

# Research on the Effectiveness of College Counselors' Work in the Age of Big Data

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**Abstract:** In colleges, counselors need to guide the ideological and political education, manage and serve students in their daily life and study, protect students' mental health, and engage in teaching and scientific researches. Therefore, it is of great significance to define the effectiveness of counselors' work, to analyze the current situation of counselors' work and to explore measures which can improve the effectiveness of counselors' work. This study not only strengthens and improves the ideological and political education in colleges and promotes the healthy growth of students, but also plays an important role in the reform, development and stability of higher education institutions.

## 1. Introduction

Since the Central Committee of CPC and the State Council promulgated and implemented the Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving Ideological and Political Education of College Students, while the Ministry of Education published the Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of Counselors' Team in College and the Regulations on the Construction of College Counselors' Teams, profound changes have taken place in the work of college counselors in China. The effectiveness of counselors' work is manifested more obviously. Counselors need to work in the first-line of college students' ideological and political education, and participate in educational management. They also shoulder the responsibility of improving college students' ideological and political qualities, cultural qualities and psychological qualities, and guiding college students to become talents "with four virtues". They are the backbone in college ideological and political education. However, in view of the actual situations, counselors have to deal with large numbers of trial matters about students. Especially in recent years, the continuous expansion of enrollment imposes more burdens on counselors. They are tired of dealing with daily affairs, while the efficiency of their work needs to be improved.

## 2. Purposes and Significance of the Research

The connotation of counselors' work can be defined as the degree and utility of counselors' work in meeting the development needs of students, schools and counselors themselves. That is to say, counselors can make their own progress and meet their own development needs through education and management methods. Therefore, the study of counselors' effectiveness is of great significance both in the development of counselors themselves and in the growth of students.

## 3. Research Methods

This research adopts the methods of questionnaires and interviews, so as to understand counselors' understanding of their own work and students' recognition of the effectiveness of counselors' work. Through questionnaires from different levels such as teachers' and students' questionnaires, as well as interviews with counselors from different functional departments, researchers evaluate the overall situation on counselors' work efficiency. Through data analysis, the author further analyze the effectiveness of counselors' work. Finally, the paper puts forward practical and operable countermeasures and suggestions. In the whole research, we strive to present

the macro and micro aspects of the effectiveness in counselors' work. Meanwhile, the work of counselors relates with "people"; it is a complex educational project with a lot of affecting factors and reform measures. This study cannot cover all these issues.

#### **4. Result Analysis**

In this survey, counselors and students of Ningbo Dahongying College are the main objects of investigation. In order to facilitate the collection and analysis of data, electronic questionnaires were distributed on the Wechat platform through mobile phone submission and links. About 70 counselors participated in the survey, with a male-female ratio of 3:7. The main age group was 20-35. The ratio of male to female students was 16:9. 2,500 questionnaires were distributed while 2,316 were collected. Among them, 92.64% were valid questionnaires. Invalid questionnaires accounted for 7.36%. Participants in the interview were randomly selected counselors and teachers, accounting for 20% of the total number in our school. There were 16 counselors from the secondary college. The average number of counselors was 1-3 from each college. 5 people were selected from the student affairs office and the league committee. From the survey and interviews, main problems of counselors' work in our school are found as follows.

##### **4.1 Current situation on counselors' work in our school**

###### **4.1.1 As far as the subject of implementation of counselors' work is concerned:**

Many counselors lack the clear understanding on their professional responsibilities. Because of the complex and excessive daily routines, counselors become "nannies" of college students. As ideological and political educators, their ideological quality and working methods are not well reflected. The overall satisfaction of counselors is not high. Through the survey about 70 counselors, it is found that 55.07% of the respondents believe that routine jobs are basic work, and they should get rid of them and do something more meaningful. From the proportion chart of confusion encountered by counselors, we can see that many counselors feel confused on their future career and are not satisfied with the relatively low economic income, accounting for more than 80% respectively. The unreasonable remuneration and low social status came afterwards. Most college counselors hold that the work they are engaged in could not inspire personal career passion; they are lacking professional honor. Without the effective implementation of policies, they cannot get academic titles or be promoted in short periods. They make a lot of efforts but achieve nothing; there is a big gap between them and their peers. At the same time, they do not truly understand the importance of ideological and political work. As a result, some counselors regard the work as "temporary", "transitional" and "short-term". They always look for opportunities to transfer jobs, and are unable to professionalize the work of counselors.

###### **4.1.2 As far as the object of education in counselors' work is concerned:**

Many college students are quite satisfied with the work of counselors. At present, college students are accustomed to seeking help from counselors when they encounter difficulties and problems in their study and life. Questionnaires show that as managers and service providers, counselors are generally able to provide guidance and help students. Meanwhile, counselors can bear the burden of hard works and communicate with students effectively, and has certain appeal power. But counselors are not only managers and service providers, but also guiders and educators. Essentially speaking, ideological and political education is to solve the confusion in people's ideological understanding and moral life, to guide students' activities and enrich their spiritual world. In this process, it is very important for students and teachers to communicate their ideas, understandings and thoughts. Thus, more students want counselors to become their mentors and friends.

##### **4.2 The effectiveness of counselors' work**

At present, the effectiveness of school counselors' work is the most direct criterion to measure the effectiveness of student work. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of from the

perspectives of elements, the process and results.

#### **4.2.1 Effectiveness of elements**

Many elements affect the effectiveness of counselors' work, such as the leader of counselors' work, counselors themselves, the object of counselors' work, the purpose of counselors' work, working contents, working methods, the working situation and so on.

The content of counselors' work lacks effectiveness, but it can be improved from many aspects, rather than sticking to conventions. According to the survey, 69.57% of the respondents think that 20 minutes' early self-study is ineffective and cost-effective. 50.72% respondents believe that if the early self-study is cancelled, they could strengthen the discipline of the first and second lessons in the morning. Teachers can check the attendance, and publish the result through QQ group newsletter. 21.74% respondents hold that it is necessary for each class to check their own attendance, and truly implement it in the moral education assessment, so as to ensure the order of the first lesson. In the aspect of dormitory management, 42.03% of the respondents believe that the purpose of dormitory management is to enhance the quality of civilization; 30.43% think that it is to improve the comprehensive quality. At present, counselors invest a lot of time and energy in dormitory management, but they only inspect the hygiene condition, or even help students to clean the room when they find problems, rather than notify the authority. The essential ideological problems of students are not solved; a long-term mechanism is not established.

In addition to working content, the effectiveness of working methods should also be analyzed. For the question "what worries you most in the daily student management", 65.22% counselors express that their work is tedious and formalism; some simple things are complicated. 15.94% respondent believe that at present, they are tired of dealing with various instructions and notifications issued by the school; the initiative of the secondary college could not be brought into play. For the question "main reasons result in complaints about counselors' work," 69.57% respondents believe that the main reason for their complaints is the repeated and unclear work instructions. For "reasons lead to the cumbersome and onerous management of counselors' work", 65.22% people think that students' work is too complicated; they have limited time but heavy tasks.

The working environment and working situation also greatly restrict the effectiveness of counselors' work. At present, the counselor team in our school is not stable. Most counselors are confused about their future career and do not have clear development direction. At the same time, their economic income is relatively low while they cannot get reasonable working benefits or professional titles. Difficulties in career development also contribute to counselors' low sense of well-being. Counselors' working enthusiasm is greatly reduced in that circumstance. Most of the time, counselors only want to complete their work. Therefore, the effectiveness of their work is low.

#### **4.2.2 Process effectiveness**

The questionnaire also contains questions about the process effectiveness of counselors' work. There is the question "what do you think of the process effectiveness of student work in our school?" Among respondents, 44.93% think that students' work does not have clear objectives and direction; the working range is too broad. 33.33% believe that the objectives are basically clear, but counselors need to deal with a lot of complex trifles. There are no clear working foci. The effectiveness of working process depends on the time spent on different aspects of counselors' work. Surveys show that it is generally believed that counselors spend too much time in complicated and onerous routine work, leaving limited energy invested in effective work, especially in the ideological and political education of students. The researcher also proposes the question of "what proportion of students' work should be occupied by dormitory management." 39.13% of the respondents think that it is one part of students' affair, and should occupy 30% of counselors' working time. But 55.07% people believe that dormitory management is that basic work and that counselors should be freed from it and engage in more meaningful jobs. However, as far as the current situation of our school is concerned, dormitory management occupies a lot of time and energy of counselors. Usually, they need to inspect for the purpose of inspection, which directly leads to the lack of effectiveness in counselors' work process.

### **4.2.3 Validity of results**

The lack of effective factors and process directly leads to the unsatisfactory results. For the question “how effective do you think the results of counselors’ work are”, 55.07% of the respondents believe that the results are not effective. The leaders, students and themselves are not satisfied. The validity accounts for 21.74%. Most respondents believe that the secondary management of student work in schools had a clear division of labor and a balanced proportion, but the objectives and direction of student work are unclear. There are some deficiencies in the system level, the secondary branch management level and the student work management level, which lead to the poor effectiveness of the results. The student work seems to be very efficient, but the actual effect is difficult to estimate. The effectiveness of student work should be considered by students’ satisfaction. However, currently students are not satisfied with school management on the student management system and logistics services, which need reflection and improvement.

## **4.3 Measures to improve the effectiveness of counselors’ work**

### **4.3.1 Optimizing the working mechanism**

First, we should clearly understand the leadership relation at working level. That is, under the leadership of the Party Committee, counselors are directly led by the party and government administration of departments. Relevant departments of student work can not directly assign work to counselors, so as to avoid the phenomenon of multiple leadership and management. The problem of repeated instructions can also be solved. The role of secondary management should be given full play, so as to stimulate the vitality of secondary colleges and create bright and distinctive brands of colleges.

Secondly, we should clearly understand the relationship among relevant functional departments dealing with student work, clarify the responsibilities and tasks of the various functional departments and personnel, standardize the communication and working procedures and improve the work efficiency.

Thirdly, we should standardize the student management system. We can refer to systems of other schools. The system should be sound and operable. Meanwhile, the assessment management system and the duty system of counselors need to be further improved. The voices of counselors should be taken into consideration, rather than catering for leaders.

### **4.3.2 Schools should provide more development platforms for counselors and realize the rational flow of counselors, providing more opportunities for counselors in career development**

One of the important reasons for the instability of some counselors is that they do not have clear promotion path. Therefore, colleges and universities should adhere to the “people-oriented” principle, and create conditions for counselors’ future development according to their working performance, personal characteristics and strengths. We should also promote the professionalization and professionalization of counselors, encourage some full-time counselors to engage in students work for a long period of time, and help them to become specialized personnel in ideological and political education. We should train and select counselors as reserve cadres for the Party and government administration departments of our school. Counselors who are willing and qualified to engage in teaching and scientific research should be promoted. Counselors should be able to switch their positions inside and outside the school. Qualified excellent social personnel should be hired by the school as counselors; counselors on campus should be actively recommended and delivered to other social posts. To sum up, through policy design, system design and mechanism design, we should build an “overpass” for the development of counselors, and form a good environment for the growth of counselors.

### **4.3.3 Take the improvement of students’ satisfaction as an opportunity to enhance the happiness of counselors and promote the effectiveness of their work.**

For some specific problems of counselors, such as promotion, political treatment, post subsidy,

housing conditions, training and further education, and investment in funds, the school authority should take into serious consideration. According to actual situations, appropriate preferential policies should be given. The excess workload of counselors should be recognized; post allowances should be increased. The school Schools should create conditions for counselors to improve their happiness index, and try best to improve counselors' treatment and reduce their working pressure. Counselors should enjoy certain advantages in title evaluation, which can help them to have a clear career development path.

Counselors are full-time personnel engaged in the management of teachers and students, and are responsible for students' ideological and political education. They shoulder the responsibility of cultivating talents for our country and the society. Therefore, only by accurately grasping students' ideological trends and applying targeted education methods according to students' characteristics and individual differences, can we effectively improve the actual effects of ideological and political education, improve the effectiveness of counselors' work and lay a solid foundation for students' future development.

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