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# The Application of Drama in Education in Mental Health Education of Contemporary Chinese College Students

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## **Abstract**

As a comprehensive teaching method and means, Drama in Education has gradually entered the college and been applied to a certain extent. It is a beneficial attempt to apply it to college students' mental health education. The connection between Drama in Education and campus psychodrama is that campus psychodrama often has some functions of Drama in Education to some extent, and Drama in Education can be a good supplement to campus psychodrama and become a routine way of college students' mental health education, so as to achieve full coverage of audience and time. In addition, the use of Drama in Education is flexible and less affected by objective factors, which is also suitable for the assistants for political and ideological work as an effective means of mental health counseling. Drama in Education is malleable and changeable and will surely shine brilliantly in China's educational cause in the future.

## **Keywords**

College students; Mental health education; Drama in Education; Application.

### 1. Introduction

At present, Drama in Educational(DIE) in China has a strong momentum of development.It is not only fully used in preschool education, but also in compulsory education and high school, and is gradually being applied in colleges. DIE is a kind of comprehensive teaching method and means, which is different from the "drama art" that we are familiar with. Fully using the method of education plays in college, not only can the related factors of education as the purpose of education in special education in the corresponding theme, the positive effects on college students' group, can also as a reliable carrier, specific application in contemporary Chinese college students' mental health education curriculum, the psychological positive regulatory role of the college students' group.

# 2. An Overview of the Development of DIE

The form of DIE was basically established in the United States in the 1920s. [1] The 1930s to the 1950s were the development period of DIE in Europe and America. From 1970s to 1980s, DIE has gradually developed in North America and Western Europe. In the 1990s, DIE established a complete system in developed countries in Europe and America. The concept of "Drama in Education" entered into Southeast Asia and Hong Kong and Taiwan regions of China earlier, but entered into Mainland China relatively late. However, even though the concept of DIE has been basically established in Europe and America, its definition is still vague and has not been unified in Mainland China. [2] Xu Jun's ideal DIE should be a social activity that consciously reproduces and transmits human kindness experience through imagination and acting, and is the intersection of drama and education in a broad sense. [3]By contrast, Li Ying rather more representative, she says, is in the process of normal education teaching, education plays in dramatic elements, and use a drama of teaching methods, teachers and students to participate, lets the student in the corresponding teaching link, use drama to complete learning

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goals, to achieve the corresponding education. [4] Therefore, this paper holds that the main purpose of DIE is education, and the elements and methods of drama are important ways and means of education.

At present, DIE is widely used in preschool education and compulsory education classes in China. Usually in the form of drama performance, the corresponding learning objectives are integrated into the rehearsal. Through the effect of "play" and "entertainment" brought by drama performance, the positive emotions of students are fully mobilized to complete the teaching objectives. Some primary and secondary schools in developed areas of China have also developed school-based courses of DIE with certain characteristics, with high response, participation and completion of teachers and students. However, we need to see that DIE in contemporary China is still in the early stage of development, with a relatively obvious gap with developed countries, and has not formed the "scale" of application. Happily, in recent years, DIE has entered the classroom of mental health education in primary and secondary schools. Mental health teachers actively guide students to participate in the form of DIE, which effectively improves the mental health level of primary and secondary school students. To see is the same, even though the education of mental health education in primary and middle school classroom drama has been applied, but the application of the mental health education in colleges and universities in China is still less, most of China's college mental health education is still a combination of classroom teaching and after-school counseling, still has the characteristics of "mechanical" and "rigidity".

# 3. The Relationship Between DIE and Mental Health Education of College Students

With the continuous development of integrated circuit industry and the widespread popularity of chip products such as smart phones, the development of network information pays more attention to the interactivity and rapidity, and college students are more susceptible to the influence of constantly changing, changing and transforming information. Contemporary Chinese college students face various challenges, psychological pressure gradually increased, more and more psychological problems. [5] At present, with the expansion of the number of college students in China, the mental health situation of college students has become more serious. Therefore, in recent years, mental health education has increasingly become the focus of the work of College students in China. In addition to the psychological measurement and monitoring of students after enrollment and before graduation, psychological health education centers in colleges and universities should also set up corresponding public mental health education courses, and be responsible for psychological counseling and basic psychological treatment of college students. However, there are more part-time staff and fewer full-time staff in the mental health education center of colleges and universities, which directly leads to the psychological health education of college students can not be comprehensively and deeply spread out, most of the work can only be dipped into, and the proportion of students with psychological problems is increasing year by year. These problems are common: anxiety and depression caused by academic maladjustment; Indulging in the network caused by impetuous, confused; The anger and irritability caused by addiction to online games; Depression caused by improper handling of interpersonal relationships. If the above psychological problems can not be resolved in time, it is extremely easy to cause extreme or malignant events. It can be seen that the mental health education center in colleges and universities has great responsibility, but there are also some problems such as backward working mode and inadaptability to the new mental health problems generated by the current Chinese college students. It is a beneficial attempt to introduce DIE into college students' mental health education.

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Psychodrama originated in the United States in the 1920s and was introduced and applied in China in the 1980s. Psychodrama is a commonly used psychotherapy method in families and communities, which mainly treats individual emotions and other factors through dramatic performances. [6] Mental health education centers in colleges and universities often organize performances of campus psychodrama, which to some extent also has some functions of DIE. Campus psychodrama before a show will collect, sort out all kinds of college students in the campus life of all kinds of psychological problems encountered, and select the part of the problem, in the center of the mental health education under the guidance of scientific solution is put forward, in the theater as the carrier, to complete performance, to participate in the performance of the actors and the audience good psychological hint and positive, So as to achieve the effect of "psychodrama" correction. Campus psychodrama has a wide audience, a large number of participants and a strong pertinence of psychological problems, which can arouse a wide range of resonance among students.

Currently, in colleges and universities in China, the campus psychodrama performances and is widely used, but also inevitably appeared the tendency of generalization, that is, from the psychological problems of "collecting, organizing, reproduce, healing" direct generalization "situation reproduced" for psychological problems, rarely mentioned or not to mention the function of "psychotherapy". At present, many psychodrama in colleges and universities often have the following problems: (1) Focus on stage performance, costumes, props and ignore the theme; (2) The performer is too amateur to put the audience into the situation; (3) Lack of research, subjective speculation on performance themes and even solutions to psychological problems; (4) Outdated theme and lack of innovation; (5) Replace campus psychodrama with ordinary stage plays. From a certain point of view, campus psychodrama is just a periodical and temporary activity held by the mental health education center of colleges and universities, which cannot fully cover all students, nor can it be held stably for a long time. To solve the above problems, introducing DIE is an effective way. If the theme of DIE is simply limited to the field of college students' mental health, with the specific psychological problems of college students as the guidance and goal, then DIE can be a good supplement to campus psychological drama, and become a routine way of college students' mental health education, so as to achieve full coverage of the audience and time. For example, in the classroom teaching of college students' mental health education, it is completely possible to arrange students to plan and rehearse in advance, around a certain mental health theme, and use one class or even half of the class time to carry out "fragmentary" performances to enrich the classroom content of college students' mental health education.

In a word, DIE and campus psychodrama have some similarities. First, they both take dramatic art as the carrier, so they both have actors, stage, audience, dramatic conflict and other dramatic elements. Second, both of them have corresponding goals.DIE try to accomplish certain educational goals, while campus psychodramas focus on psychotherapy. Third, both need to be rehearsed, in the form of a complete "theatrical performance" to achieve the preset goals. The difference between the two is that the theme of DIE is more random and gives priority to the theme, while stage, props and other elements are not the focus. Any educational goal that needs to be completed can be used as the theme of DIE, and the theme can be randomly matched according to the educational goal. Performances can also be used as an organic part of regular teaching, with ease. The theme of campus psychodrama must be limited to the psychological problems that college students are prone to, with obvious directivity. If there are many combinations of psychological problems, a clear logical line is needed to connect the themes. In addition, in order to obtain good psychological treatment effect and create a good performance atmosphere, campus psychodrama has relatively high requirements for actors, costumes, stage, props and other elements.

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## 4. Application of DIE in Mental Health Education of College Students

At present, the mental life of college students is surrounded by various "fast mental consumption" apps such as Tik Tok, which are highly addictive. In addition, college students are also prone to psychological problems because they have just left their families and stepped into society. Solving the mental health problems of college students is the most important responsibility of college students mental health education center. Lin Chongde once said: Nowadays in China, with the increase of life and work pressure, people may encounter psychological imbalance in work, study, life, interpersonal relationship and self-awareness. These psychological or behavioral problems also exist in students, so it is necessary to carry out psychological health education for students. [7] The DIE mentioned above, due to its strong theme plasticity and high audience participation, can be a good supplement to campus psychodrama in college students' mental health education, and can be widely and deeply applied in college students' mental health education as a "conventional means". However, it should be noted that the development of DIE in contemporary China is not mature enough, lacking a certain amount of specific practice and theoretical guidance. In addition, front-line student staff in Chinese colleges are also cautious and dare not make vigorous explorations into unknown areas. Therefore, DIE, as a supplement of campus psychodrama and an attempt of college students' mental health education, needs further practice and effective results in order to truly promote the further development of college students' mental health education.

Based on the author's practical experience, DIE can be applied in the following situations. First, it is applied in the teaching of college students' mental health education. As a common public course, the teaching in the past was often scripted, and it was basically difficult to play a great therapeutic effect on college students with psychological problems. Therefore, teachers can collect and select some common psychological problems, set certain themes, rehearse with students in advance, and insert "episodic" DIE into normal classroom teaching, so that students can have more sense of participation and experience, and understand and solve psychological problems in a real and reasonable way. In addition, due to the strong awareness of privacy protection of contemporary college students, this method can also avoid students worried about personal privacy problems lose the opportunity to psychological counseling, so as to correct the common psychological problems of students from another perspective. Because of the large number of participants in DIE, students are more likely to be influenced by others, and thus can deepen the impression of students. Second, it is applied in the routine consultation and guidance of university mental health education center. Mental health education centre staff can through research and experience to judge, the students can produce the psychological problems of classification, points type, typical script for different themes, and arrange for volunteers to participate in daily practice, for the purpose of education and guidance, break the routine and students' stereotype effect, make its produce novelty, to better achieve the healing effect.

At present, the capacity of mental health education centers in Chinese colleges and universities is limited, so a large number of students' psychological counseling work is transferred to assistants for political and ideological work. The assistants for political and ideological work in Chinese colleges and universities are also faced with the problem of consuming time and energy but achieving little effect. Luo Xiaolu pointed out that college students' mental health education and service system to achieve "ecological", can effectively solve the growing psychological health needs of college students and the development of unbalanced, inadequate contradiction, from the overall improve the level of college students' mental health. [8]DIE is flexible in use and less affected by objective factors, so it is suitable for the assistants for political and ideological work as an effective means of mental health counseling. With the continuous development of the times and the influence of different families and other factors, the

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psychological problems of contemporary Chinese college students are often unique. If the assistants for political and ideological work use a separate conversation, they may get less result with less effort. If they use the way of DIE, design corresponding themes with educational goals and let students participate, they can often get twice the result with half the effort by surprise. The specific application of DIE can be divided into two aspects: prevention and treatment. In terms of prevention, the assistants for political and ideological work need linkage with psychological health education center, the common psychological problems of the collection, induction, sorting, and form a complete solution, design education under the guidance of psychological health education center of drama script rehearsal and arrange related personnel, the use of psychological counseling or time for the performance of the theme class meeting, the psychological problems of students, play a certain preventive role. This method has varied themes and novel forms, takes less time for the assistants for political and ideological work and students, and is easily accepted by students. In terms of handling, the assistants for political and ideological work need to make full plans under the guidance of the mental health education center, prepare DIE scripts with various themes in advance, select several class cadres as regular actors, and select them according to the psychological problems encountered by students. Special attention should be paid to DIE as one of the alternative approaches to solving problems, which can be tried when conventional education fails to work. In general, DIE can be used as a routine means by the assistants for political and ideological work in daily mental health education for college students.

### 5. Conclusion

The application of DIE in the mental health education of contemporary Chinese college students is an attempt to solve the mental health problems of college students. The DIE that has blossomed everywhere in Europe and America is still a land to be reclaimed in contemporary China. The plasticity and variability of DIE are the secret of maintaining its vitality. In the near future, whether DIE can flourish in college students' mental health education or even spread comprehensively needs to be explored and studied continuously. The author believes that DIE will shine brilliantly in China's educational cause in the future.

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