



# Predicament and Breakthrough of Life Education in Universities under Major Public Health Emergencies

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**Abstract.** Life education is an eternal and enduring proposition of human society, which is used to help people live better. With the rapid development of society, the transformation of science and technology, and the rapid progress of the Internet, people have new doubts about their understanding of life, especially for college students who are in the rapid development of self-awareness. As the epidemic prevention and control work enters the normalized "post epidemic era", the life crisis of the main people caused by major public health emergencies is in urgent need of the presence of life education [1]. This paper takes 720 college students from 3 local universities in Henan Province as the research object, and conducts relevant research through the questionnaire of Life Attitude Scale and life narrative, Rationally analyze the current difficulties of college students' life, deeply discuss the impact of major public health emergencies on college students' attitude towards life, and put forward positive and effective suggestions and educational countermeasures.

**Keywords:** Universities; Major public health emergencies; Life education; Educational countermeasures

## 1 Introduction

Young college students are the most dynamic group in contemporary society. A correct outlook on life not only has a positive impact on individual self-development, but also plays an important role in promoting the healthy development of society. College students are in the critical period of the formation of "self-identity", and are prone to psychological conflicts and life difficulties. Therefore, to do a good job in life education, first of all, we should make clear the attitude of college students towards life, and how they explain the meaning of life confusion in the process of self growth. At present, there are only some relevant theoretical studies on the difficulties and influencing factors of college students' life education, and there is a lack of in-depth and rational discussion on the acquisition and cultivation of college students' sense of meaning of life in the post epidemic era. Therefore, it is necessary to understand college students' attitude towards life from the background of major public health emergencies and interpret the difficulties of college life education.

## 2 Object and method

### 2.1 Object

According to the principle of stratified random sampling, 750 college students selected from three local universities in Henan Province were taken as the subjects of the questionnaire, 740 questionnaires were recovered, with a recovery rate of 98.7%. The invalid questionnaires with incomplete information and online questionnaire answering time less than 100 seconds were excluded. Finally, 720 effective questionnaires were collected, with an effective rate of 97.3%. There are 316 male students (43.9%) and 404 female students (56.1%); 209 freshmen (29%), 144 sophomores (20%), 167 sophomores (23.2%) and 200 seniors (27.8%); 285 (39.5%) in liberal arts, 117 (16.3%) in science, 183 (25.4%) in engineering and 135 (18.8%) in art; 17 people (2.4%) came from large cities, 116 from small and medium-sized cities (16.1%), 126 from small towns (17.5%), and 461 from rural areas (64%); There were 103 only children (14.3%) and 617 non only children (85.7%).

### 2.2 Tools

The Life Attitude Scale was prepared by Xie Manying, a scholar, in 2003. There are 70 items in total. It uses 7 levels of scoring. The higher the score on the total score and sub scale of the scale, the more positive the life attitude. The scale includes six dimensions: ideal, life autonomy, sense of existence, love and care, death attitude, and life experience. The test results of the scale among college students in Taiwan showed that: Cronbach's  $\alpha$ . The coefficient is 0.94, and the retest reliability is 0.91  $\alpha$  The coefficient is between 0.67 and 0.90<sup>[2]</sup>.

### 2.3 Data Processing

SPSS21.0 was used for statistical analysis of the survey data. The methods were descriptive statistics, T-test and analysis of variance; Qualitative research software was used to code and analyze the interview data.

## 3 Research results

### 3.1 General situation of college students' life attitude

**Table 1.** Overall situation of college students' attitude towards life

	Highest score	Minimum score	M±SD
Total score	484	181	343.83±55.86
Ideal	77	11	53.36±11.16
Life autonomy	84	24	58.69±11.16
Sense of presence	77	19	54.43±11.82

Love and care	91	30	65.48±11.20
Death attitude	84	37	56.67±9.19

Note: The data in this table are from the author of this paper, the same below.

In the Life Attitude Scale, the higher the total score and subscale score, the more positive the life attitude. In general, the life attitude of college students is good, which shows that most students can face life with a positive attitude. Specifically:

**Ideal dimension.** The average score of college students is  $53.36 \pm 11.16$ . On the whole, college students have a clear life goal, but there are also quite a few students who have a confused attitude towards life and can not find the direction of life efforts.

**Life autonomy dimension.** Generally speaking, individuals who have high freedom of choice in their own life course and can be responsible for their own choices perform better in the dimension of life autonomy. In this paper, college students' sense of control over their own lives is at a medium level, which indicates that most people have low autonomy in life and weak self-regulation ability.

**Presence dimension.** Those with higher scores acknowledge their individual uniqueness and affirm their self-worth and significance. In this paper, the average value of college students in the dimension of sense of existence is  $54.43 \pm 11.82$ , and some students still have a vague sense of life. They are full of powerlessness and uncontrollable sense of life, denying self value and meaning of life.

**Love and care dimension.** Those with higher scores have rich positive emotional experiences, and have higher acceptance of love and care for others. In this paper, the scores of college students in the dimension of love and care are between 30~91, The overall score of college students in this dimension is above the average level, indicating that most college students are more likely to express love and care in real life and treat the external environment with a positive and warm attitude.

**Death attitude dimension.** People with high scores have a rational and objective view of death, while people with low scores have irrational extreme cognition of death, such as avoidance and extreme fear. In this paper, the data shows that there are still quite a number of college students who lack an objective and scientific attitude towards death and tend to choose a negative attitude towards life when encountering life difficulties, This deserves our attention.

**Life experience dimension.** People with high scores can objectively look at positive and negative experiences in life and accept them rationally. The scores of college students in the dimension of life experience ranged from 23 to 77, with an average of  $55.20 \pm 10.24$ . When life is blocked, such as lovelorn, failure to enter a higher school, and interpersonal problems, college students can basically objectively and rationally look at the positive and negative experiences in their life, and actively transform negative experiences into positive experiences.

### 3.2 Life attitude in demographic variables

**Table 2.** Difference Comparison of Life Attitudes in Demographic Statistical Variables

	Gender	Grade	Professional category	Home origin	Only child or not
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Total score	0.040*	0.000**	0.000**	0.316	0.302
Ideal	0.015*	0.002**	0.000**	0.256	0.215
Life auton- omy	0.091	0.000**	0.000**	0.281	0.158
Presence	0.735	0.027*	0.000**	0.275	0.379
Love and care	0.007**	0.003**	0.000**	0.007**	0.532
Death attitude	0.145	0.000**	0.000**	0.318	0.611
Life experi- ence	0.005**	0.000**	0.000**	0.875	0.562

Note: \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01.

It can be seen from Table 2 that there are significant differences in the total score of life attitude scale among gender, grade and major categories, but there are no significant differences in the total score of life attitude scale between the family origin and whether the only child is born or not.

Among them, the total score of life attitude of boys was higher than that of girls (t=2.061, p=0.040); The total score of the grade's attitude towards life showed a significant level of 0.01 (F=7.357, p=0.000). LSD multiple comparisons showed that freshmen were higher than sophomores, juniors and seniors; The total score of life attitude of major categories showed a significant level of 0.01 (F=13.574, p=0.000). LSD multiple comparisons showed that the life attitude of engineering students was significantly higher than that of liberal arts, science and art students.

Gender, grade, major category, home origin and other demographic statistical variables have significant differences in the six dimensions of ideal, life autonomy, sense of existence, love and care, death attitude, and life experience.

Gender. Boys were significantly higher than girls in ideal (t=2.448, p=0.015), love and care (t=2.722, p=0.007), life experience dimension (t=2.827, p=0.005). LSD multiple comparisons showed that freshmen were significantly higher than other grades in such dimensions as ideal (F=5.152, p=0.002), life autonomy (F=7.096, p=0.000), sense of existence (F=3.076, p=0.027), love and care (F=4.727, p=0.003), attitude towards death (F=6.818, p=0.000), and life experience (F=9.945, p=0.000).

Professional category. LSD multiple comparison shows that the ideal dimension (F=11.703, p=0.000) of engineering and art majors is significantly higher than that of liberal arts and science majors; Engineering students were significantly higher in love and care (F=13.662, p=0.000), death attitude (F=10.940, p=0.000) and life experience (F=12.196, p=0.000) than liberal arts, science and art students; Compared with other majors, science students have a lower perception of existence (F=8.274, p=0.000).

Family origin. The rural college students' love and care (F=4.056, p=0.007) was significantly lower than those from large cities, small and medium-sized cities and small towns.

### 3.3 Qualitative research results of college students' life attitude

College students with positive attitude towards life have a relatively stable psychological state when the epidemic occurs, and can maintain a relatively objective and scientific attitude. When faced with unexpected negative events in life, college students with

positive attitude towards life can actively explain them, for example, "I know that this matter will definitely pass, and I can focus on my current study and life without being disturbed." However, college students with negative attitude towards life will show more anxiety, tension, fear and other emotions when the epidemic occurs.

Among them, non only child families, because of the emotional support of their peers, will behave more calmly than only children. Faced with the same situation, college students with similar life attitude levels will be affected by gender and interpret events differently. For example, boys have a high selectivity for the future and relatively few anxiety emotions, but girls have low life autonomy and a weak sense of control in the face of unknown situations, and are prone to somatic symptoms such as anxiety and insomnia.

In addition, compared with college students from rural areas and small towns, college students from urban areas receive more family support and social support, and have stronger self emotion regulation ability when facing difficulties. For example, college students from rural areas mentioned that "I am very afraid that my parents will lose their jobs due to the epidemic, and that the lack of a stable source of income will affect their studies, and I do not know what to do in the future." Different from quantitative research, in qualitative interviews, there was no significant difference between college students of different majors in their feelings about the outbreak of the epidemic, but seniors' worries about employment, postgraduate entrance examination, etc. were significantly higher than those of other grades. In the interviews, only the graduation grade mentioned their concerns about future employment, while students of other grades did not.

## **4 Discussion and Analysis**

In general, the life attitude of college students is good. Most students can have a positive life attitude and full and objective life goals, and can objectively and rationally look at negative events in life and actively transform them. This is closely related to the psychological characteristics of freshmen. College students are transitioning from high school life to college life. With the freshness and yearning for a strange environment, they devote themselves to new study and life with unlimited enthusiasm and vitality. In the interview research, some students said that they were "very looking forward to the new semester and hope to spend the four years of college". With the growth of grades, college students will have self doubt if they do not deal with the problems they encounter in their study and life in a timely manner, which is manifested in the loss of sense of self-worth and vague life goals.

### **4.1 Rural college students have a low perception of love and care**

With the vigorous development of education in China, the number of rural students at all levels and in all kinds of colleges and universities is gradually increasing. After entering the university, there will be some psychological problems caused by learning and interpersonal communication<sup>[3]</sup>, which will affect the individual's attitude towards

life. Love and care not only refers to an individual's active concern for others, but also includes an individual's active acceptance of caring and warmth for others. The development of the cultivation of positive psychological quality of college students is of great significance to the healthy development of college students' psychology<sup>[4]</sup>. Therefore, colleges and universities should actively help college students from rural areas, implement appropriate life education guidance, and improve the perception of positive emotions.

#### **4.2 Gender differences in life attitude**

Due to physiological differences, boys and girls will show different coping styles when facing the same problems. For example, in the interview, boys are more calm and objective than girls because of the epidemic blockade. In particular, when explaining negative events, boys are more active than girls, and their coping styles will be more active and effective.

#### **4.3 Poor self-control and lack of objective and rational life knowledge**

The ability of self-regulation refers to the ability of an individual to consciously determine the purpose of an activity and to self control and adjust his own behavior and mental state without achieving the intended purpose<sup>[5]</sup>. The self-regulation ability affects the self-control of individuals to a certain extent. The research found that there are still some students who have negative attitudes towards life, live empty lives, and cannot realize their own value and existence. And the sense of loss increases with the growth of grade, which deserves attention. Due to the lack of ideal, they can't see their value in study, so they take some ways to pass the time without really realizing the meaning of college life. Therefore, college students should actively integrate self-development into the process of social development, establish correct self-consciousness, actively accept themselves, and form an objective and rational life cognition. Internalize social values into self-worth, actively broaden their horizons, actively participate in social practice, such as participating in voluntary activities for epidemic prevention and control, increase the experience of social concern, and truly realize the importance of life to individuals.

#### **4.4 Negatively cope with negative events and lack of anti pressure ability**

Life is a marathon, and every situation in life is a challenge for individuals, who will constantly throw out problems to be solved. It is inevitable to encounter setbacks and pressure on the way forward. If you only accept the results rather than the failures, this is a wrong understanding of the meaning of life. When dealing with life, individuals should take corresponding responsibilities, understand the meaning of life in the process of solving problems, face it with a positive and optimistic attitude, and constantly improve their stress management ability.

## 5 Conclusions

In the context of a major public health emergency, college students still have a positive attitude towards life and a positive expectation of the future. However, due to various internal and external factors, they have also brought many problems and challenges. Therefore, this paper puts forward some suggestions for college life education from the three levels of society, family and individual.

First of all, a stable and harmonious social atmosphere is an important external condition for the healthy development of individual body and mind. Nowadays, the degree of social development is getting higher and higher. In the face of sudden life crisis events, individual reaction speed is also changing quietly. Young college students focus too much on the real life experience and weaken the life consciousness, which will lead to unclear life direction and difficult to fit the life values with the current social reality. Therefore, from the national and social level, we should build a stable and harmonious social atmosphere according to the physical and mental development characteristics of college students.

Secondly, the family is the beginning of an individual's life. Therefore, what kind of educational philosophy parents adopt is crucial for young college students. High quality parent-child company is also an important support for individuals to understand the meaning of life and complete each life activity with high quality. People who treat life positively can live in harmony with their families, others and the society. Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem theory points out that the growth environment has played a role in promoting and guiding individual development, especially the family's parenting style for young people. At the same time, while satisfying the learning of life education related knowledge of college students, colleges and universities can combine family education through wechat official account, official website of the University and other forms, awaken the awareness of family education, spread scientific family education concept, reshape home school cooperative action, strengthen home school emotional communication and exchange, and jointly do a good job in life education of college students.

In addition, the core of education is to handle the relationship between "knowledge growth" and "life growth". College students should also realize that there are many ways to broaden their horizons and enhance their sense of self-worth in addition to knowledge learning. For example, actively participate in club activities, fully explore their own advantages, experience setbacks and successes, reduce internal attribution, correctly treat difficulties and setbacks, objectively evaluate themselves, actively involve themselves, set reasonable growth goals, and constantly improve their ability to withstand stress and enhance their sense of self-worth in the process of interaction with peer groups.

In the modern society with rapid social development, college students' understanding of life should also have a new change, which is not only the requirement of self-identity development, but also the requirement of high integration of individuals and society. Life education is not just a simple knowledge impartation, but should form the integration of people, people and society, people and nature on the basis of guiding the subject people to comprehensively, reasonably and objectively understand the natural attributes

of life, and drive college students to regain the meaning of life and realize their self-worth by leading and demonstrating by example.

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