

# Teaching Effect and Influencing Factors of Mental Health Courses in Higher Vocational Colleges

Yue Jin

School of Education and Psychological Science, Sichuan University of Science & Engineering,  
Zigong, 643000, China

## Abstract

**The purpose of mental health education courses in vocational colleges is not only to prevent and solve students' psychological confusion, but also to pay more attention to the cultivation and active guidance of students' mental health awareness. It is of great practical significance to explore the teaching effect and influencing factors of mental health courses for vocational college students. The results showed that the influencing factors of the teaching effect of mental health courses for vocational college students mainly included students, teachers, curriculum and environment. The results of this study provide a reference for in-depth research on the mental health curriculum of vocational college students and the development of effective teaching strategies.**

## Keywords

**Higher vocational college students; Mental health courses; Teaching effectiveness; Influencing factors.**

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, students' mental health work has taken on new characteristics, and higher requirements have been put forward for school mental health education. Especially in vocational colleges, students tend to be under a lot of pressure for a variety of reasons. Students in vocational colleges and universities are in a very sensitive and fresh period, therefore, while cultivating and perfecting professional knowledge, we should also pay attention to students' mental health and promote the healthy development of students. In order to better implement the Guiding Outline for Mental Health Education for Students in Colleges and Universities and enhance the mental health education effect of vocational colleges, it is of great significance to comprehensively improve the mental health level of vocational college students [1].

The students of higher vocational colleges are very different from ordinary college students, and their teaching goal is to cultivate high-quality talents with high professional skills for the society, so they put forward higher requirements for their psychological quality. However, at present, most of the vocational colleges take professional knowledge as the center of teaching, and ignore the mental health education, which restricts their psychological development and the improvement of their comprehensive quality. Therefore, vocational colleges should be aware of the need to educate students about mental health as soon as possible, and adopt various ways to improve their mental health level [2].

In the context of the new era, the education and teaching methods of vocational colleges have changed. With the deepening of quality education, vocational colleges and universities should not only cultivate students' ability to master professional skills, but also carry out continuing education management according to students' psychological characteristics. For the mental health education of vocational college students, teachers should pay attention to multi-channel development, create a good classroom atmosphere, guide vocational college students to comprehensively improve their personality quality while learning relevant knowledge, let

students develop a good personal attitude, and ensure the effectiveness of mental health education for vocational college students [3]. In the face of employment and higher education pressure, if students do not pay attention to the psychology of students, students gradually form an introverted and withdrawn character, are unwilling to take the initiative to communicate with others, and gradually produce negative emotions, and then begin to have an inferiority complex, lose self-confidence in learning, directly affect learning efficiency, and cause students to begin to be tired of learning. In this regard, vocational colleges should pay attention to the establishment of psychological supervision courses or psychological counseling to guide students to express their inner pressure and suffering, express their own feelings, solve existing psychological problems, and promote the healthy development of students' physical and mental health, reflecting the importance of strengthening mental health education [4]. At present, China vigorously develops vocational education, but at the same time, there are many psychological problems, which brings great difficulties to the teaching of higher vocational colleges. It is necessary to educate students on mental health from multiple perspectives, so that they can develop healthily and happily, and cultivate qualified practical talents for society [5]. In the process of teaching, in addition to strengthening the cultivation of students' professional knowledge and skills, vocational colleges should pay more attention to mental health education and implement comprehensive quality education as soon as possible. In the new round of educational reform, schools should promote the healthy growth of students, and then cultivate high-quality talents for social and economic development [6].

The period of higher vocational college is a critical period for individuals to form a stable personality and establish three views. In this process, student mental health education plays an important role in the cultivation of students' psychological quality. The wide dissemination of mental health knowledge relies on mental health education classes. The purpose of this course is to improve students' mental health literacy, so that they can be aware of the mental health status of themselves and their classmates, and know the correct way to deal with psychological problems. On the other hand, the purpose of mental health education courses in vocational colleges is not only to prevent and solve students' psychological confusion, but also to pay attention to the cultivation of mental health awareness of vocational college students and their positive guidance. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to explore the teaching effect and influencing factors of mental health courses for vocational college students[7].

## 2. Research Methodology

### 2.1. Research Subjects

Students from Zigong Health and Rehabilitation Vocational College and Zigong Vocational and Technical College were selected as the survey objects, and 1453 questionnaires were effectively collected. Among them, 77.91% were first-year students, 21.34% were sophomores, 0.34% were juniors, and 0.41% were fourth-year students. The number of male students was 45.56 per cent and that of female students was 54.44 per cent.

### 2.2. Research tools

The Questionnaire on the Effectiveness of College Students' Mental Health Education Curriculum included 33 objective questions and 1 subjective question [8]. In addition to the first and second multiple-choice questions, a total of 18 multiple-choice questions were designed according to the aspects of "course offering", "course teaching content", "course teaching methods", "course teaching evaluation", "teacher quality" and "student attitude". In addition, there are 7 multiple-choice questions and 6 multiple-choice questions to help you better understand the offering, teaching content, teaching methods and teaching evaluation of

the course. Based on 34 questions, this paper discusses the attitudes and suggestions of students in vocational colleges and universities towards mental health education.

### **3. Analysis of the Teaching Effect of Mental Health Courses for Vocational College Students**

#### **3.1. It is important for vocational colleges to offer mental health courses**

According to the survey, among the two vocational colleges, 1,120 people knew and confirmed that their schools offered this course and it was a compulsory course, accounting for 77.08% of the total. There were 264 people who knew that their schools offered mental health courses, but they set them as elective courses, accounting for 18.17% of the total. At the same time, 0.28% of the students answered that their school did not offer the course, and 4.47% of the students answered that they did not know whether their school offered the course. It can be seen that most of the surveyed vocational colleges have already offered this course as a compulsory course. Among the 1453 valid questionnaires, 68.34% of the vocational college students studied in schools set 2 credits or more for mental health courses, 29.94% of the higher vocational college students set 1 credit for mental health courses, and only 1.72% of the higher vocational college students did not set credits for this course. Due to the limited number of credits, when students in some majors have to take too many subjects, especially professional courses, and the professional courses are generally higher, this will lead to crowding out the credits of other subjects. Some vocational colleges offer mental health courses as an elective, or even do not offer them, because of the limited number of credits. There are too many public elective subjects set up in schools, so lectures are used to popularize mental health knowledge. It is also possible that the school has already offered the course, but it is only offered in the form of electives, and some students have not taken this course and therefore have no impression of whether the school offers a mental health course. Among the 1,453 valid questionnaires, 1,253 people believed that it was important for vocational colleges to carry out mental health courses, accounting for 86.23% of the total. In Question 34, "Please talk about your views or suggestions on the course", some students reflected that "I hope the teacher will not paddle in class, and give a good lecture, because there are many students with psychological problems in higher vocational colleges". Most of the students who accepted the mental health elective course thought that "the mental health course is a very necessary course", "a very necessary course, which is conducive to the physical and mental health of students", and "I hope that the mental health course can be more interesting". Most of the students who received the compulsory mental health course answered that "mental health is particularly important for today's teenagers and contemporary college students", "more mental health courses should be added for juniors and seniors, because these two grades are facing the pressure of taking the public entrance examination and finding a job, and more mental health education should be given to students", "it can objectively and effectively alleviate some of my negative emotions", "this course can allow us to effectively understand ourselves and how to deal with our interpersonal relationships" This course can help students regulate their emotions and has a great effect on students' physical and mental health", "I think mental health is helpful for the physical and mental health of my classmates, and it is conducive to positive communication", "I think this course should be continued". It can be concluded that it is very necessary for vocational college students to carry out mental health courses, and the teaching effect of compulsory courses is significantly better than that of elective courses.

### **3.2. Mental health courses in vocational colleges are very popular among students**

Vocational college students have a positive attitude towards the mental health courses offered by the school, and the students' enthusiasm in the teaching process is generally higher. The student participation rate was 83.07%, the attendance rate was 91.67%, and there were fewer absenteeism, and most of the students were willing to participate in class discussions and express their ideas. As many as 75.15% of the students think that the mental health course is their favorite course, in question 34, "please talk about your views or suggestions on the course", most of the students think that the mental health course is "very good and makes me accept myself", "this course is very good", "this course is interesting, I like this course very much", "the psychology course is very good to guide us to be cheerful, the boring class is not in the psychology course, the teacher is very active in answering various questions raised by students and solving them, Let students get psychological counseling", "This course is humorous and interesting, can relieve psychological pressure, and can bring great help to contemporary students", "Know more things in mental health class to answer the confusion in your heart", "Very interesting", etc., which shows that the mental health course offered by vocational colleges is deeply loved by students, and the course has indeed helped vocational college students to varying degrees in learning and life, indicating the positive role of mental health courses in education and teaching in vocational colleges.

### **3.3. The teaching staff is perfect, and the teaching content is effective and practical**

According to the survey research, most of the mental health courses in these two vocational colleges are taught by full-time teachers from psychological counseling centers, accounting for 77.7% of the total. As many as 89.68% of the vocational college students believe that the teachers of the mental health course are very professional and can meet the knowledge needs of students and promote the mastery and application of knowledge. 92.09% of the students of the higher vocational college believed that the teachers of the mental health course of the university were accurate and concise in language expression, proficient in classroom management and organizational skills, and able to teach effectively. 92.01% of the students believed that the teachers of the mental health course of the university loved the students, had a healthy personality, and were role models. 96.42% of the students indicated that the mental health course of the school had reference materials; In addition, 89.48% of the vocational college students believed that the reference materials provided by the school could meet the needs of classroom teaching. 91.67% of the students believed that the teaching content of the mental health course was consistent with the teaching objectives of the course. 92.57% of the vocational college students thought that the teaching content of each lesson of the mental health course of the university was appropriately informative. 91.53% of the students believed that the teaching content of the mental health course was in line with the students' experience, and the theoretical knowledge taught by the teachers was in line with the practical application. 91.47% of the students in vocational colleges felt that the teaching method of mental health courses in schools was in line with the actual situation of students. 90.36% of the students in vocational colleges felt that the teaching method of mental health courses in their schools could be optimized, which was conducive to students' understanding and mastery of the content they learned. 90.02% of the students in vocational colleges feel that the choice of mental health course teaching method in their school can stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning and improve their participation, which shows that in vocational colleges, the teaching team of mental health courses is very good, and in the teaching method, the psychological characteristics of students can be fully taken into account, and the actual situation of students can be conformed, so as to better teach.

## 4. Influencing Factors of Mental Health Courses for Vocational College Students

### 4.1. Student Factor

Students' awareness of mental health is weak, and according to the actual development of vocational college students, most students are disturbed by the external environment, and cannot form a correct understanding of mental health, and the overall awareness is relatively weak [9]. Students' perception of the importance of mental health courses is an important influencing factor for the teaching effect of mental health courses. Students' preference for mental health courses will also affect the teaching effectiveness of mental health courses. Student course input refers to the degree of student engagement in mental health courses, including active participation in the course and self-directed learning after class. Student engagement not only directly affects students' learning effectiveness, but also indirectly affects teacher level and teacher engagement. Student engagement has an indirect impact on the performance of teachers and the implementation of the teaching process [10]. In China's long-term examination-oriented education, whether students have good academic performance and whether they can be admitted to good schools have been valued by teachers and parents, not only schools and families ignore the impact of mental health on students, but also students ignore their own psychological problems. And even if a mental health course is opened, because some students are more conservative in their thinking, they often choose to escape when they encounter difficulties, resulting in them only choosing to solve problems by themselves, without professional psychological counseling, and missing the best time for treatment. Students in vocational colleges are in the stage of moving from infancy to maturity and independence. Everyday things have an impact on their worldview. If, in the process of development, some problems inevitably arise that are not properly addressed, then after many accumulations, it will cause irreparable damage to their physical and mental health [11].

### 4.2. Teacher factors

The composition, professional level, teaching method, teaching ability and personality charm of the teachers of the mental health course will affect the teaching effect of the mental health course. Among the main influencing factors of mental health, teaching methods occupy the first place, and good teaching methods can meet the purpose of teaching development, optimize classroom teaching content, and improve the level of classroom teaching [12]. Teachers' ability is the basis of teaching effectiveness, and professional level is the key to teaching effectiveness. Previous studies have shown that the knowledge impartation, activity experience, and skill training in mental health education courses should be supported by the professional quality of classroom teachers [13]. In question 15 of the questionnaire, "The composition of the teachers of this course in your school", 40.12% of the students said that the school's mental health course is taught by teachers from the School of Marxism, which indicates that the teacher level of the mental health course needs to be improved. Teacher engagement is the amount of time, energy and emotion that a teacher devotes to teaching the course. The teacher's investment in time and energy is one aspect, and emotional investment is another. In question 34 of the questionnaire, some students expressed that "I hope teachers don't paddle and talk well, there are many students in higher vocational colleges who have psychological problems", "I hope that mental health courses can be more interesting", "teachers can think more about students", "they can carry out more group activities", "set up more professional psychological counseling teachers", "you can find relevant videos to interact with students in the course", etc.

### 4.3. Course Factors

The mental health curriculum cannot meet the needs of students at the class time and grade level, and it can be seen that there are still many problems at the class time and grade level,



which cannot meet the needs of students, thus affecting the effectiveness of the curriculum. First of all, in terms of class time, from the questionnaire question 10: "The current number of class hours meets the needs of students", it can be seen that 2.2% of the students clearly stated that the limited class hours could not meet their intellectual needs. It can be seen that although the psychological education courses of vocational colleges have achieved initial results and have also been valued by vocational colleges, their proportion is still low in terms of curriculum and class time arrangement, and the number of students covered needs to be increased. Moreover, mental health education, as a complex and huge curriculum system, involves a wide range of contents, covers a wide range of topics, and has too few class hours, so teachers simply do not have enough time to explain what is to be taught, let alone psychological counseling and situational experience in the classroom. Of course, as far as the current status quo of the education system is concerned, the professional course arrangement of higher vocational college students is relatively large, and it is not safe to blindly increase the class time arrangement of mental health education for higher vocational college students, although it can increase the teacher's teaching time and the amount of knowledge that students acquire in the short term, but this will relatively reduce the class time arrangement of other courses, resulting in insufficient learning time for other subjects of higher vocational college students, thus affecting the learning of other disciplines of students, the gains outweigh the losses, and the class time arrangement needs to be carried out in an orderly manner. Secondly, in the fifth question of the questionnaire: "What is the grade level of your school offering this course", we learned that except for a small number of students, the school offers mental health courses from the first grade to the fourth grade, accounting for 30.9%, and the mental health courses for vocational college students are basically first-year freshmen, accounting for 62.56%, and mental health courses are basically not offered to senior students. The psychological development of vocational college students is a continuous process, and the development themes faced by each grade are different, and the focus of their development will also change [14].

For the senior students, they are about to enter the society, and in the face of fierce competition in the social employment situation, they are more likely to have psychological confusion, but in terms of the current course arrangement, it is completely unable to meet their needs. Of course, from an objective point of view, the senior year belongs to the critical period of entering the society from school, relative to the cruelty of society, it is actually of certain positive significance to experience various pressures and setbacks in school early, which can facilitate students to adapt to society more quickly after graduation, based on society, and develop their future life.

The content of mental health courses in vocational colleges is popular but in-depth is insufficient, providing students with basic mental health knowledge, but there are still obvious deficiencies in in-depth research and solving specific problems, and students have a basic understanding of mental health knowledge, but may still lack skills and strategies to deal with complex problems in real life. In addition, the number of mental health courses in vocational colleges leads to less practical interaction, and in the current teaching mode, students often passively accept knowledge and lack the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations [15].

#### **4.4. Environmental factors**

The class size of mental health courses may affect the teaching effect of mental health courses for vocational college students. The teaching environment refers to the objective environment provided by the school for the course, including the size, facilities, functions, comfort and other elements of the classroom, and the external conditions will affect the interaction process between teachers and students, and have an impact on the teaching effect. From question 7 of the questionnaire: "Class capacity of this course in your school", it was shown that 51.14% of

students took the course in a class of 60-120 students, 39.71% of students took the course in a classroom with less than 60 students, and only 9.15% of students studied mental health in a classroom with more than 120 students. At the same time, questions 8 and 9: "Does class size affect the teaching effect, and is large class or small class teaching more effective" showed that 58.92% of the people believed that the class size affected the teaching effect, and 53.26% thought that small class teaching was more effective. As far as mental health courses are concerned, small class sizes are more likely to solve the psychological problems or confusion faced by students. From the macro perspective of the school, the opening of large classes is conducive to the unified management of students and the unified teaching of knowledge, at least in the teaching process, it covers the psychological problems of most students, and also solves the psychological contradictions of most students, but many details are not in place; From the micro perspective of individual students, although the opening of large classes solves the psychological problems and obstacles encountered by students in their daily lives, the specific situation of each person is very different, and the original intention of the mental health education course for vocational college students is to solve the psychological problems of each student as much as possible, and if the class size is too large, it will lose its meaning and cannot solve the fundamental problems in depth [16]. Constructivism believes that teachers, students, and the environment constitute a dynamic interactive system, in which the environment, as an external factor, greatly influences the process of knowledge construction, indicating the importance of a good teaching environment [17].

Classroom atmosphere is also an important factor affecting the teaching effect of mental health courses for vocational college students, so it is necessary to pay attention to creating a good classroom atmosphere in mental health courses. Rogers once said, "In a good environment, everyone has a positive attitude and a tendency to develop themselves." "If there is no good atmosphere, it is difficult for students to open their hearts due to the psychology of seeking advantages and avoiding disadvantages, so the mental health course should create an atmosphere of acceptance, trust and safety, and create a safe, warm and protected environment. Therefore, in the class, the emotional atmosphere becomes another "invisible psychological teacher", and the teacher should be good at inviting this "peer" to join him in class. In order to create a good classroom atmosphere, we must first achieve the "agreement" before class, such as "actively participate, listen carefully, express sincerely", "say good things, be kind, know how to keep secrets, and be good friends", so as to cultivate a collective standard and a safe atmosphere to a certain extent; Second, we must adhere to value neutrality, not make judgments at will, not casually label students, and do not impose our own values on students; Third, if there is a real need for value orientation, then positive guidance should also be given to students on the basis of accepting their values [18].

## 5. Conclusion

In today's society, with the deepening of education reform and the increase in the importance of students' all-round development, the importance of mental health courses in vocational colleges and universities is becoming increasingly prominent. Mental health is not only about students' personal growth and well-being, but also a cornerstone of their academic success and social resilience. Therefore, when constructing a mental health curriculum system, vocational colleges must ensure that they have a faculty with high professional quality and rich teaching experience. This team should be able to deeply understand the psychological characteristics of students, master effective psychological counseling skills, and be able to continuously update teaching concepts and methods according to the development of the times and the needs of students. The effectiveness and practicality of the teaching content is the key to the success of the mental health program. The content of the course should be closely related to the actual life

of vocational college students, covering multiple dimensions such as emotional management, stress coping, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, and career planning, aiming to help students establish a correct concept of mental health and improve their self-regulation ability. At the same time, the curriculum design should pay attention to the combination of theory and practice, and enhance the interactivity and participation of teaching through case analysis, role playing, group discussion and other forms, so as to effectively mobilize students' interest and enthusiasm in learning, so that they can learn and master mental health knowledge in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. In order to ensure that mental health courses can truly meet the needs of students, vocational colleges and universities need to fully consider the actual development of students in the curriculum design, including their age characteristics, professional background, future career planning and other factors. When developing a curriculum, sufficient market research and needs analysis should be conducted to ensure that the course content is both forward-looking and practical. In addition, reasonable class time arrangement is also a part that cannot be ignored, not only to ensure that students have enough time for in-depth study and practice, but also to avoid overburdening students due to overly intensive courses. A good teaching environment is an important guarantee for the effective implementation of mental health courses. Vocational colleges and universities should provide special teaching venues for mental health courses, ensure that classrooms are reasonably laid out, have a warm atmosphere, and are equipped with necessary teaching equipment and auxiliary materials, so as to create a comfortable and safe learning space for students. Such an environment helps students relax and focus more on the course content, which promotes the improvement of teaching effectiveness.

To sum up, vocational colleges should pay attention to the construction of teachers, the optimization of teaching content, the rationality of curriculum and the creation of teaching environment when opening mental health courses. Through these measures, it can not only effectively improve the mental health level of students, but also provide valuable practical experience and theoretical basis for in-depth research on the mental health courses of vocational college students and the formulation of more scientific and effective teaching strategies.

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