

Construction of Public Support System for Middle School Students' Mental Health in China

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Abstract: Maintaining the mental health of middle school students is a systematic project that requires joint efforts and continuous attention from many aspects. In recent years, China has targeted the mental health issues of middle school students by formulating and implementing a series of programs on mental health education for middle school students, significantly improving the status of mental health education in the school education system. However, the causes of mental health problems among middle school students are complex and diverse, involving multiple levels such as family, school, and society. In addition, the mental health status of middle school students is a real-time changing process, and it is difficult for people to accurately grasp the psychology of students. Based on synergy theory and social support, this article proposes to build a comprehensive public support system for middle school students' mental health. This system will integrate the resources of country, schools, families, society and other parties to form a joint force to jointly protect the mental health of middle school students. By strengthening communication and collaboration among various stakeholders, it will meet the psychological needs of middle school students and provide timely and Effective psychological support helps them overcome psychological distress and achieve healthy growth.

Keywords: Chinese Middle School Students; Synergy Theory; Social Support; Mental Health; Public Support System Construction

1. Introduction

In 2021, World Health Organization data show that globally, an estimated 14% of adolescents

aged 10-19 suffer from mental health problems, and many of them are not detected and treated. In 2022, according to the statistics of the United Nations, among the 1.2 billion adolescents aged 15 to 24 in the world, more than 280 million are experiencing mental health problems. If mental illness in adolescents is not recognized and treated effectively, it can have negative impacts on their physical and mental health, academic achievement, relationships, and other important areas of life, some of which are long-lasting and even extend into adulthood. It can significantly reduce their quality of life in adulthood [1]. In this case, the Chinese government has designated a series of policies to deal with and resolve the mental health crisis of students. Such as "Technical Specifications for Children's Mental Health Care", "Guidelines for the Construction of Psychological Counseling Rooms in Primary and Secondary Schools," "Healthy China Action--Psychology of Children and Adolescents" Health Action Plan (2019-2022), and other documents. In April 2023, the Chinese Ministry of Education and 17 departments issued a notice on the "Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Special Action Plan for Students' Mental Health Work in the New Era (2023-2025)." The document points out that at least one mental health assessment is carried out for students in the upper grades of primary schools, junior high schools, high schools, and secondary vocational schools every year, and guides schools to use the assessment results in a scientific and standardized manner and to establish a "one student, one handbook" mental health file. And the work of students' mental health will be included in the evaluation of the performance of educational responsibilities by the provincial people's government into the overall planning of school

reform and development, into the talent training system and supervision and evaluation index system, as an important part of the school-running level evaluation of schools at all levels and the annual assessment of leadership groups content.

Although the Chinese government has provided relevant policy support for mental health education for middle school students in recent years, students' psychological problems are still prominent. The 2020 survey showed that the detection rate of depression risk was 11.4% for primary school students in grades 4-6 and 26.6% for junior high school students [2]. A report released by the China Youth Research Center in 2021 shows that 30 million adolescents under the age of 17 in China have various emotional and psychological behavioral problems. From relevant data, it can be seen that the psychological problems of Chinese middle school students are worrying. In view of the seriousness of middle school students' psychological problems, this study is based on synergy theory and social support to build a mental health public support system for middle school students to promote the comprehensive development and improvement of students' mental health.

2. The Guiding Role of Synergy Theory in the Mental Health of Middle School Students

Synergy theory, also known as "synergetics" or "concord science" in academia, was first proposed by German physicist Haken in the 1970s. He believed that synergy theory refers to "the search for a relationship of mutual integration, mutual connection, and mutual penetration between two or more parties, and the search for a balance solution between multiple subjects, so that multiple subjects can go from disorder to order and achieve the optimal system coordination [3]." The characteristic of synergy theory emphasizes the establishment of a coordinated and consistent goal pursuit among the subsystems, to facilitate the optimal combination and synergistic effect of each subsystem to achieve the best for the common goal of the system. This characteristic of synergy theory provides a theoretical basis for mental health education for middle school students. Human psychology is relatively complex. Different factors such as personality, experience, and concepts shape a

person's psychological state, which may be positive or negative. The occurrence of psychological problems is a complex and intertwined process. Similarly, the process of mental health education is not a problem that schools can solve alone and requires the collaboration of multiple parties.

According to the characteristics of mental health education for middle school students and combined with the synergy theory, the mental health education for middle school students is regarded as a system, with families, schools, governments, hospitals, communities, and mental health departments as subsystems. Through the mutual cooperation and coordination between various subsystems, the mental health education process is jointly completed. The composition of the mental health education system for middle school students is shown in Figure 1 below.

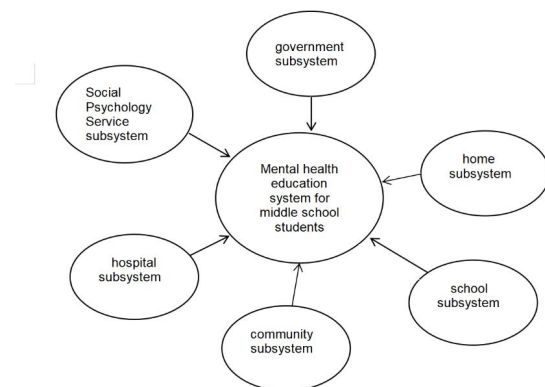


Figure 1. The Composition of the Mental Health Education System for Middle School Students

3. The Impact of Social Support on the Mental Health of Middle School Students

The concept of social support originated from psychiatric research and first appeared in the 1970s. As a scientific research object and professional concept, its connotations have not been unified, and researchers have different understandings of this concept from different perspectives. The social support system includes at least three characteristics: The first is support source, network members who provide social support relationships; The second is support behaviors or activities, network members provide material or spiritual support to the supported; The third is recipients' subjective feelings and evaluations of support activities [4]. Social support is essentially a variety of social resources that

can be used, including tangible (such as material, financial, or other support) and intangible (such as emotion, guidance, close social interaction, and respect, etc.). Starting from the perspective of psychological stimulation and mental health, some scholars define social support as the impact that individuals obtain through social connections to reduce psychological stress, relieve mental stress, and improve social adaptability.

Research by Cunyan Ma [5] and others shows that social support is closely related to students' mental health levels. Recognition and support from same-sex friends, satisfaction with relationships with teachers, conflict and punishment with fathers, affirmation and support from mothers, and satisfaction with relationships with mothers have significant predictive effects on students' mental health status. Xinxin Yu [6] used a social support assessment scale to examine the impact of social support status of middle school students on their mental health. The results found that subjective support, support utilization, and objective support can effectively explain the 8.19% variation in mental health levels, with subjective support explanations being the strongest. Meng Lingzhen's research shows that the state of social support is clearly correlated with the mental health of middle school students. Subjective support, objective support, and utilization of support can all effectively explain the level of mental health. Among them, objective support is most explainable. Li Wang(2012)also obtained similar results through her study. She found that the level of mental health of middle school students depends on the objective support resources they can accept and the use of support resources. Numerous studies have shown that social support itself is beneficial to health.

4.The Main Dilemmas Faced by Middle School Students in Terms of Mental Health

4.1. There are Many Psychological Factors that Affect the Psychology of Middle School Students, and the Causes of Psychological Problems are Relatively Complex. Mainly Including:

4.1.1 Family Environment

Family environment is one of the most important factors affecting the psychological

development of adolescents. Family atmosphere, parenting styles, parent-child relationships, etc. may all have an impact on children's mental health. A good family environment can provide healthy psychological support and security for middle school students, and is conducive to their mental health development. A poor family environment may lead to psychological problems such as mood swings, loneliness and low self-esteem among middle school students, which will have a negative impact on their mental health.

4.1.2 Academic Pressure

As competition in education intensifies, middle school students are facing increasing academic pressure. Multiple learning pressures mainly come from school, family, and society [7]. They need to complete heavy academic tasks. These pressures make them have to study for a long time. However, excessive learning pressure may cause students to develop psychological problems such as anxiety and depression. affect their physical and mental health.

4.1.3 Physiological Factors

Middle school students are at the peak of their physical development. Various psychological functions are constantly developing and their psychology is not yet stable enough. They are susceptible to changes caused by interference from external factors, which may lead to psychological problems such as mood swings, anxiety, and depression.

4.1.4 Social Relations

Social relationships among middle school students are also an important factor affecting mental health. Relationships with classmates, friends, and status in school may affect their psychological state. For example, social exclusion, bullying, loneliness, etc. can all have a negative impact on students' mental health.

4.1.5 Network Influence

With the popularization of the Internet, middle school students are increasingly exposed to the online world [8]. The information on the Internet is complex, both positive and negative. If middle school students cannot correctly distinguish and process this information, they may be adversely affected and have psychological problems. question.

4.2 Student Psychology is a Dynamic

Changing Process, and it is Difficult to Accurately Grasp Each Student's Psychology.

The psychological process of middle school students is a dynamic process. Their psychological state may change with changes in the environment, study pressure, interpersonal relationships and other factors. Chinese middle school students undergo psychological assessment work every year, but psychological assessment It is usually conducted at a specific point in time. Therefore, the assessment results may not fully reflect the students' current psychological status, nor can they predict the students' future psychological changes. one year is too long, the mental state of students may change in the middle, making it more difficult to identify students' psychological problems. Accurately grasping students' psychological problems becomes a complex and arduous task.

4.3 Parents Pay More Attention to Students' Academic Performance and Neglect their Mental Health.

Academic performance plays a pivotal role in today's society. It is not only a reflection of students' academic ability, but also the key to access to high-quality educational resources and future employment competitiveness. Therefore, many parents regard academic performance as the only criterion for their children's success and invest a lot of resources and energy in pursuing excellent academic performance. This mentality has promoted students' learning motivation to a certain extent, but it may also lead to excessive focus on academic performance and neglect of children's all-round development and mental health. Although more and more parents have begun to realize the importance of mental health, due to the lack of relevant professional knowledge and skills, they are often unable to accurately judge and deal with their children's psychological problems, resulting in students' mental health problems being ignored or delayed in treatment.

5. Construction of Public Support System for Middle School Students' Mental Health

Considering the complexity of mental health problems among middle school students, this study combines synergy theory and social support to build a public support system for

International Conference on Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (HSMS 2024)

middle school students' mental health, including family support system、home support system、school support system、community support system、hospital support system、Social Psychology Service support system. As shown in figure2:

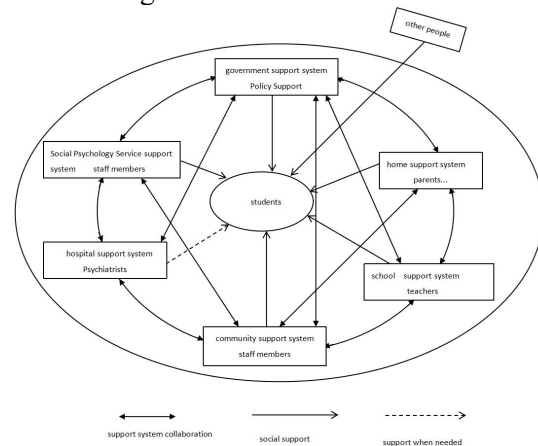


Figure 2. Public Support System for Middle School Students' Mental Health

The government support system mainly provides policy support, and the family support system pays attention to children's emotional needs, actively creates a harmonious family atmosphere, uses positive education methods, helps children build self-confidence, develop social skills, and teaches them to cope with stress and challenges. At the same time, when children have psychological problems, parents should seek professional help in time. The school support system mainly provides mental health education for students and parents and psychological service support for students; the community support system provides mental health publicity; social psychological service support system provide psychological services for students; the hospital support system provides services for students with mental illness, In the entire public support system, the government provides policy support to each support system, schools, society, families, and hospitals work together rationally, and each public support system cooperates with each other, Working together to serve students' mental health, In this process, students receive social support from parents, classmates, teachers, community workers, psychological counselor、Psychologist etc., which ultimately promotes the mental health development of middle school students.

6. Conclusion

The psychological changes of middle school students are diverse and complex, as they grow older, they have to face pressures and challenges in various aspects such as academic studies, interpersonal relationships, and future planning. These pressures and challenges may cause various psychological problems, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, rebellion, etc. By building a mental health social support system for middle school students, we can achieve the “synergistic effect” of the overall function of the support system and build a dynamic, harmonious, and efficient mental health Support system.

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