

# The Crisis of Self-identity among College Students from the Perspective of Educational Internalization and Its Resolution

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the crisis of self-identity among college students and its resolution from the perspective of educational internalization. By analyzing the phenomenon of educational involution, the challenges faced by college students in terms of academic pressure, interpersonal pressure, and future employment pressure are revealed. Using a college student named Xiaoming as a case study, this paper provides a detailed description of the difficulties and anxieties he experienced during his college life, as well as the resulting crisis of self-identity. Further exploration was conducted on the adverse effects of educational involution on the physical and mental health of college students, and suggestions and measures were proposed to resolve the crisis of self-identity among college students, including reforming the education evaluation system, strengthening mental health education, and promoting the concept of equal competition. Finally, we call on schools, families, and all sectors of society to work together to create a healthy, equal, and inclusive educational environment, and promote the healthy development of self-identity among college students.

**Keywords:** educational involution, college students, self identification

## 1. Introduction

With the popularization of higher education in China and the intensification of competition, the phenomenon of internal competition in education has become increasingly prominent, bringing new challenges and pressures to the growth and development of college students. In this context, the crisis of self-identity among college students is becoming increasingly prominent and has become one of the focuses of attention in the education industry and society. This paper aims to explore the impact mechanism of educational internalization on the self-identity crisis of college students from the perspective of educational internalization, analyze its manifestations and causes, propose corresponding solutions and strategies, and provide theoretical support and practical guidance for solving the self-identity crisis of college students.

This paper will elaborate on the concept and characteristics of educational involution, explore its causes and mechanisms, and clarify the internal connection between educational involution and college students' self-identity. Thoroughly analyze the manifestations and causes of self-identity crisis among college students, and through case analysis and research, reveal the specific impact path of educational internalization on college students' self-identity [1]. Then, a series of paths and strategies are proposed to resolve the crisis of self-identity among college students, including measures such as mental health education, school cultural construction, and social support, in order to provide a more comprehensive growth environment and support system for college students. By summarizing the research conclusions and looking forward to future research directions, the importance and urgency of solving the self-identity crisis among college students were emphasized, providing ideas and suggestions for further deepening related research.

The significance of this study lies in exploring the essence and mechanism of self-identity crisis among college students from the perspective of educational internalization, and providing theoretical guidance and policy recommendations for intervention and governance in practice. At the same time, through in-depth analysis and research on the crisis of self-identity among college students, it can promote education system reform and the construction of social support systems, and contribute to the construction of a harmonious and healthy learning and growth environment.

## **2. The concept and characteristics of educational involution**

In today's Chinese society, educational internalization is a highly concerned phenomenon, which not only affects students' learning and life, but also profoundly shapes the structure and development of the entire society. This section will explore the definition, causes, and main characteristics of educational involution, and further explore the impact mechanism of educational involution on the self-identity of college students.

### ***2.1 Definition and causes of educational involution***

The term "educational involution" was originally proposed by Chinese sociologist Qian Yingyi, referring to the phenomenon of internal compression and upgrading caused by the scarcity of educational resources and the intense social competition, which leads to fierce competition between students and parents in obtaining educational resources [2]. The causes of educational internalization can be traced back to various factors such as uneven distribution of educational resources and intensified social competition. With the reform of China's education system and the development of the market economy, the uneven distribution of educational resources and the intensification of social competition have become increasingly prominent, making the phenomenon of internal competition in education more common and serious.

### ***2.2 The main characteristics of educational involution***

The main characteristics of educational involution include: firstly, the scarcity and uneven distribution of educational resources, leading to fierce competition between students and parents for better educational resources; Secondly, the pressure of educational competition is increasing day by day, and students are under tremendous academic pressure. Many parents invest a lot of energy and money into their children's education; The third is the utilitarian tendency in the education process, which leads to students and parents excessively pursuing scores and academic qualifications, neglecting the essence and value of learning; The fourth is the social anxiety and psychological pressure brought about by educational internalization, which leads to psychological problems such as anxiety and depression among students and parents during the education process.

### ***2.3 The impact of educational involution on the self-identity of college students***

The impact of educational internalization on the self-identity of college students is mainly manifested in the following aspects: firstly, students' self-identity overly relies on external evaluation and recognition, lacking an internal self-identity foundation; Secondly, students experience anxiety and self doubt in competition, which affects the establishment of their self-esteem and self-confidence; Thirdly, students' interpersonal relationships are affected, making it difficult to establish genuine and stable interpersonal relationships; Fourthly, students are susceptible to emotional fluctuations and psychological problems due to their emotional world being impacted.

In summary, educational involution is not only an educational phenomenon, but also a social problem, which has a profound impact on the growth and development of college students. A deep understanding of the concept and characteristics of educational involution can help us better understand and solve the crisis of self-identity among college students.

## **3. Analysis of the manifestations and causes of self-identity crisis among college students**

### ***3.1 Concept and characteristics of self-identity crisis among college students***

In contemporary society, the crisis of self-identity among college students has become a highly concerned psychological issue. This crisis refers to a psychological state in which college students experience confusion, unease, or negative effects on their self-identity due to various internal and external factors during their growth process. Its characteristics are mainly manifested in the following aspects:

Identity confusion: College students are at a critical stage of life role transformation, and the transition from students to members of society may lead to confusion and confusion about their own identity. They often face the question of "who am I" and are unclear about their status and role in

society.

**Self doubt:** College students face various pressures from their families, society, and studies, which can easily lead to doubts about their abilities, values, and future. They often feel that they are not outstanding enough and question whether they are capable of facing future challenges.

**Emotional fluctuations:** The emotional management ability of college students is not yet mature, and they often face various pressures, resulting in significant emotional fluctuations. Sometimes one may feel unable to control their emotions and easily fall into anxiety, depression, or negative emotions.

### ***3.2 Analysis of the impact mechanism of educational involution on the self-identity of college students***

The phenomenon of educational involution is widespread in contemporary society, and its impact mechanism on the self-identity of college students mainly includes the following aspects:

**Competitive pressure leads to self doubt.** The fierce competition under the influence of internal competition in education puts enormous academic and competitive pressure on college students. They are often forced to compare themselves with their peers, and college students who lack self-confidence are prone to doubt their abilities, which in turn affects the formation of self-identity.

**Utilitarian education leads to identity confusion.** There is a common utilitarian tendency in today's education, where students view learning as a means to achieve high scores and academic qualifications, while neglecting the exploration of their own interests and values. This utilitarian tendency can easily cause confusion and confusion in identity recognition among college students, as well as confusion about their interests and pursuits.

**Social anxiety affects emotional stability.** The intensification of social competition and academic pressure under the internal competition of education has led to widespread anxiety among college students. Faced with uncertainty and challenges in the future, college students have significant emotional fluctuations and are easily influenced by the external environment, leading to psychological problems such as low mood or anxiety.

### ***3.3 Typical case analysis and case study***

Through typical case analysis and case studies, we can gain a deeper understanding of the manifestations and causes of self-identity crisis among college students. By conducting surveys, in-depth interviews, and other methods, a large amount of case data can be collected to reveal the impact mechanism of educational involution on the self-identity of college students.

**Typical case:** Xiao Li is a sophomore college student from an ordinary family in a small city. He achieved excellent grades in high school and was admitted to a 985 university. After entering university, he began a new life. However, contrary to expectations, he found that college life was not as beautiful and fulfilling as he had imagined. In college, Xiaoming faces pressure from various aspects, such as academic pressure, interpersonal pressure, and future employment pressure. He found that his academic performance was not as outstanding as in high school, and the course content became more complex and profound. He often felt confused and frustrated in his studies. At the same time, he found that his relationship with his classmates was not as harmonious as he had imagined, sometimes feeling lonely and excluded. Faced with his parents' expectations for his future, he felt immense pressure and felt that he must achieve better results in order to live up to his family's expectations. Under this pressure, Xiaoming began to doubt his abilities and values, leading to a crisis of self-identity. He feels mediocre and incompetent compared to his classmates, lacking confidence and courage. He began to evade social activities and retreat into his own small world, unwilling to communicate and share his confusion and troubles with others. He often sleeps at night, filled with anxiety and unease, feeling as if he is trapped in a pitch black mist, unable to find a way out.

The problems faced by Xiao Li reflect the universality and severity of the current phenomenon of educational internalization. Internal competition in education refers to the increasing pressure on students to pursue higher academic performance and better development opportunities in a fiercely competitive education system, resulting in an impact on individual physical and mental health. The entire society also faces problems such as unreasonable resource allocation and social injustice. The pressure that affects Xiao Li mainly focuses on the following aspects:

**Academic pressure,** Xiaoming found in college that the academic pressure far exceeded his imagination. Compared to high school, university courses are more profound and demanding, and

learning tasks are more intense. He often feels confused and frustrated, and this academic pressure may come from the high demands placed on students by his school, as well as the intensity of academic competition.

Due to interpersonal pressure, Xiaoming found that his relationship with his classmates was not as harmonious as he expected, and sometimes even felt lonely and excluded. This may be due to the competitive atmosphere of the school, which leads to interactions between classmates being more based on competition rather than true friendship, or it may be due to their own introverted personality and lack of social skills.

The pressure of future employment and the expectations of his parents for Xiaoming's future have put immense pressure on him. He feels that he must achieve better grades to live up to the expectations of his family, and this employment pressure may come from the high expectations of society for 985 university students and the uncertainty of the job market.

These pressures together led to Xiaoming experiencing a crisis of self-identity, doubting his own abilities and values. He feels mediocre and incompetent compared to his classmates, lacking confidence and courage. This situation not only hinders Xiaoming's personal development, but also reflects the negative impact of the current education system on the physical and mental health of students. Therefore, the issue of internal competition in education urgently requires social attention, and requires joint efforts from schools, families, and society to create a healthier, equal, and inclusive educational environment. From the above analysis, it can be seen that the crisis of self-identity among college students is a complex psychological problem, which involves internal psychological factors of individuals and social factors of the external environment. Only by deeply analyzing its impact mechanism can we better help college students overcome this psychological difficulty.

#### **4. Pathways and strategies to resolve the crisis of self-identity among college students**

The resolution of the self-identity crisis among college students is not achieved overnight, and comprehensive strategies and measures need to be taken, including mental health education, school culture construction, social support, and learning pressure management. Below, we will elaborate in detail on aspects such as mental health education and counseling services, school culture construction and campus atmosphere creation, social support and family education, as well as learning pressure management and life balance [3].

##### ***4.1 Psychological health education and counseling services***

Psychological health education plays an important role in alleviating the crisis of self-identity among college students and is an indispensable measure. Schools can achieve this goal by offering mental health education courses that aim to introduce students to the concepts, characteristics, and formation mechanisms of self-identity, thereby enhancing their cognitive level and understanding of self-identity issues. At the same time, schools should also establish a comprehensive psychological counseling service system to provide students with timely and professional psychological counseling and counseling support. These services can help students solve psychological confusion and emotional problems, guide them to establish positive psychological attitudes, enhance psychological resilience and coping abilities. Through the dual support of mental health education and counseling services, students can better understand and cope with self-identity issues, thus facing the challenges of college life with greater health and confidence.

##### ***4.2 School culture construction and campus atmosphere creation***

The construction of school culture and campus atmosphere are crucial for the formation and development of self-identity among college students. Schools should actively promote a positive and upward campus culture to create a respectful, inclusive, and caring campus atmosphere, and provide students with a warm and harmonious learning environment. Through diverse cultural activities and various social organizations, schools can provide students with a platform to showcase themselves, encourage them to showcase their personal strengths, and cultivate self-confidence and self-awareness. This positive campus culture will help stimulate students' potential, promote their comprehensive development, and enhance their sense of belonging and identification with the school while realizing personal value.

### 4.3 Social support and family education

In addition to school support, social and family support is also a key factor in solving the self-identity crisis of college students. Society can establish a sound social support system to provide various resources and assistance to college students, in order to alleviate their life pressure and psychological burden. Meanwhile, family education also plays a crucial role. Parents should closely monitor their children's growth and mental health, communicate with them, provide understanding and support, and help them establish correct outlooks on life and values. Through the dual support of society and family, college students can better cope with self-identity issues, establish a healthy mindset and positive attitude towards life.

### 4.4 Learning stress management and life balance

Learning stress management and life balance are the key to solving the crisis of self-identity among college students. For this purpose, schools can plan learning skills training and stress management courses to teach students how to scientifically and effectively face academic pressure, improve their learning efficiency and exam response ability. At the same time, schools should also attach importance to the quality of life of students, provide diverse extracurricular activities and entertainment facilities, help students relax and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Through these measures, students can better balance learning and life, thereby facing the challenge of self-identity and having a more positive and healthy mindset.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper explores the causes, manifestations, and impact on individuals and society of self-identity crisis among college students from the perspective of educational internalization, and proposes corresponding strategies and paths for resolution. Through a comprehensive analysis of relevant theories and empirical research, it has been found that educational involution exacerbates the occurrence of self-identity crisis among college students. The current phenomenon of internal competition in education is becoming increasingly severe in China, and the fiercely competitive education system has led to enormous academic and social pressure for students, making them prone to confusion and struggle in self-identity. Moreover, the self-identity crisis among college students is manifested in various forms, such as unclear self-awareness, lack of self-worth, and tense interpersonal relationships, which seriously affect their mental health and social adaptability. Therefore, resolving the crisis of self-identity among college students requires the joint efforts of multiple parties, including schools, families, and society. Through comprehensive measures such as mental health education, school culture construction, social support, and learning pressure management, we can help students establish a positive and healthy self-identity. At the same time, a diversified and inclusive education ecosystem should be constructed. The education system should break away from a single exam oriented education model, establish a diversified and inclusive education ecosystem, give students more development space and choices, and enable each student to find a suitable development path and achieve healthy self-identity development.

In summary, the crisis of self-identity among college students based on the perspective of educational internalization is an important challenge facing education in China, which requires the collective attention and response of the whole society. Only through the joint efforts of multiple parties and the establishment of a positive and healthy educational ecosystem can we effectively resolve the crisis of self-identity among college students, promote their healthy growth and comprehensive development.

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