



An Analysis of the Influencing Factors of Undergraduate Students' Mental Health

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ABSTRACT: At present, psychological problems have posed a serious threat to the physical health of undergraduate students. Many regrettable things have happened on undergraduate campuses, such as autism, depression and suicide. Crime phenomena are also constantly occurring, and their rates are also increasing (Gao et al., 2023). The mental health problem of undergraduate students has attracted much attention from all walks of life, and improving the mental health level of college students is the focus of mental health education and ideological and political education in colleges and universities (Zhang et al., 2021). Due to factors such as themselves and the social environment, undergraduate students' mental health problems will not only affect their daily life, academic and physical health, but also affect the development of future talents and even the development of the country. In view of the current situation that the overall mental health level of undergraduate students is favourable, the factors affecting the mental health of college students are summarized as family environment, school environment, social environment and network environment.

KEYWORDS: Mental health of undergraduate students, family environment, school environment, social environment, network environment

I. INTRODUCTION

The psychological problems of undergraduate students are becoming increasingly prominent. For example, a survey of the psychological status of undergraduate students by the Chinese Academy of Sciences showed that 13.6% of undergraduates and above have a high probability of depression detection rate, the detection rate of technical secondary school and junior college students is about 16%, and the detection rate of high school students is about 16%. The detection rate for the group below is 18.1%; it was also found that 18.5% of undergraduate students have a tendency to be depressed, of which 4.2% have a high risk of depression (Wu, 2021). In addition, it was also found that contemporary undergraduate students have common sleep problems. 43.8% of undergraduate students said they have insufficient sleep, 7.9% of undergraduate

students said they have sleep problems more than half of the time in a week, and 4.4% of undergraduate students have sleep problems almost every day (Fu et al., 2021). At the same time, analysis based on age group as a variable found that the mental health level of research subjects aged 18-25 is relatively low. This result shows that the current mental health status of undergraduate students is not optimistic. Therefore, the prevention and intervention of undergraduate students' mental health problems need to be strengthened (Zhang, 2022). In addition, undergraduate students are faced with academic, interpersonal, emotional and other pressures, and the resulting psychological problems among undergraduate students are increasing day by day. For example, a study investigated the mental health status of contemporary undergraduate students. The results showed that 80% of undergraduate students knew that they had certain psychological problems, 11% of students believed that their current mental state was poor, and 35% of students said that they were under great psychological pressure (Feng, 2020).

THE IMPACT OF FAMILY ENVIRONMENT ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

Satir, the American "family therapy master", believes that a person can be inextricably linked to his family of origin, and this connection may affect his life (Cai, 2022). The concept of family of origin comes from the field of family psychotherapy. It refers to the family in which one is born and grew up. It refers to the family composed of parents and oneself. It is the first place for individual emotional experience learning. Factors such as bad family atmosphere, unhealthy parents' personality characteristics, unhappy parents' marital status and other factors all project different psychological problems of undergraduate students. Therefore, every problematic student originates from a problematic family (Cai, 2022).



Family is the first environment for growth, and parents are students' first teachers. Family has the most direct impact on students' mental health. Family economy, family education, and family environment are directly related to the formation of undergraduate students' thinking, behaviour, and psychological traits. (Lai et al., 2022). Li (2022) stated that students who enter college with psychological trauma and problems often grow up in a problematic family, and their parents themselves are mentally unhealthy or suffer from serious mental illness. In this case, not only are students unable to obtain all kinds of support from their families, but there are often students who finally get rid of their psychological distress at school. After returning home to spend time with their parents and family for a period of time during the holidays, their psychological problems reappear or even aggravated. Cai (2022) also pointed out that in the actual work process, many undergraduate student workers have discovered that many of the psychological problems that undergraduate students have in school originate from their families of origin. These psychological risks gradually arise and accumulate during the growth process of students.

Family is the basic factor affecting the mental health of undergraduate students (Li, 2023), and with the development of Internet information technology, the psychological weaning period of undergraduate students has been significantly delayed. Specifically, the impact of family factors on the mental health of undergraduate students is reflected in the following aspects, First, the parenting style will affect the mental health of undergraduate students. Research shows that democratic parenting styles have a positive impact on the mental health of undergraduate students, while authoritarian and doting styles are likely to have a negative impact on their mental health (Li, 2023). Zhang et al. (2022) pointed out that poor parenting style is one of the risk factors for children's psychological disorders. For example, parents of neurotic patients are often rejecting and dominant, and parental rejection is a risk factor for the formation of personality disorders. Family is the first environmental factor that an individual comes into contact with, and is the beginning of self-growth and psychological development. Parents, as important others in the individual socialization process, play a vital role in the physical and mental development of undergraduate students. Among them, the parenting style in the upbringing process is one of the important influencing factors. It mainly refers to the

emotional atmosphere when parents raise their children or the special behaviors that promote the socialization of their children, which has a profound impact on individual knowledge, emotion, intention, and behavior (Wang et al., 2023). Generally speaking, positive parenting methods can promote better individual development, make individuals more independent and confident, promote healthy development of interpersonal relationships, and have a higher level of mental health; on the contrary, negative parenting methods can increase the probability of individual negative emotions and can lead to higher levels of mental health. May result in inappropriate behavior (such as substance abuse, truancy, or even suicide), lack of responsibility, and low mental health. Mckinney investigated the relationship between parenting style and college adjustment. The study found that the higher the authoritativeness of the parenting style, the better the college adjustment and the lower the level of depression; but compared with boys, the authoritative parenting style increased the risk of depression in girls. However, authoritative parenting style and rejecting-neglecting parenting style (rejecting-neglecting) have a significant positive effect on suicidal tendencies (Wang et al., 2023).

Secondly, family structure has a certain impact on the mental health of undergraduate students, among which the number of children in the family has a more significant impact. Research shows that the mental health level of undergraduate students in families with multiple children is relatively low (Li, 2023). Third, parents' marital status also has a greater impact on the mental health of undergraduate students. Research shows that undergraduate students from divorced families have relatively low mental health levels, and even have a greater negative impact on college students than the death of their parents (Li, 2023). In addition, family economic conditions, parents' education level, parents' occupation, family relationships, and expectations for children will all affect the mental health of undergraduate students (Li, 2023). Family economic status has a great impact on the mental health of undergraduate students. Undergraduate students from poor families are more likely to develop psychological problems such as anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Parental education is also related to the mental health problems of undergraduate students. Some parents with low education provide harsh discipline to their children, making children more likely to develop negative mental states such as low self-



esteem, irritability, anxiety, and depression (Lai et al., 2022).

THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

When individuals gradually separate from their families, they enter the school environment, receive school education, and further develop individual socialization. In the context of schools, a sense of belonging is considered a basic psychological structure related to students' various learning and quality of life. It is a basic human motivation. All individuals are born with the desire to form and maintain positive relationships with others. Sense of belonging is defined as the degree to which students personally feel accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school environment, and is an emotional and psychological identification and investment (Wang et al., 2023). Previous research has shown that school belonging is related to academic abilities, social habits, emotional health, and mental health (ARSLAN, 2021). When students experience neglect and rejection (especially by peers and teachers), students may be at a disadvantage in terms of academic ability, social interaction, and mental health, and may even develop more serious psychological and behavioral problems, such as aggressive behavior, social stress and depression. (Wang et al., 2023). Therefore, individuals with a high sense of school belonging are prone to positive emotions, such as happiness and satisfaction; while a low sense of belonging or lack of belonging is often related to negative emotions, such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness (ARSLAN et al., 2021).

School is the main living and learning environment for undergraduate students, and their self-adaptation, emotional adaptation, and satisfaction are the main factors affecting their mental health (Lai et al., 2022). The insufficient development of elective courses related to school psychological education and mental health education activities will lead to insufficient popularization of mental health knowledge among students. When students encounter psychological problems, they don't know how to adjust and adapt. The social support provided by the university environment can effectively alleviate undergraduate students' anxiety and depression to a certain extent by talking to friends, classmates, and teachers in life, and by going to the campus psychological counseling room for consultation.

The main social support for undergraduate students in the university environment comes from the school, which comes from the school's teacher support, friend support, and classmate support. These supports have a certain effect on alleviating undergraduate students' depression (Lai et al., 2022).

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

Social factors include race, culture, social support, stressful life events, social class, economic income level, social capital. These social factors are related to mental health, and different social factors have different impacts on mental health. In the period of social change and transformation, the complex social environment and diverse values have caused great psychological distress and discomfort to college students who lack social experience and have weak sense of frustration (Lai et al., 2022).

The first social factor that affects the mental health of undergraduate students is whether they have a relatively complete social support system. The social support system is a network of relationships through which individuals can obtain emotional, emotional and psychological support, relieve psychological stress, improve their ability to adapt to the environment and cope with changes (Feng et al., 2022). Generally speaking, the lack of social support for undergraduate students is mainly reflected in two aspects. First, there is a lack of communication between family members, and there is no correct and effective communication method. The support from family members is weak. The intensification of conflicts between some students and their parents is the trigger for students continued bad mood, reduced interest in life, and reduced mental health. Second, the living environment of undergraduate students has changed greatly from that of high school. They are far away from their original social relationships and have great differences in behavioral habits, language expression. They need time to integrate into the new environment. They have not yet established a solid relationship, which is not enough to provide them with social support.

At present, society is developing rapidly, exchanges between different countries and regions are close and frequent, various types of information frequently impact the public's brain, and the crisis facing national mental health is gradually escalating (Li, 2022). An epidemiological survey in



2019 showed that the weighted lifetime prevalence rate of various mental diseases (except dementia) in China's population over 18 years old was 16.57%. Chen Xueshi's research in 1986 showed that the overall prevalence rate of mental illness among people over 15 years old in my country at that time was only 12.69%. At the same time, researchers at home and abroad have also noticed that a large number of individuals suffering from mental illness do not seek treatment. For example, two research reports in 1999 and 2016 both showed that among the people who died by suicide in my country, 63% had psychological problems, but only 7% of those who committed suicide had received professional mental health help during their lifetime (Li, 2022). Due to the negative and even stigmatizing attitude of the public towards mental illness and its treatment, many undergraduate students are unaware of their own psychological problems, or even if they are aware of them, they are negative about seeking professional help to solve their psychological problems due to a lack of mental health knowledge. Although there are still some people who want to seek help, due to family financial reasons or because their parents are worried that if they receive psychological or psychiatric treatment, it will affect their studies or future employment, they are resistant and refuse to receive psychological counseling in schools or even psychological treatment in hospitals. The ultimate refusal to seek professional help leads to increasingly serious mental health problems (Li, 2022).

THE IMPACT OF INTERNET ENVIRONMENT ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

The development of Internet information technology not only provides convenience for information dissemination, but also provides technical support for the reform of teaching in colleges and universities. The Internet era provides more paths for the reform of mental health education and teaching for undergraduate students (Luo, 2022). The extensive development of new media, such as WeChat, Weibo, QQ, Kuaishou, Douyin and other mobile software, has had an important impact on the psychology of undergraduate students. According to the 49th Statistical Report on China's Internet Development released in 2022, as of December 2021, the number of netizens in my country has reached 1.032 billion, the Internet penetration rate has reached 73.0%, and the rate of Internet users using mobile

phones to access the Internet is as high as 99.7%. It can be seen from the age composition of netizens that there are relatively many people in the two age groups of 20-29 and 30-39. The main purposes of these netizens using new media are communication and viewing (Zhao, 2022).

Among Chinese netizens, the number of people watching online videos ranks second, second only to instant messaging, which plays an important role in using new media. Most of all kinds of online information are presented to people in the form of videos. The video content is rich and colorful, and it can be pushed in time based on the content that is usually viewed to meet people's needs. Relevant research shows that undergraduate students' exposure to excessive amounts of online information in a very short period of time will produce a certain amount of psychological pressure (Zhao, 2022). The average age of undergraduate students in our country is concentrated in the age group of 18-24 years old, which is also an important part of the age group of 20-29 years old in our country. They have entered adulthood, but under the protection of family and school. The psychological development of undergraduate students is uneven. From the perspective of undergraduate students themselves, when they enter university from high school and get rid of some constraints, they will inevitably encounter some pressures and conflicts brought about by study, life and employment. Compared with adults, they lack the ability to solve difficulties independently. It is difficult to bear the setbacks brought by society, and some negative thoughts will occur psychologically, which seriously threatens their mental health (Zhao, 2022). From an objective perspective, with the continuous popularization of the Internet, new media platforms such as Douyin short video platform have emerged and gradually entered the daily lives of undergraduate students. According to relevant statistics, in 2018, 50% of netizens in my country were interested in Douyin (Wang, 2019). The short video platform has reached a moderate level of usage, and a large part of the population is undergraduate students. In some video platforms, the social quality is relatively low and the video content is uneven, making it difficult for many students to distinguish between true and false information in the online world. Coupled with the setbacks encountered in society, a considerable number of students have become psychologically unbalanced over time. According to a 2018 questionnaire survey of 1,322 college students, nearly 20% of college students will imitate the



information released by the platform, which will gradually have a certain negative impact on their own mental health (Wang, 2019).

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