, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, and 59 demonstrated statistical significance at the 0.05 level, with the rest showing significance at the 0.01 level. Following the removal of non-significant items, the scale's validity and reliability were firmly established.

- Calculating the Reliability:

To ascertain the reliability of the Quality of Life Scale, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. the result is displayed in the table below:

Table (3): CalculatingCronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale

the scale	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Quality of Life	0.72

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 22 outputs)

The table above indicates that theCronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.72, indicating that the quality of life measure is reliable.

7-4-2 The Attitudes towards Speech Therapy Major Questionnaire:

The second instrument used in the study was the Attitudes towards Speech Therapy Major Questionnaire, specifically developed to measure student attitudes towards this field. The questionnaire includes 47 items, composed of 25 positive and 22 negative statements, and utilizes a five-point Likert scale. It covers four dimensions, each including cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Validated by ten experts, the questionnaire initially contained 51 items but was refined to 47 items after assessing internal consistency and validity.

- Validity and reliability of the Attitudes Questionnaire:

it displays how each item relates to the scale overall. The Pearson coefficient has been used to demonstrate this consistency, and the outcomes are displayed in the table below:

Table (4): Displays the Validity of constructof the Attitudes Questionnaire

item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation	item	Item-total correlation
1	0.61**	11	0.32**	21	0.41**	31	0.62**	41	0.39**
2	0.62**	12	<u>0.19</u>	22	0.46**	32	0.35**	42	0.42**
3	0.55**	13	0.32**	23	0.43**	33	0.29**	43	0.54**
4	0.55**	14	0.32**	24	0.39**	34	0.48**	44	0.48**
5	0.56**	15	0.37**	25	0.46**	35	0.28**	45	0.52**

6	0.44**	16	0.22*	26	0.32**	36	0.33**	46	0.35**
7	0.48**	17	0.43**	27	0.35**	37	0.40**	47	0.31**
8	0.28**	18	0.55**	28	0.64**	38	<u>0.11</u>	48	0.50**
9	0.27**	19	0.28**	29	0.39**	39	<u>0.14</u>	49	0.53**
10	0.43**	20	0.28**	30	<u>0.02</u>	40	0.40**	50	0.50**
51	0.24*								

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 22 outputs)

Results indicated that items 16 and 51 were significant at the 0.05 level, while items 12, 30, 38, and 39 were non-significant and subsequently excluded. The remaining items showed statistical significance at the 0.01 level, resulting in a refined questionnaire with 47 items.

The reliability of the Attitudes Questionnaire: both Cronbach's alpha and split-half reliability coefficients were used to calculate the reliability, and the results are displayed in the table below:

Table (5): Calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Questionnaire

variable	method	Reliability coefficient
Attitudes Questionnaire	Cronbach's alpha	0.882
	split-half	0.783

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 22 outputs)

The results from these statistical methods yielded satisfactory values, thus affirming the questionnaire's reliability and its appropriateness for the study's data analysis.

8- Statistical methods used in the study:

For the statistical analysis of the collected data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. The study applied various statistical techniques, including the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, One-Sample t-Test, along with calculating the mean and standard deviation.

9- Results and discussion:

9-1 First hypothesis:

The first hypothesis states the following: There is a significant correlation between the quality of life and attitudes towards the Speech Therapy major among third-year Speech Therapy students.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied to examine this hypothesis. The results are displayed in the following table:

Table (6): Correlation coefficient between Quality of life and attitudes towards the Speech Therapy major

variable	Sample size	Correlation coefficient	significance
Quality of life	101	0.11	Not significant
attitudes towards the Speech Therapy major			

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 22 outputs)

As can be seen from the above table, the study sample consisted of 101 students. The correlation coefficient between their scores on the Quality of Life scale and the Attitudes towards the Speech Therapy Major scale is 0.11. This coefficient indicated a weak and non-significant relationship between these variables.

Based on this value, it can be shown that there is no correlation between quality of life and attitudes towards speech therapy major. We have not found any studies that prove or refute the outcome in the same field, but we have found some studies that have revealed results that are consistent with those of the present study, but in other fields, such as the Hani Khadija study, which has resulted in an absence of a relationship between quality of life and satisfaction with study major.

The Zarrouk study (2022) showed that there was no relationship between quality of life and satisfaction with school major.

It may be noted that, according to the researcher, there are few studies on this aspect, but there are some studies that may be considered to be close to the present study, which revealed findings that are contrary to those of this study, such as the Al-Sayed study (2010), which found a positive and statistically significant correlation between quality of life and the attitude towards special education major.

The 2016 Nagham Jamal study showed a statistically significant negative relationship between quality of life and counseling needs within the sample study.

In addition, the Jihan Ibrahim study (2022) found a correlation between students' attitudes towards psychological and educational counseling and quality of life.

According to the researcher, the result of this assumption can be explained by the fact that the student, whether he or she has positive or negative attitudes towards the speech therapy major, has nothing to do with the quality of life. A major is only an experience of exploration and cannot be judged by success or failure. The student may have a quality of life that has nothing to do with his or her own major. There are other factors and reasons that interfere with his or her choice of major. If the student chooses this major out of conviction and it is compatible with his or her wishes and abilities, he or she will be satisfied with it. and the opposite for the student directed to a major that he or she does not wish to and does not agree with his or her abilities.

9-2 Second hypothesis:

The second hypothesis posited that the level of quality of life among third-year Speech Therapy students is high. A one-sample t-test was conducted to compare the average scores of students on the Quality of Life scale with the expected mean. This mean was derived by multiplying the number of scale items by the mean of the scale options.

Table (7): Results of one sample t test of the quality of life scale

variable	Sample size	calculated Mean	Standard deviation	Expected Mean	T	df	Sig
Quality of life	101	231.72	18.80	180	27.49	100	0.05

Source: (prepared by the researcher based on SPSS 25 outputs)

The table shows that the study's sample size was 101 individuals. Their Mean score on the Quality of Life Scale was 231.72, with a standard deviation of 18.80. This Mean is much higher than the calculated Mean of 180, suggesting a significant difference in favor of the calculated Mean. The one sample t-test value is 27.49, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that the calculated mean of the sample is higher than the expected mean. Therefore, we can conclude that the students in the study have a high quality of life, supporting the second hypothesis of the study.

This result aligns with the study by Al-Aswad (2017), which found that the quality of life among students at Al-Wadi University was high. It also agrees with the findings of Baali and Jaghlouli (2018), who concluded that the quality of life among psychology department students at Al-M'sila University was high. Similarly, it is consistent with the studies of Al-Adly (2006), Hassan and Al-Mahrazi (2006), Al-Mashaqba (2015), Al-Nader (2017), and Mostafawi and Al-Aswad (2021), all of which indicated a high level of quality of life.

However, this result does not agree with the study by Raghdah Naissa (2012), which demonstrated a low level of quality of life, attributing this to students not having the freedom to choose an academic field that matches their interests and abilities. It also differs from the findings of Kazem and Al-Bahadli (2006), who observed a decrease in the quality of life in terms of mental health and emotional aspects.

The studies by Nagham Jamal (2016) and Ghofran Al-Dahni (2018) showed that students rated their quality of life as average.

This finding differs from the studies by Tempski et al. (2012) and Dweida and Al-Yazidi (2023), which found a low level of quality of life among university students.

This result can be explained by considering quality of life as a broad concept affected by overlapping subjective and objective aspects. It is linked to an individual's health status, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships formed, and their interaction with their living environment.

Moreover, this result emphasizes that quality of life is associated with an individual's personal perception and their sense of satisfaction and happiness, resulting from their evaluation of the services provided and available in their society, which they perceive as meeting their needs and fulfilling their desires in various life domains.

The researcher believes that this result can be attributed to how a student perceives their quality of life. Education and experiences encountered by the student contribute to their understanding of the standards of quality of life, which can be achieved through these experiences within the university. Furthermore, family upbringing, care, and attention play a significant role in enhancing the sense of quality of life, which helps in increasing their self-confidence and ability to adapt to the society they live in.

Conclusion:

In the current study, the relationship between quality of life and students' attitudes towards the speech therapy major was investigated. These two variables are considered to have a significant impact on university students, both in their academic studies and in their professional future, as well as their satisfaction with the future and life in general.

The study indicates that quality of life is not related to the attitude towards the speech therapy major. This result is not surprising because it is not necessary for a student to be satisfied with their major to have a quality life. Attitudes, being acquired, learned, and relatively stable, they do not change quickly, and having an emotional component, are generally agreed upon by researchers as acquired positions through experiences and knowledge encountered in life. We may find some students oriented towards major they initially did not prefer, but eventually, they achieve positive results. This can be attributed to their ambition and desire to achieve their full potential.

In light of the results of the current study, the researcher presents several recommendations that can be beneficial, as follows:

Incorporate the concept of quality of life into speech therapy courses at the university to aid students in understanding quality of life standards.

Emphasize the need to conduct more studies examining the relationship between quality of life and attitudes towards the speech therapy major, and suggest correlational studies titled 'The Relationship between Quality of Life and Academic Achievement among University Students'.

Foster a general sense of quality of life among students by building a clear and specific understanding of the meaning of life, as well as correcting their perceptions about major and university options.

Organize major seminars and training courses for university students, especially freshmen, to educate and guide them about the available pathways at the university before choosing a major, and clarify the job opportunities available to graduates of this major.

Take into account the desires and attitudes of students and not rely solely on academic averages.

Focus on more variables that affect quality and conduct other studies, such as examining the quality of life among individuals with hearing and mobility disabilities and proposing programs to improve their quality of life.

Necessitate attention to the quality of life to ensure individual stability, which can increase productivity in various areas such as study, work, and reaching creativity.

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