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Enhancing College Students' Awareness of Anti-Scam through Social Work—A Case Study of the "Scam-Spotting Team" Group

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Abstract: ***In the era of rapid internet development, online fraud methods are constantly evolving, posing a serious threat to the security of property and personal information. College students, due to their limited social experience and relatively weak awareness of prevention, are particularly vulnerable to online fraud. While many universities attach great importance to campus anti-fraud education, traditional educational and promotional methods have many limitations. Integrating social work into college students' anti-fraud education can not only effectively meet the needs of universities and innovate educational methods, but also effectively enhance students' anti-fraud awareness and effectively protect their legitimate rights and interests. This study focuses on the "Smart Fraud Detection Team" group practice, exploring the methods and techniques of social work-involved anti-fraud education for college students, as well as the experimental results and empirical results. The study found that incorporating a group work model into college students' anti-fraud education is highly consistent with the inherent needs of college students. Through various activities such as case analysis, scenario simulations, and interactive games, it fosters an atmosphere of mutual support, enabling group members to learn from each other and effectively transfer and apply anti-fraud knowledge and skills, stimulate students' enthusiasm and initiative, and effectively address the limitations of traditional educational methods. The pre- and post-test results show that college students have significantly improved their anti-fraud awareness, fraud knowledge, and prevention capabilities. We advocate for enhancing college students' anti-fraud awareness through the use of interdisciplinary and diversified anti-fraud education methods. Leveraging professional social work methods can provide useful practical references and lessons for anti-fraud education in colleges and universities.***

Keywords: Social Work; College Students; Group Work; Anti-Fraud Education.

1. RESEARCH ORIGIN

April 9, 2021, Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, President of the State, and Chairman of the Central Military Commission, issued important instructions on combating and managing telecom network fraud crimes, emphasizing that : "In recent years, all regions and departments have implemented the decisions and deployments of the CPC Central Committee, and have continued to combat and manage telecom network fraud crimes, achieving initial results. We must adhere to the people-centered approach, coordinate development and security, strengthen the concept of systems and legal thinking, focus on source control and comprehensive governance, adhere to joint efforts and collective prevention and control, fully implement various measures for combating, preventing, controlling, and managing, and the main responsibilities of regulators in the financial, communications, and Internet industries, strengthen the construction of legal systems, strengthen social publicity and education for prevention, promote international law enforcement cooperation, and resolutely curb the frequent and high incidence of such crimes, and make new and greater contributions to building a safer and more law-abiding China." [1] On the morning of May 27, Li Guozhong, spokesperson for the Ministry of Public Security of China, reported at a press conference that in the past five years, public security organs across the country have cracked 1.945 million telecom network fraud cases, and the upward trend of telecom network fraud crimes has been effectively curbed [2].

Among the victims of telecommunication network fraud, college students have gradually become the main target of criminals. According to relevant research and surveys, among the victims of telecommunication network fraud, college students have been the "largest group of victims" in China for five consecutive years [3]. Telecommunication fraud occurs frequently in colleges and universities and has become a potential factor threatening student safety and campus stability. The main reasons for college students to be defrauded are: First, college students lack safety awareness. In a simple environment, lack of corresponding safety awareness makes it difficult to have a clear distinction between various frauds [4]. Second, the fraud methods are diverse. In recent years, fraud cases in colleges and universities have occurred frequently, and the fraud methods have changed in various ways. Third, there are loopholes in the management of colleges and universities. At present, most colleges and universities have an open management model, which allows fraudsters to easily enter the campus and even the student dormitory to commit fraud [5]. Fraudulent behavior not only causes direct property losses, but also causes serious psychological trauma to students. At present, the prevention and crackdown measures of colleges and universities against telecommunication network fraud are mainly reflected in publicity and education, mainly in the form of holding safety education theme class meetings, safety education training and daily case warnings [6]. However, these methods have many limitations and it is difficult to achieve ideal educational results. In general, there are many shortcomings and challenges in the current anti-fraud education for college students, which makes it difficult for anti-fraud education to fully meet actual needs. Further improvements are needed to enhance college students' anti-fraud capabilities.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Demand Survey

Based on literature research, field interviews, and classroom surveys, this article systematically analyzes the urgent need for anti-fraud education among college students. The findings reveal that college students lack sufficient knowledge of fraud methods, possess incomplete knowledge of prevention techniques, and possess weak legal awareness. Existing education, characterized by its single format and outdated content, fails to meet student needs. There is an urgent need to develop an integrated education system encompassing "cognition, skills, and awareness."

2.2 Pre-test of Group Members

To comprehensively assess the team members' awareness of telecom fraud prevention, a systematic pre-test analysis was conducted. The pre-test revealed that only 33.33% of students were actively interested in learning. They were relatively aware of scams like "fake orders for cashback" and "impersonating customer service," but less so of "pig-killing scams" and "campus loan cancellations." Furthermore, their recognition rate in simulated fraud scenarios was low, indicating a critical need for improvement in their prevention capabilities.

2.3 Research Methods and Framework

2.3.1 Research Methods

This study, based on the practical activities of the anti-fraud team of Y College, the "Smart Eyes Fraud Detection Team," employed group work methods to conduct a two-month series of activities. Using field research methods, a comprehensive approach encompassed participatory observation, interviews, and questionnaires to collect comprehensive data. The study comprised two groups: the social work team responsible for implementing the activities and the recruited team members.

2.3.2 Research Framework

guided primarily by social learning theory and group dynamics theory, focuses on university students. Relying on the "Smart Fraud Detection Team" initiative, the study explores the application of social work methods in anti-fraud education for university students. Through designed group activities, the study helps students understand telecommunications fraud tactics and enhance their awareness of prevention. By leveraging group interaction to leverage peer education and build mutual support networks, the study aims to advance anti-fraud education from theory to practice, ultimately creating a replicable model for university anti-fraud practice.

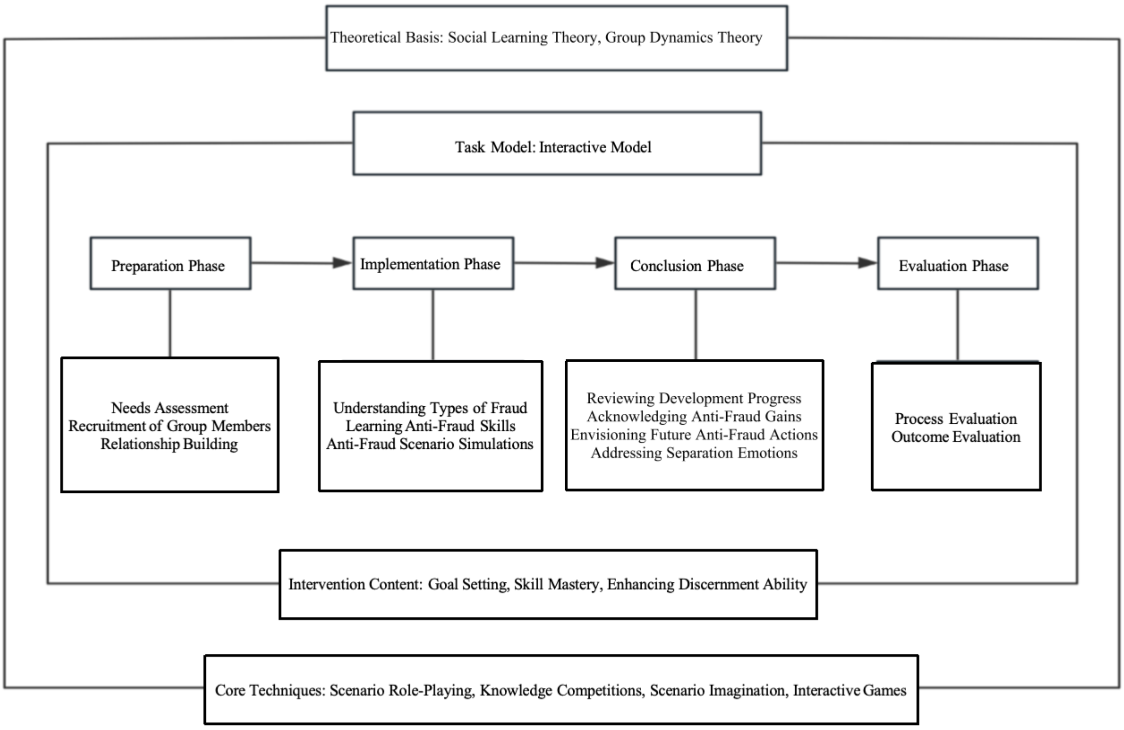

Figure 1: Anti-fraud team service framework

3. THE PRACTICAL PROCESS OF THE "SMART EYES FRAUD DETECTION TEAM" EDUCATION AND GROWTH GROUP

3.1 Introduction to the Group

3.1.1 Group Overview

This group is an educational and growth-oriented group. Through group activities, it aims to enhance members' anti-fraud awareness and skills, thereby achieving self-education. Based on the group's type, nature, and activity objectives, the recruitment criteria are as follows: university students; individuals or friends who have experienced fraud; possessing certain anti-fraud awareness and skills; and a strong interest in anti-fraud issues. The final seven members include two males and five females, ensuring the group's professionalism and practicality.

3.1.2 Group Goals

3.1.2.1 Overall Objective

Through group activities, group members can comprehensively improve their anti-fraud awareness, capabilities and knowledge dissemination, forming a solid anti-fraud barrier, and widely disseminate anti-fraud knowledge to enhance the anti-fraud capabilities of social groups.

3.1.2.2 Sub-targets

Improve team members' anti-fraud awareness, enable them to have a clear understanding of common fraud methods, and enhance their vigilance.

Enhance team members' ability to deal with fraud and master practical prevention techniques and response strategies. They focus on four areas: online, phone, text messaging, and daily life.

Lead team members to form a cohesive team, expand the social support network, and encourage team members to share the knowledge and experience they have learned about preventing telecommunications fraud with their family and friends [7].

3.1.3 Theoretical basis

This study is based on Lewin's theory of group dynamics. It focuses on the interplay between group behavior, attitudes, and beliefs, emphasizing the importance of group norms, role divisions, and cohesion in influencing member behavior and group development. By sharing their own experiences or those of their loved ones who have been scammed, group members foster an atmosphere of mutual influence and shared learning, which helps strengthen group cohesion. This allows group members to more effectively enhance their anti-fraud awareness and skills, and to acquire more practical anti-fraud knowledge and skills.

3.2 Intervention Implementation Process

The Fraud Detection Team successfully conducted five group activities. Initially, through icebreaker games and rule-setting, they effectively established trust and clarified activity objectives, laying the foundation for subsequent intervention. Mid-term activities focused on analyzing fraud cases, conducting scenario simulations, and conducting knowledge competitions, significantly improving team members' fraud identification and response skills, and shifting their role from social workers to facilitators. Later, through review and presentation of results, they consolidated learning outcomes, properly handled parting emotions, and encouraged team members to incorporate anti-fraud knowledge into their daily lives, ultimately achieving the group's goals.

Table 1: Anti-fraud team activity table

Number of activities	Activity Objectives	Main activities
first	Team members get to know each other; conduct pre-test analysis on fraud awareness; establish team rules	Ice-breaking games; clarifying the purpose of the activity; establishing group rules; pre-testing anti-fraud awareness and cognition; and setting expectations for the activity.
Second time	Strengthen understanding of fraud and enhance awareness of fraud prevention	Review the content of the event; analyze the diversity and complexity of fraud methods; watch anti-fraud film clips; share fraud knowledge and suspected fraud experiences.
The third time	Improve anti-fraud capabilities and learn fraud response strategies.	Review anti-fraud skills; use scenario simulation to identify fraud methods, propose response strategies and share experiences; summarize anti-fraud experiences.
Fourth time	Strengthen the learning and understanding of anti-fraud techniques and improve prevention capabilities.	Fraud knowledge competition consolidates anti-fraud knowledge; anti-fraud skills training.
Fifth	Show what you have learned about anti-fraud.	Review the types of fraud and anti-fraud techniques and conduct post-tests; share feelings and gains, and the social worker summarizes the activities and takes group photos.

4. EVALUATION AND RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Group Intervention

4.1.1 Process Evaluation

Through five sessions, the group established a closed learning loop of "experience-reflection-application." Member participation shifted from passive waiting to active participation, with no absences or lateness throughout the entire process and a significant increase in speaking up, demonstrating endogenous motivation for growth. Methods such as case studies, scenario simulations, and interactive games effectively activated the learning experience, fostering an anti-fraud learning ecosystem where social workers and team members can jointly enhance their capabilities. Data demonstrates that group activities effectively achieve the dual goals of knowledge transfer and capacity building.

4.1.2 Results Evaluation

Group members have shown significant improvements in fraud identification accuracy, personal information protection awareness, and response capabilities.

(1) Increased willingness to learn: 77.78% of participants actively learned anti-fraud knowledge, 22.22% expressed unconditional willingness to learn, and 0% expressed negative willingness. Compared to the pre-test data, there was a significant improvement in positive learning attitudes.

(2) Improved awareness of fraud: 33.33% of respondents had a "complete understanding" of common fraud methods, while 55.56% had a "basic understanding". Their cognitive level was significantly improved, verifying the two-way empowerment value of case analysis and interactive discussion in group activities, and achieving knowledge transfer and capacity improvement.

(3) Improved anti-fraud capabilities: The mastery rate of telephone fraud prevention knowledge reached 100%, and the actual ability to identify and respond to fraud was effectively enhanced, demonstrating the effectiveness of the group's work model.

4.2 Research Conclusions

4.2.1 Group work model empowers college students' anti-fraud literacy

Social work intervention, centered around a group work model, breaks through the limitations of traditional anti-fraud education. Through diverse activities such as case review and scenario simulation, a closed loop of "experience-reflection-application" is established. This drives a shift in students' anti-fraud cognition from "fragmented" to "systematic," and their behavior from "passive defense" to "active prevention." This provides a replicable model for anti-fraud efforts in universities and strengthens their campus protection network.

4.2.2 The dominant position is prominent, and the endogenous growth momentum is strong and lasting

Team members deeply engaged in the entire process, shifting from passive waiting to active driving. They proactively explored their experiences, spontaneously formed study groups, and evolved from being "educated" to "builders of the anti-fraud learning community. " This solidified their ability to proactively learn and grow collaboratively, injecting lasting momentum into anti-fraud education and driving long-term improvements in awareness and behavior.

4.2.3 Group interaction stimulates educational vitality, and two-way empowerment broadens the path of campus anti-fraud.

The team members and social workers use anti-fraud as a link to build a two-way growth field. Social workers use professional skills to guide team members to explore resources and understand needs; team members broaden their thinking in interactive discussions, improve their knowledge system and analytical ability, and improve their professional ability as social workers. Promote student organizations to play a demonstration role, such as establishing student clubs with the goal of anti-fraud propaganda, carrying out various activities on campus to prevent telecommunications fraud, and achieving full coverage of anti-fraud education in all areas and all personnel on campus [8]. Realize the radiation of anti-fraud knowledge from the "group field" to the "campus field", the role of team members changes from "learners" to "disseminators", and social workers change from "implementers" to "companions + builders", and precipitate the "two-way empowerment + wide dissemination" anti-fraud model.

4.3 Reflection

4.3.1 Shortcomings in activity design

Coverage of emerging fraud is insufficient, and the differentiated needs of students in different majors and grades are not fully addressed. Dynamic tracking of fraud trends and layered design of anti-fraud content are needed to improve the precision of anti-fraud education. Case sharing sessions are prone to being overwhelmed by personal experiences, and scenario simulations fail to adequately address the fraud variants raised by students. Social workers should be strengthened in their on-the-spot response, transforming "unexpected" situations into teaching resources and optimizing the time allocation of each session.

4.3.2 Insufficient coverage and long-term effectiveness

Reliance on secondary dissemination by group members leads to information attenuation. It's necessary to collaborate with campus media to promote high-quality content, and to leverage classes and clubs to launch "anti-fraud competitions" and "challenge weeks" to expand coverage. Independent study groups are difficult to sustain after the activities conclude. An "anti-fraud practice points system" can be established, integrating curriculum ideological and political education with the Security Office to cultivate a "student anti-fraud lecturer team" to establish a long-term mechanism for anti-fraud learning.

5. IMPLICATIONS AND OUTLOOK

5.1 Building a Multi-dimensional Anti-fraud Education System in Colleges and Universities

To overcome the current limitations of anti-fraud education in universities, efforts should be made to build a collaborative "1+X+N" education system, encompassing both on-campus and off-campus activities. This system, with the university-level Smart Anti-Fraud Education Center ("1") as the core platform, will coordinate and plan university-wide anti-fraud efforts; connect the various colleges ("X") to form a core force; and cover key "N" nodes, including on-campus locations like cafeterias and dormitories, as well as off-campus communities. By integrating anti-fraud education into the curriculum, establishing interactive online columns, establishing physical promotional corners, and strengthening collaboration between families, schools, police, and the community, a complete educational closed loop will be established, achieving comprehensive penetration of anti-fraud education.

5.2 Innovate Anti-fraud Education Methods and Strengthen the Establishment of Anti-fraud Scenarios

To address the lack of appeal of traditional anti-fraud education methods, we should vigorously promote innovative educational methods and strengthen the development of anti-fraud scenarios. Leveraging modern information technology, we should develop diverse anti-fraud education tools, such as short videos and online games. These tools should be promoted through platforms like WeChat official accounts and TikTok, allowing students to learn about anti-fraud through entertainment. Simulated fraud scenarios should be set up in N selected suitable locations, with targeted scenarios designed to encompass various fraud types. For example, scenarios modeled after online fraud scenarios should be used to allow students to conduct immersive response drills in these simulated environments, enhancing their ability to discern fraud.

5.3 Focus on Key Groups and Implement Differentiated Education

Given the large and diverse student population, anti-fraud education must be targeted and implemented with a precise focus on key groups. Regarding grade level, younger students will focus on cultivating basic awareness, while older students will incorporate intensive training on employment and entrepreneurship risks. Regarding majors, education should be tailored to the specific characteristics of each major. For example, business and management students will focus on preventing financial fraud, while science and engineering students will focus on identifying technological fraud. Regarding gender, female students will be strengthened in protecting against romantic relationships, while male students will focus on preventing gaming and online lending fraud, achieving truly targeted measures.

5.4 Deepen Publicity Efforts and Create a Nationwide Anti-fraud Atmosphere

In today's world of diversified information dissemination, improving the effectiveness of anti-fraud education is crucial for building a nationwide anti-fraud defense. To build a solid nationwide anti-fraud defense, we need to enhance publicity efforts in three key areas: first, enriching the content of publicity and thoroughly exposing the social harm of fraud; second, expanding publicity channels, achieving comprehensive coverage through campus activities, public transportation, and community outreach; and third, strengthening inter-departmental collaboration to create a joint publicity force, enhance the authority and influence of publicity, and ultimately foster a strong anti-fraud atmosphere throughout society.

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