

A Practical Study of Experiential Teaching Mode in Psychological Education Courses for College Students

Yuan Liang, Wenjuan Gao*

Hengxing University, Qingdao, Shandong, China

**Corresponding author: gao_wenjuan2005@163.com*

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Abstract: The experiential teaching model is a student-centered pedagogical approach that achieves learning objectives through active participation and immersive experiences. In the context of practical courses on psychological education for university students, this model has proven effective in enhancing students' motivation to learn and their self-awareness. Experiential teaching transcends mere knowledge transmission, placing significant emphasis on the emotional experiences, hands-on activities, and profound reflections that students encounter during the learning process. Its essence lies in facilitating a deep understanding of psychological theories and an awareness of one's mental state through authentic experience. This article will explore the current state of the experiential teaching model within university psychological education, detailing specific strategies and the challenges it faces. The research findings indicate that experiential teaching can enhance students' psychological resilience and social adaptability; however, it must contend with issues such as low student engagement and the difficulties associated with the evolution of the instructor's role. Therefore, the effective design and implementation of the experiential teaching model, to maximize its efficacy in psychological education, emerges as an urgent issue to address.

1. Introduction

As society evolves, mental health issues among the student population increasingly come to the fore. Traditional psychological education models often emphasize the transmission of theoretical knowledge, neglecting students' real-life experiences and emotional engagement, resulting in subpar educational outcomes. The introduction of experiential teaching methodologies offers a fresh perspective and innovative approach to psychological education. This model centers on students' active participation and experiential learning, aiming to foster a profound understanding of psychological concepts and an awareness of their own mental states through interaction and hands-on activities. In this pedagogical framework, students transition from passive recipients of knowledge to proactive participants and experiencers, thus significantly enhancing their intrinsic motivation and interest in learning. Experiential teaching emphasizes emotional engagement and reflection throughout the educational process, enabling students to learn how to address various psychological challenges within authentic contexts, thereby improving their psychological

resilience and social adaptability. This approach not only enriches the content and form of psychological education but also provides educators with an effective teaching strategy, thereby augmenting both the effectiveness and appeal of their instruction. Consequently, investigating how to effectively implement experiential teaching methodologies in university-level psychological education holds substantial practical significance and theoretical value.

2. Theoretical Basis of Experiential Teaching Model

2.1. Definition and characteristics of experiential teaching

Experiential learning is a student-centered educational approach that facilitates the acquisition of knowledge and skills through active participation and immersive experiences in authentic contexts. Its fundamental principle lies in fostering a profound understanding and internalization of the subject matter through hands-on practice and interaction. This teaching model transcends the traditional teacher-dominated paradigm focused on the mere transmission of knowledge, emphasizing the significance of direct experience and reflection throughout the learning process. The hallmark of experiential learning is its pronounced emphasis on participation and interaction. Students are not merely passive recipients of information but are instead inquirers and constructors of knowledge [1]. Throughout this process, they engage dynamically in various activities such as role-playing, group discussions, and situational simulations. The amalgamation of emotional engagement and cognitive involvement renders learning more personalized and relevant, thereby nurturing students' innovative thinking and problem-solving capabilities. Moreover, this educational approach underscores the critical importance of reflection. By contemplating their experiences, students can evaluate and adjust their perceptions and behaviors, thus achieving a deeper level of understanding. In the realm of psychological education for university students, experiential learning proves particularly beneficial, as it provides rich contexts for students to engage with and comprehend complex psychological phenomena in either real or simulated environments, thereby enhancing self-awareness and psychological resilience [2].

2.2. Relationship between experiential teaching and psychoeducation

Experiential learning and psychological education exhibit an intrinsic compatibility, characterized by a profound synergy in their educational objectives and implementation methodologies. Psychological education aims to assist students in comprehending psychological principles while enhancing their psychological resilience and emotional regulation skills. Experiential learning, through hands-on participation and emotional engagement, renders this process not only more vibrant but also considerably more effective. Within the realm of psychological education, experiential teaching methodologies furnish students with an array of practical activities and authentic scenarios, such as role-playing and situational simulations, allowing them to perceive and grasp psychological phenomena through actual practice. This approach not only facilitates the acquisition of theoretical knowledge but also fosters self-awareness, emotional expression, and psychological adjustment within contextual frameworks. Through this methodology, students can attain a deeper understanding of themselves and others, enhancing their empathetic abilities and social adaptability, thereby genuinely achieving the multifaceted goals of psychological education. Moreover, experiential learning emphasizes active engagement from learners, which harmoniously aligns with the requirements of individual participation, self-exploration, and autonomous reflection found in psychological education. Through this model, students engage in a continuous process of reflection and feedback, enabling them to adjust and elevate their mental states comprehensively, thus promoting a well-rounded development of their

psychological attributes. Consequently, experiential learning provides a more immersive and effective pedagogical pathway for psychological education, significantly enhancing educational outcomes and supporting students' mental well-being [3].

3. Challenges of implementing experiential teaching mode

3.1. Students' resistance and lack of participation

During the implementation of experiential teaching methods, the prevalent and intricate issue of student resistance and low engagement poses significant challenges. Many university students are accustomed to traditional rote learning; they favor clear, direct knowledge transmission and are often reluctant to embrace innovative pedagogical approaches. Experiential learning necessitates deep involvement and active interaction from students, which can manifest as a psychological burden, potentially triggering resistance. The roots of this resistance may lie in students' unfamiliarity and mistrust of experiential education, leading to concerns about their performance and the fear of exposing their inadequacies in front of peers. Simultaneously, some students may perceive these activities as irrelevant to formal learning, dismissing them as mere "games," which discourages them from investing time and effort. Moreover, it is essential to recognize that experiential teaching often entails emotional engagement and self-reflection, presenting additional challenges for more introverted or less confident students. The lack of engagement may also be attributed to insufficiently designed content and format. If experiential activities fail to connect meaningfully with students' actual needs and interests, or if the teaching context lacks appeal, students are unlikely to benefit, thus diminishing their enthusiasm for participation. Additionally, the dynamics of large class settings may lead students to feel that their contributions are insignificant, further dampening their motivation. These interconnected factors render student resistance and low engagement major challenges that must be addressed in the promotion of experiential learning within the realm of psychological education for university students [4].

3.2. Teachers' lack of mastery of the new teaching mode

The insufficient mastery of experiential teaching methods by educators presents a significant challenge during its implementation. Many teachers have undergone years of training and practice within traditional teaching frameworks; however, they often lack adequate experience and theoretical backing for this interactive and flexible approach. Some educators may feel unfamiliarity and apprehension towards this novel pedagogical method, rendering them unable to integrate it effectively into curriculum design and classroom management. This inadequate command can lead to several issues. Firstly, teachers may struggle to design experiential activities that possess sufficient allure and educational value, resulting in suboptimal teaching outcomes. Secondly, during the execution of lessons, if educators fail to respond promptly to student feedback and unforeseen circumstances, maintaining a fluid and positive classroom atmosphere becomes notably challenging [5]. In the exploration and reflection phases, instructors must possess the ability to guide students in profound contemplation and self-awareness, a task that proves considerable difficulty for those accustomed to traditional lecturing. Furthermore, the educators' attitudes significantly influence student engagement and enthusiasm; if teachers display a lack of confidence in, or express resistance to, experiential teaching, students are likely to feel perplexed and uneasy. Consequently, the inadequate grasp of experiential teaching methods by educators transcends mere technical issues; it also involves a transformation in educational philosophy and the enhancement of personal capabilities. This challenge directly impacts the effectiveness of experiential teaching and the learning experiences of students, necessitating urgent attention and resolution within educational

training and teacher development programs.

4. Specific application measures of experiential teaching in psychoeducation programs

4.1. Design and adjustment of teaching content

The design and adjustment of instructional content in psychological education courses is pivotal for the successful implementation of experiential teaching. In this process, the integration of psychological knowledge with practical experiences enhances the efficacy of the curriculum, allowing students to gain a more profound understanding of theoretical concepts through active participation. For instance, classical psychological theories such as Freud's defense mechanisms or Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be presented through techniques such as role-playing and situational simulations. This approach not only renders abstract theories more tangible but also encourages students to internalize this knowledge through active engagement. This experiential learning method aids students in perceiving the genuine existence and complexity of psychological phenomena through firsthand experiences, thereby fostering a more proactive attitude towards self-reflection and psychological adjustment. For example, while studying cognitive-behavioral therapy, simulating real counseling scenarios where students assume the roles of both therapist and client can significantly enhance their understanding and application of this psychological intervention method. Such designs not only facilitate learning through enjoyable interactions but also effectively augment the interactivity and engagement of the teaching process. Concurrently, the incorporation of real-life cases to bolster practicality constitutes a crucial aspect of content design in teaching. Authentic examples from everyday life allow students to connect more closely with reality, appreciating the practical value of psychological knowledge. For instance, when discussing anxiety and stress management, analyzing typical real-life cases or inviting actual participants to share their experiences enables students to visualize the application of psychological theories in their daily lives. This methodology not only enriches the authenticity and practicality of the curriculum but also helps students forge connections between theory and reality, thereby enhancing their social adaptability and psychological well-being. In summary, the design and adjustment of teaching content aim to merge experiential learning with real-world contexts, enabling students to acquire solid psychological knowledge that can be applied in practical life scenarios [6].

4.2. Diversified teaching activity design

The design of diverse teaching activities serves as the cornerstone of a successful experiential teaching model. Through a myriad of engaging activities, it effectively stimulates students' interest in learning and enhances their participation. In group discussions and collaborative learning, students engage in mutual communication and cooperation, sharing perspectives and resources on specific psychological topics. This not only facilitates a deeper understanding of knowledge but also cultivates teamwork and communication skills. For instance, when exploring the multifaceted factors of mental health, students can be divided into groups, each responsible for different dimensions such as physiological, psychological, and social factors, ultimately integrating their discussions into a comprehensive understanding. Such an approach encourages active participation and autonomous learning, elevating the dynamism of the classroom. Role-playing and situational simulations are pivotal tools within experiential teaching. By recreating real-life scenarios, students can immerse themselves in the process of embodying different roles, thereby deepening their comprehension of psychological principles. For example, when learning about conflict resolution and interpersonal relationships, students can simulate various conflict situations, taking on the roles of opposing parties to experience and explore different coping strategies. This methodology not

only strengthens the connection between theory and practice but also enhances students' emotional empathy and practical problem-solving skills through interactive engagement. Emotional experiences and sharing activities represent another vital component, guiding students toward self-reflection and emotional expression [7]. This aids them in gaining a better understanding of their inner worlds and emotional experiences. For instance, in a course focused on self-identity, students may express their emotions and feelings through writing, painting, or other creative forms, followed by sharing and discussion within their groups. Such activities enrich the emotional depth of the classroom, fostering growth through mutual understanding and support. Field studies and interview practices extend classroom learning into real-world settings, allowing students to observe and experience the application of psychological theories in practical contexts. For example, students might visit psychological counseling centers or community service organizations, or interview individuals recovering from psychological issues. Through such direct exposure, students can more vividly grasp the real-world significance of theories while simultaneously honing their observational and analytical capabilities. These practical activities not only enrich the content of teaching but also ignite students' passion and motivation for the study of psychology. Through diverse designs of teaching activities including group discussions and collaborative learning, role-playing and situational simulations, emotional experiences and sharing activities, as well as field studies and interview practices, the application of experiential teaching in college-level psychological education courses unfolds in a comprehensive and profound manner. These activities not only enable students to master professional knowledge through concrete experiences but also enhance their interpersonal and social adaptability through interactive sharing, thus providing a solid foundation for their psychological well-being.

4.3. Teaching Strategies and Methods

In the context of university-level psychological education courses, the selection and design of teaching strategies and methods are of paramount importance for achieving the objectives of experiential learning. Thoughtful strategies foster a more vibrant classroom atmosphere and significantly enhance educational outcomes. The employ of problem-based teaching strategies effectively encourages students to engage deeply and think actively. In this approach, educators pose challenging questions that prompt students to engage in critical analysis of psychological theories and practical case studies. For instance, a teacher might present an open-ended question concerning a specific psychological phenomenon, facilitating group discussions that urge students to analyze and respond from various perspectives. Through this stimulating exchange of ideas, students not only deepen their comprehension of the subject matter but also cultivate their capacity for innovative thinking [8]. Moreover, interactive teaching methods constitute a vital element of experiential learning. Educators should emphasize classroom interactions through various engaging activities such as Q&A sessions, brainstorming, and impromptu discussions, thereby fostering an open and inclusive learning environment. Within psychological education courses, the interactions between teachers and students, as well as among peers, contribute to establishing an atmosphere of trust and sharing, encouraging students to express their authentic thoughts and feelings. For example, while exploring emotional management, teachers might organize an emotion card exchange activity in which students articulate their recent emotional experiences and then share and discuss them with their peers. This interaction not only underscores the significance of emotional expression but also enhances their ability to communicate emotionally. Differentiated instruction represents a strategy tailored to accommodate individual student differences. Given the diverse backgrounds and psychological needs of students in psychological education courses, educators should design instructional content and activities that reflect this variability. For instance, students

with a solid grasp of foundational psychological concepts could be presented with more complex and in-depth questions for exploration, while those with weaker foundational knowledge would benefit from additional support and guidance through simplified questions and increased practical opportunities, enabling them to gradually enhance their learning capabilities and interests. Furthermore, reflective and feedback mechanisms are essential components of experiential teaching. Educators ought to facilitate reflection and feedback sessions following each instructional activity, encouraging students to summarize their experiences and identify areas for improvement. This practice not only aids students in digesting and internalizing the knowledge acquired but also provides educators with invaluable insights into the effectiveness of their teaching. For example, after a psychological group counseling activity, a teacher might ask students to complete reflective journals or share orally their learnings and feelings about the experience, allowing the teacher to adapt strategies and methods promptly based on student feedback, enhancing the efficacy of subsequent lessons. By incorporating strategies such as problem-based learning, interactive teaching, differentiated instruction, and reflective feedback, experiential education is comprehensively realized within psychological courses. These teaching approaches not only enrich the format and substance of the classroom experience but also elevate students' learning outcomes, thus significantly contributing to their psychological well-being. In practical implementation, educators should continuously seek exploration and innovation to ensure that teaching strategies and methods align more closely with students' actual needs and developmental characteristics [9].

4.4. Teacher Role Transformation

In the experiential teaching model, the role of the educator has undergone a remarkable transformation; they are no longer mere conveyors of knowledge, but rather facilitators, promoters, and active participants. This role evolution necessitates that teachers possess a more versatile teaching ability and profound professional expertise, simultaneously infusing new vitality and vigor into the classroom. The facilitator's role entails that educators must excel in designing and guiding learning activities, aiding students in independently exploring and uncovering the intricacies of psychological knowledge. Throughout this process, teachers should be adept at posing thought-provoking questions and tasks, encouraging students to collaboratively tackle challenges through experiential learning. Within psychological education, such guidance not only ignites students' enthusiasm for learning but also nurtures their critical thinking and self-directed learning capabilities. For instance, a teacher might present a challenging scenario at the beginning of a course, allowing students to explore the principles and mechanisms underlying psychological phenomena through discussion and experimentation. As facilitators, educators need to cultivate a supportive learning environment that encourages students to express their genuine feelings and thoughts. One of the aims of psychological education is to enhance students' mental health and self-awareness; thus, teachers must foster an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom, enabling students to confront their shortcomings and issues without reservation, thereby facilitating personal growth. For example, teachers can promote mutual understanding and support among students through emotional sharing activities and collaborative tasks, allowing them to experience the collective strength and warmth derived from shared experiences. The participant role demands that educators assume not only the mantle of classroom leaders but also become active participants and experiencers of the activities themselves. This requires a deep immersion in classroom endeavors, engaging with students in discussions and experiential learning. Such a shift in role not only bridges the gap between teachers and students but also sets a commendable example of engagement and lifelong learning. For instance, during psychodramas or role-playing exercises, teachers might personally participate in performances or take on directorial roles; this exemplary

behavior not only motivates students but also renders the educational experience richer and more engaging. This transformation in roles imposes higher demands on teachers themselves, necessitating robust professional competence and classroom management skills, as well as heightened emotional sensitivity and empathy. Teachers must continuously update their knowledge, flexibly employ diverse teaching strategies and methodologies, and make timely adjustments to optimize lesson plans. Furthermore, they should prioritize emotional communication with students, promptly addressing and responding to their needs and concerns, thereby becoming a steadfast support for their learning and growth. The transition in roles within the experiential teaching model positions educators not only as conveyors of knowledge but also as guides, promoters, and active participants in the psychological growth and development of students. This shift has ushered in a revolution in classroom teaching and enhanced educational outcomes, rendering psychological education courses more attuned to the actual needs of students and establishing a solid foundation for their mental health development.

5. Conclusion

The application of experiential teaching methods in courses on psychological education for university students offers a novel avenue for enhancing pedagogical efficacy. Through tangible experiences, students not only deepen their comprehension of psychological theories but also elevate their self-awareness and psychological resilience during their active participation. Specific measures, such as the incorporation of real-life case studies, the design of diverse instructional activities, the use of varied teaching strategies, and the transformation of the teacher's role, are all instrumental in achieving this objective. Nevertheless, the implementation phase must still contend with challenges such as low student engagement and insufficient proficiency among educators. Future educational reforms should prioritize how to better foster student involvement, enhance the professional competence of instructors, and continuously refine experiential teaching methods in tandem with specific teaching contexts. Only in this manner can we truly harness the unique advantages of experiential learning in the psychological education of university students, enabling them to attain holistic development through the integration of theory and practice. Whether in theoretical construction or practical exploration, experiential teaching methodologies will increasingly assume a pivotal role in the domain of psychological education for university students.

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