

PSYCHOLOGY HEALTH EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

With the advancement of educational modernization and the "Healthy" strategy, psychology health education has become an essential component of higher education. This study analyzes the management of mental health education in higher education has gradually improved. Most universities have established mental health education centers, offering psychological courses, counseling services, and mental health activities, as well as crisis early-warning mechanisms. To address these issues, the paper proposes four optimization strategies: First, the current situation of mental health education management in higher education is analyzed. Second, the problems and challenges faced by mental health education management in higher education are discussed. Third, relevant experiences and references in mental health education management are reviewed to provide theoretical and practical support. Fourth, the characteristic development paths of mental health education management in higher education are explored. Fifth, improving the capacity of mental health education management is conducive to enhancing work effectiveness and promoting the overall quality and efficiency of educational management. This study provides valuable reference for improving the application of mental health education management in higher education.

KEYWORDS: Psychology Health, Education Management, Characteristic Development Paths

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INTRODUCTION

As a key part of fostering students' all-round development with moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education, mental health education has grown into a priority in school management at all levels. China's Ministry of Education and National Health Commission have issued policies like Basic Standards for Mental Health Education in Universities and Opinions on Strengthening Students' Mental Health Work in the New Era, requiring universities to improve mental health education systems to boost students' psychological well-being and resilience (Yu, E., Han, P., & Fang, X. 2025). Against the backdrop of increasingly diverse university student backgrounds, mental health education management has become more critical. Many universities have optimized their systems by setting up counseling centers, offering mental health courses, and providing varied support services, forming systematic mechanisms with professional staff and regular activities (Hui Cai & Xianglian Yu, 2024). However, some still struggle with insufficient professionals, incomplete systems, and delayed interventions, which hinder the effectiveness of mental health education. To address these issues, universities have been strengthening mental health education management through policy guidance, institutional leadership, and collaboration with society and families. By improving counseling services, implementing targeted programs, and building support networks, some institutions have gradually standardized and normalized their mental health education practices.

METHODOLOGY

Literature Search Strategy. This study uses a literature review method, retrieving relevant studies from databases such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, and CNKI.

Search Keywords. Keywords include “mental health education,” “higher education,” “student mental health,” and “education management,” combined using Boolean operators (AND, OR). **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.** Included studies are peer-reviewed English or Chinese publications related to mental health education in higher education with theoretical or empirical value. Studies focusing on primary/secondary education, unrelated topics, or non-academic sources were excluded. **Literature Analysis.** The selected literature was analyzed thematically, focusing on service systems, policy support, and innovative practices, to systematically summarize existing research.

The current situation of psychology health education management of Higher Education

Mental health education management is vital in higher education, but challenges like staff shortages, limited resources, and weak intervention systems persist. Strengthening coordination, professional support, and systematic frameworks is essential to improve student well-being and educational quality.

THEORETICAL AND POLICY RESEARCH

The theoretical research on mental health education management in higher education

Theoretical research on college mental health education management integrates education, psychology, and management science to enhance student well-being through systematic approaches. Key theories—ecological systems theory, positive psychology, and work-resource models—emphasize environmental support, strengths development, and resource allocation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Together, they support building integrated systems combining education, counseling, and crisis intervention to promote students' psychological adaptability and sustainable development.

Policy support health education management in higher education

Policy support is essential for advancing mental health education management in higher education. Global frameworks emphasize counseling services, curriculum integration, and preventive and crisis systems (World Health Organization, 2022). Policies promote holistic,

coordinated support across departments (UNESCO, 2021), while international bodies stress inclusive environments, resource allocation, and collaboration to enhance effectiveness and student resilience (OECD, 2021).

Implementation of psychology health education

Psychological service resource allocation

Mental health education management in higher education now prioritizes resource allocation, with many universities setting up counseling centers staffed by full-time or part-time professionals to provide support, counseling, and educational programs for students (Ministry of Education of China, 2018). However, resource development remains uneven across institutions, with insufficient professional staffing and imbalanced distribution continuing to undermine the effectiveness of mental health education management (World Health Organization, 2022). Research confirms that enhancing institutional support and professional staffing is critical to improving the quality and sustainability of university mental health services (Xiao & Li, 2021).

Teaching and Education

Meanwhile, many universities have incorporated psychology health courses into their public elective systems, expanding educational formats through lectures, group counseling sessions, and psychological salons.(Chen, Z. 2024) .Some regions have also developed targeted psychology health initiatives that integrate local cultural elements and regional characteristics, significantly enhancing the effectiveness and appeal of these programs.

Faculty team construction and training

To enhance the professionalization of psychology health education, universities in Yunnan Province have implemented a 1:4,000 student-to-teacher ratio for psychological counselors. The province has been actively developing training mechanisms for psychology health educators through provincial programs like the National Training Program, school-based professional development initiatives, and specialized workshops. These measures have significantly improved teachers' knowledge of psychology health and their ability to provide interventions.

Crisis intervention and support mechanism construction

Some universities have established psychological crisis intervention mechanisms capable of preliminary identification and handling of risks such as suicidal tendencies, campus bullying, and emergencies. However, most institutions still face issues like non-standardized responses and delayed reactions, lacking a cross-departmental emergency coordination system. Additionally, follow-up support mechanisms for students with psychology health disorders and family collaboration frameworks remain underdeveloped.

Public cognition and school-family cooperation

While psychology health education has achieved some success within school systems, there remains a cognitive lag at the family and societal levels. Some parents harbor biases toward psychological issues and show low cooperation, hindering the extension of school-based education. The limited involvement of social psychological service institutions also constrains the transition from "in-school support" to "multi-stakeholder collaboration" in psychology health education.

Problems and challenges in psychology health education management of Higher Education

Despite ongoing efforts, higher education institutions continue to face significant challenges in managing psychological health education. These include a shortage of professional mental health staff, inadequate funding, weak institutional support, and limited awareness among students and faculty. Such challenges are particularly evident in remote and minority regions. Previous studies have shown that limited institutional resources and insufficient professional support remain major barriers to effective mental health services in universities (Daniel Eisenberg et al., 2012; Sarah Ketchen Lipson et al., 2019). Against this background, it becomes imperative to systematically identify these challenges and develop effective strategies to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of mental health education in higher education institutions.

Unbalanced regional development

Mental health education management in higher education shows significant regional disparities. Well-resourced urban universities offer stronger services, while underdeveloped areas face funding and staffing shortages, limiting service quality. These inequalities reduce accessibility and effectiveness, worsened by rising demand (Eisenberg et al., 2012; Lipson et al., 2019). Addressing them requires better resource allocation and stronger institutional support.

Weak Coordination Mechanism between Home, School, and Community

The effectiveness of psychological health education is significantly influenced by the family environment (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014). However, in many contexts, parents often lack sufficient awareness and understanding of psychological well-being, which limits their ability to effectively support students' mental health development. At the same time, communication and collaboration between schools and families remain relatively weak, resulting in insufficient coordination in addressing students' psychological needs. In addition, the limited involvement of community resources further constrains the establishment of a comprehensive support system for students' psychological health education.

Gap in Policy Implementation in Higher Education

Although governments at different levels have introduced various policies to promote mental health education, the implementation of these policies in higher education institutions often remains inconsistent. In many universities, the responsibilities related to mental health education among administrative departments—such as student affairs, counseling centers, and academic units—are not clearly defined. This lack of coordination and effective information sharing may lead to fragmented resource allocation, reduced operational efficiency, and the absence of a comprehensive management framework for mental health education. Previous studies have noted that policy – practice gaps and institutional coordination problems are common barriers to effective mental health service delivery in universities (Sarah Ketchen Lipson et al., 2019; Daniel Eisenberg et al., 2012).

Insufficient Financial Support for Mental Health Services in Higher Education

Financial investment in mental health education and services in higher education institutions remains relatively limited. Many universities still lack sufficient funding to establish well-equipped counseling centers, provide professional training for psychological counselors, and develop systematic mental health programs. The shortage of dedicated financial resources restricts the expansion of psychological support services and affects the overall quality and accessibility of mental health education for students. Research indicates that insufficient institutional resources and limited counseling capacity remain major challenges for universities in meeting the growing mental health needs of students (Sarah Ketchen Lipson et al., 2022; Daniel Eisenberg et al., 2021).

Reference for Mental Health Education Management in Higher Education

To optimize mental health education management in higher education, institutions should leverage proven domestic and international models. Many universities have built integrated systems combining counseling, preventive education, professional training, and crisis intervention. By studying their successes in governance, curriculum design, staffing, and support services, institutions can develop more coordinated and sustainable frameworks, enhancing student psychological well-being and overall educational quality.

psychology health education management domestic reference

Shanghai has developed a standardized, research-driven mental health education model through a three-tier system (school, district, municipal) integrating counseling services, teacher training, and policy coordination. It combines structured curricula with activities to enhance students' psychological resilience (Shen & Xu, 2021). Zhejiang Province: Promoting the integration of digitalization and psychological services

“Internet + mental health” platforms enhance management by integrating assessment, counseling, and educational resources, enabling data-driven evaluation, early warning, and personalized support (Pike et al., 2019). With policy and financial backing, these digital systems support sustainable and systematic mental health services (World Health Organization, 2022).

Guangdong Province: The mode of extensive participation of social resources

Guangdong has developed a collaborative model integrating universities, communities, and medical institutions to expand mental health services. It strengthens professional capacity through training and certification, and promotes family-school cooperation to enhance student well-being (World Health Organization, 2022; Eisenberg et al., 2012; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).

Foreign Models of Mental Health Education Management

United States: A Systematic Campus Psychological Service System

The U.S. has developed a comprehensive, institutionalized mental health education system featuring multidisciplinary counseling centers, SEL-integrated curricula to build resilience, and student-centered case management with external collaboration. Supported by federal and state policies, these approaches enhance accessibility, help-seeking, and overall effectiveness (Osborn et al., 2022; Fang et al., 2025; Lipson et al., 2019).

The United Kingdom: Emphasis on Early Identification and Preventive Intervention

The UK model emphasizes early identification and prevention, supported by national policies and programs like MHFA to improve mental health literacy and intervention skills (Kitchener & Jorm, 2002). Institutional frameworks and professional certification systems ensure service quality, while preventive approaches enhance awareness and early help-seeking (World Health Organization, 2021; Dodd et al., 2023).

Finland: Integration of Education Systems and Well-being Education

Finland's model integrates well-being into the education system, emphasizing happiness, belonging, and psychological safety. It uses multidisciplinary support teams and preventive, positive psychology-based education to enhance resilience, engagement, and overall well-being (OECD, 2017; Lazarewicz et al., 2024; Seligman et al., 2009).

Exploring the characteristic path of psychology health education management of Higher Education

Core Principle for High-Quality Mental Health Education

Universities must adopt innovative, context-specific mental health management strategies tailored to diverse student needs. By integrating policy, governance, professional development, and cross-disciplinary collaboration, and partnering with families and communities, institutions can build comprehensive, student-centered systems that enhance psychological resilience and well-being.

Cultural Integration in Mental Health Education

Global student mental health issues (stress, anxiety, depression) demand culturally responsive solutions (Fang et al., 2025; Wang & Joo, 2024). Embedding local traditions into mental health education boosts students' cultural identity and resilience, particularly as cultural factors shape their psychological development (Lazarewicz et al., 2024). Such programs improve service acceptance, help-seeking willingness, and support effectiveness (Osborn et al., 2022). Integrating cultural perspectives is key to advancing inclusive, effective higher education mental health systems.

Ecological & Nature-Based Mental Health Interventions

Environmental psychology confirms interactions with natural landscapes reduce stress and aid emotional recovery (Copeland et al., 2022). In higher education, nature-based activities (outdoor learning, ecological education) are emerging as preventive mental health strategies, aligning with demand for diversified student well-being support (Ertem, 2025). Integrating environmental resources offers new, evidence-based pathways to enhance student psychological well-being.

Improve the management system of psychology health education

Optimizing Mental Health Education Management. Strengthened policy guidance and funding are critical to institutionalizing university mental health services (Daniel Eisenberg et al., 2012). Key measures include establishing full-time counseling roles, upgrading facilities, integrating mental health into curricula, and expanding service access (Sarah Ketchen Lipson et al., 2019). Universities should also build cross-sector collaboration (school-family-community) and early crisis intervention systems to enhance service professionalism and student well-being (World Health Organization, 2022).

Digital-Psychology Integration for Remote Areas

A "Student Mental Health Service Platform" for online assessments, self-guided courses, and consultation bookings. Multilingual mental health app for ethnic minority groups. AI-driven psychological risk identification with tiered interventions

"Education, Medical treatment and society" collaborative path: establish a three-dimensional psychological support network

A "psychological service alliance" has been established with the Higher Education psychology health Center, psychology majors in universities and social psychological service agencies. Establish a four-in-one student psychological crisis intervention mechanism of "school doctor, community and family". Encourage college students and teachers to practice, teach and tutor in Higher Education. Realize the sharing of professional strength, expand the service radius, and provide psychological support throughout the life cycle.

Stratified and Targeted Intervention Path: Providing Precise Mental Health Services for Different Student Groups

To enhance the effectiveness of mental health management in higher education, it is essential to establish stratified and targeted intervention mechanisms based on students' needs and risk levels (Eisenberg et al., 2021). Universities should develop comprehensive assessment and early-warning systems to identify students with psychological distress. Universal mental health education can support the general student population, while at-risk students require specialized services such as counseling and continuous support. Special attention should also be given to vulnerable groups, including first-year students and those facing academic, financial, or social challenges. Research indicates that structured services and early identification systems can improve the accessibility and effectiveness of psychological support (Lipson et al., 2019). Differentiated interventions can further enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of mental health management in higher education.

Comprehensive Pathways of Mental Health Management in Higher Education to Promote Teachers' Professional Development

The integration of mental health management with teachers' professional development in higher education is essential for improving job satisfaction, strengthening professional identity, and reducing burnout. According to the Job Demands – Resources theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), adequate psychological and organizational resources can buffer work pressure and enhance well-being. Universities can support teachers through counseling services, stress management training, and mental health education, helping to relieve stress and prevent burnout. At the same time, professional development support—such as training, academic exchange, and career planning—can enhance teachers' sense of value and strengthen professional identity. Research on burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2016) shows that supportive environments and effective resource allocation are key to reducing burnout and promoting engagement.

DISCUSSION

The rising prevalence of student mental health issues—driven by social change, academic pressure, and relationship challenges—has made it a global priority in higher education,

highlighting the need for systematic management frameworks (Fang et al., 2025; Lazarewicz et al., 2024). From a governance perspective, mental health education should function as a holistic system integrating teaching, policy, professional services, and campus culture.

International models show three key features: institutionalized support through professional counseling centers (Osborn et al., 2022); preventive education programs such as SEL and Mental Health First Aid (Dodd et al., 2023); and collaborative governance involving universities, families, and communities.

However, existing studies often focus on policies or single interventions, lacking analysis of long-term effectiveness and governance mechanisms. Future research should adopt integrated frameworks to explore sustainable systems that combine education, management, and social support.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Universities should strengthen professional counseling systems with multidisciplinary support, improving well-being and help-seeking (Lipson et al., 2019). Preventive mental health education should be integrated into curricula to build resilience and coping skills. Collaborative governance among universities, families, and healthcare providers is essential for comprehensive support. Additionally, expanding digital mental health services can enhance accessibility and efficiency.

ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

This study reviews international models of mental health education management, identifying key elements: institutional services, preventive education, and collaborative governance. It highlights gaps in integrated governance research and promotes interdisciplinary insights. The conclusion emphasizes context-sensitive strategies and comprehensive systems combining policy, services, and education to enhance student well-being and support sustainable higher education development.

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