



# Student Association and Its Relation to The Mental Health of Secondary Vocational Chinese School Students Towards the Design of An Intervention Program

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## ABSTRACT

Secondary vocational school students are still in adolescence, which is a critical period for the formation of values and world views. With the long-term academic performance of secondary vocational students which is not ideal, the mental health status of students is worrying, thus the formation of secondary vocational student mental health intervention project has become an important subject of secondary vocational schools. Students' associations in secondary vocational schools are under the unified management of the school, with teachers participating in guiding all the students who are participating in the student organizations. Students' associations are a platform for students to realize self-knowledge and self-adjustment, also a good way for schools to carry out mental health education. This study investigated the mental health of secondary vocational school students in Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, China in the school year 2019, and further explored the relationship between the involvement of secondary vocational school students in student associations and their mental health. On this basis, an effective mental health intervention plan for secondary vocational school students was proposed which would provide the theoretical and practical guidance for the development and promotion of secondary vocational school student associations and student mental health education.

**Keywords:** Student Association, Mental Health, Intervention Program

## I. INTRODUCTION

Student associations are mass organizations formed by students themselves. Student associations have important relations with students' physical and mental health development.

Most students in secondary vocational schools are still in the stage of adolescence and are in the critical period of life development, they face with the current situation of entering the social employment as soon as possible, so the pressure on their vocational skills and adaptation to the society is even greater. These problems will seriously affect their learning in school, relationships, employment, and will worsen the problems that they already have if not handled properly. Therefore, paying attention to the mental health of students in secondary vocational schools is not only the current situation that schools must pay attention to, but also a hot issue that the whole society must pay attention to.

Therefore, this study attempted to explore the relationship between students' association and students' mental health, determine whether school association can promote students' mental health level, so as to provide practical guidance through mental health education to students in secondary vocational schools.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study maximized the use of quantitative and qualitative methods to determine the influence of student associations in defining various indicators of students' mental health. The quantitative method was appropriate, because the research needed a numerical value to determine the degree of influence of student associations on students' mental health level, and the effect as to whether or not to participate in community activities on students' mental health level was different, so as to determine how to carry out students' mental health education in student association. On the other hand, qualitative research was used to explore the research issues related to this study. The qualitative data from the interviews were also used to support the quantitative data analysis and interpretation more clearly.

### III. DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 The Mental Health Status of the Secondary Vocational Students

It can be perceived from the Table 1 the overall average value of 2.0866 revealed that the students were in the mild mental state. This was supported by the average values of the hostile factor index score (2.5871), interpersonal tension and sensitivity (2.0128), depression factor (2.0151), anxiety factor (2.0892), study-induced stress factor (2.0121), maladjustment factor (2.1703), emotional imbalance factor (2.0061), and psychological imbalance factor (2.0844). Only two factors those of obsessive-compulsive disorder factor index (1.9589) and paranoia factor index score (1.9326) were the students found to be in normal mental state. The scores were close to 2, indicating that the performance of the students in these two factors was not optimistic.

**Table 1. The Mental Health Status of the Secondary Vocational Students**

- a. NMS = Normal Mental State
- b. MiMS = Mild Mental State
- c. MoMS = Moderate Mental State
- d. SMS = Serious Mental State
- e. VSMS = Very Serious Mental State

In 2016, Chinese scholar Sun conducted a survey on the mental health of students in a secondary vocational school in Hebei, China. The results showed that secondary vocational school students generally had mental health problems. From the similar studies of Chinese scholars Feng (2017) and Cai (2018), same results were found. Another study by Chen (2018) conducted to students in a secondary vocational school in Hubei, China, and the results showed

	n	min	max	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Overall Average Value	1005	.00	5.38	2.0866	.46379	MiMS
1. Obsessive-compulsive symptoms	1005	0	5.00	1.9589	.73058	NMS
2. Paranoia	1005	0	4.00	1.9326	1.09819	NMS
3. Hostility	1005	0	6.83	2.5871	1.03184	MiMS
4. Interpersonal tension and sensitivity	1005	0	5.00	2.0128	.81950	MiMS
5. Depression	1005	0	5.00	2.0151	.94528	MiMS
6. Anxiety	1005	0	5.67	2.0892	.97319	MiMS
7. Study-induced stress	1005	0	5.00	2.0121	.89230	MiMS
8. Maladjustment	1005	0	5.00	2.1703	.90782	MiMS
9. Emotional imbalance	1005	0	5.00	2.0061	.82324	MiMS
10. Psychological imbalance	1005	0	5.00	2.0844	1.03172	MiMS
n	1005					

that half of the secondary vocational schools were living with mental health problems. These data once again prove that the mental health of secondary vocational students generally needs to be addressed to improve it. The secondary vocational students enter the society earlier than college students. They are younger and have a low start. They are more likely to encounter ups and downs as well as setbacks. If their psychology cannot be well relieved and guided, they will cause a great problem to the society, so the society should give them more attention and guidance.

#### 3.2 Relationship between the Level of Involvement in School Associations and Mental Health Status

Student associations are interventions of schools in promoting mental health of the students. In this part, the researcher discussed the correlation between the level of student participation in the student associations and their level of mental health.

**Table 2 The Relationship between Mental Health Status and the Level of Involvement in School Associations**

Mental Health		Level of Involvement	Description	Decision	Interpretation
Average value	Pearson correlation	-.642**	High Negative Correlation	Reject Ho	Significant
	p (two-tail)	.000			
	N	1005			

As shown in Table 2, there was a negative correlation between the overall mental health status and the degree of participation in the school associations, and the correlation coefficient (r) was -0.642 \*\*. This means that the higher the level of involvement in the school association, the lower the overall average score of the student's mental health. The lower the factor score means higher the level of mental health. In other words, the higher the participation of the

secondary vocational students in student associations, the higher the level of mental health. Since the p-value of 0.000 was less than the significance level of 0.05, it indicated that the relationship was significant.

Thirty (30) members of the associations were randomly selected for investigation and interviews. The results showed that all 30 students agreed that participating in the student associations can improve their mental health. In addition, it can be seen from the interviews and surveys with 20 association instructors that they also agreed that after participating in the activities of the association, the mental health of students has been improved and improved. These data also illustrate the relationship between student associations and student mental health.

Cheng's (2018) research on secondary vocational students in Shanxi Electronic Information School showed that students with high participation in association activities had higher mental health levels than students with low participation in associations. Fu, Huang (2020) conducted research on secondary vocational students of sports associations, and the results showed that secondary vocational students with high participation of sports associations have higher levels of mental health. Zheng's (2019) study on the impact of sports club activities with different exercise frequencies on the mental health of middle school students showed that continuing to participate in sports club activities with different frequencies each week and a cumulative exercise intensity of 40 minutes each time can enhance junior high school students' self-awareness. Additionally, it was found out that participating in sports club activities four times a week had the most significant effect, which also proved the relationship between association participation and students' mental health. This may be because the student association can bring more positive adaptation, interpersonal relationship training, self-awareness, career development guidance, emotional management, etc. to secondary vocational students.

Therefore, as student involvement continues to increase, their mental health is being enhanced, improved, and maintained. It follows that the student association is an important platform for mental health education in secondary vocational schools, and an important avenue for secondary vocational students to exercise and maintain mental health.

The researcher walked an extra mile in testing the relationship between the level of involvement and the individual sub-factor of mental health status, namely: obsessive-compulsive symptoms, paranoia, hostility, interpersonal tension and sensitivity, depression, anxiety, study-induced pressure, maladjustment, emotional imbalance, and psychological imbalance. The results are as follow:

### 3.3 Mental Health Education Promotion Plan for Secondary Vocational School Students based on the Involvement in School Associations

From the survey data, the mental health of secondary vocational students was in the stage of mild psychological problems, and the mental health of secondary vocational students was worrying. There was a negative correlation in the mental health and the frequency of school associations' involvement. In other words, the mental health status of students in the secondary vocational schools and their involvement in the student association was relatively high. Therefore, as a means of school intervention, student associations played a very good role in promoting students' mental health.

Combining the survey data and the results of the interview, this research proposed the following mental health promotion plan for secondary vocational school students based on the involvement in school associations.

#### Mental Health Education Promotion Plan Matrix for Members of Secondary Vocational School Associations School Year 2020-2021

PRIORITY	Promote the improvement of students' mental health in Secondary Vocational School Association.
PROBLEM	Exploration and application of mental health education in student associations
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Incorporate mental health education in the construction of goals of the student association</li> <li>2. Integrate the mental health education concept into the student association</li> <li>3. Formulate a complete set of student association mental health education guidelines</li> <li>4. Effectively improve the mental health of the students of the Secondary Vocational Association</li> </ol>
TARGET GROUPS	Three hundred (300) students from the secondary vocational school student associations in Taiyuan, Shanxi, China. These are students from the schools involved in the study.
CONTENTS	<p>Module 1: Mental Health Education and Training for Lecturers and Student Leaders of Student Associations</p> <p>In this module, the researcher will conduct mental health education and training for the instructors and main persons in charge of the student associations in order to raise their awareness and concern about mental health from the level of ideology and literacy, and provide them with some simple learning methods of mental health education knowledge and skills, including basic mental health knowledge, diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, self-knowledge, interpersonal relationships, emotional management, gratitude education, life education, career planning, etc.</p> <p>Module 2: Mental Health Education Plan of each Student Association</p> <p>The purpose of this module is to supervise and assist various student associations to develop and plan activities. By urging student associations to formulate mental health education implementation plan through seminars and other methods, and giving appropriate guidance and suggestions, lay the foundation for the next step of using student associations to carry out student mental health education.</p>

	<p>Module 3: Student Union Implementation of Mental Health Education</p> <p>This module mainly helps various associations to implement mental health education. In its implementation the parent-child guidance association may help to carry out mental health education activities, such as the application of mental health group counseling technology to the daily activities of the student association, and group mental game training.</p> <p>Module 4: Evaluation and Integration</p> <p>This module is to evaluate the effect of the intervention plan, and to improve and supplement the intervention plan in time based on the evaluation results.</p> <p>The evaluation method will use subjective questionnaire and objective questionnaire methods.</p> <p>The implementation method of the objective questionnaire is as follows: through the implementation of the one-year intervention plan, these 300 students will be surveyed again. After obtaining the data, they will be compared with the previous data to explore whether the implementation plan effectively improve the mental health level of the student members of the Secondary Vocational School Associations.</p> <p>The subjective questionnaire method is as follows: select some of the students and the instructors of the association, learn about the students' feelings and gains during the implementation of the program through interviews, obtain relevant information and feedbacks, and based on these determine whether the implementation of the program successfully achieved its objective of promoting and improving the level of students' mental health.</p>
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS* (Expressed as outputs already)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mental health of 300 students has been improved to average/normal level.</li> <li>2. A scientific and reasonable implementation plan for student associations with mental health education characteristics has been created.</li> <li>3. The participation of secondary vocational school student associations has increased by 50%.</li> </ol>
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One hundred percent (100%) participation of the trainees in the activities (procedures and attendance tables) to the greatest extent</li> <li>2. Other school related documents, such as communications, letters, emails, etc.</li> <li>3. List of Trainees</li> <li>4. Plan, Training Plan, Implementation Plan, etc.</li> <li>5. List of Materials Used (from the planning stage to its implementation)</li> <li>6. Accomplished Evaluation Forms</li> <li>7. Photos and/or Videos</li> </ol>
TIME FRAME	September 2021, 9——September 2023, 9
BUDGET	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lecturer's training: 4,000 yuan</li> <li>2. Cost of guidance and implementation: 4,000 yuan</li> <li>3. Food (lunch and dinner) cost: 1,000 yuan</li> <li>4. Materials cost: 300 people * 100 yuan/person = 30,000 yuan;</li> <li>5. Printing fee: 1,000 yuan</li> </ol> <p>Total: 40,000 yuan</p>
RISKS ASSESSMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The school and related departments do not cooperate with the work.</li> <li>2. During the training period, the teacher or the head of the association is unwilling to participate in the training.</li> <li>3. The training period conflicts with the class time of teachers and students.</li> <li>4. Participants cannot apply mental health education methods to the construction of the association's plan.</li> </ol>
RISKS MANAGEMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To obtain the support of the school or superior department, to please notify the participating personnel in the form of a memo or letter.</li> <li>2. To provide a plan timetable in advance, reach a consensus with the school, and allow instructors and students to adjust their classes.</li> <li>3. To have a detailed implementation plan as much as possible, and provide anytime, specific, professional and follow-up services to ensure that instructors and association managers can smoothly implement the intervention plan.</li> </ol>

#### IV. CONCLUSION

1. The students are in the mild mental state.
2. The negative correlation between involvement in school associations and mental health score status is significant.
3. A mental health promotion program is formulated to enhance school involvement and mental health status of students.

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