

CHARITY CULTURE-ORIENTED LIFE EDUCATION: A TALENT TRAINING MODEL OF TCM PSYCHOLOGY IN RESPONSE TO GLOBAL AGEING: A CASE STUDY OF HUACHIEW CHALERMPRAKIET UNIVERSITY AND POH TECK TUNG FOUNDATION

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of global population ageing and the shortage of psychosomatic care professionals, contemporary medical education often prioritizes technical competency while neglecting compassion training and life literacy. Rooted in the century-old overseas Chinese charitable heritage and good deeds culture of Thailand's Poh Teck Tung Foundation, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University (HCU) has developed a distinctive whole-person training programme for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) psychology. Using real disaster-response and hardship encounters as immersive life education classrooms, the curriculum integrates reflection on suffering, compassion formation, and psychosomatic professional training, addressing the humanistic deficits prevalent in mainstream medical psychology education. This paper adopts an embedded single-case study design to unpack the logical framework, practical pathways, and educational values of the HCU TCM psychology programme underpinned by Poh Teck Tung's charitable and good deeds culture. Findings indicate that life education anchored in disaster and suffering, with charity and good deeds culture as its foundation, deepens the essence of medical education and produces compound TCM psychology practitioners equipped with both benevolent compassion and professional psychosomatic service capacity. Such graduates are highly needed in elderly mental health services, post-disaster psychological support, and community psychosomatic interventions, with irreplaceable practical value. This research extends the theoretical repertoire of international medical life education and offers a transferable innovative paradigm for psychosomatic workforce development worldwide.

Keywords: Charity culture; Good deeds culture; Life education; TCM psychology; Talent cultivation; Global ageing; Psychosomatic medicine; Overseas Chinese education

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Global population ageing represents an irreversible major social trend of the 21st century. The World Health Organization documents high prevalence of late-life anxiety, depression, chronic psychological distress and psychosomatic comorbidity in ageing societies, creating a massive international workforce gap for integrated psychosomatic care [1]. Professionals capable of combining TCM regulation, psychological intervention and humanistic care have become scarce assets in geriatric health services.

Nonetheless, homogenisation persists within mainstream medical and psychological training. Curricula tend to prioritise theory, procedural skills and clinical drills, whereas life education and humanistic formation remain marginalised. Many learners master robust technical knowledge yet lack first-hand encounters with human suffering, with underdeveloped compassion and social accountability [2]. This creates a mismatch between trained professionals and real-world service demands [3].

Life education centred on confronting suffering and disaster constitutes a core pathway for medical education to return to its humanistic essence. Disaster and hardship contexts offer the most immediate medium for learners to grasp the fragility of life and develop a sense of professional responsibility. As a century-old overseas Chinese charity, the Poh Teck Tung Foundation has long delivered disaster relief, poverty alleviation and public welfare services across Thailand and Southeast Asia, accumulating rich frontline experiential resources [4]. Drawing on this charitable legacy and overseas Chinese good deeds inheritance, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University has embedded disaster relief and public

service into its full TCM psychology training cycle. The model merges professional psychosomatic education with compassion-oriented life education, forming a training pathway distinct from Western mainstream medical psychology.

1.2 Literature Gap

This study followed the PRISMA 2020 guideline for literature identification and screening [5]. Literature was retrieved from CNKI, Web of Science, Scopus, PubMed and ThaiLIS, supplemented by snowballing from reference lists, institutional annual reports and grey literature. A total of 427 records were identified through database searching, and another 36 records were added via supplementary sources, yielding 463 records before deduplication. After removing 71 duplicate records, 392 records entered title-and-abstract screening. Among them, 334 irrelevant records were excluded, and 58 records were assessed for full-text eligibility. Four records could not be retrieved, and the remaining 54 full-text articles were evaluated in detail. Exclusions at the full-text stage included inappropriate participants ($n=21$), inappropriate study design ($n=16$), insufficient key information ($n=10$), and language constraints ($n=4$). Finally, 3 core articles were included for theoretical dialogue and gap analysis. Screening was completed independently by two Existing scholarship on TCM psychology education concentrates largely on curriculum design, pedagogical innovation and clinical skill building. Moreover, most medical education research separates technical training from humanistic development, lacking empirical case studies of compound professionals tailored to global ageing [3]. International literature still lacks systematic theoretical synthesis of the “charity culture + disaster life education + TCM psychology training” overseas model, limiting cross-cultural references for global psychosomatic workforce planning.

1.3 Research Aims and Significance

This study examines HCU’s TCM psychology training supported by the Poh Teck Tung Foundation. It analyses how disaster and hardship contexts operate as life education carriers, and how charitable and good deeds culture shapes learners’ compassion and professional identity.

Theoretically, it enriches research on medical humanities, life education, and overseas Chinese cultural education, proposing an integrative framework linking humanistic literacy and medical professional training. Practically, it validates that graduates from this model meet service demands in ageing societies, filling gaps in compassionate psychosomatic care and providing replicable experience for international medical psychology education.

1.4 Research Questions

- (1) How does the century-old charitable and good deeds culture of Poh Teck Tung Foundation sustain the life education system for TCM psychology students at HCU?
- (2) How do direct encounters with disaster and suffering deepen medical education and cultivate compassion and life responsibility?
- (3) What unique strengths and social value do TCM psychology graduates from this model bring to services for ageing populations globally?

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Overseas Chinese Good Deeds Culture and Charitable Education

Overseas Chinese good deeds culture originates from Confucian benevolence, empathy, and mutual aid, and has evolved within Thailand’s cross-cultural society. A century of practice at Poh Teck Tung has crystallised its core ethos: benevolence, altruism, perseverance, and stewardship. Rather than didactic moral instruction, charitable education based on a culture of good deeds is situated and experiential; it invites learners to witness the weight of life and the purpose of healing through real public welfare and disaster contexts [4]. Such experiential humanitarian practice helps medical learners transform abstract moral norms into embodied professional virtue [6].

2.2 Psychosomatic Theoretical System of TCM Psychology

TCM psychology is an interdisciplinary field bridging TCM and modern psychology, grounded in holism and mind–body unity. Unlike standalone Western psychological interventions, it prioritises coordinated somatic regulation and counselling, which is particularly suited to long-term psychosomatic management of older adults [7]. Its training requires not only assessment and intervention competencies, but also the humanitarian commitment of “healing hearts and relieving suffering”—an ethos strongly aligned with charitable life education and good deeds cultivation, as elaborated in Wang’s foundational work on TCM psychology [8]. The holistic mind-body idea provides theoretical support for combining technical competence with humanistic care in geriatric mental health services [7].

2.3 Life Education Theory Centred on Suffering and Disaster

Suffering and disaster are powerful educational resources. Life education through direct exposure to disaster transcends textbook learning. By participating in rescue, vulnerable-group accompaniment, and post-trauma support, students viscerally recognise life’s fragility and value, forming compassion and social mission beyond technical mastery [2].

3 METHODOLOGY

This study uses the embedded single-case study method widely accepted in SSCI educational and medical humanities research [9]. The pre-study protocol, including research design, sampling strategy, ethical considerations and expected contributions, is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Research Pre-Protocol Information

Item	Content
Title of manuscript	Charity Culture-Oriented Life Education: A Talent Training Model of TCM Psychology in Response to Global Ageing — A Case Study of Huachiew Chalermprakiet University and Poh Teck Tung Foundation
Research type	Qualitative research, embedded single case study
Research paradigm	Constructivist qualitative educational research
Research setting	Institute of TCM Psychology, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University; public welfare and disaster relief system of Poh Teck Tung Foundation, Thailand
Core case	Postgraduate and doctoral training programme of TCM psychology at Huachiew Chalermprakiet University
Embedded analytical units	(1) Implicit curriculum system of charity and good deeds culture; (2) Life education practice system based on disaster and suffering scenarios; (3) Closed-loop talent training system for psychosomatic medicine; (4) Social service output system oriented to ageing-related posts
Data sources	Official training documents, syllabi, disaster relief archives, foundation annual reports, practice logs, WHO ageing reports, academic literature
Sampling strategy	Purposive typical case sampling
Research methods	Case study, thematic analysis, multi-source triangulation
Theoretical foundations	Overseas Chinese good deeds culture theory; mind–body unity theory of TCM psychology; life education theory of suffering and disaster; talent development theory of psychosomatic medicine
Core research questions	(1) How does the century-old overseas Chinese charity and good deeds culture support the construction of the life education system for TCM psychology students? (2) How do on-site disaster and suffering experiences advance medical education and foster compassionate literacy among practitioners? (3) How do graduates trained under this model meet the service demands of an ageing global society?
Trustworthiness strategies	Multi-source data triangulation, complete audit trail, traceable research process, expert review
Ethical statement	This study analyses only publicly available archives and official documents. No human subjects, interviews or identifiable personal information are involved. It complies with academic ethical standards.
Innovations	(1) Integrating the century-old disaster relief system of overseas Chinese charity and good deeds culture into medical psychological education; (2) Constructing a new educational pathway: encounter with suffering → compassion formation → professional competency development in psychosomatic TCM psychology; (3) Providing a transferable cross-cultural paradigm for TCM psychology education responding to global ageing workforce needs
Limitations	Single-case design restricts generalisability; the analysis relies mainly on archival documents without long-term longitudinal follow-up data
Expected output	Peer-reviewed journal article for SSCI/SCI; empirical outcomes of educational innovation

3.1 Case Rationale

First, typicality: HCU is one of very few overseas universities offering formal TCM、 psychology higher education anchored in a leading overseas Chinese charitable foundation, creating a unique cross-cultural model. Second, completeness: it forms a closed educational pipeline from cultural immersion and situated practice to professional instruction and graduate deployment. Third, innovation: embedding disaster life education into psychosomatic training addresses an identifiable research gap. Purposive typical-case sampling was adopted [9].

3.2 Data Sources

Multiple data streams were triangulated: Poh Teck Tung's official disaster and welfare archives, HCU's TCM psychology curriculum documents, practice logs, global ageing workforce reports, and graduate service feedback [1, 4]. A triangulation strategy with multiple independent data sources was applied to improve the trustworthiness of qualitative findings; the detailed verification architecture is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Triangulation Framework for Multi-Source Data

Category of data	Specific materials	Verification function
Foundation official documents	Century-long disaster relief archives, annual public welfare reports, and social assistance records of the Poh Teck Tung Foundation	Verify the authenticity of charity and good deeds culture and sustainability of life education scenarios
University teaching documents	TCM psychology training scheme, postgraduate curriculum system, practical teaching guidelines	Verify the integrity and institutionalisation of the talent training system
Student practice archives	Public welfare training records, volunteer disaster service documents, community elderly care logs	Verify the implementation process and realisation of life education

Category of data	Specific materials	Verification function
Macro industry reports	WHO Global Report on Ageing and Health, reports on workforce gaps in geriatric mental health	Support research background and demonstrate social service demands
Academic literature	Publications on TCM psychology, medical humanities, life education, and overseas Chinese education	Support theoretical framework and identify research gaps

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Only publicly available documents, foundation annual reports, and university teaching materials were analysed. No human subjects, private interviews, or personally identifiable information were involved. The research complied with academic ethical standards.

4 CASE ANALYSIS: MODEL CONSTRUCTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

This study adopts a structured analytical framework covering cultural foundation, educational pathways, training loop, competency outcomes, and social value, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Analytical Framework of the Case Study

Analytical dimension	Observation indicators	Data sources
Foundation of charity and good deeds culture	Inheritance of charitable and good deeds values, university–foundation collaborative mechanism, implicit cultural curriculum, heritage of century-long disaster relief culture	Annual reports of Poh Teck Tung Foundation, cooperation agreements, professional training scheme
Pathways of disaster life education	Types of suffering scenarios, frequency of public welfare training, organisation of post-disaster psychological accompaniment, records of physical and mental support for vulnerable groups	Disaster relief archives, student practice logs, service briefings
Closed-loop talent training system	Cultural foundation modules, specialised TCM psychosomatic courses, psychological intervention training, disaster mental health practice, graduate career pathways	Syllabi, training plans, teaching schedules, internship archives
Competency and literacy outcomes	Humanistic compassion, TCM psychosomatic assessment, clinical psychological intervention, post-disaster psychological aid, geriatric psychosomatic care	Practice reports, service feedback, assessment records
Social value and occupational fit	Matching degree with ageing-related posts, public health value, workforce gap mitigation, stability of career development	WHO ageing reports, workforce demand documents, graduate employment records

4.1 Cultural Foundation: Century-Long Charity and Good Deeds Culture as Implicit Curriculum

Poh Teck Tung Foundation has for decades responded to floods, poverty, medical hardship and funeral relief across Thailand and Southeast Asia. Its continuous engagement with natural disasters and human distress supplies a sustained, authentic field classroom for HCU (Figure 1).

Beyond explicit ethics courses, HCU frames Poh Teck Tung's altruistic relief tradition and good deeds inheritance as an implicit curriculum for TCM psychology, embedding benevolence into daily learning and grounding students in the mission "to regulate the body through TCM and heal the mind through psychology". This overseas Chinese charitable practice in Thailand has been documented in prior research on transnational Chinese educational practice.



Figure 1 Life-Saving Operational Courses and on-Site Disaster-Relief Practices of the Poh Teck Tung Foundation

4.2 Educational Transformation: Suffering Encounters Reorient Medical Education

The core innovation is centring direct confrontation with suffering and disaster as the spine of life education. Conventional medical psychology training relies on abstract knowledge; through Poh Teck Tung's relief missions, students enter disaster zones and settings of hardship.

While supporting flood survivors (Figure 2), accompanying traumatised communities and providing psychosomatic care to disadvantaged elders, learners witness embodied distress in disaster and ageing. This immersive experiential model moves medical education from skill acquisition toward life stewardship, nurturing compassion and vocational mission difficult to foster in classroom settings [6].



Figure 2 Supporting and Assisting Flood-Disaster Survivors

4.3 Training Loop: Integrating Compassion Literacy and Psychosomatic Competence

HCU implements a closed-loop training pathway: Cultural grounding: charitable and good deeds culture modules build altruism and accountability;

Professional skill building: systematic training in TCM, psychosomatic modulation (Figure 3), psychological intervention and geriatric mental health care; The School of Psychology jointly established by China and Thailand cultivates high-end talents at the master's and doctoral levels in psychology, and its degrees are eligible for verification by the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE).

Situated practicum: recurring participation in disaster response, community elder care and pro bono psychological outreach;

Graduate deployment: workforce output targeted at global ageing service demands.

The pathway unites humanistic disposition and technical proficiency, responding to the industry challenge of skilled but emotionally detached practitioners [3].



Figure 3 Teaching Bases: Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospitals and the Sino-Thai Jointly-Built School of Psychology

4.4 Social Value: Service Potential in an Ageing World

Global ageing generates persistent demand for psychosomatic care: late-life insomnia, anxiety, psychosomatic syndromes and post-disaster psychological reconstruction all require TCM psychology practitioners with both compassion and technical expertise [1].

Graduates hold dual competitive strengths: mastery of TCM psychosomatic assessment and psychological intervention (Figure 4), plus frontline experience in disaster mental health and geriatric welfare, with mature empathic literacy [3]. Compared with mainstream psychology graduates, they match well with geriatric health centres, aged-care institutions, post-disaster mental health agencies and international senior health organisations, with strong employability and service potential [7].



Figure 4 Compared with Graduates from Single-Discipline Majors, These Graduates Demonstrate Enhanced Competitiveness, with Proficiency in TCM and Psychological Techniques as well as Philanthropic Professional Dedication

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Advantages of Charity-Based and Good-Deeds-Oriented Disaster Life Education

Much international medical education reform focuses on curricular and technical innovation, underplaying the foundational role of life reflection and humanistic formation. This case demonstrates that authentic disaster and hardship contexts constitute powerful life education media, while Poh Teck Tung's overseas Chinese charitable heritage and good deeds inheritance provide stable cultural grounding for humanistic training, addressing deficits in compassionate care in modern medicine [2].

Evidence from multiple documentary sources (see Table 2) consistently supports that the life education practice is institutionalised rather than an ad-hoc volunteer activity. Contemporary medical education research also indicates that humanistic modules are often marginalised in formal curricula, highlighting the necessity of situational life education based on real social practice [2]. Humanitarian field-based learning could effectively bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and real-world clinical ethical requirements [6].

5.2 Distinctive Competitiveness of Compound TCM Psychology Practitioners

In ageing societies, isolated Western psychotherapy or purely biomedical TCM care cannot satisfy the complex psychosomatic needs of older adults [7]. Graduates from this model integrate TCM holism, modern intervention science, and charitable good deeds humanistic values, creating a distinctive, non-substitutable competitive edge in the global health labour market [6].

5.3 Implications for Global Medical Education Reform

HCU's "cultural immersion + disaster life education + disciplinary training" framework offers an alternative to homogenised international medical psychology education. It suggests a principle for medical workforce development: high-quality clinicians must root practice in life awareness and compassionate accountability, supported by technical skill, to meet evolving population health needs [3].

6 CONCLUSION

HCU's TCM psychology programme, nourished by Poh Teck Tung's century-old charitable tradition and overseas Chinese good deeds culture, builds life education around direct engagement with disaster and human suffering, reorienting medical education from skill training toward vocational mission formation. The model cultivates competent, compassionate, and socially accountable psychosomatic practitioners [6].

Against global population ageing, TCM psychology professionals are needed continuously in geriatric psychosomatic care, post-disaster psychological reconstruction, and community public health, with stable employment channels and broad service scope [1]. This research innovatively synthesises overseas Chinese good deeds culture, disaster life

education, and TCM psychology professional training. It expands the theoretical and practical landscape of international educational inquiry and provides a transferable blueprint for psychosomatic workforce development and higher medical education reform worldwide [9].

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

JieLi Jiang: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing-original draft Wei Zhou: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Resources, Writing-original draft, Supervision, Project administration MengQing Liu: Formal analysis Yu Tang: Investigation, Visualization Henry S. R. Kao: Resources, Writing-review & editing Yong Wei: Writing-review & editing Jian Zou: Writing-review & editing Ze Zhan: Writing-review & editing All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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