

A STUDY ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EDUCATION MODEL INTEGRATING PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND CULTURAL QUALITY EDUCATION TAKING UNIVERSITIES IN SICHUAN PROVINCE OF CHINA AS AN EXAMPLE

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The higher education becomes more widespread and competition intensifies, the academic pressure on college students is increasing, and psychological. **Objective:** This paper focuses on local universities in Sichuan Province, systematically exploring the integration mechanisms and pathways of Psychological Health Education (PHE) and Cultural Quality Education (CQE). The aim is to develop a localized, high-quality, and sustainable integrated education model. Within the context of relevant policies in China. **Method:** the study involves surveys of 30 Sichuan universities, interviews with faculty and students, and analysis of practical cases. It reveals the status and issues of integrated education in terms of concept updating, curriculum development, and mechanism support, and proposes a three-dimensional integration path model of 'synergy, connectivity, and embedding. **Results:** The research indicates that integrated education not only enhances college students' psychological adaptability and cultural identity but also strengthens their personality development, social responsibility, and national consciousness, contributing to the high-quality transformation of higher education. **Conclusion:** The integration of Psychological Health Education and Cultural Quality Education provides a systematic approach to promoting students' holistic development. The proposed three-dimensional model of synergy, connectivity, and embedding offers a practical pathway for integrated education. This model can support universities in enhancing students' psychological adaptability, cultural identity, and overall development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As higher education becomes more widespread and competition intensifies, the academic pressure on college students is increasing, and psychological health issues are becoming a significant factor that hinders academic progress (Chemagosi, 2024)^[4] Numerous studies show that psychological health directly impacts students (Suldo et al., 2014)^[23] learning efficiency, academic performance, and overall development. Moreover, cultural quality education (Annahatak, 1994)^[2] which plays a crucial role in enhancing students' humanistic qualities, values, and social adaptability, positively contributes to the comprehensive growth and academic success of students (Sheldon & Kasser, 2001)^[21]

Liu et al. (2022)^[12] a region rich in higher education resources but with a diverse student body, has seen local universities undertake numerous initiatives in psychological health and cultural quality education. (Taylor & Brown, 1988)^[24] However, traditional educational models often separate these two areas, lacking a systematic integration that could fully leverage their synergistic effects on enhancing students' academic performance (Amirova, 2025)^[1] Psychological health education focuses (Korobeinikova, Iermakov & Korobeynikov, 2024)^[10] on students' psychological adjustment and emotional management, while cultural quality education emphasizes value guidance and cultural identity (Nightingale et al., 2013)^[16] The effective integration of these two areas can create a dual support system for students' psychological and cultural development, thereby significantly boosting their learning motivation, academic performance, and overall growth (Crystal et al., 1994)^[6]

Research significance from a theoretical perspective, integrating psychological health education with cultural quality education can help build a multi-dimensional and multi-level student support system. This integration provides both psychological and cultural (Schotte et al., 2018)^[20] support to enhance students' academic performance. The integrated model helps strengthen students' psychological resilience and cultural identity (Costigan et al., 2010)^[5] stimulating their intrinsic motivation to learn, which in turn promotes academic achievement and the development of comprehensive qualities.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the current situation of psychological health and cultural quality education in local colleges and universities in Sichuan province and its influence on students' academic performance;
2. Explore the theoretical basis of the integration and the mechanism of the integration to promote students' academic performance;
3. Design a psychological health and cultural quality integration education model suitable for colleges and universities in Sichuan Province;

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Development and core issues of mental health education (PHE) (Schotte et al., 2018)^[20] Higher Education Psychological Health (PHE) originated from psychological counseling practices. As students' psychological issues have become more prominent and theories have developed, PHE has evolved from initial intervention and treatment to a focus on both prevention and promotion, with an emphasis on

cultivating psychological qualities (Roberts et al., 2018)^[19] Foreign research, such as the American model of psychological health promotion and the European system of support services, has laid the foundation for a multi-level system, emphasizing environmental support and social-cultural context (Keyes, 2007)^[9]

Transformation and integration potential of cultural quality education (CQE)

The CQE aims to enhance humanistic literacy and social responsibility, shifting its focus from knowledge transmission to cultural identity and value shaping. Under policy guidance, domestic universities actively engage in cultural theme activities, but these efforts often suffer from fragmented content, an incomplete system, and a lack of diverse methods, which hinders their effectiveness in promoting student development (Pirson, 2020)^[17]

The conceptual structure of the integrated mental health model is based on two pillars: developmental psychology and cultural competence (Pirson, 2020)^[17] Traditional university mental health models have been heavily criticized for their emphasis on mental health (Mushonga, & Henneberger, 2020)^[15] Contemporary literature advocates for developmental education (Davydov, 1998)^[7] focusing on positive psychology, emotional regulation, and preventative mental health support for all students. (Bar-On, 2010)^[3]

Crisis screening and early warning systems: Implementing an integrated approach (McLellan et al., 2017)^[13] at the institutional level requires robust data tracking to identify at-risk students and create a protective network that monitors both academic stress and social and cultural adjustment (Ward & Kennedy, 1993)^[25]

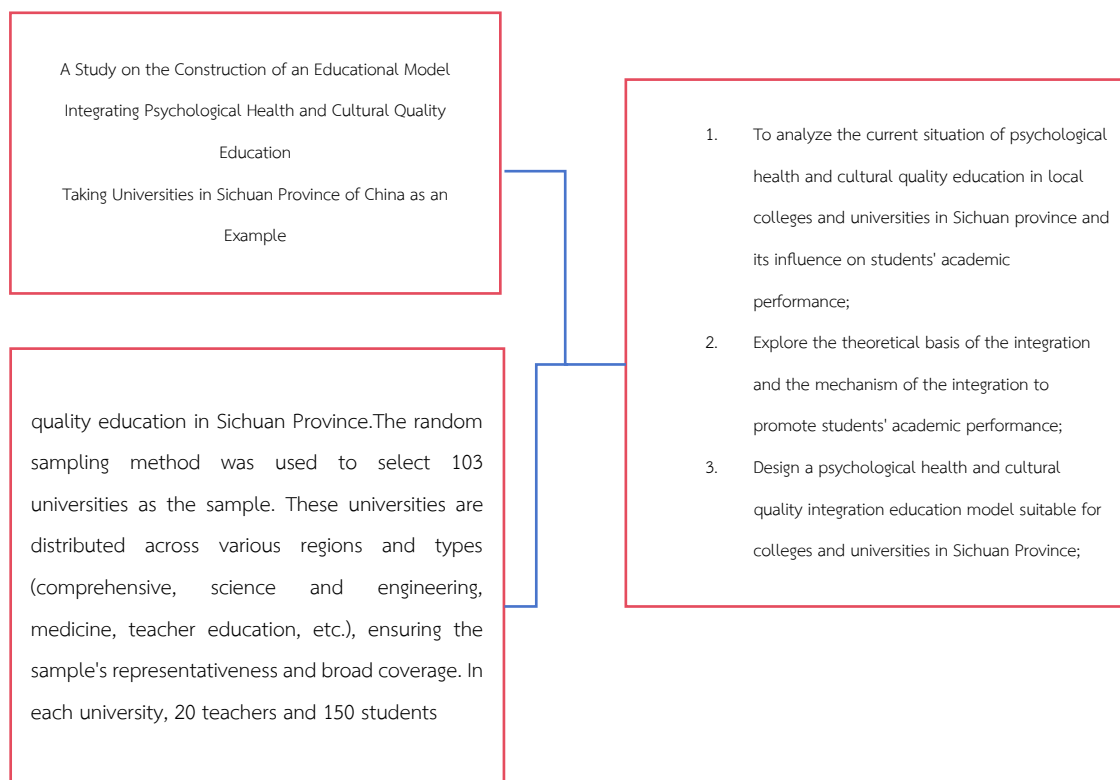
In practice, although domestic universities started exploring integrated education (Rennie et al., 2012)^[18] relatively late, they have achieved some success. Some universities in Sichuan Province (Liu, 2018)^[11] have attempted to integrate excellent traditional Chinese culture (Zhu & Yuan, 2023)^[26] with psychological health education (Jiao, 2025)^[8] by developing integrated courses and organizing cultural psychological theme activities, actively fostering a campus environment that supports students' psychological adjustment and cultural identity (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993)^[22] However, the integration practices still face numerous constraints, such as the lag in building interdisciplinary teacher teams, the lack of systematic design in the integrated curriculum system, and an underdeveloped evaluation mechanism. More importantly, integrated education (Mitchell, 2015)^[14] has yet to establish a unified theoretical framework and practical standards, and there is a lack of replicable models, which severely hinders its promotion and effectiveness.

In summary, the integration of psychological health and cultural quality education is not only supported by solid theoretical foundations but also meets the practical needs for the all-round development of college students. Future research should focus on developing a systematic integration theory, enhancing interdisciplinary teacher training, deepening curriculum reform, and establishing a scientific evaluation system to promote the standardized and routine development of integrated education models. This will genuinely enhance students' psychological health and cultural literacy, fostering their academic and personal

4. CONCEPTURAL FRAMWORK

Figure 1

Conceptual framework



4. METHODOLOGY

1. Population and sample

The study focuses on college students and teachers involved in psychological health and cultural quality education in Sichuan Province. The random sampling method was used to select 103 universities as the sample. These universities are distributed across various regions and types (comprehensive, science and engineering, medicine, teacher education, etc.), ensuring the sample's representativeness and broad coverage. In each university, 20 teachers and 150 students were randomly selected to distribute questionnaires, and a total of 20,710 valid questionnaires were collected. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with 4 teachers and student's representatives in some universities, totaling 412 people, to ensure the depth and breadth of the research results.

2. Research tools

In-depth interviews Data collection and analysis the questionnaire was distributed and collected through a combination of online and offline methods to ensure the efficiency and completeness of data collection.

5. RESULTS

Table 2

Recognition and confusion of integrated education concepts

Category	Age 20-25	Age 26-30	Female	Male	2021 Cohort	2022 Cohort	2023 Cohort	Total
Count	61	203	91	112	65	72	66	281
Percentage	30.05%	69.95%	44.83%	55.17%	32.02%	35.47%	32.51%	100%

The coding analysis of the in-depth interviews with 412 teachers and students extracted the following core themes: Recognition and confusion of integrated education concepts Most respondents recognized the importance of integrating psychological health and cultural quality education but had great doubts about the specific implementation path. Lack of interdisciplinary cooperation among teachers the lack of effective communication and collaboration among teachers restricts the design and implementation of integrated courses.

Insufficient resource allocation and policy support Integrated education lacks special funds and policy guarantee, so it is difficult to carry out in-depth activities continuously. 4.5.4 Students' willingness to participate actively needs to be stimulated Some students have little interest in integrated courses and lack the motivation to participate actively. These qualitative findings provide an important supplement to the quantitative results and reveal the internal obstacles in the process of promoting integrated education.

Table 3

Detection rate comparison of students with psychological problems in the past three years

Year	Students Psychological	P	DF
2017	15.45%	<0.001	2
2018	11.61%		
2020	9.15%		

There is a significant difference in the detection rate of students with psychological problems in 2017, 2018 and 2020, $P < 0.001$. Therefore, it is necessary to use Bonferroni method for correction and conduct the post-event pairwise comparison of the significance level. Through the pairwise comparison, the results are shown in

6. DISCUSSIONS

This study systematically reveals the current situation, mechanism and key obstacles of the integration of psychological health education (PHE) and cultural quality education (CQE) in colleges and universities in Sichuan Province, which provides an empirical basis for the construction of effective integration mode. The core findings and their significance are discussed as follows:

Analysis of the reasons for the cognitive differences between mental health and cultural quality education. This study reveals that teachers generally have a deeper understanding of the integration of psychological health and cultural quality education, whereas students' understanding is relatively limited. Teachers, who have typically received systematic professional training, understand the significant role of integrating these two areas in promoting students' all-round development and possess a solid theoretical foundation and practical experience. In contrast, students, who are still in the educational stage, have limited knowledge of these concepts and specific content, particularly regarding the intersection of psychological health education and cultural quality, and they lack sufficient guidance and deep personal experiences.

Furthermore, universities still fall short in promoting and guiding students at the student level, leading to a significant gap in students' understanding of the integration of psychological health education and cultural quality education. Some students view these two areas as parallel, lacking a comprehensive understanding, which to some extent reduces their enthusiasm for participating in related courses and activities. To address this issue, universities are advised to increase efforts in promoting the integration of psychological health and cultural quality education, by organizing specialized lectures, case studies, and experiential activities, to enhance students' understanding and participation.

There are also significant differences in the cognitive approaches of different types of universities. Comprehensive and teacher training universities traditionally place a greater emphasis on cultural literacy and psychological health, with more advanced concepts that have been implemented earlier. In contrast, science and engineering, as well as medical universities, focus more on the development of professional skills, with less integration of cultural quality and psychological health education. This aligns with the theory of ecological systems, which suggests that different universities should tailor their psychological health and cultural quality education programs to their specific professional characteristics and student needs, achieving tailored and precise educational strategies.

The deep-rooted reasons for the low participation in the combination of mental health and cultural quality education

Although the combination of psychological health and cultural quality education has been widely recognized in concept, the actual participation is not high. Survey data show that only about 40% of students and 50% of teachers actively participate in relevant courses or activities, indicating that there is still a big gap in practice.

First, the course system is not well-developed. Most courses are standalone programs in psychological health or cultural quality, lacking systematic integration and coherent teaching content, which

hinders the formation of an integrated educational approach. Second, there is insufficient interdisciplinary collaboration among teachers, leading to a lack of innovation and coordination in course development and teaching implementation, with teaching resources scattered and unable to meet the diverse development needs of students. Third, policy support and financial resources are limited, with many universities lacking dedicated funds and management mechanisms for integrating psychological health and cultural quality education, which hinders the sustainable development of these programs.

The lack of student engagement is also a significant factor. Some students find the course content dull and disconnected from real-world applications, making it hard to spark their interest. Moreover, the social and family environments offer limited support for students' 'psychological well-being and cultural literacy, lacking a supportive social and cultural environment. Universities should address these issues by optimizing course design, incorporating more practical and experiential elements, enhancing the courses' appeal and practical value, and fostering a more proactive student engagement.

The promotion mechanism of students' development combining psychological health and cultural quality education This study, using a structural equation modeling approach, reveals that integrating psychological health and cultural quality education can significantly enhance students' psychological resilience and emotional regulation skills by strengthening their cultural identity. This, in turn, promotes academic adaptability and overall development. This finding aligns with the theories of cultural identity and psychological resilience, highlighting that cultural identity serves as a crucial protective factor for psychological health, positively impacting students' ability to adapt to complex environments and challenges.

Specifically, cultural quality education enriches students' spiritual world, enhancing their sense of self-worth and belonging. Meanwhile, psychological health education helps students develop effective emotional regulation and stress management skills. These two aspects complement each other, creating a positive cycle. Furthermore, the support from teachers and the positive campus culture significantly enhance the effectiveness of integrating psychological health and cultural quality education. In interviews, many teachers and students noted that a warm and inclusive campus environment enhances students' psychological security, which in turn facilitates the simultaneous improvement of cultural quality and psychological health.

Challenges and countermeasures to promote the combination of psychological health and cultural quality education Combining qualitative interviews and questionnaire data, it is evident that integrating mental health and cultural quality education still faces numerous challenges. Firstly, the lack of awareness about the importance of these concepts leads to insufficient emphasis, particularly among some teachers and students who fail to fully grasp their significance. Secondly, the lack of a robust interdisciplinary collaboration mechanism, including cross-disciplinary teams, hinders curriculum development and practical innovation. Thirdly, inadequate resource allocation, including insufficient policy and financial support, limits the scale and sustainability of these projects. Lastly, students' motivation to participate is low, lacking both tangible experiences and effective incentives.

In view of the above problems, it is suggested that colleges and universities start from the

following aspects: Strengthen top-level design and concept publicity Make clear the strategic positioning of combining psychological health with cultural quality education, integrate it into the plan of talent training in colleges and universities, and enhance the understanding and attention of teachers and students. Build interdisciplinary collaboration team Establish an interdisciplinary team of teachers from psychology, education, culture and other majors to carry out systematic training and teaching collaboration and promote the innovation of curriculum content and teaching methods. Improve the construction of curriculum system

Develop integrated courses, pay attention to the combination of theory and practice, design diversified and experiential teaching activities, improve the interest and practicality of the course, stimulate students' active participation. Strengthen policy support and financial guarantee We will strive for special financial support from the government and schools, establish a long-term management mechanism, and ensure the sustainable development of the project combining psychological health and cultural quality education. Create a good campus cultural atmosphere Carry out colorful cultural activities and psychological health theme activities, create an inclusive and caring campus environment, promote the dual improvement of students' cultural identity and psychological health. Focus on evaluation and feedback mechanism Establish an effective evaluation system, regularly collect feedback from teachers and students, continuously improve teaching content and methods, and improve the quality and effectiveness of education.

7. ORIGINALITY AND BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

The originality of this study lies in the development of an Integrated PHE–CQE Educational Ecosystem Model, which conceptualizes psychological health education and cultural quality education as an interconnected system rather than two parallel educational domains. The model proposes a three-dimensional integration pathway Synergy, Connectivity, and Embedding through which cultural identity strengthens psychological resilience and emotional regulation, subsequently enhancing students' academic adaptability and holistic development. Teacher support and a positive campus cultural environment further reinforce this process.

8. RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implication of the Study

Based on the findings of this study, several practical implications are proposed for colleges and universities seeking to strengthen the integration of psychological health education and cultural quality education.

1. Strengthen Top-Level Design and Clarify the Strategic Positioning of Integration Universities should incorporate psychological health education and cultural quality education into their overall talent-development strategies and institutional development plans. Rather than treating these two areas as independent educational activities, universities should develop integrated implementation plans that clarify objectives, responsibilities, implementation procedures, and evaluation mechanisms. Education authorities

should also formulate relevant policy guidelines to clarify institutional responsibilities and establish mechanisms for supervision and evaluation. Such top-level design can ensure that integrated education is implemented systematically and continuously rather than through temporary or isolated activities.

2. Promote Interdisciplinary Teams and Strengthen Teacher Training Universities should establish interdisciplinary teams involving professionals from psychology, education, cultural studies, student affairs, and related disciplines. Such collaboration can facilitate the development of integrated teaching content, innovative pedagogical approaches, and interdisciplinary research. Universities should also provide regular professional development and training opportunities to strengthen teachers' knowledge and skills in psychological health and cultural quality education. Where appropriate, interdisciplinary teaching and research teams can be encouraged to develop joint courses and projects that bridge the boundaries between psychological health and cultural education.

3. Improve the Integrated Curriculum System and Enhance Teaching Effectiveness Universities should develop a coherent and student-centered curriculum system that integrates psychological health and cultural quality education. Integrated courses can incorporate case studies, experiential learning, group activities, reflective learning, and project-based learning to enhance students' engagement and practical understanding. The curriculum should be designed with clear progression and coherence across different levels of study. In addition, blended online and offline learning approaches can be adopted to expand access to learning resources and provide students with more flexible opportunities for participation.

4. Increase Policy Support and Financial Investment The sustainable implementation of integrated education requires adequate institutional and financial support. Education authorities should consider providing special funding or policy support for universities developing innovative programs that integrate psychological health and cultural quality education. At the institutional level, universities should allocate dedicated resources for curriculum development, teacher training, student activities, interdisciplinary research, and program evaluation. Stable financial and policy support can improve the continuity, quality, and sustainability of integrated educational initiatives.

5. Create a Positive and Healthy Campus Cultural Environment Universities should create an inclusive, caring, and supportive campus environment in which students feel psychologically secure and culturally connected. Cultural activities, psychological health programs, student clubs, peer-support initiatives, and community engagement activities can be used to strengthen students' cultural identity and sense of belonging. Student self-governance organizations should also be encouraged to participate actively in the planning and implementation of relevant activities. By giving students greater ownership of educational activities, universities can promote a collaborative educational environment characterized by shared participation, mutual support, and co-construction between teachers and students.

2. Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should further develop the findings of this study in several directions. First, future studies should expand the geographical and sample scope. Researchers should include universities from multiple provinces and regions of China and increase the sample size to improve the

representativeness and generalizability of the findings. Comparative research across different geographical and cultural contexts could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the integration of psychological health and cultural quality education.

Second, comparative studies should examine differences among different types of universities. Future research could compare comprehensive universities, teacher-training universities, science and engineering universities, medical and pharmaceutical universities, and other types of higher education institutions. Such comparisons could identify institutional characteristics and contextual factors that facilitate or constrain the implementation of integrated education.

Third, future research should explore and evaluate different models of integration. Researchers could develop alternative models based on curriculum integration, extracurricular activities, campus culture, digital learning, or interdisciplinary teaching. Experimental or quasi-experimental research could then be used to examine the effectiveness of different models in improving students' psychological resilience, cultural identity, academic adaptability, and overall well-being.

Fourth, future research should investigate the potential application of big data and artificial intelligence technologies. Digital technologies could be used to analyze students' learning behaviors, participation patterns, psychological needs, and educational experiences while maintaining appropriate ethical and privacy safeguards. AI-supported systems may contribute to the development of personalized educational pathways and more precise intervention strategies. Such approaches could enhance the responsiveness, scientific rigor, and intelligence of integrated psychological health and cultural quality education.

Finally, longitudinal studies are recommended to examine the long-term effects of integrated education. Following students over an extended period could provide stronger evidence regarding whether improvements in cultural identity, psychological resilience, academic adaptability, and psychological well-being are sustained over time. Longitudinal evidence would also help universities refine their educational strategies and establish evidence-based models for sustainable implementation.

In conclusion, the integration of psychological health education and cultural quality education should be regarded not simply as an additional educational activity but as an important component of holistic student development. Through coordinated policy support, interdisciplinary collaboration, curriculum innovation, adequate resource allocation, student participation, and the strategic use of digital technologies, universities can develop a more systematic and sustainable educational ecosystem that supports students' psychological well-being, cultural development, and academic success.

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