

# Exploration on Mental Health Education of Female College Students from the Perspective of Education with Female Characteristics

## Taking Xi'an Peihua University as an Example\*

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**Abstract**—With the tradition and characteristics of female education in the process of schooling, Xi'an Peihua University has accumulated rich experience in female education. Based on the mental health status of female college students and the development course of the education course with female characteristics, this paper discusses the importance of the education with female characteristics in guiding female college students to grow into talents in higher education by combining the training mode and teaching effect of the education course with female characteristics in Xi'an Peihua University, so as to provide a new perspective for Chinese higher education to improve the mental health of female college students.

**Keywords**—female college students; education with female characteristics; psychological health education; course

### I. INTRODUCTION

As the saying goes, "To educate a boy is to educate an individual; yet a good education of a girl, is equal to a good education of a family, a nation, a country!" With the development of women's universities and the establishment of women's disciplines, people pay more and more attention to female education. As the number of female college students who form the group with higher cultural quality among women is increasing, their mental health is threatened by many factors. The mental health of female college students is not only related to their personal growth, but also affects the progress of society and the cultivation of talents in the new era. The education with female characteristics is set up according to the physiological and psychological characteristics of women, and has strong pertinence, which is of great significance to the growth of female college students and the improvement of their mental health.

Xi'an Peihua University, formerly Xi'an Peihua Girls College, has accumulated rich experience in women's education in its 89 years of history. In 2010, the Women's College of Xi'an Peihua University was formally established to recruit female college students, cultivate the

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comprehensive quality of female college students and carry out education with female characteristics. Under the premise of professional study, students in Women's Colleges are required to take 6-8 courses with female characteristics offered by the colleges and participate in systematic training programs for improving female quality. What kind of influence these educational courses with female characteristics have on the mental health of female college students is the important content thought and researched with depth in this paper.

Female college students are in their postpuberal phase, a period that psychologist Erikson calls the most prone to self-identity crisis. The core task for college students to deal with at this stage is to establish their sense of identity and eliminate self-confusion. If not properly guided during this period, female students will suffer from a series of psychological problems, affecting their healthy growth [1]. The positive influence of education with female characteristics on female college students' self-identity, self-efficacy and other mental health factors can provide theoretical support for female college students' mental health education and enrich theoretical research on ideological and political education in colleges and universities.

### II. OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION COURSES WITH FEMALE CHARACTERISTICS

With the development of feminist thought, the research on female education has begun to take shape. From the value basis, educational theory, to the specific teaching link, western feminist scholars have made many explorations on feminist educational theory. Nourished by feminist education theories, the United States has become the birthplace of women's colleges, with a relatively mature scale. Its higher education for women has a profound impact on women's education throughout the world.

Female education is the socialization process of imparting knowledge, shaping personality and cultivating morality to female individuals. It not only includes the equal and same education as men, but also includes special education for women [2]. Education with female

characteristics belongs to the category of female education. It is a series of education aimed at enhancing the survival and development ability of women by improving their unique temperament and giving play to their special advantages. The education courses with female characteristics have strong applicability and practicability for female college students. Many colleges and universities in China have successively carried out such education courses, which are popular among college students [3].

Education courses with female characteristics refer to the courses that guide women to grow into talents according to the characteristics and needs of female educatees, improve women's comprehensive qualities such as gender consciousness, intelligence, ability and concept, and develop women's potential [4]. Some scholars believe that the education courses with female characteristics mainly include: "gender sociology", "female psychology", "female literature", "female art appreciation" and "public relations, etiquette and social contact", etc. [5]. The teaching purpose and significance of this kind of course is to let the educated have a better understanding of the gender problems and the causes of various phenomena in the society, and help women to understand more scientifically the psychological characteristics of women in career, social achievements, love and marriage and other aspects; train them to have elegant femininity and improve the humanistic quality and self-confidence of female college students on the whole. Through the study and practice of the series of characteristic courses for women, the education path that can realize the female college students' humanistic quality, temperament cultivation and social etiquette in addition to professional skills is explored [6].

The researchers found that female students in colleges and universities with female characteristic courses generally have stronger and clearer social gender awareness, social survival ability, interpersonal skills, self-value goals and other aspects than those without such courses [7]. This is related to the education of characteristic courses for women that they have received in school. The opening of such courses has exerted a subtle influence on girls, helping them form a scientific and reasonable sense of gender and female subjectivity, enhance their self-confidence and better plan their life. At the same time, such courses can guide female college students to correctly understand their physiological and psychological characteristics and social positioning, form a correct concept of gender and love and marriage, and avoid taking unnecessary detours [8].

### III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTERISTIC EDUCATION FOR WOMEN IN XI'AN PEIHUA UNIVERSITY

#### A. History

Xi'an Pihua University, formerly known as Xi'an Peihua Girls College, has accumulated rich experience in female education and cultivated a large number of outstanding female talents for the society. In order to inherit and carry forward the fine tradition of women's education, the Women's College of Xi'an Peihua University was established in 2010, and women's psychology research center was

established in 2018, serving as the main front for the implementation of women's education, service and research. Over the years, the college has united all social forces to carry out research on gender culture and women's development, build a social information platform of gender culture, organize academic and cultural exchanges, pay attention to the survival and development of women, and take cultivating female elites in various fields as the goal, so that they will have more advantages in the future employment and further study.

#### B. Teaching Characteristics

Women's college combines professional education, characteristic education, open education and other forms, and integrates teaching, scientific research and vocational training. It has opened female/gender courses for current students, offered women's education minor classes and training programs for improving women's quality, and form a multi-level and multi-form education model featuring women, short-term vocational training, special foreign training, and exchange of foreign students. For years it has established extensive contacts with girls' schools in South Korea, Japan and other countries to cultivate international female talents with strong practical ability.

#### C. Curriculum Setup

Education courses with female characteristics set in this college include gender equality education for college students, women and the law, female mental health, femaleology, women's self-care and health, female social etiquette, women and literature, the art of female speech communication, tea art, calligraphy, clothing appreciation, the art of inserting flowers, cooking, cases of successful women, hand knitting, sewing and art of music, etc.

#### D. Cultivation Mode

Xi'an Peihua University sets up women's classes in each secondary college, which is an independent small-amount class allocation system, with 30-40 students per class, equipped with excellent counselors for ideological and political education, learning guidance and life care. Combining the characteristics of women, the stage learning parallel to professional education is adopted to develop women's quality education and professional life skills training. Cultivated by professional colleges and women's colleges jointly, students are required to take 2-3 courses with female characteristics offered by women's colleges every semester on the premise of completing the professional study, participate in systematic training programs for improving female quality, and obtain the corresponding certificates after gaining credits. Efforts have been made to train high-quality practical women professionals who can meet the requirements of modern society and have comprehensive modern civilization and traditional virtues for enterprises and institutions. The goal is to train female elites in various fields so that they will have more advantages in future employment and further study.

### E. Educational Effectiveness

The female students in women's colleges have improved their comprehensive personal quality and professional quality by receiving the education of female characteristic courses. They believe that learning such courses has changed some of their traditional ideas; allowed them to know more about the development history of women's status; enhanced their concept of gender equality; made them more rational and learn to get along with the opposite sex in a more scientific and reasonable way and better protect themselves. At the same time, they also find themselves more self-assured, have improved their internal mental health quality and external image, and have made a better career planning so that they showed obvious advantages in their graduation job-hunting.

### IV. THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION WITH FEMALE CHARACTERISTICS

Female college students are faced with the imprisonment of traditional concepts, the orientation of social roles, the difference in physiological and psychological aspects and the impact of various factors such as employment environment, resulting in a variety of inner conflicts, contradictions and imbalances. As their mental health problems are becoming increasingly prominent, it is particularly important to explore the way of female college students' mental health education. As a private university with many years of rich experience in education with female characteristics, Xi'an Peihua University has accumulated rich experience in education with female characteristics during its development. Its education with female characteristics has been proved to be effective in improving the level of mental health, which has important implications for the development of mental health education for female college students.

In the first place, it strengthens the education atmosphere with female characteristics and enhances the independence consciousness and self-confidence of female college students. Carrying out education with female characteristics can help female college students establish lofty and firm ideals and beliefs, strengthen their achievement motivation and sense of growth, and increase their courage to pursue independence and dignity. Secondly, a series of activities with female characteristics are carried out in this university to optimize the campus culture for female college students to grow into talents. Women's activities represented by female culture salon, female culture and art lectures, volunteer activities, tea art club, etiquette and the red wind engineering service focus on women's survival and development, provide social assistance, which not only enrich the campus culture of female college students, but also set up a number of successful female images to encourage female college students to surpass themselves. Thirdly, the cooperation and exchange activities with domestic famous women's universities and international women's higher education institutions have been strengthened [9]. Keeping up with *The Times*, it widely absorbs the successful experience of all parties, promote the innovative development of education

with female characteristics, popularize and promote the basic national policy of gender equality so as to improve the education quality of female college students [10].

### V. CONCLUSION

Combining with the current situation of female college students' mental health under the new situation, Xi'an Peihua University has carried out the unique education with female characteristics for many years, which reflects the attention to female college students' education guidance paid in higher education. In order to solve the practical problems in the process of female college students growing up, the education with female characteristics focuses on exploring the effective strategies of female college students' mental health education in different times. Carrying out education with female characteristics is helpful to expand the approaches of female college students' mental health education, to help counselors carry out ideological and political education for female college students [11], to improve the ability of female college students to cope with practical problems, and to help female college students form healthy and scientific socialist core values.

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