

Study on the Influence of Family of Origin on the Mental Health of Vocational College Students

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Abstract: This paper aims to explore the psychological impact of family of origin on vocational college students. Studying vocational college students revealed how factors such as family of origin environment, and education mode affect their psychological development, personality formation, and academic and career choices. This study found that the economic conditions of the native family, the educational level of parents, the family environment, and other factors have a significant impact on the psychological development of vocational students. Finally, based on Bandura's three-way interaction theory, the paper puts forward some suggestions on improving the family environment and optimizing family education and students' self-growth, so as to promote the mental health and all-round development of vocational students.

Keywords: Family of origin; Vocational college students; Influencing factors; Mental health; Ternary interaction theory

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1. Introduction

Family of origin refers to the family in which an individual is born and raised. The internal atmosphere of the family, living habits, economic conditions, the interaction between family members, etc., will affect the mental health of children^[1]. Satya, a famous American therapist, believes that a person is inextricably linked with his original family, which may affect his whole life.

The family of origin has an important impact on mental health as it is the initial social environment of a person^[2]. Mental health is directly related to the improvement of individual learning, life, and social adaptability. However, the research on the mental health of vocational college students mainly focuses on external factors such as academic pressure and employment competition, with less emphasis on the influence of the family of origin. As a result, the management and intervention of the psychological problems of vocational college students remain superficial as the role of the family in the psychological health of students is neglected^[3].

2. Factors affecting the mental health of vocational college students from the perspective of family of origin

The family of origin has a significant impact on one's physical and mental development. Like a melting pot,

it shapes our character and personality. In China, the family of origin heavily determines the path of one's personal growth, especially concerning the mental health development of vocational college students ^[4]. The impact of family of origin includes five aspects, as explained below.

2.1. Family relationship

Family relationships are particularly critical because they shape a student's ability to give and receive love. These bonds not only help individuals learn how to love but also provide emotional support. Healthy and stable family connections are seen as essential for developing good social skills and succeeding in one's career ^[5]. The bonds within a family play a big part in a person's mental health and ability to fit into society ^[6]. Without strong family ties, one may struggle to take care of themselves and others, which can affect their ideas about love and who they choose to marry. It is important to recognize the importance of family bonds and work to maintain and strengthen them to help individuals grow and keep society stable and harmonious.

2.2. Family education

Parents' methods and beliefs about education have a direct impact on children's development. Family education, as a significant component of the home environment, profoundly influences individuals' growth and maturation. The way parents educate their children unquestionably shapes their journey through life. In the context of vocational college students' development, the significance of the family education environment cannot be overstated ^[7]. In such an environment, children feel comfortable expressing their opinions, challenging conventions, and exploring new ideas. Through this exploration, they learn to think for themselves, moving beyond blind adherence to authority and making decisions based on their own judgment and understanding. Conversely, a negative or restrictive family environment can hinder children's growth and development.

2.3. Family financial status

The economic status of a family significantly influences the growth and development of individuals. This is because a family's financial situation directly impacts children's quality of life and access to educational opportunities. In families with higher economic stability, children benefit from better educational resources and exposure to a wider range of knowledge, enhancing their preparation for future careers. Conversely, children from economically disadvantaged families may face challenges due to financial constraints, experiencing heightened life pressures and limited access to educational resources. These circumstances can have adverse effects on their psychological development ^[8].

2.4. Family environment

The cultural atmosphere within a family is a crucial aspect that cannot be overlooked. A family rich in cultural heritage offers children a wealth of spiritual nourishment, fostering their aesthetic appreciation and humanistic values. Conversely, in a family lacking cultural exposure, children may struggle to access a diverse range of knowledge, impeding the development of their overall quality. Moreover, parents' level of education significantly impacts the mental health of vocational college students. Parenting styles and beliefs often reflect the educational background of parents. Those with higher education levels tend to possess a better understanding of their children's needs and are more adept at providing psychological support ^[9]. Conversely, parents with lower levels of education may exhibit overly strict or hands-off approaches to parenting, which can negatively affect their children's mental well-being.

2.5. Family values

Family values have a profound impact on the growth and education of children. Good family values can help children establish a correct outlook on life and values and promote the healthy growth of children. Moreover, family values contribute significantly to societal stability and harmony. However, negative or detrimental family values can hinder children's growth, such as an excessive focus on material wealth at the expense of education. Additionally, internal conflicts within families can have broader societal repercussions ^[10-11].

3. Strategies for improving the mental health of vocational college students from the perspective of family of origin

The family of origin significantly impacts the mental health of vocational college students. To enhance their mental well-being, it's crucial to recognize and understand the influence of factors such as family environment, social and economic status, education, and values ^[12]. The mental health of vocational college students is shaped by a combination of individual, family, and societal factors. Improving their mental health quality requires addressing both internal and external influences.

Bandura's ternary interaction theory holds that the interaction between individuals and the environment, other individuals, and themselves all play a role in shaping mental well-being. Therefore, students' mental health can be improved from the following three aspects ^[13].

3.1. Interaction between individuals and the environment

In Bandura's ternary interaction theory, the environment plays a crucial role in shaping individual behavior and psychology, and for vocational college students, this environment holds particular significance. A harmonious, stable, and supportive family and campus environment can contribute to the development of positive psychological traits among vocational students. For instance, when teachers and parents listen to students' problems and offer constructive feedback, students become better equipped to navigate the challenges they face in school. While there are factors beyond the control of students' home environments, schools can effectively influence the campus environment. Firstly, schools should provide psychological counseling services. As students progress through their academic journey, they encounter various pressures related to studies and daily life. Professional psychological counseling is essential during such times to help students adjust their mindset and find solutions to their problems. Psychological counseling services enable students to learn coping mechanisms and enhance their psychological resilience. For instance, schools can establish a psychological counseling service platform ("tree hole") where students can anonymously share their psychological issues related to studies, family, emotions, employment, and social matters. Trained psychological counselors can then provide professional and standardized responses tailored to each student's concerns. By analyzing the underlying causes of negative emotions and states, students gain a deeper understanding of the connection between themselves and their surroundings. Furthermore, counselors can devise individualized adjustment plans and strategies to help students independently manage their emotions and adapt to their environment's characteristics ^[14].

3.2. Interaction between individuals

Bandura's theory underscores the role of observational learning and imitation in shaping behavior, particularly relevant for vocational college students who are highly influenced by their peers and role models. Encouraging students to observe positive examples, such as outstanding seniors and societal figures, can help foster positive behavior. Schools can facilitate this by organizing activities like "experience-sharing meetings for seniors,"

enabling students to learn from others' experiences and adjust their mindset to cultivate positive psychological traits. Moreover, schools must prioritize guiding students to establish harmonious peer relationships and cultivate values like solidarity and mutual assistance, recognizing the significant impact of interpersonal relationships on mental health during the school years. By emphasizing these aspects, schools can create a supportive environment conducive to students' mental well-being and positive behavior. Schools can take several steps to promote friendship and understanding among students. Firstly, they can advocate for friendly interaction by organizing activities such as legal education and moral lectures to instill respect for others and adherence to social ethics, fostering good conduct. Simultaneously, through classroom education and campus culture initiatives, students can be guided to embrace kindness, mutual assistance, and cooperation. For instance, teachers can regularly conduct themed class meetings and campus lectures encompassing topics like rule of law education, moral education, and patriotic education. These sessions provide opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of various themes and establish correct values, life outlooks, and cultural perspectives. Through these efforts, schools can create an environment that promotes positive social interactions and cultivates a sense of unity among students. Another approach is to encourage peer counseling cooperation. Schools can promote cooperative learning, allowing students to learn from and assist each other in activities like classroom discussions and group assignments. This not only enhances students' teamwork skills but also improves emotional communication, fostering positive interpersonal relationships. For instance, teachers can establish "one-to-one" support groups, pairing outstanding students with underachievers based on their learning abilities and personality traits. This encourages outstanding students to guide underachievers in studying together, leveraging the peer education process for mutual communication, learning, and guidance.

Additionally, schools can organize collective activities on a regular basis, such as sports games and cultural festivals. These events provide students with opportunities to experience warmth and cultivate teamwork and a sense of collective honor. By participating in such activities, students strengthen their bonds and develop healthy interpersonal relationships.

3.3. Interaction between individuals and themselves

In the ternary interaction theory, the individual serves as the link between behavior and environment. For vocational college students in adolescence, enhancing their psychological well-being hinges on improving self-awareness and self-regulation abilities. Schools can establish additional psychological education classes, such as OH Cards self-healing sessions, to aid students in understanding their emotions, needs, and potential, thereby bolstering their self-awareness and self-management skills. Teaching students effective learning and life management strategies, including goal-setting, plan execution, time management, and emotional regulation, also contributes to developing self-management abilities ^[15]. Positive interactions between individuals and themselves foster self-perception development. Through introspection and self-observation, students gain insight into their emotions, needs, and strengths, leading to enhanced self-perception levels. This, in turn, enables students to better navigate academic and personal challenges, boosting self-confidence and self-image.

4. Conclusion

Bandura's ternary interaction theory provides a useful framework for improving students' mental health quality. Schools can help students establish a positive and healthy mental state and achieve all-round development by focusing on the interactions between individuals and their environment, individuals and themselves, providing resources and support, cultivating good interpersonal relationships, and promoting self-awareness and self-management abilities.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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