

# **The Development of Life Values Integrated Curriculum to Enhance Mental Health for Freshmen Students**

**Xie Peihao, Wichian Intarasompun,  
Wirot Watananimitgul and Areewan Iamsa-ard**  
BansomdejChaopraya Rajabhat University, Thailand  
Corresponding Author, Email: kongbai98@foxmail.com

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## **Abstracts**

The objectives of this study were as follows: 1) to investigate the current state of mental health and life values among college students after the epidemic, 2) to develop a Life Values Integrated Curriculum, 3) to conduct an experimental study using the developed curriculum, 4) to assess the satisfaction of students participating in the experiment with the curriculum. The study initially employed a questionnaire research method to investigate the mental health levels and the current state of life values among 719 university students in Guangxi, utilizing the Mental Health and Life Values Questionnaire. Subsequently, three experts assessed the development of the Life Values Integrated Curriculum using the Index of Objective Consistency (IOC) method. Following this, we implemented a quasi-experimental design to teach the Life Values Integrated Curriculum to 51 university students from Wuzhou University, analyzing changes in the students' mental health levels before and after the experiment, as well as their satisfaction with the curriculum's content. Finally, we used a curriculum satisfaction questionnaire to assess students' satisfaction with the curriculum. The results of the study showed that: 1) That Depression, Anxiety, and Stress of college students were at normal levels and Mental Wellbeing was at moderate levels. 2) The Life Values Integrated Curriculum has well-defined objectives, content, and teaching arrangements. It comprises 6 units, totaling 18 hours, and has successfully passed the IOC test. 3) Life values integrated curriculum has a positive impact on freshmen students, not only can it help freshmen students significantly reduce Depression, Anxiety, Stress negative emotions, but also can significantly improve the level of positive mental health. And student satisfaction with the units is good. 4) Students expressed the highest level of satisfaction with the instructor.

**Keywords:** Mental Health; Life Values; Mental Health Curriculum;

## **Introduction**

COVID-19 belongs to major public health emergencies, which are sudden, mass and seriously harmful to the society (Wang and Liang, 2020 : 6), and can cause fear, anxiety and depression (Xu and Sun, 2020 : 2). With the liberalization of epidemic prevention and control policies, people's lives and physical health gradually recovered, but the adverse mental health consequences caused by the epidemic may still persist or even worsen (Rajkumar, 2020 : 1; Shu, Liao and Qin, 2021 : 29). The college student population is more likely than other populations to show fear and anxiety after a major stressful event due to the characteristics of less life experience, unstable psychological state, and fluctuating emotions. Some studies have found that most students experience self-esteem, anxiety, loneliness and other problems

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after an epidemic (Bian, 2020:6), and if college students cannot effectively control such conflicts, they may experience a variety of psychological problems such as anxiety, tension, depression, and crises, which can affect their school learning, life, and health (Liu and Liu et al., 2022:95), and seriously may also affect campus safety and social stability (Ding and Hu, 2020:129). Therefore, colleges and universities should pay attention to the current situation of college students' mental health, find the main factors affecting their mental health, and carry out mental health education that effectively improves the mental health of students after the epidemic.

Some studies have pointed out that the deep-rooted causes of many mental health problems of college students are often their confusion about life and the value of life (Xu and Wang, 2017:5). However, the traditional mental health curriculum lacks the embedding of life knowledge (Huang, 2020:163), and it is difficult to carry out only traditional mental health education to help students recognize life and find the goal and meaning of life, which in turn fails to enhance students' life values and sense of well-being (Dong, 2014:83; Huang, 2019:56). Integrating the value of life into traditional mental health courses can guide college students to recognize the value and connotation of life, be able to respect and care for life, and help to promote the development of college students' mental health (Shi, 2020:245), which can not only solve the difficulties and frustrations of students in the process of growing up in life, but also improve their understanding of life and the value of life, as well as improve their psychological quality and promote personal development, providing a new way of thinking for the teaching of mental health education and improving the content system of mental health education for college students (He Zeming and He Yongqiang et al., 2018:97, Xue, 2020:84). In summary, the development of an integrated life values course that combines life values and traditional psychological courses is a key way to promote the psychological and behavioral growth of college students, which can help college students to recognize, experience and feel the essence, goal and meaning of life, establish positive life values, and improve their mental health. Therefore, this study first investigates the mental health status of college students after the epidemic; then develops an integrated life values course in terms of course objectives, course content, course teaching program, teaching resources, teaching evaluation and feedback; then conducts an experimental study on the developed integrated life values course; and finally investigates the satisfaction level of students who participated in the experimental integrated life values course. It provides a theoretical basis and practical reference for the effective development of college students' mental health education after the epidemic.

## **Research Objective**

- 1) To investigate the current situation of the mental health and life values level of college students in Wuzhou.
- 2) To develop a life value integrated curriculum that integrates mental health and life value to enhance Mental Health for freshmen students.
- 3) To understand the effectiveness of the life values integrated curriculum by comparing the changes in the mental health level of college students before and after the implementation of the curriculum and to investigate students' satisfaction with the teaching of each unit.

4) To understand students' satisfaction with the curriculum through the survey of students' overall satisfaction with the curriculum after the experiment of the life values integrated curriculum.

## Research Methodology

### 1. Population and sample

1.1 The population of this study was divided into two parts. 1) The population of the survey study on the status of mental health and life values was college students in Wuzhou, Guangxi. 2) The population of the life values integrated curriculum teaching experiment was freshmen students at W University.

1.2 The sample group for the survey study on the status of mental health and life values was 719 college students sampled in Wuzhou, Guangxi through the principle of convenience sampling. 2) The sample group for the teaching experiment of Life Values Integrated Curriculum was 51 freshmen students majoring in logistics management in the college of Management of W University.

### 2. Research Tools

The following research tools were used in this study:

2.1 Questionnaire on mental health and life values of college students. The questionnaire consists of three parts:

2.1.1 Personal background information, mainly for the purpose of understanding the basic situation of the research subjects, mainly including gender, age, Household type, Family situation, Number of family members.

2.1.2 Mental Health, consisting of the Depression Anxiety Stress Youth Scale (Szabo and Lovibond, 2022:16), The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (Tennant et al. 2007:13). The purpose is to measure the mental health of students.

1) Depression-Anxiety-Stress Self-Assessment Scale (DASS-Y). In this study, this scale was translated into Chinese. The dimensions of the scale remained unchanged after translation, with 7 items in each of the three dimensions of depression, anxiety, and stress to improve the efficiency of recognizing and evaluating the symptoms of the corresponding mood disorders, and a 4-point Likert scale was used, with higher scores indicating higher levels of anxiety, depression, stress, and other negative emotions. It has been used in a large number of studies in China, and the scale has good reliability and can effectively measure the mental health status of college students. In this study, the scale has a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.95$ , The cumulative explained variance is 60.65 percentage. The scoring criteria were that subjects scored:

Depression: 0-6 Normal, 7-8 Mild, 9-13 Moderate, 14-16 Severe, 17+ Extremely severe;

Anxiety: 0-5 Normal, 6-7 Mild, 8-12 Moderate, 13- 15 Severe, 16+ Extremely severe;

Stress: 0-11 Normal, 12-13 Mild, 14-16 Moderate, 17-18 Severe, 19+ Extremely severe;

Total: 0-23 Normal, 24-29 Mild, 30-29 Moderate, 30-39 Severe, 47+ Extremely severe.

2) The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). has been tested and proven to be suitable for the assessment of positive mental well-being in a number of studies. The main feature of the WEMWBS is that it consists of 14 items, which are not only short and easy to operate, but also integrates three aspects of mental health, namely, positive emotions, positive psychological functioning, and interpersonal satisfaction. In this study, the scale has a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.95$ , The cumulative explained variance is 63.06 percentage. The scoring criteria were that subjects scored: <43 as Low, 44-60 as Moderate, and 61-70 as High.

2.1.3 Live values (LVS). The main purpose was to measure the level of life values of college students. In this study, The Life Values Scale (Zhang et al, 2009:505) was revised, with the dimensions reclassified as existential, goal, and social values, and the 28 items of the original scale were deleted to 24 items, with a 5-point Likert scale, which has good reliability and validity. In this study, the scale has a Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.94$ , The cumulative explained variance is 56.88 percentage. The scoring criteria were that subjects scored: 0.00-1.49 Very Unimportant, 1.50-2.49 Unimportant, 2.50-3.49 Commonly, 3.50-4.49 Important, 4.50-5.00 Very Important.

2.2 Life Values Integrated Curriculum Instructional Program. The study firstly, reviewed the past related literature and organized it; then, three professional scholars including curriculum and teaching experts, pedagogy experts and psychology experts were asked to check the teaching objectives, teaching contents of life values integrated curriculum through Index of Objective Consistency (IOC), teaching process, to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum. finally, a curriculum plan with 18 hours of instruction and 6 units was determined. In this study, the Life Values Integrated Curriculum has an IOC=1.

2.3 Freshman Mental Health Questionnaire. Consisting of DASS-Y and WEMWBS, it is mainly designed to measure the changes in the mental health level of freshmen before and after the course experiment.

2.4 Unit satisfaction questionnaire. Consisting of 3 items on a 5-point Likert scale, it was designed to investigate students' enjoyment of the unit, satisfaction with the content of the unit, and satisfaction with the teaching activities of the unit. The scoring criteria were that subjects scored: <3.50 Dissatisfied, 3.50-4.49 Satisfied, 4.50-5.00 Very Satisfied.

2.5 Curriculum Satisfaction Questionnaire. It consists of three dimensions, Subjects in the curriculum, Instructor side, Teaching methods and teaching activities, with 14 items on a 5-point Likert scale. The purpose was to investigate students' satisfaction with Life Values Integrated Curriculum. The scoring criteria were that subjects scored: <3.50 Dissatisfied, 3.50-4.49 Satisfied, 4.50-5.00 Very Satisfied.

## Results of Data Analysis

The study collected data according to the following steps:

1) The principle of convenience sampling was used to distribute a web-based questionnaire on mental health and life values to college students in Wuzhou, Guangxi. The introduction of questionnaire filling explained in detail the principles of voluntary completion, confidentiality of information, and anonymity. A total of 724 questionnaires were distributed, and after deducting 5 invalid questionnaires, the actual number of valid questionnaires was 719. Subsequently, the recovered valid questionnaires were data coded and statistically analyzed, and the results were presented and analyzed in terms of mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation

(SD.), and percentage (%).

2) Through a quasi-experimental design, mental health questionnaires were distributed and collected from 51 freshmen before the curriculum experiment. Then 6 units of Life Values Integrated Curriculum were implemented. Mental health questionnaires were distributed and collected again at the end of the curriculum. Using the mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation (SD.), t-test (t), p-value (p), and significance (sig), we observe the changes of students' mental health level before and after the experiment, and analyze the effect of Life Values Integrated Curriculum.

3) During the curriculum experiment, after the end of each unit, a unit satisfaction questionnaire was distributed to 51 freshmen to investigate their satisfaction with each unit of the curriculum, and the results were presented and analyzed by mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and standard deviation (SD.).

4) At the end of the curriculum experiment, a curriculum satisfaction questionnaire was distributed to 51 freshmen who participated in the experiment to investigate their satisfaction with the overall curriculum, and the results were presented and analyzed in terms of mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and standard deviation (SD.).

## Research framework

The research framework of this study is shown in Figure 1:

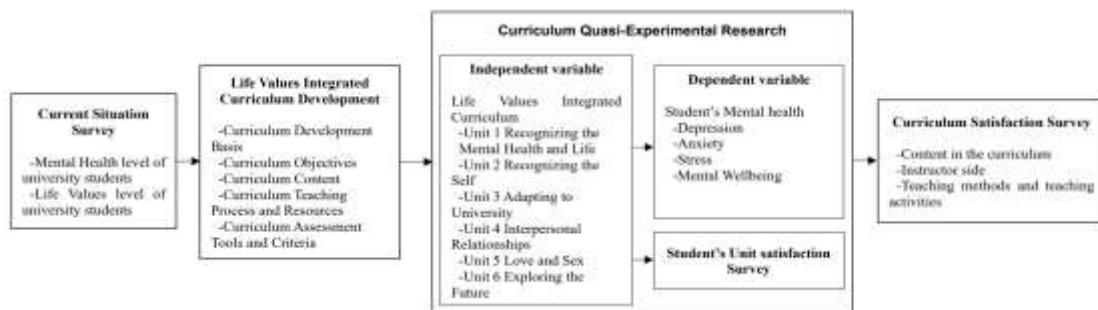


Figure 1 Research framework

## Research Results

Frequency and Percentage of Common data of the respondent in overall, it is found that the respondents college students in terms of gender, the highest proportion of the number of female students totaled 523 people accounted for 72.74 percentage, male students 196 people accounted for 27.26 percentage; in terms of age, 18-year-old students 258 people accounted for 35.88 percentage of the highest proportion, 19-year-old students 232 people accounted for 32.27 percentage of the proportion of the next highest, 199 people accounted for 20 years old and above students accounted for 27.68 percentage, 17-year-old students 30 people accounted for 4.17 percentage proportion is the lowest; in Household type, rural students 526 people accounted for 73.16 percentage proportion is the highest, urban 193 people 26.84 percentage; in Family situation, non-specialized family 626 people accounted for 87.07 percentage proportion is the highest, followed by Single parent 85 people accounted for 11.82 percentage, the lowest is the Orphan 8 people accounted for 1.11 percentage; in

terms of family size, 4 and above 552 people accounted for the highest proportion of 76.77 percentage, and the rest in the order of 3-member family 20.17 percentage, 2-member family 2.64 percentage, 1-member family 0.42 percentage.

According to the objectives of this study, the analysis of the research results is divided into four parts:

### 1. The Current Situation of Mental Health and Life Values of College Students in Wuzhou, Guangxi.;

**Table 1** Respondents Mental Health and live values level

Mental Health and Life Value	$\bar{x}$	SD.	Level	(n=719)
DASS-Y	9.10	9.39	Normal	
Depression	2.48	3.68	Normal	
Anxiety	2.44	3.18	Normal	
Stress	4.18	3.81	Normal	
Mental Wellbeing	3.40	0.78	Moderate	
Life Value	3.72	0.55	Important	
Existence value	3.98	0.63	Important	
Social value	3.45	0.65	Commonly	
Objective value	3.13	0.66	Commonly	

From Table 1, The mental health of college students in Wuzhou, Guangxi, is at a normal level. DASS-Y scores indicate normal levels of ( $\bar{x}=9.10$ , SD.=9.39), and Mental Wellbeing is at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.40$ , SD.=0.78). From the composition of DASS-Y, students scored best at the Anxiety level ( $\bar{x}=2.44$ , SD.=3.18), followed by the Depression level ( $\bar{x}=2.48$ , SD.=3.68), and lastly, the Stress level ( $\bar{x}=4.18$ , SD.=3.81). that the overall life value of college students in Wuzhou, Guangxi is in Important level ( $\bar{x}=3.72$ , SD.=0.55). Among them, Existence value ( $\bar{x}=3.98$ , SD.=0.63) has the highest level, followed by Social value, ( $\bar{x}=3.45$ , SD.=0.65) and finally Objective value ( $\bar{x}=3.13$ , SD.=0.66).

### 2. Developing a teaching programmed and Lesson Plan for a Life Values Integrated Curriculum to improve the mental health of freshman students.

**Table 2** Content structure and timing

Learning Unit	Content	Time
Unit 1 Recognizing the Mental Health and life		3h
Lesson 1: Life and Mental Health	Content 1: Recognizing Life Content 2: Understanding psychology Content 1: Recognizing Abnormal Mental Health	
Lesson 2: Psychological health counselling	Content 2: Protecting life Content 3: Suicide prevention and intervention	
Unit 2 Recognizing the Self		3h
Lesson 1: Self-awareness	Content 1: Peer Talk	

and improvement	Content 2: The OH deck "I" Content 3: The Lost Corner	
Lesson 2: Self-emotional awareness and regulation	Content 1: Emotional AB Drama Content 2: ABC Theory of Emotions Content 3: Life without limits	
Lesson 3: Self-care strategies	Content 1: Self-care Content 2: Scenario simulation	
Unit 3 Adapting to University		3h
Lesson 1: I am the master of my university	Content 1: My maladjustment Content 1: Stress	
Lesson 2: stress management	Content 2: The three-factor model of stress	
Lesson 3: Time Task Management	Content 1: "Tearing up" our lives Content 2: A busy day	
Unit 4 Interpersonal Relationships		3h
Lesson 1: The Ship of Friendship	Content 1: We live in relationships Content 2: My Circle of Friends Content 3: Interpersonal relationships and human interaction	
Lesson 2: Making friends in good faith	Content 1: La Boîte Content 2: Please sign my name for me Content 1: Passing the buck	
Lesson 3: Interpersonal relationship optimization	Content 2: Interpersonal communication experience	

**Table 2 (Continued)**

Learning Unit	Content	Time
Unit 5 Love and Sex		3h
Lesson 1: Understanding Love	Content 1: What is love? Content 2: Like or Love	
Lesson 2: The Psychology of Love	Content 1: What you don't get you like better Content 2: I want to say to you	
Lesson 3: Healthy Sexuality	Content 1: Sex in my eyes Content 2: Abortion and Caesarean section	
Unit 6 Exploring the Future		3h
Lesson 1: Understanding Death	Content 1: If I only had a little time left Content 2: The closest moment to death Content 1: How many people we will meet in our lifetime	
Lesson 2: Exploring the Value of Life	Content 2: Peer Talk Content 3: My Epitaph Content 4: Meaningful action	

The life values integrated curriculum is essentially mental health education, based on the content of the mental health education curriculum, and the integration of life values is a supplement to and sublimation of the content of the original mental health curriculum, so that it can better promote the improvement of the mental health level of college students. This study will mainly use experiential teaching, inspirational teaching and other teaching methods to integrate life values such as value of life, meaning of life, life ideals, life goals and attitudes to life into the original mental health education course content, so that students start from the cognition of life, extend to the cognition of other people's lives as well as the life that exists in nature, and in terms of common psychological abnormalities and diseases organically. The curriculum consists of six units, totaling 18 hours, covering topics such as Recognizing Mental Health Education, and the importance of the importance of the mental health of the students in their lives. The curriculum consists of six units, totaling 18 hours, covering topics such as Recognizing Mental Health and Life, Recognizing the Self, Adapting to University, Interpersonal Relationships, Love and Sex, and Exploring the Future. See Table 2 for details.

### **3. Comparing changes in students' mental health before and after the implementation of the curriculum, and analyze students' satisfaction with each unit of the curriculum**

The difference between the students' total DASS scores, Depression, Anxiety and Stress aspects before and after the experiment was significant by paired samples t-test ( $t=4.03$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $t=3.12$ ,  $p<0.01$ ,  $t=2.22$ ,  $p<0.05$ ,  $t=4.08$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). The same significant difference was found in Mental Wellbeing ( $t=3.39$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). It can be seen, that with the end of the program intervention, the students participating in the Life Values Integrated Curriculum experiment had a significant downward trend in Depression, Anxiety, and Stress, and a significant upward trend in Mental Wellbeing, which proves that the Life Values Integrated Curriculum can effectively improve students' mental health. As shown in table 3.

**Table 3** Data Analysis of Respondents in a Pre-Post Mental Health Experiment

(n=51)

<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>Pretest (51)</b>		<b>Posttest (51)</b>		<b>t (sig)</b>	<b>p</b>
	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b>SD.</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b>SD.</b>		
DASS-Y	13.25	6.30	10.12	6.52	4.03***	0.00
Depression	4.00	2.36	3.04	2.20	3.12**	0.00
Anxiety	4.06	2.53	3.33	2.39	2.22*	0.03
Stress	5.20	2.53	3.75	2.62	4.08***	0.00
Mental Wellbeing	42.61	7.58	49.16	10.61	3.54***	0.00

\* represents statistical significance at .05

\*\* represents statistical significance at .01

\*\*\* represents statistical significance at .001

Students who participated in the Life Values Integrated Curriculum experiment reached a Satisfied level with each unit of the curriculum. In terms of Students liked the unit, unit 4 scored the highest ( $\bar{x}=4.39$ ,  $SD.=0.64$ ), and unit 6 scored the lowest ( $\bar{x}=4.20$ ,  $SD.=0.40$ ). In terms of Students satisfaction with the learnt content of the unit, unit 5 and unit 6 scored the highest ( $\bar{x}=4.06$ ,  $SD.=0.54$ ), and unit 1 scored the lowest ( $\bar{x}=3.78$ ,  $SD.=0.58$ ). In terms of Students satisfaction with the learnt activities of the unit, unit 1 and unit 5 scored the highest ( $\bar{x}=4.35$ ,  $SD.=0.56$ ,  $\bar{x}=4.35$ ,  $SD.=0.66$ ), and unit 6 scored the lowest ( $\bar{x}=4.21$ ,  $SD.=0.61$ ). In terms of unit satisfaction scores, the highest satisfaction scores were found in units 4 and 5

( $\bar{x}=4.24$ ,  $SD.=0.50$ ,  $\bar{x}=4.24$ ,  $SD.=0.54$ ), and the lowest satisfaction score was found in unit 1 ( $\bar{x}=4.13$ ,  $SD.=0.45$ ). As shown in table 4.

**Table 4** Students' Unit satisfaction Data

(n=51)

Unit	1. Students liked the unit		2. Students satisfaction with the learning content of the unit		3. Students satisfaction with the learning activities of the unit		Total	
	$\bar{x}$	SD.	$\bar{x}$	SD.	$\bar{x}$	SD.	$\bar{x}$	SD.
1	4.25	0.60	3.78	0.58	4.35	0.56	4.13	0.45
2	4.25	0.72	4.00	0.60	4.27	0.70	4.18	0.55
3	4.29	0.61	3.98	0.62	4.24	0.50	4.17	0.51
4	4.39	0.64	4.04	0.66	4.27	0.57	4.24	0.50
5	4.31	0.61	4.06	0.54	4.35	0.66	4.24	0.54
6	4.20	0.40	4.06	0.54	4.21	0.61	4.16	0.52

**4. Student satisfaction with the overall curriculum at the end of the life values integrated curriculum**

The students who participated in the Life Values Integrated Curriculum experiment were more satisfied with the Life Values Integrated Curriculum ( $\bar{x}=4.40$ ,  $SD.=0.53$ ). The instructor side has the highest score ( $\bar{x}=4.46$ ,  $SD.=0.54$ ), followed by Teaching methods and teaching activities ( $\bar{x}=4.44$ ,  $SD.=0.57$ ), and lastly, Content in the curriculum ( $\bar{x}=4.30$ ,  $SD.=0.56$ ). As shown in table 5.

**Table 5** Structural data on respondents' curriculum satisfaction

(n=51)

Curriculum Satisfaction	$\bar{x}$	SD.	Level
Content in the curriculum	4.30	0.56	Satisfied
Instructor side	4.46	0.54	Satisfied
Teaching methods and teaching activities	4.44	0.57	satisfied
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.40</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>satisfied</b>

Among the students' satisfaction with the Content in the curriculum, Student satisfaction that the curriculum is appropriate to the learner's knowledge base is satisfied scored the highest ( $\bar{x}=4.35$ ,  $SD.=0.59$ ), The curriculum is useful for the profession scored the lowest, at a satisfied level ( $\bar{x}=4.20$ ,  $SD.=0.69$ ). As shown in table 6.

**Table 6** Analysis of data on student satisfaction with Content in the curriculum

Content in the curriculum	$\bar{x}$	SD.	Level	(n=51)
1.Curriculum content is appropriate to the credit	4.31	0.58	satisfied	
2.Curriculum content is up-to-date and subject to change	4.31	0.62	satisfied	
3.The curriculum is appropriate and meets the learning needs	4.31	0.62	satisfied	
4.The curriculum is appropriate to the learner's knowledge base	4.35	0.59	satisfied	
5.The curriculum is useful for the profession	4.20	0.69	satisfied	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>satisfied</b>	

Among the students' satisfaction with the Instructor Side, Teachers are friendly, give advice and listen to opinions scored the highest, at a Very satisfied level ( $\bar{x}=4.51$ , SD.=0.58), Teachers are well versed in keeping up with changes in technology, scored the lowest, at a satisfied level ( $\bar{x}=4.41$ , SD.=0.57). As shown in table 7.

**Table 7** Analysis of data on student satisfaction with Instructor side

Instructor side	$\bar{x}$	SD.	Level	(n=51)
1.Teachers prepare to teach in advance	4.49	0.58	satisfied	
2.The teacher has the ability to transfer knowledge to help create subject learning	4.47	0.58	satisfied	
3.He teacher has a good understanding of the subject matter being taught.	4.43	0.61	satisfied	
4.Teachers are well versed in keeping up with changes in technology	4.41	0.57	satisfied	
5.Teachers are friendly, give advice and listen to opinions	4.51	0.58	Very satisfied	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.46</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	

Among the students' satisfaction with the teaching methods and teaching activities, Uses a variety of teaching methods appropriate to the content of the subject being studied, scored the highest, at a satisfied level( $\bar{x}=4.45$ , SD.=0.64), Knowledge and understanding of the aims and objectives of teaching the curriculum is created and There are learning activities that focus on giving students an understanding of the values of life, scored the lowest, at a satisfied level ( $\bar{x}=4.41$ , SD.=0.57,  $\bar{x}=4.41$ , SD.=0.61 ). As shown in table 8.

**Table 8** Analysis of data on student satisfaction with Teaching methods and teaching activities

Teaching methods and teaching activities	$\bar{x}$	SD.	Level	(n=51)
1.Knowledge and understanding of the aims and objectives of teaching the curriculum is created	4.41	0.57	satisfied	
2.There are learning activities that focus on giving students an understanding of the values of life	4.41	0.61	satisfied	
3.Media and technology or innovations are used in	4.47	0.61	satisfied	

teaching and learning to promote student learning appropriately			
4.Uses a variety of teaching methods appropriate to the content of the subject being studied	4.45	0.64	satisfied
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>satisfied</b>

## Discussion

The analysis of research Discussion is divided into four Parts, this section is discussed in turn:

### 1. Discussion on the current state of mental health and life values among college students

The results of the study on the current status of mental health and life values of college students in Wuzhou City, Guangxi Province showed that Depression, Anxiety, and Stress of college students were at normal levels and Mental Wellbeing was at moderate levels. This is different from the findings of Lee and Jeong et al. (2021:519) on Depression, Anxiety, and Stress of college students during COVID-19, but similar to the findings of Gonzales and Lanchipa et al. (2022:1215) and Najam and Ail (2022:23) on the positive mental well-being of college students. The reason for this is that as the spread of the epidemic was controlled, the life of the university students returned to the normal conditions that existed before the epidemic, and therefore the mental health of most of the university students gradually returned to a normal state.

The results of this study also show that the overall life value of college students is at Important level, and in terms of dimensions, Existence value is at Important level, Social value is at Moderate level, and Objective value is at Moderate level. The results of the study are similar to those of Zhang and Xiang et al.(2009:505) study on the life value of college students after a disaster and Qian and Hang (2023:77) study on the life value of Chinese medical students. The reason for this is that college students generally believe that having good health, moral character, and interpersonal skills are key elements for achieving professional success and personal growth, and that focusing on the cultivation of these aspects can lay a solid foundation for their future development.

### 2. Discussion on the development of a Life Values Integrated Curriculum

The study initially organizes concepts and theories related to college students' mental health, life values, and the college students' mental health curriculum. It then combines the relevant content of life values with that of the college students' mental health curriculum and determines the objectives, teaching process, learning resources, evaluation, and feedback for the Life Values Integrated Curriculum. Furthermore, it successfully passed the Index of Objective Coherence (IOC) test by three experts in the relevant field. The curriculum consists of six units, totaling 18 hours, covering topics such as Recognizing Mental Health and Life, Recognizing the Self, Adapting to University, Interpersonal Relationships, Love and Sex, and Exploring the Future.

The life values integrated curriculum was developed in response to the previous traditional mental health curriculum that lacked the embedding of life knowledge (Huang, 2020:163) and neglected students' life values and individual life emotions (Chen and Ying, 2020:114). Therefore, this study integrates life value content such as Existence value, Social

value, and Objective value with previous mental health curriculum content (Dong, 2014:83; Huang, 2019:56) and is an attempt to supplementation and sublimation of previous mental health education content. Starting from the knowledge of life and psychology, the course enables students to correctly recognize the connection between life and the individual, master the methods of psychological adjustment, and adapt to university life, interpersonal interactions and responsibilities, so as to form the correct value of life, so as to have a positive and healthy psychological state, and to reduce the occurrence of symptoms of mental illness. In turn, it promotes the improvement of college students' mental health.

### **3. Discussion the implementation Effect of the Life Values Integrated Curriculum**

After the implementation of the life values integrated curriculum teaching experiment, the difference between the pre-test level of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress and the post-test level of the 51 freshmen who participated in the teaching experiment was significant, and the scores showed a decreasing trend. The difference between the pre-test level of Mental Wellbeing and the post-test level is significant, and the scores tend to increase. It shows that the curriculum can reduce the freshmen's Depression, Anxiety, and Stress levels and also increase the Mental Wellbeing levels. The results of the study also showed that the freshmen reached the Satisfied level for each unit of the course in terms of favoritism, content, and learning activities. It can be proved that the life values integrated curriculum can effectively improve the mental health of college students. This is consistent with the research of Pan (2018:164). The reason for this is that the deep-seated cause of mental health problems among college students is the confusion about life and life values, and the meaning of life can enhance the individual's sense of control over events, reduce the sense of powerlessness, positively predict positive emotions, and effectively alleviate negative emotions such as anxiety and depression (Jin, He and Li, 2016:1854, Tosati, S., Sitthisopasakul, T., and Intarasompun, W. 2021: 124–137). Combining life values with mental health curriculum can not only effectively cultivate students' The combination of life values and mental health courses can not only effectively cultivate students' awareness of love and respect for life, but also help students find the meaning of life and form correct life values, but also cultivate college students' good personality qualities and psychological qualities, and promote all-round development. Therefore, the curriculum effectively improves the mental health of freshmen students.

In terms of college students' satisfaction with their units, In terms of unit preference, students favored Unit 3 Adjusting to University and Unit 4 Interpersonal Relationships; in terms of unit content satisfaction, students were most satisfied with Unit 3 Adjusting to University, and in terms of unit learning activity satisfaction, students were most satisfied with Unit 1 Recognizing Mental Health and Life. The reason for this is that college students pay more attention to the value factor of the curriculum, that is, whether the unit content can bring them practical benefits (Zhang, Cheng et al, 2019:6 Intarasompun, W., Muangnual, P., and Punchatree, N. 2022: 124–137). Freshmen just came to school from home, firstly, they have to adapt to the life of the college campus which is different from middle school or high school, and secondly, they have the need to make new friends, and these units just meet the practical needs of college students.

### **4. Discussion on students' satisfaction with the life values integrated curriculum**

The subjects of this part of the study remained the 51 students in the experimental group. At the end of the Curriculum, a survey was conducted on Curriculum satisfaction in terms of Subjects in the curriculum, Instructor side, and Teaching methods and teaching

activities. Among them, students were most satisfied with the instructor side, specifically in the individual questions. In the item10, Teachers are friendly, give advice, and listen to opinions, they scored Very satisfied. The reason for this is that most of the students who participated in the experiment believed that the instructor did an excellent job in explaining the curriculum content, answering questions, and providing academic support. Students also felt that they could establish an effective communication style with the instructor, a style that effectively supported and helped them better understand and apply what they were learning. This aligns with Wen (2005:1), as well as Wichean Intarasompan, and Jittawisut Wimuttipanya (2021:2) , findings that educators need to have a proper outlook on life and a deep understanding of the curriculum's content and implementation for students to be satisfied with the curriculum and for it to be effective.

## Recommendations

### 1. Applicability of results

#### 1.1 Targeted activities to improve students' life values

The results of this study show that the Social value and Objective value scores of college students' life values are low and at Moderate level. Therefore, it is suggested that colleges and universities should pay attention to the enhancement of college students' life value, which can be done by carrying out targeted thematic lectures, quality development, social service and other extracurricular activities to increase their attention to Social value and Objective value, and to promote the cultivation of positive life value.

#### 1.2 Addition of a Life Values Integrated Curriculum at universities

The results of this study demonstrate that the Life Values Integrated Curriculum can effectively enhance the mental health of freshman students. It is recommended that schools consider the actual context and add the Life Values Integrated Curriculum. Additionally, organizing pre-curriculum training for psychology teachers can help them gain a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum's objectives, content, nuances, and teaching methods. This will facilitate better implementation of the curriculum to benefit students.

#### 1.3 Enhancing the development of Life Values Integrated Curriculum resources

In this study, the Life Values Integrated Curriculum found that students were less satisfied with the program's content compared to faculty aspects, teaching methods, and teaching activities. The Life Values Integrated Curriculum is a program that combines life values and mental health. It includes not only the contents of the original psychological curriculum, such as mental health knowledge, self-awareness, and interpersonal relationships, but also incorporates life values content like life values, life meaning, and life attitude. This comprehensive and practical program is challenging to improve solely through individual efforts. Therefore, it is recommended that colleges and universities increase their financial support for the Life Values Integrated Curriculum and collaborate with relevant instructors to jointly develop curriculum content resources. Additionally, strengthening communication and cooperation with other colleges and universities can enhance the development and utilization of off-campus resources, thereby enriching the curriculum content and improving its implementation.

## 2. Future Researches

### 2.1 Adding research variables

This study explored the current situation of life values and mental health of college students, but the impact of life values on mental health was not explored, so future research can use empirical studies to explore the causal relationship between life values and mental health. This study only explored the effectiveness of the curriculum in improving the mental health of freshmen students, but did not explore whether the curriculum could also improve the life values of freshmen students, which could be further verified in future studies.

### 2.2 Increase the number of follow-up studies

This study only explored the immediate effects of the Life Values Integrated Curriculum intervention on the mental health of freshman students, and did not further explore the delayed effects. Future research could, three months or more after the end of the Curriculum, add a survey of college students' mental health to explore the delayed effects of the Curriculum.

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