

Exploration on the Factors Causing Adolescents' Individual Psychological Crisis

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Abstract: The intervention of psychological crises in adolescents is a significant focal point in the field of psychology today. Adolescence, being one of the most critical stages in life, presents numerous challenges and pressures for individuals. While striving for independence and autonomy, adolescents often face various psychological crises. This paper comprehensively examines the specific manifestations and underlying causes of mental health issues in adolescents. Furthermore, it proposes targeted solutions for the prevention and intervention of mental health problems, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the overall mental well-being of adolescents.

1. Introduction

Adolescent psychological crisis refers to the state of psychological imbalance that arises when adolescents confront significant blows or sudden changes, surpassing their capacity to cope using their existing psychological resources and coping strategies. This imbalance is characterized by negativity and, at times, a lack of control. If not effectively addressed in a timely manner, it can potentially result in cognitive, emotional, and behavioural disorders, particularly in severe cases. The adolescent period is a critical phase in life, marked by both challenges and opportunities. Throughout this stage, individuals encounter a range of psychological crises that can profoundly influence their physical and mental well-being, as well as their future development. According to data from the 2022 Blue Book on National Depression, approximately 65.27% of depression patients in China are aged 24 or below, with roughly 72.6% of them being diagnosed before the age of 25. ^[1]

The Report on National Mental Health Development in China (2019-2020) highlights concerning statistics regarding depression among Chinese adolescents. The report reveals a detection rate of 24.6% for depression, comprising 17.2% for mild depression and 7.4% for severe depression. Additionally, despite a decline in the overall suicide rate in China, there has been a quiet rise in the suicide rate among Chinese adolescents. Notably, the suicide rate among 10-14-year-olds has seen a significant increase, with rural suicide rates surpassing five times the 2010 figures and urban suicide rates nearly tripling during the same period. Given these alarming trends, it is of utmost importance for parents, schools, and society as a whole to prioritize and support adolescents, offering the necessary help and assistance to navigate this critical stage of life.

2. Major Psychological Crises Faced by Adolescents

2.1 Emotional Fluctuations

Emotional fluctuations are a prevalent occurrence during adolescence, where adolescents may experience a range of emotions such as sadness, anxiety, anger, or distress even in response to minor life events. These fluctuations can be attributed to hormonal changes and the ongoing development of the brain, as well as the various pressures adolescents encounter from school, family, and social environments. Consequently, these emotional fluctuations can contribute to behavioural challenges, including rebellion, avoidance, and self-isolation. Figure 1 illustrates the significant role that emotional fluctuations play as a primary catalyst for psychological issues in adolescents. ^[2]

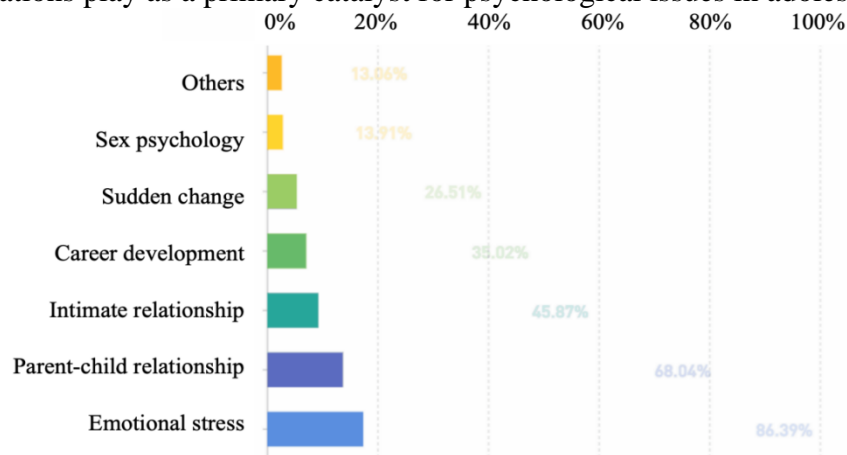


Figure 1: Causes of depression

2.2 Identity Confusion

Adolescence is a pivotal phase in the development of one's self-identity. However, it is also a period characterized by potential confusion and uncertainty regarding this very self-identity. Adolescents often find themselves questioning their values, life aspirations, and career paths, seeking to understand their self-identity and future direction. Such introspection and uncertainty can give rise to feelings of diminished self-esteem and a sense of inadequacy among adolescents.

2.3 Interpersonal Relationship Pressure

Adolescence is a crucial period for the formation of social connections. However, it is also a stage where individuals frequently encounter peer pressure, conflicts, and challenges such as competition, fractured friendships, and bullying. Additionally, adolescents may experience stress and feelings of isolation due to communication barriers with adults, such as parents and teachers. Loneliness, a significant indicator of mental health, represents negative emotional experiences resulting from unsatisfactory personal social relationships. In fact, approximately 40% of adolescents report occasional or frequent feelings of companionship deficiency, being ignored, or isolated from others. These pressures can contribute to social anxiety, profound loneliness, and a sense of alienation among adolescents (as depicted in Figure 2).^[3]

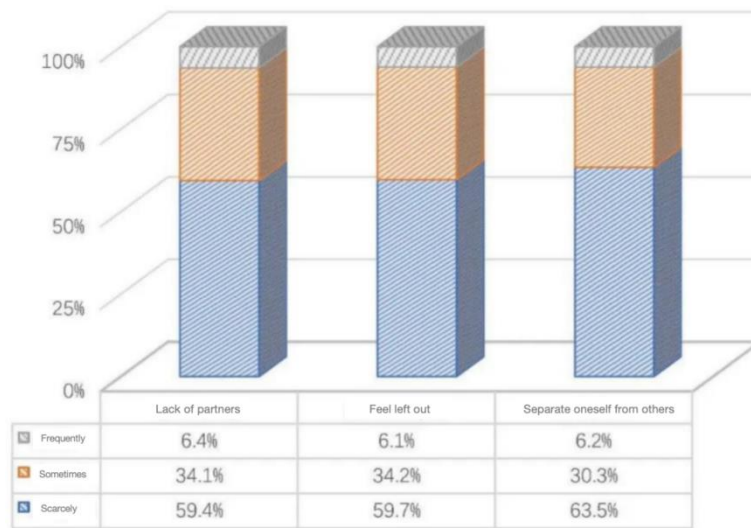


Figure 2: Proportion of loneliness among adolescents

2.4 Academic Pressure

The period of adolescence is marked by a significant rise in academic pressure. During this stage, individuals are confronted with mounting academic expectations and the stress of examinations. The excessive academic pressure exerted on adolescents can result in various challenges, including anxiety, depression, and psychological exhaustion. Moreover, the strain of potential exam failures and the pressure surrounding college admissions can deeply impact the mental well-being of adolescents.

2.5 Family Tension

The family environment plays a crucial role in the development of adolescents. However, during the period of adolescence, family relationships can often become strained and conflict-ridden. Challenges such as parental divorce, domestic violence, and serious family illnesses can significantly impact the mental well-being of adolescents. Furthermore, excessive parental expectations placed upon their children can lead to strained relationships within the family unit. These factors can contribute to the emergence of low self-esteem, avoidance behaviours, and rebellious tendencies among adolescents.

2.6 Self-harm Tendency

In certain instances, adolescents may display a propensity for self-harm. This inclination can stem from emotional depression, overwhelming stress, or a sense of identity confusion. Examples of self-harming behaviours include cutting, self-injury, or, in severe cases, even suicide. These behaviours often serve as outlets for emotional release or as a means of expressing inner anguish. It is of utmost importance to promptly address and treat this tendency to prevent potential tragedies from occurring.

3. Factors Contributing to Individual Psychological Crises in Adolescents

The psychological crisis experienced by adolescents refers to a range of psychological issues that can significantly influence their physical and mental well-being, as well as their future development. Understanding the factors that contribute to this crisis is crucial. The following are key factors that

contribute to the individual psychological crisis in adolescents:

3.1 Family Factors

The family environment plays a pivotal role in contributing to the individual psychological crisis in adolescents. It encompasses the dynamics between family members, the overall atmosphere within the household, and the parenting styles employed. A negative family environment can give rise to emotional challenges, behavioural issues, and academic difficulties in adolescents. Examples of such negative factors include parental divorce, domestic violence, and significant family illnesses, all of which can profoundly impact the psychological well-being of adolescents. It is imperative to prioritize psychological health education and management for adolescents, aiming to enhance their overall psychological well-being. Additionally, comprehensive management of the social environment is crucial to minimize the detrimental effects on the psychological well-being of adolescents.^[4]

3.2 Personal Factors

Academic pressure stands as a significant stressor for adolescents, as they strive to excel in the face of intense social competition. While the pursuit of academic success is important, excessive pressure can result in anxiety, depression, and psychological exhaustion among adolescents. Furthermore, the fear of academic failure and the pressure to secure a place in higher education can further undermine their psychological well-being. While they seek to establish their own social circles during this period, they also grapple with competition and conflicts among peers. These social challenges can lead to feelings of loneliness, diminished self-esteem, and social anxiety, all of which profoundly impact their psychological well-being. Self-identity development holds significant importance in the psychological growth of adolescents. As they navigate through this stage, individuals encounter various contradictions and conflicts in forming their own values, life perspectives, and worldviews. Such internal struggles can manifest as anxiety, depression, and psychological fatigue. Uncertainties regarding life goals, career planning, and self-identity further contribute to the negative impact on their psychological well-being.

3.3 Social Factors

External events play a crucial role as factors contributing to the individual psychological crisis in adolescents. These events encompass a range of significant occurrences, such as political events, economic crises, and natural disasters. Their impact can trigger feelings of panic, unease, and anxiety among adolescents. Furthermore, the presence of inappropriate social moral values can also exert a negative influence on their psychological well-being. Behaviours like dishonesty and a disrespect for law hold the potential to significantly impact adolescents in adverse ways.^[5]

4. Advisory for Coping with the Individual Psychological Crisis in Adolescents

4.1 Establish Proactive Psychological Defence Mechanisms

To effectively cope with psychological crises, adolescents can benefit from employing positive psychological adjustment mechanisms. These mechanisms enable them to maintain a calm and optimistic attitude when confronted with setbacks and stress. For instance, when faced with difficulties, adolescents can try to view the problem from various perspectives or actively seek positive solutions. Building self-confidence and nurturing a sense of self-efficacy is also vital for

adolescents to better handle psychological crises. Common issues faced by adolescents in such situations include isolation and excessive self-criticism. To address these challenges, it is important for adolescents to avoid isolating themselves and engaging in self-destructive self-criticism. Instead, they should actively communicate with others, sharing their feelings and confusion, which can alleviate the sense of isolation and provide them with valuable support and assistance. Furthermore, by refraining from excessive self-criticism, adolescents can cultivate confidence and foster a positive attitude.

4.2 Enhance Self-awareness and Self-understanding

Self-awareness and self-understanding play a crucial role in aiding adolescents to comprehend their inner world. Through introspection and reflection on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, adolescents can gain a deeper understanding of their emotions and needs, facilitating better coping with psychological crises. Additionally, cultivating self-awareness contributes to the development of self-worth and self-esteem. Equally important is the mastery of emotional regulation skills, which empowers adolescents to effectively manage their emotions. By acquiring techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, and relaxation, adolescents can exert control over their emotions, thereby avoiding emotional outbursts and impulsive behaviours. Furthermore, emotional regulation skills contribute to establishing a positive emotional state, enhancing their resilience in coping with psychological crises.

4.3 Seek Professional Psychological Counselling

In times of severe psychological crises, it is vital for adolescents to seek professional psychological counselling assistance. Professional counsellors offer personalized support and guidance, aiding adolescents in addressing psychological issues and restoring their mental well-being. Moreover, counsellors can provide valuable resources and referrals to help adolescents effectively cope with their psychological crises. Acquiring stress management skills is also crucial for adolescents to navigate stress and life challenges more effectively. By learning techniques such as time management, effective communication, and problem-solving, adolescents can develop the necessary tools to handle stressors with greater resilience. Additionally, cultivating a positive mindset and attitude can significantly contribute to their ability to cope with psychological crises.

4.4 Establish a Healthy Lifestyle

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is paramount for adolescents to uphold both their physical and mental well-being. Adequate sleep, a balanced diet, and regular exercise can have a positive impact on their overall health. Furthermore, developing healthy sleep habits and sticking to a consistent daily routine can assist adolescents in better coping with psychological crises. A positive mindset and attitude are powerful assets for adolescents when facing challenges and difficulties in life. By adopting an optimistic outlook, seeking positive solutions, and emphasizing personal growth and development, adolescents can cultivate a resilient mindset and attitude to navigate psychological crises. Moreover, a positive mindset and attitude contribute to building confidence and a sense of self-efficacy in adolescents.

4.5 Cultivate a Positive Support System

Effectively addressing the individual psychological crisis in adolescents requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach that encompasses a wide range of support and guidance. By providing

suggestions such as establishing proactive psychological defence mechanisms, enhancing self-awareness and self-understanding, mastering emotional regulation skills, building a support system, seeking professional counselling, avoiding isolation and excessive self-criticism, establishing a healthy lifestyle, learning stress management skills, and cultivating a positive mindset and attitude, we can help adolescents better cope with psychological crises and improve their mental health. Establishing a robust support system is instrumental in facilitating adolescents' access to the support and assistance they need when navigating psychological crises. Family members, friends, and teachers can all play crucial roles within this support system. By actively communicating with others and openly sharing their feelings and confusion, adolescents can foster an environment of understanding and compassion, thereby receiving the support and assistance necessary to cope more effectively with psychological crises.

5. Conclusion

Through the above analysis, it becomes evident that numerous factors contribute to individual psychological crises in adolescents. These factors encompass the family environment, academic pressure, social distress, physiological changes, psychological growth, and societal events. Consequently, it is imperative to enhance the education and management of adolescent mental health to bolster their psychological well-being. Moreover, we must actively address and manage the social environment to mitigate negative impacts on the mental health of adolescents. By creating supportive and nurturing social contexts, we can promote positive mental health outcomes and provide adolescents with the necessary tools and resources to navigate psychological challenges successfully. This calls for collaborative efforts from families, educational institutions, healthcare providers, and society as a whole to prioritize and prioritize the mental well-being of adolescents.

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