

Research on the Construction of Psychological Education System in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract

At the critical stage of advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through Chinese-style modernization, universities, as the core base for talent cultivation, bear the important mission of fostering “new-era individuals capable of shouldering the great task of national rejuvenation” through their psychological education system construction. This study integrates theoretical resources from Marxist humanistic theory, traditional Chinese cultural thought, and positive psychology to establish a four-dimensional integrated framework of psychological education encompassing “value guidance, full participation, preventive intervention, and support mechanisms”. It proposes to improve organizational leadership mechanisms to clarify responsibilities and divisions of labor, refine collaborative working mechanisms to integrate resources from families, schools, and communities, innovate preventive intervention mechanisms to achieve targeted measures, and strengthen operational support mechanisms to consolidate implementation foundations, ultimately realizing the deep integration of psychological education with ideological and political education.

Keywords

College Psychological Education, Integration of Mental and Moral Education, System Construction, Historical Reflection, Mechanism Optimization

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background

With the in-depth advancement of economic globalization and social informatization, contemporary college students are facing multiple challenges such as academic competition, employment pressure, and complex interpersonal relationships, and mental health problems

show a trend of diversification and complication. Against this background, the state attaches great importance to the psychological education work in colleges and universities^[1]. The “Special Action Plan for Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Mental Health Work of Students in the New Era (2023-2025)” issued in 2023 further clearly requires improving

the psychological education mechanism and enhancing students' mental health literacy^[2]. However, there is still a gap between the strong promotion at the policy level and the implementation effect at the practical level. How to organically integrate mental health education and ideological and political education has become a core problem in the construction of the psychological education system in colleges and universities.

2. Internal Tensions in the Psychological Education System of Colleges and Universities

2.1. Goal Tension: Conflict between Individual Mental Health and Group Ideological

From a historical perspective, the mental health movement in the Republic of China period not only pursued "individual mental health" but also served "the transformation of national character". In the new era, psychological education not only requires "improving students' mental health level" but also needs to "cultivate new-era talents who take on the responsibility of national rejuvenation"^[3]. This dual goal leads to deviations in practice: some colleges and universities overemphasize ideological guidance and politicize psychological problems, some colleges and universities focus on technical intervention and ignore value guidance, making it difficult to achieve the organic unity of "nurturing the mind" and "nurturing morality".

2.2. Method Tension: Disconnection between Professional Technology and Localized Practice

The psychological education in colleges and universities draws on Western psychological counseling technologies (such as cognitive behavioral therapy and psychoanalytic therapy), but these technologies are based on the Western cultural context and are different from the concepts of "self-cultivation" and "mind management" in traditional Chinese culture^[4]. Psychologists in the Republic of China period once tried to integrate the thoughts of traditional Chinese medicine and Confucianism (for example, Ding Zan used the concept of "the mean" to explain psychological balance), but no systematic results were formed. At present, some colleges and universities mechanically apply Western theories and ignore the

psychological characteristics and cultural background of Chinese students, resulting in poor educational effects.

2.3. Subject Tension: Role Conflict between Professional Teachers and Ideological and Political Workers

According to policy requirements, the psychological education in colleges and universities needs to be jointly participated in by mental health teachers, counselors, and ideological and political course teachers. However, there are professional differences between the two groups: mental health teachers focus on technical intervention and emphasize "value neutrality"^[5], counselors and ideological and political course teachers focus on ideological guidance and pay attention to "value guidance". The phenomenon of "psychologists concurrently serving as moral education officials" in the Republic of China period is manifested as the practical dilemma of "counselors undertaking psychological counseling duties" at present. Due to the lack of professional training, counselors are unable to effectively deal with complex psychological problems, and may also confuse the boundary between ideological education and psychological intervention.

3. Practical Difficulties in the Construction of the Psychological Education System of Colleges and Universities

3.1. Talent Dilemma: Shortage of Teachers and Insufficient Professional Ability

Although the policy requires the allocation of full-time mental health teachers at a teacher-student ratio of 1:4000, a survey in 2023 shows that only 41.67% of colleges and universities meet this standard, and 8.33% of colleges and universities have a teacher-student ratio lower than 1:5000. At the same time, the professional ability of teachers is uneven: more than two-thirds of counselors are not from psychology majors and lack systematic psychological counseling training, some mental health teachers have not received continuing education for a long time, and their knowledge update is lagging behind, making it difficult for them to deal with complex psychological problems.

3.2. Effectiveness Dilemma: Disconnection between Educational Effects and Students' Needs

From the feedback of students, 69.23% of students believe that mental health courses “can answer some questions”, but only 28.3% of students think that “the course content is close to actual needs”. In terms of consulting services, some colleges and universities have the problem of “difficulty in making appointments”, with an average waiting time of 7 - 10 days, the consulting content focuses on emotional counseling, and the ability to solve practical problems such as academic pressure and employment anxiety is insufficient, making it difficult to meet the diverse needs of students.

3.3. Coordination Dilemma: Imperfect Multi-Subject Linkage Mechanism

The psychological education in colleges and universities involves multiple departments such as the Student Affairs Department, the Mental Health Center, the Academic Affairs Office, and various colleges and departments, but there is a lack of effective coordination between departments. For example, the Mental Health Center and the Academic Affairs Office lack communication in curriculum setting, leading to repetition or disconnection between mental health courses and ideological and political courses, the information sharing between colleges and departments and the Mental Health Center is insufficient, making it difficult to dynamically track students' psychological status. In addition, the coordination between schools and families is insufficient. Some parents do not attach enough importance to students' psychological problems and even refuse to cooperate with interventions, affecting the educational effect.

3.4. Guarantee Dilemma: Insufficient System and Resource Support

At the system level, some colleges and universities have not established an assessment mechanism for psychological education, and regard psychological education as a “soft task”, there is a lack of special funds for psychological education. A survey in 2023 shows that only 35% of colleges and universities have set up special funds for mental health education, and the funds of other

colleges and universities are allocated from the funds for ideological and political work, which is difficult to meet the work needs. At the resource level, the psychological counseling rooms of some colleges and universities have insufficient space and outdated equipment^[6], and lack professional venues such as emotional catharsis rooms and group counseling rooms, affecting the service quality.

4. Construction Framework of the Psychological Education System in Colleges and Universities

Based on historical reflection and realistic examination, this study constructs a four-dimensional integrated framework of the psychological education system in colleges and universities, namely “value guidance-full-staff collaboration - prevention and intervention-guarantee support”. Each dimension is interrelated and mutually supportive, forming a systematic and complete educational pattern.

4.1. Value Guidance Dimension: Clarifying the Direction and Goal of Psychological

Education Guided by the Marxist theory of human studies, the fundamental goal of “all-round development of people” is taken. It is necessary not only to improve students' mental health literacy (such as emotional regulation ability and stress coping ability) but also to cultivate students' ideals, beliefs, and moral qualities (such as patriotism and collectivism). By exploring the psychological education resources in excellent traditional Chinese culture (such as Confucian “self-cultivation” and Taoist “following nature”) and integrating positive psychology theories, students' healthy mentality of “self-respect, self-confidence, rationality, calmness, and positivity” is cultivated^[7]. In curriculum teaching, socialist core values are integrated. For example, “integrity” and “friendliness” are emphasized in the “interpersonal relationship” module, in practical activities, “red psychological education” activities are carried out, such as organizing students to visit revolutionary memorial halls to stimulate positive psychological qualities through the struggle stories of revolutionary ancestors, in consulting services, students are guided to combine personal development with national needs to alleviate

negative mentalities such as “empty heart disease” and “involution”.

4.2. Full-Staff Collaboration Dimension: Constructing a Multi-Subject Linkage

Educational Network An internal school collaboration mechanism is established, which is “under the unified leadership of the Party Committee, coordinated by the Student Affairs Department, supported by the Mental Health Center professionally, implemented specifically by colleges and departments, and jointly participated by counselors, ideological and political course teachers, and professional teachers”^[8]. The responsibilities of each subject are clarified: the Mental Health Center is responsible for professional consultation, crisis intervention, counselors are responsible for the preliminary screening of psychological problems and daily counseling, ideological and political course teachers integrate psychological education content into their courses, professional teachers pay attention to students’ psychological status in teaching, forming a “full-staff education” pattern. A “school-family-society” collaborative education network is constructed. At the family level, through parent - teacher meetings and family education guidance, parents’ attention to mental health is enhanced, and a regular communication mechanism between schools and families is established to share information on students’ psychological status in a timely manner. At the social level, cooperation with mental health centers and psychological counseling institutions is carried out to establish a referral mechanism to provide professional treatment for students, community resources are used to carry out “psychological education entering the community” activities, such as organizing students to participate in community psychological volunteer services to improve their practical ability.

4.3. Prevention and Intervention Dimension: Establishing a Full-Process Risk Prevention and Control System

Freshmen’s psychological surveys are carried out, and tools such as the “Chinese College Students’ Mental Health Screening Scale” are used to establish students’ psychological files, regular mental health evaluations (such as once a semester) are conducted to dynamically track

changes in students’ psychology. At the same time, through mental health courses, lectures, and publicity activities, mental health knowledge is popularized, students’ psychological literacy is improved, and the occurrence of psychological problems is prevented. A hierarchical intervention system of “Level 1 Early Warning (Dormitory) - Level 2 Intervention (Class) - Level 3 Support (College) - Level 4 Crisis (School)” is established. For students with mild psychological distress, counselors provide counseling, for students with moderate psychological problems, the Mental Health Center provides professional consultation, for students with severe psychological crises, they are promptly referred to mental health institutions, and follow - up tracking is done well. In addition, classified interventions are carried out for different groups (such as freshmen, graduates, and students from economically disadvantaged families). For example, “employment psychological counseling” is provided for graduates, and “psychological support group” services are provided for students from economically disadvantaged families. A psychological education effect evaluation mechanism is established. Through questionnaires, interviews, and other methods, feedback from students on courses and consulting services is collected, third - party evaluation institutions are introduced to conduct an objective evaluation of the operation effect of the psychological education system^[9]. Based on the evaluation results, the educational content and methods are adjusted in a timely manner, such as optimizing the curriculum setting and improving the consulting service process, forming a closed - loop management of “monitoring - intervention - evaluation - improvement”.

5. Optimization Path of the Psychological Education System in Colleges and Universities

5.1. Improving the Organizational Leadership Mechanism and Clarifying the Division of Responsibilities and Rights

5.1.1. Strengthening Party Committee Leadership

The Party Committee of colleges and universities incorporates psychological education into the overall development plan of the school, and holds Party Committee meetings regularly to study the psychological

education work, a “Leading Group for Psychological Education Work” is established, with the Secretary of the Party Committee as the group leader, the vice president in charge as the deputy group leader, and the heads of the Student Affairs Department, the Mental Health Center, the Academic Affairs Office, and other departments as members to coordinate and promote the psychological education work.

5.1.2. Clarifying Departmental Responsibilities

The Student Affairs Department is responsible for coordinating the psychological education work and formulating work plans and assessment methods, the Mental Health Center is responsible for professional consultation, crisis intervention, and teacher training, the Academic Affairs Office is responsible for incorporating mental health courses into the teaching plan and ensuring the course hours and quality, each college and department is responsible for implementing the psychological education work of its own unit, establishing a psychological education working group of the college and department, with the Secretary of the General Party Branch of the college and department as the group leader, and counselors and professional teachers as members to carry out daily psychological education activities.

5.1.3. Improving the Decision - Making Mechanism

A “Joint Meeting System for Psychological Education Work” is established, which holds a meeting once a month to coordinate and solve problems in the work, a “Student Psychological Education Committee” is set up, composed of student representatives and the person in charge of the mental health association, to participate in the formulation of psychological education policies and effect evaluation, and improve students’ participation and right to speak.

5.2. Improving the Collaborative Working Mechanism and Integrating Educational Resources

5.2.1. Internal School Collaboration: Breaking Departmental Barriers

The “College and University Psychological Education Information Platform” is established to integrate students’ psychological information from the Student Affairs Department, the Mental Health Center, colleges and

departments, and other departments to realize information sharing. In terms of curriculum construction, the Mental Health Center and ideological and political course teachers jointly develop characteristic courses of “integration of psychological education and ideological and political education”, such as “Positive Psychology and Socialist Core Values”, in practical activities, the Student Affairs Department and the Mental Health Center jointly carry out the “Mental Health Culture Festival” to enhance the influence of the activity.

5.2.2. School - Family Collaboration: Building a Communication Bridge

The “School - Family Psychological Education APP” is developed to push information on students’ psychological status and mental health knowledge in a timely manner, an online parent - teacher meeting is held once a semester to explain students’ psychological characteristics and family education methods, a “Parent Psychological Hotline” is established, and mental health teachers provide consulting services for parents to guide them in dealing with students’ psychological problems.

5.2.3. School - Society Collaboration: Expanding the Educational Space

Cooperation agreements are signed with local mental health centers to establish a “green channel” for prioritizing the admission of college students with psychological crises, “psychological education practice bases” are established in cooperation with communities to organize students to participate in community psychological volunteer services, social psychological counseling experts are invited to the campus to give lectures and provide supervision to improve the level of psychological education in colleges and universities.

5.3. Innovating the Prevention and Intervention Mechanism and Improving the Precision of Education

5.3.1. Optimizing Screening Tools

Combined with the psychological characteristics of Chinese students, the “Chinese College Students’ Mental Health Screening Scale” is revised, and dimensions such as “cultural adaptation” and “interpersonal relationship” are added, big data technology is introduced to analyze the psychological

signals in students' campus card consumption, library borrowing, network behavior, and other data to realize the early identification of psychological problems.

5.3.2. Innovating Intervention Methods

"Localized psychological counseling technologies" are developed, such as the "cognition - behavior - self - cultivation" integrated therapy that integrates Confucian "self-cultivation" thoughts, virtual reality (VR) technology is used to carry out "social anxiety exposure therapy" and "post - traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) intervention", "micro- courses on psychological education" are offered to provide students with convenient channels for learning mental health knowledge through short videos, live broadcasts, and other forms.

5.3.3. Strengthening Crisis Management

The "Emergency Plan for Psychological Crisis Intervention in Colleges and Universities" is formulated to clarify the process and responsible subjects of crisis identification, reporting, intervention, and referral. A "Rapid Response Team for Psychological Crisis" is established, composed of mental health teachers, counselors, school doctors, etc., on duty 24 hours a day to deal with crisis events in a timely manner, the coordination with public security, medical, and other departments is strengthened, and a "college - public security - hospital" crisis disposal linkage mechanism is established to ensure the rapid and effective resolution of crisis events.

6. Conclusions and Prospects

6.1. Research Conclusions

By sorting out the historical evolution of the psychological education system in colleges and universities, this study reveals its internal logic from the "integration of mental health and moral education" in the Republic of China period to the "integration of mental and moral education" in the new era, and points out that "goal tension", "method tension", and "subject tension" are the structural contradictions throughout^[10]. Through realistic examination, it is found that the current psychological education in colleges and universities has formed a multi-dimensional policy network and achieved initial results in curriculum construction, consulting services, prevention

and intervention, etc., but still faces practical difficulties such as talent shortage, insufficient coordination, and weak guarantees. Based on this, this study constructs a four-dimensional integrated psychological education system framework of "value guidance-full-staff collaboration-prevention and intervention- guarantee support", and puts forward optimization paths from four dimensions: organizational leadership, collaborative work, prevention and intervention, and operation guarantee. This system framework not only absorbs historical experience but also responds to practical needs, emphasizes the organic unity of "nurturing the mind" and "nurturing morality"^[11], and provides a systematic solution for the practice of psychological education in colleges and universities.

6.2. Research Prospects

In the future, the construction of the psychological education system in colleges and universities needs to focus on three directions: first, deepen localized research, combine traditional Chinese culture with the contemporary social context, and develop psychological education theories and methods more suitable for Chinese students, second, strengthen technological empowerment, use big data, artificial intelligence, and other technologies to improve the accuracy of psychological problem identification and the effectiveness of intervention, third, expand the international perspective, learn from the advanced experience of foreign mental health services, and at the same time, promote the Chinese psychological education model to the international community, contributing Chinese wisdom to the global college mental health education.

The construction of the psychological education system in colleges and universities is a long-term systematic project that requires the joint efforts of the government, colleges and universities, families, and society. Only by continuously optimizing the system design, improving the operation mechanism, and strengthening the guarantee support can the in - depth integration of "nurturing the mind" and "nurturing morality" be realized, providing a solid guarantee for cultivating new - era talents with sound personalities, firm beliefs, and positive attitudes, and injecting spiritual motivation into the construction of Chinese - style modernization.

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