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Depression Among College Students, Causes and Treatment

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Abstract

In this era of media convergence with rapid technological development, broadcasting practitioners are faced with the problem of how to use new technologies to enhance news dissemination and turn dilemmas into opportunities. This study uses media convergence theory and Chinese broadcasting theory to conduct a collective case study of positive examples of barrier-breaking, analyzing different presenters and their programs. It analyses the impact of changes in how audiences receive information, the relative lag in the speed of communication, the limitations of the form of communication, and the decline in the influence of communication on the communication of broadcasters and presenters. It puts forward positive suggestions in terms of guiding public opinion, strengthening one's influence, adapting to the form of communication, and transforming the language style. This will inform the career development of radio and television industry practitioners in the era of media convergence.

Keywords: media convergence era; broadcasters and presenters; dilemmas and opportunities; radio and television; digital technology

Introduction

The number of depressed college students has reached a high percentage and due to depressed mental states, suicide attempts and deaths are increasing. According to the

World Health Organisation ,“depression is a common mental disorder that presents with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, and poor concentration”. several reasons which induce depression in the students : academic pressure, lack of family support, inability to adapt to new situations easily and lack of coping skills to deal with stress. Researchers have found that the majority of college students experience depression mainly due to the stress and demands of college life. Therefore, the role of lecturers is very important in such situations. As a result of depression, students can ruin their academic performance by developing bad habits such as alcoholism and drugs dependence. However, studies have shown that depression can be treated and its effects can be prevented particularly if it is discovered early. This essay provides research that proves increasing depression among college students, discusses depression and serious problems that

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are related to it, and then evaluates possible solutions.

Increasing Cases of Depressed Students

Several studies have shown that depression has increased dramatically among university students in recent years. According to the studies conducted by the American College Health Association (ACHA, 2009), most of the students whose academic performance dropped in the last twelve months in 2009, suffered from stress, sleep difficulties, anxiety and depression. This study clearly showed that all the students who went through an academic degradation, 80 per cent were experiencing depression (ACHA, 2009 p 3). Eisenberg et al (2007a) point out that one out of every seven students may suffer from depression worldwide. The vast majority of students in the studies are aged between 18 to 25 years which implies that this disease has rooted strongly in young students. Studies also illustrate that 70% of the students felt unsafe in the school campus during night time while this number in the daytime is only 20 per cent (ACHA, 2009 p 6). Moreover, 92% of the college students in USA experienced more than average stress in their lives in 2009.

Reasons for Depression

Depression is a serious medical illness which is usually associated with other critical problems that affect the health of students physically and complicate their lives. Even though the depression's effects are often very similar in most cases, its causes are different from one case to another depending on an individual's circumstances. According to NIHM (2003), the major reason for depression among college students is increasing pressure either due to lack of time management skills or due to demands of academic studying or due to both of them together. A good illustration of this is that most students always worry about their academic performance and along with it they want to succeed in saving time for their families or their 3 friends or to do additional activities such as attending extra classes, exercising in the gym and joining different clubs. Nevertheless, when they cannot meet the busy life requirements, they very easily become victims of depression. The second most important cause of depression amongst college students is lack of family support (NIHM, 2003 p 2). Students want to achieve their success on their own, taking little help from their parents, as they believe they can solve problems themselves. As a result, they may become ill with depression, anxiety and stress. Eisenberg et al (2007) say that stress is usually related to three factors: workload, living abroad from family and money related issues. The inability of coping with a new environment is also considered a significant cause of depression amongst college students. Students who have been very studious during their life, are generally not able to cope with the new environment because studying is all they have done in their school time. However, when they arrive at college, they learn about relationships and extracurricular activities such as book clubs. Initially, while joining the college, the students are full of courage and confidence, they enrol themselves in different groups and become completely occupied. Eisenberg et al (2007) also argue that this pressurises students to a very large extent as clubs and activities demand their best.

Problems Associated with Depression

Although depression is undoubtedly a very harmful disease, its effects are by far more serious than depression its self. According to the American College Health Association (ACHA, 2009 p 5), students involve themselves in different bad habits: drinking, smoking, drugs abuse, unsafe

sex, and when they find that these do not relieve their symptoms, they may attempt suicide. All have very negative effects as they all lead to the

ultimate degradation of the students and their career. This eventually leads to the destruction of the whole life of a student as the quality of life is affected by medical problems such as obesity, anxiety, hepatitis, AIDS, and other physical and mental illnesses.

Prevention and Treatment of Depression

Studies show that depression can be combated by increasing awareness among students and college staff, using antidepressant medications and psychotherapy treatment. The induction programmes in colleges should be informative regarding the diseases that are related to depression and stress. The college administration should arrange helplines which are specialised for cases of hopelessness, loneliness and suicidal feelings. Thus, students can call anytime to discuss their feelings and problems. Seminars should be conducted on common illnesses in the university campus to educate professors and staff to recognise problematic students and enable them to receive treatment (NIHM, 2003 p 3). Eisenberg et al (2007a p 600) suggest that in order to decrease the requirements of mental care services, educational and awareness campaigns seem very vital solutions and students should be informed about campaigns availability and their importance. However, when students are being affected by depression, antidepressant remedies or psychotherapy treatment or sometimes a combination of both is highly recommended depending on the severity of the disease and this must be taken under a psychologist supervision.

The best Treatment of Depression

The effective ways of tackling this problem are divided into two stages. At the early stage of the disease, depression can be prevented by encouraging a great deal of the early discovery

of alarming signs of depression among parents, friends and university staff. NIHM (2003) 5 suggests that the early alarm signs should be displayed on notice boards across a college campus to inform all people particularly students, parents, friends and college staff. At the later stage of depression, psychotherapy and antidepressant treatment are very crucial solutions that should be received by affected students. In spite of the fact that all these solutions are important, addressing the underlying problems not to focus on the depression itself seems the best solution.

Conclusion

In conclusion, even though depressed students should be treated by antidepressant medications and psychotherapy sessions which are very necessary in most cases of depression, treatment of depression and its effects should start from the core and each and every member of the society should be informed about the symptoms and warning signs. The government should take necessary actions for fighting them by starting helplines. For removing these diseases in students and in the general public from the core, all should work as one for the treatment i.e. a friend should help a friend and a family member should take care of other family members.

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