

# Research on the Practice of Student Mental Health Education from the Perspective of Advantage

Xin Liu<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> College of Sport Training, Wuhan Sports University, Wuhan 430079, China  
\*Corresponding Author

**Abstract:** Ideological and political education is a complex systematic project, as the main body of educating people, college counselors, mastering professional working methods is a necessary work skill. With the diversified development of society, the thinking of college students in the new era has become more diverse and open. Under the new situation, continuous exploration of new work models and transformation of new ideas in combination with work practices are an important part of strengthening and improving the ideological and political education of college students, so as to effectively solve new problems and cope with new challenges. "Advantage perspective" is a brand-new work concept in the field of social work. When used in ideological and political work, it can help counselors fully tap the potential advantages of students and change the traditional "problem perspective" to accept, empathize, and equal work. The principle of conducting heart-to-heart talks can effectively solve students' mental health problems and rebuild self-confidence.

**Keywords:** advantage perspective, ideological and political work, mental health

## 1. Introduction

As the first-line workers in the ideological and political education of college students, college counselors bear the important responsibility and mission of "cultivating people with morality". Under the new situation, post-00s college students present new characteristics of diverse ideas and outstanding personalities. "The "nanny" education model and the role consciousness of managers obviously cannot adapt to the personality characteristics of college students in the new era, and may even have a negative impact. Therefore, the new era puts more emphasis on the "people-oriented" education concept and focuses on the main body of students. As a new concept in the field of social work practice, "advantage perspective" can effectively change the traditional "problem-oriented" thinking mode and focus on the favorable factors and potentials of students, have an equal dialogue with students, and better reflect the humanistic care of education managers.

## 2. Overview of advantage perspective theory

In 1992, Dennis Saleebey put forward the concept of "advantage perspective" in the book "Advantage Perspective in Social Work Practice" [1]. The "advantage perspective" criticizes the labeling of the client in the traditional social work perspective, and focuses on the client's past successful experience and experience to help the client see the superior resources in himself and the ecosystem in which he is located, to discover the hope in the predicament and the possibility of overcoming suffering [2].

Therefore, the essence of the advantage perspective is to change the client's negative outlook on life. When the problems they face are no longer threatening, then the client's motivation to solve the problem proactively and actively respond to the environment can be enhanced. The concept of advantage perspective work can also be widely used in student work practice. For students' behavioral deviations, wearing colored glasses to pay too much attention to their problems will reduce students' sense of self-efficacy and may be even more detrimental to problem solving. The college counselors should believe that every student can be changed through changes in himself and the external environment, and helping students discover their own superior resources can give students a stronger motivation to change the status quo and achieve "help others and help themselves."

### 3. Case introduction

Wang is a sophomore boy in a certain school, both his parents have been medical practitioners. They have provided Wang with a superior educational environment and resources since he was a child, hoping to find a stable job after successfully completing his studies. It is understood that during his freshman year, Wang chose to suspend school due to the fact that he missed too many subjects and was unwilling to face the fact that he was about to repeat a grade. After the one-year semester expired and returned to school, the mother took the student back to school to welcome a new university life, the dormitory beds were made up by the mother herself. Since entering the school, the student is unwilling to communicate with others, prefers to be alone, and thinks that the interpersonal communication in the university is meaningless and worthless. He is addicted to the Internet throughout the day and often misses classes. The college counselor talks to him many times, he said that many courses in the school can be completed by self-study in the dormitory.

Because Wang never cleans the dormitory, he likes to lay out his personal belongings in public areas, and he has quarrels with his roommates. In class, Wang likes to talk to himself, and occasionally contradicts the teacher because he disagrees with a certain point of view. Every time the conflict is resolved, the mother will eventually come forward to communicate, and he often chooses to avoid it. This student has a lot of mood swings and problem handling difficulties, which also leads to his strong dependence on his mother. Once the problem is not resolved in time, he will experience anxiety and even manic emotions, such as hitting the table with a blunt object and verbally speaking to his roommate. At three o'clock in the morning one night, the student was anxious because he missed the test time and had difficulty falling asleep. He rushed back and forth in the hallway of the dormitory. The same symptoms appeared many times within a week, causing panic among the dormitory students.

As a result, the college counselor referred him to the school's mental health center for evaluation. Because the symptoms were severe and the students had a strong psychological defense mechanism, the teachers at the health center asked him to conduct a comprehensive diagnosis in the psychiatric department of the hospital. Wang's mother has been in medicine for many years and thinks that Wang has no psychological problems, but has an extreme personality. She is worried that Wang will not be able to complete his studies and refuses to take him for professional mental diagnosis and treatment. After repeated consultations, the parents finally agreed that Wang would go home for a while to recuperate. After half a month, his mother issued a mental health certificate and took Wang to return to school. The school agreed that he would continue to attend school, but manic symptoms occurred occasionally and he persisted in school. One year later, due to too many subjects to retake, the pressure of the final exam was too great. Wang proposed to drop out in the first semester of his junior year. His mother firmly disagreed with him, believing that his academic qualifications would increase the weight and advantage of competition for Wang's future career. Therefore, completing his studies is Wang's goal in recent years. The college counselor suggested that another year of school leave to allow both parties to deliberate on the issue of dropping out, and at the same time ease Wang's psychological pressure to a certain extent. His mother insisted that his youth was gone forever and Wang could no longer waste a year of youth because of this. The relationship between the two parties once fell into tension.

### 4. Case analysis

On the surface, this case is that the student's behavior is abnormal, accompanied by manic emotions, there are interpersonal communication obstacles, escape problems, etc., fundamentally Wang may have mental health problems. Because the parents did not pay enough attention to mental health, they did not actively cooperate with the examination and treatment. Blindly avoiding causes students' psychological problems to continue to complete their studies at school without scientific treatment, exhausted physically and mentally but unable to change the status quo, they can only adopt a more negative attitude towards school life, creating a vicious circle. The complexity of this case lies in the interweaving of multiple contradictions:

First, the conflict between parent and child, the parents have high expectations for Wang. Because both parents graduated from prestigious universities with doctoral degrees, they cannot accept the fact that their children may not be able to successfully complete the undergraduate degree. Faced with Wang who has already suspended school once, no matter what they encounter during the return to school How much resistance, the focus of parents is to solve the resistance to help them complete their studies, even though Wang is already in a sub-healthy state of mind and body. Wang grew up in an

environment where his parents were repressive and autocratic. Instead of having ineffective communication and struggling, he should silently accept facts and obedience. The environment of his native family made him reluctant to communicate with the outside world. The way to solve problems is to escape and forbear, his health may be Wang's unconscious resistance.

Second, the contradiction between home and school. Regarding the results of the evaluation by the school's mental health center, the parents adopted an evasive attitude, and even believed that the school discriminated against students and was unwilling to actively cooperate with the treatment. As the student's mental health problem is a dynamic process, the uncertainty of Wang's manic symptoms also increases the pressure and difficulty of school supervision, and at the same time brings certain safety hazards to the school. If the parents do not cooperate, the contradiction is difficult to resolve.

Third, the conflict between teachers and students. Long-term absenteeism of students has caused too many subjects to be missed in the course, and the abusive behavior towards the teacher in the classroom makes the relationship more tense. The course problems aggravate Wang's anxiety and psychological pressure. On the one hand, it affects physical and mental health, and on the other hand, smooth graduation on time has become a major problem.

Fourth, there are contradictions inside the bedroom. Once a student's manic symptoms occur, the aggressive behavior will not only make roommates nervous, but also cause safety hazards to others. Wang's unwillingness to communicate with others makes the dormitory relationship more tense, and small friction in the dormitory continues.

From the perspective of traditional problems, Wang is a "problem student", and the root of the problem lies in his possible psychological problems. Of course, from the school's standpoint, if the parents agree with the advice given by the mental health center and support the student to leave school at home, wait until he no longer exhibits mania and other abnormal behaviors before returning to school. The rest of the contradictions brought about by this will be resolved naturally, which is also the most effective way to solve the "problem students". In fact, this ideal state is difficult to achieve because the solution does not stand in the position of equal dialogue with students and parents. The mental health certificate issued by the student is to some extent aimed at eliminating the school's prejudice and discrimination against students, protect their right to receive education in school. However, if the school wears colored glasses to view students' behavioral deviations at school and refuses to study at school, it will inevitably cause strong resistance from parents, and the contradiction will become more intense and bad. Therefore, the dominant perspective provides the possibility to solve the problem. In the theoretical category of the dominant perspective, the student's "problem" is not a problem in itself. It is only defined as a problem when students' behavior is placed under the mainstream social value evaluation criteria. If in communication with students, the college counselor can understand and empathize with the students' situation, and does not need to explain the students' lives or choices with their own values, then the education of the students becomes gentle and powerful.

## **5. Processing method and process based on advantage perspective**

### **5.1 Advantage resource assessment**

#### **5.1.1 Student advantage**

(1) Cognitive advantage: As a college student, Wang has the ability to think independently. He believes that although employability is still lacking, it can be gradually improved through his own learning and social practice. In order to obtain a degree in university forcing yourself to take courses that you are not interested in is a waste of time. It is better to drop out of school and enter society early to realize your life value. Wang has an independent way of thinking about problems and principles of dealing with things. At the same time, he has a wide range of interests, he likes to discuss with teachers in-depth hot topics in politics, economy, culture, and society. Although Wang is not good at words most of the time, he is interested in himself, he is willing to express his views and positions in his field. Although Wang has certain problems with the understanding of the meaning of university education, if he is actively guided, it can also be an advantage to change Wang's current situation.

(2) Change motivation: Since Wang returned to school, he has made a systematic plan for his future course study, which shows that he is full of confidence in the future. The anxiety caused by missed exam time is enough to show that he attaches importance to the course. He hopes to be able to successfully completing school to avoid more conflicts with parents about going to school, but due to

poor execution, the final result was different from what I expected, so I chose to escape again and wanted to drop out. If the initial motivation for returning to school is fully explored, and the current student's course anxiety is effectively resolved, the problem of dropping out will be solved.

(3) Emotional advantage: Although the student is paranoid and reluctant to make friends at school, he respects the teacher who taught him for seven years since childhood. He will seek this when he is in extreme anxiety and cannot find an outlet, the help of a teacher relieves stress. At the same time, when he has conflicts with his roommate and teacher, he will take the initiative to find a counselor or contact his mother for help, indicating that the student has a problem-solving awareness and a strong emotional attachment to the person he recognizes, but the sense of ownership is not strong, the college counselor can help students see that they have the ability to solve problems and enhance resilience.

### ***5.1.2 Family-level strength assessment***

Wang belongs to an only child at home, although his parents are strict with him, he has never lacked care and warmth since he was a child. Although the relationship between mother and child is tense, every time there is a disagreement, no matter the outcome, the mother will actively communicate and talk with the child. Although it involves mental health issues, the mother adopts an evasive attitude, but when it comes to issues that are closely related to the student's graduation, the mother will actively communicate with the school to find a solution to successfully complete the school. Therefore, by fully grasping the parents' psychological and behavioral motivations, home-school communication and cooperation can be effectively achieved.

### ***5.1.3 Environmental resource advantage assessment***

With the full trust of Wang, the school peer groups, counselors, and mental health center teachers will provide students with instrumental or expressive support, so the college counselors can assist students in striving for resource advantages in all aspects.

## ***5.2 Intervention strategy***

### ***5.2.1 Focus on students' own advantages and enhance self-awareness***

First, find the right entry point for the topic and build a relationship. Wang is a person who does not easily start conversations with the outside world. For this reason, the college counselor took out a picture of who was doing a psychological test of the "House Trees and Person" in the early stage, and started a conversation with him, and understood through constant assumptions and verification. When it comes to life stories that he does not want to tell in his daily life, the communication method using painting as a medium avoids the embarrassment of directly opening the topic, and at the same time, it can deeply dig into the cognition behind the students' behavior.

Second, acceptance, understanding and empathy are the prerequisites for effective communication with students. Before having a heart-to-heart conversation with the students, the counselor should first let go of himself, clarify his role as a listener, and listen to the students' life stories with an empty cup mentality. For example, when a student talked about his relationship with his parents, he said that his parents were just forcing himself to do things he didn't want to do in the name of love. He was very distressed but unable to resist, which has been the case since childhood. In fact, when students express their dissatisfaction with their parents, if the counselor makes value judgments, they will stand in different positions and perspectives with the students, and communication will be difficult to continue. Instead, they will share their own stories through empathy and empathy, express understanding of students, so as to jointly explore ways to communicate effectively with parents.

Third, dig out the positive meanings in life from students' narration, deconstruct students' negative language, and help them build up the courage and confidence to overcome difficulties. When Wang expressed his thoughts about dropping out, he was in a state of helplessness and entanglement. Faced with the upcoming exams and preparations in the early stage, he expected the notice of repetition that might follow in the next semester. Efforts are wasted, and dropping out seems to be the best option. If you reconstruct the words as "In fact, you want to graduate, right? You just don't have confidence in the current exams. The courses that you may not pass in the future and the resulting repetition are things that have not happened yet, and it does not mean that you cannot change think. I think that through your hard work in the past year, you passed 90% of the courses and your learning ability has been recognized. If the current exam pressure is too great, you can relieve it by applying for a postponement exam, and also have more time to prepare those courses that are not sure to pass, perhaps the worst will not happen." Through heart-to-heart talks, Wang's negative perceptions of things can be

changed, and his innermost desire and motivation to change the status quo can be stimulated, and he can see the current problem solving.

Fourth, fully tap students' goals and use positive feedback effects to stimulate their personal potential. Through the conversation, I found that Wang desperately hopes to be able to successfully complete his studies and gain the approval of his parents, so that he can gain more voice and autonomy at home, and he hopes to control his life in the future. Wang's sense of loss of control in real life is largely due to the compromise, weakness in his character and the strong intervention of his parents in his life. He desires to change but can't find a way. Therefore, during the conversation, the counselor continuously strengthened Wang's belief that he hoped to change, and at the same time encouraged him to give himself positive psychological hints the next time he has interpersonal problems or emotional out-of-control: "I can." Every time he makes a small breakthrough give rewards for achievements, let him see his progress gradually, strengthen self-affirmation, and rebuild self-confidence.

### ***5.2.2 Focus on family advantages***

First, strengthen parent-child communication and ease family conflicts [3]. The mother's high expectations for Wang and her realistic feedback made her feel more and less powerful, and her desire to control Wang's life left her with no room for independent living and expression. At the same time, Wang expressed strong dissatisfaction with his mother's high-pressure policy. On the one hand, the counselor must actively communicate with his mother, express Wang's efforts to complete his studies, take the initiative to understand his inner thoughts, and respect Wang's decision after fully communicating with the child; The mother's dissatisfaction, while accepting the love and support from the parents, accepts the imperfections of the parents.

Second, correct parents' irrational cognition of mental health problems. The communication should adopt the way of knowing the reason and moving the emotion, and consider the problem with the parents from the standpoint of the child's physical and mental health development. Because the parents have been in medicine for many years, they first affirm their professionalism. Although Wang's health certificate has been issued, it should be recognized that mental health problems are a dynamic process. The symptoms after returning to school indicate that Wang has not been cured. The recent course pressure may even trigger his psychological crisis again. Therefore, taboo medicine is not a good way to solve the problem. The parents should change their minds, treat the diagnosis of professional doctors scientifically and objectively, and urge them to seek medical treatment for the health of student Wang and the successful completion of his studies, so as not to cause serious consequences for individuals and families in the future influences. At the same time, it is also necessary to explain to parents the school's suspension and resumption policy to eliminate parents' worries that students may not be able to complete their studies due to illness.

Third, establish a long-term mechanism for home-school communication. If Wang's condition is within the controllable range and the parents insist that continues to study at school, then the college counselor should strengthen the daily management of him, maintain long-term communication and collaboration with the parents, and give regular feedback on Wang's school performance, the parents work together to help students grow up healthily.

### ***5.2.3 Focus on environmental resource advantages***

First, change Wang's prejudice against the psychological consultation room and learn to make full use of resources such as the college student psychological consultation room, online consultation platform, and 24-hour psychological consultation hotline to vent his negative emotions and improve his ability to help himself. In addition, the counselor should keep in touch with the mental health center, feed back the results of each consultation to the college, keep records of Wang's psychological consultation on file, and dynamically grasp the psychological status of the students.

Second, optimize the living, learning, and friendship environment of student Wang, and build a peer group support network. Through the development of theme classes, students will be taught how to correctly handle small conflicts in interpersonal communication, have one-on-one conversations with roommates, soothe their panic, and know how to respect and tolerate Wang. Arrange for the head of the dormitory and the psychological committee to pay close attention to Wang's emotional state, and give feedback as soon as he experiences anxiety, mania and other bad emotions, and at the same time urge Wang to change his bad work and rest habits and create a peaceful dormitory living environment. In addition, in terms of academic work, the establishment of a "one-by-one" learning pairing assistance mechanism for party members, to provide comprehensive guidance to Wang's study, and to answer questions for him in time.

### 5.3 Intervention effectiveness

After the college counselor's regular weekly conversations, Wang gradually became able to control his emotions, his insomnia gradually disappeared, and he slowly got out of the haze of mania and anxiety. Since he has given up the idea of dropping out, his parents have given him more space to express himself, and family relations have been effectively improved. In order to gain points for the second class, he began to take the initiative to clean the dormitory, and the relationship with his roommates gradually eased, the situation of poor communication with others has been significantly improved, he gradually gained a sense of control over his life and rebuilt his confidence.

## 6. Conclusions and reflections

(1) Establish a sense of service and conduct equal dialogue and cooperation with students [4]. Traditional ideological and political educators are often used to playing the role of managers, but they ignore the "people-oriented" service concept. Therefore, the condescending way of communication as a manager makes it impossible to penetrate deep into the hearts of students, and also places parents on the opposite side of work. The interweaving of multiple contradictions makes the work of students difficult. The advantage perspective concept emphasizes that the service provider and the service target establish a cooperative relationship on the basis of trust and equality, follow the law of student growth and success, take students as the main body, and make ideological and political education deep and warm.

(2) It is better to teach people how to fish than to teach them how to fish. As a student's life mentor, we must be good at tapping students' shining points and provide a platform for students to show themselves, so that they can stimulate their potential through every practice, see their own strengths and abilities, and a confident and sunny mentality can help students enhance self-repair ability when facing difficulties. As long as the counselor plays the role of a listener and gives warm feedback when students need help, the students themselves can become the end of the problem.

(3) Starting from the advantages of personal ecological systemization, form an educational synergy. U Bronfenbrenner emphasized that human external behavior is the result of the continuous interaction between the individual and the environment, and human development is affected by the interaction of different levels of environmental systems [5]. Some college students' individual psychological problems can't be solved solely by college students' self-adjustment or the counseling services of mental health education teachers. Mental health education teachers need to strengthen close cooperation with counselors, class teachers, student leaders, and parents, through multiple channels, take intervention measures in multiple forms to combine solving psychological problems with solving ideological and practical problems, thereby enhancing the ability to help college students solve individualized psychological problems [6]. Therefore, ideological and political education can improve and adjust each other from the two aspects of the students and the ecological environment where they are located, change the way the environment supports students, and finally achieve the expected goals.

## References

- [1] Dennis Saleebey. Li Yawen, Du Lijie translated. *Advantage perspective—a new model of social work practice* [M]. Shanghai: East China University of Science and Technology Press, 2004.
- [2] Wang Liang. A review of domestic research on advantage perspective theory [J]. *Social Sciences*, 2018, 33(12): 73-76.
- [3] Zeng Yan. *Work case of college counselors-helping students get out of psychological "haze"* [J]. *Science and Technology Wind*, 2019, (2): 203-211.
- [4] Han Na, Wang Yongshun. *Thoughts on innovative ideas and methods of ideological and political education in colleges and universities from the perspective of advantages* [J]. *Journal of Inner Mongolia Normal University (Education Science Edition)*, 2014, 27(01): 35-37.
- [5] Fu Zhao, Wang Ying, Zhang Shiyi. *Research on College Students' Crisis Psychology and Deviation Behavior from the Perspective of Ecosystem—Based on the Investigation During the New Coronary Pneumonia Epidemic* [J]. *Youth Research and Practice*, 2020, 35(04): 5-12.
- [6] Ding Minjiang. *Counselor's role positioning and work strategy in psychological education: thinking based on 406 letters of help from college students* [J]. *College Counselor*, 2020(02): 73-76.