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Innovation in ideological and political education in higher education institutions for student development

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This study aims to explore the promoting effect of the combination of mental health education and ideological and political education for college students on improving their comprehensive psychological quality and ideological and political theoretical level. The research adopts a combination of system analysis methods, experimental methods and clustering algorithms, and conducts course experiments through experimental methods, providing basic data. In the process of the experiment, from the perspective of educational psychology theory, the systematic analysis method is used to distinguish subject and object, and functional analysis is carried out. At the same time, clustering algorithms are used to classify the mental health problems of different students. The research results indicate that in terms of subjectivity, teachers' psychological communication ability, psychological understanding ability and psychological guidance ability have a significant positive impact on students' psychological state. The level of ideological and political theory and psychological strain ability also have a significant positive impact on students' psychological state. Intervention on students' values and personality psychological issues is also effective. These findings provide an important basis and guidance for further carrying out higher education reform.

Contribution: With the development of society, students need to face more and more external concepts during their growth. Students whose mental growth is not mature are likely to have certain psychological problems in this process. This research can be utilised by scholars in the field of youth ministry and religious educational studies.

Keywords: educational psychology; mental health; ideological and political education; innovation path; student development.

Introduction

Educational psychology is a psychological theory applied in the field of pedagogy. Its main research object is the law of psychological interaction between teachers and students in the process of learning behaviour. The purpose of this study is to explore the psychological interaction between teachers and students in order to cultivate students' learning psychology, improve their learning ability, and enhance their learning results. On the one hand, understanding the psychological action law in the process of learning behaviour can become an important theory for fostering students' learning psychology and improving their academic performance. On the other hand, it can serve as a theoretical basis for helping teachers discover the underlying mechanisms of learning behaviour and develop more effective teaching methods (Wang & Luo 2021). From the perspective of educational psychology, educational behaviour is not only about students acquiring professional knowledge but also about promoting their mental health. However, because of the specific characteristics of the student population, it is often challenging for them to obtain positive mental health knowledge through other social channels (Rouhani & Asadi 2020). Moreover, students may lack the ability to discern whether certain social concepts are beneficial to their well-being. Therefore, without proper guidance, students are at risk of adopting harmful behaviours that may negatively impact their mental health (Tang & Shi 2021). At this stage of their lives, students' main goal is learning. Therefore, their learning behaviour occupies the majority of their daily life, becoming the core of their existence. The learning attitudes, tendencies and methods displayed by students in their learning behaviours are not only applicable in the context of education but also have the potential to impact various aspects of their lives (Akhlaghdoust et al. 2021). Therefore, it

is essential for educational psychology theory to understand and guide students' psychological state in their learning behaviour. This necessity is reflected in the ability of teachers to help students develop a positive thinking mode and psychological state through psychological guidance in the process of learning behaviour (Yang & Li 2020).

This study adopts a combination of system analysis, experimental methods and clustering algorithms to explore the promoting effect of combining mental health education with ideological and political education on improving the comprehensive psychological quality and ideological and political theoretical level of college students. Firstly, system analysis methods will be used to distinguish between educational subjects and educational objects, and thereafter functional analysis will be conducted. Secondly, course experiments will be conducted to provide basic data using experimental methods. Finally, clustering algorithms will be used to classify the mental health issues of college students participating in the experiment. Through the application of clustering algorithms, it is possible to better understand the psychological health issues and needs of different students, providing scientific basis for personalised psychological health education and ideological and political education.

Subjects and methods
Study setting

The research takes educational theory as the implementation approach and psychological theory as the starting point. Positive thinking patterns and psychological states can greatly assist students in their learning behaviour.

The positive role of ideological and political education can extend beyond learning, as it can help students improve their overall mental health. However, it is worth noting that ideological and political concepts seem to be disconnected from students' daily lives, which is why they may not be able to drive students to change themselves through concept learning (Wang 2020). Therefore, when combining ideological and political education with mental health education, it is crucial to integrate the characteristics of empathy, interactivity, initiative and confidentiality of mental health education. The research is conducted from this perspective for integrated research. The integrated psychological ideological and political education can be divided into four main parts, and the experimental design is based on these four basic dimensions.

Empathy refers to understanding and considering students' perspectives, taking into account their actual psychological and living conditions. By creating a supportive environment in which students can participate, ideological and political concepts can be integrated into their learning and life experiences (Christian, Delariarte & Reyes 2021). Educators should maintain a neutral attitude and avoid imposing their subjective thoughts and emotions on students' situations. This method can provide a deeper understanding of students

and more effective psychological guidance in the educational process (Slade, Molyneux & Watt 2021).

Interactivity refers to the two-way cooperation and communication between educators and students in the process of mental health education. This kind of communication should not be one-sided or indoctrinated. On the contrary, it should include emotional and linguistic communication, allowing educators to provide timely feedback based on students' actual life and psychological conditions. This interactive method helps educators dynamically adjust teaching strategies and prevent negative effects of indoctrination (Slade, Molyneux & Watt 2021).

Pro-activity refers to the responsibility of educators to adopt proactive methods to solve psychological problems. Educators should not wait for students to initiate discussions or seek help. By actively identifying and addressing students' psychological problems, educators can prevent these problems from escalating and provide timely guidance and intervention (Slade et al. 2021).

Confidentiality is crucial in mental health education as it often involves discussing students' personal psychological aspects. Creating a trusting and open environment can enable effective and meaningful communication between educators and students. This helps to better understand students' psychological state, thereby helping educators develop appropriate educational strategies (Slade et al. 2021).

In short, when ideological and political education is combined with mental health education, it is essential to combine empathy, interactivity, initiative, and confidentiality. By doing so, educators can create a supportive and trusting environment that provides effective communication and better mental health for students (Slade et al. 2021).

The research was conducted during the 2022–23 academic year at XYZ University, combining ideological and political education and mental health education from the perspective of educational methods during the experimental design. This is because of the fact that only one of the educational methods cannot achieve the desired educational effect when solving the problem of the intersection and mutual existence of ideological and psychological aspects of college students. Therefore, when implementing educational methods, we need to combine ideological and political education with mental health education, learn from each other, integrate psychological guidance into ideological and political education, and integrate ideological norms into mental health education, so as to form a comprehensive educational system. The methods of ideological and political education in colleges and universities that can be used for reference from mental health education include equal dialogue method and self-help method. The equal dialogue method in mental health education is to go deep into students' inner world through democratic communication with students, clarify students' psychological state and then follow the educational principles of specific

analysis of specific problems to put forward countermeasures to solve problems. This is what the ideological and political education work in colleges and universities lacks. It carries out indoctrinated theoretical teaching on the basis of not knowing the true state of mind of college students. It cannot deeply combine with students' study and life, and cannot achieve the educational effect. Therefore, ideological and political educators need to change their educational ideas and start from the practical learning and living needs of students, so as to achieve the right medicine to the case and improve the effectiveness of ideological and political education. The self-help method means that professionals or teachers guide students' current psychological problems in mental health education activities, and actively play the subjective initiative of college students, so that they can master and improve their psychological defence and response abilities in the future. The ideological and political education in colleges and universities should also fully respect the subject status of college students, give them enough space to play their subjectivity and initiative, so that they can master the scientific methods to deal with ideological problems and always maintain correct values in the face of social reality. The methods that mental health education can learn from ideological and political education in colleges and universities include classroom teaching method and preventive education method. At present, the outstanding problem in college mental health education is the lack of psychological curriculum platform, which has seriously affected the popularisation of mental health knowledge. Therefore, mental health education should reasonably draw on the educational approaches of ideological and political education, and effectively use the educational platform of ideological and political education. That is, on the one hand, learning ideological and political education pays attention to the use of classroom teaching methods, and constantly updates the content of teaching materials and enriches the strength of teachers. On the other hand, because the number of hours of mental health education is small, we should actively use the teaching platform of ideological and political education. For example, when the theory of ideological and political curriculum involves the education of ideals and beliefs and values, educators should actively introduce mental health knowledge, so that college students can rationally face setbacks and reasonably release pressure under the guidance of correct ideological and political concepts. The ideological and political education refers to the prevention education method in mental health education, which means that prevention is more important than treatment in the former mental health education, because before the occurrence of psychological problems, educators may resolve the psychological crisis and even avoid the occurrence of catastrophic problems by providing professional knowledge guidance to the education objects. At present, there are some college students who are confused in ideology and lack firm belief, which requires ideological and political educators to conduct timely guidance and intervention and strengthen preventive education, so as to protect the healthy growth of college students. At the same time, in the ideological and political education in colleges and universities, we should pay attention to the role of mental health education, not only in the theoretical level of educational content and methods but also in the innovation of educational means to better apply it to practice. The innovation of educational means mainly includes two aspects: one is to give full play to the educational role of new network media, and the second is to actively guide college students to go deep into social practice. These educational means close to the daily life of college students make them influenced by two education imperceptibly. Firstly, give full play to the educational role of new online media. At present, the rapid development of network technology has become a world trend. College students, as the main group of network applications, have increasingly integrated the network into daily life. Secondly, actively guide college students to go deep into educational practice. In the process of education, practice should be added to improve students' ideological awareness and psychological quality in practice. In actively guiding college students to deepen educational practice, college students' values and psychological quality can be improved only through regular educational practice. Therefore, colleges and universities should attach great importance to educational practice activities, and require college students to closely combine the theoretical knowledge learned in class with extracurricular practice activities, so as to achieve the unity of knowledge and practice to improve the effectiveness of education. At the same time, in the work of ideological and political education and mental health education in the new era, we need a professional education team. Because they come from different levels of education, we need specific guidance and training to strengthen the joint construction of the education team. Colleges and universities should also improve the mental quality of ideological and political educators and their ability to engage in mental health education. As an excellent ideological and political educator, he or she should have professional knowledge, lofty professional ethics, healthy psychological quality and other factors.

The research is mainly carried out in the form of intervention experiments. According to the four learning and life stages of college students, the experiment divides the sex education experiment of combining mental health and ideological and political education into four parts and provides courses for four student groups. The four courses set different learning objectives for students and different emphasis on teacher education according to the growth stage of students' current psychology and life state, as shown in Table 1.

A total of 460 students were selected to participate in the experiment. The experiment lasted for 4 months. All students were required to sign an informed consent before participating in the experiment. A total of 111 first-year students were selected from the experimental course, accounting for 24.13% of the total number; there were 121 second grade students, accounting for 26.30% of the total; there were 116 third grade students, accounting for 25.22% of the total; and there were 112 fourth grade students, accounting for 24.35% of the total. According to the different life and psychological states of students in the four stages, the study recorded the changes of students' psychological states after receiving the experimental

TABLE 1: Content design of intervention test.

Student group	Students' psychological learning goals	Emphasis on teachers' psychological education	Number of experimental students (person)	Proportion of experimental students (%)
First grade	Adapt to college life, master learning methods, adapt to learning patterns and enrich personal practice	Teaching the basic theory of ideological and political education, leading students to understand the characteristics of college learning and life, and setting up preliminary learning and life goals	111	24.13
Second grade	Improve learning ability, establish a reasonable value framework, expand vision, and summarise learning and life problems	Improve students' psychological quality, fill in the details of ideological and political education theory, and apply it to learning and practical life	121	26.30
Third grade	Form effective learning habits and plans, improve self-personality and value system, and be able to effectively distinguish external information	Train students to establish their own positive value reference system through independent thinking, and then form the ability of self-thinking and self-solving	116	25.22
Fourth grade	Learn to cope with external pressure, handle your own emotional changes and plan your life at the same time, so as to have a realistic outlook on your life development	Help students deal with the pressure from the outside world, train students' ability to self-guide under pressure and help them form their life plans	112	24.35
The sum			460	100.00

Note: The data in this table is derived from the statistical results of experimental students. The formula for calculating the proportion of experimental students is: number of experimental students/ total number of students.

courses. At the same time, the study used clustering algorithm to classify students with different mental health problems to form more targeted analysis. The Euclidean distance calculation method of clustering algorithm is shown in equation (1):

$$d(x,y) = \sqrt{(x_1 - y_1)^2 + (x_2 - y_2)^2 + \ldots (x_n - y_n)^2} \qquad \text{[Eqn 1]}$$

In Where, $x = (x_1, x_2 \ldots, x_n)$ and $y = (y_1, y_2 \ldots, y_n)$ are the two points of the calculated distance. x_n and y_n represent the numbers of two sample points, respectively.

Design

Although there are some courses in mental health in colleges and universities at present, these courses of mental health education are mostly in the form of optional courses, which are not valued by students or even teachers, making the teaching of this course a mere formality. The ideological and political education can largely solve the problem that psychological education is not valued in the college education system. However, ideological and political education, as the main channel for colleges and universities to publicise ideology and improve political literacy, it's boring teaching style has attracted strong aversion and resistance from college students. In this regard, colleges and universities should apply mental health knowledge to ideological and political education activities in a targeted way, which can make up for their respective shortcomings and combine organic courses.

On this basis, colleges and universities should also update the content of ideological and political education from the psychological needs of college students. Firstly, the content of ideological and political education has the characteristics of keeping pace with the times. It needs to adapt to the goal of achieving socialist modernisation, and also meet the psychological development needs of college students. Therefore, while the content of ideological and political education is constantly updated and improved, it should always adhere to the main goal of college education to cultivate college students into high-quality physical and mental talents. Secondly, no matter the content of mental
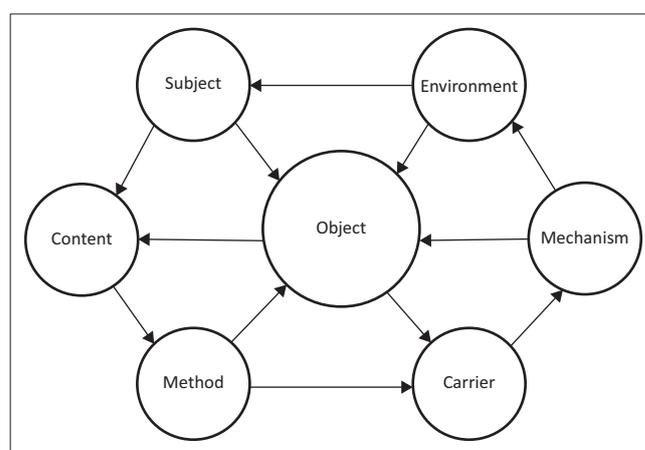
FIGURE 1: Psychological ideological and political education system.

health education or ideological and political education, none of them can become theoretical education without practical support. We must closely combine theoretical content with practical problems, start from the actual situation of students, and start from the actual learning and life problems that students want most urgently to solve. While providing curriculum education, it should provide help for students' daily learning and life. Thirdly, when helping college students solve psychological problems, educators should fully respect their personality, go deep into their inner world, learn to listen and keep secrets, so that college students can relax their psychological vigilance, help students solve negative psychological problems, and cultivate their comprehensive physical and mental quality.

The research uses the system analysis method to divide psychological ideological and political education into functional systems, forming six subsystems around the object as a whole, as shown in Figure 1.

In Figure 1 taking students in psychological ideological and political education as the main subject, it can be divided into six subsystems: psychological ideological and political education subject, psychological ideological and political education content, psychological ideological and political education method, psychological ideological

and political education carrier, psychological ideological and political education mechanism, and psychological ideological and political education environment. Although they are independent subsystems, they also have certain connections. Different systems will have different effects under the influence of their own variables. The research is based on educational psychology, so it mainly focuses on the functional relationship between subject and object in the system. The main variables include: ideological and political theory level, psychological communication ability, psychological understanding ability, psychological analysis ability, psychological guidance ability and psychological strain ability. While the object variable is classified according to the students' mental health problems, mainly divided into four main types of mental health problems: values and personality problems, learning and development problems, emotional control problems, and stress coping problems.

Results

The research is based on educational psychology and takes the subject system and object system in the psychological ideological and political education system as the main analysis part. Among them, the main part analyses the teaching characteristics of educators. After quantifying the variable influencing factors during the test, the influence analysis is shown (see Figure 2).

It can be seen from Figure 2 that the impact of teachers' psychological communication ability, psychological understanding ability and psychological guidance ability on students in the psychological ideological and political education curriculum has reached level 4 of the quantitative level, which represents the significance of the significant impact level, that is, teachers' psychological communication ability, psychological understanding ability and psychological guidance ability will have a significant impact on students' psychology. The impact of teachers' ideological and political theory level and psychological strain ability on students in the psychological ideological and political education curriculum has reached the third level of the quantitative level, which represents the significance of the obvious impact level, that is,
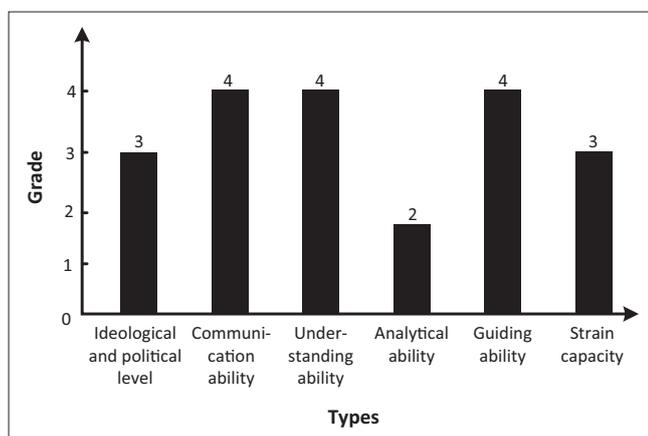
teachers' ideological and political theory level and psychological strain ability will have an obvious impact on students' psychology. The impact of teachers' psychological analysis ability on students in the psychological ideological and political education course is only level 2 of the quantitative level, which represents the general impact level meaning, that is, the impact of teachers' psychological analysis ability on students' psychological status is not sufficient, and it is only a general impact. From the perspective of system object, that is, students, the changes of students' typical mental health problem scores over time are shown in Figure 3.

It can be seen from Figure 3 that with the time progress of the psychological ideological and political education course, the psychological problem scores of students with values and personality psychological problems as the main dimensions have decreased from 38.8 points to 17.1 points, with the largest drop in psychological problem scores and a stable downward trend on the time scale. It can be seen that the psychological ideological and political education course has a significant and stable impact on students. The student group with emotion control as the main dimension has the second largest drop in scores. The score of psychological problems of this group has dropped from 37.2 to 23.7. Although the drop is not as large as that of the group with values and personality psychological problems, the overall decline is still stable. The psychological problem scores of the learning and development problem group and the stress-coping group have a certain fluctuation, and the overall decline is the same. Among them, the psychological problem scores of the learning and development problem group have a slight upward trend from the second month to the third month, while the psychological problem scores of the stress-coping group have a slight rise from the third month to the fourth month.

Discussion

In the context of modern information development, college students are easily influenced by external social environments and values, leading to deviations in their value systems and various mental health issues. Previous research by Zhan et al (2020) has shown that because of the influence of negative social factors, the Internet environment and other aspects,
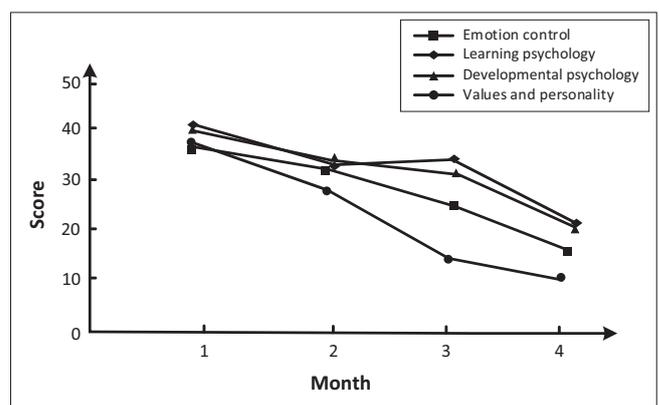

FIGURE 2: Impact analysis.

FIGURE 3: Score of psychological problems.

college students are highly susceptible to limitations in their social experiences and incomplete personality development, resulting in negative psychological problems (Zhan et al. 2020). These factors greatly impact ideological and political education. The current study, based on educational psychology, innovatively integrates mental health education with ideological and political education in colleges and universities. The results demonstrate that teachers' psychological communication skills, psychological understanding abilities and psychological guidance abilities significantly affect students in the psychological ideological and political education course. This indicates that focusing on these three aspects can effectively deepen the conceptual and psychological guidance provided by the ideological and political education course, helping students break free from the control of negative external ideas and improve their mental health. This is in line with the research by Sun and Wang (2020), which suggests that colleges and universities need to reform ideological and political education to help students overcome the negative impact of external irrational consumption concepts and other detrimental value systems, and assist students in distinguishing between high-quality and low-quality cultures in mass culture. The findings of the current study indicate that psychological ideological and political education can effectively help students address their value and personality issues, and establish self-control strategies to reduce the persistent impact of negative emotions on students. Ai (2021) also found that the Internet and new media make it difficult for college students to form a stable value system during their psychological and personality growth, leading to various psychological symptoms such as difficulty in identity identification. However, incorporating relevant educational content addressing students' current psychological issues into ideological and political education can effectively help students establish a reference system of values and improve their psychological stability. In addition to external influences, students themselves also encounter certain psychological issues during their psychological development, such as self-development problems. The current study reveals that the psychological problem scores of students with learning and development issues show a slight upward trend from the second to the third month, which is attributed to the increasing academic year causing students to consider enrolment and graduation development problems. However, the scores of psychological problems for stress coping groups increased slightly from the third to the fourth month, as the graduation atmosphere on campus triggered self-reflection among students, leading to increased developmental pressure. Jin et al. (2021) found that unhealthy behaviour habits among college students may lead to an increase in students' psychological problems and a higher prevalence of mental disorders. The current study helps students plan their university life process from an educational psychology perspective, guiding students' behaviour habits at a psychological level. The final experimental results show that students' mental health levels have indeed improved. By employing educational psychological ideological and political education strategies, targeted psychological training can be conducted at different stages of life growth, helping students avoid potential psychological problems and achieve better psychological education outcomes.

Conclusion

Because of the immaturity of their own mental development, college students are easily affected by external information and ideas, and then form a bad psychological state. In order to solve this problem, based on educational psychology, the research divides the growth stages of students according to grades, and according to the four stages of study and life, the sex education experiment of combining mental health and ideological and political education is divided into four parts, and the courses for four groups of students are set up for the experiment. The results show that the teachers' psychological communication ability, psychological understanding ability and psychological guidance ability have a significant impact on the students in the psychological ideological and political education curriculum, which indicates that in the psychological ideological and political education method, the teachers' communication, understanding and guidance ability at the psychological level is very necessary for the students' psychological growth and can play a significant positive role. At the same time, the scores of students' psychological problems with values and personality psychological problems as the main dimensions decreased from 38.8 points to 17.1 points, with the largest drop. It can be seen that the educational psychological ideological and political education method has the greatest positive impact on students' values and personality psychological problems. According to the research results, the psychological communication, understanding and guidance abilities of teachers in psychological and ideological education courses have a significant impact on students, indicating that in psychological and ideological education methods, the communication, understanding and guidance abilities of teachers at the psychological level are necessary for students' psychological growth and can play a significant positive role. The research and design methods can not only improve students' ideological and political theory level but also promote their psychological health level, help them form a complete personality and improve their comprehensive quality. However, there are also some shortcomings in this study, mainly because of funding and external constraints, resulting in sample size not being able to provide more universal empirical results. This is also the direction that future research needs to strive for.

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Data availability

All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this published article.

Disclaimer

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