

A Coupled Study of Mental Health and Ideological Guidance Education for College Students Majoring in Finance and Economics

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Abstract—College students majoring in finance and economics often have characteristics such as a preponderance of female students over male students, a focus on humanities rather than science, more sensibility than rationality in thinking, and a tendency towards critical thinking rather than acceptance. Compared with students majoring in science and engineering or comprehensive disciplines, the incidence of psychological disorders among finance and economics majors is relatively high. Starting from the educational system, teaching methods, and educational models of finance and economics majors, this article analyzes the mental health status, establishment of identity, and guidance of values among college students. It investigates the coupling mechanism between mental health and ideological guidance for finance and economics majors, aiming to address issues such as the high incidence of psychological problems and the difficulty in ideological guidance among students majoring in finance and economics.

Keywords—finance and economics colleges, mental health education, ideological and political education

I. INTRODUCTION

Finance and economics majors typically exhibit characteristics such as a preponderance of female students, a strong liberal arts background with relatively less scientific knowledge, a tendency towards emotional thinking rather than rational thinking, and a predisposition towards critical thinking with less acceptance [1]. Especially against the backdrop of accelerated global urbanization, the incidence of psychological issues among finance and economics majors is higher compared to students in science and engineering fields, and their acceptance of ideological and political education is relatively poorer. Therefore, it is imperative for educators in higher education institutions to delve deeply into the relationship between mental health education and based on the characteristics of finance and economics majors, clarify the unique educational cores of both, and carry out coupled research

on mental health and ideological guidance education for these students [2].

II. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION AND IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION FOR FINANCE AND ECONOMICS MAJORS

Mental health education aims to utilize the principles and methods of psychology to actively educate and guide students in aspects such as cognition, behavior, emotions, willpower, needs, motivation, temperament, personality, and abilities, thereby promoting their psychological development, enhancing their social adaptability, and safeguarding their mental health [3]. Ideological and political education focuses on employing the theories and methodologies of ideological and political education to scientifically and correctly guide students' worldviews, life outlooks, values, political views, legal concepts, and moral outlooks, ensuring that their ideological and political qualities align with societal expectations and continuously elevating their ideological level, political consciousness, moral quality, and cultural literacy. Currently, finance and economics majors face three major issues in mental health education and ideological and political education: distinct student characteristics, separation of educational systems, and a shortage of qualified teaching staff [4].

(i) Distinct Student Characteristics

Finance and economics majors typically exhibit distinct characteristics such as a preponderance of female students [5], a strong focus on humanities compared to science, a tendency towards emotional thinking rather than rational thinking, and a predisposition towards critical thinking with less acceptance. Consequently, these students often possess strong debating skills, rich and delicate emotions, lively and outgoing personalities. However, they can also be psychologically sensitive and fragile, possess a strong sense of pride, and experience rapid emotional changes. Additionally, they may lack persistence and psychological adaptability [6]. Conducting mental health work solely for finance and economics majors can trigger their sensitive and fragile emotions. Routine developmental psychological

counseling and guidance may also touch upon their pride, leading some students to doubt their mental health status and feel disgusted and suppressed. On the other hand, solely conducting ideological and political education for these students can be challenging as they often have strong debating abilities and may not understand or agree with teachers' ideological and political theories. They tend to have their own independent thinking patterns and value orientations. Therefore, educators should, based on an understanding of the distinct characteristics of finance and economics majors, explore a model that organically combines mental health education with ideological and political education tailored to their needs. Furthermore, they should delve into how these two aspects can be integrated and what effects can be achieved through this integration [7].

(ii) Separation of Educational Systems

Mental health education and ideological and political education have different theoretical bases, different focus on content, and different directions in addressing issues. Consequently, universities typically separate the teaching systems for these two areas. In China, mental health education is often conducted by teachers and counselors from psychological counseling centers, mostly limited to mental health education classes and counseling sessions for college students [8]. Moreover, psychological counseling is often passive, with outdated educational methods and limited student participation. On the other hand, ideological and political education is typically conducted by teachers, with theoretical education and classroom teaching as the primary educational approaches, but with low student acceptance. The two educational systems have not formed an organically unified situation. However, the essence of both mental health education and ideological and political education is to cultivate individuals, and they share commonalities. Mental health education can incorporate the active guidance model of ideological and political education, while ideological and political education can adopt the consultative and counseling methods of mental health education [9].

(iii) Shortage of Qualified Teaching Staff

The implementation agencies for mental health education in Chinese universities typically have 1 to 3 full-time professional psychological teachers or counselors and several part-time psychological counselors. In contrast, foreign universities have tens to hundreds of full-time professional psychological teachers or counselors in their mental health education implementation agencies [10]. Currently, both mental health education and ideological and political education teams in finance and economics majors, as well as across universities nationwide, face a shortage of teachers, unable to meet the current educational requirements. To deliver effective education, competent educators are essential. To adapt to the characteristics of finance and economics students and explore new educational models, it is necessary to equip the teaching staff accordingly to achieve the desired results [11].

III. EXPLORING THE COUPLING MODEL OF MENTAL HEALTH AND IDEOLOGICAL GUIDANCE FOR FINANCE AND ECONOMICS MAJORS

(i) Studying the Interface of the Coupling Model for Mental Health and Ideological Guidance for Finance and Economics Majors

(1) Finding the interface from the perspective of the educational system

Due to their unique characteristics, students majoring in finance and economics typically have a higher incidence of psychological issues and lower acceptance of ideological and political education. Therefore, we can find the interface between the two from three dimensions: status determination, classroom instruction, and practical activities [12].

Firstly, the status of ideological and political education should be established within the mental health education system, and the role of mental health education should also be emphasized in the ideological and political education system. All faculty and staff should not only grasp the ideological dynamics of students but also pay attention to their psychological conditions in their work, adhering to the student-oriented principle.

Secondly, elements of ideological and moral cultivation should be incorporated into mental health classroom instruction or psychological counseling [13]. Besides imparting psychological principles, methods, and common psychological illnesses to students, patriotic education, moral cultivation education, and value-oriented education from ideological and political education should gradually be integrated. Once students establish correct viewpoints, they will be able to face their psychological issues from a higher perspective, realizing that teachers and counselors are helping them solve problems. This will help them put aside their pride and reduce their vulnerability. In ideological and political classrooms, in addition to the dry and boring principles of ideology and politics, a teaching model similar to psychological counseling should be introduced, transforming the traditional didactic approach into a participatory one. Leveraging the characteristics of finance and economics students, such as their independent thinking and courage to explore, students can be encouraged to grow and accept through group counseling, debates, and other formats. Furthermore, by linking practical psychological cases to students' real-life experiences, they can be informed that positive values promote positive psychological development, encouraging them to actively learn ideological and political education theories [14].

Thirdly, mental health education should incorporate the social practice system from ideological and political education work. In addition to fully utilizing psychological classrooms and counseling services, students, especially those with psychological issues, should be encouraged to participate in volunteer services, campus cultural activities, and other events. This will enable them to feel the care of their peers in collective activities, enhancing their self-worth and psychological resilience. On the other hand, exploring the ups and

downs of life through various practical activities can help them feel its happiness and beauty. In ideological and political education, activities designed to expand students' qualities from the mental health education system can be referenced. After enhancing team spirit and collective cohesion, students' sense of identity, happiness, and acceptance towards their peers and teachers will increase significantly. At this point, tailoring ideological and political education to local conditions and circumstances will yield remarkable results [15].

(2) Searching for connection points from the perspective of teaching methods

From a macro perspective, mental health education primarily employs methods such as psychometric scales, behavioral therapy, and cognitive therapy, with a heavier emphasis on listening, recording, and guiding during specific psychological counseling sessions. On the other hand, ideological and political education mainly utilizes indoctrination education, critical education, and typical education methods, with a stronger focus on teaching, imparting knowledge, and communicating ideas. However, from a microscopic point of view, there are connection points between the teaching methods of mental health education and ideological and political education [16]. Firstly, both mental health education and ideological and political education involve preliminary information collection and analysis before implementing educational methods. This involves exploring the most scientific, efficient, and targeted approach to address students' issues and achieve educational objectives. Secondly, there are partial intersections in the core of their educational methods. For instance, positive reinforcement in behavioral therapy for mental health education and praise in critical education for ideological and political education both involve rewarding certain behaviors to establish and maintain them.

(3) Searching for connection points from the perspective of educational models

In terms of educational models, mental health education and ideological and political education can also establish connections. Mental health education can shift from the current "passive treatment-seeking" model to introduce the "active guidance" model of ideological and political education. This aims to foster a healthy psychological atmosphere of mutual assistance and participation among all students across the entire campus, transforming the mindset from "I have to solve this problem" to "solving it together with everyone". Meanwhile, ideological and political education can downplay the "indoctrination" model and incorporate the "consultation and counseling" model of mental health education. This shift from "I should know" to "I want to know" can enhance students' enthusiasm and initiative in participating in ideological and political construction [17].

(4) Searching for connecting points through team building

Currently, the teaching staff for mental health education and ideological and political education among college students is characterized by a shortage of personnel and limited overlap. To effectively explore a

parallel connection model tailored to students majoring in finance and economics, it is necessary to establish a three-tier ideological and political-psychological team-building network. This will ensure a dual approach, information sharing, and the effective integration of mental health education with ideological and political education [18].

Tier One: Team Expansion. It involves expanding the teams responsible for mental health education and ideological and political education, by increasing the number of professional psychological teachers and counselors, and complementing the ideological and political education team. This ensures that both mental health education and ideological and political education have sufficient core strength.

Tier Two: Learning Interaction. It includes conducting various levels of training, establishing a mechanism for certification, and gradually implementing the requirement for mental health education personnel to hold teacher certificates and ideological and political education personnel to hold psychological counselor certificates. Regular ideological and political-psychological seminars and exchange sessions should be organized for teachers to share cases and exchange experiences.

Tier Three: Information Transmission. The mental health team should fully utilize the advantage of ideological and political education being close to students, leveraging the strength of the ideological and political education team to jointly conduct screenings and provide counseling for psychological issues among college students. The ideological and political education team should make full use of psychological principles and methods to effectively distinguish between students' ideological and psychological issues, and with the support of the mental health education team, jointly guide students to establish correct worldviews, values, and moral standards.

(ii) Integrated Education on Mental Health and Ideological Guidance for University Students in Finance and Economics Colleges

It is crucial to establish integrated education in three aspects: understanding the psychological state of students, establishing their sense of identity, and guiding their values.

(1) Understanding the psychological state

University students in finance and economics colleges possess unique psychological characteristics, and their college years are marked as the "second weaning period" physiologically. Both mental health education and ideological and political education should grasp the psychological state of students, paying attention to their ideological and psychological dynamics through dual approaches [19]. They should explore teaching methods that students are willing to accept, discard those that students are reluctant to embrace, and actively pay attention to and guide students, adapting to changes in time and situation.

(2) Establishing a sense of identity

The integrated education of mental health and ideological guidance aims to enhance students' political,

moral, and personal sense of identity. They should identify with their country, their group, and themselves, boosting their self-confidence and self-care. Understanding that the collective is composed of individuals is equally important while affirming oneself.

(3) Guiding values

A correct worldview, outlook on life, and values are beneficial to the formation of mental health, and healthy psychology provides a solid foundation for the development of these correct perspectives. Both mental health education and ideological and political education aim to cultivate our students into physically and mentally healthy, positive, and upright young individuals [20]. Guiding students in these three aspects can help them better shape their personality and cultivate a positive and healthy mindset.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Yantong Zhou researched the characteristics of students majoring in finance and economics in various universities in China, analyzed the current situation, explored the coupling model of mental health and ideological guidance for finance and economics majors, and wrote the paper; Yingda Shen studied the interface of the coupling model for mental health and ideological guidance for finance and economics majors, integrated education on mental health, and ideological guidance for university students in finance and economics colleges; both authors had approved the final version.

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