



**THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF STUDENTS' MOTIVATION
FOR ENROLLMENT IN CHANGSHA XIANGDU SECONDARY
VOCATIONAL SCHOOL**

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**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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This Independent Study Has Been Approved as a Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Administration

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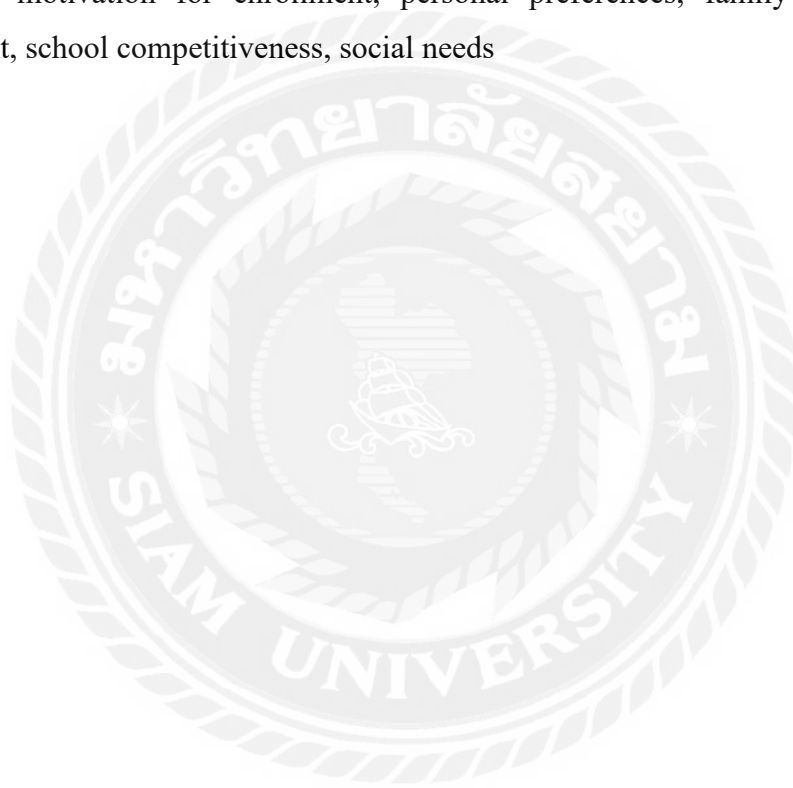
ABSTRACT

The rapid development of China's economy has resulted in a significant demand for high-quality and highly skilled vocational and technical personnel, necessitating a robust secondary vocational education system to provide adequate support. Currently, the quality of China's secondary vocational education still requires further improvement. The investigation of the motivation for enrollment in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School revealed the various types of motivation for enrollment of students in this institution. The factors influencing the decision to enrollment in a secondary vocational programmer were also identified, with the aim of developing an educational management strategy for the advancement of secondary vocational education in Hunan Province. The objective of this study was to explore the effects personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness and social needs on the enrollment motivation of students in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School.

This study employed the quantitative research method. The research subjects were the students of Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. A total of 240 questionnaires were distributed and 225 were returned, representing an efficiency of 93.75%. This study found that personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness and social needs affect the motivation of secondary vocational

students to enroll greatly. This research highlights the significant roles of personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, and social needs in influencing secondary vocational students' motivation to enroll in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. Key factors include students' aspirations, family background, and societal perceptions of vocational education. To enhance enrollment, schools should tailor strategies to meet diverse motivations, improve career guidance, and foster a positive public image of vocational education.

Keywords: motivation for enrollment, personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, social needs



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Xu Shaofu

DECLARATION

I, Xu Shaofu, hereby declare that this Independent Study entitled “The Influencing Factors of Students' Motivation for Enrollment in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School” is an original work and has never been submitted to any academic institution for a degree.

Xu Shaofu

Xu Shaofu

Nov 6, 2024



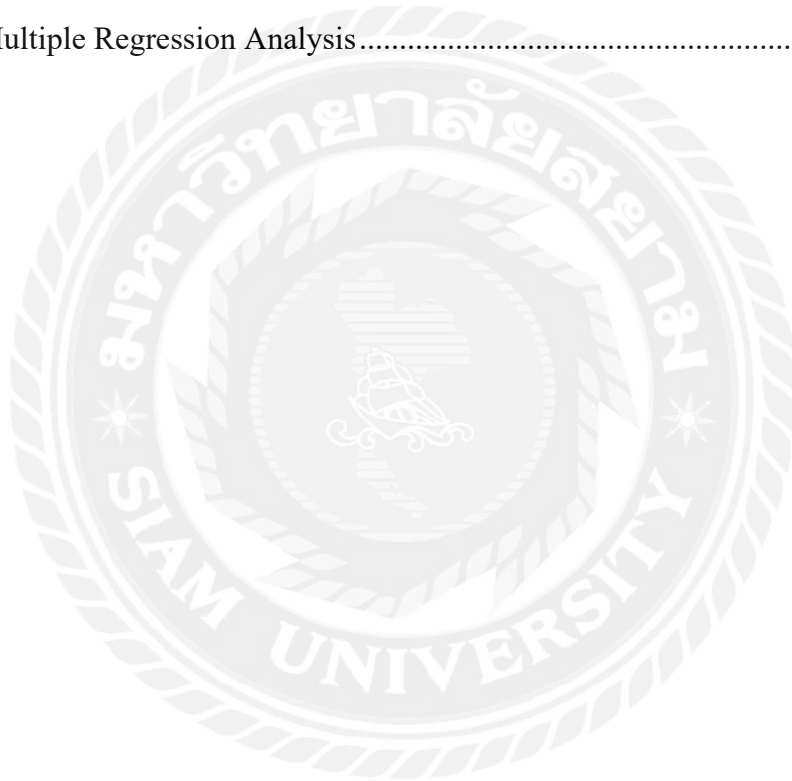
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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China highlighted detailed plans and arrangements to further enhance the vocational education system (Liu, 2017). These include "coordinating vocational education, higher education, and continuing education for collaborative innovation, promoting the integration of vocational and general education, fostering industry-education integration, and optimizing the status of vocational education." China places significant emphasis on the development of vocational education, positioning it as a key priority (Liu, 2022). General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly underscored the importance of vocational education and has personally chaired the fifth meeting of the Central Committee for Comprehensively Deepening Reforms, which reviewed and approved the "National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan." The 2023 Government Work Report further underscores the need for China to vigorously develop vocational education and promote innovation in higher education.

Education is fundamental to preventing the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Secondary vocational education, characterized by low admission thresholds and broad enrollment criteria, primarily targets junior high school graduates who have not advanced to regular high schools or those from impoverished families. It offers these students the opportunity to continue their education at the high school level (Ali et al., 2005). In recent years, with economic development and industrial restructuring, the role of secondary vocational education in cultivating high-quality technical and skilled talent, promoting employment, and fostering economic and social development has become increasingly significant (Qiu & Yuan, 2024). As a critical component of the vocational education system, the quality of secondary vocational schools and the learning outcomes of their students are directly linked to the overall development of vocational education and the fulfillment of societal needs (Chen & DesJardins, 2010).

Nevertheless, even though China is making efforts to enhance the development of secondary vocational education, this field of education still encounters a multitude of difficulties and challenges. According to data, the number of secondary vocational schools in China decreased from 10,100 in 2019 to 7,085 in 2023, representing a decline of approximately 3,015, or approximately 30%. This shift has prompted widespread

concern among all sectors of society regarding the future trajectory of secondary vocational education (Source: Statistical Communiqué on the Development of China's Education). In parallel with the expansion of China's economy and society and the evolution of its education system, secondary vocational education is confronted with new challenges and demands. Conversely, a few secondary vocational schools have been identified as having deficiencies in terms of educational quality and employment rates. This has resulted in most Chinese students and parents opting for ordinary high schools or other educational avenues. In 2023, Changsha had 48 secondary vocational schools (excluding technical schools) (28 private schools) enrolling 36,202 students, a decrease of 3,487 from the previous year. There were 107,868 full-time students in secondary vocational schools, a decrease of 2,581 from the previous year. The average school size was 2,247, an increase of 38 from the previous year. The number of graduates was 34,019, a decrease of 2,183 from the previous year, see Figure 1.1. The future of secondary vocational education is uncertain, and the necessity for educational reform is becoming increasingly apparent.

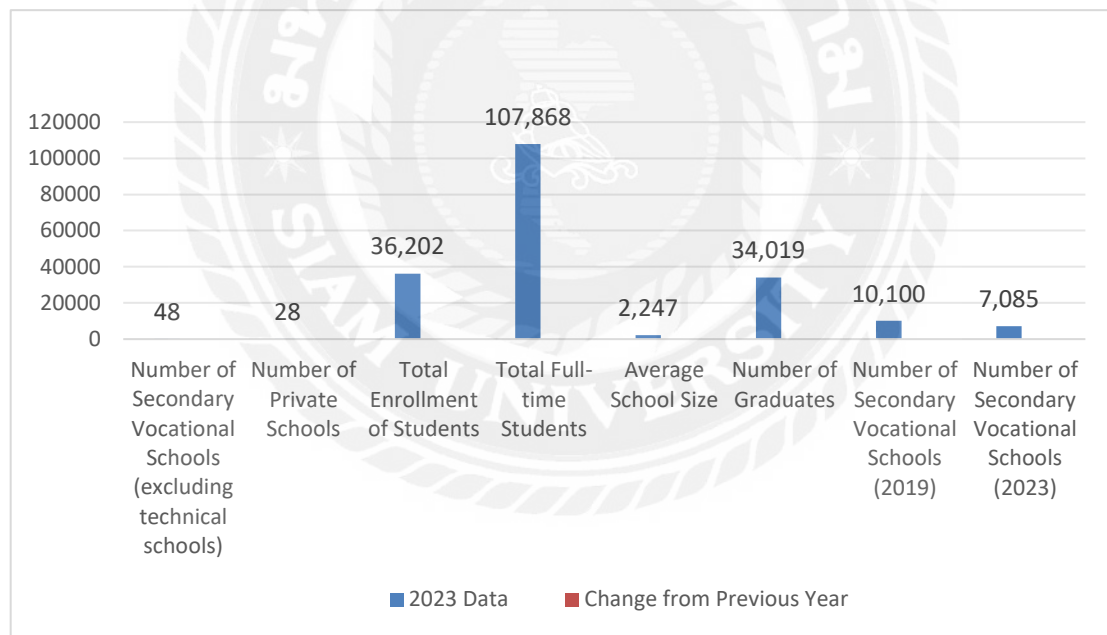


Figure 1.1 Number of Students, Enrollments and Graduates in Secondary Vocational Schools in Changsha from 2021 to 2023

Source: Changsha Municipal Education Bureau

1.2 Questions of the Study

A comprehensive examination of the motivation of students enrolled in secondary vocational schools, with a focus on the underlying factors influencing this motivation, not only enhances the quality and efficacy of secondary vocational education but also have significant practical implications for cultivating high-quality technical and skilled talent and promoting sustainable economic and social development. The principal research questions guiding the analysis of the motivation of students to enroll in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School are as follows:

1. Do personal preferences affect the enrollment motivation of students in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School?
2. Does family educational environment affect the enrollment motivation of students in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School?
3. Does school competitiveness affect the enrollment motivation of students in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School?
4. Do social needs play a role in the enrollment motivation of students in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The preceding research questions are distilled into four specific objectives for this study:

- (1) To explore the effect of personal preferences on the enrollment motivation of students at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School.
- (2) To explore the effect of family educational environment on the enrollment motivation of students at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School.
- (3) To explore the effect of school competitiveness on the enrollment motivation of students at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School.
- (4) To explore the effect of social needs on the enrollment motivation of students at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study examined students' motivation for enrollment to Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School, with a particular focus on the attribution theory and the

comprehensive motivation theory. This study reviewed 50 journal articles and several theses through Google Scholar to gain a comprehensive understanding of relevant concepts and theoretical frameworks. Based on this literature review, this study developed a structured online questionnaire that was distributed for one week in September 2024. A total of 240 questionnaires were sent out, and 225 responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 93.75%. This high response rate indicated strong engagement of the students of Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School, providing valuable data for analyzing their motivations and influencing factors. This study used the quantitative analysis method, analyzed the factors affecting the enrollment of secondary vocational students, and proposes educational management strategies to promote the development of secondary vocational education in Hunan Province. The aim is to increase the attractiveness of secondary vocational education, improve students' enrollment motivation, stimulate and mobilize the learning interest of secondary vocational students, and improve the quality of secondary vocational education.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the theoretical research on motivation theory in different educational stages and types, and provides a reference for academic research in related fields. By analyzing the influencing factors of motivation of students at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School, it is possible to supplement and improve existing educational management theory and expand the perspective of educational motivation research, particularly in the field of secondary vocational education. Furthermore, the discrepancies in enrollment motivation among distinct student groups can elucidate the applicability and limitations of motivation theory in the secondary vocational education stage and educational type, thereby furnishing a foundation for the further advancement and enhancement of the theory. An investigation and analysis of students' motivation for pursuing vocational education will assist secondary vocational education managers in furthering their comprehension of student behaviour and psychology. This, in turn, will provide new theoretical support for educational management. The investigation and analysis of the motivation of students enrolled in secondary vocational schools and the basic laws of educational

management provide theoretical guidance for the high-quality development of secondary vocational education.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

In the current social development context, it is evident that secondary vocational education is unable to keep pace with the evolving needs of the population. Secondary vocational education is generally characterised by a number of significant challenges, including a lack of adequately trained teaching staff, an uneven distribution of educational quality, and a low level of social recognition. Secondary vocational education remains a relatively underdeveloped area within the broader field of education. This study examines the issues facing secondary vocational education by analysing the factors influencing students' motivation for enrolling in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. The analysis of the survey data enables the real thoughts and needs of students regarding secondary vocational schools to be understood. This provides valuable insights for the development of secondary vocational schools, enabling secondary vocational school managers to formulate more targeted enrollment and publicity strategies, and attract students who meet the school's training goals. Concurrently, instructors can provide more targeted career planning and learning guidance based on students' motivation, thereby enhancing students' enthusiasm for admission and learning motivation. Conversely, it offers targeted and effective recommendations to relevant departments on how to enhance the appeal of secondary vocational education and elevate the calibre of secondary vocational education.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Motivation refers to the study of what drives individuals to make decisions. It explores various factors that influence motivation, such as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, and how these factors impact behavior in educational settings.

Personal preferences is the individual's choice or liking for certain activities, subjects, or careers. It reflects a student's unique interests and values, which can significantly influence their decision to enroll in a specific educational program.

Family education background refers to the level of education and the attitudes towards learning that a student's family possesses. This background can affect a

student's motivation and aspirations, as supportive family environments often encourage educational pursuits.

School competitiveness describes how well a school performs compared to other institutions in terms of academic results, student satisfaction, and job placement rates. A competitive school is more likely to attract students seeking quality education and better future opportunities.

Social needs involve the desire for belonging, acceptance, and interaction with others. In an educational context, these needs can motivate students to choose schools where they feel they can connect with peers and participate in a community.



Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Motivation

Motivation in psychology refers to an internal state that prompts individuals to engage in goal-oriented behavior (Yu, 2023). It is generally believed to involve the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behavior. In organizational behavior, motivation mainly refers to the psychological process of stimulating people's motivation. Through stimulation and encouragement, people develop an internal driving force to move towards the desired goal; in this process, motivation is usually not static, on the contrary, motivation may increase or decrease (Han, 2020). Motivation theory refers to the theory about the generation, mechanism, motivation and needs, behavior and goal relationship of motivation (Xiao, 2022). Motivation is a concept in psychology, which refers to the internal arousal state that causes and maintains human behavior in a certain way (Liu, 2022). It is mainly manifested as the subjective desire or intention to pursue a certain goal, and it is people's conscious awareness of pursuing a certain expected purpose. Motivation is generated by needs. When the needs reach a certain intensity and there are objects to meet the needs, the needs can be transformed into motivation (Eccles & Roeser, 2011).

Behaviorism is a branch of psychology that started in the United States in the early 20th century. It focuses on studying observable behaviors instead of the mind or consciousness, which it believes should not be analyzed without scientific proof. The main idea of behaviorism is that both human and animal behaviors are shaped by responses to environmental stimuli and experiences throughout life (Wang, 2022). This includes factors like punishment, rewards, and reinforcement that come from interactions in one's environment (Liu, 2022). While behaviorists acknowledge that genetics play a role in behavior, they emphasize the importance of environmental influences. Many behaviorists argue that free will is an illusion, suggesting that all actions are determined by a mix of genetic factors and environmental experiences (Xiao, 2022).

On the other hand, humanistic psychology offers a more human-centered approach. It includes theories like the hierarchy of needs and client-centered therapy, which are valuable in areas like management, education, and therapy. Humanistic psychology

highlights the importance of human dignity, value, creativity, and self-fulfillment. It believes in studying human psychology from a more holistic viewpoint rather than just focusing on behaviors. Xie (2019) introduced the well-known hierarchy of needs, categorizing human needs into five levels: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. He argued that people will seek to fulfill higher-level needs only after lower-level needs have been met.

2.2 Personal Preferences

"Personal preferences" refer to the individual choices, likes, and dislikes that influence a person's decisions and behaviors (Zhu et al., 2024). These preferences can be shaped by various factors, including personal experiences, cultural background, and values. In the context of education or career choices, personal preferences might affect which subjects a student enjoys, what kind of work environment they thrive in, or which vocational paths they find appealing. Understanding personal preferences is essential, as they play a significant role in motivating individuals to pursue specific goals or enroll programs. Wang (2022) took the 2022 five-year freshmen of Wuxi Open University as the research object, and used a self-compiled questionnaire survey method to deeply understand the channels for freshmen to obtain information when filling out their applications, as well as their interests, learning goals, school life, development expectations, etc., to explore the motivation and development goals of junior high school students in choosing five-year higher vocational education. The survey results show that students are mainly determined by their interests in choosing schools and majors, followed by external factors such as parents.

Zheng (2022) conducted a survey on the family background, enrollment motivation, and willingness to perform duties of 2032 targeted normal school students in Anhui Province in 2021. It was found that the reasons for the enrollment of targeted normal school students were clear. The first was the love for education, and the second was the guarantee of employment. The middle school entrance examination scores and family economic reasons had little impact. Students generally value the stability of the teaching profession. At the same time, they also have internal motivation to become excellent teachers, and there is a lot of room for improvement in their professional level.

2.3 Family Education Background

"Family education background" refers to the educational level and involvement of a student's family members, particularly their parents or guardians (Liu, 2022). This includes factors such as the highest level of education attained by parents, their attitudes toward education, and their support for their children's academic pursuits. A positive family education background often leads to greater encouragement and resources for students, which can significantly impact their motivation to learn and succeed in school. Yan and Pang (2014) studied the impact of family income on the motivation of higher vocational students to enroll. The results showed that higher vocational students mostly come from low- and middle-income families. Higher vocational students have clear learning motivation and employment motivation. Family income level affects their desire to study. Students from middle- and low-income families have a deeper understanding of their employment disadvantages than students from high-income families.

Based on this, the social attractiveness of higher vocational education should be further enhanced, the channels for higher vocational students to advance to higher education should be opened, career planning guidance for students should be strengthened, the internal and external environment for student enrollment should be actively improved, and the service quality of higher vocational colleges should be improved.

Xiao (2022) explored the mediating role of school enrollment motivation between master's students' family social capital and learning investment, to more comprehensively reveal the relationship between family social capital and learning investment. Master's students whose parents have high academic qualifications and whose mothers have high occupational class The level of internal motivation of students is relatively high, and family education background is a significant factor affecting the motivation of graduate students.

Zheng (2022) studied the motivation model of graduate student enrollment selection in double first-class universities and believed that "survival rationality" and "economic rationality" such as employment opportunities, network resources, salary, influence of others, and family environment all intuitively affect graduate student enrollment motivation. Formation.

2.4 School Competitiveness

"School competitiveness" refers to the degree to which a school is perceived as competitive in its educational environment (Qiu & Yuan, 2024). This can involve factors such as academic performance, the quality of teachers, resources available, and overall reputation. A competitive school often attracts motivated students and offers various programs and opportunities that foster achievement. When students view their school as competitive, it can enhance their motivation to perform well and engage in their studies. The competitive nature of educational institutions is a significant factor influencing students' motivation to enroll (Liu, 2022). The perceived quality and reputation of a school have a significant impact on students' decisions regarding their enrollment. It can be reasonably assumed that schools with excellent reputations and high academic performance are more likely to attract students who are motivated to enroll (Chen & DesJardins, 2010).

Students are more likely to attend institutions with higher school competitiveness, which provide them with access to a broader range of academic and extracurricular programs. Such opportunities are frequently perceived as potential routes to future success, which serves to enhance motivation to attend (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Deci & Ryan (2000) analyzed the marketing strategy of adult education enrollment at Southern Talent Vocational Training School, focusing on enrollment motivation. Although education is not a tangible commodity, adult education involves choosing a school and its programs. As consumers, students demand high-quality, distinctive, and reputable education services. School competitiveness significantly influences enrollment motivation. Han (2020) studied the enrollment motivation of interdisciplinary master's students in educational economics and management. The choice to pursue this field results from multiple enrollment motivations, with school competitiveness being a core influencing factor.

2.5 Social Needs

"Social needs" refer to the human requirements for interpersonal relationships, belonging, and connection with others (Qiu & Yuan, 2024). These needs encompass the desire for acceptance, friendship, love, and community. They are fundamental to our emotional well-being and play a crucial role in motivating behavior. When social

needs are met, individuals often experience a sense of belonging and fulfillment, which can enhance their overall happiness and drive. In contrast, unmet social needs can lead to feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction, influencing various aspects of life, including personal motivation and productivity. Liao (2022) studied the motivation of public-funded normal students in primary education. Through literature research, questionnaire surveys and interviews, it was found that their motivation for enrollment is greatly affected by external factors such as social needs (such as employment) and economy, and is relatively less affected by their own internal ideas. This has led to a lack of learning motivation, learning autonomy and professional identity for some normal students to a certain extent. Wang (2022) proposed that there is a significant correlation between the motivation, learning interest and learning status of public-funded normal students; based on stepwise regression analysis, it is concluded that individual learning interest is the mediating variable between the motivation and learning status of public-funded normal students. Students' external social incentives should be stimulated to transform into internal individual motivations; the learning interest of public-funded normal students should be stimulated to promote the improvement of their learning status, prevent the occurrence of irrational enrollment caused by the deviation of students or parents' cognition, and effectively implement relevant policies to improve the welfare and professional belonging of primary and secondary school teachers, and continue to stimulate the social incentives of public-funded normal students (Qiu & Yuan, 2024).

Wu et al. (2024) investigated the motivation and influencing factors of postgraduate students of a certain military medical university. They used a stratified sampling method and a self-made scale to investigate the general situation, lifestyle, life experience and motivation of postgraduate students of a certain military medical university. The survey results show that the motivation of postgraduates to enroll is diverse. There are 477 postgraduates with work-oriented motivation for postgraduate study, accounting for 44.2% of the surveyed population. Social needs is the biggest influencing factor, indicating that the motivation of postgraduates to study for a certain degree of pragmatism. By employing a robust methodology and revealing the complexity of students' motivations, this research contributes to the broader understanding of higher education dynamics. The emphasis on work-oriented motivations and the impact of social demand underscores the importance of aligning educational offerings with the needs and aspirations of students.

As educational institutions continue to evolve in response to societal changes and labor market demands, the insights gained from this study can guide efforts to enhance the postgraduate educational experience, ultimately benefiting students and society.

2.6 Attribution Theory

Attribution refers to the observer's inference of the cause and causal relationship of another person's behavior (Qiu & Yuan, 2024). The attribution theory is a theory that studies how people make attributions and why they make certain attributions in one situation and different attributions in another situation. The assumption of attribution theory is based on the individual's desire to rebuild cognitive balance at any time. It advocates that when people's words and deeds are out of order, they will actively use the cognition in their brains to come up with reasons for themselves or find reasons for others. For example, if a typically diligent student suddenly performs poorly on an exam, their peers may engage in attribution by considering various explanations. They might attribute the failure to external factors, such as a difficult test or personal issues, or to internal factors, like a lack of effort or ability. This exercise in reasoning helps individuals make sense of unexpected behaviors, allowing them to maintain a coherent view of reality.

Psychologist Harold Kelly (1967, 1973) gave a more in-depth explanation of Heider's theory: when people tend to make inward attributions and when they tend to make outward attributions; this theory is called the "covariation model". Like Heider, Kelley believes that in the process of making attributions, people will collect various personal and situational information to assist in judgment, and compare and judge how other people's behavior "covariates" with time, place, their own role, participants, and other situational factors. There are three important pieces of information, or three "dimensions" (aspects) to consider (Aronson et al., 2011):

Consensus: Do different people behave in the same way as the subject when facing the same stimulus?

Distinctiveness: Does the subject respond differently to other stimuli of the same type?

Consistency: Does the same person respond the same way to the same stimulus at different times and in different situations?

2.7 Comprehensive Motivation Theory

The term "motivation" is a psychological concept that refers to the process of stimulating and encouraging people's desire to act. In management, it can be understood simply as the way to inspire people to be enthusiastic about their work (Liu, 2017). Motivation theories aim to fulfill individuals' needs and help them reach specific goals by tapping into their enthusiasm. Since the 1920s and 1930s, various scholars have introduced different theories of motivation, including behavioral, cognitive, and comprehensive motivation theories (Li et al., 2004).

The behavioral motivation theory focuses on the actions individuals take and emphasizes the role of external factors in influencing behavior. In contrast, cognitive motivation theory criticizes behavioral theories and highlights the importance of internal factors that drive individuals' actions. Comprehensive motivation theory combines aspects of both behavioral and cognitive theories. It builds on the strengths of each approach to more effectively engage individuals by taking a holistic view.

Robbins (1997) developed a comprehensive model that brings together various motivational theories. According to this model, if an individual believes that their efforts will lead to good performance, and that this performance will earn them rewards from the organization, they are likely to work harder. However, before achieving their goals, individuals need to have the right skills and a fair system for evaluating their performance. Additionally, to reach their personal goals, they must also consider the influence of organizational support, a competitive environment, and their own leadership needs.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The objective of this study is to construct a theoretical framework of the motivation of secondary vocational school students to enroll, and to provide a solid theoretical basis for the research. This framework enables the sorting out and analysis of the core concepts and main theoretical viewpoints of the motivation of secondary vocational school students to enroll. This provides a useful theoretical reference for the development of secondary vocational school education management and for improving the attractiveness and quality of secondary vocational education. The research framework is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

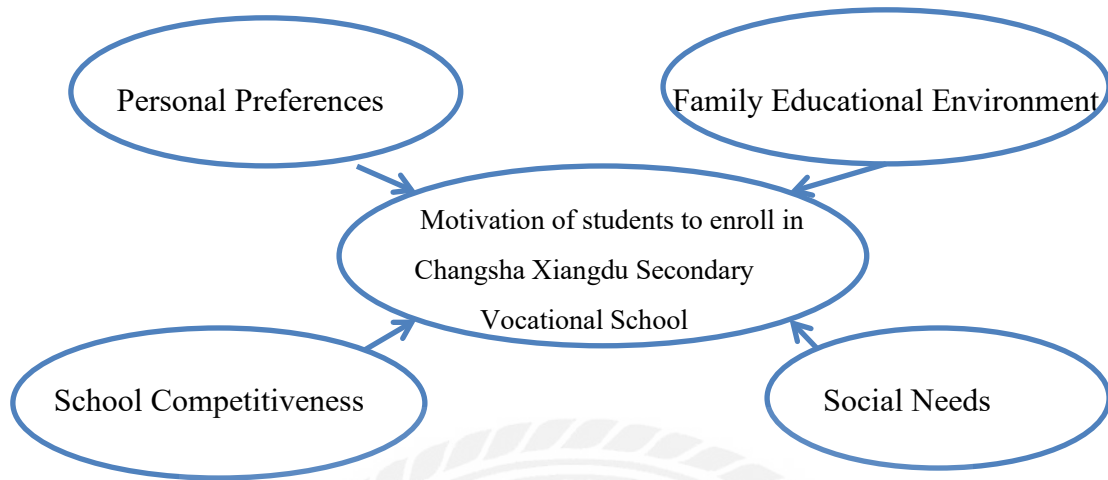
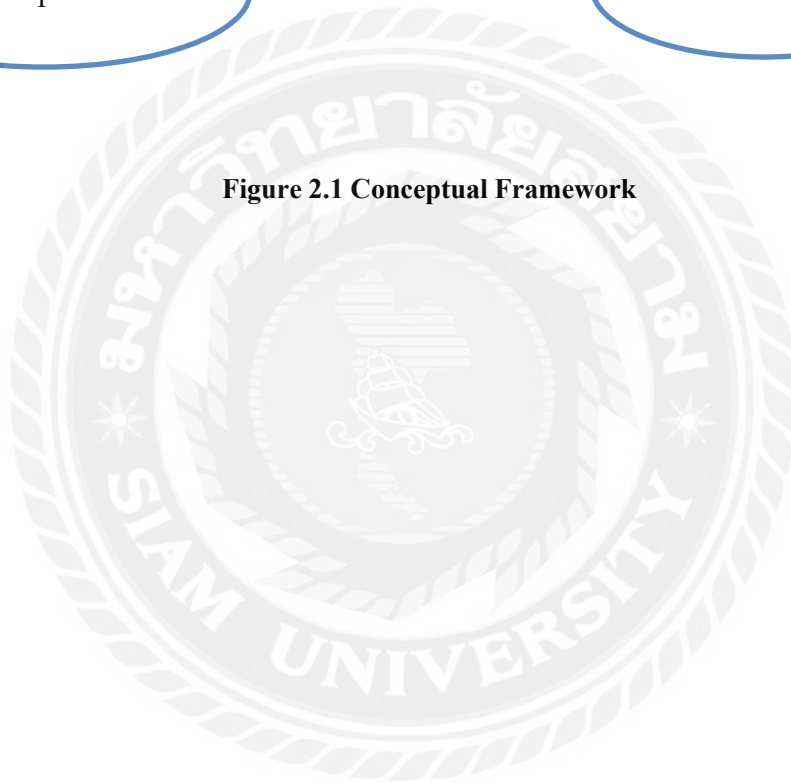


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework



Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed the quantitative research method, utilizing a questionnaire survey to collect data. The questionnaire is divided into two main sections. The first section, Basic Information, collects demographic and background data from respondents. The second section, Variable Items, includes questions related to personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, social needs, and student enrollment motivation. To assess respondents' levels of agreement, a 5-point Likert scale is used, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree." The response options range from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. The final design of the questionnaire is presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. This structured approach enables a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing students' motivations for enrolling in secondary vocational schools.

Table 3.1 Sample Characterization Measurement Item

NO.	Basic Information	NO.
1	Gender	Q1
2	Age	Q2

Table 3.2 Student Enrollment Motivation Measurement Item

Variate	Measurement Item	NO.
Personal Preferences (PP)	I am motivated to enroll in vocational education because it helps me prepare for my future career.	Q1
	Enrolling in my preferred major improves my personal abilities.	Q2
	My chosen major aligns well with my interests and hobbies.	Q3
	I choose vocational education to satisfy my curiosity about specific skills and knowledge.	Q4

	Choosing a major that aligns with my interests.	Q5
Family Educational Environment (FEE)	Parents require me to attend vocational school.	Q6
	Economic circumstances influenced my choice to pursue vocational education.	Q7
School Competitiveness (SC)	The vocational school provides good job placement opportunities.	Q8
	The support from my school staff motivates me to enroll in vocational education.	Q9
	I believe the courses offered in vocational school are more relevant to my career goals.	Q10
	I prefer vocational education to avoid the academic pressure of high school.	Q11
Social Needs (SN)	It will be easy to find a job after graduation.	Q12
	My family assists me in finding job opportunities after I graduate from vocational school.	Q13
	I am pursuing vocational education to enhance my educational qualifications for future employment.	Q14
	I am motivated to enroll in vocational education because I believe it will make finding a job easier after graduation.	Q15
Motivations of Students to Enroll (EN)	My usual academic performance is poor, so I cannot enter high school.	Q16
	I did not perform well on the entrance exam and could not get into my preferred high school.	Q17

Other factors that are not based on my own wishes.	Q18
I want to escape from studying.	Q19

3.2 Population and Sample

The study employed the simple random sampling as the sampling method. This technique ensures that every student at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School had an equal chance of being selected to participate in the survey. By using the simple random sampling, the study aimed to obtain a representative sample of the student population, which enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings related to the factors affecting their motivation to enroll.

The study focused on the factors affecting the motivation of secondary vocational students to enroll, using the students of Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School as the research subjects. The motivation of these students to enroll is influenced by various factors, including personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, and social needs. Therefore, understanding their opinions and views is of great significance.

3.3 Hypothesis

H1: Personal preferences (PP) have a positive impact on the motivation of secondary vocational students to enroll (EN).

H2: Family educational environment (FEE) has a positive impact on the motivation of secondary vocational students to enroll (EN).

H3: School competitiveness (SC) has a positive impact on the motivation of secondary vocational students to enroll (EN).

H4: Social needs (SN) have a positive impact on the motivation of secondary vocational students to enroll (EN).

3.4 Reliability and Validity Analysis of the Scale

3.4.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the questionnaire is crucial for data analysis. In this study, SPSS was utilized to analyze data from 225 students at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. The reliability coefficient, Cronbach's Alpha, was calculated for each factor, as presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Reliability Analysis

Independent Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Personal preferences (PP)	0.871	5
Family educational environment (FEE)	0.843	2
School competitiveness (SC)	0.875	4
Social needs (SN)	0.883	4
Dependent Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Motivations of students to enroll (EN)	0.891	4

The study assessed the reliability of various independent and dependent variables using Cronbach's Alpha, which measures internal consistency. The results are as follows:

Personal Preferences (PP): The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.871, based on 5 items. This indicates a high level of internal consistency.

Family Educational Environment (FEE): The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.843, derived from 2 items. This also shows good reliability.

School Competitiveness (SC): The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.875, based on 4 items, indicating strong internal consistency.

Social Needs (SN): The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.883, calculated from 4 items, reflecting a high level of reliability.

For the dependent variable:

Motivations of Students to Enroll (EN): The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.891, based on 4 items. This result indicates excellent internal consistency.

Overall, the Cronbach's Alpha values for both the independent and dependent variables suggest that the measurement scales used in this study are reliable and suitable for analyzing the factors influencing student enrollment motivation.

3.4.2 Validity Analysis

The KMO test and Bartlett's spherical test are essential prerequisites for factor analysis to determine the scale's suitability and validity. The results indicate that the KMO value is 0.897, exceeding the threshold of 0.7, and the approximate chi-square value is 3062.443, with 103 degrees of freedom (df). The significance level (Sig.) is 0.000, which is well below the threshold of 0.05. This result indicates that there are significant correlations among the variables, supporting the appropriateness of conducting factor analysis. These results, shown in Table 3.4, confirm that the questionnaire meets the requirements for exploratory factor analysis. Consequently, the study suggests a correlation between various variables, enabling further correlation and regression analyses.

Table 3.4 Validity Analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.897
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3062.443
	df	103
	Sig.	0.000

3.5 Data Collection

To gain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the factors influencing students' motivation to pursue secondary vocational education, this study employed a questionnaire survey at Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. Changsha

Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School was established in 2018 and is a private secondary vocational school with 2,261 students. This study primarily utilized online questionnaires for data collection. The simple random sampling techniques were adopted, and the questionnaires were distributed in September 2024. A total of 240 questionnaires were distributed, and 225 valid responses were collected, resulting in a response rate of 93.75%.

The feedback from these questionnaires covered students of different majors, ensuring the diversity and representativeness of the sample, and providing a rich and solid data foundation for subsequent data analysis and research.

3.6 Data Analysis

This study employed a multi-method approach, integrating a questionnaire survey, Likert five-point scales and SPSS statistical analysis, to gain insight into the factors influencing students' motivation to pursue secondary vocational education, and to inform the development of evidence-based educational management strategies in secondary vocational schools. Descriptive statistics of the demographic characteristics of the research subjects were analyzed, and correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were conducted.

Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This chapter presents the demographic characteristics of the participants who completed the questionnaire. A total of 225 valid responses were collected from students enrolled in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. The demographic data includes gender and age distribution.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	53.3
	Female	105	46.7
	Total	225	100
Age	Under 16	30	13.3
	16-18	150	66.7
	19-21	35	15.6
	Over 21	10	4.4
	Total	225	100

The demographic characteristics of the participants reveal key insights into the sample population. Among the 225 valid respondents, the majority were male, making up 53.3% of the total, while female students accounted for 46.7%. This indicates a relatively balanced representation of genders within the sample. Regarding age distribution, the largest group, comprising 66.7% of participants, fell within the 16-18 age range, which aligns with the typical age of secondary vocational students. A smaller portion of respondents, 15.6%, were aged 19-21, while 13.3% were under 16, and only 4.4% were over 21. This distribution highlights that most students are within the standard age range for secondary education. Overall, these demographic characteristics provide essential context for understanding the motivations of students enrolling in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School.

4.1.2 Correlation Analysis

In this study, SPSS was used to analyze the relationship between various factors and students' motivation in Changsha. The correlation analysis revealed positive correlations among personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, social needs, and motivation to enroll.

Table 4.2 Correlation Analysis

Variables	Personal preferences (PP)	Family educational environment (FEE)	School competitiveness (SC)	Social needs (SN)	Motivations of students to enrol (EN)
Personal preferences (PP)	1				
Family educational environment (FEE)	.746 **	1			
School competitiveness (SC)	.758**	.702**	1		
Social needs (SN)	.791**	.801**	.717**	1	
Motivations of students to enrol (EN)	.866**	.771**	.801**	.793**	1

Table 4.2 presents the correlation coefficients among various factors influencing the motivations of students to enroll in secondary vocational education. Personal preferences (PP) demonstrate a strong positive correlation with enrollment motivations ($r = 0.866$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that students with stronger personal preferences are more likely to be motivated to enroll. Furthermore, personal preferences is positively correlated with the family educational environment (FEE) ($r = 0.746$, $p < 0.01$), which itself has a significant correlation with enrollment motivations ($r = 0.771$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that a supportive family environment plays a crucial role in shaping

students' motivations. Similarly, school competitiveness (SC) is positively correlated with personal preferences ($r = 0.758, p < 0.01$) and enrollment motivations ($r = 0.801, p < 0.01$), indicating that students who view their school as competitive tend to have stronger preferences and motivations. Additionally, social needs (SN) show a strong correlation with both personal preferences ($r = 0.791, p < 0.01$) and enrollment motivations ($r = 0.793, p < 0.01$), highlighting the importance of addressing these needs in motivating students.

Thus, the study concludes that there are significant positive relationships between personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, social needs, and motivation for school enrollment.

4.1.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4.3 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis, which examines the impact of various factors on the motivations of students to enroll in secondary vocational education.

Table 4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Item	Unstd. B	Std. Beta	t	Sig.	VIF	F	Durbin- Watson
C	.367	.516	.679	.486	1.527		
Personal preferences (PP)	.249	.068	3.467	.000	1.654		
Family educational environment (FEE)	.209	.070	2.683	.002	2.368	163.198***	1.936
School competitiveness (Sc)	.206	.071	2.793	.003	1.289		
Social needs (SN)	.298	.058	4.642	.000	1.531		
R Square					0.747		
Adjusted R Square					0.741		

NOTE: * $P < 0.05$, ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.001$

The model has an R Square value of 0.747, indicating that approximately 74.7% of the variance in enrollment motivation can be explained by the independent variables included in the analysis. The adjusted R Square value is 0.741, suggesting a good fit for the model.

The constant (C) has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.367, with a significance level of 0.486, indicating that it is not statistically significant. Among the independent variables, personal preferences (PP) have an unstandardized coefficient of 0.249, with a standardized beta of 0.068 and a t-value of 3.467 ($p < 0.001$), demonstrating a strong positive impact on enrollment motivation. The family educational environment (FEE) shows an unstandardized coefficient of 0.209, with a t-value of 2.683 ($p < 0.01$), also indicating a significant influence. School competitiveness (SC) has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.206 and a t-value of 2.793 ($p < 0.01$), confirming its positive effect on student motivation. Lastly, social needs (SN) exhibit the highest unstandardized coefficient at 0.298, with a t-value of 4.642 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that it has the most substantial impact on enrollment motivation among the factors analyzed. The variance inflation factor (VIF) values indicate that multicollinearity is not a concern in this model. Overall, these results highlight the importance of personal preference, family educational environment, school competitiveness, and social needs in shaping the motivations of students to enroll in secondary vocational education.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Discussion on Enhancing Enrollment Motivations in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School

1. Influence of Personal Preferences

To strengthen the connection between personal preferences and enrollment motivation, the school should offer a diverse range of vocational programs that align with students' interests and aspirations. Implementing career counseling services can help students identify their passions and guide them toward suitable educational paths, fostering intrinsic motivation.

2. Role of Family Educational Environment

Schools should engage families by hosting informational sessions and workshops that highlight the benefits of vocational education. Providing resources and support for parents can help create a more encouraging educational environment. Additionally, developing partnerships with families can reinforce the importance of vocational training and motivate students to pursue these pathways.

3.School Competitiveness

To enhance perceptions of school competitiveness, it is crucial to improve job placement services and emphasize skill development opportunities. The school can invest in collaborations with local businesses and industries to provide internships and hands-on training. Promoting success stories of alumni who have secured jobs can also enhance the school's reputation and attract more students.

4.Social Needs

Educational institutions should effectively communicate the relevance of vocational education in meeting labor market demands. This can be achieved through outreach programs that inform students about current job trends and the skills required in the workforce. Tailoring programs to address societal expectations will not only motivate students to enroll but also ensure that their education aligns with the needs of the job market.

4.2.2 Explanation of Unexpected Results

While the study's findings largely align with existing literature, some results may seem counterintuitive or unexpected.

1. Variability in Family Influence

Although the family educational environment showed a significant positive correlation with enrollment motivation, some students reported limited familial support. This variability could be attributed to differing family values and educational backgrounds. In cases where family expectations conflict with personal interests, students may feel pressured to pursue paths that do not align with their motivations. Future research could explore how family dynamics specifically impact vocational education choices.

2. Underestimation of Social Needs

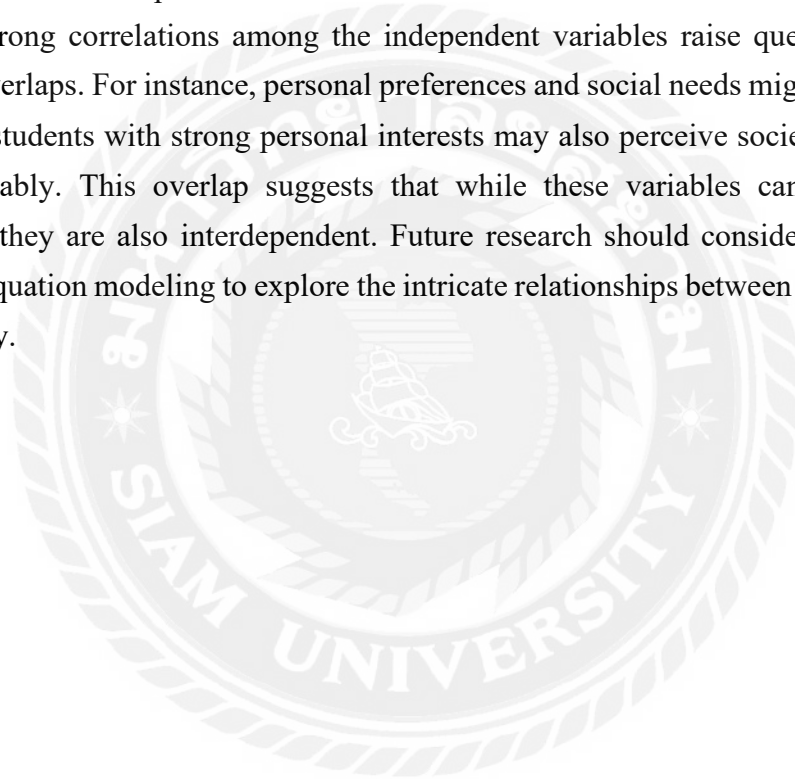
Another unexpected finding was the relatively lower emphasis placed on social needs by some participants, despite its significant correlation with motivation. This could suggest a disconnect between students' immediate motivations and broader societal expectations. Some students may prioritize personal or academic aspirations over social considerations. This divergence may reflect a more individualistic approach to education, where personal success is prioritized over meeting social demands.

3. Influence of External Factors

External factors, such as economic conditions and regional job markets, were not directly measured in this study but could have influenced students' motivations. Changes in the job market or economic instability may lead students to seek vocational education as a more viable alternative to traditional schooling. This can result in heightened motivation driven by necessity rather than personal preference. Future studies should consider these external influences to provide a more comprehensive understanding of enrollment motivations.

4. Potential Overlap Between Variables

The strong correlations among the independent variables raise questions about potential overlaps. For instance, personal preferences and social needs might be closely related, as students with strong personal interests may also perceive societal demands more favorably. This overlap suggests that while these variables can be studied separately, they are also interdependent. Future research should consider employing structural equation modeling to explore the intricate relationships between these factors more deeply.



Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

In recent years, vocational education has gained significant attention in China, especially as it plays a vital role in preparing students for the workforce. This study focused on Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School to understand the motivations behind students' decisions to enroll. By examining the various factors influencing these motivations, the research aimed to provide insights that can enhance the effectiveness of vocational education programs.

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the factors influencing the motivations of students to enroll in secondary vocational education, particularly focusing on the case of Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School. The findings indicate that personal preferences, family educational environment, school competitiveness, and social needs significantly impact students' motivations to enroll.

This study examines the factors influencing enrollment motivation in Changsha Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School: 1) Personal preferences play a significant role, as students are drawn to schools that match their interests. 2) Family educational environment impacts motivation, with higher attainment fostering support for education. 3) The school's competitiveness attracts students seeking academic excellence and better future opportunities. 4) Additionally, social needs shape motivation, as societal expectations drive students to pursue prestigious schools that enhance their status and prospects.

Several factors influence these motivations, including family educational environment, school competitiveness, and social needs. A supportive family background tends to encourage students in their educational pursuits, while a competitive school environment fosters a sense of ambition and commitment. Furthermore, the fulfillment of social needs, such as job security and the ability to find employment after graduation, also plays a crucial role in motivating students to choose vocational education. The analysis reveals that these factors are interconnected and collectively contribute to shaping students' decisions regarding vocational education.

1. Influence of Personal Preferences

The strong correlation between personal preferences and enrollment motivation underscores the importance of individual interests and aspirations in educational choices. Students who align their studies with their personal interests are more likely to feel motivated to engage in their education. This finding supports previous research that emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation in academic success. Personal preferences serve as a driving force, encouraging students to pursue careers that resonate with their aspirations.

2. Role of Family Educational Environment

The family educational environment significantly influences students' motivations. The findings suggest that students from supportive families, who encourage vocational education, are more likely to enroll. This aligns with existing literature that indicates familial support and expectations are crucial for students' academic paths. Families that prioritize education and provide guidance can foster a conducive environment for students, ultimately enhancing their motivation to enroll in vocational programs.

3. School Competitiveness

The results also indicate that students' perceptions of school competitiveness positively correlate with their motivations to enroll. Schools that provide strong job placement services and emphasize skill development are perceived as more attractive to students. This finding emphasizes the importance of a school's reputation and its ability to prepare students for the workforce. Schools that invest in creating competitive programs can significantly enhance student motivation and enrollment rates.

4. Social Needs

Social needs emerged as a vital factor influencing enrollment motivations. Students who believe that vocational education will facilitate job acquisition and meet societal demands are more motivated to enroll. This finding highlights the necessity for educational institutions to communicate the relevance of vocational education in addressing labor market needs. Moreover, understanding societal expectations can help institutions tailor their programs to better meet the aspirations of students and the requirements of the job market.

Therefore, the study highlights the complex interplay of these factors in shaping students' decisions to enroll in secondary vocational schools, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers.

5.2 Recommendation

1. Student - Oriented Enrollment Strategy

Understand students' diverse motivations influenced by personal preferences, family educational environment, and internal factors like self - improvement and skill transfer. Tailor enrollment strategies to meet these different needs to attract more students.

2. School - Based Improvement

Enhance school competitiveness by focusing on students' employment promotion. Conduct systematic career planning and employment guidance, and provide effective information services to increase students' employment opportunities.

Earnestly implement national policies to improve school - running conditions and create a good environment for personnel training.

3. Social Environment Optimization

Create a good public opinion atmosphere to improve the social identity of vocational education, guide the public to treat vocational education equally with general education, and distinguish between different - sized vocational training institutions.

Reform the education enrollment system to achieve the same admission batch and fair competition. Establish a security system for school - enterprise cooperation to implement talent training models for students to gain practical experience and supply high - quality talents to society.

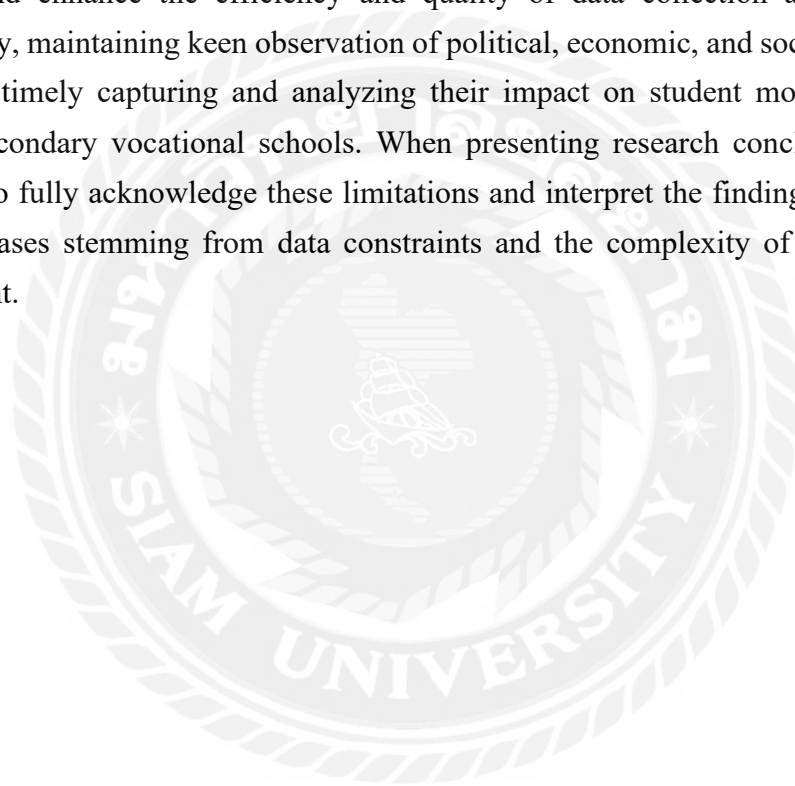
5.3 Further Study

This study has several limitations. While conducting an in-depth analysis of the motivations of secondary vocational school students, certain research constraints were unavoidable. One primary limitation is the simplicity of the sample selection, which does not account for the varied impacts of different socioeconomic backgrounds on secondary vocational education across regions. The study was conducted at Xiangdu Secondary Vocational School in Changsha City, which may only reflect the perspectives of students in that specific region, thereby lacking national representativeness. Additionally, the study may not comprehensively address the primary factors influencing the motivation of secondary vocational school students. The motivations of students in different types of secondary vocational schools (e.g.,

technical versus artistic schools) may vary, but this study might not encompass all such variations.

Student motivation is influenced by numerous external factors, such as family background and social environment, which can fluctuate over time. The complex interactions and influence mechanisms among these factors are challenging to fully control. Therefore, this study must thoroughly consider the impact of these external variables and endeavor to understand their mechanisms of action on student motivation.

To mitigate these limitations, it is essential to continuously refine research methods and enhance the efficiency and quality of data collection and analysis. Additionally, maintaining keen observation of political, economic, and social factors is crucial for timely capturing and analyzing their impact on student motivations for entering secondary vocational schools. When presenting research conclusions, it is important to fully acknowledge these limitations and interpret the findings cautiously to avoid biases stemming from data constraints and the complexity of the external environment.



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Appendix

Questionnaire on Student Enrollment Motivation

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you very much for taking the time out of your busy schedule to participate in this Interviews survey. Thank you very much for your participation.

Part 1: Basic Information

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other

Age:

- Under 16
- 16-18
- 19-21
- Over 21

Part 2: Student Enrollment Motivation Measurement Item

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using a 5-point Likert scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Personal Preference (PP)

Q1. I am motivated to enroll in vocational education because it helps me prepare for my future career.	1	2	3	4	5
Q2. Enrolling in my preferred major improves my personal abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
Q3. My chosen major aligns well with my interests and hobbies.	1	2	3	4	5
Q4. I choose vocational education to satisfy my curiosity about specific skills and knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
Q5. Choosing a major that aligns with my interests is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5

Family Educational Environment (FEE)

Q6. Parents require me to attend vocational school.	1	2	3	4	5
Q7. Economic circumstances influenced my choice to pursue vocational education.	1	2	3	4	5

School Competitiveness (SC)

Q8. The vocational school provides good job placement opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
Q9. The support from my school staff motivates me to enroll in vocational education.	1	2	3	4	5

Q10. I believe the courses offered in vocational school are more relevant to my career goals.	1	2	3	4	5
Q11. I prefer vocational education to avoid the academic pressure of high school.	1	2	3	4	5

Social Needs (SN)

Q12. It will be easy to find a job after graduation.	1	2	3	4	5
Q13. My family assists me in finding job opportunities after I graduate from vocational school.	1	2	3	4	5
Q14. I am pursuing vocational education to enhance my educational qualifications for future employment.	1	2	3	4	5
Q15. I am motivated to enroll in vocational education because I believe it will make finding a job easier after graduation.	1	2	3	4	5

Motivations of Students to Enroll (EN)

Q16. My usual academic performance is poor, so I cannot enter high school.	1	2	3	4	5
Q17. I did not perform well on the entrance exam and could not get into my preferred high school.	1	2	3	4	5
Q18. Other factors that are not based on my own wishes influence my decision.	1	2	3	4	5
Q19. I want to escape from studying.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation!