

# Research on Professional Psychological Confusion and Psychological Adjustment Strategies of University Counselors in the Context of the Epidemic

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**Abstract:** With the global prevalence of the epidemic, it has brought great challenges to the work of counselors. The counselor community is highly prone to psychological confusion because of their close contact with students and the complexity of their content. The lack of relief from psychological confusion can bring about burnout, which can seriously affect the performance of student work in universities. The conflict between job adaptation and professional identity, as well as the frustration of work, are all issues that universities should focus on. As front-line personnel in student work, the extent of counselors' mental health seriously affects their own work effectiveness. The main objective of this study is to identify the most important issues that should be focused on in universities. Therefore, university counselors should master certain psychological strategies to learn self-psychological adjustment in terms of mental stress management, physiological state adjustment, negative emotion release, cognitive state improvement and action problem solving.

**Keywords:** college counselors; psychological confusion; psychological adjustment; strategies

## 1. Introduction

With the development of the times, the recurrence of the new crown epidemic and the deepening of China's economic development and education reform, the student work in domestic colleges and universities is facing more new challenges and new problems. Counselors in China's colleges and universities have not only changed their title, from "political counselor" to counselor. The work content of counselors is also expanding, with the "same" mission of educating people and the "change" being the flow between different fields with students as the target and the network as the grip, drawing the trajectory of epidemic prevention and control of the grassroots student work team [1].

These new changes have placed higher demands on counselors, but the original intention of counselors to nurture people cannot be changed. The new situation, such as the diversification of space and time and the complexity of student work, requires university counselors to adjust their mindset, stay rational, keep up with the times, grow and innovate [2]. In the context of the epidemic, the work of university counselors is more complicated, the work pressure is greater, the "standby" time is longer and the recognition of the profession is lower, which makes counselors very prone to burnout.

## 2. Psychological confusion of university counselors in the context of the epidemic

In the context of the epidemic, student work has become more difficult, and both new counselors and former counselors are more or less likely to encounter some psychological confusion in their workplace [3]. If these confusions of the counselors are not timely channeled and resolved, it is easy for the emotional state to become unbalanced and thus produce a psychological crisis.

### 2.1. Conflict over job adaptation

The work content of the counselor position is very complicated, which is inseparable from the complexity of student work, student work involves economic, academic, employment, emotional, interpersonal relationships and many other aspects, not only to care about the physical quality of

students, but also to pay attention to the psychological quality of students; not only to guide students to think about their future life planning, help students to establish the correct three views, but also to do a good job of leading the ideological and political dynamics of students. This places high demands on student counselors. In student activities, counselors need to have strong organizational, management and coordination skills; in psychological work, counselors need to have a foundation of professional knowledge in education, psychology, sociology, political science and management; in financial aid work, counselors need to have a very familiar understanding of national financial aid policies and poverty alleviation policies; in daily work, communication with other sister colleges and administrative departments, they also need to have strong communication and collaboration skills [4]. In the daily work, communication with other colleges and administrative departments also requires strong communication and collaboration skills. In the context of the normalization of epidemic prevention and control, counselors need to be able to calm students' emotions, supervise students' compliance with various epidemic prevention policies, complete various epidemic prevention tasks issued by the university and the community, grasp students' psychological dynamics in a timely manner, master the main forum for students' voices on the Internet, and help students solve practical difficulties during the epidemic, etc. All these tasks require counselors to have stable psychological qualities, strong coordination skills and comprehensive qualities. All these tasks require counselors to have a stable psychological profile, strong co-ordination skills and a comprehensive quality of education, and to be able to "suffer", "be brutal" and "be patient".

In addition to the counselor's duties, there are also many other tasks assigned by the head of the college. When the division of responsibilities is not precise enough and the boundaries are not clear enough, there is no way to accurately divide the tasks into specific departments or sections. It is easy for the counselor to become the person who takes over this part of the work, and it is difficult to define the nature of this part of the work in the work evaluation, and occasionally there is a situation where the counselor is "directed" by several leaders at the same time. Under such circumstances, counselors are prone to encounter the "dilemma" of job adaptation barriers and are sometimes at a loss as to what to do in the face of a "multitude of tasks" at work.

## ***2.2. Conflict of professional identity***

They do not have a clear promotion path, like teachers in scientific research and teaching posts, nor do they have the recognition of school leaders as full-time administrators who are responsible for administrative work. The status quo of the counselor as a "multi-faceted person" brings opportunities for the future development of the counselor, but at the same time brings many constraints to the professional development of the counselor. Counselors are involved in many tasks, such as party and group work, daily management work, ideological and political education work, online thinking work, psychological work and financial aid work, all of which are the scope of work of counselors. Many of the university's tasks are "grounded" in the counselor's post and depend on the counselor to implement them [5].

On the one hand, everyone recognizes the importance of the counselor, as many tasks require the counselor to "pass on the information"; on the other hand, when it comes to some of the core tasks of the university, the counselor becomes a transparent group. On the other hand, when it comes to some of the core tasks of the school, counselors are a transparent group and are often ignored, for example, although there is a gradual reform within the university, the promotion path for counselors is still not as clear as that for full-time teachers, and the promotion system is not interchangeable between different schools, it is an internal assessment within the school and cannot be determined across schools. In other words, counselors are an important part of personal growth and are a "marginal group" in the overall structure of the school, and a large proportion of counselors are "non-staff", without the stable status of career staff, and have to be promoted and trained for further study. This is an important reason for the high turnover rate of counselors in all universities. There was once an excellent counselor who had been working as a counselor for more than ten years and had won many prizes in the counselor skills competition in the provincial school, but under the "desperate" situation of repeatedly "not being able to join the staff", she resolutely chose to leave her beloved student work team and leave the university. She said: "I love the job of a tutor, I love my students, I used to be a tutor as a life career to fight, but things are not as they should be, but cannot get more room for growth, people in middle age, can only choose to leave, I need to bow to the "reality". "

The simultaneous existence of "being recognized" and "being ignored" in their professional identity can cause counselors to have deep doubts and denial about themselves, and many counselors wonder "who am I?" Many counselors wonder "who am I?" With a lot of work to do, counselors are easily

embarrassed by the fact that many tasks are "superficial" and involve a lot of work, and one's energy is limited. This is also a great obstacle to the future development of counselors.

### ***2.3. High frustration at work***

More counselors need to work with a class of students before they can deepen their understanding of the profession, especially the few difficult groups among students: academically challenged, economically challenged, employed and psychologically challenged. "It is very difficult to complete the task of helping students within a short period of time and see the results. What the counselor can do is to understand the students' demands at the first time, to be a good bridge between home and school, to report the students' real difficulties to the leaders in time, to solve the students' practical difficulties, to solve the problems in a practical way, to implement the work with a temperature, to slowly "melt" the students' inner barriers, to "touch" the students. The students will be able to "melt" their inner barriers, "touch" them, provide support for their growth and help them to become successful.

The complexity of student work has resulted in a lot of work that counselors have done diligently, spending a lot of time and energy, but the results need to wait a long time before they can be seen, especially the handling of student crises, which is about the "red line" of student management and requires a lot of input from counselors to ensure the overall stability of students. The frequency and difficulty of student emergencies during an epidemic is far greater than in the period before the epidemic. However, there are currently no domestic standards for crisis management in China, nor is the management of student crises included in the assessment of counselors' titles. However, China's National Health Commission issued the "Guidance on Establishing a Long-term Mechanism for Protecting Care and Love for Medical Staff" in 2021, and the Guidance includes the real-life performance of medical staff in public health emergencies as an important element of the title evaluation. The results of counselors' work are not easily seen by the outside world, making it difficult to get external recognition and easily generating a sense of job frustration; the scope of counselors' work is so wide that it demands a high level of their own knowledge reserves, resistance to stress and execution, and counselors need to assist students in all aspects of their work, but no one is perfect, and the realistic intensity and difficulty of their work places extremely high work expectations on counselors, and student work places high demands on The contradiction between the high demand for counselors' competence reserves and the counselors' inadequate knowledge reserves in reality can reinforce the counselors' frustration in student work.

## **3. Psychological Adjustment Strategies for College counselors in the Context of the Epidemic**

Many universities are forced to close their schools in order to ensure the safety of all students, especially in the context of the epidemic, and the intensity of student work that comes after the closure requires counselors to have strong emotional adjustment skills and to restore their psychological state to This requires counselors to have strong emotional regulation skills, to restore their mental state to a stable one, to meet the challenges of their work with a full mental outlook, to do a good job in educating and managing students during the epidemic, and to improve the level of ideological and political work in universities.

### ***3.1. Strategies for managing mental stress***

"The sky is healthy and the gentleman is self-improving". counselors are a great cause, counselors should learn to identify their own sources of stress, "the" target, through the analysis of the source of stress, find ways to crack the source, and make targeted adjustments, take themselves out of the negative state, with a positive and optimistic way to face life, adjust their mindset, to have Don't be defeated by the "valley" of life, stay away from the "abyss" of negative emotions, as long as you have the courage to "hit the bottom" and the vitality to "survive". "As long as they are upwardly mobile, every step they take is a step towards growth.

Counselors encounter problems do not rush to "success", a lot of things to deal with, are the need for a certain amount of time and course, to learn to correctly look at the difficulties and setbacks encountered in life, sometimes to have the courage to turn difficulties into opportunities, to be good at turning pressure into power. "The sky will be a great responsibility of the people, must first suffer its heart and mind to labor its bones", eat bitterness in order to become a person of the people, in order to do a better job of parenting, frustration is a necessary stage of life, but also an important stage that can

stimulate human potential, to have the tenacity to face the warm sun, bursting from the cracks and born of perseverance.

### ***3.2. Strategies for adjusting physiological states***

Every counselor should pay attention to his or her physical health. Counselors have a lot of work to do and are on call 24 hours a day in case of a crisis. It is difficult to avoid working overtime, especially in the context of an epidemic, when the situation is uncontrollable and the school is closed, teachers use online teaching, but the work of student management cannot be done online. Many university counselors are on 24-hour shifts. The intensity of their work places a high demand on their physical fitness.

counselors need to strengthen their physical exercise, maintain good physical fitness and physiological condition, and ensure sufficient rest time, while also developing innovative thinking and taking multiple measures to make good use of the student cadre and improve efficiency. counselors, according to their own specific physical state, choose a suitable exercise mode, adhere to the exercise, refuse to "lie flat", and leave work "lying down" state forever, healthy diet, balanced nutrition, in a better state to meet the challenges from life and work. The challenges of life and work can be met in a better way.

### ***3.3. Strategies for releasing negative emotions***

Everyone has negative emotions and stress, and counselors are ordinary people with ordinary "feelings and desires". We need to be aware that negative emotions are a "cry for help", a reminder that we need to adjust our state of being and be vigilant, not to be ignored or dismissed. If we do not remove ourselves from negative emotions in a timely manner, it is easy to develop psychological problems or illnesses in the long term. Because of the nature of their work, counselors often deal with students in their work, and in their communication with students, they listen to students' "complaints" and act as a "dustbin" for students' negative emotions, so naturally the whole person will accumulate a lot of "negative energy". The amount of negative emotions that can be contained in a "bin" is limited, and if it is not emptied effectively and in a timely manner, the negative emotions will "overflow" and affect the counselor's own emotional state.

As a relatively young and energetic group of university teachers, counselors must pay attention to regulating their own psychological state, maintaining a healthy psychological state and acquiring good emotion regulation skills while doing their psychological work with students. Release bad emotions as a way to help themselves adjust to a stable and healthy emotional state, experience the peace of life and the beauty of life.

### ***3.4. Strategies for improving cognitive states***

Everyone faces different situations in life and makes different choices. College counselors need to know themselves, they need to be aware that "they are just an ordinary person", from ordinary people, do not demand perfection from themselves, we need to face up to their own shortcomings, self-knowledge of their own ignorance, is the best wisdom. It is wise to know our own shortcomings and not be discouraged, and to keep pursuing progress. Therefore, knowledge begins with oneself, and self-knowledge is followed by knowledge of others. Counselors need to have a correct knowledge of themselves first in order to better understand and serve the student body. Counselors need to have the attitude of striving hard, but also the openness to "let nature take its course" after they have done their best. The "natural" is not to ignore the reality of the situation, and in the process of struggling to do their best, but we also need to realize that many things, not rely on efforts alone can be achieved, more is the need for timing, location and people and many other factors of unity, in the time of no way to achieve, we need to do is quiet down to think and precipitation, and then The counselor's work is more of a silent plough, quietly waiting for the flowering process, many cases are not forced to come, we must pay attention to the way and means of work.

Each counselor should be firm in his or her own state and clear in his or her responsibilities, and should not be "assimilated" into the negative group or burned out in his or her work because of the perfunctory work of others. Start your own journey to build your dreams and practice your path to fulfill them. A better life in the future, which is the eternal pursuit of human beings, counselors should not give up lightly, but struggle tirelessly to realise their dreams, remember the counselor's oath,

continue the enthusiasm they had when they first joined the profession, and put themselves into their work with full enthusiasm.

### **3.5. Strategies for solving action problems**

Counselors should enhance their problem awareness and learn to identify, analyse and solve problems. The more complicated the daily work is, the more the counselor needs to take time out of his busy schedule, reflect on the "leisure", think in the precipitation, distill the common problems from the different individual problems, then think about the causes of the problems and find solutions to them. The process of going from the concrete to the abstract is also the process of counselors constantly improving their own level of work and working ability.

The counselor should learn to decompose the work tasks, do not have to do everything personally, to give students time and space for self-education and self-management, to learn to lead a good student cadre, counselor in the process of decomposing tasks and delegating work, is not only to enhance the understanding of students and the process of understanding, but also in the process of training student cadres, student work tasks in the implementation, and constantly train and exercise their own work ability. counselors should do a good job of training student cadres, learn to "grasp the big and let go of the small", more is to do a good job of directional guidance, in the details of the work, let go of student cadres to implement, the majority of young student cadres, with youthful vigour and passion, to fully exploit the potential of student cadres in the process of problem solving, so that students in the work of The students are expected to develop perseverance in the implementation of their tasks. The use of the "teacher-led, student-led" model in the work of the counselors will not only help to develop the students' working skills and improve their overall quality, but will also give them a chance to "catch their breath" and share a little of the pressure of their work. We need to learn to focus on the key aspects of our busy work and seize the key aspects to improve efficiency and achieve twice the result with half the effort. Counselors should also be good at reporting to their supervisors, especially during the epidemic, when many emergencies need to be dealt with quickly, and it is difficult for them to do so on their own, so they need the collaboration of many forces, such as the home, school and community, to learn to integrate resources. The process of reporting work is also a process of sending information and resources to superiors, and it is important to seek help from leaders who have a wealth of experience and resources to work with, which is an effective guarantee for improving efficiency in daily work.

## **4. Conclusion**

College counselors should have respect for their work from the moment they enter the workplace. counselors should all love their jobs, face the real difficulties positively, rise to the occasion, adjust their working state, complete the tasks with high work passion and full of enthusiasm, be a competent manager and service provider of student work, become a good teacher and friend of students, become a confidant and guide of students, and grow up together with students.

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