

THE INTEGRATION OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE CULTURE AND SCHOLARLY CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

Tianqi Yu and Jun Wang, Tian Tao

Department of Student Affairs, Hubei University of Chinese Medicine, Hubei, China

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the synergistic integration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) culture with the construction of a "scholarly campus" (often translated as "bookish campus" or "campus with the fragrance of books") in Chinese higher education institutions. The scholarly campus initiative emphasizes fostering a reading-oriented, culturally enriched environment to promote intellectual growth and moral development among students. By incorporating TCM principles such as harmony, balance, and holistic well-being, universities can enhance campus culture, improve student health literacy, and align with national policies promoting cultural heritage. Drawing on existing literature and case studies, this study proposes a framework for integration, highlighting benefits like enhanced moral education and innovative teaching methods. The findings suggest that such fusion not only preserves TCM heritage but also contributes to a vibrant, health-conscious academic atmosphere.

KEYWORDS

Traditional Chinese Medicine, Scholarly Campus, Cultural Integration, Higher Education, Moral Education

1. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary China, the concept of a "scholarly campus" has gained prominence as part of broader educational reforms aimed at cultivating a deep appreciation for reading, knowledge, and cultural values^[1]. Coined from the idiom "shu xiang shi jia" (a family fragrant with books), it symbolizes an environment where intellectual pursuits and ethical development flourish^[2]. Parallel to this is the resurgence of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) culture, which embodies ancient philosophies of yin-yang balance, preventive health, and humanistic care^[3]. The integration of TCM culture into scholarly campus construction represents a strategic alignment with China's national strategy to promote cultural confidence and holistic education^[4].

This paper argues that merging TCM elements—such as herbal knowledge, acupuncture principles, and philosophical tenets—with campus activities can create a multifaceted learning ecosystem^[5]. For instance, TCM's emphasis on "benevolence and sincerity" can infuse moral education, while practical workshops on herbal gardens align with reading clubs to foster interdisciplinary engagement^[6]. Policy initiatives, such as President Xi Jinping's advocacy for the convergence of Chinese and Western medicine now extended to the field of education, lend strong support to the pressing need for this integration.

The objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to review existing literature on TCM and campus culture; (2) to analyze potential integration strategies; and (3) to propose recommendations for implementation in Chinese universities.

1.1. Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by the Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR), which provides a comprehensive structure for identifying barriers and facilitators to integrating innovations like TCM culture into educational settings. CFIR encompasses five domains: intervention characteristics (e.g., TCM's adaptability), outer setting (e.g., national policies), inner setting (e.g., university culture), characteristics of individuals (e.g., student and faculty engagement), and process (e.g., planning and execution). This framework guides the analysis of TCM integration by emphasizing evidence-based strategies, aligning with systems theory elements for holistic TCM application in higher education. By applying CFIR, the study moves beyond descriptive narration to a theoretically grounded evaluation of integration pathways.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on TCM culture in education reveals a growing body of research focused on its pedagogical applications. Early studies emphasize TCM's role in moral education, where concepts like "ren ai" (benevolence) are integrated into curricula for medical students^[7]. More recent works extend this to broader campus environments, exploring how TCM can enhance cultural construction in universities^[8].

Scholarly campus construction, meanwhile, is rooted in initiatives to combat digital distractions and promote reading. Research highlights its benefits in improving student engagement and ethical awareness^[9]. The intersection of TCM and scholarly campuses is evident in studies on project-based learning, where TCM cultural elements are woven into English courses or general education programs in TCM universities^[10]. For example, courses on TCM classics like the Huangdi Neijing are combined with reading seminars to promote holistic health education^[11].

Furthermore, the evolution of TCM education in China, influenced by national policies, supports its integration into campus life^[12]. Collaborative models, such as industry-education partnerships, facilitate the dissemination of TCM knowledge through campus events and facilities^[13]. However, gaps remain in empirical studies on measurable outcomes, such as student well-being metrics.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches. The design integrates a literature review with primary data collected through a survey conducted at Hubei University of Chinese Medicine (HUCM), the authors' affiliated institution, to provide context-specific insights into TCM culture integration.

The study population consists of undergraduate students and faculty members at HUCM, a key TCM-focused university in China with approximately 15,000 students and 1,200 faculty (based on institutional reports). The sample was selected using convenience sampling, targeting accessible participants during the academic year 2024-2025. A total of 230 participants were recruited: 200 undergraduate students (from various years and majors, including TCM, nursing, and pharmacy) and 30 faculty members (from departments related to TCM education and campus culture). This sample size was deemed sufficient for exploratory purposes, representing about 1.5% of the student population and 2.5% of faculty, with a response rate of 92% for surveys.

Data sources include primary data from the HUCM survey. Data types comprise quantitative elements (e.g., Likert-scale responses measuring attitudes toward TCM integration, health

literacy scores, and willingness to engage) and qualitative elements (e.g., open-ended responses and interview transcripts on integration strategies). Primary data collection involved an online questionnaire distributed via the university's WeChat platform and email, supplemented by 15 semi-structured interviews with selected faculty and students (lasting 20-30 minutes each). Data were collected between September and October 2025.

Analysis involved basic statistics, such as averages and percentages, to summarize quantitative data and spot patterns like support levels for integration. For qualitative data, we grouped similar responses into simple themes using the CFIR framework as a guide for categories like barriers and facilitators. This approach combined methods to verify findings and kept the coding consistent for reliability.

4. ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

4.1. Philosophical Integration Strategies

At the core of integration lies the philosophical alignment between TCM culture and scholarly campus ideals. TCM emphasizes "ren ai" (benevolence) and "cheng xin" (sincerity), which can infuse moral education within campus reading programs. For instance, incorporating TCM classics like the *Huangdi Neijing* into philosophical discussions fosters a balanced view of health and ethics, encouraging students to view knowledge acquisition as a harmonious process. Survey results from HUCM indicate that 92% of faculty respondents supported such cultural integration for moral development. This strategy involves reinterpreting scholarly campus activities through TCM lenses, such as linking book clubs with TCM's preventive philosophy to promote mental resilience amid academic pressures.

Moreover, ideological and political education can be enriched by TCM's cultural elements, creating a synergy that addresses contemporary issues like student stress and cultural identity. Strategies here include curriculum redesign where TCM ethics are woven into general education courses, promoting a "humanistic care" model that aligns with the scholarly campus's emphasis on ethical development. Qualitative responses from interviews highlighted themes of "harmony" and "cultural pride," with 85% of students expressing that TCM principles enhanced their ethical awareness. Potential challenges include reconciling TCM's traditional views with modern scientific skepticism, which can be mitigated through comparative studies highlighting complementary aspects.

4.2. Practical Integration Strategies

Practical strategies focus on tangible implementations that embed TCM culture into daily campus life. One key approach is the development of TCM-themed facilities, such as herbal gardens and wellness centers integrated with library spaces, allowing students to engage in hands-on learning while fostering a "bookish" atmosphere. Workshops on TCM practices, like acupuncture simulations or herbal tea sessions during reading events, can enhance experiential learning and cultural immersion. Questionnaire data showed that 78% of students were willing to participate in such workshops.

Another strategy involves project-based learning, where TCM cultural elements are incorporated into interdisciplinary courses, such as combining TCM history with English or ideological education to build cognitive and cultural competencies. Industry-education collaborations, including partnerships with TCM enterprises, facilitate real-world applications, such as cultural communication platforms that promote TCM through campus media and events. Digital tools,

like virtual TCM museums or apps for herbal knowledge, can extend these strategies to online scholarly communities, addressing accessibility in large universities. Thematic analysis of open-ended responses identified "practical engagement" as a key facilitator, with barriers like resource limitations noted under CFIR's "inner setting" domain.

4.3. Evaluative Integration Strategies

To ensure efficacy, evaluative strategies must assess the impact of integration efforts. This includes metrics like student engagement surveys, health literacy assessments, and participation rates in TCM-related activities. Thematic analysis of student feedback and other qualitative methods can shed light on TCM integration's impact on moral and intellectual growth. Longitudinal studies tracking alumni outcomes could further validate these strategies, providing data for iterative improvements. Findings from the HUCM survey show that 84% of students indicating willingness to adopt TCM practices in daily life.

Overall, these strategies form a cohesive framework, but their success depends on contextual adaptation to university-specific needs, such as resource availability and faculty expertise. Guided by CFIR, the combined quantitative (e.g., high support percentages) and qualitative (e.g., themed barriers) insights confirm the potential for effective integration at institutions like HUCM.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings from the HUCM survey align with previous studies on TCM integration, extending the literature by offering context-specific empirical insights through a CFIR-guided mixed-methods analysis. For instance, the cultural infiltration strategies resonate with earlier research on campus cultural construction, where the core concepts of TCM such as "harmony between nature and humans" and "benevolence and sincerity" have enhanced students' cultural identity. However, our primary data reveal strong faculty support (92%) and high student recognition of cultural education value (85%), suggesting that TCM-oriented institutions like HUCM may foster greater buy-in compared to broader surveys, potentially due to the inner setting of specialized cultural environments as per CFIR.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

6.1. Policy-Level Recommendations

For effective implementation, universities should align with national policies promoting TCM cultural inheritance, such as those outlined in China's educational reforms. Recommendations include advocating for government funding to support TCM integration projects, integrating them into university strategic plans. Establishing inter-university alliances for sharing best practices can amplify impact, with policies mandating TCM modules in general education curricula to ensure widespread adoption.

6.2. Institutional-Level Recommendations

At the institutional level, universities should form dedicated committees comprising TCM experts, educators, and administrators to oversee integration. Training programs for faculty on TCM pedagogy are essential, emphasizing diversified teaching measures to enhance ideological affinity. Infrastructure investments, such as TCM cultural corners in libraries or wellness hubs, should be prioritized to create immersive environments. Additionally, incorporating TCM into

extracurricular activities, like cultural festivals or moral education seminars, can foster student-led initiatives.

6.3. Specific Actionable Steps

Practical steps include piloting TCM-infused courses in select departments, with assessments to refine approaches. Collaborations with external TCM institutions for guest lectures and workshops can enrich content. Digital platforms should be developed for virtual TCM resources, ensuring accessibility for all students. To address challenges like resource constraints, phased implementation—starting with awareness campaigns and scaling to full integration—is advised.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The integration of TCM culture with scholarly campus construction offers a promising avenue for enriching Chinese higher education. By fostering a holistic, culturally grounded environment, universities can nurture well-rounded individuals equipped for modern challenges. Future research should include longitudinal studies to assess long-term impacts. Policymakers are encouraged to prioritize funding for such initiatives, ensuring TCM's legacy thrives in academic settings.

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AUTHOR

Yu Tianqi, started working in July 2022 and currently serves as a full-time counselor at the Counselor Development Center of the Student Affairs Department (Office) of Hubei University of Chinese Medicine.



She focuses on students' ideological and political education and counselor team building. Her academic and work achievements include: being awarded the "Advanced Individual in the 2024 Undergraduate Education and Teaching Audit and Evaluation"; leading the development of the "Scholarly Xinglin" characteristic education brand, which won the "Characteristic Achievement Award in Students' Ideological and Political Education" from the National Association of Higher Education of Chinese Medicine; and presiding over or participating in multiple university-level key education and teaching projects. She has solid practical experience in student management, brand-based education and team building.