

# Brief Analysis of Influences of Divorced Family on Psychological Health of College Students and Countermeasures

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**Abstract**—As the divorce rate in China rises continuously, the number of college students in divorced families is increasing as well. Family is an important factor affecting the psychological development of individuals. The family breakdown may seriously affect the psychological health development of college students. The paper proposes corresponding countermeasures and suggestions in family, school and society by analyzing the status quo of the psychological health of college students in divorced families and the reasons, so as to both promote the healthy development of college students' psychology and to provide important theoretical basis for college and university student management workers.

**Keywords**—*Divorced family; College students; Psychological health; Family file*

## I. INTRODUCTION

College students are in the critical period of physiological and psychological development changes, during which their cognitive abilities and dialectical thinking constantly develop, their psychologies gradually mature, and their awareness constantly improves. The college students in this phase are prone to various psychological problems due to insufficient social experience, lack of life experience, fragile and sensitive

psychology etc. At present, all colleges and universities across the country attach great importance to the development of psychological health of college students. Therefore, the psychological health education of college students has become the general focus of the nation and society. With the gradual increase of the divorce rate in China (Figure 1-1 shows the gross divorce rate and registration of divorce in China in 1999-2017), the number of college students in divorced families has increased significantly. Compared with ordinary college student, the college student in a divorced family is a more special group and the changes in the family cause psychological damage and further affect their psychological health.

Although there has been significant progress in the level of psychological health education of college students in China in recent years, there are still many deficiencies and problems in the psychological health education of college students from the social situation and the demand of psychological health development of college students. Therefore, it is extremely urgent to study the influences of a divorced family on the psychological health of college students and propose the corresponding countermeasures.

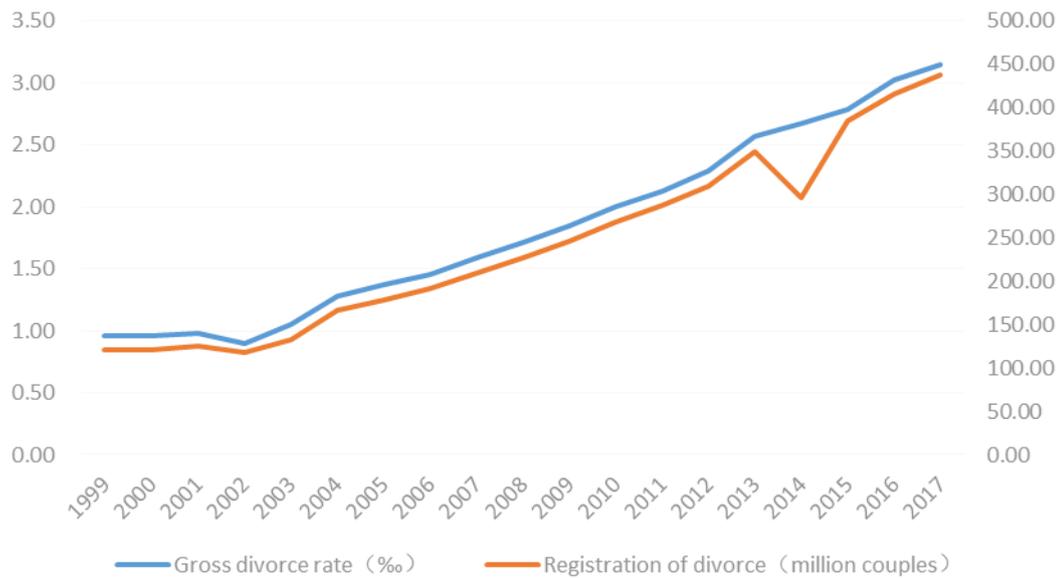


Fig. 1. Gross Divorce Rate and Registration of Divorce in China in 1999-2017

<sup>a</sup> Data source: Official Website of National Bureau of Statistics of China

## II. ANALYSIS OF STATUS QUO OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN DIVORCED FAMILIES

### A. College Students in Divorced Families are Prone to Inferiority and Sensitivity

Now, inferiority is a common problem in the psychological health surveys of college students, especially for college students in divorced families. They are more likely to feel inferior because of family disharmony and incompleteness, and are reluctant to communicate with others. When others mention topics related to the family unintentionally, the children in the divorced families will be sensitive and alert immediately and believe that they ridicule their families intentionally and sportively, which aggravate the psychological health problems of college students in divorced families.

### B. College Students in Divorced Families are Prone to Be Reversal and Hate

Parents are the enlightenment teachers of children and the family is the most important place for children's psychological development and personality cultivation. Most interpersonal cognitions and practices of the children before they enter the society are derived from the imitation of parental behaviors. The reason for the emergence of divorced families is mainly the emotional problem between parents. The two problematic parties often vent their arguments by a quarrel and hate, which will have a serious impact on the children's psychological health. Over time, the children have serious reversal against their parents and further hate and are fed up with people around and do not want to open their hearts. After they enter the university campus, such reversal and hate will gradually aggravate along with changes in the living environment and may even lead to an anti-social behavior if serious, resulting in unpredictable consequences.

### C. College Students in Divorced Families are Prone to Jealousness and Comparison

College students in divorced families are significantly different from those in native families in material conditions and emotional satisfaction that it is not so easy for children in divorced families to get what can be got easily by those in native families. When they are in the same living environment, the children in divorced families may turn envy into jealousy, or create a comparison to meet their inner needs. On the one hand, it is reflected in emotion aspect. The college students in divorced families are more eager for parental care as well as for more emotional comfort at this stage. But if things go awry, the situation will be even worse; On the other hand, it is reflected in material aspect. Many college students in divorced families compare with their classmates and blindly ask for to meet their vanity. Meanwhile, the divorced parents may also try their best to meet the children's material needs due to guilt, which further aggravates this unhealthy psychology [1].

### D. College Students in Divorced Families are Prone to Depression and Anxiety

The college students in divorced families largely lack parental emotional care and necessary family education, a sense of belonging to the family, trust in others and coping experience and psychological enduring capacity in the face of difficulties and setbacks, are full of negative emotions and may even be depressed if serious; Meanwhile, college students in divorced families are reluctant to open their minds and share and communicate with others when facing problems. The main reason shall be that the aggressive language and behavior between parents when they are young cause them to be frequently in an anxiety state and seriously lack security and the negative emotions cannot be released and further affect their psychological health.

### III. ANALYSIS OF REASONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

#### A. *Improper Family Education Methods*

The psychological health problem of college students is closely related to the psychological development before they enter the universities. The latter is the background and basis of the psychological health of college students. Both the developing psychological education and the compensatory psychological education are continuations on such basis and they are not independent. [2] Therefore, the influence of family factors on the psychological health of college students is not only the past, but also the present and the future. A complete family is an important condition for the development of psychological health and the continuous improvement of volitional quality. It is not easy to educate the children for a complete family and even more difficult to optimize the psychological education of children because the negative influences may influence the psychological health of children to a greater extent. Through the study of the educational methods for the children in divorced families, the improper education methods are summarized as follows:

Firstly, the divorced parents may form new families generally and there may be new children born, which may distract their energy and reduce their concern and education for their original children to a certain extent. Meanwhile, stepparents are also biased in the education and care of stepchildren, which exacerbates the lack of deserved family education. Many husbands and wives after divorce shirk their responsibility for nurturing of children mutually and even more some hand over their children to their ancestors to nurture.

Secondly, although many parents who have divorced raise their children, but they lack a sense of responsibility, are indifferent to their children's learning and living conditions, have no knowledge of their psychological health status and let their children develop themselves, which greatly lead to the deterioration of the psychological health status of their children.

Finally, some divorced parents feel guilty about their children and think that their children can't get complete family care, so they are busy making money and want to make up for their emotional embarrassment by providing material conditions. While ignoring the education and guidance for their children, they compromise in all aspects and satisfy their desires unboundedly to further breed the excessive desire and unfair comparison of the children. When the parents are unable to satisfy their desires, the children are misconducted and even embark on the road of illegal crime.

#### B. *Increased Negative Social Pressure*

With the development of the times and the progress of the society, people's ideas are constantly changing. However, people sometimes may be prejudiced against some special groups, such as divorced families. Due to the particularity of divorced families, many people in the society have discrimination and prejudice against divorced families, which inevitably leads to an increase in social negative pressures on children in divorced families to further make them have greatly changed emotions and be unwilling to open minds to

communicate with others. When the pressure is too heavy and there is no proper counseling, the children are depressed and may have a suicidal thought if serious. [3] The specific reasons are analyzed as follows:

On the one hand, the college students in divorced families are more prone to inferiority and sensitivity because of family accident. In addition, they think that there is a significant difference between themselves and other classmates and that the classmates also put themselves in a special social status and thus have senses of alienation and being abandoned. If parents or friends around them cannot give appropriate help in time, it may lead to increased internal pressure and depression and anxiety come into being; On the other hand, the college students in divorced families think that they play a special social role due to the negative attitude of the public, which together with the disharmony and incompleteness brought about by family conflicts may make them more inclined to rebel and hate the people and things around and extremely prone to impulsive bad behaviors. These may cause personal injury and endanger the harmony and stability of society if serious.

### IV. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the analysis above, this paper proposes corresponding countermeasures and suggestions for the problems of students in the divorced families in family, school and society, in order to help the development of psychological health of college students and provide important theoretical basis for college and university student management workers at the same time.

#### A. *Play the Role of Family Education*

Family is an important environment for personal psychological growth. As the children's enlightenment teachers, the words and deeds of the parents and the family conditions directly affect the children's life. In the current social situation in China, even if the children enter the colleges, the psychological health education of college students is still inextricably linked with the family. However, the educational methods of parents have a great impact on the children's psychological health, volitional quality etc. due to the great changes in family structure[4]. Therefore, divorced couples shall sensibly and wholeheartedly treat their children's education, whatever the attitudes they look at each other.

On the one hand, many divorced parents believe that the broken family has brought a heavy blow to the quality of life and psychology of their children, therefore they inevitably feel guilty and try to make up for the owing to their children through pure material wealth and unlimited indulgence. However, during this process, parents shall properly grasp the degree of such compensation that they shall "care" and not be "indulgent" and simply "expiatory" because these only encourage the children's reversal and arrogance and are likely to spoil the children as those who do not understand gratitude and have no love; On the other hand, no matter whether the college students in divorced families follow the fathers or mothers, the other party shall still educate and care the children with true heart and love, undertake the corresponding

responsibility and pay more attention to the children's growth and education and must not be indifferent and walk away.

### *B. Improve the Educational Mechanism of Colleges and Universities*

College students in divorced families are more prone to psychological problems than ordinary college students because of incomplete family. University, as a very important life and learning environment in their life stage, shall provide a warm, harmonious and safe living atmosphere as much as possible to make up for negative influences brought to the students due to incomplete family and promote their healthy growth into adults.

#### *1) Establish a Perfect Family File*

The psychological health problems of college students have significant continuity and some do not start at the university and have certain signs before the students enter the universities. Therefore, colleges and universities shall establish a family file of college students to understand the family situation of the students. For students whose parents divorce, the colleges and universities shall early discover, understand and pay attention, provide "invisible help" and dynamically focus on their psychological status by confidential survey and tracking[5] of their life to help when necessary.

#### *2) Strengthen Family and School Contact Mechanism*

Due to the particularity of divorced families, colleges and universities shall strengthen the two-way contact mechanism between family and school, which requires that the college and university student management workers shall actively contact parents to understand the recent psychological status of students and that parents shall promptly feed relevant information back so that the colleges and universities can dynamically pay attention to the psychological health problems of college students in divorced families and achieve early discovery and early resolving. The network WeChat platform, call-back mechanism etc. for family and school communication may be established to facilitate answering questions between the family and school to further collaborate manually and reach a consensus.

#### *3) Enrich Campus Cultural Activities*

Colleges and universities shall combine ideological and political education with practical education to actively carry out campus cultural activities, give full play to the positive guiding role of student management workers, classes, student unions and student associations, develop a series of rich and interesting and public participated campus cultural activities and actively encourage and guide college students in divorced families to participate, so that they can feel warmth and love, and realize that they are indistinguishable from other students to further promote their establishment of normal interpersonal relationships, reduce and eliminate negative emotions to be helpful to their healthy growth.

### *C. Improve the degree of emphasis of the society*

Firstly, change the inappropriate views on the divorced families that still exist in society to fundamentally eliminate the social opinion pressure on the children in divorced families and ease their psychological burden; Secondly, increase the social support for the psychological health education of college

students in divorced families, and play the role of a scientific and effective psychological health education method through the communication of family, school and society; Finally, improve the society's awareness of psychological health education for college students in divorced families and recognize their negative emotions and negative pressures. The society shall actively assume more educational responsibilities to jointly promote the development of psychological health for college students in divorced families.

## V. CONCLUSION

The study of the influences of divorced families on the psychological health of college students is conducive to deeply analyzing and exploring the psychological health problems of college students and enhancing the understanding on family factors in the psychological health problems of college students, with positive theoretical significance. The study also contributes to promoting the development of psychological health education for college students, with important reference significance for the construction of the characteristic road of psychological health education for college students in China; Meanwhile, it is helpful for improving the status quo of family and school cooperation, giving full play to the linkage mechanism between families and colleges and universities, optimizing the psychological health status of college students in divorced families and improving the quality and level of psychological health education for college students in China, with important practical significance.

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