

# A Collaborative Study on the Cultivation of Traditional Culture and the Psychological Growth of College Students

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## Abstract

## Original Research Article

Traditional culture serves as valuable resource to cultivate college students' psychological qualities and fulfill the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education in higher education. Integrating traditional cultural education with college students' psychological growth to realize coordinated development has become a key measure for the in-depth combination of holistic education and psychological education in the new era. Adopting literature research, logical analysis and case analysis, this paper starts from the psychological educational connotation of traditional culture, sorts out the internal logical relationship between traditional cultural resources and college students' psychological development, analyzes practical obstacles restricting their coordinated development, elaborates the collaborative mechanism from four dimensions including cognitive foundation, emotional nourishment, value shaping and practical internalization, and constructs a four-in-one collaborative cultivation path covering universities, society, families and individuals.

The study finds that current colleges are confronted with prominent problems such as separation between traditional culture courses and psychological teaching, superficial campus cultural activities, insufficient home-school coordination and students' lack of initiative to internalize relevant knowledge. Supported by four categories of traditional cultural resources, namely Confucian ethical cultivation, Taoist wisdom of harmony between human and nature, TCM emotion regulation and folk ritual culture, educators can optimize college students' personality, ease psychological pressure and enhance their psychological resilience. Through curriculum co-construction, environmental construction, home-school linkage and autonomous practice, a closed-loop educational system can be formed, so as to realize cultural inheritance via spiritual nourishment and consolidate students' mental development with cultural accumulation. The findings provide theoretical support and practical references for the reform of college psychological education.

**Keywords:** traditional cultural education, college students, psychological growth, collaborative education, psychological resilience.

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## 0. Introduction

Cultivating people with culture is an essential approach to fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue. Excellent traditional Chinese culture contains abundant wisdom of self-cultivation,

emotional regulation and interpersonal communication, which functions as localized high-quality resources to solve college students' prevalent psychological troubles including heavy academic burden, interpersonal sensitivity, value confusion



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and poor psychological resilience. With intensified social competition and clashes of diverse cultures, compound pressures from further study, employment and interpersonal communication lead to a growing prevalence of psychological disorders among college students. Over-reliance on Western psychological theories in mental health education exposes obvious drawbacks; hence it is urgent to explore localized traditional culture and renovate psychological education modes (Lin, 2025)[1].

In current practice, university traditional culture education mainly focuses on humanistic quality and ideological-moral cultivation, while psychological education is confined to classroom teaching and individual counseling. The two work independently, making it hard to materialize the psychological healing value of traditional culture and resulting in disconnection between cultural teaching and psychological counseling (Chen & Liu, 2023)[2]. Existing studies by Kang (2026)[3] and Huang et al.(2025)[4] discuss the application value of integrating traditional culture into mental health education; Chen (2024)[5] and Han et al.(2025)[6] respectively carry out research on traditional cultural education and campus psychological construction. However, systematic research on their collaborative mechanism and integrated cultivation system remains insufficient. Referring to the research framework of Wang (2014)[7] and Miao (2016)[8] on festival-based cultural education, this paper explores the educational value of traditional culture, clarifies collaborative contradictions and internal mechanisms, and constructs a four-stakeholder cultivation path to boost the coordinated development of cultural inheritance and college students' psychological growth.

## 1. Core Educational Resources of Traditional Culture and Their Contemporary Value

### 1.1 Four Core Cultural Resources Beneficial to Students' Psychological Development

Accumulated over thousands of years, excellent traditional Chinese culture integrates Confucianism, Taoism, traditional Chinese medicine, folk rituals and intangible heritage crafts into a complete

spiritual nourishment system, whose four core components match college students' developmental demands:

**Confucian Self-cultivation Ethics:** Cultivates sound personality and harmonious interpersonal relations. Confucian ideas of self-examination, benevolence and moderation guide students to treat personal strengths and weaknesses rationally and relieve self-abasement and interpersonal conflicts. The ideal of self-improvement helps learners set long-term goals and tackle the problem of spiritual emptiness (Zhao & Wu, 2022)[9].

**Taoist Wisdom of Human-Nature Harmony:** Relieves anxiety and internal friction and improve stress resilience. The concepts of following natural laws and contentment free students from vicious comparison and irrational internal friction, while dialectical thinking teaches them feasible coping strategies amid setbacks to stabilize emotions (Liu & Zhang, 2022)[10].

**TCM Emotion Regimen Therapy:** Realize physical-mental integration and localized emotional intervention. Xiong (2016)[11] put forward the theories of body-spirit unity and five-emotion inter-restriction in *Traditional Chinese Culture and Health Psychology*. Combined with Baduanjin, five-tone music therapy and traditional health preservation, such methods adjust negative emotions physically and mentally and remedy the over-verbalization deficiency of modern psychological counseling.

**Folk Ritual and Art Culture:** Creates immersive experience and cultivate belongingness. As pointed out by Wang (2024)[12], collective activities such as traditional festivals, calligraphy, painting and intangible heritage handcrafts ease loneliness and social phobia via immersive experience and strengthen empathy and group identity in teamwork, which is further verified by Li (2018)[13] in her monograph.

### 1.2 Contemporary Value of Collaborative Education

Firstly, enrich localized psychological education to fix the inadaptability of Western

psychological theories and build a mental health system suitable for Chinese college students. Secondly, realize two-way empowerment: traditional culture gets rid of rigid textbook-based teaching via psychological courses, while psychological education shifts from passive intervention to regular spiritual nourishment with cultural carriers (Han et al., 2025)[6]. Thirdly, cultural identity consolidates students' self-confidence, reduces value disturbance caused by inappropriate foreign ideologies and lowers the incidence of self-doubt and emotional sensitivity from the source (Wei, 2017)[14]. Fourthly, facilitate all-round education reform and conform to the health-oriented educational trend in contemporary higher education (Huang et al., 2025)[4].

## 2. Current Synergy Status and Restrictive Factors

### 2.1 Existing Synergistic Deficiencies

The synergy is featured with superficial cognition, passive participation and separation between recognition and practice.

At the cognitive level, over 90% of students know classic proverbs and general traditional knowledge, yet less than 30% understand the psychological regulation connotation behind such culture; niche TCM regimen and heritage-based mental healing are rarely introduced in psychology courses, leading to isolation between cultural knowledge and emotional adjustment (Kang, 2026)[3].

At the participation level, campus cultural activities are dominated by performances and essay contests, and psychological activities focus on popular science lectures and mental screening; joint integrated projects are scarce. Less than 45% of students voluntarily join calligraphy meditation, traditional exercise decompression and heritage handcraft therapy, as formalism and utilitarianism weaken educational effects (Wang, 2014)[7].

At the attitudinal level, more than 82% of students recognize the psychological benefits of traditional culture, but only a few apply classic recitation and traditional regimen to ease emotions;

some students blindly pursue overseas leisure decompression methods and ignore indigenous spiritual cultivation (Wei, 2017)[14].

### 2.2 Multidimensional Restrictive Elements

University side: Liberal arts schools, mental health centers and student affairs offices operate independently without cross-department coordination; psychology teachers lack traditional cultural literacy while arts teachers receive insufficient psychological training, resulting in a shortage of interdisciplinary instructors; specialized spaces such as cultural psychological workshops and meditation rooms are insufficient on campus (Chen, 2024)[5].

Social side: Excessive commercialization turns festivals and intangible heritage into marketing tools and dilutes their spiritual value; fragmented short-video communication leads to vulgarized and entertainment-oriented interpretation of traditional culture; inadequate long-term cooperation between cultural venues, heritage institutions and universities wastes off-campus practical resources (Miao, 2016)[8].

Family side: Parents prioritize academic grades over family precept-based spiritual cultivation; most guardians lack relevant knowledge of cultural mental nourishment and fail to assist schools with home-based psychological guidance (Zhou, 2022)[15].

Individual side: Driven by utilitarian learning, students prioritize certificate and employment-related courses and despise traditional culture learning; fragmented reading habits prevent them from in-depth exploration of self-cultivation philosophy (Chen & Liu, 2023)[2].

### 2.3 Correlation between Cultural Learning and Mental Health

Practical data from multiple universities proves that students with long-term participation in integrated cultural-psychological courses have remarkably lower anxiety and depression rates and stronger adaptability and resilience; the depth of traditional cultural learning is positively correlated with

students' mental health (Wang, 2024)[12], (Zhou, 2022)[15].

## 2.4 In-depth Cause Analysis of Synergy Barriers

Combining field interview and literature review, three core causes are concluded: insufficient top-level institutional design leading to separated management of cultural and psychological education; insufficient secondary psychological transformation of traditional cultural resources which disconnects from students' real life; deficient interdisciplinary training system restricting the cultivation of versatile teachers (Kang, 2026)[3], (Chen, 2024)[5].

## 3. Four-dimensional Synergistic Mechanism of Traditional Culture for Mental Development

### 3.1 Cognitive Empowerment: Lay Theoretical Foundation for Mental Health

Systematic traditional cultural learning helps students build localized body-mind cognitive frameworks and clarify the relations among self, others and nature. Mastering Confucian self-cultivation and TCM emotion theories enables students to view mood fluctuation rationally and reduce unnecessary self-denial and irrational psychological troubles (Zhao & Wu, 2022)[9]; (Xiong, 2016)[11].

### 3.2 Emotional Identification: Consolidate Psychological Security and Emotional Endurance

Reunion customs in traditional festivals, classic art and group folk events stimulate family, national and peer affection to relieve loneliness; calligraphy, painting and folk music serve as healthy emotional outlets, and continuous positive experience improves students' emotional resilience and sense of belonging (Miao, 2016)[8]; (Wang, 2024)[12].

### 3.3 Value Cultivation: Remedy Spiritual Emptiness and Optimize Value Orientation

Core traditional virtues such as perseverance and benevolence break the single score-employment

evaluation stereotype and help students establish diversified life pursuits. Traditional inspirational thoughts provide spiritual support amid academic and career setbacks and reduce severe psychological crisis risks (Liu & Zhang, 2022)[10].

## 3.4 Practical Internalization: Translate Cultural Knowledge into Daily Self-help Skills

Hands-on activities including sachet making, traditional rubbings, Tai Chi practice and classic reading convert abstract cultural ideas into practical emotion-regulation approaches, allowing students to learn mindfulness and empathy and realize the transformation from theoretical knowledge to mental self-help capacity (Wang, 2024)[12].

## 4. Four-in-one Collaborative Cultivation Path

### 4.1 Universities: Optimize Top-level Design as Core Cultivation Carrier

**Curriculum Construction:** Add traditional spiritual cultivation modules to compulsory mental health courses and set electives of *Chinese Classics & Psychological Regulation and Traditional Art Therapy*. Integrate psychological elements into ideological, physical and art courses and arrange regular Baduanjin and Tai Chi lessons in PE classes.

**Campus Activities:** Develop featured psychological salons, handcraft therapy and volunteer services around Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival; fund student associations of calligraphy, folk music and traditional handcraft and build campus cultural meditation spaces.

**Faculty Construction:** Organize cross-training: psychology teachers receive traditional culture courses while arts teachers take systematic psychological learning; employ folk heritage inheritors and sinologists as part-time instructors and set interdisciplinary teaching groups.

**Campus Environment:** Build traditional culture corridors and quiet reading rooms in student communities to realize imperceptible mental nourishment.

## 4.2 Society: Integrate Social Resources to Expand Off-campus Practice

Cooperate with museums, intangible heritage centers and TCM hospitals to build off-campus practice bases; launch popular science columns about cultural spiritual nourishment on new media platforms; standardize commercial exploitation of traditional culture to avoid over-commercialization; carry out folk-themed public welfare activities with local communities.

## 4.3 Families: Take Family Precepts as Home-based Cultivation Foundation

Universities deliver cultural mental-nourishment knowledge via parents' meetings and online family lectures, guiding parents to organize family reading and handcraft activities in festivals; combine excellent family traditions with festival education to ease students' psychological pressure via family warmth.

## 4.4 Individuals: Improve Subjective Initiative for Self-cultivation

Students conduct systematic reading of traditional classics to abandon fragmented shallow reading; take part in various cultural-psychological activities and relieve negative feelings via calligraphy and traditional exercises; establish inclusive cultural values to absorb merits from both Chinese and foreign cultures and realize self-growth with traditional culture.

## 5. Conclusion and Future Prospect

### 5.1 Research Conclusion

Traditional culture boasts abundant resources in self-cultivation, interpersonal ethics, health preservation and empathy cultivation to satisfy college students' psychological development demands. Restricted by institutional, social, familial and individual factors, current collaborative education suffers from disjointed curriculum, superficial activities and separation between recognition and practice. Driven by cognition,

emotion, value and practice, traditional culture effectively facilitates mental development; coordinated efforts from universities, society, families and individuals form integrated educational synergy to realize dual goals of cultural inheritance and students' mental health improvement.

### 5.2 Future Prospect

Follow-up research may launch empirical questionnaires across different regions and majors. Through scientific data collection and analysis, the actual improvement effects of various traditional cultural projects on the mental health of participants can be quantitatively evaluated, and their mechanism and impact degree can be clarified. At the same time, efforts should be made to explore the use of modern technological means such as VR technology and digital interactive platforms to create immersive and highly interactive online virtual cultural healing spaces, so that traditional culture can be integrated into the psychological support system in a more vivid and convenient way. In addition, beneficial experiences from foreign countries in folk activities and educational practice should be referenced and drawn upon, combined with the characteristics of Chinese culture, to systematically promote the external dissemination and exchange of excellent traditional Chinese culture centered on "cultivating the mind", and continuously feedback, adjust and improve in practice, thereby continuously optimizing the collaborative education model involving cross-disciplinary and multi-party participation, and enhancing its effectiveness and sustainability.

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