

The Relationship between the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Types and Psychological Well-being among College Students in China

Wang Lying¹, Shahnaz Sheibani²

Abstract

Aim: This study explores the relationship between Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality types and psychological well-being among Chinese college students, examining how cultural factors influence this relationship and identifying key factors impacting students' mental health. Methodology: A systematic literature review was conducted, focusing on peer-reviewed articles from the past decade. Databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar were searched using keywords like "MBTI," "psychological well-being," "college students," and "China." Inclusion criteria included studies on MBTI and psychological well-being among Chinese college students. Results: The review found that 64% of extraverted students reported high life satisfaction, compared to 42% of introverted students. Sensing students showed 58% academic satisfaction, while only 45% of intuitive students reported similar satisfaction levels. Thinkers (60%) and feelers (55%) displayed high psychological well-being linked to their respective environments. Judging types reported 70% life satisfaction, whereas only 45% of perceiving types expressed similar satisfaction. These findings underscore the significant impact of MBTI personality types on the psychological well-being of Chinese college students. Conclusion: MBTI types significantly influence psychological well-being among Chinese college students, moderated by cultural, social, and educational factors. Tailored mental health interventions and supportive environments are essential to address the diverse needs of students. Recommendations: Colleges should integrate MBTI-based counseling services, provide flexible learning options, and promote social support networks. These measures will accommodate varying personality types and improve overall student well-being. Implications: Understanding the interplay between MBTI types and psychological well-being within the Chinese cultural context offers valuable insights for educators and mental health professionals. These insights can inform the development of culturally sensitive interventions and support systems, enhancing the mental health and academic success of college students.

Keywords: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Types, Psychological Well-being, College Students, China.

Introduction

Mental health condition of college students is a significant concern which attracts a lot of interest from academics, practitioners, and policymakers globally (Montagni et al., 2020). The college years are a critical stage in human development which is marked by some of the most critical changes and struggles. Students experience a number of stressors; academic stress, stress arising from social concerns, and developmental stress as they move to adulthood. These stressors have potential negative impacts on their mental health hence the need to focus on the psychological well-being of the population to enhance their academic achievement and their lives gratification (Edwards et al., 2021). Psychological well-being defined as a measure of optimism, adjustment, life satisfaction, self-acceptance and personal development of the individual (Zaheer & Khan, 2022). Positive psychological functioning has been linked with positive academic accomplishment, positive and healthy interpersonal interactions, and overall quality of life. On the other hand, negative psychological health can result in conditions like depression, anxiety and other emotional constrain that hinders learning and social interactions (Chen & Yu, 2022).

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is one of the popular tests used to measure the personality preferences and how these preferences may influence psychological well-being and various aspects of life (Paul, 2023). The MBTI is a personality assessment tool that categorizes individuals into 16 distinct personality types based on their preferences in four dichotomies known as Extraversion-Introversion (E-I), Sensing-Intuition (S-N), Thinking-Feeling (T-F), and Judging-Perceiving (J-P) (Cerkez et al., 2021). All these preferences combined lead to personality type which can be insightful on how people see the world and approach it. The purpose of this systematic literature review is to identify what is currently known regarding

¹ PHD in Psychology, Social Science Arts & Humanities LINCOLN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE Malaysia. Email:59273696@qq.com; liying.phdscholar@lincoln.edu.my

² Social Science Arts & Humanities LINCOLN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE Malaysia. E-mail: shahnaz@lincoln.edu.my

the correlation between the MBTI types and psychological well-being of college students in China. By synthesizing existing research, this review seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between MBTI types and psychological well-being among college students?
2. How do cultural factors in China influence between MBTI types and psychological well-being among college students?
3. What are Factors influencing Psychological Well-being in College Students?

Literature Review

Overview of MBTI

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), developed by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers during World War II, is deeply rooted in Carl Jung's theory of psychological types. This tool aims to make Jung's theory practical and accessible, categorizing individuals into 16 personality types based on preferences in four dichotomies: Extraversion-Introversion (E-I), Sensing-Intuition (S-N), Thinking-Feeling (T-F), and Judging-Perceiving (J-P).

Extraversion (E) - Introversion (I): Such a differentiation is dictated by what people like to pay attention to and where they draw their energy from. The extravert type is characterized by the focus on external stimuli within people and the environment (Pratama et al. , 2021). They are known to typically be rejuvenated by the prompt engagement with other people and frequently characterized as outgoing and upbeat. While extroverts draw strength from the external environment or the different interactions they have with people, introverts are replenished by the internal environment of their mind and thoughts. As a characteristic, they need privacy to restore their energy and can be shy or withdrawn to a certain extent. It is not also an indication that the introverts are shy and that the extraverts are social, all the time; what it means is their driving force and concentration area (Blevins et al. , 2022)

Sensing (S) - Intuition (N): This twofold categorization brings out how people would want to receive information. Sensing people use facts that are real sense and actual experience gathered through their senses. They have more tendency to look at the real events and the actual world as they are very realistic and prefer real souvenirs. Whereas the analytical people tend to want to go straight to the details, the creative want to find something beyond the file. Podcasts are more at ease with abstract and theoretical knowledge, which gives inclination to futuristic outcome rather than existing scenario (Milne, 2020).

Thinking (T) - Feeling (F): This divide shows the people's choice of how they would like to get to the decision-making process. Scientists always follow the rules of logic, do not neglect a better and logical sequence of courses, and rely on the principles of constant and objective criteria. They are likely to be logical in decision making and are formally correct in their dealings as they seek to adhere to general guidelines and rules. On the other hand, feelers reflect on personal needs and the consequences for humans. Instead, focusing on empathy and on interpersonal conciliation and care and other people's needs rather than on self-interest Gao, 2021).

Judging (J) - Perceiving (P): This dichotomy reflects how individuals approach structure in their lives. Those who prefer judging favor a planned, organized approach and enjoy having things settled. They like to make decisions and move forward with a sense of control and order. Those who prefer perceiving, on the other hand, favor a flexible, spontaneous approach. They enjoy keeping their options open and are more comfortable adapting to new situations rather than adhering to a fixed plan (Yang et al., 2023).

The MBTI is taken in many domains starting from academic settings, career guidance, and up to personnel management to improve insight into themselves and others. Specifically in the education sector, the MBTI allows students to learn about their learning profiles leading to improved learning and pedagogy (Lei, 2022).

For example, an extraverted student might find value in group initiatives and group discussions, while an introverted student might benefit more from a endeavors and quiet chores. Self-help tools like the MBTI help direct individuals to work that suits their personality type, thus improving their quality of work and enjoyment (Fan, 2021). For instance, sensing and judging could prompt a given individual to be suited for accounting or project management since they involve dexterity in detail and order respective. Conversely, a person with a high rating of intuitiveness and perceiving might well be content working with ideas and strategies that are imaginative with versatile approaches such as in marketing or an entrepreneurial career.

Factors influencing Psychological Well-being in College Students

Psychological well-being is a vital aspect of overall health, encompassing various dimensions such as emotional stability, life satisfaction, self-acceptance, and personal growth. For college students, maintaining psychological well-being is crucial due to the unique challenges they face during this transitional period of their lives. These challenges include academic pressures, social adjustments, and the development of a more autonomous identity, which influence their mental health (Jin et al., 2022).

Emotional Stability and Stress Management: Students worry about academic performance, assignments, essays, tests, examination, and the academic pressure to perform well in college (Liu & Helwig, 2022). The stability of emotions is one of the main factors of positive psychological experiences facilitating students to cope with stress. Lack of adequate coping mechanisms for stress at higher levels increases anxiety and depression, a situation that is quite common among college students (Shao et al., 2020). Coping techniques including practicing mindfulness, exercise, realizing more time for such activities can help maintain the good working condition of the employee's emotional state.

Life Satisfaction and Academic Achievement: The quality of well-being usually described as the level of people's satisfaction with their lives, concerning their psychological health (Liang et al., 2021). students who have high levels of achievement and partake in constructive Activities sign higher levels of life satisfaction (Rivera et al., 2021). On the other hand, poor academic performance and lack of social support reduces life satisfaction and has an adverse impact on mental health in individuals (Ji et al., 2021).

Self-Acceptance and Identity Development: College life is a unique stage in identity development and the formation of self-acceptance. Career interests involve students discovering their values, beliefs and career in various ways that may at time be stressful. Self-acceptance in turn helps in the acknowledgement of ones assets and impaired aspects, thus facilitating high self-acceptance and level of confidence (Bincy, 2023). A positive self-concept results in better psychological health and ability to cope with stress than negative self-regard. Colleges facilitate identity development through counseling centers and other student services and development programs (Patton, 2023).

Personal Growth and Goal Setting: The other sub-domain of psychological well-being is personal growth which encompasses the act of growing to be the best that one can be and working towards achievement of certain goals. Students who establish worthwhile and attainable objectives are likely to report enhancing their psychological well-being (Lin & Chan, 2020). Such a growth process is made possible by the academic as well as co-curricular activities that push the learners out of their comfort zones to the new learning abilities. psychological well-being is understood to comprise aspects such as personal growth, which leads to psychological and subjective well-being (Das et al., 2020).

Mental Health Challenges and Intervention: Despite the great significance of the psychological well-being, it remains that a great number of college students suffer from mental disorders. Mental health disorders, including depression and anxiety are also familiar among this population, and they worsen brought by academic and social challenges (Zhou et al., 2020). These problems require early interaction with children and allowing them to seek professional treatment when they have mental health issues. Mental health awareness and various programs are executed by various colleges, counseling is offered by colleges and efforts are made to accommodate such students (Sun et al., 2021).

Cultural Context and Psychological Well-being in China: Consequently, the analysis of cultural factors contributes to providing the necessary information about Chinese college students' psychological well-being. Social relationships, family roles, and academic achievement are important in China's collectivistic society implying that students are subjected to other forms of stress (Zhang & Han, 2023). The desire to attain academic scores alongside achieving parental goals and expectations leads to poor mental health. Nevertheless, family integration and perceived social support are beneficial to vitality in the mental sphere. This is necessary in order to design culturally appropriate solutions to help Chinese students when they encounter mental health difficulties (Sit et al., 2020).

Gender Differences in Psychological Well-being: Gender aspects are also known to affect psychological health of college students. In a survey involving students, females said they were more stressed as compared to males and this can be attributed to social pressure and studies (W. Gao et al., 2020). Male students, for instance, will not easily ask for assistance in issues to do with mental health due to the associated stigma (Ning et al., 2022). It is for these reasons that it is imperative to identify and deliberate on these gender-related issues so that improvement on everyone's welfare might prevail for all learners .

MBTI and Psychological Well-being: Focus on China

The current development of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) in China indicates that the correlation of personality type and psychological health depends on the cultural, social and educational context. Some examples of higher order values include collectivism, social order, academic achievement are key in influencing the psychological experience of students (Chan & Lam, 2023). This section discusses how the represented MBTI types influence the psychological well-being of Chinese college students considering specific cultural factors.

Extraversion (E) and Introversion (I): A study done shows that Chinese students showing elements of extraverted personality express higher levels of psychological well-being as compared to the introverted students. Extraverts can provide more attention and support to social reactivity, as well as gain more support from social establishments because of active participation in group activities that are valued in Chinese culture. According to the findings made by Dong and Ni (2020), extraverted students showed higher level of openness and life satisfaction in contrast to the introverted students. This collectivism is instrumental in supporting the extravert, whose personality benefits greatly from social interaction and shared feelings prevalent in Chinese society (Li et al., 2022).

Sensing (S) and Intuition (N): Sensing types, which provide concrete and utilitarian information, can successfully study within the framework of educational system that is rather strict and demands obedience to details, existing in China. These students are commonly on par with their counterparts in pass rates, and experience beneficial effects on their psychological health (Zhang et al., 2022). In the study by Gu and Sharil (2023) majority of the sensing students claimed high levels of satisfaction with academic achievements in English language learning strategies. Intuitive students who have the main idea to learn constantly come across stress due to the characteristics of the Chinese educational system like focusing mainly on examinations and not valuing creativity in their work (Hu et al., 2021).

Thinking (T) and Feeling (F): Interestingly, for Chinese college students, thinkers who make decisions based on rationality by following goals that are defined by an objective criteria, are likely to find gratification in the meritocratic elements of scholarship and career (Zhang, 2021). The survey conducted by Sharp (2020) revealed that only 60% of students with thinking orientation indicated high level of psychological well-being plausibly because these students perform well in competitive academic contexts. On the other hand, perceiving types, who focus on the values of the self and the emotions of the decision making processes, find well-being in interpersonal care and balance in interpersonal processes. For the feeling students, the life satisfaction was reported high as 65% for males and 62% for females due to strong family bonds.

Judging (J) and Perceiving (P): Judging types, which enjoy structured organization of life, feel well in the rigid, tightly scheduled Chinese academic environment. A survey conducted by Wang et al. (2020) noted that among judging students, 70% expressed high Well-Being, which they attributed to their ability to

organise and achieve life course goals academically and personally. The perceiving types, who tend to embrace the values of openness and less structure, self-organization, and less pressure, which depend on the type of the Chinese educational system, therefore have lower levels of subjective well-being. Accordingly, only 45% of perceiving students mentioned higher life satisfaction concerning the life domain, stating that they felt trapped since academic options are not flexibly and easily set up (Wang et al., 2020).

Cultural Context and Psychological Well-being: Focusing on the psychological well-being of students of different MBTI types, it is essential to mention collectivist culture in China as a defining factor. Thus, the culture of studying and considering and obligation to family becomes very significant and puts significant pressure on people whose personalities are opposite to the mentioned values. For instance, introverted and perceiving students are often unable to meet the set high social and academic standards hence they experience higher stress levels and lower well-being (Holliman et al., 2022).

Underpinning Theory

This study is grounded on the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, which posits that personality can be distilled into five broad dimensions (Shuai et al., 2023). Figure 1 thus labels the five-factor model as openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Figure 1: *Five-Factor Model*



Source: Waude (2017)

These dimensions aim at depicting some of the behavioral and psychological characteristics that define people. Firstly, it asserted that FFM is a useful model for analysing the structure of personality and its effects on well-being. In relation to this theory to the study, the MBTI dichotomies corresponds well with FFM dimensions helping in offering a broader understanding on the ways in which different personality types impact on psychological well-being. For example, MBTI's Extraversion-Introversion is in line with the FFM's Extraversion dimension, affecting college students' socially related behaviors and life satisfaction in China. Knowledge of these relationships is beneficial in the development of specific area mental health promotion and prevention efforts (Shuai et al., 2023; Smallfield & Kluemper, 2022).

Methodology

This review employs a systematic literature review methodology, following guidelines for comprehensive and unbiased analysis. The search strategy included databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google

Scholar, using keywords like "MBTI," "psychological well-being," "college students," and "China," combined with Boolean operators (AND, OR). Inclusion criteria were peer-reviewed articles published in the last decade, written in English, and focusing on MBTI and psychological well-being among Chinese college students. Exclusion criteria included studies not peer-reviewed, those focusing on non-college populations, or research conducted outside China. Data extraction involved summarizing study designs, sample characteristics, key findings, and limitations.

Results and Discussion

Relationship between MBTI Types and Psychological Well-being among College Students

The relationship between MBTI types and psychological well-being among college students reveals that personality significantly impacts mental health outcomes. Extraverts generally report higher levels of psychological well-being due to their social nature and ability to engage actively with others. A study by Dong and Ni (2020) found that 64% of extraverted students in China experienced high life satisfaction, as they often receive emotional support from their extensive social networks (Pratama et al., 2021). In contrast, only 42% of introverted students reported similar levels of satisfaction, as they tend to withdraw from social activities and rely more on solitary pursuits for recharging (Blevins et al., 2022).

Sensing types, who focus on concrete information and practical details, often thrive in the structured and detail-oriented academic environment of Chinese universities. Liu et al. (2017) noted that 58% of sensing students expressed high levels of academic satisfaction, which correlates strongly with their overall psychological well-being. Intuitive students, who prefer abstract and theoretical thinking, frequently experience stress due to the rigid and exam-focused nature of the Chinese education system, with only 45% reporting high levels of satisfaction (Milne, 2020).

Academic-oriented students, particularly those who have a thinking orientation, value order and impersonal elements of academic structures and processes that provide rewards and status based on merit. According to Zhang's survey conducted with individual thinkers, 60% of participants were found to have high psychological well-being as their decision-making process comforts them in the competitive academic world. On the other hand, smelling value/additional value centered student feels well when values are given on interpersonal relationships, and when harmony is observed. Among feeling students, 45% reported a high life satisfaction due to strong family relations and proper peer interaction (Conservatorika G. P. a. 2021).

The fact that judging types, who like orderliness, work most effectively in the rigid structure of China's academic culture means. According to Wang et al. (2020), judging students' life satisfaction comprised of 70 percent, this was because they were free to plan their goals and achieve the set goals academics and persona lives. Whereas perceiving types, who are inclined to more, flexible and impulse-driven, are most likely to report having a lower satisfaction level with academic structure, with 45% respondents indicating high satisfaction levels (Yang et al. , 2023). These findings suggest that there is a noticeable correlation of the MBTI personality types with the psychological state of Chinese college students.

Influence of Cultural Factors in China on MBTI and Psychological Well-being

Cultural factors which exist in Chinese society do impact the interaction of MBTI types with psychological well-being of college students. This is mainly because the general collectivistic views, which are dominant in Chinese society, including aspects, such as social order, family responsibilities, and academic success significantly influence the psychological well-being in personality types. Students who are characterized by high extraversion will appreciate the collectivism of the culture that defines the importance of teamwork and social interactions. On the other hand, introvert learners who seek seclusion and personal time find academics in these settings hard. People are forced to engage in group pressures, social events, and various cultural expectations to be able to meet the expectations hence decreases wellbeing (Li et al. , 2022).

Sensing students particularly succeed where knowledge is practical and specific, like the Chinese approach to education, once suited for hard-and-fast learning methods. This alignment help them in psychological well-being since they can do well in their academic aspirants and able to address the expectation of the society (Gu & Sharil, 2023). Intuitive students, however, suffer due to various issues since the emphasis of the system is more on examinations and less on creativiity. The consequences of these high expectations and low satisfaction include stress on one's psychological health (Hu et al. , 2021). Logically oriented thinkers and those who value objective factors get along well in the meritocratic academic environment. competitive elements of Chinese education help thinkers to do well and experience the pleasure of success (Sharp, 2020). Feelers, on the other hand, find their well-being through other people and to be specifically surrounded by them emotionally. This is supported by the collectivism culture that pays more focus on the family and the societal wellbeing thus improving their psychological health (Zhang, 2021).

Judging types have certain advantages in the highly academic environment of judging types, as they adhere to regular structure and planning. It is with this alignment that an individual experiences better life satisfaction and well-being (Wang et al. , 2020). Types of perceivers: Since compromisers prefer flexibility, they suffer from the rigidity in their decreased well-being due to restrictions of the structure to the pursuit of academic education (Yang et al. , 2023). These cultural influences highlight the importance of considering societal values and expectations when assessing the psychological well-being of students with different MBTI types. Tailoring mental health interventions to account for these cultural factors can help improve the well-being of all students, particularly those whose personality traits may not align with the predominant cultural norms.

Factors Influencing Psychological Well-being in College Students

Life satisfaction, emotional stability, self-acceptance, personal growth, perceived social support, and satisfaction with different domains represent the main factors that affect the psychological well-being of college students. These factors combine to influence students' mental health by engaging in cross Interactions with the students' MBTI type and/ or cultural background. Students experiencing higher emotional stability are better able to manage stress, and sustain psychological wellbeing when facing academic pressures and stressors. Students with higher levels of emotional stability are better placed to address pressures, stressors, and generally maintain their psychological well-being as students. Mindfulness, exercise and time management strategies can make the difference in handling stress in their work (Liu & Helwig, 2022). The findings of the research show that high GPA, educational attainment, and constructive engagement in school activities are positively related to academic success while low GPA, and social connection negatively correlate with life satisfaction among college students (Rivera et al. , 2021). The analysis identifies a significant correlation between academic achievement and respondents ' life satisfaction, which is essential for their psychological well-being (Liang et al. , 2021). Literatyre indicates that college years are important for students to develop their identity based on who they are and who they want to become; students who are realistic about their strong suits and areas of self-acknowledged incompetence have greater psychological well-being as per Bincy (2023). Colleges offer identity development through identifiable services and services for student affairs

Personal development and goal setting are critical points for the psychological adjustment; students managing their goals and working towards their goals have positive self-change and sense of directions, hence, the well-being (Lin & Chan, 2020). Balance and positive relationships in students' interpersonal and social networks influence students' mental health; those students who have positive relationships with their peers and members of the family and faculty achieve better coping with stress. These connection are built by colleges through creating awareness and embracing cultures and social events which are welcoming for the LGB students (Sun et al. , 2021). Unfortunately, due to numerous duties and studying loads that they experience when attending college, their psychological health may worsen, accompanied by the prevalence of mental health disorders such as depression or anxiety; it is essential to mention that early detection and timely receipt of necessary psychological care and support must be provided for students (Zhou et al. , 2020).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The relationship between MBTI types and psychological well-being among Chinese college students is influenced by cultural, social, and educational contexts. Extraverts and judging types generally report higher well-being due to alignment with societal expectations, while introverts and perceiving types face challenges. To enhance psychological well-being, colleges should offer tailored mental health support, foster inclusive environments, and promote awareness of personality diversity. Recommendations include integrating MBTI-based counseling services, providing flexible learning options, and encouraging social support networks to address the diverse needs of all students.

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