

# Research on the Status Quo of Psychological Crisis Among College Students in Ethnic Areas

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**Abstract:** The article discusses the significance of the research, and outlines the concepts of psychological crisis, its intervention, and psychological crisis among college students, as well as relevant theories on psychological crisis. The research mainly adopts case study and interview methods. Through scientific analysis of psychological crisis cases in four grades of X College in ethnic regions, it summarizes the current situation of crisis psychology among X College students, hoping to provide some first-hand data and research ideas for relevant researchers.

**Keywords:** Ethnic regions; Psychological crisis; Psychological crisis intervention

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research background

#### 1.1.1. The state emphasizes ideological and political work in universities

Since the 18th National Congress of the party, the Central Committee of the party has paid great attention to the mental health and development of the students. In recent years, a series of policy documents have been issued, including “Healthy China Action—Action Plan on Mental Health of Children and Adolescents (2019–2022)”<sup>[1]</sup>, “Notice on Strengthening the Management of Students’ Mental Health”<sup>[2]</sup>, “Guide to Teaching Materials for the Introduction of Life Safety and Health Education into Primary and Secondary Schools”<sup>[3]</sup>, and “Special Action Plan for Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Mental Health Work of Students in the New Era (2023–2025)”<sup>[4]</sup>, the 2023 plan will focus on promoting students’ mental health to promote students’ healthy growth.

#### 1.1.2. Increasing psychological problems of college students in ethnic areas requiring urgent resolution

With no exception in our country, mental health problems have become the focus of social attention, especially the students, and strengthening the mental health education of adolescents has become the consensus of the whole society. The research team conducted a survey of the psychological data of the freshmen in X universities

in ethnic minority areas and concluded that among the freshmen in the class of 2020, the proportions of first, second, and third-degree mental problems were 10.04%, 12.42%, and 18.5% respectively. Among 2021 freshmen, 10.25%, 14.32%, and 20% had first-degree, second-degree, and third-degree psychological problems respectively. Among the 2022 freshmen, 11.08% had serious psychological problems, 18.31% had general psychological problems, and 15.82% had potential psychological problems. Psychological problems are increasing every year. To some extent, whether colleges can fulfill the task of educating people is affected by the level of mental health of college students. Colleges and universities should attach great importance to the education of college students' mental health, improve their mental health level and psychological quality, and cultivate high-quality talents to meet the needs of the socialist market economy. The psychological crisis of college students is not well dealt with, which can easily lead to a great loss of individual, family, and society.

### **1.1.3. Psychological education is an important component of the education system**

In December 2016, 22 departments including the former National Health and Family Planning Commission and the Ministry of Education jointly issued the “Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Mental Health Services”<sup>[5]</sup>, which clearly stated that “emphasis should be placed on improving the psychological adjustment ability of college students, maintaining good adaptability, emphasizing suicide prevention, and carrying out psychological crisis intervention”<sup>[5]</sup>. Afterward, in December 2017, the Party Group of the Ministry of Education of the Communist Party of China issued the “Implementation Outline of the Quality Improvement Project for Ideological and Political Work in Universities”<sup>[6]</sup>, proposing that “psychological education” is one of the “top ten” education systems in universities<sup>[6]</sup>. Integrating psychological and moral education, scientifically constructing a five-in-one psychological health education system that includes consultation services, preventive interventions, educational teaching, platform guarantees, and practical activities, with a focus on cultivating a positive, rational, and peaceful mindset among teachers and students, helping to improve their ideological and moral qualities, psychological health qualities, and scientific and cultural qualities for harmonious development. In April 2023, the Ministry of Education and 17 other departments issued the “Special Action Plan for Strengthening and Improving the Mental Health Work of Students in the New Era (2023–2025)”<sup>[4]</sup>, which pointed out that “we should fully implement the Party’s education policy, adhere to educating people for the Party and the country, implement the fundamental task of moral education, and adhere to the educational concept of health first”<sup>[4]</sup>, as well as improve psychological warning intervention, and it can be seen that psychological education is an important component of the education system.

## **1.2. Research significance**

This study can provide a way for the ideological and political education of college students in ethnic areas. One of the goals of ideological and political education for college students is to cultivate college students' positive psychological quality and mental health. Therefore, from the perspective of “strengthening morality education,” this paper studies the characteristics and intervention of college students' psychological crisis in ethnic areas, which provides some new research perspectives for the development of ideological and political education of college students in ethnic areas. At the same time, this study can also provide some ideas and methods for the related departments to carry out the prevention and control of psychological crisis of college students in ethnic areas. By collecting and analyzing the first-hand information and data about the present situation of college students' psychological crisis and the present situation of intervention, the conclusion can provide a scientific decision-making basis for related work. According to the conclusion of the study, the work strategy of preventing and intervening psychological crisis of college students in minority areas can provide basic ideas for

promoting the work of mental health education for college students in minority areas.

## **2. Definition of key concepts and theories**

### **2.1. Definition of key concepts**

#### **2.1.1. Psychological crisis**

In 1964, Caplan first proposed the theory of psychological crisis. He pointed out that if an individual is faced with a sudden or significant life dilemma, the crisis management method and support system used in the past cannot deal with the present situation, in other words, when the individual must face a difficult situation beyond his ability, the individual will produce temporary psychological distress, this temporary psychological imbalance is a psychological crisis. According to this, a psychological crisis is defined as a temporary state of psychological imbalance that cannot be solved by usual methods of dealing with problems when individuals encounter sudden changes <sup>[7]</sup>. According to Cristi Kanel, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles, psychological crisis, however defined by scholars, must have three components: the occurrence of a crisis event, and the perception of the event that causes the subject's subjective pain, the failure of the usual coping style leads to the decline of the psychological, emotional, and behavioral functions of the parties <sup>[8]</sup>. Thus, we can understand that the psychological crisis is not the individual experience of events, but the individual experience of the difficult situation of emotional response to their own state.

When an individual feels that he or she has experienced a great setback, or that his or her usual way of dealing with external stimuli is not able to solve the dilemma, and because of this setback or dilemma, he or she experiences feelings of fear, anxiety, shock, and sadness, an imbalance has occurred, or perhaps there have been many failed attempts to solve the problem before this state occurred. The psychological crisis is often sudden and should be scientifically controlled and timely relieved, otherwise it will lead to individual multi-functional incoordination, and even cause serious harm to individual life safety.

#### **2.1.2. Psychological crisis intervention**

Caplan also puts forward the concept of crisis intervention. He thinks that crisis intervention is the process of resolving crisis and telling the interviewee how to use scientific and rapid methods to deal with stressful events or difficult situations <sup>[7]</sup>. Therefore, psychological crisis intervention can be defined as a psychological intervention method formed on the basis of short-term psychotherapy, which aims at solving problems and restoring psychological balance by giving care, support, and help to individuals to go through the crisis safely, the process does not involve individual personality correction. To put it simply, psychological crisis intervention is to help the individual in a situation of psychological crisis to restore psychological balance.

#### **2.1.3. Psychological crisis intervention for college students**

Psychological crisis intervention means to help and support college students who are in trouble and frustration, to change their psychological imbalance, and to restore their psychological balance. The psychological crisis intervention of college students is the same as the psychological crisis of college students, because it increases the limited crowd before the intervention. Due to their special development stage, college students lack adequate experience to deal with many problems, therefore, the psychological crisis intervention should actively provide support and help to college students themselves, and provide constructive suggestions for them to identify appropriate, scientific, and effective ways to respond to a crisis. Moreover, in most cases, the psychological crisis intervention for college students is usually carried out on campus, so it makes the psychological crisis intervention more difficult than the general psychological crisis intervention.

## **2.2. Theories**

### **2.2.1. Marxist theory of the all-round development of man**

Marxism's theory of the all-round development of man is gradually deepened with the transformation of Marxism's view of practice and his understanding of the nature of man. The all-round development of human beings means that human beings possess their all-round essence in an all-round way, including human needs, abilities, individuality, full development of subjectivity, social relations, and so on, it emphasizes the free, harmonious, and all-round development of human beings<sup>[9]</sup>. When we define the psychological crisis intervention of college students, we also emphasize that the psychological crisis intervention of college students is to relieve the psychological pressure of college students and improve their ability to recover from the past social adaptation, and turn the current psychological crisis into a personal experience of psychological growth. Therefore, the ultimate goal of psychological crisis intervention is to support college students in turning psychological crisis into a breakthrough opportunity in their growth and promote their all-round development. To a certain extent, this can prove that psychological crisis intervention of college students can be based on the Marxist theory of all-round human development as the theoretical basis. The main way to realize the all-round development of human beings is education. School education can promote the development of the object of education as well as the history of all-round development of human beings. An important part of ideological and political education in colleges and universities is to intervene the psychological crisis of college students, whose goal is to make them have a better future. Accordingly, it is necessary for all stakeholders to master the knowledge and working methods of psychological crisis and crisis intervention, so as to prevent and control the occurrence of individual psychological crisis and promote the all-round development of the individual.

### **2.2.2. Psychological crisis intervention theory**

There are a lot of psychological crisis intervention theory, here we introduce three typical psychological related theory. Janosík's psychological crisis intervention theory summarized the crisis theory into three levels: basic crisis theory, expanded crisis theory, and applied crisis theory. In this study, the psychological crisis is defined as the imbalance of individual psychology, basic crisis theory focuses on helping the parties to recognize and correct the temporary cognitive, emotional, and behavioral distortions caused by traumatic events. Based on this definition, Brammer proposes the applied crisis theory, which holds that psychological crisis consists of three kinds of crises: existential crisis, situational crisis, and developmental crisis, there are objective and subjective reasons for psychological crisis. After a systematic study of psychological crisis, Brocklepp puts forward the theory of crisis personality. Brocklepp believes that there are individuals who are prone to crises, and they often share common traits, such as being socially introverted, self-denial by not expressing or expecting too much of oneself, and unwillingness to try or act impulsively in the face of problems<sup>[7]</sup>. Therefore, we should pay special attention to the individuals with these characteristics when carrying out psychological crisis intervention work. Most theories of psychological crisis have analyzed the causes of individual psychological crisis, such as individual characteristics, external objective environmental factors, etc. To some extent, these theories can lay a theoretical foundation for students' psychological crisis intervention.

## **3. Research method**

This research mainly used the case study method and the interview method to carried out scientific analysis of the National Area X College four grades' psychological crisis. This paper summed up the present situation of college students' crisis psychology, the causes of college students' psychological crisis, the present situation of college students' crisis intervention, and the factors influencing college students' crisis intervention. In addition,

because of the limitations of the case study, such as the lack of flexibility and the difficulty in ensuring the quality of the written form, the interview method was used to supplement the case study, to understand the current situation of college students' crisis intervention and its influencing factors.

## **4. Investigation results and analysis**

### **4.1. The status quo of college students' psychological crisis in X College**

This research conducted a simple statistical analysis of the university student psychological crisis situation and the simple statistics performed on the 66 cases may draw the following conclusion.

In all the cases analyzed, the incidence of psychological crises in freshmen to seniors accounted for 16.67%, 33.33%, 34.85%, and 15.15% of the total cases, respectively, mainly concentrated in sophomores and juniors. The rate of mental crisis among female students and male students was 66.67% and 33.33%, respectively. In terms of ethnicity, the psychological crises of the Tibetan, Han, Hui, and Yi ethnic groups accounted for 4.55%, 83.33%, 4.55%, and 7.57% of the total cases, respectively. The proportion of Han students was much higher than that of students from other ethnic groups. The proportion of students' psychological crises in town, big city, and rural area was 37.88%, 1.52%, and 60.60% respectively. Single parent, orphan, nuclear family, and blended family accounted for 7.58%, 1.52%, 68.18%, and 13.64% respectively, and the proportion of nuclear family was much higher than that of other family structures. In terms of past medical history, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, delusional tendencies, delusional disorders, personality impulses, depression, and other diseases accounted for 16.67%, 12.12%, 1.52%, 1.52%, 1.52%, 1.52%, 36.36%, and 28.79% of the total cases, respectively, depression was much higher than other types. In terms of the current psychological state of students, the proportions of cases with unstable emotions, extremely unstable emotions, relatively stable emotions, stable emotions, suicidal self-injury behaviors, suicidal self-injury intentions, and other types were 16.67%, 1.52%, 9.09%, 62.12%, 3.03%, 1.52%, and 6.06%, respectively. After some intervention measures, the emotional state of most students had stabilized, and the proportion of students with stable emotions was much higher than other types.

### **4.2. The causes of psychological crisis among college students**

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on the causes and sources of psychological crises that affect students. It was found that among the events that cause psychological crises, the setbacks caused by interpersonal relationships, academic performance, employment, and heartbreak accounted for 40.91% of the total cases, domestic violence accounted for 7.58%, campus bullying accounted for 1.52%, sexual violence accounted for 1.52%, major diseases accounted for 6.06%, important family member deaths accounted for 7.58%, and other reasons accounted for 34.85% of the total cases. The setbacks caused by interpersonal relationships, academic performance, employment, and heartbreak were much higher than other types; it can be seen that setbacks caused by interpersonal relationships, academic performance, employment, and heartbreak are the main factors that trigger psychological crises among this group of college students. Through detailed analysis of collected case data, it is found that problems related to interpersonal relationships are relatively the primary factors that trigger psychological crises among college students.

The causes of psychological crises in different grades vary. The data on setbacks caused by interpersonal relationships, employment, academic performance, and heartbreak increases with the growth of grades, freshman year is 27.27%, sophomore year is 36.36%, third grade is 43.48%, and fourth grade is 60%, from the interview, it is also found that employment and academic performance are the main causes of psychological crisis among college students.

“Family” is a high-frequency word in interviews and case studies, a simple statistical analysis of 66 cases found that independent living, parental rearing, intergenerational rearing, and other relatives’ rearing accounted for 1.52%, 83.33%, 10.60%, and 4.55% of the total cases respectively, the proportion of parental rearing patterns was much higher than that of other rearing patterns, and the proportion of laissez-faire, democracy, indulgence, autocracy, and others were 25.76%, 9.09%, 25.76%, 18.18%, and 21.21% respectively, the proportion of laissez-faire is the same as that of indulgence, followed by other type, autocratic type, and democratic type. Less resistance to family structure, scientific parenting, and education is more conducive to personal development.

### **4.3. Current situation of crisis intervention for college students**

At present, in terms of the treatment methods, medication treatment, follow-up consultation, untreated, and others account for 39.39%, 6.06%, 40.91%, and 13.64% of the total cases, respectively. Untreated cases account for the highest number, followed by medication treatment, with the least number of follow-up consultation. In terms of intervention measures, communication with psychological teachers, contacting psychological counseling centers, notifying parents to seek medical treatment, untreated, and others accounted for 1.52%, 1.52%, 27.27%, 30.30%, and 39.39%, respectively. Other methods and untreated accounted for the vast majority, followed by notifying parents to seek medical treatment, and contacting psychological teachers and counseling centers was rare.

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