

---

# Problems and Developmental Approaches to Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students in China

**Liuling Tian**

Department of Fundamental Education, Wuxi Taihu University, Wuxi, China

**Email address:**

18762621979@163.com

**To cite this article:**

Liuling Tian. Problems and Developmental Approaches to Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students in China. *Higher Education Research*. Vol. 4, No. 5, 2019, pp. 62-69. doi: 10.11648/j.her.20190405.11

**Received:** September 10, 2019; **Accepted:** September 30, 2019; **Published:** October 15, 2019

---

**Abstract:** Undergraduate mental health education is not only an important means to promote the development of mental health and the psychological well-being of undergraduate students, but also an important strategy so that China can realize the quality of undergraduate education and promote the holistic development of undergraduate students. However, there are still many problems in mental health education for undergraduate students in China. For example, Chinese mental health education for undergraduate students lacks independent development space, localized basic theory, scientific management system, comprehensive curriculum system, professional faculty and professional service system. These problems affect the realization of the goals of mental health education to a certain extent. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the causes of the above problems, and to propose the development path and coping strategies for mental health education for undergraduate students in China. In order to achieve this goal, by analyzing and interpreting the official documents of the Chinese government and the Ministry of Education, this study seeks to show the characteristics and current situation of the mental health education for undergraduate students in China. Furthermore, based on the author's own long-term teaching experience and the research results of other scholars, it seeks to reveal the reasons for the above problems existing in the mental health education for undergraduate students. On this basis, this study will propose rationalization suggestions for improving the mental health education for undergraduate students in China. This study believes that scientific concepts of education, effective administrative departments, optimized curriculum systems, professional faculty, and a comprehensive service system may contribute to the success of implementing mental health education for undergraduate students.

**Keywords:** Mental Health Education, Mental Health of Undergraduates, Systems of Educational Administration, Psychological Consultation, Psychological Intervention

---

## 1. Introduction

Currently, rapid economic development in China has aggravated industry competition and social stratification, and undergraduate students at universities and colleges shoulder heavier mental burdens. Undergraduate students' mental health issues, along with their undesired consequences, have gradually received widespread attention in society. This is because these issues are associated not only with the students' own development but also with the development of China and its social stability. Therefore, mental health education for undergraduate students has already become an important instructional task in higher education in China. However, numerous problems still exist in this field and they seriously affect the development and efficacy of implementing mental

health education for undergraduate students. For example, some scholars have found that: (1) Chinese universities usually regard the mental health problems of undergraduate students as mental illnesses, and use methods for treating mental illness to solve mental health problems [1]. (2) Chinese universities are accustomed to regard the mental health problems of undergraduate students as ideological and political issues, and try to solve mental health problems through ideological and political education methods [2]. (3) The curriculum of mental health education in Chinese universities is not systematic and scientific, and the mental health courses offered cannot meet the actual needs of undergraduate students [3]. (4) The level of specialization of mental health education in Chinese universities is not high, and there is lack of professional psychology teachers. The

education methods and teaching methods are also relatively backward [4]. (5) Chinese universities lack a psychological crisis intervention system, and have not established a psychological crisis prevention mechanism for undergraduate students [5]. (6) Chinese universities have not established a sound management and service system for mental health education, and it is difficult to effectively deal with related issues of mental health education [6]. Because of the above problems, the exploration of developmental approaches to mental health education for undergraduate students and associated reform measures are important research topics at present. This study focuses on the problems and developmental approaches to mental health education for undergraduate students.

## 2. The Status Quo of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students in China

Over the past few years, research into the instruction, science, and social practice of mental health education for undergraduate students has developed relatively quickly due to the emphasis given by the government and departments of educational administration in China. Mental health education for undergraduate students has already become an important component for the training system in higher education and for ideological and political works in China. In March 2001, the Ministry of Education proposed the document, *Opinions on the Strengthening of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students at Ordinary Colleges and Universities* [7]. This document placed an emphasis on mental health education for undergraduate students and highlighted the importance for colleges and universities in providing a quality education. It also stressed how colleges and universities should provide mental health education to promote undergraduate students' holistic development, equipping them with satisfactory ideological, moral, cultural, professional, physical, and mental qualities. In January 2005, the Ministry of Education, along with other governmental departments, proposed the document, *Opinions on the Strengthening of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students* [8]. This document proposed five principles to improve mental health education for undergraduate students: (1) adherence to the integration of mental health education and ideological education; (2) adherence to the integration of universal education and individual counseling; (3) adherence to the integration of in-class education and extracurricular activities; (4) adherence to the integration of education and self-education; (5) adherence to the integration of resolutions to mental issues and practical problems. In February 2011, the General Office of the Ministry of Education proposed the document, *Standards for the Fundamental Development of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students at Ordinary Colleges and Universities (Interim)* [9]. This document required college and university administrators to pay attention to the following dimensions when implementing

mental health education for undergraduate students: (1) the development of the system and mechanism of mental health education; (2) the development of the faculty of mental health education; (3) the development of the pedagogical system of mental health education; (4) the development of the system of mental health education activities; (5) the development of the system of psychological counseling; (6) the development of the system of psychological crisis prevention and intervention; (7) the development of the requirements to practice mental health education. Simultaneously, this document also provided detailed regulations in the aforementioned fields. In July 2018, the division of the Communist Party of China in the Ministry of Education regulated the document, *Guidelines for Mental Health Education for Students at Colleges and Universities* based on the aforementioned documents [10]. This document again emphasized the coordination and development of the quality of undergraduate students' mental health, together with the quality of ideological and moral aspects, and the science and culture of students. Moreover, this document provided systematic requirements and practical guidelines for colleges and universities to comprehensively strengthen undergraduate students' mental health education. With the vigorous support of departments of governmental and educational administration in China, mental health education for undergraduate students in China has already achieved certain milestones, and the following characteristics can be observed.

First, mental health education for undergraduate students was regarded as a part of the ideological and political education at colleges and universities. It can be seen, based on the regulations in the aforementioned documents, that the guiding ideologies for the departments of governmental and educational administration in China in terms of proposing policies on mental health education for undergraduate students included Marxism-Leninism, Maoism, Dengism, the Important Thought of Three Represents, and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. It is necessary for colleges and universities in China to put the aforementioned political ideologies into practice as regards mental health education so that it may serve ideological and political education better. At the same time, except for courses in mental health education provided by professional instructors, other activities in the realm of mental health education were primarily organized by instructors of ideological and political education. This suggests that mental health education for undergraduate students in China had already been integrated into the field of ideological and political education in colleges and universities, or, at least, has become part of the dual structural system of mental health education and ideological and political education.

Second, the management system of mental health education for undergraduate students was already established. Colleges and universities in China have already organized task forces for guiding mental health education. School managers and leaders are in charge of these task forces and the members consist of people-in-charge in the following departments: institutions for mental health education and counseling,

student affairs, publicity, academic affairs, human resources, financial affairs, security, logistic support, school infirmaries, academic colleges (departments), graduate schools, and teaching and research centers of relevant disciplines. These leading groups are responsible for the regulation and planning of the system of mental health education, and for coordinating and leading the school-wise practice of mental health education. Simultaneously, colleges and universities in China have already established a tertiary network to provide mental health education and counseling services in universities, academic colleges (departments), and classes.

Third, courses in mental health education for undergraduate students were already being comprehensively provided. According to the integrated planning of the Ministry of Education, colleges and universities in China provided school-wise courses in mental health education for undergraduate students. These courses guarantee students' general access to knowledge and training in mental health education. Simultaneously, certain colleges and universities also provided elective courses, thereby enriching the curricular system of mental health education.

Fourth, there are rather a lot of extracurricular activities on the topic of mental health education for undergraduate students. Colleges and universities in China are able to innovate in terms of the types of activities, expand their approaches, and create an appropriate atmosphere for mental health education. At the same time, colleges and universities support students in organizing psychological groups and develop activities as regards mental health education to popularize the knowledge of mental health. In addition, certain colleges and universities are able to actively publicize activities in the realm of mental health education through multimedia tools such as the Internet and school newsletters. Online platforms for mental health education have been developed, together with online educational resources.

Fifth, undergraduate students at colleges and universities have access to basic counseling services. According to the requirements of the Ministry of Education, colleges and universities in China have already established counseling offices and offices for mental health education and guidance. At the same time, colleges and universities provide online counseling and telephone counseling services to satisfy individual needs. In addition, colleges and universities have also strengthened and standardized the system of psychological counseling services, including filing students' counseling records according to the principle of confidentiality.

Sixth, colleges and universities have already established a system for the prevention and intervention of psychological crises among undergraduate students. Colleges and universities in China are able to use the existing network of mental health education to conduct a census of undergraduate students' mental health to identify their potential and current mental health issues in time. Colleges and universities pay close attention to students with more serious mental health issues and provide guidance and intervention according to their mental status. Simultaneously, colleges and universities

provide contingency plans for psychological crisis intervention according to the regulations of the Ministry of Education so that the authorities concerned may follow established work procedures to handle an emergency on time. In addition, counseling centers in colleges and universities closely cooperate with the psychiatric departments in hospitals to work with students with mental health issues or psychopathologies.

### **3. Existing Problems of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students in China**

Although the development of mental health education for undergraduate students in China is satisfactory, several current problems still need to be resolved. The following dimensions show these problems:

#### ***3.1. The Absence of Independent Development in Mental Health Education***

Colleges and universities in China still consider mental health education as a part of ideological and political education. Moreover, ideological and political education, as a replacement for mental health education, is used to guide the cultivation of undergraduate students' personalities. Although mental health education and ideological and political education are closely linked, a barrier still exists between the two disciplines, with a discrepancy in terms of their educational goals, contents, and methods. Mental health education equips students with a fundamental knowledge of psychology, an understanding of the cognitive rules in psychology, and an understanding of research methods in psychology, so that students may apply the knowledge and methods of psychology to analyze their own psychological differences and resolve mental issues so that they may establish a more satisfactory social network with others [11]. Ideological and political education, on the other hand, cultivates students' ideologies and virtues through ideological, moral, and political education, along with knowledge regarding the law, so that they may develop a socially acceptable philosophy of life, as well as their values and outlook on the world [12]. Ideological and political education is inevitably characterized by a specific political position and ideology because it always serves a specific power system [13]. Therefore, the focus of mental health education should lie in students' individual psychological differences, mental disorders, and treatments for psychopathology, and needs to be devoid of a political position per se. The focus of ideological and political education, however, should lie in students' ideologies, moral virtues, ideological, and political inclinations, as well as whether they meet the demands of political and social benefits in China [14]. Based on the aforementioned analysis, a mutual relationship exists between mental health education and ideological and political education, but the former has its own developmental rules and approaches and should not be simply treated as a subdomain

of ideological and political education.

### ***3.2. The Absence of Localized Theories of Mental Health Education***

Mental health education for undergraduate students in China emerged during the 1980s, which is later than in developed countries in the West. In this field, the compilation of materials for mental health education in colleges and universities in China made direct reference to psychological theories and cases of psychological experiments conducted in the West. This situation not only jeopardizes the development of mental health education as a discipline in China, but it also challenges the production of positive effects in the process of mental health education. This is because mental health education is inevitably influenced by the history, culture, society, and economics of a country to some extent. Therefore, it is characterized by different components in different countries. Mental health education in the West is characterized by the patterns of politics, economics, and society in the West, and its underlying thoughts and concepts. Types of educational experiences were also established in the environments of specific countries in the West. Mental health education in China, however, stems from traditional Chinese philosophy, medical science, and educational philosophy. Thus, the environments from which mental health education in China stem from, and how they target clients, are different from those in the West. It is thus necessary to place mental health education in a Chinese context, which should be based on traditional Chinese culture, incorporating references to the concepts of mental health education in the West to naturally incorporate it with traditional Chinese culture [15].

### ***3.3. The Absence of an Evidence-Based Management System of Mental Health Education***

Mental health education for undergraduate students is still marginalized in colleges and universities in China and fundamental changes in recognizing the status of mental health education have not occurred at a managerial level. At the same time, managers of faculties are still not sufficiently aware of the missions, characteristics, and developmental laws regarding mental health education, and are not sufficiently aware of the fundamental differences between mental health education and ideological and political education. In addition, colleges and universities in China have already established a managerial system with a focus on groups who led mental health education but this managerial system has not had its expected effect. This is because this managerial system consists of numerous departments with various functions and they have their own missions. It is thus challenging for these departments to spend time and effort on affairs that are not within the scope of their own department. Therefore, the system and planning as regards interdepartmental cooperation in mental health education has become a mere formality. In addition, the managerial system primarily focuses on the assessment and treatment of psychopathology among undergraduate students, but fails to

pay sufficient attention to undergraduate students' general mental health education. This is because administrators at managerial level in colleges and universities have not changed their ideas in the workplace. Moreover, they are not aware of the importance of promoting mental well-being and the development of mental health among undergraduate students [16].

### ***3.4. The Absence of a Comprehensive Curricular System of Mental Health Education***

Although the Ministry of Education requires colleges and universities to establish a comprehensive curricular system of mental health education, most colleges and universities provide only one course, Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students, to their freshmen. The mental health knowledge that undergraduate students possess is incomprehensive and unsystematic because of the absence of an articulate and rich curriculum. This situation has occurred mainly because managers in colleges and universities have failed to pay sufficient attention to mental health education. Moreover, colleges and universities have failed to follow the requirements of the Ministry of Education in recruiting sufficient professional faculty members, and allocating sufficient instruction time for courses in mental health education, thus, failing to provide comprehensive courses in mental health education. According to the experience of developed countries, the system of mental health education primarily consists of: (1) basic courses in psychology, which primarily include developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, social psychology, and physiological psychology; (2) basic courses in education, which primarily include special education, and guidance techniques; (3) courses in psychological assessment and intervention, which primarily include applied behavior analysis, psychological counseling, and psychotherapy; (4) courses in research methods in psychology, which primarily include statistics, psychometrics, and psychological evaluation; (5) courses in professional psychology, which primarily include professional psychology, professional ethics, and professional development [17].

### ***3.5. The Absence of a Professional Faculty for Mental Health Education***

The main force for organizing activities regarding mental health education in colleges and universities is the faculty of mental health education. The quality of the faculty has a direct effect on the quality of courses provided and on the quality of undergraduate students' mental health. However, there is a widespread absence of faculties with relevant professional knowledge and satisfactory professional training in colleges and universities in China. Many existing faculty members in mental health education are part-time instructors, who are not aware of the rules of mental health education, did not learn the theories and conduct research on mental health education, and did not receive any professional training in the field. Factors that contribute to this situation are as follows: (1) colleges and universities that provide psychology majors are rare in China.

In 2019, only 75 colleges and universities provide psychology majors in China. This is because psychology is an emerging discipline in China and has not received close attention from departments of educational administration and colleges and universities. The development of this discipline is thus slow. (2) Colleges and universities in China do not provide mental health education as a major at undergraduate level. Mental health education is merely a sideline in ideological and political education majors, higher education majors, and a research direction for applied psychology majors at postgraduate level [18]. Therefore, the cultivation of specialists in this discipline is extremely limited. (3) Mental health education for undergraduate students is a basic course provided in colleges and universities in China; it is marginalized when compared with other courses, failing to attract outstanding instructors to devote themselves to mental health education [19]. (4) There is an absence of long-term planning to educate teachers of the courses in mental health education because these courses for undergraduate students at colleges and universities in China are provided merely to meet the requirements of the national policies of education.

### ***3.6. The Absence of a Full-Time Professional Faculty in Psychological Counseling Centers***

Although psychological counseling centers are established in colleges and universities in China, they are merely affiliated with other administrative departments. For instance, in 46 colleges and universities in Guangdong Province, 50% of psychological counseling centers are affiliated with departments of student affairs, and the remainders are affiliated with youth league committees, offices of social sciences, or school infirmaries in colleges and universities [20]. The absence of independent psychological counseling centers contributes to the widespread absence of funding in the workplace. In addition, there is a widespread absence of full-time staff in psychological counseling centers. According to the *Guidance on Strengthening Mental Health Services* proposed by the National Health and Family Planning Commission of China and other departments, colleges and universities should basically recruit psychological counseling instructors and staff based on a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:4000 [21]. However, the aforementioned faculty consists of more part-time staff and less full-time specialists. The part-time staff is mainly ideological and political educators, administrators, tutors, or guidance personnel in colleges and universities. The part-time staff members not only lack the systematic knowledge of psychology and the theoretical knowledge of mental health education, but also standardized training in psychological counseling techniques. At the same time, it is challenging for these part-time staff to spend more time on providing mental health counseling services when there is no long-term job. It is thus challenging for colleges and universities in China to organize effective psychological counseling activities and services.

## **4. Developmental Approaches to Mental Health Education for Undergraduates in China**

### ***4.1. The Promotion of the Independent Development of Mental Health Education***

Due to its unique developmental rules, mental health education should develop independently from ideological and political education. Mental health education should aim to cultivate students' satisfactory mental well-being and psychological potential, provide fundamental curricular content including mental health knowledge and mental adjustment techniques, and use methods such as psychological testing, behavioral training, psychological guidance, and psychological intervention. The instructional process of mental health education should cover three dimensions: (1) using mental health education to promote all students' general mental well-being to realize general mental health education for all; (2) using mental health education to enhance students' competency in psychological adjustment and adaptation so that students may better adjust themselves to external social environments; (3) using mental health education to provide an individualized service for students with mental health issues to overcome mental health obstacles, and prevent and treat psychopathology to coordinate students' individual and holistic development harmoniously and consistently. In addition, mental health education should adopt the educational model of positive psychology. Colleges and universities should emphasize the development and application of students' own mental strength to help them to understand its importance and to promote the effective maintenance and promotion of the mental health status of all students [22]. Education based on positive psychology is effective in developing students' mental strength, in maintaining a satisfactory quality of mental health, and in shaping a positive personality, which is in accordance with the goals of the cultivation of talent in colleges and universities in China and may prevent colleges and universities from using the methods of ideological and political education to implement mental health education.

### ***4.2. The Realization of the Localization of Mental Health Education***

China should explore its own developmental approaches to mental health education. Moreover, the localization of mental health education will certainly become a trend for undergraduate students in China [23]. As part of this process, China needs to prevent not only the comprehensive Westernization of local mental health education, but also boycott the application of Western advanced thoughts and concepts in China. In other words, the localization of mental health education requires practical efforts on behalf of educators in terms of research and the adoption of mental health education theories and methods that are appropriate within a Chinese context to explore a mental health education model that suits students in China so that mental health

education may have a positive effect in the unique environment of the country. The localization of mental health education can be realized using the following approaches: (1) Mental health educators should propose Sinicized mental health education concepts and theoretical models, study specific behavioral patterns relevant to the unique social and cultural factors in China, and adapt and design psychological testing instruments that suit the Chinese population. (2) Mental health educators should conduct research on the association between the actual conditions in China and undergraduate students' mental health development, and explore educational models and methods that suit the Chinese population. (3) Theories of mental health education for undergraduate students should follow the perspectives and theories of traditional Chinese philosophy, and, simultaneously, incorporate certain foreign mental health education theories and methods. (4) Mental health counselors for undergraduate students should adopt principles and methods of psychological counseling that are appropriate in a Chinese context based on the society, customs, cultures, and psychological patterns of undergraduate students in China. (5) Psychological guidance and treatment methods for undergraduate students should also be in accordance with the social environment and psychological patterns of undergraduate students in China.

#### ***4.3. The Amelioration of a Managerial System of Mental Health Education***

The development of mental health education for undergraduate students requires the promotion of the departments of mental health administration in colleges and universities and an evidence-based managerial system will benefit the realization of the educational goals of mental health education. First, the departments of mental health administration in colleges and universities in China should actively change their thinking in the workplace and prevent themselves from using the theories and methods of ideological and political education to implement mental health education for undergraduate students. This is because a mental health issue is not an ideological and political issue and cannot be addressed by treating it as such. To some extent, using the methods of ideological and political education may trigger a rebellious mindset on behalf of undergraduate students. This not only jeopardizes the resolution of mental health issues but also exacerbates the situation [24]. Second, departments of mental health administration in colleges and universities should be sufficiently aware of the importance of mental health education, and simultaneously shift their focus to the general mental health education of undergraduate students. This is because the educational goals of mental health education include the following aspects: helping undergraduate students to cope with frustration, build their tolerance, and adapt well in social situations; cultivating undergraduate students' optimism, confidence and mental well-being; and promoting the development of sound personalities among all undergraduates. Assessment and treatment of students with mental issues or psychopathology

are merely components of mental health education. The departments of mental health administration in colleges and universities should scientifically handle the primary and secondary steps of every problem. Finally, these departments should also be considered as managerial ones that operate independently, and should consist of full-time professional instructors and administrators. At the same time, colleges and universities should provide sufficient funding and satisfactory operational conditions for the departments of mental health administration. These departments can function well only when provided with the aforementioned conditions.

#### ***4.4. Strengthening the Faculty of Mental Health Education***

Mental health education requires a strong professional approach and techniques as requirements regarding the competence of mental health educators are relatively strict. Therefore, improving recruitment in professional faculties may contribute to the enhancement of a formal, practical, and scientific approach to mental health education [25]. Colleges and universities in China should recruit specialist instructors as primary providers and these specialist instructors will take charge of the instruction of courses in mental health education, counseling services, and the management of psychological counseling centers, as well as the overarching plans for mental health education. Specialist instructors should meet the following requirements: (1) Specialist instructors should have an educational background in mental health education, and demonstrate mastery of mental health education theories and knowledge and research competence. (2) Specialist instructors should have qualifications to practice psychological counseling and professional services, and possess several years of experiences in psychological counseling and clinical skills. (3) Specialist instructors should demonstrate strong managerial competence and be able to develop systematic plans and projects for mental health education. In addition, colleges and universities may recruit part-time mental health instructors based on specific circumstances. However, part-time instructors should also possess the same theoretical professional knowledge and have received satisfactory training in techniques. Part-time instructors can be psychologists, psychological counselors, medical specialists, and clinical social workers. They may complement staffing numbers when there is an absence of full-time instructors in colleges and universities because they tend to have a flexible schedule. It is necessary to emphasize that the recruitment of a faculty takes a long time and requires systematic efforts. This not only requires the development of relevant disciplines to provide a faculty but also a standardized system to guarantee its progress.

#### ***4.5. The Optimization of Curriculum Design for Mental Health Education***

Colleges and universities in China should develop a mental health education curriculum based on Chinese situations and undergraduate students' patterns of psychological development, which may benefit from the lessons provided by

developed countries. Mental health education for undergraduate students in China should include courses in at least the following three dimensions: (1) Basic courses in the knowledge and concepts of mental health education. The courses aim to provide the fundamentals of mental health so that undergraduate students have knowledge of individual psychological activities and personality traits, and are aware of their own mental issues and psychopathology over time. They need to be able to scientifically address these mental issues in their process of growth and continually enhance the quality of their own mental health awareness. (2) Basic courses in mental health techniques. These courses aim to train undergraduate students' skills in psychological adjustment and provide methods to maintain their mental health status and promote their psychological well-being so that they may learn to cope and effectively resolve mental issues such as negative emotions. These courses will additionally promote their competence in social adaptation and tolerance of frustration. (3) Quality education for specializations in mental health. These courses aim to develop a quality education in psychology, targeting students at different phases and levels and from different disciplines, as well as students with special needs. These courses follow and develop the two aforementioned courses and include the following aspects of education: adaptation, interpersonal aspects, romance and sex, personality, frustration, confidence, emotion, and decision-making [26]. In addition, colleges and universities can integrate compulsory and elective courses in their curriculum design, simultaneously providing talks about mental health education. This curriculum design may also facilitate undergraduate students in making decisions based on their own needs.

#### ***4.6. The Amelioration of Psychological Counseling Services and Psychological Intervention Mechanisms***

The scientific evaluation and research of mental health is a prerequisite and the basis for the operation of psychological counseling services and mechanisms of psychological interventions. Colleges and universities in China may provide psychological counseling services and psychological interventions to students with mental issues. Through these services, colleges and universities may discover current issues faced by students in a timely manner and be able to resolve the psychological crisis that is associated with these issues. Generally, undergraduate students' mental issues will lead to three main types of psychological crises: (1) Developmental crisis, which arises because of undergraduate students' physiological and psychological differences due to development, such as a rebellious mindset in puberty, family conflict when growing up, and psychological crises due to physical health issues. (2) Situational crisis, which arises because of unpredictable and uncontrollable events, including death of relatives, divorce, separation, or breakup, violence and injury, unsatisfactory academic performance, and psychological crises associated with natural disasters. (3) Existential crisis, which refers to the stress faced by undergraduate students in their transitional period in life, and

anxiety and psychological crisis because of the failure to make decisions, including crises due to dilemmas concerning career choice or launching a business [27]. Colleges and universities should organize psychological intervention activities after determining any concrete psychological crisis faced by undergraduate students. Although interventions for psychological crisis involve short-term psychological catharsis and assistive behavior, it may assist those students who face an individual crisis, adversity, and danger so that they can achieve psychological equilibrium as soon as possible.

Since psychological counseling services and interventions require a strong level of professionalism and concrete techniques, colleges and universities should recruit specialists who possess these professionalisms accordingly and introduce a system of psychological counseling qualifications.

## **5. Conclusions**

Mental health education for undergraduate students aims to maintain or restore the mental health status of these students, and prevent or eliminate their mental disorders or behavioral problems by using the methods of mental health education to reduce negative emotions, and promote positive and optimistic mindsets so that undergraduate students' can satisfactorily adapt to their social environment. Therefore, the amelioration of mental health education for undergraduate students is an important component of a comprehensive quality education and an important part of cultivating high quality talented students. Mental health education for undergraduate students in China is characterized by its Chinese components and needs some modifications. It involves interdisciplinary integration and requires numerous theories and educational methods to promote undergraduate students' mental health and well-being. However, it also has its own developmental rules and specific educational contents, methods, and modes. Therefore, mental health education for undergraduate students still requires independent development and needs to follow its own developmental rules to explore approaches to psychological development and adaptation that suit undergraduate students. In summary, mental health education for undergraduate students in China should restructure its thinking and develop theories and educational methods of Chinese characteristics based on traditional Chinese culture to promote the comprehensive development of mental health education for undergraduate students.

---

## **References**

- [1] Hongxia Ma, et al. Reform and Practice of Trinity Teaching Mode for College Students' Mental Health Education: Taking Stress Management and Frustration Management as an Example. *Journal of North China University of Science and Technology (Social Science Edition)*. 2018, 18 (1): 86-104.
- [2] Qi Lang, et al. A Research on the New Model of the Mental Health Education of University Students. *Journal of Hebei North University (Social Science Edition)*. 2019, 35 (3): 77-85.

- [3] Hua Zhou, et al. A Study on the Model of the Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students: Taking Northeast Agricultural University as an Example. *Journal of Northeast Agricultural University (Social Science Edition)*. 2018, 16 (6): 46-50.
- [4] Hongzhi Fang, Siyu Pan. The Development and Trend of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students in China during the Past 40 Years of Reform and Opening Up. *Contemporary Education Sciences*. 2019, (8): 91-96.
- [5] Zaizhou Liu, Yarong Ti. Discussion on Undergraduate Students' Mental Health Education and Crisis Intervention Model. *Journal of Yangtze University (Social Science Edition)*. 2018, 41 (1): 96-99.
- [6] Xiaolu Luo. The Status Quo and Countermeasures of College Students' Mental Health Education. *Educational Research*. 2018, (1): 112-118.
- [7] Ministry of Education in China. Opinions on the Strengthening of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students at Ordinary Colleges and Universities (Jiaoshezhen [2011] 1). 16<sup>th</sup> March 2001.
- [8] Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Central Committee of the Communist Youth League in China. Opinions on the Strengthening of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students (Jiaoshezhen [2011] 1). 12<sup>th</sup> January 2005.
- [9] General Office of Ministry of Education. Standards for the Fundamental Development of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students at Ordinary Colleges and Universities (Interim) (Jiaosizhengting [2011] 1). 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2011.
- [10] Communist Party Members Group Ministry of Education. Guidelines for Mental Health Education for Students at Colleges and Universities (Jiaodang [2018] 41). 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018.
- [11] Liuling Tian. Integration and Approaches to Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students and Law Education. *Education Modernization*. 2017, 4 (50): 97-100.
- [12] Huixing He, Lan Zhang. Research on the Parallel Penetration between Ideological and Political Education and Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students. *Journal of National Academy of Education Administration*. 2010, (10): 13-16.
- [13] Baisheng Qiu, Xuemin Gao. The Development of the Discipline of Ideological and Political Education: Issue Awareness and Its Object. *Fudan Education Forum*. 2014, 12 (2): 17-22.
- [14] Jianqing Ma. On the Association between Psychological Counseling and Ideological and Political Education at Colleges and Universities. *Research in Higher Education of Engineering*. 1993, (2): 49-52.
- [15] Jinggui Cui. The Localization of Psychology Education in China from a Cultural Perspective. *Peking University Education Review*. 2004, 2 (1): 84-88.
- [16] Chunmei Zhou. Innovations of the Approaches to Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students. *Jiangsu Higher Education*. 2011, (5): 124-126.
- [17] Zhengchun Guan. Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students and Developmental Strategies. *Theory Horizon*, 2008, (11): 177-178.
- [18] Xuejin Pei. On Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students from the Three-Dimensional Perspectives in Political Sciences. *Research in Higher Education of Engineering*. 2010, (4): 131-135.
- [19] Zhao Kang, Long Wan. Mental Health Education Teachers' Development of Professionalisms: Difficulties and Resolutions. *Teacher Education Research*. 2017, 29 (3): 25-30.
- [20] Xiaolu Li. Innovations in Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students in Guangdong: A Perspective from the Model of Mental Health Education at University of Oxford. *Higher Education Exploration*. 2006, (2): 12-17.
- [21] China National Health and Family Planning Commission and Other Departments. Guidance on Strengthening Mental Health Services (Guowejijikongfa [2016] 77). 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016.
- [22] Zhiying Song. Mental Health Education Policies at Colleges and Universities from the Perspective of Positive Psychology. *Jiangsu Higher Education*. 2009, (4): 106-108.
- [23] Jinggui Cui. Reflections and Development of Psychology Education at Schools in China. *Journal of the Chinese Society of Education*. 2003, (2): 39-42.
- [24] Zuoxin Yang. Research on Thoughts and Strategies for the Amelioration of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students. *Higher Education Exploration*. 1999, (2): 58-62.
- [25] Wei Tong. On the Soundness and Amelioration of Faculty for Mental Health Education at Colleges and Universities. *Jiangsu Higher Education*. 2017, (9): 85-88.
- [26] Jilin Xia. Theories and Practices of the Classification of Mental Health Education for Undergraduate Students. *Jiangsu Higher Education*. 2008, (2): 112-113.
- [27] Hong Zhou. On the Establishment of the System of Psychological Crisis Prevention at Colleges and Universities. *Jiangsu Higher Education*. 2013, (1): 138-139.