A Phenomenological Study on Psychological Anxiety of Vocational College Students

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Abstract：This study takes vocational college students as the research object, adopts phenomenological research methods, and deeply explores the manifestations, causes, and influencing mechanisms of psychological anxiety among them. The research results show that vocational college students generally have a certain degree of psychological anxiety, which is mainly reflected in five aspects: employment anxiety, academic anxiety, social anxiety, love anxiety, and material anxiety. The factors that affect the psychological anxiety of vocational college students mainly include four levels: social factors, school factors, family factors, and personal factors. Effective prevention measures should be taken from the perspectives of government leadership, university participation, family responsibility, and student autonomy.

1.Introduction

1.1 Research necessity

With the rapid development of society and the continuous deepening of educational reform, the mental health problems of vocational college students are becoming increasingly prominent. Psychological anxiety, as one of the more common psychological problems, not only affects the personal growth and academic performance of students, but may also further induce other psychological disorders, such as depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Therefore, conducting in-depth research on the phenomenon of psychological anxiety among vocational college students is not only a response to the current educational environment and social psychological health challenges, but also a necessary requirement to promote the comprehensive development of students and build a healthy campus environment.

1.2 Research purpose

This study aims to explore the specific manifestations, causes, and influencing mechanisms of psychological anxiety among vocational college students from a phenomenological perspective. The research aims to reveal the current situation and characteristics of psychological anxiety among vocational college students, and provide empirical support for related mental health education. Propose targeted psychological intervention measures and suggestions to promote the improvement and development of mental health education in vocational colleges.

1.3 Research question

This study will focus on the following core issues: What are the main manifestations of psychological anxiety among vocational college students? What are the main causes of psychological anxiety among vocational college students? How to effectively identify, prevent, and intervene in the psychological anxiety problems of vocational college students? Through in-depth research on these issues, this study aims to reveal the underlying causes of psychological anxiety among vocational college students and propose practical and feasible solutions to promote their mental health and comprehensive development.

2.Research methods

2.1 Research object

This study focuses on vocational college students, especially those who exhibit symptoms of psychological anxiety. To ensure the universality and representativeness of the study, it will cover students of different genders, grades, and professional backgrounds. At the same time, efforts will be made to consider background factors such as the geographical location and family economic situation of students, in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the manifestations of psychological anxiety in different groups. To this end, the researchers contacted 5 teachers (including professional course teachers and counselors) and asked them to select 15 students who met the above conditions to recommend to the researchers. The researchers explained the intention of the study to them, and in the end, 10 students agreed with the psychological anxiety problems that occurred on themselves and were willing to participate in the study as research subjects. The researchers numbered each research object, and the basic information is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Basic information of the studied subjects

Number	gender	enrollment method	Major studied	grade
C1	male	College Entrance Examination	Mechatronics	first grade
F1	male	College Entrance Examination	Intelligent robot technology	second grade
E1	female	independent recruitment	Insurance Practice	second grade
C2	male	Five years consistent	industrial engineering technology	Third grade
F2	female	College Entrance Examination	Digital Media Technology	first grade
M1	male	independent recruitment	NUMERICAL CONTROL	Third grade
F3	male	independent recruitment	Big data technology	second grade
C3	female	Five years consistent	Modern logistics management	Third grade
M2	female	independent recruitment	Application of Cloud Computing Technology	first grade
E2	female	College Entrance Examination	Production of radio, film and television programs	second grade

2.2 Research tools

This study used a semi-structured interview outline to conduct in-depth interviews with students, understand their anxiety performance in daily learning, life, and social activities, and collect basic information and anxiety related factors from students.
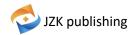
2.3 Research steps

The study used semi-structured in-depth interviews and conducted pre interviews and formal interviews with 10 research subjects. The main content of the pre interview includes students' learning experience in vocational education, how to understand psychological anxiety, and their views on themselves, teachers, and schools. On the basis of pre interviews, the researchers designed an outline for formal interviews, covering four aspects and eight questions, including experiences, feelings, opinions, and hopes of psychological anxiety. The interview time for each participant was about 30 minutes, and the entire interview process was recorded.

2.4 Data analysis

After the interview, the researchers transcribed the interview data of each research subject to form 48000 words of interview data. Then, using qualitative data analysis methods, they sorted and analyzed the interview records, extracted key information, and combined with previous research and literature, used qualitative analysis methods such as theme analysis and content analysis to explore the specific manifestations of psychological anxiety among vocational college students The causes and their impact on learning and life, comprehensively revealing the phenomenological characteristics and underlying mechanisms of psychological anxiety among vocational college students.

3.Research results

3.1 Specific manifestations of psychological anxiety

3.1.1 Employment anxiety.

All 10 respondents, without exception, indicated that they have "employment anxiety", which ranks first among all types of psychological anxiety. In the interview, several students mentioned, "The current employment situation is severe, with higher employment requirements. They also lack the ability and quality required by the market, and are worried about finding their ideal job in the future.", "In fact, it is relatively easy for vocational college students to find a job, but they or their parents have high expectations for their careers, and they always think about finding a very satisfactory job. This requirement is also a kind of pressure for me, afraid of letting down my parents' hard work and years of hard work."

3.1.2. Academic anxiety.

Through interviews, it was found that most college students reported experiencing academic anxiety. Some students said, "Their recognition of their major is not high, and they are not interested in learning professional courses. They do not know what the purpose of learning is, and they are full of anxiety about professional learning." Another student mentioned, "There are too many courses in university, and exam anxiety will occur before the final exams, seriously affecting exam performance."

3.1.3 Social anxiety.

Most vocational college students are only children and lack experience in interpersonal communication for a long time during their growth. When there is a significant difference in social role cognition and behavior, they will develop a strong sense of anxiety, specifically manifested as persistent fear of one or more social situations, and obvious behavioral difficulties or negative emotions. Some college students are addicted to online games for a long time, their social functions weaken, and eventually develop serious social barriers.

3.1.4. Love anxiety.

With over 80% of respondents expressing a desire to have a romantic relationship in college. However, in practical life, some college students may experience love anxiety due to deviations in their views on love, insufficient love experience, and improper problem-solving methods. The interview results showed that 100% of the respondents reported experiencing "love anxiety". From the stage of anxiety occurrence, 3/5 of the respondents indicated that it occurred during the "love process". Meanwhile, the causes of anxiety can also vary from person to person. In the interview, over 4/5 of the respondents expressed their desire to seek reasonable ways to alleviate their love anxiety. The case study shows that some college students are unable to handle the problems that arise during the love process well, leading to psychological conflicts and ultimately solving problems in extreme ways.
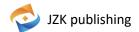
3.1.5 Material anxiety.

The interview results showed that over 80% of the respondents reported experiencing "material anxiety". When asked about the reasons for your material anxiety, some respondents expressed their anxiety due to the pursuit of high-end products, some expressed their anxiety due to participating in high paying off campus training, some expressed their anxiety due to frequent gatherings and high expenses, and some expressed their anxiety due to poor family financial conditions. In the interview, it was found that some vocational college students have distorted consumption concepts, blindly pursue high-end mobile phones, branded clothes and bags, high-end cosmetics, etc. Some students obtain quick financial solutions through online loans, and then suffer from long-term debt repayment anxiety, seriously affecting their learning and even life safety.

3.2 The main symptoms of psychological anxiety

Through interviews, it was found that the main symptoms of psychological anxiety among vocational college students are reflected in multiple levels.

On an emotional level, students generally feel nervous, irritable, and irritable, filled with uncertainty and fear for the future. They often worry about their academic, employment, interpersonal relationships, and other issues, and cannot relax their body and mind. For example, in terms of learning, anxiety may lead to students losing interest and motivation in learning, resulting in problems such as lack of concentration and decreased memory during the learning process.

At the cognitive level, psychological anxiety may have a negative impact on students' self-awareness and self-worth.

They may overly focus on their own shortcomings and deficiencies, leading to a decrease in self-confidence and self-esteem. Severe anxiety can also lead to psychological disorders such as depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder, causing great harm to the mental health of students.

At the behavioral level, anxiety may lead to a decline in students' social skills, tense interpersonal relationships, and even physiological problems such as insomnia and loss of appetite. To avoid anxiety, some students may choose to avoid social situations and reduce communication with others. Some students may exhibit negative behaviors such as delaying their studies, lying flat, and becoming addicted to their phones, which seriously affect their learning outcomes and academic development.

3.3 The causes of psychological anxiety

3.3.1 Social level

Firstly, the social environment is complex and ever-changing. The clash effect between Western consumerism and local value systems has led to some students experiencing value cognitive dissonance, triggering material anxiety and identity crisis. Secondly, the employment situation for college students is severe. The problem of "mismatch between skill supply and demand" in the process of industrial upgrading is significant, and vocational college students face a real gap between "high skill expectations" and "basic positions", resulting in a decline in vocational efficacy and employment panic. Thirdly, thoughts and behaviors are influenced by the internet. Fragmented entertainment leads to distorted time perception, algorithmic recommendation mechanisms exacerbate the information cocoon effect, and social media dependence weakens real-life interaction abilities, causing some students to fall into the "virtual achievement compensation" mechanism, forming a vicious cycle of digital addiction and academic burnout.

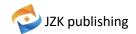### 3.3.2 At the school level

One is the mismatch between professional development and employment services. Some colleges' professional settings lag behind industrial transformation, and there are intergenerational differences in curriculum systems and job competency requirements. Insufficient involvement of enterprises in practical teaching has led to cognitive confusion among students due to the disconnect between learning and application. The heavy academic workload combined with rapid technological iteration pressure creates a persistent source of academic anxiety. Secondly, there is a gap in the mental health education system. The existing psychological counseling mostly stays at the passive response level, lacking a full cycle prevention mechanism, insufficient coverage of emotional management courses, and insufficient intervention timeliness. The third issue is the operational blockage of the crisis intervention system. There is a shortage of professional psychological counseling teachers, and the cross departmental collaborative handling process has not been fully implemented. The existing emergency plan lacks standardized handling of group anxiety events, and there is a risk of obstruction in crisis referral channels.

3.3.3 At the family level

One is the influence of family education philosophy. The higher the expectations of parents, the more afraid students are of not being able to meet their expectations, thereby increasing their psychological burden and leading to the emergence and even exacerbation of their anxiety. The second is the influence of family upbringing methods. Excessive protection or harsh criticism of children can affect the development of their independence and confidence, making individuals more likely to feel greater pressure and anxiety as they grow up. The third factor is the influence of family economic conditions. Students from economically disadvantaged families are highly susceptible to material anxiety. There are also some college students from families with superior economic conditions who lack rational consumption concepts and pursue high consumption as a fashion, resulting in insufficient income and even satisfying their material desires through online loans, falling into the economic anxiety of constantly repaying debts.

3.3.4 On a personal level

One is that individuals have a low sense of self-efficacy. When faced with academic setbacks, heartbreak, financial pressure, employment difficulties, and conflicts in interpersonal communication, some college students may have weak self-efficacy, which can easily lead to anxiety. Secondly, there is a lack of career planning and self-awareness imbalance.

Many college students lack career development plans during their time in school, and their professional knowledge is not solid. After experiencing multiple setbacks in job hunting, they will become more confused and experience anxiety. Setting high goals for oneself during the job search process often leads to a higher level of self-awareness or anxiety due to others' evaluations. Thirdly, strong self-awareness makes it difficult to regulate interpersonal conflicts. Some college students have a strong sense of boundaries in interpersonal communication, have low social skills, prefer to be alone, and are accustomed to virtual communication in the online world. They may feel uncomfortable with interpersonal communication in the real world and cannot handle interpersonal relationships well.

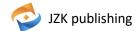## 4.Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 Government led

One is to establish a value driven mechanism, integrate socialist core values into social governance, strengthen education on excellent traditional Chinese culture, improve the ideological security prevention and control system, promote the construction of a safe China, and create a stable and harmonious social atmosphere. The second is to optimize the employment security system. Implement entrepreneurship and employment support policies, and incentivize enterprises to attract graduates through measures such as loan interest subsidies and tax reductions. Establish a mechanism to assist groups facing employment difficulties, provide skills training, job matching, and temporary assistance services, simplify the recruitment process, and stabilize the employment base. The third is to strengthen the comprehensive governance of the online ecosystem, carry out a special action to clean up the internet, and focus on rectifying illegal live streaming, online gambling and other chaos. Develop high-quality online education resources, construct a digital content matrix covering topics such as career planning and mental health, strengthen college students' online literacy education, and cultivate a clear online cultural space.

4.2 Main body of universities

As a key field for the socialization development of college students, universities must play a leading role in alleviating psychological anxiety and focus on promoting the construction of two major systems: one is the supply side reform of professional education. Establish a market-oriented professional dynamic adjustment mechanism, connect with the needs of national strategic emerging industries, and optimize the model of government school enterprise cooperation in education. Refactoring the three-dimensional curriculum system of "knowledge+skills+literacy", integrating professional ethics, digital skills, etc. into the training program, and enhancing the matching degree between talent supply and industry demand. The second is the construction of a psychological service ecosystem. Improve the three-level working mechanism of "warning intervention support", establish a mental health big data platform, use AI algorithms to analyze anxiety factors, and achieve accurate identification of high-risk populations; Build a collaborative work system for psychological counselors, professional teachers, and other professionals, and develop hierarchical intervention curriculum modules; Establish a standardized psychological service center, equipped with virtual reality relaxation devices, open a 24-hour cloud psychological hotline, and create a "screening consultation referral"service loop. Simultaneously strengthen the construction of full-time and part-time teams, implement a system of practice rotation for psychological counselors in enterprises, and enhance the professionalization level of crisis intervention.

4.3 Family Responsibility

One is to establish a correct concept of family education, break away from the "achievement oriented" parenting philosophy, and establish a cultivation orientation that emphasizes both moral growth and psychological development. Focus on cultivating children's emotional management skills, critical thinking, and resilience, establish a supportive parent-child interaction model, and avoid imposing career planning and other life choices on children. The second is to adopt scientific parenting methods, build democratic and consultative family relationships, and understand children's development demands through regular in-depth dialogues. Abandon excessive protection and emotional manipulation, and use the "psychological weaning"strategy to enhance children's independent decision-making ability. Establish a family stress buffering mechanism to alleviate anxiety through activities such as joint exercise and art therapy. The third is to

optimize the economic support strategy, implement the "demand grading guarantee" system, ensure necessary expenses for academic life, eliminate online loan risks, guide occupational value recognition, and avoid the alienation of the salary oriented career outlook. Carry out family financial consultation practice, cultivate rational consumption habits through simulated budget management, and eliminate conspicuous consumption psychology.

4.4 Student autonomy

One is accurate self-assessment to enhance self-efficacy. To take a positive outlook on life as the core and guide one's own personality development. When facing various problems in academic, employment, and interpersonal communication, one should learn to attribute them correctly and actively enhance their ability to regulate anxious emotions. To face reality, objectively analyze one's own strengths and weaknesses, comprehensively understand one's abilities and personality traits, continuously enhance self-confidence, and maintain a positive, optimistic, and energetic mental state. The second is to choose appropriate adjustment methods to alleviate psychological anxiety. When psychological anxiety occurs, students should rationally accept and treat it correctly, and promptly adopt healthy methods that meet their own needs for adjustment. For example, mindfulness training can be used to accept the current psychological response state, and through exercises such as mindfulness breathing and body scanning, it can effectively alleviate inner fear and anxiety.

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