

# Research on the mutual promotion of mental health education and campus culture construction in colleges and universities from the perspective of aesthetic education

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**Abstract:** *The construction of campus culture and the education of college students' mental health are interdependent and mutually supportive. From the perspective of aesthetic education, on the one hand, a sound campus culture not only expands the content and methods of mental health education but also fosters a positive humanistic atmosphere for cultivating the proactive mentality of college students. It effectively enhances the affinity and targeted approach of psychological education, thus playing a positive role in promoting college students' mental health education. On the other hand, the level of college students' mental health also determines the direction, content, and essence of campus culture. Positive psychological education enriches the connotation of campus culture, optimizes its psychological environment, and expands and extends the horizontal and vertical dimensions of campus culture. This, in turn, fosters a multi-level and comprehensive new era campus culture system within the university, where the mutually beneficial interaction between the two further promotes the all-round development of college students.*

**Keywords:** *aesthetic education; mental health education; campus culture; mutual promotion*

As a form of cultural existence, campus culture is a cultural precipitation gradually formed in the long-term process of teaching and educating. It refers to the sum of material, institutional and spiritual culture of the school, and is a comprehensive embodiment of the school's educational philosophy. In July 2021, the General Office of the Ministry of Education issued the Notice on Strengthening the Management of Students' Mental Health, which emphasizes the need to "give full play to the important role of physical education, aesthetic education, labor education, and campus culture". Meanwhile, the notice is also issued with the aim to attract students to actively participate in a variety of healthy campus cultural life and student club activities", as a way to vigorously cultivate positive psychological qualities and "promote students' psychological health development in all aspects"<sup>[1]</sup>. This has pointed out the way forward and provided a fundamental guarantee for realizing the positive interaction between campus culture and college students' mental health education.

As a part of comprehensive development education, aesthetic education can not only satisfy people's aesthetic needs, but also delight people's psychology, cultivate people's sentiment and purify their hearts via wonderful things, which has the educational function of "mind-imprinting, mankind-transformation and mental-delightfulness". Maslow believes that aesthetics is a high level psychological need of human beings, which can make people constantly obtain the most beautiful peak experience. This peak experience is an expression of mental health. Therefore, aesthetic education has an important educational value to meet the aesthetic needs of college students, purify students' mind and maintain their psychological balance. As a special kind of spiritual food and psychological needs, aesthetic education has a role in promoting students' psychological health development that cannot be replaced by other forms of education. Therefore, we should give full play to the positive value of aesthetic education, enlighten students' minds and hearts through the imperceptibly educational functions of aesthetic education such as implication and infection, and realize the goalto "nurture the heart with aesthetic cultivation and build aesthetic awareness with the heart"<sup>[2]</sup>.

As the soul project of college construction, campus culture can create a strong atmosphere of psychological education, play a permeable and suggestive role, thus playing an effective positive influence on college students' mental health education. In turn, the aesthetic education, which aims to promote the improvement of people's aesthetic and humanistic qualities, is an important form of building campus culture, and can also lead to positive changes in students' psychology and promote

their mental health and harmonious development. In this regard, under the new situation, colleges and universities must adhere to the educational concept of “cultivating people with aesthetic education and transforming people with culture”, give full play to the potential nurturing function and good pleasure function of college campus culture under the perspective of aesthetic education, examine the positive psychology of college students with the unique thinking of campus culture, and cultivate the positive psychology of college students with the power of campus culture penetration. At the same time, they should explore effective ways to achieve multi-dimensional mutual promotion of mental health education and campus culture construction, so as to deepen the mental health education of college students and realize the goal of cultivating a sound personality in college.<sup>[3]</sup>

## **1. The inherent conjunction between mental health education and campus culture construction**

### **(1) Consistency of the subject**

The purpose of both college mental health education and college campus culture construction is to serve students. As the main subject of mental health education and campus culture construction, students are both the creators and ultimate beneficiaries of mental health and campus culture, and the consistency of the two subjects gives a clear guideline for the combined work of the two later.

### **(2) Unity of purpose**

Mental health education in colleges and universities is an educational activity which is carried out via positively influencing students' psychology through scientific ways and methods, promoting their psychological development and adaptation and thus maintaining students' peaceful and healthy minds. The aim of the mental health education is to improve students' psychological quality, fully develop their potential, cultivate optimistic and upward psychological qualities, and ultimately promote the formation of their sound personalities. The goal of campus culture construction is to internalize the spiritual power into students' psychological energy through the cultivation and inculcation of different cultures, so that students can adapt to university study and life, fully develop and improve themselves in all aspects, and build a perfect personality. Although both of them have their own focus, the ultimate goal is to effectively improve the comprehensive quality of college students through corresponding measures and activities.

### **(3) Interoperability of methods**

Mental health education in colleges and universities is mainly carried out by classroom teaching, supplemented by related mental health activities (such as psychological drama, related lectures, psychological counseling, etc.), which focuses more on improving students' psychological cognition by traditional means of indoctrination and tends to ignore students' consciousness and emotions. Compared with mental health education, campus culture construction, as a very complex and systematic project, is an orderly and systematic activity carried out in practical activities and self-education. It emphasizes the autonomy and practicality of activity participation, and thus often has a unique educational effect. The interoperability of the two methods and means can combine internal and external factors, content and form, psychological activities and educational links. In this way, on the one hand, in the process of building campus culture, the overall planning can be done according to the psychological characteristics of college students, so as to build a comprehensive college campus culture system. On the other hand, it can make up for the vagueness and rigidity of traditional mental health education by using the practical and entertaining characteristics of campus cultural activities, which can enhance the relevance and entertainment of mental health education and improve the timeliness of mental health education.

### **(4) Interpenetration of content**

The content of campus culture construction includes campus material culture, spiritual culture and institutional culture construction. The construction of campus material culture is detailed to the layout of campus buildings, hardware facilities, natural landscape, cultural activities, etc. The content of spiritual culture construction includes the construction of teaching climate, school ethos and academic style, and the content of institutional culture construction includes various moral education management systems. The content of mental health education includes not only cognitive education such as popularizing mental health knowledge, establishing mental health awareness, understanding simple psychological adjustment methods, and recognizing psychological abnormalities, but also personality improvement education such as correct cognitive education, emotional education, and willpower strengthening education. The content of campus culture construction runs through the

content of mental health education. For example, the physical culture of the campus includes the construction of facilities for mental health education, the school ethos includes the construction of harmonious interpersonal relationships, and the academic style intersperses the cultivation of good behavioral habits of students. Mental health education also supplements the content of campus culture construction. It infiltrates its essence into campus culture construction through its own characteristics, and campus culture construction without mental health education as content cannot truly serve and help students. From this, we can see that mental health education and campus culture construction have much in common in terms of content and both of them can interpenetrate each other.

## **2. Interactivity of mental health education and campus culture construction**

### **(1) The role of campus culture construction in influencing mental health education**

Guiding people with advanced culture and creating a healthy, harmonious and positive campus culture atmosphere is one of the important contents of cultivating healthy psychology among college students and an important aspect of college students' mental health education. Firstly, good campus culture is conducive to popularizing college students' mental health knowledge, which can help students improve their perceptual understanding of mental health and deepen their rational understanding of psychological knowledge through campus cultural activities such as psychological scenario skits, psychological counseling games and psychological movie appreciation. Secondly, good campus culture is conducive to assisting in the psychological adjustment of college students. Campus cultural activities provide a way for college students to soothe their psychology, vent their emotions, release their psychological energy and balance their minds, which can give them psychological comfort and help them make psychological self-adjustment. Thirdly, good campus culture is conducive to the cultivation of sound personality of college students. Campus cultural activities often influence college students in a subtle way in terms of ideology, morality, political concept, psychological quality, behavior and value orientation, which helps cultivate sound personality of college students.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **(2) The promotion of mental health education for campus culture construction**

As the creators and disseminators of campus culture, students' mental health issues are directly related to the construction of campus culture. First, mental health education can penetrate into the three fields of campus culture construction—material culture, spiritual culture and institutional culture construction— through its own more specific educational contents, and give expansions to the contents of the three fields to improve the campus culture construction, such as adding students' adaptation ability cultivation, will ability cultivation and emotional education. Secondly, mental health education can increase the ways of campus culture construction, such as psychological salon, psychological drama, psychological outreach training and other new ways to reflect the uniqueness of mental health education. Meanwhile, the spirit of inquiry and psychological self-confidence shown by students during the activities will become both the content of campus culture and fully demonstrate the influence of campus culture. Thirdly, mental health education can optimize the psychological environment of campus culture construction, and ensure healthy and happy state of mind and enterprising mentality of college students, thus providing a good humanistic atmosphere for the construction of college campus culture.

## **3. The realistic shackles to achieve mutual promotion of mental health education and campus culture construction**

Due to emphasis of form over content and the neglect of humanistic care in current college culture construction, the students' sound personality formation may be affected and they tend to have rebellious attitude. Meanwhile, the poor consideration in the participating subjects may make students to have negative psychology. There are many disconnects between the theory and mode involved in college mental health education and the personality characteristics of college students, and the specific ways and methods are too single and lack of affinity. In terms of mutual penetration, the rationality of transformation needs to be strengthened due to the inappropriate way of analysis; the integration of teaching is insufficient, so the organic nature of integration needs to be improved; the carrier of promotion is lacking, so the effectiveness of leading needs to be strengthened; the depth of integration is insufficient, so the comprehensiveness of education also needs to be expanded.

#### **4. The construction of a multi-dimensional path for the mutual promotion of mental health education and campus culture construction under the perspective of aesthetic education**

From the perspective of aesthetic education, there are rules to follow in the mutual promotion of mental health education and campus culture construction. In order to ensure the smooth promotion of the two, the system of effective mutual promotion can be built from four levels: following the principle of mutual promotion, creating the platform of mutual promotion, establishing the mechanism of mutual promotion, and innovating the system of mutual promotion, so as to ensure the good effect of mental health education and campus culture construction by exploring and grasping the working rules of the two.

##### **(1) Following the principle of mutual promotion: to achieve effective and benign mutual promotion of the two with a unified talent training goal**

Campus culture is a group culture with students as the subject, campus as the space, spiritual culture, behavioral culture, environmental culture, and institutional culture construction as the main content, and campus spirit and civilization as the main characteristics. The campus culture focuses on influencing students and shaping campus spirit through elegant and positive campus cultural activities; it aims at enriching the spiritual and cultural life of college students, cultivating their moral qualities, cultivating a positive attitude and forming a perfect personality. Mental health education focuses on helping students to acquire a healthy psychological state, learn to relieve stress and solve psychological problems with the knowledge of psychology and mental health, and regulate students' behavior and thoughts while influencing them to lead them to develop a healthy psychological state. This shows that both mental health education and campus culture construction take the healthy growth of students as the unified goal of talent cultivation, which also lays a solid theoretical foundation for the effective and benign promotion of the two.<sup>[5]</sup>

##### **(2) Creating a mutual promotion platform: to build a suitable psychological environment for college students' mental health education with campus material culture as effective synergy**

As the cornerstone of campus culture construction, campus material culture is the tangible and visible manifestation of campus culture, and also the environmental foundation for the development of mental health education in colleges and universities. The school's material factors have long been influencing the psychological state of college students in an imperceptible form. Specifically, it includes elegant natural environment culture such as proper campus location, reasonable building layout, campus greenery and perfect facilities culture such as teaching and office facilities, research and experimental equipment, library, campus cultural relics and university history museum. The accumulation of campus material culture reflects the history and tradition of a school, reflects the inner spirit and soul of the university, and shows the moral identity and value belonging of teachers and students. Whether the campus material culture is good or not will influence and restrict the development of mental health education.<sup>[6]</sup> Colleges and universities should follow the law of beauty and the concept of people-oriented, optimize the campus material culture construction in all aspects, and focus on unifying the explicit, external and hard campus environment with the implicit, internal and soft cultural accumulation and historical heritage of the school. They should combine school-running characteristics and education style together to achieve the integration of ideology, emotion and art in the whole campus, and thus create a suitable psychological development environment for the mental health education of college students. This enables students to feel humanism, equality and freedom under this relatively independent platform, release their own personality, effectively relieve the anxiety, tension, frustration and other bad emotions in life, so that their psychology can find a support and they can face life in a relaxed mentality.

##### **(3) Establishing a mutual promotion mechanism: to create a positive psychological atmosphere for college students' mental health education with campus spiritual culture as effective synergy**

As an inner rational culture, campus spiritual culture is a concentrated reflection of the concepts, beliefs and habits formed by all teachers and students of the school for a long time, which is internalized in the form of values and externalized in the form of school ethos, academic style and teaching climate. Campus spiritual culture is not only the deep level of campus culture, but also the spiritual core of campus culture. Harmonious and unique campus spiritual culture transmits a lot of information through silent language, which not only has a profound influence on the overall campus atmosphere, but also plays a central role in the process of individual psychological development. The campus spiritual culture is an indispensable carrier of college mental health education. As an invisible

environmental force, it should adhere to the principle of modernity, combine with the school reality to create a campus spiritual culture rich in school characteristics, school ethos and school style, internalize the external requirements into the self-requirement of the campus culture subject through imperceptible ways, and create a strong atmosphere for mental health education while stimulating the desire of school teachers and students to seek knowledge and build good personality character. It makes college students receive mental health education unconsciously, so as to expand the ways of mental health education in colleges and universities and improve the mental health level of college students.

**(4) Innovation and mutual promotion system: to provide a strong guarantee for college students' mental health education with campus system culture as the effective synergy**

As the ontology of the content of campus culture construction in colleges and universities, campus institutional culture is a culture of norms and customs, including the rules and regulations of teaching and research, the norms and regulations of organization and management, and the code of conduct and requirements of students. Campus institutional culture reflects the cultural guidelines of colleges and universities, condenses the traditions and essence formed in the generation, inheritance and development of campus culture, and plays the role of guiding, regulating and motivating college students while playing the role of regulation.<sup>[7]</sup>Universities should follow the laws of higher education, combine the requirements of society for education, establish and implement a reasonable school management system, further improve and standardize the campus regulations and rules from both teaching and learning aspects and strictly implement them. Sound institutions, scientific methods and perfect reward and punishment systems can stimulate students' enthusiasm for self-management and self-improvement to the greatest extent, so that they can consciously internalize the constraints and restraints of the external system on their psychological behavior. They can make the work of mental health education more scientific and efficient, and let the concept of democracy, equality and respect be established in students' hearts, so as to form a good and relaxed institutional environment and provide a strong guarantee for college students' mental health education. This will form a good and relaxed institutional environment and provide a strong guarantee for the standardization of college students' mental health education.

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