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A national survey on the professional backgrounds of the practitioners of psycho-counseling and psychotherapy in China

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Statement of the Problem: The psycho-counseling and psychotherapy have been developed in China since two decades, and the practitioners are growing. However, these practitioners' professional backgrounds have not been well studied previously. This paper is set to explore their professional backgrounds nationwide in China.

Methods: It was a cross-sectional nationwide survey. Multi-stage sampling by regions and cities combined with cross-control quota sampling by disciplines was used, and then face-to-face interview was conducted. According to the administrative divisions by Chinese government, the whole China was divided into 6 regions. In each region, the sampling cities were divided into 3 city-level. And the sampling disciplines included three, which were health-care system, educational system and other department practitioners. A quota sample of 200 practitioners was selected from each region. Each discipline covered one third of sampling both in each region and each city-level.

Findings: A total of 1232 practitioners were interviewed face-to-face. 70.4% was female and 29.6% was male. The mean age was 37.0±8.4 years (range from 21 to 80 years). As to educational level, 68.8% of all the practitioners were with undergraduate degree, 31.0% with graduate or postgraduate degree, only 0.2% with high school level. As to professional background, 49.6% of the practitioners were with psychology, 36.0% with medicine, 17.5% with pedagogics, and 25% with other background such as law, finance, engineering, management, Chinese literature, nursing, IT, chemical, trading, tourism science, agriculture, sociology and nutriology, et al. Among non-psychologists, 61.7% of the practitioners learned psychological knowledge from the training class, 22.2% learned from the conference, 39.6% from refresher course, 27.7% from the supervisor, 19.6% from web-based training, and 51.4% learned by themselves.

Conclusion & Significance: Although the educational level of the practitioners of psycho-counseling and psychotherapy in China is not low, less than half of them were with background of psychology, and more than half of them learned by themselves. It suggested that the practitioners of psycho-counseling and psychotherapy in China need more normalized guideline and training.

Biography

Yuping Cao, got the Ph.D degree in Psychiatry and mental Health in 2006. Since joining the Central South University, she has been involved with studies related to psychotherapy, and got several national grants about psychotherapy. She was edit-in-chief of two books on psychotherapy and psychological intervention, and modulated and normalized the ten kinds of psychotherapy methods in China firstly, which was founded by Ministry of Science and Technology of China.

Yalin Zhang got the Ph.D degree in Psychiatry and mental Health in 1998. Since joining the Central South University, he has been involved with studies on psychotherapy, and got several national grants about psychotherapy. He worked as a deputy dean of department of psychiatry in 1995-2011. He was edit-in-chief of ten books on psychotherapy and psychological intervention, and modulated and normalized the ten kinds of psychotherapy methods in China firstly.

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