

## Article

# Exploration on the Integration of Excellent Traditional Chinese Culture and Positive Psychology into Psychological Education in Universities

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**Abstract:** Positive psychology, a burgeoning discipline in recent years, focuses on cultivating positive human qualities, emphasizing individual value and humanistic care to help individuals continuously seek happiness and achieve ideal lifestyles. Traditional Chinese cultural values such as self-reflection, perseverance, the Doctrine of the Mean, and harmonious integration align closely with the core principles of positive psychological qualities expected in college students. Building on a theoretical compatibility analysis, this study explores the intrinsic unity between excellent traditional Chinese culture and positive psychology in terms of value pursuit, personality development, and practical orientation. It further analyzes the current challenges faced by universities in integrating psychological education, including the fragmentation of curricular content, insufficient cultural embedding, and limited student engagement. On this basis, the paper proposes systematic pathways for incorporating traditional cultural resources and positive psychology into campus mental health education, such as curriculum design, experiential activities, and counseling practices. By articulating both theoretical foundations and practical strategies, the study aims to provide a useful reference for constructing innovative psychological education models in higher education that effectively combine traditional wisdom with contemporary psychological science, thereby promoting the holistic development and mental well-being of university students.

**Keywords:** traditional chinese culture; positive psychology; university psychological education; college students' mental health; value education; chinese higher education; character development

## 1. Introduction

Universities play a pivotal role in fostering a well-rounded and capable generation of individuals who contribute to societal development through moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor achievements. In the current era, college students encounter a wide array of challenges, including the pressures of academic performance, intense competition in the job market, and the complexities of interpersonal relationships. These factors have contributed to a noticeable rise in mental health concerns among students. Traditional methods of addressing these issues often fall short in meeting the diverse and evolving psychological needs of students during their developmental journey. The rich heritage of traditional culture in China offers profound insights into psychological resilience and character development, providing valuable strategies for addressing these challenges [1]. Simultaneously, the principles of positive psychology, which focus on fostering strengths, cultivating positive traits, and enhancing overall well-being, offer a complementary framework. The integration of these two perspectives creates a robust foundation for advancing psychological education, equipping modern higher education institutions with innovative approaches to support students' mental and emotional growth effectively.

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## 2. Theoretical Compatibility Between China's Excellent Traditional Culture and Positive Psychology

The excellent traditional Chinese culture and positive psychology exhibit profound theoretical compatibility. From the perspective of value orientation, the traditional cultural ideal of "cultivating oneself, regulating the family, governing the state, and bringing peace to the world" aligns seamlessly with the focus of positive psychology on enhancing individual well-being. Both frameworks emphasize the holistic development of individuals and the realization of life's purpose. The Confucian virtues of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness" correspond closely with the principles of character development in positive psychology, as both aim to foster positive traits and moral excellence in individuals. Regarding methods of personal growth, the traditional cultural practice of "self-reflection and cultivation" parallels the positive psychology approach of "strength identification." While the former emphasizes introspection and ethical self-improvement, the latter focuses on recognizing and utilizing personal strengths, with both approaches converging on the goal of self-enhancement. Taoist teachings, such as "contentment brings happiness," harmonize with the positive psychology practice of cultivating gratitude, while Buddhist principles of compassion, joy, and generosity align with strategies for fostering positive emotions. These shared values and practices create a complementary relationship between the two disciplines. On a practical level, the wisdom embedded in traditional Chinese culture offers a wealth of localized resources for the application of positive psychology, while the empirical methodologies of positive psychology provide a robust framework for validating and modernizing traditional cultural practices [2, 3]. The integrative thinking inherent in traditional culture and the systematic research paradigms of positive psychology reinforce one another, forming a solid theoretical basis for developing a psychological education model uniquely suited to China's cultural context.

## 3. Current Status and Integration Challenges of Psychological Education in Higher Education Institutions

### 3.1. *Insufficient emphasis on problem correction and proactive quality cultivation*

Currently, many universities continue to rely on traditional approaches in psychological education, which predominantly focus on addressing challenges such as mental distress, crisis management, and psychological disorders [4]. These methods often emphasize identifying and correcting psychological issues, yet they lack a comprehensive strategy for nurturing students' positive psychological attributes. While this problem-oriented approach can provide relief from psychological burdens, it does not fully harness students' potential for growth and development. Positive psychological traits, including gratitude, resilience, and creativity, are essential for holistic development, yet efforts to integrate these qualities into educational practices remain limited [1, 5]. Institutions have yet to establish systematic frameworks and robust evaluation mechanisms to effectively cultivate these traits. Expanding psychological education to include proactive strategies that emphasize the development of positive qualities could significantly enhance students' overall well-being and equip them with the tools to thrive in diverse environments. A shift toward a more balanced approach that integrates both corrective measures and proactive cultivation is crucial for advancing psychological education in higher education institutions.

### 3.2. *Fragmented resource supply and the need for deeper integration of cultural resources*

The allocation of psychological education resources within higher education institutions demonstrates considerable fragmentation, with traditional cultural education and mental health education frequently functioning independently. While certain universities provide elective courses focused on classical Chinese literature and traditional culture, these offerings often fail to establish meaningful connections with psychological education programs, thereby missing opportunities for synergistic

development [6]. Additionally, significant gaps persist between the wealth of campus cultural resources, ideological and political education materials, and psychological education frameworks, obstructing the cohesive integration of these elements. In efforts to incorporate traditional cultural resources into psychological education, some institutions limit their approach to surface-level cultural representations, neglecting the deeper psychological benefits these resources can offer. This superficial engagement undermines the potential for a comprehensive integration of cultural heritage with psychological science, highlighting the need for a more strategic and holistic approach to resource utilization that bridges cultural and psychological domains effectively [3, 7].

### *3.3. Single methodological approach with insufficient integration of scientific rigor and cultural considerations*

Current psychological education approaches in higher education institutions predominantly rely on Western psychological theories and techniques, with traditional lecture-based teaching remaining dominant. Many universities place excessive emphasis on standardized psychological assessment tools and formulaic counseling methods when implementing mental health education, often overlooking the profound educational insights inherent in China's traditional culture [8]. This overreliance on rigid frameworks limits the adaptability of psychological education to the diverse needs of students [9]. Furthermore, some institutions fail to effectively merge experiential learning approaches inspired by traditional cultural practices with the structured methodologies of modern positive psychology. This lack of integration creates a gap between the precision of scientific methodologies and the nurturing of humanistic values, which are essential for holistic educational development. Such a narrow focus not only restricts the ability to address the varied psychological growth requirements of students but also hinders the potential to fully harness the unique strengths and perspectives offered by Chinese cultural heritage in the field of psychological education.

### *3.4. Insufficient coordination of support systems and lack of in-depth dialogue on value orientation*

Current psychological education support models at universities face challenges in establishing effective coordination mechanisms among various departments [10, 11]. Key stakeholders, such as mental health education centers, student affairs offices, ideological and political education instructors, and academic faculty, often operate independently, lacking robust communication platforms and collaborative frameworks [12, 13]. This fragmentation hinders the integration of psychological counseling with value-oriented guidance, resulting in missed opportunities for fostering meaningful dialogue on cultural and ethical values [14]. Efforts to incorporate traditional cultural elements into psychological education programs frequently suffer from inadequate planning and a lack of holistic design, further limiting their impact. Departments tend to focus narrowly on their specific functions, which restricts the potential for unified educational strategies. Additionally, evaluation systems are predominantly centered on quantitative metrics, neglecting the importance of qualitative assessments that measure deeper outcomes, such as cultural engagement and the cultivation of values. To address these issues, a more comprehensive approach to planning, communication, and evaluation is essential for achieving truly integrated and impactful psychological education.

## **4. Practical Approaches for Integrating China's Excellent Traditional Culture and Positive Psychology into Psychological Education in Higher Education Institutions**

### *4.1. Reconstructing Objectives: Establishing a New System for Positive Quality Cultivation*

The reconstruction of psychological education objectives in higher education institutions necessitates a shift toward a developmental framework that emphasizes the cultivation of positive qualities. This approach integrates the concept of "gentleman's character" from China's traditional culture with the principles of positive psychology,

particularly the "character advantage" theory. The resulting framework aims to nurture positive qualities across four interconnected dimensions: cognition, emotion, willpower, and behavior. In the realm of cognitive development, the focus should be on fostering intellectual capabilities and critical thinking skills, enabling students to approach challenges with analytical precision and innovative problem-solving abilities [15, 16]. Emotional cultivation, on the other hand, should prioritize the enhancement of benevolent sentiments and empathetic capacities, fostering a deeper understanding of interpersonal relationships and emotional intelligence. Willpower development involves strengthening resilience and self-regulation, equipping students with the tools to navigate adversity and maintain focus on long-term goals. Behavioral cultivation emphasizes the importance of practical ethics and social responsibility, encouraging students to translate their internal values into meaningful actions that benefit society. The proposed goal model introduces tiered cultivation standards, progressing from foundational psychological literacy to advanced character refinement. This creates a structured, upward developmental trajectory that supports continuous personal growth [17]. To complement this, diversified evaluation metrics should be established, combining a profound understanding of traditional cultural literacy with observable behavioral manifestations of positive psychological qualities. These metrics should seamlessly integrate qualitative and quantitative assessments to provide a holistic evaluation of student development. For instance, "gratitude education" serves as a practical application of this framework. Educators can merge traditional cultural principles, such as the value of "repaying kindness," with modern gratitude intervention techniques from positive psychology to design comprehensive teaching programs. These programs may include activities like gratitude journal writing, composing letters of appreciation, and engaging in reflective meditation exercises. During these activities, teachers can guide students through classical texts to deepen their understanding of gratitude's cultural significance. For example, exploring traditional teachings about familial respect and purposeful living can provide context for gratitude practices. By incorporating gratitude exercises, such as documenting daily acts of gratitude and sharing experiences with peers, students develop a heightened awareness of gratitude and an increased sense of happiness. This approach effectively bridges traditional cultural values with scientific methodologies, fostering a transition from problem-solving to the cultivation of enduring positive qualities.

#### *4.2. Deepening Content Development to Create a New Curriculum for Cultural and Psychological Integration*

To develop a curriculum framework that integrates traditional cultural elements with positive psychology, it is essential to thoroughly explore the educational potential of cultural heritage in fostering psychological growth while maintaining a high standard of academic rigor. This approach aims to create a teaching structure that balances cultural richness with contemporary relevance. Course design should seamlessly blend the life wisdom found in classical texts with the scientific principles of positive psychology, constructing immersive and culturally meaningful psychological learning experiences. In selecting content, educators can align core Confucian virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness with frameworks for character development in positive psychology [3]. Additionally, the Taoist philosophy of harmonizing with nature can be integrated into psychological resilience training, providing students with a dual perspective that combines cultural insights and scientific methodologies [2, 5]. This strategy allows learners to receive structured guidance for psychological development while engaging with cultural traditions. Instructional methods should move beyond conventional knowledge delivery models, adopting thematic and case-based approaches to achieve a cohesive integration of cultural education and psychological development. For instance, in a module focused on cultivating resilience, educators might use classical passages that emphasize perseverance and overcoming adversity as entry points. These cultural narratives can be paired with modern psychological tools, such as resilience assessments, reflective exercises on

personal challenges, and practical skill-building activities aimed at enhancing resilience. By engaging with these comprehensive learning modules, students gain both an appreciation for the life wisdom embedded in traditional culture and practical techniques for psychological adjustment, achieving a harmonious blend of cultural immersion and skill acquisition [9]. Furthermore, the curriculum should emphasize localized characteristics by leveraging regional cultural resources to strengthen students' sense of cultural identity and promote their mental well-being. This localized approach ensures that the curriculum remains relevant and impactful, fostering a deeper connection between students and their cultural heritage while supporting their psychological growth.

#### *4.3. Innovative Approaches: Exploring Scientific Culture and Reimagining Models*

To establish an educational methodology system that integrates scientific rigor with cultural depth, teaching designs must organically combine traditional cultural immersion with positive psychology techniques [10]. This integrated approach should leverage the experiential and reflective learning strengths inherent in traditional culture while incorporating evidence-based training methods from positive psychology, thereby creating an educational model that combines profound cultural heritage with modern scientific characteristics. During implementation, strategies such as situational immersion, role-playing exercises, and reflective dialogues can be employed to help students experience positive emotions within cultural contexts and internalize cultural values through scientific training. Methodological innovation should prioritize individualized needs by designing tiered learning pathways that foster emotional connection to traditional culture while validating positive psychological outcomes through scientific validation. For instance, educators can guide students to explore classical teachings that emphasize the joy of learning and self-improvement, encouraging them to perceive positive emotions through activities such as classical recitation, artistic immersion, and reflective discussions [14]. These activities can be further enriched by integrating modern psychological techniques, such as envisioning future-oriented goals and creating actionable plans that align with traditional ideals of personal growth and aspiration. Additionally, educators may introduce practices that encourage daily reflection, such as recording positive life events, which can be inspired by the ancient tradition of journaling. This practice not only helps students develop a habit of gratitude but also enhances their ability to find beauty and meaning in everyday experiences. By combining these reflective practices with structured cultural immersion, students can cultivate emotional resonance and strengthen positive cognitive patterns [14]. Over time, this approach enables them to internalize optimistic qualities, fostering sustainable personal development and a deeper appreciation for the interplay between cultural heritage and scientific methodologies.

#### *4.4. Pooling Resources to Establish a New Collaborative Education Mechanism*

To establish a new collaborative education mechanism, it is essential to create a multi-stakeholder education framework that fosters cooperation among diverse entities. A cross-departmental coordination committee should be formed to unify efforts across key educational departments, such as mental health services, student affairs, ideological education, and specialized academic institutions. This committee would aim to develop a cohesive plan that integrates cultural and psychological education into the broader academic framework. Enhanced information-sharing platforms are crucial for facilitating the exchange of data related to students' psychological well-being, cultural literacy, and academic achievements. Such platforms would enable data-driven strategies to address individual and collective educational needs effectively. Furthermore, a multi-tiered faculty collaboration system should be established to encourage interdisciplinary teaching communities. Psychology educators, cultural studies scholars, and ideological instructors should engage in joint lesson planning and case study discussions to promote deeper interdisciplinary understanding. Regular collaborative sessions would ensure the integration of diverse perspectives into the curriculum [16]. Incentive-based evaluation

systems should also be introduced to incorporate the outcomes of cultural-psychological integration into faculty performance assessments, motivating educators to actively contribute to this initiative. For instance, an interdisciplinary program focusing on character education could be developed, where educators from various fields collaborate to explore historical and contemporary interpretations of character development. Ancient literature specialists could analyze classical texts to extract foundational principles, mental health professionals could apply psychological theories to understand character-building mechanisms, and ideological educators could contextualize these principles within modern societal values. The curriculum could combine theoretical exploration, case studies, and experiential learning to provide students with a holistic understanding of character education. Students might begin by examining classical texts to understand traditional virtues, followed by applying psychological frameworks to assess their relevance in contemporary contexts. Practical activities could then be designed to help students embody these virtues in their daily lives. Additionally, the teaching team should establish regular forums for exchanging insights and refining instructional strategies, ensuring the seamless integration of interdisciplinary knowledge and the continuous improvement of educational outcomes.

#### *4.5. Expanding platforms to establish a diversified new platform for practical experience*

Higher education institutions should actively establish diverse and innovative platforms to integrate traditional cultural heritage with principles of positive psychology. By developing cultural clubs, practice bases, digital platforms, and other educational tools, schools can create immersive and engaging environments that foster holistic student development. A systematic integration of campus cultural activities, volunteer initiatives, and traditional festivals can significantly broaden the scope and depth of psychological education. This multifaceted strategy not only enhances the appeal and effectiveness of educational programs but also provides students with authentic, real-world scenarios to cultivate personal growth and mental well-being. The coordinated operation of these platforms establishes a comprehensive educational framework, enabling students to naturally internalize cultural values and psychological insights through active participation. For instance, courses centered on "Tea Culture Appreciation" can serve as a practical example. Instructors may design specialized experiential programs within dedicated tea art studios, allowing students to explore the profound cultural philosophy of "cultivating tranquility and nurturing character" while acquiring knowledge of tea traditions and mastering brewing techniques [10]. Educators should encourage students to engage deeply with their sensory experiences during tea tasting, employing mindfulness practices to observe subtle variations in aroma, color, and flavor [7]. This process not only enhances concentration and awareness but also fosters a deeper connection to the present moment [9]. Additionally, students can establish tea culture clubs to organize regular seminars and artistic performances, which promote social interaction, emotional resilience, and cultural preservation. This dual-purpose approach effectively combines the safeguarding of traditional heritage with the advancement of psychological well-being, creating a balanced and enriching educational experience.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, there is a profound synergy between the principles of traditional cultural values and the foundational concepts of positive psychology, which has invigorated psychological education within academic institutions. Universities are uniquely positioned to delve deeply into the psychological dimensions embedded in traditional cultural frameworks, leveraging these insights to develop innovative and culturally resonant approaches to mental health education. By integrating the methodologies of positive psychology with the rich heritage of traditional culture, institutions can create a transformative model of psychological education that reflects distinct cultural characteristics. This approach not only enhances the mental well-being

and positive attributes of students but also plays a pivotal role in preserving and revitalizing cultural heritage. Furthermore, it fosters a generation of individuals equipped with robust psychological resilience and a strong sense of cultural identity. Future research should explore scalable strategies for integrating these models across diverse educational contexts, ensuring their adaptability and long-term impact.

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