



An Investigation on the Loneliness of Chinese Secondary Vocational Students

Shujuan Zhao, Weicai Qin

Suzhou Polytechnic Institute of Agriculture, China

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Representative e-Mail: 254160910@qq.com

ABSTRACT

Loneliness is one of the important indicators of mental health. The loneliness of secondary vocational students plays an important role in inducing their cell phone dependence, interpersonal avoidance and inappropriate campus love. Secondary vocational students are still in adolescence, which is the key period for the formation of values and world outlook. However, compared with their peers, secondary vocational students are facing the campus atmosphere of self-management in vocational colleges, the test of moving to professional posts earlier, the challenge of moving faster to society and adapting to society, so they are more likely to feel lonely. This study investigated the loneliness status of 706 students in two secondary vocational schools in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, China. From 620 valid data, it can be seen that many students in secondary vocational schools have varying degrees of loneliness. Among them, 13.7% and 13.5% had higher emotional loneliness and social loneliness than ordinary people, while 3.1% and 7.4% had serious emotional loneliness and social problems; The scores of emotional loneliness and social loneliness of secondary vocational students were higher than those of emotional independence and social independence.

Keywords: Secondary Vocational Students, Loneliness, Mental Health

I. INTRODUCTION

The research on loneliness has a long history. Weiss (1973) influenced by the attachment theory, believes that loneliness is a subjective feeling that when an individual lacks a satisfactory interpersonal relationship, such as being alienated or rejected by others, and his current communication situation can not reach the expected reflection. Perlman (1981) and others defined loneliness as an unpleasant emotional experience generated by an individual when the social network can not meet his expected needs, including the lack of expected friends in quantity and low quality. Zou Hong (2010) believed that loneliness is a state of dissatisfaction with the social network in which an individual is located. It is a bad subjective psychological experience caused by the gap between his social expectation state and his actual social state. Its performance is often accompanied by depression, isolation and helplessness, Spiritual emptiness, etc. (Wang Qi, 2016).

With the development of urbanization and the acceleration of the pace of life, people's communication tends to be more and more superficial, resulting in the alienation and dilution of individual emotions. Loneliness has become a common problem in modern society (Huang Jiehua, 1995). Although temporary loneliness can give individuals a space for independent thinking and help them evaluate and establish their own life path, long-term loneliness may lead to some emotional disorders, such as depression, helplessness, depression, irritability, low self-esteem, despair (Li ChuanYin, 1995), and affect the quality of individual sleep (Dr. John T. Cacioppo, University of Chicago), Reduce the level of immunity and mental health of individuals, leading to diseases (Liu Yali, 1995).

The majority of students in secondary vocational schools are between the ages of 14 and 18. They are still in adolescence and are in a critical period of life development, which is an important period for the formation of their personal world outlook (Shujuan Zhao, 2020). Secondary vocational school students are facing the current situation of entering social employment as soon as possible, the pressure of vocational skills and social adaptation will be greater, and the psychological challenges will be greater. In addition, according to the research, a large part of the parents of secondary vocational students lacks effective family education, which makes them have more difficulties in

interpersonal communication, self cognition and social adaptation (Lin JinHui,2020). The mental health status of secondary vocational students is not optimistic (Shujuan Zhao,2020). One survey of Jiang shaokai shows that secondary vocational school students generally have the phenomenon of mobile phone dependence, which has an important relationship with their sense of loneliness (Jiang shaokai,2019). Therefore, the research on the loneliness of secondary vocational students plays an important role in exploring and solving the interpersonal problems, mobile phone dependence and self cognition of secondary vocational students.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study makes maximum use of quantitative and qualitative methods to determine the current situation of loneliness of secondary vocational students.

The quantitative method is appropriate, because the research needs a numerical value to determine the current situation of secondary vocational students' loneliness according to the demographic characteristics, and whether there are significant differences in students' loneliness according to the demographic characteristics.

On the other hand, qualitative research is used to explore the research problems related to this study. Qualitative data from interviews are also used to more clearly support quantitative data analysis and interpretation.

III. DISCUSSION

3.1 Basic information of Secondary Vocational Students

Students from two secondary vocational schools in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province are selected as the research object. A total of 706 questionnaires were distributed and 650 were recovered, with a recovery rate of 92.07%. After excluding the unqualified questionnaire, there were 620 qualified subjects, accounting for 87.8% of the students who volunteered to participate in this study. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Basic information of Secondary Vocational Students

	Group	n	Rate (%)
Gender	Male	159	74.4
	Female	461	25.6
Age	14-15	40	6.5
	16	180	29.0
	17	268	43.2
	18	116	18.7
	19	16	2.6
Nation	Han Nationality	580	93.5
	Ethnic minority	40	6.5
One Child or More	Yes	118	19.0
	NO	502	81.0
Parenting Pattern	Autocratic	46	7.4
	Democratic type	555	89.5
	Doting type	19	3.1
Place of Origin	City	196	31.6
	Rural	424	68.4
Birth Place	Provincial Capital	383	61.77
	Non-Provincial Capital	274	44.20
N		620	100

3.2 Loneliness of Secondary Vocational Students

As shown in Table 2, many students in secondary vocational school have varying degrees of loneliness. In this survey, 13.7% and 13.5% of the respondents had higher emotional loneliness and social loneliness than the general population, and 3.1% and 7.4% had serious emotional loneliness and social problems. This is similar to the findings of Wang Qi (2016) and Yao Xu (2018).

This survey shows that the emotional loneliness experience of secondary vocational students is higher than that of social loneliness. Weiss (1973) pointed out that loneliness can be divided into emotional loneliness and social loneliness. Emotional loneliness refers to the loneliness caused by the dissatisfaction of people's attachment needs, which involves the intimate and safe relationship between individuals and others, usually refers to sex, love and marriage; Social loneliness is the loneliness generated when people's needs for social integration are not satisfied or lack a sense of society, which is usually caused by the lack of satisfactory relationships with friends and classmates (Wang HongWei,2003). It can be seen from table 2 that the scores of secondary vocational students on the emotional isolation and emotional loneliness subscales are higher than those on the social isolation and social loneliness subscales.

respectively, which may indicate that the strong loneliness experience of secondary vocational students is mainly caused by the lack of satisfactory intimacy (Pang WeiFeng,2020).

Table 2 Loneliness of Secondary Vocational Students

	Group	n	Rate (%)	$\bar{x} \pm s$
Emotional isolation	None or almost none (< 6)	351	56.6	6.31±0.13
	General isolation (6-8)	156	25.6	
	Higher than average isolation (9-12)	76	12.3	
	Serious isolated problems (≥ 13)	34	5.5	
Social isolation	None or almost none (< 6)	422	68.10	4.73±0.13
	General isolation (6-8)	102	16.50	
	Higher than average isolation (9-12)	80	12.90	
	Serious isolated problems (≥ 13)	16	2.60	
Emotional loneliness	None or almost none (< 6)	358	57.70	6.35±0.16
	General loneliness (6-10)	158	27.3	
	Loneliness higher than that of ordinary people (11-14)	85	13.70	
	Serious loneliness problem (≥ 15)	19	3.10	
Social loneliness	None or almost none (< 6)	335	54.00	4.83±0.17
	General loneliness (6-10)	155	25.00	
	Loneliness higher than that of ordinary people (11-14)	84	13.50	
	Serious loneliness problem (≥ 15)	46	7.40	
N		620	100	

Secondary vocational school students have entered puberty, and their sexual psychology has gradually developed and matured (MengJin,2002). Due to the low pressure of examination, the study and life of secondary vocational schools are relatively relaxed and free, and their spare time life is rich and colorful. In addition, in recent years, the social mass media has rendered love and sexual problems, which makes secondary vocational students easy to have rich emotional needs. In addition, a large part of the families of secondary vocational students lack family attention and family education, The intimacy with their parents is relatively weak, and many students are sensitive, which also increases the demand and desire for intimacy (Gao Yang,2017), which is one of the reasons why secondary vocational students have more campus love than ordinary high school students. Due to various practical reasons, such as the immaturity of personal interpersonal skills, the restrictions of school rules and regulations, the immaturity of personal psychological age, the unfinished self-identity, and the previous failed interpersonal experience, it is difficult for them to establish a closer relationship with their classmates and friends, so they are more likely to have emotional loneliness experience.

Although secondary vocational school students are not proficient in communication mode and communication skills, they are still in the stage of active communication and exploration. The social or interpersonal communication of secondary vocational school students has not been fully carried out (Xu Xia,2008), and they lack mature interpersonal skills and have not formed a definite communication boundary and scope. Therefore, although some students will feel lonely in social communication, But it's weaker than emotional loneliness.

3.3 Score Of Emotional Loneliness Subscale Of Emotional Social Loneliness Scale

Table 3 Emotional Loneliness Subscale Grouped by Demographic Factors

	Group	n	$\bar{x} \pm s$	F/Z	P
Gender	Male	461	6.26±3.81	1.225	0.269
	Female	159	6.66±4.27		
Age	14-15	220	6.39±3.99	0.099	0.906
	16-17	268	6.29±3.89		
	18-19	132	6.36±3.93		

Nation	Han Nationality	40	5.53±3.16	/	/
	Ethnic minority	580	6.42±3.98		
One Child or More	Yes	118	6.53±3.93	0.275	0.600
	No	502	6.32±3.94		
Parenting Pattern	Autocratic	46	7.28±4.06	/	/
	Democratic type	555	6.30±3.94		
	Doting type	19	6.00±3.16		
Place of Origin	City	196	5.95±3.81	0.479	0.078
	Rural	424	6.55±3.97		
Birth Place	Provincial Capital	383	6.37±3.96	0.000	0.983
	Non-Provincial Capital	237	6.36±3.89		
N		620			

The results of variance analysis of the secondary vocational students who participated in the survey are grouped according to gender, age, place of origin and other factors. The results show that it cannot be considered that there are significant differences in the level of emotional loneliness among subjects of different gender, age, place of origin and nationality. The results are shown in Table3.

3.5 score of social loneliness subscale of emotion social loneliness scale

The secondary vocational students who participated in the survey were grouped according to gender, age, place of origin and other factors for analysis of variance. The results showed that it could not be considered that there were significant differences in the level of social loneliness among subjects of different gender, age, place of origin and nationality. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Social Loneliness Subscale Grouped by Demographic Factors

	Group	n	$\bar{x} \pm s$	F/Z	P
Gender	Male	461	5.56±4.21	1.954	0.163
	Female	159	6.11±3.93		
Age	14-15	220	5.47±4.14	1.098	0.334
	16-17	268	5.66±4.22		
	18-19	132	6.16±4.47		
Nation	Han Nationality	40	6.05±4.47	/	/
	Ethnic minority	580	5.68±4.23		
One Child or More	Yes	118	5.68±3.85	0.005	0.946
	NO	502	5.71±4.33		
Parenting Pattern	Autocratic	46	6.74±4.79	/	/
	Democratic type	555	5.62±4.18		
	Doting type	19	5.58±4.68		
Place of Origin	City	196	5.17±4.01	5.070	0.033
	Rural	424	5.95±4.33		
Birth Place	Provincial Capital	383	5.84±4.40	0.980	0.318
	Non-Provincial Capital	237	5.49±3.97		
N		620			

The results show that there is no significant difference between male and female secondary vocational students in terms of isolation or loneliness factors. This is consistent with the research results of Borys and Perlman (1985), Cheng Juan et al. (2022), Yao Xu et al. (2018). This may be because secondary vocational students are in the fifth stage of Eriksson's personality development theory. During this period, both male and female secondary vocational students are in the stage of self-identity and have the same task of self-development. They are also faced with the task of personality development to enter the next stage, that is, to obtain a sense of intimacy and avoid loneliness (Zou CiFeng, 2005). Therefore, there was no significant difference in isolation or loneliness in gender classification. In addition, Borys and Perlman (1985) believe that the gender differences measured in other studies are due to the scale with the word "loneliness", and men are more reluctant to report loneliness than women, which makes women feel lonelier than men. The emotional social loneliness questionnaire used in this study did not use the word "loneliness", and the results did not find gender differences, which supported their view.

The results showed that there were significant differences in individual social loneliness in the places of origin (provinces, prefectures, county-level cities and groups at and below the county level). The scores of social loneliness of subjects at and below the county level were higher than those of subjects at and below the county level. This is similar to the research of Cheng Juan et al. (2022) and Yao Xu et al. (2018). For example, it is difficult for students from rural areas to adapt to the changes of their living conditions in the city, which is related to the fact that they are less likely to integrate into the environment of the city after entering the secondary vocational school, Especially rural students from poor families are more likely to have this feeling (Zhang DiYang, 2020); Another possibility is that the communication scope of students from the county and below has become smaller, and they have not yet developed new effective communication skills and communication skills in the process of communicating with new students, so it is easy to have a lonely experience in communication (Yao Xu, Luo ZhengLi, 2018).

The results showed that there was no significant difference in the scores of isolations and loneliness between only children. This may be because the number of children in more children families is also relatively small. The relationship between parents and children also tends to be similar to the one-child family, so there is no difference between the two. This study is similar to Ma Su Hong's (2007) research on graduate students in school and Hu LiRong's (2004) research on junior middle school students.

In the results of this study, because fewer students choose "autocracy" (46) and "doting" (19) in family education, the difference between individual loneliness with different family education needs to be further studied in the future.

The results of this study show that there is no statistically significant difference in the age group of loneliness, which may be because there are few differences in the age group, they are generally in the fifth stage of Eriksson's personality development theory, and the environment of individuals is relatively similar, so the development tasks they face are also similar, so there is no statistically significant difference in loneliness.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. Secondary vocational students generally have a sense of loneliness, which will promote their self-isolation, cell phone dependence, unable to fall in love correctly and so on. Schools should pay more attention to the loneliness of secondary vocational students.
2. There is no significant difference between isolation and loneliness in the loneliness of secondary vocational students in gender, only child or not and other factors.
3. The loneliness of students in rural is significantly higher than that of students in city.

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