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**Nurturing the Mind Through the Five Domains of Education: A Practice-
Based Study of Primary School Mental Health Education From the
Perspective of Integrated Education**

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Abstract

Primary school is a critical period for personality formation, emotional development, and the cultivation of psychological literacy. Mental health education is therefore not an auxiliary activity, but a foundational mechanism for implementing the fundamental educational task of fostering virtue. Traditional models of primary school mental health education often rely on isolated psychology lessons and remedial intervention after problems occur. Such models tend to fragment educational resources, narrow the range of learning contexts, and emphasize correction rather than daily psychological nourishment. This practice-based study, written from the perspective of a frontline primary school mental health teacher, takes the integration of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education as its organizing framework. Drawing on the school-based “1511” collaborative education system, it examines how moral education can shape psychological values, intellectual education can reduce learning anxiety, physical education can strengthen resilience, aesthetic education can nourish emotional life, and labor education can cultivate responsibility and positive energy. Through top-level institutional design, integrated five-domain classroom practice, home-school-community collaboration, and technology-enabled education, the study proposes a comprehensive, regularized, and developmentally nourishing model of primary school mental health education. The model aims to address practical difficulties in grassroots mental health work and to support the coordinated physical and psychological development of every child. It also provides a practical reference for improving the quality of primary school mental health education in the new era.

Keywords: five-domain integration; primary school mental health education; 1511 education system; home-school-community collaboration; child-centered education

Introduction

The Guidelines for Mental Health Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (2012 revision) clearly state that mental health education should be integrated into the entire process of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education, and should follow the principles of whole-staff, whole-process, and all-round education (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2012). With the continued deepening of basic education reform, the coordinated development and integration of the five domains of education have become a central orientation of quality education. Mental health education is no longer an auxiliary task separated from subject teaching; rather, it is a foundational project that runs through all five domains and supports the comprehensive development of students.

Primary school students are highly malleable in psychological development, tend to express emotions concretely, and remain strongly dependent on adult guidance. For these reasons, conventional approaches that rely only on specialized psychology courses or problem-centered interventions cannot sufficiently nourish students' inner worlds or cultivate their positive psychological qualities at the root. Contemporary primary school students grow up in increasingly complex environments and face more visible difficulties, including academic anxiety, interpersonal timidity, weak emotion-regulation ability, insufficient frustration tolerance, and biased self-understanding. Some schools still approach mental health education through a pattern of "more intervention than prevention," "more form than effect," and "more isolated action than whole-system integration." In such cases, mental health education is confined to psychology classes and individual counseling, while the broader psychological value of the five domains of education remains underused (Yu & He, 2023; Wang & Guo, 2021).

From the perspective of frontline psychological education, the five domains of education are highly compatible with mental health education. Moral education nourishes psychological character; intellectual education can reduce learning-related anxiety; physical education offers channels for releasing negative emotions; aesthetic education enriches emotional and spiritual life; and labor education strengthens responsibility, perseverance, and frustration tolerance. The integration of the five domains is therefore a central pathway for transforming school mental health education from passive correction to active nourishment.

Guided by the school philosophy that “when a hundred flowers bloom, spring fills the garden” and by a child-centered educational foundation, our school has built a “1511” mental health education system. In this system, “1” refers to one top-level design, “5” refers to the integration of the five domains of education, the second “1” refers to a collaborative mechanism linking school, family, and community, and the final “1” refers to the ultimate goal of comprehensive student development. Through years of practice, the school has embedded mental health education into the whole process of the five domains, into multiple scenes of campus life, and into home-school-community collaboration. This paper analyzes the internal educational logic, practical difficulties, and implementation pathways of primary school mental health education from the perspective of five-domain integration, with the aim of providing a practice-based reference for improving primary school psychological education and cultivating students’ positive psychological qualities.

The Internal Educational Logic of Five-Domain Integration and Primary School Mental Health Education

Moral Education as Value Formation: Consolidating the Ideological Foundation of Mental Health

Moral education is the core of virtue-oriented education and the spiritual support of mental health education. Sound psychological development requires positive value guidance, moral cultivation, and an active attitude toward life. At the primary school stage, moral education helps students build rule awareness, develop affection for family and country, and cultivate kindness. These processes can correct undesirable psychological tendencies such as selfishness, defiance, and passivity while fostering confidence, kindness, tolerance, and perseverance. Mental health education that is detached from moral guidance can address surface emotional problems, but it cannot build a stable psychological core. From the perspective of five-domain integration, moral education and mental health education should be deeply connected. Moral education can guide the heart, while emotional education can warm the heart. Through moral cultivation, students gradually develop accurate understandings of self, others, and society, thereby reducing the conditions under which negative psychological emotions emerge.

Intellectual Education as Cognitive Activation: Reducing Psychological Anxiety in Student Growth

Intellectual education is a central part of school life and a major source of psychological pressure for students. Academic stress, classroom frustration, self-doubt about ability, and excessive competition are common causes of anxiety, school aversion, and inferiority among primary school students. Traditional intellectual education tends to emphasize knowledge

transmission and score improvement while neglecting students' learning experiences and psychological feelings. This easily places students in a passive learning state and reinforces self-doubt. Under the framework of five-domain integration, intellectual education should break away from score-only thinking and attend to students' psychological development. By building a classroom ecology that respects children's minds, accommodates differences, and encourages growth, schools can reduce academic anxiety. Growth-mindset cultivation, differentiated instruction, and positive reinforcement can help students experience learning in a relaxed and confident way, thereby enabling intellectual development and psychological nourishment to support each other.

Physical Education as Psychological Strengthening: Building a Resilient and Healthy Mental State

Physical condition and psychological condition are closely related. A healthy body provides a physiological basis for mental health, and physical activity is an effective vehicle for releasing negative emotions and cultivating stress tolerance. Primary school students experience large emotional fluctuations, accumulate negative feelings quickly, and often lack mature channels for emotional expression. As a result, they may experience emotional suppression and psychological imbalance. Physical education is interesting, practical, competitive, and cooperative. Through movement, students can release stress, express emotions, and strengthen willpower. Through team competition, they learn cooperation, tolerance, acceptance of winning and losing, and the ability to face setbacks. Physical education therefore helps improve psychological vulnerabilities such as isolation, fragility, and fear of difficulty, while cultivating optimism, resilience, and perseverance.

Aesthetic Education as Emotional Nourishment: Enriching the Inner World of Students

Aesthetic education is an important educational carrier for healing the mind and cultivating temperament. It has distinctive value for emotion regulation, aesthetic development, and self-identity among primary school students. Children at this stage are emotionally delicate and highly responsive to beautiful and meaningful experiences. Painting, singing, drama, handicrafts, and other artistic activities provide channels for emotional expression and psychological release. They help students discharge pressure, transform negative emotions, and experience inner healing. Regular aesthetic education can cultivate calmness, optimism, and openness, while enhancing students' aesthetic perception and self-recognition. In the process of discovering, creating, and sharing beauty, students gradually build a positive psychological foundation.

Labor Education as Psychological Empowerment: Cultivating Positive Psychological Energy

Labor education emphasizes practical experience, willpower training, and responsibility formation. It is an important pathway for addressing problems such as fragility, self-centeredness, and weak stress tolerance among primary school students. Many children today grow up in relatively favorable living conditions and lack sufficient labor experience and frustration experience. They may therefore show weak frustration tolerance, limited responsibility, and insufficient interpersonal empathy. Labor practice enables students to experience effort and harvest through hands-on work, learn tolerance and sharing through cooperation, and build perseverance through overcoming difficulties. It can correct undesirable psychological states such as impatience, timidity, and passivity, and can cultivate stable, healthy, and positive psychological defenses.

Practical Difficulties in Five-Domain Integrated Psychological Education in Primary Schools

Fragmented Educational Concepts and Weak Awareness of Integration

Many primary schools still regard the five domains of education and mental health education as separate tasks. Teachers often assume that mental health education is the exclusive responsibility of psychological teachers, while subject teachers, moral education teachers, and teachers of physical and aesthetic education may lack the initiative to embed psychological education into their teaching. Moral education tends to focus on behavioral norms, intellectual education on academic achievement, physical education on fitness training, aesthetic education on artistic skills, and labor education on practical tasks. These domains often operate independently rather than interactively. At the same time, some schools still overemphasize intellectual education while undervaluing mental health education and integrated development. As a result, psychological education lacks stable daily carriers, and its effects become fragmented and superficial.

Limited Integration Pathways and Insufficient Educational Carriers

In concrete teaching practice, the integration of the five domains and mental health education often lacks systematic and routine pathways. It tends to remain at the level of scattered thematic activities rather than being deeply embedded in classroom teaching, daily management, and campus life. Many subject classrooms still focus primarily on knowledge transmission and skill training, with insufficient attention to students' emotional states, psychological experiences, and growth mindset. Activities in the five domains may also lack clear psychological targets. They are not always designed around common psychological issues among primary school

students, such as anxiety, inferiority, timidity, and interpersonal conflict. This weakens the nourishing value of the five domains and reduces the actual effectiveness of integrated education.

Incomplete Collaborative Mechanisms and Weak Educational Synergy

Mental health education is a systematic project that requires coordinated action from schools, families, and society. At present, many school-based models of five-domain psychological nourishment remain confined to the campus. Home-school-community collaboration is often incomplete. Some parents lack an understanding of the psychological value of the five domains and of scientific parenting. They overemphasize academic performance while overlooking children's psychological development and comprehensive literacy. Family education may therefore be simple, rough, or inconsistent with the school's mental health work. Meanwhile, high-quality social resources for psychological education and five-domain practice are not always effectively connected with school education. This weakens the consolidation of school outcomes and produces disconnection among family, school, and community actions.

Insufficient Professional Support and Lagging Technology Integration

Grassroots primary schools often face shortages of professional mental health teachers, and many teachers lack the capacity to conduct integrated psychological education. Subject teachers may not have enough knowledge of mental health education to identify psychological elements within their classrooms or to carry out scientifically grounded integration. At the same time, although educational technology has developed rapidly, many schools still rely on traditional psychological education models. Artificial intelligence-based evaluation, big-data monitoring, virtual-reality psychological experiences, and other modern tools are insufficiently used. Consequently, schools cannot yet dynamically monitor students' psychological states or provide

individualized and precise intervention. The attractiveness, precision, and effectiveness of five-domain integrated psychological education need further improvement.

Practice-Based Exploration of Primary School Psychological Education From the Perspective of Five-Domain Integration: The “1511” Education System

Establishing One Top-Level Design to Build a Whole-School Educational Framework

To address the separation between five-domain education and mental health education, as well as the looseness of the overall educational system, our school has developed a systematic top-level framework for mental health education based on child-centered education. The school adheres to the educational idea of “protecting children’s hearts, nourishing the mind, and promoting comprehensive development.” It has established a mental health education leadership group jointly led by the Party secretary and the principal, and has formed a six-level collaborative team consisting of the leadership group, professional mental health teachers, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, class psychological monitors, and parent committee members.

This structure clarifies the educational responsibilities of different positions and forms a work pattern in which school leaders coordinate overall planning, the moral education office organizes implementation, mental health teachers provide professional guidance, and all staff participate throughout the process. The school has also incorporated five-domain psychological nourishment and mental health education into its overall development plan and annual priorities. Management systems, curriculum implementation systems, crisis intervention systems, and home-school collaboration systems have been improved to ensure that integrated mental health education is normalized and standardized.

At the same time, the school upholds the original intention embodied in the phrase “when a hundred flowers bloom, spring fills the garden.” It respects the developmental differences of every student, rejects homogeneous education, and emphasizes individualized, mind-nourishing support. In this way, students with different personalities, traits, and psychological states can receive educational nourishment suited to their growth needs.

Deepening Five-Domain Integrated Practice to Achieve Whole-Field Psychological Nourishment

Moral education shapes the soul and strengthens a positive psychological foundation. The school embeds psychological nourishment into moral education activities, campus culture, and ideological-political elements in subject teaching. It focuses on core psychological needs such as adaptation at the beginning of the semester, interpersonal communication, and character development. The school regularly organizes adaptation-week activities at the start of term and designs engaging moral education scenes that correspond to children’s developmental characteristics. These activities help students adjust their psychological states and adapt quickly to school life. The school has also created a child-centered campus culture through immersive scenes such as playful floor games and voice-activated flower lights. These settings enrich students’ recess life, reduce academic fatigue, and help them develop a sunny and relaxed mindset. Regular selections of “civilized youth” and “smiling ambassadors” establish confident, positive, and kind student models, guiding students to form positive character and healthy psychological cognition.

Intellectual education opens the mind and reduces academic anxiety. The school has developed a child-centered classroom model that respects students, encourages growth, and

nourishes the mind. It moves away from tense and oppressive classroom atmospheres and optimizes classroom design around encouragement, praise, and positive interaction. A positive classroom reinforcement mechanism helps students experience learning as meaningful and enjoyable in an atmosphere of recognition and respect. The school also builds a graded mental health curriculum that corresponds to the psychological characteristics of lower, middle, and upper primary grades, so that the developmental concerns of different age groups can be addressed more precisely. A monthly “no-homework day” provides students with space to release psychological pressure and relax physically and mentally. Meanwhile, the school promotes an AI-supported classroom evaluation system and integrates growth-mindset training into subject teaching. Through challenging tasks and process-oriented positive evaluation, students are guided to face learning difficulties constructively and to strengthen their capacity to tolerate setbacks.

Physical education strengthens the mind and cultivates resilience. The school follows the principle that physical education can strengthen the heart and nourish the mind. In addition to regular physical education classes, it offers whole-school rope skipping, basketball, physical fitness training, and various sports clubs to meet students’ diverse movement needs. Open campus sports equipment allows students to exercise whenever appropriate, release negative emotions, and regulate their psychological states through movement. Sports festivals, parent-child sports meetings, and other regular activities enable students to learn cooperation, accept winning and losing, and face challenges through competition and teamwork. These practices improve psychological vulnerabilities such as fear of difficulty, fragility, and timidity, while cultivating optimism and perseverance. Regular physical-activity homework further extends

school education into family life and helps exercise become a daily strategy for mood regulation and physical-psychological health.

Aesthetic education nourishes the heart and enriches students' inner worlds. The school explores a "aesthetic education plus psychology" pathway and incorporates the idea of art-based emotional healing into daily aesthetic education. Through handicrafts, Chinese painting, drama performance, and other artistic courses, students gain channels for emotional expression and pressure release. Artistic creation helps them express inner feelings and transform psychological distress. The school regularly organizes art festivals, modeling activities, class choruses, outdoor public-interest performances, and other distinctive aesthetic activities. These activities nurture students' minds through aesthetic experience and enhance self-identity and emotional resonance. A teacher-student guitar club and other artistic display platforms encourage students to express themselves confidently, improve social competence through cooperative performance, and overcome social timidity. The selection of "smiling ambassadors" promotes a sunny, confident, and optimistic spirit, using student models to create a positive campus psychological atmosphere.

Labor education strengthens the mind and cultivates positive psychological energy. The school actively explores a "labor education plus psychology" model and uses labor practice to strengthen willpower and cultivate positive attitudes. It offers distinctive labor courses such as life skills, handicraft weaving, and campus plant care, guiding students to improve self-care ability, patience, and perseverance through hands-on work. Campus labor festivals, food festivals, and other regular practical activities enable students to experience growth and confidence through learning, practice, operation, and sharing. Such activities enhance adaptability and life stress tolerance. Campus volunteer service and community public-interest labor further guide students to develop responsibility and tolerance through serving others and contributing to the

collective. These practices can improve self-centeredness, social isolation, and emotional indifference, while fostering an active, responsible, and upward-oriented psychological state.

Improving One Collaborative Mechanism to Build Home-School-Community Synergy

Deepening home-school collaboration. The school has built a regular home-school education platform focused on key issues such as parent-child communication, emotion management, academic anxiety, and habit formation. It periodically organizes parent lectures on scientific parenting and parent-child communication skills, popularizes mental health knowledge, and corrects the misunderstanding that education should focus only on academic achievement. Parent open days, family reading activities, and parent-child cultural and sports activities build bridges for parent-child interaction, improve family relationships, and create a warm family education environment. Online mini-programs and home-school applications provide dynamic communication channels, allowing teachers to provide timely feedback on students' school-based psychological states and developmental performance and to respond to psychological problems that appear at home.

Expanding social educational channels. The school actively connects with communities, hospitals, courts, and professional psychological institutions to construct a broader system of social education. It works with communities to organize mental health public lectures and volunteer activities, thereby expanding students' psychological practice spaces. It also connects with professional medical institutions and psychological research organizations to establish graded referral channels for psychological crisis, providing professional intervention and clinical support for students with special psychological needs. Experts in psychology are periodically invited to the school for guidance, lectures, and supervision, which improves professional quality.

Visits to museums and science and technology museums further broaden students' horizons, enrich their spiritual world, strengthen environmental adaptability, and enhance psychological tolerance.

Anchoring One Ultimate Goal to Support Lifelong Student Development

The ultimate goal of the school's five-domain psychological nourishment model is to move beyond fragmented education and realize a transformation from problem intervention to whole-staff nourishment, and from isolated instruction to whole-field immersion. The desired outcome is to cultivate children who are inwardly enriched, confident, resilient, kind, and comprehensively developed. Through years of practice, the school has used the deep integration of the five domains and the coordinated work of school, family, and community to address common problems such as academic anxiety, interpersonal timidity, emotional dysregulation, and weak frustration tolerance. Students' positive psychological qualities have improved, and the campus atmosphere has become warmer and more harmonious.

For long-term development, the school will continue to optimize three areas. First, it will deepen interdisciplinary integration by developing project-based psychological theme courses and virtual-reality psychological experience courses. Second, it will strengthen technology-enabled education by building an intelligent mental health management platform and using data to support dynamic monitoring and individualized intervention. Third, it will improve long-term evaluation mechanisms by including psychological education outcomes and five-domain integration in teacher assessment and school development planning. These measures will help ensure that mental health education proceeds regularly and with high quality.

Reflection and Prospects

Primary school mental health education from the perspective of five-domain integration is a long-term, continuous, and immersive educational exploration. Mental health education should not function merely as an isolated “emergency station” for psychological problems. It should become a continuous source of psychological nourishment that runs through the whole process of the five domains and every part of campus life. Through the implementation of the “1511” system, our school has addressed the fragmentation, formalization, and limited effectiveness of traditional psychological education. It has promoted psychological nourishment through the five domains and across the whole campus, enabling every student to bloom in a diverse educational environment and giving practical meaning to the educational vision of “listening to the sound of every flower blooming.”

At the same time, grassroots practice shows that there remains substantial room for improvement. Cross-disciplinary integrated curricula are not yet fully developed; the depth of technology-enabled education remains insufficient; home-school-community collaboration needs to become more precise; and differentiated education for students with diverse needs must be further strengthened. In the new era, the psychological development needs of primary school students are more varied, and psychological education faces new opportunities and challenges. Primary school mental health educators should remain committed to child-centered education, respect the laws of student development, and continuously deepen pathways of five-domain integration.

In the future, the school will continue to optimize the “1511” education system, deepen the integration of the five domains and mental health education, innovate educational carriers, enrich

educational forms, improve collaborative mechanisms, and strengthen technology-supported practice. By putting students first, respecting individual differences, and protecting every child's inner world, the school will use the five domains of education to nourish the mind and accompany students' growth. In doing so, it will promote the high-quality development of primary school mental health education and help every child grow into a psychologically enriched, upward-looking, and comprehensively developed person.

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