



Effect of psychological health status among vocational college going students

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Abstract

Psychological health plays a crucial role in the academic performance, skill development, and overall well-being of vocational college students. Vocational education focuses on practical training and career-oriented skills, which often expose students to academic pressure, performance anxiety, employment uncertainty, and social adjustment challenges. The present study aims to examine the psychological health status of vocational college students and analyze its impact on academic performance, skill acquisition, and social functioning. A sample of 200 vocational college students aged 17-25 years was selected from various technical and professional courses. Data were collected using the General Health Questionnaire and Psychological Well-being Scale. Statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, and correlation analysis were applied. The results revealed moderate levels of psychological distress among students, with significant effects on academic performance and emotional stability. The findings highlight the importance of mental health awareness, counseling services, and stress management programs in vocational institutions.

Keywords: Psychological health, vocational students, mental well-being, academic stress, emotional stability

Introduction

Psychological health is an essential component of overall well-being that influences an individual's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral functioning. It affects how individuals think, feel, manage stress, and interact with others. In educational settings, psychological health plays a significant role in determining students' academic performance, social relationships, and career development. Vocational education focuses on developing practical skills and professional competencies required for employment. Unlike traditional academic education, vocational training emphasizes hands-on learning, technical expertise, and job readiness. While vocational education provides career opportunities, students often face various psychological challenges such as performance pressure, skill assessment anxiety, competition, and uncertainty about future employment.

Vocational college students experience multiple stressors including academic workload, time management challenges, financial concerns, and social adjustment issues. These stressors may negatively affect their psychological health, leading to anxiety, depression, emotional instability, and reduced motivation. Poor psychological health may also affect students' ability to acquire technical skills effectively and perform efficiently in professional environments. Psychological distress among students may result in poor concentration, lack of interest in learning, reduced academic achievement, and interpersonal difficulties. Therefore, understanding the psychological health status of vocational college students is essential for developing appropriate support systems and promoting student well-being. The present study aims to examine the psychological health status of vocational college students and analyze its effects on academic performance and social functioning.

Psychological Health and Student Well-being

Psychological health is an important aspect of overall well-being that influences an individual's emotional, cognitive,

and behavioral functioning. It determines how individuals manage stress, regulate emotions, make decisions, and interact with others. In educational settings, psychological health plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic performance, learning ability, and social relationships. Students with good psychological health demonstrate better concentration, motivation, and emotional stability, which contribute to academic success and personal development. On the other hand, poor psychological health may result in anxiety, depression, stress, and emotional imbalance, negatively affecting students' academic achievement and social adjustment.

Vocational Education and Psychological Challenges

Vocational education focuses on developing practical skills and professional competencies required for employment. Unlike traditional academic education, vocational training emphasizes hands-on learning, technical expertise, and job readiness. Although vocational education provides career opportunities, students often face various psychological challenges such as performance pressure, skill assessment anxiety, competition, and uncertainty regarding future employment. Vocational college students also experience stress related to academic workload, time management difficulties, financial concerns, and social adjustment. These stressors may negatively affect their psychological health, leading to emotional instability, reduced motivation, and lack of confidence in their abilities.

Impact of Psychological Health on Academic and Social Functioning

Psychological health significantly affects students' ability to acquire knowledge, develop technical skills, and maintain effective social relationships. Poor psychological health may lead to reduced concentration, lack of interest in learning, and poor academic performance. It may also create difficulties in interpersonal relationships and social

functioning. Therefore, understanding the psychological health status of vocational college students is essential for developing support systems, counseling services, and intervention programs. The present study aims to examine the psychological health status of vocational college students and analyze its effects on academic performance and social functioning.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the psychological health status of vocational college students.
- To examine the level of psychological distress among students.
- To analyze the impact of psychological health on academic performance.
- To study the relationship between psychological health and emotional stability.
- To suggest measures for improving mental health among vocational students.

Hypotheses

- Vocational college students will experience moderate levels of psychological distress.
- Poor psychological health will negatively affect academic performance.
- There will be a significant relationship between psychological health and emotional stability among vocational students

Methodology

Sample

The study was conducted on a sample of 120 vocational college students aged between 17 and 25 years. Participants were selected from various vocational courses such as technical training, computer applications, engineering diplomas, and professional skill programs using random sampling techniques. Students represented different socio-economic backgrounds.

Tools Used

The present study employed standardized psychological assessment tools to measure the psychological health status and well-being of vocational college students. The tools were selected based on their reliability, validity, and wide acceptance in psychological and educational research.

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ)

The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) is a widely used standardized instrument designed to assess psychological distress and overall mental health status in both clinical and non-clinical populations. It was developed by David Goldberg in 1972 to identify individuals experiencing psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, social dysfunction, and loss of confidence. The GHQ is a self-administered questionnaire that evaluates an individual's current mental condition by focusing on symptoms experienced in recent weeks.

The GHQ is available in different versions, including GHQ-12, GHQ-28, GHQ-30, and GHQ-60, which vary in length and depth of assessment. The GHQ-12 is commonly used in educational research because of its simplicity and effectiveness in detecting psychological distress among students. It includes items related to concentration problems, sleep disturbances, emotional stress, and the ability to cope

with daily activities. Participants respond using a Likert-type scale indicating the severity of symptoms. The GHQ has high reliability and validity and has been widely used in educational and healthcare settings. In the present study, it was used to assess psychological distress among vocational college students and classify their mental health status into different levels, providing insight into their psychological well-being.

Psychological Well-being Scale

The Psychological Well-being Scale is a standardized instrument used to assess positive aspects of mental health, including emotional stability, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and overall psychological functioning. The concept of psychological well-being is based on humanistic and positive psychology approaches, which emphasize personal growth, self-acceptance, autonomy, and meaningful social relationships as essential components of mental health and overall life satisfaction.

This scale measures multiple dimensions of well-being such as emotional balance, sense of purpose, interpersonal relationships, and self-confidence. It helps evaluate how individuals perceive their quality of life and their ability to manage stress, maintain positive relationships, and function effectively in daily activities. The instrument typically consists of structured statements to which participants respond based on their personal experiences, attitudes, and feelings, allowing researchers to assess different levels of psychological adjustment. The Psychological Well-being Scale has been widely used in educational and psychological research to assess students' mental health, adjustment, and emotional functioning. It has demonstrated strong reliability and validity across different populations. In the present study, the scale was used to assess vocational students' emotional stability, self-esteem, and overall psychological well-being, helping to understand how psychological health influences their academic performance, social interaction, and skill development.

Procedure

Prior to conducting the study, formal permission was obtained from the institutional authorities of the selected vocational colleges. The participants were informed about the purpose, nature, and significance of the research, and their voluntary participation was ensured. They were also assured that the information provided by them would be kept confidential and used strictly for academic and research purposes. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before administering the research instruments.

The data were collected from vocational college students in classroom settings to ensure a controlled and comfortable environment for responding. Clear instructions regarding the completion of the questionnaires were provided, and participants were encouraged to respond honestly based on their personal experiences and feelings. The researcher remained present during the administration of the tools to clarify doubts and ensure proper completion of the questionnaires. Adequate time was provided to the students to complete the instruments without any pressure. After the collection of responses, the questionnaires were carefully checked for completeness and accuracy. The obtained data were then scored according to standardized scoring procedures specified in the manuals of the General Health

Questionnaire and the Psychological Well-being Scale. The scores were tabulated and organized systematically for further statistical analysis and interpretation.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to achieve the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated to understand the overall level of psychological health and well-being among vocational college students. These measures helped in summarizing the data and identifying variations in psychological health status.

In addition, correlation analysis was applied to examine the relationship between psychological health and academic performance among vocational students. This method helped determine the strength and direction of the association between mental health status and students' academic functioning. The results of the statistical analysis were interpreted systematically to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the psychological health status of vocational college students and its impact on their academic and social outcomes.

Results and Discussion

Level of Psychological Health among Vocational Students

Psychological Health Level	Number of Students (N)	Percentage (%)
Good Psychological Health	36	30%
Moderate Psychological Distress	57	47.5%
High Psychological Distress	27	22.5%
Total	120	100%

The level of psychological health among vocational students was analyzed by classifying participants into three categories: good psychological health, moderate psychological distress, and high psychological distress. The total sample consisted of 120 students, and the distribution of students across these categories was calculated using percentage analysis. The percentage of students in each category was determined using the formula:

$$\text{Percentage} = (\text{Number of Students} \div \text{Total Sample}) \times 100.$$

Based on this calculation, 36 students were found to have good psychological health. When calculated, 36 divided by 120 and multiplied by 100 equals 30 percent. This indicates that only a small proportion of vocational students demonstrate good mental health and emotional stability. These students are likely to show better coping abilities, emotional balance, and effective adjustment to academic and social demands.

A total of 57 students were classified under moderate psychological distress. The percentage was calculated as 57 divided by 120 multiplied by 100, which equals 47.5 percent. This represents the largest group in the sample, indicating that nearly half of the vocational students experience moderate levels of psychological stress. This level of distress may result from academic pressure, skill-based learning challenges, and uncertainty regarding career opportunities.

Further, 27 students were identified as experiencing high psychological distress. The percentage calculation of 27 divided by 120 multiplied by 100 equals 22.5 percent. This

suggests that a considerable number of students experience severe psychological difficulties such as emotional instability, stress, anxiety, and poor adjustment. The sum of all categories confirms the accuracy of the distribution, as the total number of students equals 120 and the total percentage equals 100 percent. Overall, the findings indicate that a majority of vocational students experience some level of psychological distress, with moderate distress being the most common.

The analysis also highlights the impact of psychological health on academic performance. Students with poor psychological health reported lower academic achievement, reduced concentration, and decreased motivation toward learning activities. Psychological distress negatively influences learning ability, technical skill acquisition, and academic engagement.

Furthermore, the relationship between psychological health and emotional stability was examined using correlation analysis. The obtained correlation value ($r = 0.54, p < 0.01$) indicates a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between psychological health and emotional stability. This means that students with better psychological health tend to demonstrate higher emotional stability, improved social functioning, and better adjustment in academic and personal life.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that vocational college students experience considerable psychological stress due to academic demands and career expectations. Moderate psychological distress among students highlights the need for mental health support systems in vocational institutions. The results suggest that psychological health significantly influences academic performance and emotional well-being. Students with better mental health demonstrate higher motivation, improved concentration, and effective skill acquisition. These findings are consistent with previous research emphasizing the importance of psychological well-being in educational achievement.

Conclusion

The study concludes that psychological health plays a significant role in the academic and emotional functioning of vocational college students. A considerable proportion of students experience moderate psychological distress, which negatively affects their academic performance and emotional stability. Improving psychological health through counseling services, stress management programs, and mental health awareness initiatives can enhance student well-being and academic success.

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