Analysis and Countermeasures of University Freshmen’s Adaptability in China

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Abstract
Entering the university is an important turning point in life. In this transformation process freshmen will encounter a lot of difficulties and problems in adaptation of learning, independent living, interpersonal skill, and mental state, etc. In this regard, freshmen must actively adjust themselves, shorten the adaptation time from high school to university; and higher education should be based on the characteristics of freshmen’s psychological development, adhere to the combination of principles and priorities, enhance learning guidance and science education to help freshmen adapt to university life as soon as possible.

Key words: Freshmen; Adaptation; Problems; Countermeasures

INTRODUCTION
With enrollment expansion in China’s universities, the increasing amount of undergraduate communities make the problem of the adaptability of university freshmen attendant more prominent. For those who just starting university, there are significant differences between the life and learning in here with the ones in high school. Left their parents, they got into a completely strange environment. It is inevitable for them to not easily get used to the new environment. Add the fact that some students are spoiled when growing up, they usually lack communication skills, are not comfortable to communicate with others, and even have different level of communication disorders. Over time, the difficulty of university environment adaptation has become nasty problems for many freshmen. For freshmen, from military training, to new textbooks type, from the using student card to the process of using library, from enroll into health insurance to handle the first vaccination on the campus clinic, all are completely new challenge. From the relatively familiar environment into the unfamiliar environment, freshmen will definitely make the appropriate changes in all aspects.

University stage is the stage in which a person’s physical and psychological develops rapidly. Freshman year is a special stage of convergence high schools and universities. From high school to university, because of living environment, learning content, ideals and goals, habit and interest, relationships and other aspects undergoing great changes, their mindset has become complicated, causing variety of contradictions and problems. In this regard, freshmen must actively adjust themselves, shorten the adaptation time from high school to university as soon as possible, and university educators should base on the psychological development of the characteristics of freshmen, take positive and effective measures to improve the mental ability to adapt to new life for the whole university level education to lay a good foundation.

In this paper, students’ problems and educational countermeasures in the adaptation phase are discussed.

1. MAIN ISSUES OF FRESHMEN IN THE ADAPTATION PHASE
According to the survey, the presence of mental health problems takes a very high proportion in freshmen. Many of them, though qualified in the university admission
scores, but psychological, ideological and moral qualities and ability to adapt to the new environment failed to reach the pass line. It should be said that it is normal for freshmen to not be able to adapt to new environment or even “lost” in the beginning of entering universities. However, if blindly “lost” continues, it will hinder their successful completion of their studies and healthy growth. Therefore, the university educators should pay high attention to the psychological problems of the freshmen adaptation, educate and guide them out of “lost” as quickly as possible, to make a good first step to independent life. The following talk about the reasons of “lost” from both life and learning aspects.

1.1 Difficult to Adjust to Life in a New Environment
Freshmen relationship with the university environment is a dialectical unity, on the one hand, all freshmen enter the university with a “university imagination”, but there is always a gap between the ideal and the reality. On the other hand, new environment of university required certain qualities of freshmen (Lin, 2011). Compared to high school, university is a new environment: new school, a new community, new friends, new dorm, new learning life, new ways of learning, and also to accept new ways of thinking etc. Freshmen face these major changes in a short time, which may lead to the negative psychological adaptation, and often confused in perplexity.

1.1.1 The First Change New Students Face is the Change of Living Environment
Before entering the university, many students have never been away from home, therefore their daily life is always arranged by their parents, through which formed a strong psychological dependence. After entering the university, without the caring of their family, due to lack of ability to live independently, some students can not take care themselves; some students spend unplanned, which causes “economic crisis”. When facing these problems, freshmen often don’t have solutions and become frustrated, resulting in irritability, pain, tension, anxiety and symptoms of neurasthenia like anxiety, fatigue, insomnia, difficulty concentrating, etc. This contrast and contradiction between dependence and independence makes them miss the previous lifestyle and nostalgia, and find it difficult to adapt to a new life.

1.1.2 Difficult to Adapt to New Interpersonal Relationship
Entering an unfamiliar environment, individual must establish a harmonious relationship with the environment to meet their physical needs (basic necessities), security needs (psychological safety), and esteem needs. In recent years university dormitories contradiction is very prominent, many people believe that this is due to one child policy. In fact, one big difference universities have compared to high schools is that the students ‘heterogeneity’ degree is higher. In high school, despite the difference of family background of students, they mostly living in the same area; however university students are from all over the country. Regional differences bring cultural differences, even differences in values, such as treatment of personal space, personal items, students from different places attitude often different. Therefore, the dorm contradiction is not only a problem of individual moral quality, but also cultural and personality conflicts. Learn to deal with the university classmates with different backgrounds, learn to deal with the contradictions and conflicts between the students undoubtedly are beneficial in the future into the community.

Freshmen generally have their own stable social circle in high school. When they just arrive at university, as strangers to each other, adding that university students’ psychological characteristics as in puberty, they often have a stronger sense of self-protection, and communicate more cautiously. Many students are inexperienced in social level, therefore they either has limited social circle or not able to be honest with people, frankly exchange ideas. Unwilling to take the initiative to close others, thoughts and feelings lack of timely communication and expression, interpersonal disharmony appears on many freshmen, make them feel “hard to find bosom friend”, resulting in a depression, loneliness and boredom psychological depression.

1.1.3 Self, Others and Society Evaluation is Not Comprehensive Enough
Some students can not objectively evaluate themselves and liable to extremes, lead to a sense of self-conceited sadness intertwined. In general, the ones can squeeze through single-plank bridge entrance examination, admitted to university are all perform extraordinary in high school. The teacher’s favor, the students envy, making them the center of their peers, potentially generate some kind of excessive self-evaluation. Many among them will suddenly lose confidence, I feel worthless after admitting to university. This “lost” firstly because the competition opponent changed, the peers are all in similar level so that one can no longer maintain a dominant position as in high school; in addition to that, at the university, contents of competition are not limited to academic, but also general knowledge, art and sporty expertise, social skills, management skills, etc. In this case, a person can easily see their weaknesses. And some people will feel inferiority after seeing their own weaknesses with prolonged depression, and even close themselves in order to avoid frustration. Some students will triumphant after achievements, and when they encounter failure, they feel worse than anyone else, emotionally unstable. They only can see someone else’s shortcomings and weaknesses when evaluating others. When it comes to the evaluation of the community, the majority of students can make an objective evaluation, they can actively adapt to society, while recognizing the bright side of society, feel the social, community warm and won’t consequent negative whole community for an isolated phenomenon. But few students often due to hear, see or experienced some dark
side of society, think extremely about society’s darkness, and even treat some of the good society phenomenon as hypocritical, generates cynicism in their mind. This kind of unreasonable self-evaluation, unilateral evaluation about others and society, make university students tend to lose growing motivation, and the confidence in the future. These also adversely affect their outlook on life, world outlook formation.

1.2 Unable to Adapt to Learning in University

1.2.1 Mental Confusion When Losing Goal
High school learning goal is clear, as to get a high score in the entrance examinations. After fierce competition in the university entrance examination, many students feel exhausted, want to enjoy success and relax in university, to compensate for the over-a-decade hard working. However in the university, the heavy work load, which makes them feel lost. During the decade of studying, the sole purpose of study for many students is to be admitted to a university. Adding the double pressure from parents and teachers, the learning is often passive. After entering the university, this goal has been achieved, many students lost their goal and thrust outside. The emergence of psychological influence of passive learning causes their mental wandering and confused.

1.2.2 Not Suited to Learning Methodology
In high school, the class teacher is highly targeted to the content of those are likely to occur in the entrance examination. Student in the classroom is not the real subject, but passive “receiver”. However, students are accustomed to this kind of “spoon-fed” teaching methods. The content and methods of teaching in universities are different from high schools. Especially after the Ministry of Education adjust the teaching time for each subject, while significantly reducing the number of classes, students self-learning time is greatly increased. Compared with high school, university study has more autonomy, flexibility and exploratory. The students often don’t know what to do in universities. Some students feel all of a sudden release from the strict discipline in high school, but do not know how to arrange the study, therefore feel depressed and anxiety. This new life is really difficult to adapt for freshmen, and this fact is often heard since university life has so much free time after little homework. Obviously university freshmen feel uncomfortable about learning in university, their learning objectives are not clear. According to the survey, a freshman’s failure rate was significantly higher than higher grade, and even some students who get high scores in the entrance failed in final exams in the first semester of university.

2. RESPONSE MEASURES OF FRESHMEN IN THE ADAPTATION PHASE

According to the problems of freshmen’s learning and life in adaptation stage, university educators should take positive and effective measures to improve the freshmen’s ability to adapt, from the following aspects of freshmen education.

2.1 Educate Student to Rebuild Their Life Objective

2.1.1 Encourage Students in the Managerial Level
Encourage students in the managerial level to establish a correct outlook on life and values, learn to use objective thinking to analyze and solve problems, objective analysis of the social and the surrounding environment. Encourage them to see their own advantages as well as face their own shortcomings. As the saying goes, “correct self evaluation is precious” shows that people understand their own is not easy to correct, which means people’s self-understanding often prone to bias. Students must first understand their own, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, put themselves in a position to correctly handle the relationship between the individual and others, the community and society. University educators should guide students to make use of leisure time, to carry out the second classroom activities, to develop a wide range of interests. When students in a variety of leisure and cultural life, that can increase interpersonal communication, enhance the affinity and mutual relations between the students, promote community spirit of mutual love. If these feelings between the students in a timely manner to stimulate and be given guidance, combined with the community honor, that will form a strong cohesion, a good class group will be formed too. Freshmen living in such an environment will be full of fun, loneliness will also naturally fade even disappear.

2.1.2 Guide Students to Establish Their Own Goals in Life
After entering the university, their thinking is more mature, mind more open. Over a period of time to explore, they can re-establish their goals in life. Here the word “goal” and not just a “big” ideal, but a set of target system. After you thinking and answering, “what kind of person I want to be?”, “What in life is the most important thing for me?” and similar fundamental issues, you should also set specific goals to realize your value of life according to the situation, and broke it down into small goals that can be achieved step by step. A goal-oriented person can manage their own lives more effectively.

2.1.3 Learn to Social with People
Some researchers have pointed out that some freshmen have difficulties to integrate into the group. Then have intense relationship with people, often have many friends without deep relationship. They are confused by social with the opposite sex, so tend to be keen with network contacts (Lin, 2006). They have to widen the field of interpersonal communication, complete communication pattern change, and learn how to correctly deal with students, teachers and villagers, lovers, elder students, and gradually mastered interpersonal skills (Chen, 2006). Students in the social should adhere to be honest, tolerant.
of others, the principles of equal treatment, and master communication skills. Psychological research shows that people want to get the praise of others while fear for the accusations. Therefore, communicating should not always criticize, blame others, but should sincerely commend and appreciate others. This respect for others, will meet each other virtually self-esteem needs to win each other’s good will, deepen each other’s feelings. Students should manage the degree of communication, the saying goes “He that knows nothing, doubts nothing. “Degree” on interpersonal refers to maintaining good interpersonal relationships need to grasp the direction, depth, breadth and the like.

2.2 Help Freshmen to Learn How to Master the Correct Method

2.2.1 Learn to Do Research, to Find and Solve Problems
Higher educators should conduct freshmen learning adaptation education, make university’s requirements clear to freshmen, identify learning objectives for them, enable them to accurately grasp university education model, learning methods, turn passive learning to active learning, from reception learning to ponder learning, from single, centralized learning to complex learning (Chen, 2010). Modern education methods require teachers not only impart knowledge, more important, to guide students so that they learn how to learn, to master their own learning, self-learning ability with the analogy. University is different from high school. On the learning objectives, from “ascend to the high school level and struggle” to “how to make oneself a good senior personnel”. On the learning requirements, university no longer confined to the “high scores”, the consideration lean to master more specialized knowledge and ability to develop advanced comprehensive quality. On learning autonomy, the high school students rely mainly on teachers in learning activities, learning autonomy is generally low, university students mainly rely on their own arrangements for learning activities, having space for self-learning. The university student, on the other hand, rely mainly on study activities themselves as self-learning range widen. On what they learn, high school contents are narrow and shallow while university contents are wide and deep. On the learning method, high school students have less time learning by themselves than university students. On the point of view of thinking, high school students mostly perform as imitate memory and knowledge of general understanding while university students have more creative learning and more in-depth understanding of them. Freshmen should learn to adapt teaching methods and university as soon as possible.

2.2.2 Learn to Combine Professionalization and Comprehensiveness
University education has the most obvious professional features. Students should consider their major once they choose universities to apply. Their major has settled when being admitted to university, therefore all the learning objectives are surrounding the major requirement. University study is actually a high-level professional learning. This professionalization will deepen and widen with the changes of requirements of the profession from social change and development. In order to meet both highly differentiated modern science and technology development, and highly integrated feature of this professionalization is usually only a general direction. The more specific, more detailed professional goals are finally set during the four years of university, or even after entering the industry. Therefore, during the professional education in university, we must also take into account the characteristics of technological development and the knowledge requirement of social adaptation to try to maximize the comprehensiveness, in order to enhance the adaptability of industrial work after graduation. In general, professional counterparts is relative, it is impossible to achieve complete professional counterparts, so that in addition to university to learn professional knowledge, students should also expand their knowledge according to their abilities, interests and hobbies by elective or other self-study courses, to lay a good foundation for better adapt to a job after graduation.

CONCLUSION

Overall, because of the changes of learning and social roles, freshmen living environment must go through an adaptation process. Whether freshmen can get through the adaptation period smoothly is essential for their growth and success. If some issues mishandled or there are cognitive errors, it will lead them to mental disorder or mental illness. The problem of freshmen’s adaptation stage should arouse the attention of university student’s management workers. They should take the characteristics of the freshmen into account, take effective educational methods to help them successfully get through confusing times, and then create a good learning and life surroundings.

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