Implementation of the Special Action Plan in Liuzhou City Vocational College: Basis for Action Plan

Haoqing Xia[1], Santos Ruth Ann[2]

[1]*Liuzhou City Vocational College, China*
[2]*Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Cabanatuan City Nueva Ecija, Philippines*

xiahaoqing@126.com, ruthanngsantos@neust.edu.ph

Abstract. This study investigates the implementation of the Special Action Plan aimed at enhancing mental health education in Liuzhou City Vocational College (LCVC). Through a descriptive-quantitative analysis, the thesis contributes to the broader discourse on mental health in education, offering insights for policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals. By analyzing the effectiveness of mental health curriculum, consulting services, peer support, collaboration mechanisms, and the psychological talents team, the study assesses the plan's impact on students' mental well-being and educational outcomes. Challenges such as facilities and technology, educational resources, consulting services, awareness, and student engagement are also examined. The research proposes actionable strategies to address identified gaps, aiming to foster a supportive environment that enhances students' mental health and academic success. The overall assessment of LCVC's mental health education strategy shows a mix of positive feedback and identified areas for improvement. Students appreciate the current curriculum, consulting services, and peer support programs for their accessibility, effectiveness, and positive impact on mental health awareness. However, there's a consensus on the need for more diverse courses, broader consulting services, and enhanced resources for peer support. Despite these strengths, there are significant concerns regarding the adequacy of mental health support infrastructure, with calls for improved accessibility, engagement, and diversity of resources. The gap between student expectations and the college's efforts underscore the necessity for a more comprehensive approach to mental health education and support.

Keywords: mental health; policy implementation; challenges; educational resources; mental health education

1. Introduction

Mental health is a fundamental aspect of personal and professional development, particularly as cases of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues continue to rise among students worldwide. This growing concern has prompted governments and institutions to address mental health in education proactively. In response, the Ministry of Education, alongside 16 other departments, introduced the *Special Action Plan for Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Mental Health Education for Students (2023–2025)*. This plan seeks to integrate mental health education into educational

curricula, train educators and staff, provide counseling services, and develop policies to support students with mental health conditions.

Vocational colleges, such as Liuzhou City Vocational College (LCVC), play a crucial role in shaping the future workforce, making student mental well-being an essential component of educational success. Unlike traditional academic institutions, vocational colleges prepare students for direct entry into the workforce, where mental health challenges can significantly impact their productivity, performance, and career growth. Therefore, ensuring robust mental health education and support systems in these institutions is paramount.

This study investigates the implementation of the *Special Action Plan* at LCVC, with a specific focus on emotional management among students. It looks at how mental health education is going now, finds policy implementation gaps, and makes suggestions that can be put into action that are specific to vocational education. The importance of this research is underscored by existing literature that highlights the significant influence of mental health on academic performance, career readiness, and overall student satisfaction. For example, research by Abelson et al. (2022) and Chen et al. (2023) shows strong links between emotional stability, academic success, and the mental health landscape after the pandemic. Furthermore, research indicates that vocational colleges face unique challenges, including insufficient resources, limited mental health facilities, and a lack of trained professionals.

By addressing these challenges, this study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on mental health education in vocational colleges. It emphasizes the need for curriculum integration, teacher training, peer mentoring, and collaboration between vocational colleges and external mental health experts. Additionally, the study advocates for leveraging technology and regular policy evaluations to create adaptive and effective mental health interventions. The study aims to better understand and use mental health education in vocational colleges, which will lead to healthier and more supportive learning environments in the long run.

2. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to examine students' perceptions of mental health. Data were collected using self-constructed questionnaires administered to students across various academic levels. Statistical techniques were utilized to analyze the data, enabling the identification of key challenges and potential solutions related to mental health in educational settings. The results give us important information about how students feel, which can help us create more effective programs and services for mental health, such as counseling services, peer support groups, and ways for students to work together. The study's results also enhance mental health policies and initiatives, promote a supportive academic environment, and foster student well-being.

THE QUEST Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development

2.1. Sampling Procedure

The study used a survey questionnaire to explore the current status and challenges of the Special Action Plan. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: the current status of areas implementing the plan and the encountered challenges. The questionnaire underwent review by experts, advisers, panel members, and statisticians to ensure content validity. The experts' qualifications were crucial, as they had academic qualifications, practical experience, and cultural awareness relevant to the study's focus. Pilot testing was conducted to establish reliability, with a small sample selected for a preliminary investigation. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the instrument's reliability. The results showed acceptable to good internal consistency in the current status of areas implementing the Special Action Plan and encountered challenges. Adjustments were made to improve the questionnaire's validity. The validity of the instruments was established through a content review of experts in Mental Education, and the reliability was established through a pilot study involving 30 respondents.

2.2. Respondents

The research involved 372 individuals, including freshmen, sophomores, and graduates, as respondents. These participants provided insights into various aspects, such as providing mental health curriculum, offering mental consulting services, implementing peer support, optimizing mental health collaboration mechanisms, and enhancing the psychological talents team. The specific focus of the research was on the then-current status and challenges under the implementation of the Special Action Plan.

2.2.1 Research Site

The study was conducted in Liuzhou, located in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southern China. Liuzhou's picturesque landscapes, cultural heritage, and economic significance made it a fitting locale for exploring the implementation of mental health policies.

Table 1 Distribution of the Respondents

Respondents	Total No. Of Population	%	No. Of Sample
Students in year level 1	1500	28.30	105
Students in year level 2	1800	33.96	126
Students in year level 3	2000	37.74	140
TOTAL	**5300**	**100.00**	**372**

The survey, involving 372 students from various academic years, provided valuable insights into student demographics and educational program tailoring. The inclusive stratified random sampling strategy ensured accurate representation and reduced bias, generating nuanced findings.
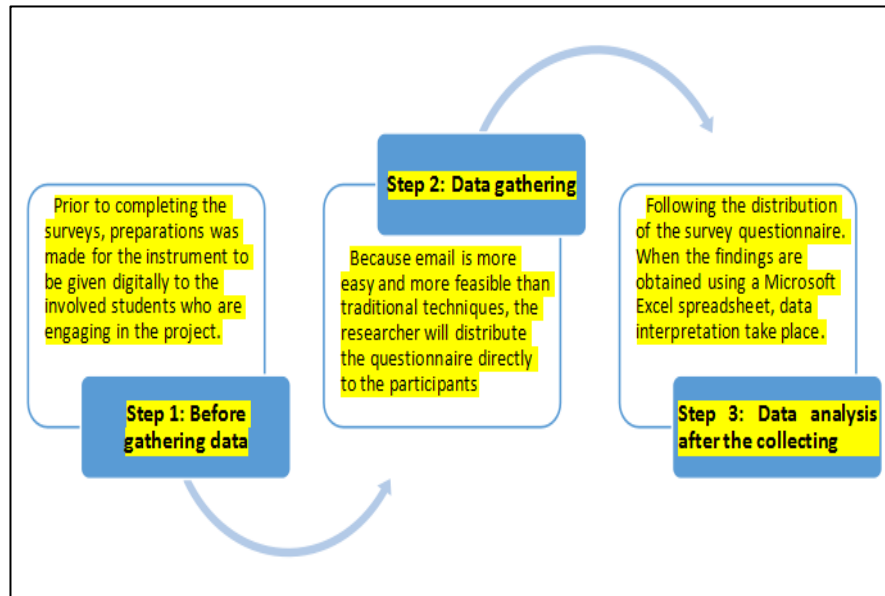
Figure 1 Data Gathering Procedure Flowchart

The study used SPSS to compile, organize, and process data using percentage frequency, mean, 4-Likert scale, and survey questionnaires. Perceptions were determined through strongly agreeing or disagreeing statements, and the researcher used verbal interpretation.

3. Results and Discussion

Implementation Areas of the Special Action Plan

3.1.2 Mental Health Curriculum

The study found that the overall attitude toward the mental health curriculum at LCVC, as indicated by a calculated mean of 3.42, is categorized as "Highly Implemented." This result reflects the curriculum's successful integration and positive impact, with students strongly agreeing on its importance within their education.

3.1.3 Offering Consulting Services

The result shows a positive consensus on mental health consulting services at LCVC, with a mean score of 3.24. However, there is a gap between awareness and engagement. The results align with a 2019 review indicating that school-based interventions can improve emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes.

3.1.3 Peer Support

The study found moderate agreement among respondents about the contribution of peer support programs to a college's mental health ecosystem. However, there is room for improvement in promoting these programs and enhancing training and resources for peer supporters. Peer support is essential for recovery and empowerment among individuals facing mental health challenges. Still, its effectiveness depends on the training and integrating these programs into the institution's mental health resources.

3.1.4 Optimizing Collaboration Mechanism

The mean score of 3.35 indicates strong agreement among respondents on the effectiveness and satisfaction with LCVC's collaborative implementation of mental health policy. This "Highly Implemented" rating reflects recognition and appreciation for departmental efforts to improve student mental health outcomes. Consistent with findings by Woodbridge et al. (2015) and Weist et al. (2012), collaboration leads to better health services, outcomes, and access. Key success factors include clear communication, shared goals, trust, resources, and supportive policies. Collaboration is an effective strategy for enhancing mental health care and providing students with improved support and experiences.

3.1.4 Enhancing Psychological Talents Team

A mean score of 3.34 reflects strong agreement on the effectiveness of LCVC's mental health teachers and the successful integration of mental health education. Aligned with Li et al. (2022), the findings underscore the importance of qualified professionals in addressing student needs. Initiatives like workshops and awareness campaigns further equip students with vital mental health knowledge. Sustained investment in these educators is crucial for enhancing LCVC's mental health services.

The encountered challenges of the implementation of the Special Action Plan

3.2.1 Facilities and Technology

A mean score of 2.49, rated as "Slightly Challenging," reflects a positive view of LCVC's mental health facilities and technology while highlighting the need for improvement. Leveraging digital tools and student feedback is essential to better align resources with student needs and ensure ongoing effectiveness.

3.2.2 Education Resources

A mean score of 2.41, rated as "Slightly Challenging," indicates LCVC's mental health resources are adequate but could benefit from greater diversity, accessibility, and

engagement. Aligning with Zhao (2022), the study highlights the need for continuous updates and student involvement to enhance resource effectiveness.

3.2.3 Counselling Service

The mean score of 2.50 for LCVC's counseling services indicates satisfaction, but acknowledges areas for improvement. Research emphasizes accessibility and effectiveness in encouraging diverse student seeking help, strengthening the college's mental health support system.

3.2.4 Awareness

The mean score of 2.40 suggests general satisfaction with the college's mental health awareness efforts, but highlights areas for improvement. Research, including Salerno (2016), emphasizes the importance of mental health literacy. Despite current initiatives, there's a gap in their effectiveness, requiring more engaging campaigns and better communication to strengthen mental health awareness.

3.2.5 Student Engagement

The mean score of 2.40 suggests general satisfaction with the college's mental health awareness efforts but highlights areas for improvement. Research, including Salerno (2016), emphasizes the importance of mental health literacy. Despite current initiatives, there's a gap in their effectiveness, requiring more engaging campaigns and better communication to strengthen mental health awareness.

4. Conclusions

Students at LCVC generally have a favorable view of mental health education, counseling services, peer support, and the psychological talents team. However, there is an apparent demand for more diverse offerings and expanded services to meet students' needs better. The study also shows that people are unhappy with how well mental health infrastructure works, highlighting the need for better accessibility, effectiveness, and a wider range of educational materials and institutional support. In response, the action plan lays out a complete plan to improve LCVC's mental health services, focusing on integrating them into schools, making them easier to access, getting help from the community, working together, and having expert teams. This shows a strong dedication to making mental health outcomes better for students.

Acknowledgements

References

Abelson, S., Lipson, S. K., & Eisenberg, D. (2022). Mental health in college populations: A multidisciplinary review of what works, evidence gaps, and paths forward. Higher

Education: Handbook of Theory and Research. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 133-238.

Chen, Y. N. (2023). The Relationship Between Personality Traits, Emotional Stability and Mental Health in Art Vocational and Technical College Students During Epidemic Prevention and Control. Psychology Research and Behavior Management, 2857-2867.

Christian, D. D., & Brown, C. L. (2018). Recommendations for the role and responsibilities of school-based mental health counselors. Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy and Evaluation, 1(1), 26-39.

Dahlan, R., Abd Ghani, M. N., Yahaya, R., & Tuan Hadi, T. S. (2018). Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Terengganu, Malaysia: milestones so far and the paths to the future. London journal of primary care, 10(4), 113–117. https://doi.org/10.1080/17571472.2018.1484318

Eisenberg, D., Lipson, S. K., & Ceglarek, P. (2019). Promoting student mental health and well-being on college campuses. Harvard Review of Psychiatry, 27(5), 313-326.

Ellison, M. L., Huckabee, S. S., Stone, R. A., Sabella, K., & Mullen, M. G. (2019). Career services for young adults with serious mental health conditions: Innovations in the field. The Journal of Behavioral Health Services & Research, 46, 1-14.

Fikry, P. M. (2024). Mental health in selected MENA countries during COVID-19: an empirical investigation. Review of Economics and Political Science.

Han, Y. (2022). Application of computer digital technology and group psychological counseling in higher vocational education mental health education curriculum under a complex network environment. Mathematical Problems in Engineering, 2022.

Hartley, M. T., & Bell, L. (2020). A pilot study evaluating a mental health first aid training program for nurse faculty. Nurse Educator, 45(1), 12-16.

Harper, J., Baker, S., & Collins, D. (2020). Evaluating the effectiveness of mental health programs in vocational colleges: A longitudinal study. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 57(1), 84-98.

Jap, T., & Tiatri, S. (2024). Cross-disciplinary curricula in Bachelor of Information Systems education: a case study in Indonesia. In Teaching Information Systems (pp. 68-86). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Li, S., Sheng, Y., & Jing, Y. (2022). How Social Support Impact Teachers' Mental Health Literacy: A Chain Mediation Model. Frontiers in psychology, 13, 851332. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.851332.

Lyon, A. R., & Bruns, E. J. (2019). From evidence to impact: Joining our best school mental health practices with our best implementation strategies. School mental health, 11, 106-114.

Ma, Q., Gallo, J. J., Parisi, J. M., & Joo, J. H. (2022). Development of the Mental Health Peer Support Questionnaire in colleges and vocational schools in Singapore. International Journal of Mental Health Systems, 16(1), 45.

Ma, Z. (2021, September). Mental health education of freshmen in higher vocational colleges under information technology. In 2021 4th International Conference on Information Systems and Computer Aided Education (pp. 701-705).

Prince, J. P. (2015). University student counseling and mental health in the United States: Trends and challenges. Mental Health & Prevention, 3(1-2), 5-10.

Seppälä, E. M., Bradley, C., Moeller, J., Harouni, L., Nandamudi, D., & Brackett, M. A. (2020). Promoting Mental Health and Psychological Thriving in University Students: A Randomized Controlled Trial of Three Well-Being Interventions. Frontiers in psychiatry, 11, 590. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2020.00590

Shao, S., & Jen, T. H. (2023). Research on Innovative Internships and Teaching Modes in Vocational Colleges Based on Mental Health Theory. Eurasian

Wyatt, T. J., Oswalt, S. B., & Ochoa, Y. (2017). Mental Health and Academic Performance of First-Year College Students. International Journal of Higher Education, 6(3), 178-187.

Yang, L. (2022). Research on Strategies of Promoting Mental Health of Higher Vocational College Students Based on Data Mining. Wireless Communications and Mobile Computing, 2022.

Zhu, X. (2023). Research on the Causes and Countermeasures of Mental Health of Students with Financial Difficulties in Higher Vocational Colleges. International Journal of Vocational and Technical Education, 3(3), 85.

Zhao J. (2022). Integrating Mental Health Education into French Teaching in University Based on Artificial Intelligence Technology. Journal of environmental and public health, 2022, 1046813. https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/1046813