

Keynote Communication

Can Traditional Chinese Medicine Benefit Mental Health?

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Abstract: Mental health issues can have physical, emotional, and financial consequences, affecting individuals, their families, friends, and society as a whole. Alternative approaches can offer new possibilities for enhancing global mental health. This study aims to analyze existing evidence regarding the effectiveness of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in treating mental health conditions and to explore potential applications within Western healthcare systems. We conducted a thorough search of PubMed, Cochrane, Web of Science, Science Direct, and Scielo databases to identify studies on TCM techniques for mental health, specifically focusing on meta-analyses involving human subjects. Studies that investigated mental health in relation to other diseases were also included, while low or moderate-quality studies were excluded. Our search yielded 319 studies, reduced to 265 after removing duplicates. Following a screening of titles and abstracts, 40 studies were selected for further examination. Full-text assessment and quality evaluation were performed on 38 studies, ultimately including 32 studies in the final analysis. Introducing TCM into the healthcare system has the potential to positively impact the treatment of certain mental disorders and enhance the quality of life for patients with other illnesses. TCM may also benefit populations lacking the access to conventional therapies. However, further research is necessary, and improvements in methodological quality are required. The study protocol has been registered with the International Prospective Registry for Systematic Reviews (PROSPERO CRD42021276118), and the article was published in the journal *Brain Behavior and Immunity – Integrative* (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbih.2023.100013>).

Keywords: Mental health, Tradicional Chinese medicine, CAM, Integrative medicine.

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