

Analysis of Common Problems in Mental Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools and Countermeasures

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Abstract: This paper mainly analyses the current situation of mental health education in primary and secondary schools of China, summarizes common problems existed and puts forward corresponding solutions.

1. Introduction

Though we advocate quality education today, there are still many schools which set the goal of high enrollment rates and pay too much attention to students' academic performances. Under the motivation of exam-oriented education, mental health education usually becomes a simple slogan, and cannot be really implemented. In addition, in primary and secondary schools, the leaders and teachers do not have enough awareness on the importance of mental health education. The lack of psychological knowledge also hinders the development of mental health education in primary and secondary schools.

2. Common Problems in Mental Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools

2.1 Serious mental problems of ordinary teachers

Teachers' influence on students' mental health can be realized through the actual teaching and management process. At the same time, teachers' own physical and mental health can also impact students. Teachers' physical and psychological health is the model of students' health conditions. Teachers are lofty professions whose personality influences students' personality. Their psychological states, speeches, behaviors and personality characteristics usually exert subtle influences on students, and have great impacts on students' learning and personality development as well as their mental health. If teachers have psychological problems, they will certainly have a negative impact on students' physical and mental health and growth. However, the actual situation is worrying. According to relevant surveys, many teachers have different degrees of psychological problems. Teachers, as social people, are inevitably stimulated and pressured from the society, from their families, and from the working environment. In addition to the particularity of teachers' profession, there are many factors that can harm teachers' psychological states. In addition, due to the lack of ability to deal with their own psychological troubles, teachers' psychological problems usually cannot be healed in a long time. Teachers with psychological problems often lack affection for students and enthusiasm for work. They tend to adopt the simple authoritarian, laissez-faire and punitive styles of education. As a result, the relationship between teachers and students becomes tense; there are antagonistic emotions between teachers and students. Under that situation, students are unwilling to accept teachers' education and guidance, and even intentionally confront teachers. Thus, students cannot be correctly educated. Under the influence of teachers' unhealthy psychology states and work styles, some students have learned how to carefully weigh up teachers' words and closely watch teachers' expressions. They choose to cater to and please their teachers, thus gradually forms internal traumas such as obedience, flattery, cowardice, strong dependence, shirking responsibility and losing self-confidence. It can be seen that teachers' mental health is particularly important. Only when the teacher is in a good physical and mental state, can he be enthusiastic about the work, love the students from the bottom of his heart, and truly understand and

accept students. Only these teachers can win students' trust, and achieve the educational goals.

2.2 Inadequate mental health education

For a long time, education in our country attaches too much importance to the study of knowledge and the cultivation of intelligence. It often takes the amount of knowledge accepted and the level of examination scores as the evaluation criteria to judge the students' quality, and assesses the level of teachers by students' academic achievements. The mode generally ignores the education for students' emotion, will, motivation and personality. The quality education, especially education for students' mental health is inadequate. The lack of mental health education is mainly manifested in following aspects.

(1) First is the lack of specialized mental health education courses. The Ministry of Education promulgated *Several Opinions and Guiding Outline on Strengthening Mental Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*. The documents clearly explain the guiding ideology, basic principles, the importance, goals and tasks, main contents, as well as ways and methods of mental health education, and explain how to organize and implement mental health education and how to build the teachers' team. The guiding opinions also require all levels of education departments and schools to pay full attention to mental health education in primary and secondary schools, and conscientiously carry out mental health education. However, so far, there are still many primary and secondary schools do not offer courses on mental health. Some schools have opened the course, but the courses are occupied by other teachers, or become self-study classes.

(2) Mental health education professionals are scarce in schools. At present in China, most psychological counselors in schools are not professional. They do not have professional backgrounds in psychology, and are lack of professional training in psychological counseling. Most psychological counselors are part-time teachers of other disciplines, such as leaders in charge of moral education, teachers of ideological and political courses, and head teachers for the class. They do not have professional psychological knowledge or psychological counseling skills. They tend to reasoning with students in counseling. Thus, students' psychological counseling is more like the ideological and political education class, which leads to the poor effect of mental health education in schools.

(3) There are misunderstandings in concepts. The first misunderstanding is that, many teachers hold that mental health education is the work of psychological counselors; it has nothing to do with them. In fact, carrying out mental health education in various subjects is an important way to realize the mental health education. Different courses, practical projects, as well as recreational and sports activities play important roles in mental health education. The second misunderstanding is that many educators mistakenly believe that mental health education equals to do psychological tests. They are keen to organize students to do various psychological tests, but ignore the continuous psychological intervention for students after psychological problems exposed through tests. Simply labeling students by test results cannot improve their mental health; the negative psychological hints may even hamper students' psychologic status. The third misunderstanding is to equate psychological courses with mental health education. Some teachers think that the target of mental health education can be achieved as long as the school offers psychological lessons. But in fact, mental health education should be carried out through multiple channels and from multiple angles.

Due to the weakness of mental health education in schools, many students' psychological problems cannot be found and valued in time and intervened properly. The developing problem can cause harm to students' physical and mental health in the long run.

3. Mental Health Education in Schools

3.1 Psychological counseling for students should be transformed from the educational mode to the service mode

For a long time, the mental health education in Chinese schools is carried out based on pre-set goals and contents. Educators conduct mental health education in a planned and systematic way.

This mental health education mode is built mainly from the perspective of schools and educators; it focuses on educating and shaping students according to the wishes of educators. It belongs to the mode of education. In view of the shortcomings of this educational mode, the school mental health education should be changed into from the educational mode to the service mode. The service mode starts from student's point of view. It takes students own developmental needs as the starting point, fully mobilizes their initiative and enthusiasm, and provides corresponding mental health services according to the physical and mental characteristics of students, as well as the psychological development laws and the growth needs. More attention is paid to meet the development needs of students. For example, according to different psychological problems students encounter at different stages, the school should carry out corresponding psychological counseling activities, such as counseling which can improve interpersonal communication abilities and emotional management abilities. In order to effectively realize the transformation of school mental health education from the education mode to the service mode, it is necessary to continuously develop school mental health curriculum and education resources, compile localized mental health assessment tools, strengthen the construction of school psychological counseling rooms, establish school psychological crisis prevention and intervention system, and gradually form a more perfect mental health service system.

Schools can set up special psychological counseling rooms on campus, open online psychological counseling platform, psychological distress mailbox and "spiritual hotline", so that students can have more ways to solve psychological confusion. The school can also employ professional psychological counselors, so that the individual psychological counseling can be truly carried out and achieve results. On the premise of establishing the relationship of mutual trust, respect, understand and acceptance, psychological counselors should accompany students to explore their inner world, help them to find internal resources, stimulate their potentials, and promote them to find appropriate ways to deal with psychological troubles. At the same time, with the help of group counseling, students can avoid the fear of individual counseling. Everyone in the group has a common psychological distress, which can make students more relaxed and open. At the same time, students in the same group and help and comfort each other, which can provide more social support to students. In addition, peer counseling can also help student with psychological problems. Peer counseling means that students of the same age can help each other, understand and support each other, and provide psychological comfort and guidance to students with psychological distress. This is also a very good way of psychological counseling. Students of similar age have the similar psychological level. They know more about what psychological distress exists in their age group and how to deal with these psychological problems. They have their own methods. It is easier for peers to communicate with each other in terms of language and emotions, so as to establish a mutually supportive relationship. They can communicate with each other in view of the common psychological problems, which can play a certain role. Students' psychological associations can also be established under the guidance of professional teachers. The associations can organize activities regularly to create places for students to express their feelings and worries, so that students can have the opportunity to release their negative emotions, dissolve their psychological troubles and release their psychological pressure. In addition, the propaganda of health psychological knowledge can also be carried out through various channels, such as campus propaganda boards, school websites, campus broadcasting, blackboard newspapers, psychological theme class meetings and other propaganda tools. These activities can help students to acquire mental health knowledge, to understand their own psychological development characteristics and rules, and to master the methods of dealing with psychological distress. Students can understand and accept themselves, and cultivate good psychological qualities as well as strong social adaptability. Through the psychological health education of students, we can help them to relieve learning and examination anxiety, regulate negative emotions, enhance the sense of self-worth, and form correct self-awareness and self-evaluation ability.

3.2 Taking precautions against students' psychological problems

Schools should regularly conduct psychological assessments of students through psychological software, and then collate, analyze and record the results of psychological assessments. At the same time, according to the results of the assessment, timely intervention should be provided for students with psychological problems; different intervention methods should be adopted according to the severity of students' psychological problems. The school can establish mental health files for each student; the file should contain the basic family information of the student, the history of his illness and mental illness, the results of each psychological evaluation, as well as the content of psychological interviews. Head teachers and parents can get the feedback on students' mental health status and problems, which can increase the attention and concern of teachers and parents to those students with mental problems. Emotional understanding and support of teachers and parents can help students to face and deal with their own psychological problems. In addition, the school can organize students to fill in the "emotional barometer" every week, so as to timely grasp their emotional changes and daily performances, and carry out timely intervention for students with psychological distress.

3.3 Paying attention to teachers' mental health

Ushinsky believes that "everything in education should be based on the personality of educators, because only personality can affect personality, and only personality can form personality". Teachers' personality health affects students' personality health in many ways. Therefore, in order to solve students' mental health problems, teachers need to constantly improve their own mental health quality and psychological counseling ability. In daily teaching and educational activities, teachers consciously and unconsciously convey their attitudes towards life, as well as their values and world outlooks to students. Teachers' emotions exert a subtle influence on students. Teachers' guidance to students and their own mental health directly affect students' mental health. Therefore, we need to pay attention to and improve teachers' mental health level, so that they can have a healthier mental state to actively influence and educate students.

First, schools need to carry out training to improve teachers' level on mental health education. Through the training in pedagogy, psychology and psychological counseling skills, teachers can master the theories and methods of pedagogy, psychology and psychological counseling. They can understand the psychological characteristics, psychological needs and the laws of psychological development of students at different ages, and use the theories of pedagogy, psychology and psychological counseling to guide students and deal with their complex psychological distress. Students acquire the concept of who they are mainly through their parents' and teachers' attitudes and evaluations of themselves. Their self-perception, self-evaluation, self-esteem and self-confidence are built on the basis of adults' attitudes and evaluations of them. Teachers' attitudes towards students directly affect their self-perception and self-evaluation. Therefore, teachers should love students from the bottom of their hearts; they also need to respect, understand and accept students. School leaders should provide teachers with opportunities for further training in professional psychological quality education. Through training, teachers' professional qualities can be effectively improved, and teachers' awareness of being "mental health doctors" can be enhanced. They can consciously implement mental health education in all subjects, so that every primary and secondary school teacher can become qualified psychological counselors.

Second, teachers should constantly improve their own psychological qualities. Teachers should not only have the ability to provide psychological counseling to students, but also have the ability to adjust and maintain their own mental health under various external stimuli and pressures. Teachers' own psychological problems will lead to the failure of students' education and psychological counseling. Therefore, we need to pay attention to teachers' own mental health, help them to deal with psychological distress from work and family, help them to release pressure and negative emotions, and improve their emotional and mental health conditions. Leading departments at higher levels should pay attention to the mental health of front-line teachers, popularize common knowledge of mental health to all front-line teachers, and strengthen the construction of school

psychological counseling departments. Through these methods, front-line teachers will be able to deal with psychological problems by means of psychological counseling. They can also improve their psychological qualities and enhance their ability of consciously adjusting their mental states, so that teachers can use their healthy personalities, good psychological states and positive emotions to influence students and improve students' mental health.

4. Conclusion

In short, primary and secondary schools need to pay attention to teachers' own mental health conditions, enhance each teacher's awareness of mental health education, implement and infiltrate mental health education in all aspects of school education, and promote the improvement of students' psychological quality.

References

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