

Exploring Innovative Approaches to Mental Health Education for Primary School Students in the New Era

Jiahui Mo, Wenxuan Ren, Qinghao Wu, Xiaoyan Zhao, Jingjing Shi, Huichun Ning

Zhejiang Ocean University, China

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ABSTRACT:

Against the backdrop of rapid social changes and the information age, the mental health challenges encountered by primary school students have become increasingly complex. The new era has accentuated the importance of mental health education, particularly for this demographic, making the innovation of mental health education pathways to enhance psychological quality a core focus of educational research. This paper explores innovative pathways for the mental health education of primary school students, primarily covering situational interactive experiences, interdisciplinary integration, personalized counseling and intelligent intervention, collaborative participation of families and society, and the integration of cultural confidence with psychological education. Through specific case analyses, this paper emphasizes the effectiveness of situational interaction and interdisciplinary integration in improving students' emotional regulation and social adaptation skills; the potential of personalized counseling and intelligent intervention for precise psychological support and intervention; the crucial role of family and societal collaboration in providing comprehensive mental health support for students; and the positive impact of integrating cultural confidence on shaping students' psychological quality and enhancing social adaptability. Research indicates that these innovative pathways can more effectively address the psychological issues of primary school students, promote their holistic development in emotional, behavioral, and cognitive aspects, and provide solid psychological support for the healthy growth of primary school students in the new era.

Keywords: New Era; Primary School Students; Mental Health Education; Personalized Education

INTRODUCTION

"The superior doctor prevents sickness; the mediocre doctor attends to impending sickness; the inferior doctor treats actual sickness." Many primary school students may appear to have no psychological issues; however, our mental health education should precisely start from "preventing sickness," taking preventive measures to help students establish correct ideological values, improve their psychological quality, and effectively ensure their holistic development and healthy growth^[1]. In recent years, with rapid social development and ongoing changes in the educational environment, mental health issues have shown a trend towards affecting younger ages, drawing increasing attention to the psychological well-being of primary school students. Multiple factors such as the information age, academic pressure, and family structures expose primary school students to unprecedented psychological challenges. Mental health is not only a key component of student development but also an important criterion for evaluating educational quality^[2]. How to innovate the pathways of mental health

[1] Lin Xiandan. Analysis of Innovative Paths for Mental Health Education in Primary Schools [J]. Curriculum Education Research, 2019, (33): 244.

[2] Shen Ying. The Impact of the Internet on Mental Health Education for Primary School Students and Coping Strategies [J]. China New Telecommunications, 2024, 26(22): 144-146.

education for primary school students in the new era to help them cultivate a sound psychological quality has become a significant topic in educational reform^[3].

Primary School Students' Mental Health Education Data

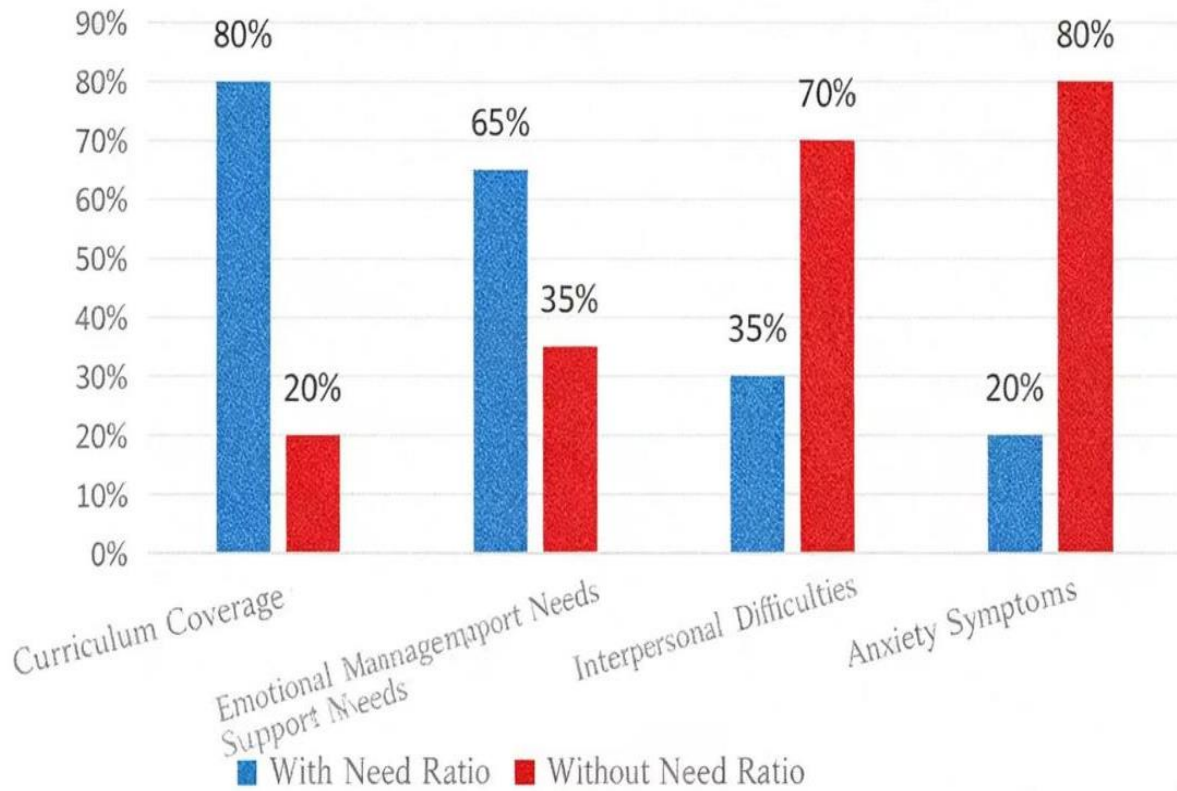


Table 1: Data on Primary School Student Mental Health Education

In 2023, seventeen departments including the Ministry of Education jointly issued the "Action Plan for Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Student Mental Health Work in the New Era (2023-2025)," which explicitly proposes cultivating students' positive psychological qualities, monitoring and tracking their mental health status, intervening early in emerging mental health issues, providing timely assistance to avoid negative impacts, and safeguarding students' personalized and social development. This has charted a clear direction for the development of mental health education for primary school students. This paper aims to explore innovative approaches to mental health education for primary school students in the new era, connecting current educational philosophies and technological means to propose educational models more suited to the times, with the goal of promoting students' holistic and healthy development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the Current Status and Influencing Factors of Primary School Students' Mental Health

Current extensive research demonstrates that primary school students face severe challenges to their mental health. Scholars generally agree that mental health issues are showing a trend towards "affecting younger ages." Shen Ying (2024)^[4] points out that the popularity of the internet is a "double-edged sword," bringing

[3] Li Qingfang. The Integrated Development of Mental Health Education and Family Education for Primary and Secondary School Students [J]. Asia-Pacific Education, 2024, (21): 83-86.

[4] Shen Ying. The Impact of the Internet on Mental Health Education for Primary School Students and Coping Strategies [J]. China New Telecommunications, 2024, 26(22): 144-146.

convenience while also negatively affecting primary school students' psychological development through issues like internet addiction and information overload. At the family level, research focuses on the crucial role of family education methods. For instance, Xing Shufen et al. (2024)^[5] revealed the significant impact of "parental control" on children's internalizing problems such as anxiety and depression; Dong Yan et al. (2024)^[6] highlighted the phenomenon of "phubbing parents," where parents are engrossed in their phones and neglect communication with their children, damaging students' emotional needs and sense of security. These studies, from social, familial, technological, and other perspectives, clearly outline the complex psychological ecological environment primary school students inhabit in the new era, providing empirical evidence for the necessity of mental health education.

Research on Traditional Mental Health Education Models and Their Limitations

Previous mental health education was often conducted through independent courses, special lectures, or individual counseling. Zhao Xianda et al. (2024)^[7] critically note that addressing or handling mental health issues among primary and secondary school students still primarily relies on intervention and correction, with most practices initiating mental health education only after problems have emerged. Such approaches easily fall into the dilemma of being "perfunctory," struggling to integrate effectively with daily educational links like subject teaching and class management, reflecting the lagging and insufficiency of mental health education. Zhang Yan (2023)^[8] also points out the insufficient synergy in primary school mental health education, mainly facing the following dilemmas: First, the forms of school mental health education are mainly mental health education courses, combined with only a small number of themed class meetings or lectures, resulting in generally singular practical approaches and poor implementation status; Second, the social environment exerts layered pressure on the development of primary school mental health education, leading to an imbalance in its construction and operation; Third, the level of teacher professional development is progressing slowly, not aligning with social development trends, and requires significant improvement.

Evidently, traditional models have shortcomings in content integration, methodological interactivity, and stakeholder collaboration, making it difficult to meet the practical needs of student development. There is an urgent need to transition towards a new paradigm that is more systematic, interactive, and personalized.

Existing Explorations on Innovative Pathways for Mental Health Education

To break through the limitations of traditional models, some scholars have attempted to promote innovation in mental health education from different paths.

Regarding technology empowerment, existing research has begun to explore the application potential of digital tools in psychological assessment and preliminary intervention. However, most discussions remain at the level of tool introduction; research on how to systematically integrate technologies like artificial intelligence and virtual reality into emotional curriculum teaching and conduct empirical effect evaluations is still scarce.

Regarding home-school-community collaboration, Li Qingfang (2024)^[9] emphasized the necessity of integrating mental health education in primary and secondary schools with family education and the core status of home-school cooperation in psychological education. She also proposed constructing a comprehensive

[5] Xing Shufen, Gao Xin, Yu Guoliang. The Impact of Parental Control on Mental Health of Primary and Secondary School Students: Evidence and Educational Countermeasures [J]. Educational Science Research, 2024, (10): 20-27.

[6] Dong Yan, Li Boyang, Yu Guoliang. The Impact of Parental Phubbing on Mental Health of Primary and Secondary School Students: Evidence and Educational Countermeasures [J]. Educational Science Research, 2024, (10): 5-11.

[7] Zhao Xianda, Yu He, Li Maochun. Problems and Solutions in Mental Health Education for Primary and Secondary School Students under the Background of Healthy China [J]. Western China Quality Education, 2024, 10(19): 123-126.

[8] Zhang Yan. Research on Optimization Paths of Primary School Mental Health Education from the Perspective of Positive Psychology [D]. Yangzhou University, 2023.

[9] Li Qingfang. The Integrated Development of Mental Health Education and Family Education for Primary and Secondary School Students [J]. Asia-Pacific Education, 2024, (21): 83-86.

management system for parent mental health education work, carrying out series of student mental health education activities, and increasing all-round cooperation and guidance between families and schools. Yi Qianhui, Tong Yuying et al. (2024)^[10] called for integrating positive psychology into secondary school mental health education and proposed its significance and measures.

However, existing research still lacks in-depth and detailed elaboration on how to build a clear and operable tripartite collaboration mechanism among home, school, and community, defining the roles and responsibility boundaries of each party.

In terms of integrated education, Lin Xiandan (2019)^[11] earlier proposed conceptions of innovative pathways, involving preliminary ideas for interdisciplinary integration. Notably, research that systematically integrates "cultural confidence" as a core element into the mental health education system to guide student value shaping and psychological resilience cultivation remains relatively weak, offering important space for expansion.

The Era Background for Innovation in Mental Health Education

In the current context of technological progress and rapid social change, the mental health problems faced by primary school students have become more complex. The advent of the information age, the acceleration of urbanization, changes in family structures, and other factors cause primary school students to endure unprecedented pressure during their growth process^[12]. These social changes impact students' emotional cognition, behavioral presentation, and mental health, making problems like anxiety and depression increasingly common. Therefore, schools, families, and society need to cooperate collaboratively to address these challenges, provide psychological support to students, help them better adapt to external pressures, and promote their physical and mental health development. The support and promotion of educational policies provide guarantees for the in-depth development of mental health education.

In recent years, the Ministry of Education has promulgated numerous policy documents highlighting the importance of mental health education. The aforementioned "Action Plan for Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Student Mental Health Work in the New Era (2023-2025)" further defines the goals for mental health education. These policies mandate schools to comprehensively carry out mental health education, promoting its normalization and systematic development. Emerging technologies such as big data, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality bring innovative means to mental health education, providing personalized psychological counseling and intervention solutions, thereby enhancing the precision and effectiveness of education^[13].

Innovative Pathways for Primary School Student Mental Health Education

Enhancing Emotional Management through Situational Interactive Experiences

Emotional management is a key component of mental health education for primary school students. Traditional emotional management teaching typically relies on theoretical explanation and simple simulation, lacking interactivity and practicality^[14]. To improve students' emotional regulation skills, situational interactive experience has become one of the innovative pathways. Utilizing Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies, students can personally experience how to identify and regulate emotions in simulated

[10] Yi Qianhui, Tong Yuying. The Integration Path of Positive Psychology in Middle School Mental Health Education [J]. Journal of Jilin Provincial Institute of Education, 2022, 38(02): 108-112.
DOI:10.16083/j.cnki.1671-1580.2022.02.027.

[11] Lin Xiandan. Analysis of Innovative Paths for Mental Health Education in Primary Schools [J]. Curriculum Education Research, 2019, (33): 244.

[12] Shen Shulu. Research on Strategies and Teaching Improvement for Mental Health Education in Primary Schools [J]. Teacher Expo, 2024, (30): 29-31.

[13] Xing Shufen, Gao Xin, Yu Guoliang. The Impact of Parental Control on Mental Health of Primary and Secondary School Students: Evidence and Educational Countermeasures [J]. Educational Science Research, 2024, (10): 20-27.

[14] Dong Yan, Li Boyang, Yu Guoliang. The Impact of Parental Phubbing on Mental Health of Primary and Secondary School Students: Evidence and Educational Countermeasures [J]. Educational Science Research, 2024, (10): 5-11.

situations. For example, teachers can design virtual scenarios where students practice calm responses and emotional control when facing situations like peer criticism or exam failure. Such interactive experiences help students practice emotional management skills in a low-pressure environment, laying the foundation for emotional regulation in real life.

In a primary school in Beijing, an emotional management course utilizing VR technology was implemented, using virtual social situations (such as parties, classroom interactions) to simulate potential emotional fluctuation scenarios students might encounter. Students responded within these virtual scenes, and the system provided immediate feedback based on their choices, helping them learn how to regulate emotions in different contexts. This immersive learning mode not only enhanced students' ability to identify and manage emotions but also strengthened their confidence in facing challenges in daily life^[15]. Through such situational interactive experiences, students can better grasp emotional management techniques, improve their psychological quality, and flexibly apply the learned knowledge in real life.

Constructing Mental Health Curriculum through Interdisciplinary Integration

With the updating of educational concepts, mental health education is gradually transcending the scope of single psychology courses and integrating with subjects like Chinese, Mathematics, Physical Education, and Art to construct an interdisciplinary mental health curriculum system. This integration not only helps students better understand mental health knowledge but also cultivates emotional expression, problem-solving, and interpersonal communication skills through specific subject activities. For instance, a primary school introduced classic literary works in Chinese class to help students analyze characters' psychological activities and emotional changes, and facilitated group discussions prompting students to share personal emotional experiences and coping methods. Mathematics class also utilized group cooperative learning tasks to promote communication and mutual support among students, enhancing their teamwork skills.

Another successful example comes from a school in Shanghai, which integrated mental health education with physical education classes, using collective sports activities to help students build trust and cooperation awareness. Through basketball matches, students not only exercised but also learned how to cooperate with others, regulate emotions, and maintain a positive attitude when facing failure. Such an interdisciplinary integrated curriculum system not only fostered team spirit in students through sports activities but also tangibly strengthened their psychological resilience and emotional management abilities.

Through this approach, mental health education becomes an organic component of students' holistic development, beneficial for improving their psychological quality and social adaptability.

Personalized Counseling and Intelligent Intervention

With the continuous development of information technology, personalized counseling and intelligent intervention are gradually being applied in the mental health education of primary school students^[16]. Traditional psychological counseling is often standardized and fails to meet the individual needs of each student. However, intelligent technology can provide customized psychological counseling plans based on the specific circumstances of students.

Where conditions permit, schools can introduce Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. Utilizing psychological assessment systems and emotion recognition software to analyze students' behavioral data, emotional responses,

[15] Dong Yan, Li Boyang, Yu Guoliang. The Impact of Parental Phubbing on Mental Health of Primary and Secondary School Students: Evidence and Educational Countermeasures [J]. Educational Science Research, 2024, (10): 5-11.

[16] Dan Zhengdaoji. Analysis of Mental Health Education Paths for Primary and Secondary School Students from the Perspective of Home-School Co-education [J]. Inside and Outside the Classroom (High School Edition), 2024, (35): 12-13.

and psychological test results, the system can intelligently push personalized counseling content. For example, after a student underwent emotional monitoring via an AI system, the system identified social anxiety and automatically recommended relevant social skills training. Over time, the student's anxiety symptoms showed significant improvement.

Intelligent intervention is also reflected in real-time emotion monitoring and intervention^[17]. For instance, some schools install emotion recognition software in classrooms to monitor students' facial expressions and behaviors in real-time, thereby assessing their emotional state. Once the system detects emotional fluctuations such as anxiety or depression in a student, teachers or psychological counselors can intervene immediately and provide necessary emotional guidance. Such real-time intervention not only helps students detect and address psychological issues early but also provides effective support without disturbing the student, enhancing the precision and timeliness of psychological counseling. Through these technological measures, students can receive psychological support more tailored to their individual needs, promoting the development of mental health education towards greater personalization and precision.

Collaborative Participation of Family and Society

The collaborative cooperation between families and society plays an extremely crucial role in the mental health education of primary school students. The family serves as an important haven for students' growth, and parents have accompanied their children since birth. The significance of family education cannot be overlooked in primary school students' mental health education. Against the backdrop of home - school co - education, the mutual cooperation between schools and families has become the norm. On this basis, mental health education can also be carried out in the form of home - school co - education. To ensure the orderly implementation of home - school joint psychological counseling, teachers and parents should actively establish connections. In this way, both parties can cooperate well from multiple aspects and provide appropriate and targeted counseling when detecting mental problems in primary school students.

In this regard, actively seeking the support of parents and forming a unified educational front through home - school cooperation is also an important part of ensuring the effective implementation of primary school mental health education, which should draw the high attention of teachers. For example, teachers regularly communicate with parents via phone or online to understand students' conditions and behaviors at home. Teachers offer suggestions on psychological education guidance to parents, enabling them to actively practice in family education to promote students' mental health. Teachers regularly invite parents to participate in lectures by adolescent mental health education experts, asking parents to sort out problems in psychological education and actively seek professional answers. Teachers regularly organize reading and sharing activities of mental health education books, requiring parents to share their reading insights, thus urging parents to read relevant psychological education books, acquire professional knowledge, correct wrong concepts, and form correct psychological education methods. Teachers communicate with parents regularly to adjust the mental health education plan, thereby enhancing its effectiveness.

Take a specific example: As they grow older, many primary school students develop varying degrees of rebellious psychology. They tend to resist doing what their parents and teachers ask them to do and are more inclined to try what is prohibited. This rebellious psychology of students has given many parents a headache. In response to this situation, as teachers, they can not only conduct detailed counseling for students at school in an acceptable way, soothe their rebellious emotions, and reason with them; they can also communicate closely with parents, teaching them proper coping methods. Parents should avoid using overly simple and crude approaches during their children's rebellious period and instead look for flexible guiding methods according to their children's thinking, avoiding direct confrontation. By having conversations with children in an atmosphere full

[17] Wang L.i. Exploration of Paths for Mental Health Education in Primary Schools [J]. Gansu Education, 2024, (18): 38-40.

of care and love, and combining multiple aspects, students' rebellious psychology can often be alleviated. During the rebellious period, children will be more willing to listen to what their parents say, follow the examples set by adults, and develop in a positive direction. In this way, with the professional guidance of teachers at school and the patient comfort of parents at home, the negative emotions pent up in primary school students can be effectively relieved. They can also try to listen to reasonable opinions from others and behave in a normal and age - appropriate manner. Obviously, this is also the ideal educational outcome achieved through the combined efforts of parents and teachers.

On the basis of home - school cooperation, the involvement of social forces is also necessary. Many schools cooperate with local community psychological service organizations and public welfare groups to promote mental health education projects and provide students with professional psychological counseling and support^[18]. The general attention and participation of society can enhance the diversity and depth of students' mental health education. For instance, in some areas, social organizations provide schools with professional psychological counselors and organize mental health lectures to help parents and teachers understand the scientific laws of children's psychological development and raise the whole society's awareness of students' mental health.

Through the collaborative effect of families and society, students can receive more comprehensive, timely, and effective mental health education with the joint support of schools, families, and society.

Integrating Cultural Confidence with Psychological Education

The integration of cultural confidence and psychological education can provide more profound and meaningful mental health education for primary school students. Cultural confidence refers to the recognition and pride in one's own national culture. It is not only the cornerstone of a country's cultural progress but also a crucial support for individual mental health. In the context of the new era, integrating cultural confidence into mental health education can help students establish correct values and enhance their psychological resilience and social adaptability. By understanding and inheriting the excellent traditional Chinese culture, students can not only experience the power of culture but also obtain spiritual comfort and support from cultural confidence.

Schools can organize activities themed on "Traditional Culture and Mental Health", integrating elements such as classic cultural stories, traditional festival customs, calligraphy, and Chinese painting into mental health education. In these activities, students can shape good emotional regulation abilities and interpersonal relationships by absorbing the wisdom of traditional culture, such as values like "benevolence" and "tolerance". The emphasis on physical and mental harmony in traditional culture can also help students build positive and healthy psychological cognitions^[19]. For example, during traditional festivals such as the Mid - Autumn Festival and the Spring Festival, schools can let students participate in group activities to strengthen their sense of collective honor and cultivate their emotional expression and social interaction abilities. This combination of cultural and psychological education can not only improve students' psychological qualities but also enhance their sense of identity and confidence in their own culture^[20].

CONCLUSION

Both mental health education and knowledge education are of great importance. Therefore, primary school teachers should pay attention to and attach importance to mental health education work. They should closely combine with the new era background and continuously explore innovative approaches to mental health education for primary school students. Through various innovative forms such as situational interactive

[18] Mao Yanli. Exploration on Strengthening and Improving Mental Health Education for Primary and Secondary School Students [J]. Qinghai Education, 2024, (Z2): 94.

[19] Hu Lianmei. A Practical Study on Class Teachers' Implementation of Mental Health Education for Primary School Students[J]. Education, 2024, (23): 53 - 55.

[20] Lin Xiandan. An Analysis of Innovative Paths for Mental Health Education of Primary School Students[J]. Curriculum Education Research, 2019, (33): 244.

experiences, interdisciplinary integration, personalized counseling, the collaborative participation of families and society, and the combination of cultural confidence and psychological education, mental health education can help students deal with daily emotional problems and psychological challenges. Moreover, it can cultivate their positive life attitudes and strong psychological resilience. Situational interaction and interdisciplinary integration provide students with more practical and interesting learning experiences, while intelligent intervention and personalized counseling provide more accurate psychological support for students through technological means. The collaborative participation of families and society builds a comprehensive support system for mental health education.

In the future, with the evolution of society and the advancement of technology, mental health education will feature personalization, precision, and diversification, establishing a good interactive mechanism involving schools, families, and society. The integration of cultural confidence endows psychological education with profound cultural connotations, helping students draw strength from traditional culture and establish positive values.

In conclusion, novel mental health education approaches can provide strong support for the all - round development and mental health of primary school students. In the future, it is expected to cultivate more primary school students in the new era with healthy psychology and good qualities.

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