

# *A Survey on the Knowledge of Depression among College Students in Shaanxi*

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**Abstract:** Objectives Understand the knowledge of Shaanxi college students about depression, provide the basis and suggestions for strengthening college students' mental health, and reduce the harm caused by depression. Methods A total of 1340 college students from some colleges and universities in Shaanxi were randomly selected, and self-compiled depression-related knowledge questionnaires were used to conduct the surveys, and SPSS23.0 software was used to statistically analyze the data. Results 4.1% of college students knew nothing about depression; 76.9% of college students believe that people with depression are dangerous; 84.5% of college students believe that depression can occur in people of almost all ages; 32.6% of college students believe that depression is hereditary; there are significant differences in college students' overall knowledge of depression by gender, place of residence, grade, and professional category. Conclusion College students' knowledge of depression is not good, and college students' understanding and awareness of depression should be strengthened.

## **1. Introduction**

According to the WHO survey, depression has become the second largest disease in the world, and the number of patients suffering from depression in the world has exceeded 4.4% of the world's total population, which is considered 4 people in 100 people, about 322 million people[1], the reported prevalence of depression is approximately 1.6 to 4.1 percent domestically [2]. Depression is an affective disorder and the clinical manifestations mainly include: Depressed mood, slow thinking, impaired cognitive function, decreased volitional activity, and suicidal ideation and cognitive impairment may occur in severe cases[3]. American psychologist Arnold A explained that depression is a disease characterized by low mood, decreased happiness, sadness or pain, and an individual's state of mind in a bad state [4]. With the gradual increase of social pressure, college students are under pressure and problems from academic, economic, emotional, and other aspects. The incidence of depression is extremely high among young people, seriously affecting their physical and mental health, family life, and social communication. However, many young college students have little knowledge of depression. College students in a critical period of growth are the pillars of the country, stepping into the long-awaited university life, facing problems from academic

education, daily life, future employment, interpersonal relationships, and other aspects, showing emotional depression and depression. Society is constantly developing, college students must not only have excellent professional theoretical knowledge, but also have strong mental health quality, therefore, it is imperative to pay attention to the mental health of college students. This paper summarizes the knowledge of depression related to college students in different professional categories, and uses statistical knowledge to summarize, to further put forward relevant suggestions from social, school, family and personal aspects, improve the ability of college students to identify depression, reduce the prevalence of depression in college students, and achieve early detection, treatment and early intervention.

## **2. Research Objects and Methods**

### **2.1. Research Object**

The research subjects selected by the institute were college students in some universities in Shaanxi, and 1340 college students of different majors were randomly selected by using self-compiled questionnaires related to depression, including 1333 valid questionnaires and 7 invalid questionnaires, with an effective rate of 99.478%.

### **2.2. Research Tools**

#### **2.2.1. General Demographic Information Questionnaire**

A self-compiled demographic questionnaire was used, the main contents of which included: gender, family, residence, grade, and type of major.

#### **2.2.2. Questionnaire on the Knowledge of Depression**

The questionnaire on knowledge and understanding of depression was compiled by the researchers based on the "Mental Health and Mental Health Knowledge Questionnaire" and after reading a large number of literature [5-10]. There are 21 questions, the first 5 of which are to understand college students' prevention and treatment of depression and their basic cognition. The last 16 questions are "yes, no" multiple-choice questions, which understand the overall understanding of college students' knowledge of depression, mainly including four parts: conceptual knowledge of depression, clinical manifestations, causative factors, and treatment and intervention methods. College students' overall knowledge of depression knowledge questionnaire adopts "0, 1" score, the total score range is 0-16 points, of which 7 questions are scored in the forward direction and 9 questions are scored in reverse, the higher the score, the better the knowledge of depression-related knowledge among college students, and the Cronbach's coefficient alpha of the self-compiled questionnaire is 0.631.

### **2.3. Statistical Analysis**

SPSS23.0 software package is used to process and analyze data. The adoption rate and percentage represent the counting data, the chi-square test is used, the analysis of variance is used to process the measurement data, and the  $P < 0.05$  indicates that the difference is significant.

### 3. Result

#### 3.1. General Information on Demography

A total of 1340 data were collected, including 1333 valid questionnaires and 7 invalid questionnaires, with an effective rate of 99.478%. Table 1 shows the basic situation: Among them, 491 (36.8%) were males and 842 (63.2%) were females. 381 (28.6%) of the students lived in rural areas and 952 (71.4%) of urban students. There were 104 (7.8%) freshmen, 308 (23.1%) sophomores, 472 (35.4%) juniors, 315 (23.6%) senior students, 32 (2.4%) fifth year of college, and 102 graduate students (7.7%). There were 586 (44.0%) majors in science and engineering, 481 (36.1%) majors in literature and history, 165 (12.4%) in the medicine profession, and 101 (7.2.46%) in art majors.

Table 1: Demographic data for university students

Project		n	Absolutely (%)
gender	man	491	36.8
	woman	842	63.2
Place of residence	town	381	28.6
	countryside	952	71.4
grade	Freshman	104	7.8
	Sophomore	308	23.1
	Junior	472	35.4
	Senior	315	23.6
	Fifth year of college	32	2.4
	graduate student	102	7.7
Majors studied	Science and engineering	586	44.0
	Literature and history	481	36.1
	Medical profession	165	12.4
	Art major	101	7.6

#### 3.2. What College Students Know about Depression

##### 3.2.1. The Basic Cognition of College Students on the Prevention and Treatment of Depression

The basic situation of college students' answers to depression knowledge is shown in Table 2, Of the 1333 respondents, 22.7% believed that they had a history of depression, and 43.5% were reluctant to associate with depressed patients; 4.1% of the respondents knew nothing about depression, and 10.4% of the respondents understood the pathology and causes of depression; 38.7% of respondents believed that the preferred treatment for patients with depression was combination therapy, and 52.3% of respondents believed that the preferred treatment for depression was psychotherapy; 76.9% of respondents believe that people with depression are at risk.

Table 2: Basic cognition of college students on the prevention and treatment of depression

Project	Constituencies	n	Absolutely (%)
Whether you think you have a history of depression	yes	303	22.7
	no	1030	77.3
Whether you are willing to associate with a depressed person	yes	753	56.5
	no	580	43.5
How well you know about depression	nothing	54	4.1
	Just knowing is a disease	436	32.7
	A rough idea of the symptoms of depression	704	52.8
	Understand its pathology and causes	139	10.4
The preferred treatment for depression	drug therapy	120	9.0
	psychotherapy	697	52.3
	Combination therapy	516	38.7
People with depression are at risk	yes	1025	76.9
	no	308	23.1

### 3.2.2. College Students are Generally Aware of Depression

Table 3: Overall knowledge of depression among college students

Serial number	Question	Answer correctly	Absolutely (%)
1	Depression is a mental problem	607	45.5
2	Negative life events are the cause of depression	1094	82.1
3	The first symptom of depression is low mood	1090	81.8
4	Depression is hereditary	434	32.6
5	If depression or other psychiatric symptoms are suspected, you should see a specialist psychiatrist	1050	78.8
6	Depression is an incurable disease	1148	86.1
7	When depression is diagnosed, it is treated with medication for a period of time, and long-term uninterrupted medication is not required	860	64.5
8	Depression only causes psychological disorders	861	64.6
9	Adolescents with depression do not suffer from learning efficiency	1023	76.7
10	The likelihood of depression in adolescents is low	1077	80.8
11	People with depression do not experience emotion, irritation, or impulsivity to hurt others	945	70.9
12	Depression is a mental illness	1061	79.6
13	Do you know World Mental Health Day?	805	60.4
14	People with depression do not need to maintain an optimistic and cheerful attitude and healthy living habits	937	70.3
15	Depression and other psychological problems cannot be prevented	879	65.9
16	The likelihood of depression in people of almost all ages	1126	84.5

The overall knowledge of depression is known, and the results are shown in Table 3. The correct answer to "depression may occur in almost any age group" is the highest, with 84.5%; the answer to "depression is hereditary" had the lowest correct rate, at 32.6 percent.

### 3.3. Analysis of Variance between College Students' Overall Knowledge Scores on Depression and Demographic Data

The overall answers of college students on depression knowledge are shown in Table 3. The study assigned a score to each question, with 1 point for correct answers, 0 points for incorrect answers, and a score for college students' overall knowledge of depression. As can be seen from Table 4, the difference between the scores is statistically significant. The difference between the overall knowledge score and the demographic data was tested, and the results are shown in Table 5. It can be seen that there are significant differences in the overall knowledge score of college students on depression-related knowledge by gender, place of residence, grade, and major.

Table 4: Overall awareness score of college students on depression-related knowledge

Score	Accuracy rate (%)	n	Absolutely (%)	X2	P
3	18.7	2	0.2	746.047	0.000
4	25.0	13	1.0		
5	31.2	36	2.7		
6	37.5	85	6.4		
7	43.8	86	6.5		
8	50.0	93	7.0		
9	56.3	150	11.3		
10	62.5	140	10.5		
11	68.9	189	14.2		
12	75.0	199	14.9		
13	81.3	207	15.5		
14	87.5	112	8.4		
15	93.8	20	1.5		

Table 5: Analysis of the difference between the overall awareness score of college students' knowledge of depression and demographic data.

Project		$\bar{x} \pm s$	F	P
gender	man	9.93±2.672	2.891	0.000
	woman	10.69±2.545		
Place of residence	town	10.58±2.591	2.005	0.017
	countryside	9.98±2.636		
grade	Freshman	11.17±1.881	1.951	0.022
	Sophomore	10.76±2.476		
	Junior	10.12±2.771		
	Senior	10.06±2.618		
	Fifth year of college	9.34±2.295		
	graduate student	11.21±2.542		
Majors studied	Science and engineering	10.75±2.532	2.291	0.005
	Literature and history	10.23±2.641		
	Medical profession	10.66±2.787		
	Art major	10.47±2.398		

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Analysis of the Current Situation of Depression Prevention and Treatment among College Students

According to the results of the study, 22.7% of students believe that they may have a history of depression, and 77.3% believe that they do not have a history of depression; 43.5% of students were reluctant to communicate with depressed patients; 4.1% of students knew nothing about depression; For the choice of treatment options for depression, 38.7% of students chose combination therapy; 76.9% of students thought that depressed patients were dangerous and did not want to interact with depressed patients.

### 4.2. Analysis of the Current Situation of College Students' Overall Cognition of Depression-Related Knowledge

The statistical results show that 15.5% of college students can answer 81.3% correctly about depression; 1.5% of college students answered 93.8% correctly about depression; 0% of college students were able to answer questions about depression knowledge completely correctly. In summary, college students are not well aware of depression-related knowledge.

Female college students scored significantly higher overall than male college students, and the former was slightly better aware of depression than the latter, consistent with Yang Zihui's [11] study. Zuo Yuting [12] and others pointed out that the mental health level of female college students is significantly lower than that of men, which can be speculated that women are under greater pressure in society, and are more likely to have psychological problems. Therefore, they will further focus on their own emotional and emotional development by understanding the knowledge related to depression [13].

The scores of college students living in urban areas were significantly higher than those of college students living in rural areas. Wang Shouhua[14] studies have shown that there are differences in depression scores among college students in different places of origin, and urban college students know the situation better than rural college students.

Graduate students scored significantly higher overall on depression knowledge than the other grades, and the freshman year scored significantly higher overall than the other four grades. This is inconsistent with Ye Lei [15] et al. proposing that senior students' cognition of depression is higher than that of lower grades, so it is necessary to appropriately strengthen the understanding of depression among senior college students to help reduce their risk of depression.

College students in literature, history and art scored significantly lower overall on depression knowledge than science and engineering and medical college students. Li Xiang [16] et al. pointed out that there was no significant difference in the understanding of depression in different majors, and the results were inconsistent. It can be seen that further strengthening the understanding of depression among college students in literature, history, and art can effectively improve the detection rate of depression among college students.

### 4.3. Suggestions

In summary, it can be seen that the current knowledge of depression among college students is not good, and some college students think that they have a history of depression, but do not further understand the knowledge related to depression; there are misunderstandings in the prevention and treatment of depression, and one-sided understanding of the concept, clinical manifestations, causative factors and treatment methods of depression; There is a partial bias and distancing of

people with depression.

From the following perspective, we improve college students' awareness of depression-related knowledge and their ability to prevent and improve their own depressed mood. ①Social Perspective: increase publicity on depression and other mental illnesses, using the Internet, books, newspapers, grassroots publicity, and other equipment, publicize relevant knowledge to patients in general hospitals or psychiatric hospitals, and update the information on the website for reference; reduce the misunderstanding and prejudice of the public against patients with depression, and advocate that all members of society care for and care for patients with depression. ②School perspective: Strengthen the publicity of depression knowledge and other related mental diseases through entrance education, expand the scope of popularization of depression knowledge, and ensure that universities have a physiological understanding of depression. Schools should establish psychological counseling rooms and allocate qualified psychological counselors to conduct regular mental health assessments for students. Carry out mental health related courses to enable students to correctly understand and reasonably cope with depression and depression. ③Family perspective: Parental behavior and parenting style are one of the main reasons affecting children's emotions [17], and reasonable and appropriate family parenting methods can effectively help children regulate their own emotions. Parents can also help their children from the side by improving their own understanding and awareness of depression, and identify whether their children have inappropriate emotions. Parents should correct their attitude towards depression, correctly view their children's depression, and seek medical treatment in time. ④Personal Perspective: adjust your emotions in time and choose the right way to decompress. Use resources to help you identify and regulate your emotions, and actively seek the help and support of psychological teachers; correctly understand and reasonably view the occurrence of depression.

Colleges and universities should popularize the knowledge of depression and other mental diseases to students, strengthen students' understanding of depression, achieve early detection, early treatment, and early intervention of depression, give students more care and help, and reduce the harm caused by depression to society, families and individuals. At the same time, it is also necessary to help college students develop the ability to identify and adjust emotions and take measures to reduce the possibility of students suffering from depression.

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