



Research and Discussion on Mental Health Education for University Students in the New Media Environment

Huaqiang Chen*

(School of Physics and Optoelectronics, South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, 510640 China)

*hqchen@scut.edu.cn

Abstract. With the rapid development of new media technologies, profound changes have taken place in the lifestyle, communication patterns, and ways of acquiring information for university students. These changes have had a significant impact on the mental health of university students. This article aims to explore the current situation, issues, and coping strategies of mental health education for university students in the new media environment, in order to provide useful references for the mental health education work in universities.

Keywords: new media; university students; mental health education; strategies

1 Introduction

With the rapid development of information technology, new media has gradually penetrated into every aspect of university life, profoundly changing the way students access information, communicate, and their values, thereby significantly impacting their mental health. The new media environment refers to a novel information dissemination environment formed by digital and internet technologies. It breaks the temporal and spatial limitations of traditional media, providing university students with more convenient and efficient means of information acquisition and communication.

In the new media environment, the instantaneity, interactivity, fragmentation, and diversification of information dissemination not only bring rich information resources and convenient communication channels to students but also pose challenges such as information overload and internet addiction, presenting new issues for their mental health. Therefore, exploring innovative strategies and practices for mental health education of university students in the new media environment has important practical significance and theoretical value for improving their mental health levels.

In existing research, many scholars have delved deeply into the mental health status of university students in the new media environment. Sun Kezhi[1] mentioned that the popularization of new media exposes students to challenges like information overload and internet addiction, negatively impacting their mental health. Xie Ying[2] emphasized the importance of mental health education for university students in the new media era and analyzed the dual impact of new media on their mental health. Zhang

Ruihong[3], Liu Shuang, Wang Jia[4], and Li Huifang[5] all highlighted the significance and necessity of mental health issues among university students in the new media environment, which requires widespread attention from universities and society.

Hence, strengthening mental health education in the new media environment has become an urgent need for current university education efforts. Meanwhile, valuable research outcomes have emerged regarding innovative strategies and practices for mental health education of university students in this environment. Wang Zhaoting[6] proposed that universities should fully utilize new media platforms to carry out various mental health education activities, aiming to improve students' psychological quality and coping abilities. Zhai Shuyan[7] advocated integrating mental health education with new media technology, providing students with more convenient and efficient mental health services by developing mental health education apps and establishing online psychological counseling platforms. Jia Jie and Zheng Menghui[8] further emphasized the urgency of researching mental health education strategies for university students in the new media environment and proposed targeted educational strategies. Wang Guangying and Wang Feifei[9] focused on the difficulties faced by mental health education for university students in the social media environment and suggested corresponding countermeasures.

These studies not only reveal the current status and challenges of mental health education for university students in the new media environment but also provide valuable references for subsequent research.

In summary, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the current status and issues of mental health education for university students in the new media environment and propose innovative educational strategies and practical methods to enhance their mental health levels. We believe that through in-depth research and continuous exploration, we can contribute to mental health education efforts in universities.

2 Current Status of Mental Health Education for University Students in the New Media Environment

2.1 Dual Impact of New Media on the Mental Health of University Students

In the new media environment, the mental health of university students has been profoundly affected. Zhang Wei[10] pointed out that new media, as an information dissemination tool, provides unprecedented convenience for students, allowing them to easily access various information and knowledge. It also offers a platform for them to showcase themselves and exchange ideas. However, this widespread application also brings certain negative impacts.

From a positive perspective, the popularization of new media provides broader information sources and communication channels for university students. Li Qiuyun and Jia Enli[11] believe that this contributes to the comprehensive development of students. Through new media, students can access diversified viewpoints and insights, thereby

broadening their horizons and enhancing their innovative consciousness and critical thinking skills.

Nevertheless, the widespread use of new media also brings negative impacts. Hu Xiaoquan[12] noted that due to the complexity and difficulty in distinguishing the authenticity of information in new media, university students, who may lack experience and have immature judgment, are more susceptible to the influence of online public opinion and cyberbullying, which can lead to psychological issues such as anxiety and depression. Additionally, Zhou Cuiping[13] indicated that excessive use of new media may also result in over-reliance on the virtual world, causing the degradation of social skills and psychological problems such as information anxiety triggered by information overload.

Overall, the negative impacts mainly manifest in the following three aspects: Firstly, anxiety caused by information overload. In the new media environment, information explodes, and students encounter a vast amount of information daily through social media, news applications, and other platforms. This information includes valuable content but is also interspersed with a lot of spam and fake news. When processing this information, students often feel overwhelmed, which can easily lead to information anxiety. Prolonged information overload can adversely affect students' mental health, causing issues such as distracted attention and mood swings. Secondly, the negative impact of over-reliance on virtual socializing. New media provides convenient social channels for students, such as WeChat, Weibo, and QQ. However, excessive dependence on virtual socializing may lead to a decline in students' interpersonal skills in real life, resulting in social barriers. Additionally, negative information and cyberbullying on the internet can also pose a threat to students' mental health. Thirdly, the aggravation of internet addiction. The convenience and entertainment provided by new media have caused some students to become addicted to online games, short videos, and other entertainment activities. This addiction can affect their studies, disrupt their daily routines, and even lead to symptoms of internet addiction. Internet addiction not only impacts students' studies and lifestyle but may also trigger a series of psychological issues such as depression, anxiety, and social phobia.

2.2 Inadequacies in Mental Health Education in Universities

In the new media environment, mental health education in universities faces a series of challenges and inadequacies. Although universities, as Wang Qi[14] mentioned, have generally recognized the importance of mental health education, there are still many problems in practical operations. Firstly, the level of attention is still insufficient. Some universities still view mental health education as a dispensable course, as Liu Lan and Ma Yanran[15] pointed out. This results in outdated educational content and a singular educational approach, which cannot meet the actual needs of students in the new media environment. Secondly, the weak teaching staff for mental health education in universities is also a significant issue. As Wu Rihui's research[16] shows, some universities lack a sufficient number of professional teachers in mental health education, and these teachers often lack professional backgrounds and practical experience in mental health education in the new media environment. This situation may prevent them from

providing effective guidance and help when facing psychological problems of students in the new media environment. Furthermore, there are certain inadequacies in the integration of resources for mental health education in universities. In the new media environment, universities need to integrate mental health education resources both inside and outside the campus to provide richer and more comprehensive mental health education services for students. However, due to the lack of an effective resource integration mechanism, mental health education resources in many universities are still scattered and inefficiently utilized, as Zhou Jiemeihui[17] pointed out. This not only affects the effectiveness of mental health education but also results in a waste of resources.

3 Issues of Mental Health Education for College Students in the New Media Environment

3.1 Disconnect between Educational Content and the New Media Environment

In the new media environment, the primary issue facing mental health education for college students is the disconnect between educational content and the current new media environment. Traditional mental health education often focuses on imparting theoretical knowledge, lacking attention and analysis of unique mental health issues in the new media environment. For example, faced with challenges brought by new media such as information explosion, cyberbullying, and virtual social networking, the existing educational content fails to provide sufficiently effective coping strategies. This disconnect not only makes mental health education seem inadequate in the new media era but may also leave students feeling overwhelmed when facing actual problems. Furthermore, the rapid changes in the new media environment require mental health education content to keep pace with the times. However, the current educational content updates slowly, making it difficult to timely reflect new situations and problems in the new media environment. This lag not only affects the pertinence and effectiveness of mental health education but may also cause students to doubt and distrust the educational content.

3.2 Lack of Innovation in Educational Methods

In addition to issues with educational content, mental health education for college students in the new media environment also faces challenges due to a lack of innovation in educational methods. Traditional mental health education methods, such as lectures and classroom teaching, although capable of imparting certain mental health knowledge, appear too singular and rigid in the new media environment, making it difficult to attract students' attention. The new media environment provides more possibilities for mental health education, such as utilizing online platforms for education and interacting through social media. However, many universities still cling to traditional methods and fail to fully leverage the advantages of new media for innovation. This not

only limits the form and scope of mental health education but may also reduce students' interest and participation in education.

3.3 Insufficient Educational Resources

In the new media environment, mental health education for college students also faces the problem of insufficient educational resources. This mainly manifests in two aspects: first, the lack of professional teachers; second, inadequate educational facilities and resources. Firstly, the shortage of professional teachers is a significant factor restricting the development of mental health education. Currently, many universities still have a weak teaching staff in mental health education, lacking professional teachers with new media knowledge and skills. This restricts the professionalism and pertinence of mental health education in the new media environment. Secondly, inadequate educational facilities and resources also affect the implementation of mental health education. Mental health education in the new media environment requires corresponding hardware facilities and software resources, such as multimedia classrooms and online teaching platforms. However, some universities still lack sufficient investment in this area, making it difficult to meet the needs of mental health education in the new media environment.

4 Coping Strategies for Mental Health Education of College Students in the New Media Environment

4.1 Updating Educational Content to Adapt to the New Media Environment

1. Incorporating new media literacy education. In the new media environment, information spreads rapidly, and it can be difficult to distinguish between truth and falsehood. Therefore, universities should include new media literacy in mental health education, teaching students how to distinguish between true and false network information and avoid being misled by online rumors and harmful information. At the same time, it is also necessary to educate students on how to protect their privacy and security online.

2. Strengthening online psychological intervention and counseling. In response to issues such as internet addiction and social networking disorders that are prone to occur in the new media environment, universities should incorporate corresponding intervention and counseling content into mental health education. For example, online psychological counseling services can be established to provide students with online psychological guidance and assistance.

3. Focusing on psychological stress management in the new media environment. In the new media environment, college students often face information pressure and comparative pressure from various sources. Therefore, mental health education should teach students how to manage and regulate psychological stress in the new media environment to avoid excessive anxiety and depression.

4.2 Innovating Educational Methods to Improve Educational Outcomes

1. Utilizing online platforms for education. Universities can develop online courses related to mental health education for students to learn anytime, anywhere. This approach not only breaks through time and space constraints but also stimulates students' interest through rich multimedia content.

2. Adopting interactive teaching methods. Taking advantage of the interactive nature of new media, teachers can use interactive teaching methods in the classroom, such as group discussions and role-playing, allowing students to learn and grow through participation. Simultaneously, social media and other platforms can also be used for post-class interaction and communication with students, keeping abreast of their psychological dynamics and needs.

3. Conducting mental health education activities. Universities can regularly organize activities related to mental health education, such as Mental Health Week and psychological lectures. These activities not only enrich students' extracurricular life but also allow them to learn about mental health in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

4.3 Strengthening Teacher Training and Enhancing Education Level

1. Improving teachers' media literacy. Universities should regularly organize media literacy training for teachers, allowing them to understand the characteristics and laws of new media and learn how to conduct effective mental health education in the new media environment.

2. Enhancing teachers' practical abilities. In addition to theoretical knowledge, universities should provide teachers with practical opportunities and platforms to continuously improve their educational level and abilities through practice. For example, teachers can be organized to participate in mental health education practices or case study discussions.

3. Establishing a sound incentive mechanism. To stimulate teachers' enthusiasm and innovative spirit, universities should establish a sound incentive mechanism to commend and reward teachers who have excelled in mental health education. Simultaneously, teachers are encouraged to actively participate in scientific research on mental health education, promoting continuous innovation and development of mental health education theory and practice.

5 Conclusion

In the wave of the new media era, mental health education for college students is becoming increasingly important. This study delves into the current status, problems, and coping strategies of mental health education for college students in the new media environment, revealing many challenges and opportunities faced by this field. We found that new media not only changed the traditional way of information dissemination but also invisibly reshaped the psychological ecology of college students. Therefore, mental health education can no longer remain in the traditional mode, but needs to keep

pace with the times and closely integrate the characteristics of new media for innovation.

Through this study, we have clarified the improvement direction of mental health education for college students in the new media environment: educational content needs to be continuously updated to adapt to the rapid changes in the new media environment; educational methods urgently need to be innovated, leveraging the interactivity of new media to enhance educational effectiveness; at the same time, strengthening teacher training is also crucial. Only when teachers grasp the essence of new media education can they better guide students to grow healthily. We believe that through these efforts, we can create a healthier and more positive psychological environment for college students, helping them thrive in the new media era.

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