

Current Situation and Thinking of Psychological Hotline Counseling in Graduation Season in Yunnan Province

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Abstract

Objective: To understand the current situation of the psychological hotline service in Yunnan Province during the graduation season, and to provide reference for the development of the psychological hotline and the improvement of service quality in Yunnan Province during the transition period. **Method:** A textual analysis of the telephone counseling of 73 psychological hotlines received by a psychological hotline service platform in Yunnan Province in May 2021. **Results:** ①The callers of the psychological hotline in the graduation season were students and parents, mainly college students; ②The most frequently consulted questions were emotional problems, academic problems, feeling problems and interpersonal problems in order; ③The counseling strategy of the psychological hotline mainly used is the method of cognitive emotion regulation. At present, the problems of psychological callers in Yunnan Province during the graduation season are diversified, and the professional requirements for psychological hotline workers have increased. However, the standardized evaluation and return visits of the psychological hotline intervention effects are relatively lacking. Students and parents' awareness of psychological hotline needs to be improved. Adopt single-session therapy to adjust the caller's cognition and emotion; Strengthen the professional training of the psychological hotline team and establish a supervision mechanism; Standardized evaluation and return visit of psychological hotline intervention effect; Guide students and parents to understand the psychological hotline correctly, to further improve the level and quality of psychological hotline services in Yunnan Province.

Keywords

Graduation season; Psychological hotline; Service quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every year from March to June, Chinese students enter the "countdown" stage for graduation or employment with many transitions. Unexpectedly, facing the major events of further life, students and parents are prone to psychological stress reactions of varying degrees such as anxiety, depression, emotional out-of-control, insomnia, and physical disorders. Stressful life events, as a stressor, collecting the pressures from family, school, society and peers faced by individuals in life, will also have a great impact on individual physical and mental health. [1]

The pressure to enter higher education faced by the student group is more prominent and persistent. The Institute of Psychology, Chinese Academy of Sciences has conducted an

investigation on the development status of middle school students in five domestic cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shantou, and Kunming). The survey demonstrated that the psychological pressures of middle school students mainly come from five aspects: entering a higher education and parental requirements, disharmony between parents in the family, financial difficulties, problems related to puberty, school environment and troubles caused by self-image, among which the biggest stressor is entering a higher education [2]. College students are also facing the pressure of academics, postgraduate entrance examinations and employments. Research on the stressors of college students has illustrated that employment pressure is the dimension with the highest score for stressors, followed by learning pressure [3]. Research in recent years has shown that there is a significant positive correlation between academic stress and anxiety and depression levels of college students [4]. In addition, parents' expectations have a significant impact on the employment pressure of college students [5].

The Communist Party of China and the state attach great importance to the mental health of students. At National Congress on Health and Wellness in 2016, Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), emphasized the need to increase basic research on mental health issues, improve mental health knowledge and mental illness science work and standardize the development of mental health services such as treatment and psychological counseling. With the development of psychological counseling and mental health education, the psychological hotline has further developed and has become an indispensable part of student psychological services. The four most famous are the "Li Jiajie Cherish Life College Student Psychological Hotline" of Tsinghua University, the psychological assistance hotline of Peking University, "Spring Rain Hotline" of Central China Normal University, offline psychological counseling and telephone psychological counseling under the continuous construction of South China Normal University. Psychological hotline is playing an increasingly important role in alleviating students' academic pressure, employment pressure and the pressure to enter a higher education.

2. A LITERATURE REVIEW OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HOTLINES

Psychological hotline is an expanded form of psychological counseling service. It uses telephone or mobile phone as the medium to establish a good counseling relationship. Besides, psychological techniques are used to help callers find problems, explore resources, solve problems, and promote their growth [6]. The psychological hotline has obvious advantages of timeliness and convenience. Mobile phones have basically become people's necessity, so you can use it to make phone calls at any time, which overcomes the geographical inconvenience and saves costs. Psychological hotline are also characterized by anonymity and autonomy. Callers can choose to keep their basic information confidential and control the start or end of the call. Therefore, the person who asks for help will be more assured to explain the problem [7-9].

Psychological hotline services originated in Britain and the United States in the 1950s [9]. After decades of development, psychological hotline counseling services have gradually received widespread attention and recognition. An employee assistance program from a private telephone consulting agency for several large companies showed that 500 questionnaires were issued to company employees from the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and 186 questionnaires were recovered. Among the 186 consulting clients surveyed, 96% of people were willing to seek psychological hotline counseling again, and 58% of respondents who had experienced both telephone and face-to-face counseling prefer hotline counseling [10]. For callers of different ages, adolescents are particularly sensitive to their status. The equality of power they feel is also considered important. Therefore, psychological hotline counseling is also considered to be an effective way to promote the youth to express their problems and troubles

[10]. China established the first psychological service hotline in Tianjin in 1987, subsequently, in Beijing, Hangzhou, Chongqing, Shenzhen, Kunming and other cities [9]. Similar to other countries, most of the callers of hotline counseling are people who aged during 20 to 49 years old [11-13]. The psychological hotline counseling for teenagers mainly focuses on 5 common developmental problems comprising adaptability problems, academic problems, career development problems, interpersonal relationship problems and self-identity problems [14]. With the rapid development of the Internet and changes in social methods, the types and degrees of psychological problems are showing a diversified trend. More and more people choose to consult on social software first, followed by telephone counseling, and finally face-to-face counseling [15].

During the period of COVID-19, a total of 427 psychological hotlines were opened in China except Tibet, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan [16]. The three most famous are: anti-epidemic psychological hotline of the counseling and mental health center of Tongji University, anti-epidemic psychological hotline of Psychology Department of Southwest University, anti-epidemic psychological support hotline of Shandong Normal University, etc. Under the dual pressure of epidemic prevention and the graduation season, the psychological hotline quickly relieved part of the mental pressure of students and parents on a large scale. And it provided a catharsis channel for them to actively and effectively respond to academic and employment pressures, making a special contribution to social stability and harmony.

The counseling and mental health center of a university in Yunnan Province specifically analyzes the content of the psychological hotline service in the graduation season in the province, to understand the main psychological needs of students and parents in the graduation season and the service situation of the psychological hotline, for more standardized and high-quality psychological hotline service for students and parents.

3. PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HOTLINES IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN GRADUATION SEASON

3.1. Object of Study

In this study, the records of 73 hotlines answered by the psychological hotline group of a university in Yunnan Province (hereinafter referred to as the hotline group) from May 1 to May 31, 2021 were analyzed. The analysis direction included the callers' basic information, call requests, problem categories, and handling methods. There were 15 volunteers in the hotline group, all of whom were full-time psychological teachers from the counseling and mental health center of the school, including 6 male volunteers and 9 female volunteers. All the hotline volunteers had rich experience in counseling and hotline answering.

3.2. Method

Selected the research methods of statistical analysis and content analysis, used SPSS.22 to make descriptive statistics on the basic situation of the psychological hotline. All the text records answered by the hotline group were summarized and analyzed according to the call problems, call demands, emotional status and physical reactions. Then combine text records for comparison, merge and categorize.

3.3. Results

3.3.1. Analysis of demographic characteristics

According to the demographic characteristics of the text records of the psychological service hotline callers, it is found that there are 14 men, 59 women, and the ratio of men to women is 1:3. There are 7 parents and 66 students, including 10 high school students and 56 college students (see Table 1 for details).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics analysis of callers

Dimensionality	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Identity	Parent	7	9.60
	Student	66	90.40
Gender	Male	14	19.20
	Female	59	80.80
Phase of studying	Senior high school	10	15.20
	College	56	84.80

3.3.2. The basic situation of calls

The main counseling questions for calling for help include academic, emotion, interpersonal relationship, feeling, family relation, suicide and risk of injury, and psychosis. The number of people who consult with emotional problems is the largest, reaching 37, accounting for 50.70% of all counseling. Among them, 12 people are anxious about their current status quo, accounting for 32.43% of all people seeking help with this type of problem, 6 people have depressed mood, accounting for 16.22%, and 1 person reporting depression, accounting for 2.70%. The second is the counseling on academic issues, with 17 people, accounting for 23.30% of all counseling. The number of calls due to emotional problems accounts for 15.10% of the total number of people, mainly manifested in love problems. 12.30% of the callers call mainly because of interpersonal problems, specifically in the dormitory, peer relationship, and teacher-student relationship; those who call for help due to strained family relationships account for 8.20% of the total number. At the same time, among all the callers, 1 has sleep disturbance, 1 has migraine due to test anxiety, and 1 has delusions (see Table 2 for details).

Table 2. Specific demands

Classification of problems (%)	Specific questions
Emotion (50.70%)	Anxiety
	Depression
	Dpressed mood
Academic (23.30%)	Learning problems, methods, planning and policies
	School-weariness
Feeling (15.10%)	Puppy love
	love
Interpersonal relationship (12.30%)	Dormitory relationship, teacher-student relationship
	Peer relationship, interpersonal sensitivity
Family relation (8.20%)	Family tension
Psychosis (2.70%)	delusions
Self-injury and the risk of injuring others (2.70%)	Specific injury plan

Counseling on emotional and academic issues has always been a hot topic in psychological counseling and hotline counseling, especially during the graduation season. In the counseling of emotional problems, the test anxiety and academic anxiety caused by the graduation season and final exams account for 35.71%, and the depressed mood caused by the graduation season account for 28.57%. And in the counseling of academic problems, Learning methods, learning plans, postgraduate entrance examinations, and policy consultations for further studies account for 76.47% of academic problems. Among interpersonal problems, the strain on teacher-student relations caused by the graduation season account for 20% of such problems. The emotional problems of college students caused by the arrival of the graduation season account

for 40%. In the family relationship problems, the family relationship tension caused by the graduation season account for 75% of such problems.

3.3.3. Counseling Strategies for Volunteers of Psychological Service Hotline

The answerers first collect the basic information of the callers and understand the callers' demands and problems, then they calm the emotionally unstable caller to stabilize the mood, ensure the effectiveness of communication, and pay active attention to the caller. After that, the caller will be evaluated and judged initially, and finally, the caller's request will be dealt with and recommended (see Table 3 for details).

Table 3. Counseling strategies of volunteers on problems

Classification of help problems	Object of suggestion	Examples
Academic	Students	Stimulate learning motivation, form a self reward and punishment mechanism, formulate a study plan that suits you, combine work and rest, exercise appropriately, prepare for the test, reduce test anxiety, and have policy guidance
	Parents	Positively guide children's learning-weariness and puppy love issues, establish an appropriate reward and punishment mechanism for learning, focus on encouragement, divert excessive attention to children's learning
Emotion	Students	Establish a social support system, exercise reasonably, have the contract consulting, and divert attention
	Parents	Adjust the way of communication with the child, give reasonable emotional counseling, care for the child, take the child to see a doctor (reach the medical treatment standard)
Interpersonal relationship	Students	Soothe and stabilize current emotions, regulate students' cognition, help them express their opinions correctly and reasonably, suggest strengthening effective communication with their parents
Feeling	Students	Adjust cognitive style, change the way of getting along and communicating
Family relation	Students	Strengthen effective communication with family
Psychosis	Students	It is recommended to seek medical treatment and inform the student's institution to pay close attention to the student
Self-injury and the risk of injuring others	Students	It is recommended to seek medical treatment and inform the student's institution to pay close attention to the student

From the above analysis, it can be found that the counseling strategy of the psychological hotline is mainly based on cognitive emotion regulation. Due to the limitation of counseling tools and scenarios, cognitive emotion regulation is the most commonly used and most effective method of psychological hotline counseling. Once the counseling problem is found to be of a psychiatric nature, it will be recommended to seek medical attention immediately. In case of psychological crisis of self injury or risk of injury to others, volunteers will immediately break the principle of confidentiality, recommend medical treatment and notify their departments to pay close attention.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Various Problems for Help

4.1.1. The number of people calling for help due to emotional problems is relatively high

Research results show that with the arrival of the graduation season, most students and parents are facing anxiety, interpersonal relationships, and family relationship tension. In the face of emotional problems, due to emotional contagion, one person has emotional problems in the intimate relationship, which will increase the probability of the same emotions for others in the intimate relationship [17]. In this study, more than half of callers calling for help due to emotional problems indicate that students are more likely to be troubled by emotional problems during the graduation season. It is particularly important to reduce the anxiety, depression, and tension of callers.

4.1.2. Academic Problems Are Prominent Among the Requests for Help

In the face of academic problems, due to students' lack of experience in learning strategies, goal planning, time management, untimely adjustment of their own pressure and insufficient understanding of the examination, students will have varying degrees of examination anxiety at different stages related to the entrance examination [18]. Therefore, guiding students to develop their own learning strategies, goal plans and time planning is an important reference content for psychological hotline counseling volunteers to help students reduce stress and improve students and their parents' correct understanding of themselves, their children and exams.

4.1.3. Interpersonal Problems Are One of the Main Problems Faced by Callers

The study-weary behaviors that accompany the tension of interpersonal and family relationships also need to be paid enough attention to. When there are conflicts or tensions between students and classmates or between students and teachers, it is easy to cause students to have study-weary emotion and behaviors. At the same time, bad family atmosphere, tense parent-child relationship, and insufficient self-cognition and evaluation of students will also make students have study-weary behaviors. It is necessary to adjust students' cognition of interpersonal relationships to alleviate their weariness and reduce their weariness behavior [19].

4.2. There Are Higher Professional Requirements for Psychological Hotline Workers

In the psychological hotline service during the graduation season, the hotline counselors need to deal with different groups of people, with students and parents of different genders, ages, and from different places. Facing the pressure of the graduation season, different students will face different problems. Some students face anxiety or depression, and some students face tension with their parents, teachers or friends. Consultants need to deal with different problems in a targeted manner, which has higher requirements for the quality and professional ability of the consultants. When the caller has the risk of self injury or injury to others, the consultant should be calm in the face of danger and give professional guidance and suggestions, and then inform his school and unit to avoid the crisis as much as possible.

4.3. The Standardized Evaluation and Return Visit of Psychological Hotline Intervention Effect Are Lacking

If the psychological hotline consultant lacks a set of standardized process during telephone counseling, it will lead to poor counseling effect, non-standard counseling and other problems, and will encounter difficulties in the return visit and effect evaluation. At the same time, research shows that in the hotline intervention work, there are problems with the quality of the counseling, which may even cause harm to the caller[20]. Therefore, unified management regulations, management mechanism of professional training and evaluation and return visit mechanism are necessary for the construction of psychological hotline. In the process of psychological hotline counseling in the graduation season, there was no evaluation or return visit of the intervention effect, which may lead to insufficient understanding of the counseling effect and informal management of online counseling.

4.4. Students and Parents' Awareness of Psychological Hotlines Needs to Be Improved

From the perspective of historical development, domestic psychology research started relatively late [21], and the development of psychological counseling is also relatively lagging. From the analysis of social reasons, although major colleges and universities have gradually established psychological counseling centers, many students still do not realize their own problems or are unwilling to take the initiative to ask for help when faced with difficulties. According to incomplete survey data from three high schools in Zhengzhou, 96.2% of students know the school's psychological counseling room, but do not actively seek help [22]. As a way of psychological counseling, psychological hotline has some compensatory advantages, but it still faces the same dilemma.

5. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Adopt Single-session Therapy to Adjust the Caller's Cognition and Emotion

The single-session therapy mode belongs to the working mode of short-term counseling orientation. It is a practical mode developed with the rise of network counseling. The effect of each counseling should be regarded as the goal of psychological counseling, and every counseling should be regarded as the last one [23]. The single-session therapy emphasizes the structural procedure in counseling. Through the establishment of a good counseling relationship within a one-time framework, it is problem-solving-oriented, and it take the changes of life status as the goal. Within effective time, there is a higher possibility of change, based on actual conflicts. Consultant help the caller to "inspect trauma", "debride", "disinfect", "bandage" and "restart", so that the caller's cognition and mood can be improved to the greatest extent.

5.2. Strengthen the Professional Training of the Psychological Hotline Team and Establish A Supervision Mechanism

The improvement of the quality of the psychological hotline is inseparable from the construction of a professional team, so it is necessary to provide professional training for the counselors participating in the psychological hotline. Professional training can be carried out from two aspects: professional quality training and professional skills training. Professional training can be conducted through lectures and simulation training. The training of professional skills covers a wide range. And it can be carried out from the principles of the psychological hotline, the process of the psychological hotline, the professional technology of the psychological hotline, crisis intervention and the handling of special situations. The form of professional skills training include courses, Lectures, simulation training, examinations and supervision, etc.

Hotline workers need to work under the guidance of supervisors to ensure the quality of consulting services and protect the rights and interests of both the consultant and the visitor [24]. Mental health education departments or centers of colleges and universities need to invite or hire professional mental health eachers and psychological counselors to participate in the supervision of the psychological hotline, supervise the quality of counseling, improve the level of counseling, and also help the psychological hotline workers adjust their own mental health level, relieve psychological pressure, and avoid psychological exhaustion caused by excessive involvement [7,25-26].

5.3. Standardized Evaluation and Return Visit of Psychological Hotline Intervention Effect

The effect of the psychological hotline intervention can be investigated from the following four aspects: whether the status of the caller has improved, the degree of compliance of the

caller to the advice, the satisfaction of the caller, and the supervisor's evaluation of the counselor's performance [9]. Based on the consideration of standardization and operability, the psychological hotline can establish a hotline evaluation mechanism, and be equipped with special hotline evaluation forms and scales to investigate and evaluate the effect of hotline intervention. At the same time, the hotline management should be equipped with corresponding systems, including the establishment of management regulations, the establishment of professional training mechanisms, and the establishment of evaluation and feedback mechanisms.

5.4. Guide Students and Parents to Understand the Psychological Hotline Correctly

The caller's choice of psychological counseling does not mean that they are sick or psychologically abnormal, but that they have encountered some problems that individuals cannot solve smoothly in real life. Through communication with the consultant, they can better understand and explore their own resources, then solve problems. Therefore, it is necessary to guide students to establish a correct understanding of psychological counseling and psychological hotlines to help students understand the necessity and importance of psychological help.

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