



# Transforming Crisis Through Cosmic Trust: A Review of Daoist Acceptance in Zhuangzi and Its Applications to Modern Mental Health Interventions

<sup>1</sup>Dong Ziyi, <sup>2,\*</sup>Huang Jiaqing

<sup>1</sup>Curator, Ziyi Museum of Living Aesthetics, China

<sup>2</sup>Research Fellow, Chengdu Neusoft University, China

Email: <sup>1</sup>89236652@qq.com, <sup>2</sup>huangjiaqing@nsu.edu.cn

\*Corresponding Author: Huang Jiaqing

**Abstract-** The complexity of contemporary life has enhanced the suffering of the psyche, and integrative and culturally based methods of mental health must be employed. This paper discusses the meaning of the term, cosmic trust, based on Daoist philosophy, especially the works of Zhuangzi, and its applicability to modern mental health practices. The acceptance of Daoist focuses on the alignment with natural processes, the giving up of strict control, and the willingness to change. These values can be well-linked with contemporary therapeutic models that emphasize acceptance, mindfulness, and psychological flexibility. The paper will assume a qualitative integrative review methodology to integrate the recent interdisciplinary literature on the Daoist philosophy and modern psychological practices. The discussion examines how the perspectives of Zhuangzi on impermanence, non-resistance, and non-identification with fixed self-concepts can be used to guide therapeutic interventions that help in managing crisis, uncertainty, and emotional distress. The conclusions indicate that cosmic trust helps to adaptively cope with adverse situations by supporting resilience, promoting emotional control, and meaning-making. Additionally, the research illuminates the incompatibility between Daoism acceptance and well-known interventions like acceptance-based and mindfulness-oriented therapies. Cosmic trust can provide a radical viewpoint by helping people accept instead of rejecting life's unknowns and re-conceptualizing crises as a growth opportunity. Nevertheless, the Daoist principles need to be cautiously contextualized to prevent misinterpretation and simplification. On the whole, this paper makes Daoist acceptance a useful philosophical and psychological asset that can inform contemporary mental health practice and lead to a more holistic approach to well-being in an ever-unpredictable world.

**Keywords:** Cosmic Trust, Daoist Philosophy (Zhuangzi), Psychological Flexibility, Emotional Regulation, Mindfulness and Acceptance Therapies.

## I. Introduction

Over the past years, the global mental health crisis has been escalating due to the accelerating speed of sociocultural changes, economic insecurity, and exposure to shared trauma. The growing levels of anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders are reflective of the shortcomings of traditional treatment models that tend to focus on symptom-minimization instead of more existential issues (Freeman, 2022). Although cognitive-behavioral and pharmacological methods have proved effective, they might not be as thorough in the aspects of human suffering that can be attributed to uncertainty, identity and meaning. Consequently, there is an increased interest in the implementation of philosophical traditions into psychological frameworks in order to offer more holistic and adaptive solutions to well-being. The ancient Chinese philosophical tradition is Daoism, which provides a subtle interpretation of existence, change, and the characteristics of human experience. The key idea of Daoist philosophy is that of the Dao which can be interpreted as the dynamic, primary process of the natural order of the universe. Instead of prescribing dogmas, Daoism focuses on conforming to this flux that is constantly changing by being flexible, spontaneous, and responsive to natural processes (Hung, 2020; Chai, 2024). One of the most powerful Daoist philosophers, Zhuangzi, went further to develop these notions by showing how men can be in harmony with the Dao by not forcing anything but by not being bound by these rigid categories. His works oppose the artificiality of conceptual demarcation, and promote an open, fluid, and context-specific approach to reality that is accommodating to uncertainty and change.

In modern psychology, the concept of acceptance-based and mindfulness-oriented interventions has appeared as similar notions. An example of such therapy is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which focuses on psychological flexibility, supporting people to accept the internal experiences instead of trying to manage or evade those (Gloster et al., 2020). Psychological flexibility is also a major predictor of mental health that allows individuals to adapt to the changing circumstances (Kashdan et al., 2020). Similarly, mindfulness-based programs increase present-mindedness and non-judging acceptance, thus enhancing capabilities of emotional regulation and building psychological resilience (Korkmaz and Guloglu, 2021).



Empirical studies in the recent past also endorse the importance of acceptance in promoting psychological well-being. Research has revealed that people pursuing acceptance-based coping mechanisms are less stressed and have enhanced job satisfaction in life (Ford et al., 2018). Likewise, the studies of emotion regulation suggest that negative emotions should be accepted, and not suppressed, because the latter is typically linked to heightened psychological distress (Monsoon et al., 2022). These results are very much in line with the Daoist ideologies, which are focused on non-resistance and unity with the natural processes.

On top of acceptance, the concept of existential psychology proposes another applicable frame of reference to the relevance of Daoist thought. Existential therapies touch on the basic human issues of mortality, freedom, isolation and meaning. According to modern studies, the meaning-making processes are a key factor in psychological resilience, especially in a crisis (Vos et al., 2015). These issues are addressed by Zhuangzi in a rather distinct way with the teachings reformulating them as natural and transformative parts of living instead of the problems that need to be solved.

New views on positive psychology also justify the incorporation of Eastern philosophical traditions. There is, e.g., second wave positive psychology, which underlines the presence of both positive and negative experiences and the need to accept the contradictions of life (Wong, 2019). This view is associated with the Daoist philosophy that views opposites as interdependent and transformative of each other instead of opposing (Yao, 2025). Moreover, cross-cultural psychology highlights the importance of implementing non-Western and indigenous views in mental health studies where the use of Western-dominant frameworks might constrain the validity and cross-cultural generalizability of mental knowledge and interventions (Anjum et al., 2024; Yusuf et al., 2024).

Neuroscientific studies have also started to understand the processes that are involved in acceptance and mindfulness practices. There is evidence that these practices are related to the changes in the brain areas related to emotional regulation, self-referential processing, and stress response (Tang et al., 2016). These results offer a biological rationale of the success of acceptance-based interventions, and further help to justify their integration with philosophical approaches, such as Daoism.

Furthermore, recent research has highlighted the significance of flexibility and strength in uncertainty coping. Acceptance and cognitive reappraisal are examples of adaptive coping strategies associated with better mental health outcomes in times of crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic (Zacher and Rudolph, 2021). These plans reflect the Daoist doctrines of adaptability and change, making the idea of Zhuangzi philosophy even more topical in modern settings. Convergences notwithstanding, Daoist philosophy is not well represented in the psychology research as compared to other Eastern traditions including Buddhism. This void is a chance to analyze the peculiarities of Daoism, especially the focus on the unity with the external reality and the absence of control. The idea of cosmic trust lends a fitting perspective in which these notions can be incorporated into the current psychological models. It summarizes a dynamic kind of acceptance that entails faith in the progression of life yet being actively engaged with the present.

### ***Research Questions***

1. What is the conceptualization of Daoist acceptance in the philosophy of Zhuangzi as cosmic trust?
2. What is the relationship between Daoist acceptance and contemporary psychological interventions?
3. What can be done to improve Daoist principles in therapeutic practices of crisis and uncertainty?

### ***Research Objectives***

To analyze the philosophical basis of Daoist acceptance in the work of Zhuangzi.

To examine how it conforms to modern psychological theory.

To suggest an integrative model of using cosmic trust in mental health interventions.

## **II. Theoretical Framework**

The conceptual framework of this research combines the Daoist philosophy- especially the teachings of Zhuangzi- and the current psychological concepts of acceptance, malleability, and well-being. In its most basic form, Daoist thinking introduces reality as dynamic, flowing and always tied together, in which psychological suffering manifests in stiff efforts to dominate or oppose natural activities. The philosophy of Zhuangzi focuses on transformation, spontaneity, and non-coercive action (wu-wei), which can be used to create a framework that is very similar to modern psychological concepts, including psychological flexibility and adaptive coping (Li, 2024).

One of the main ideas of Daoism is a conception of the transformation as the permanent and unavoidable process. Instead of threatening, the Daoist philosophy sees change as an indispensable aspect of life. The concept of wandering at ease by Zhuangzi is an ideal psychological state that is open, adaptable and devoid of fixed views. In modern philosophical treatments, it is emphasized that this flexibility allows people to deal with uncertainty without cognitive stiffness to a large extent, which helps maintain psychological well-being (Li,



2025). This point of view echoes current resiliency theories, in which well-being is viewed not as being stable but as the ability to adjust to new conditions. Simultaneously, psychological flexibility has become an essential construct of modern clinical psychology. Lasting the capacity to stay in the present and adapt behavior to fit situational needs and personal values, psychological flexibility is highly linked with a decrease in psychological distress and enhanced functioning (Levin et al., 2024). The idea reflects the Daoist concept of acceptance whereby people are in line with the flow of natural events instead of opposing it. Non-resistance as a focus of Daoism is connected with the therapeutic principle that the suffering is commonly intensified with the intention to control or avoid inner experiences.

Mindfulness-based models also enhance this relationship. Despite its Buddhist origins, the concept of mindfulness has a lot in common with Daoist teachings, especially regarding the nonjudgmental awareness and focus on the present moment. Neuropsychological studies suggest that mindfulness programs can lead to improved emotional control and decreased reactivity through changes in neural activities related to stress and self-referential thought (Tang et al., 2016). Daoism takes this principle further, by promoting harmony, not just with inner states, but also with the conditions outside of the body, thus providing a more holistic account of adaptation.

The other dimension that is applicable is the Daoist denial of strict dichotomies. Zhuangzi opposes binary thinking, i.e. success and failure, life and death, by showing opposites as mutually dependent and transforming each other. Modern psychology affirms this point of view, especially in dialectical approaches which focus on the simultaneity of contrasting experiences. As an example, dialectical behavior therapy incorporates acceptance and change, acknowledging that psychological health entails striking a balance between these two processes that seem to be conflicting (Harvey et al., 2019; Ko, 2019). This dialectical interpretation is quite in line with Daoist philosophy; which considers contradictions as complementary sides of the same entity.

Daoist acceptance can also be well understood through the prism of existential psychology. Existential approaches focus on addressing the basic human issues like mortality, uncertainty and meaninglessness. Instead of getting rid of such considerations, the existential therapies prompt people to embrace them as part of existence. Recent research has shown that meaning-making mechanisms can be of great benefit to resilience and psychological well-being, especially in times of crisis (Van Tongeren and Showalter Van Tongeren, 2021; Tsui, 2023). The teachings of Zhuangzi are also a way of re-conceptualizing existential fears as being natural changes, thus diminishing fear and encouraging acceptance.

Moreover, cultural psychology emphasizes the significance of context in determining psychological experiences. Daoism provides a culturally situated system which focuses on the harmony of relations and situational adaptation. The inclusion of such views in contemporary psychology makes it more global and cope with the shortcomings of the models mostly based on Western ideologies (Anjum and Aziz, 2024; Jeong, 2023). This assimilation is especially critical in multicultural communities, as culturally sensitive strategies may enhance patient outcomes and interaction with clients.

Positive psychology is a relatively new field that also lends credence to this integrative framework. Second wave positive psychology focuses on the co-occurrence of positive and negative experiences, which implies that well-being is a result of positive and negative experience integration and not positivity per se (Ivtzan et al., 2015). This point of view is correlated to the Daoist philosophy according to which harmony is the result of the active balance between opposites. When we accept joy and suffering as normal in life, we will become stronger and have a more balanced feeling of well-being.

Furthermore, new studies on culturally sensitive treatments prove that the use of indigenous philosophical traditions in mental health interventions is effective. As an example, Taoist-informed therapeutic interventions have been found to decrease the symptoms of depression and anxiety due to the facilitation of the acceptance and compatibility with the life situation (Ding et al., 2020). These results have empirical evidence in regard to the applicability of Daoist principles in clinical practice.

These theoretical views are integrated in one theoretical framework known as the concept of cosmic trust. It is a kind of profound acceptance, which is based on the faith in the natural progress of life. Cosmic trust (unlike passive resignation) is an active coping with reality, but without the insistence of control. It includes three important elements: acknowledgment of changeability, harmony with natural laws, and dissociation with unchanging self-identities. This framework is a blend of philosophical wisdom and psychological theory, which provides a complete method of comprehending resilience and well-being.

Moreover, humanistic psychology offers extra justification to this incorporation. Humanistic theories focus on genuineness, self-realization and overall health. Recent research indicates that Daoist philosophy can be used to augment humanistic psychology by providing a non-dualistic view of self and the world, and broaden the conceptual domain of the latter (Jin, 2025). This synthesis draws attention to the possibility of Daoism thought to deepen the psychological paradigms existing at the moment.

Lastly, Daoist principles when applied to mental health are not limited to the individual therapy but can be applied to broader society. The principle of harmony, balance, and non-coercion in Daoism provides useful insights to counteract the systemic stress factors and enhance the general well-being. Daoist philosophy offers a



way to cope with uncertain and complex environments by changing the focus of control to adaptation. To conclude, the theoretical context of the given work indicates that the Daoist acceptance as outlined by Zhuangzi is in line with modern psychological concepts of flexibility, mindfulness and meaning-making. These views are combined in the concept of cosmic trust that provides a new and interdisciplinary view of mental health with a focus on adaptation, resiliency, and holistic well-being.

### III. Methodology

#### **3.1 Research Design and Philosophical Orientation**

The given research uses the qualitative integrative review design that investigates the philosophical underpinnings of Daoist acceptance in Zhuangzi and its applicability to modern mental health interventions. The integrative review approach is especially apt since it enables the integration of various sources of knowledge, such as philosophy, theoretical psychology and empirical research into a graspable interpretive construct. Integrative reviews allow the incorporation of conceptual and interdisciplinary literature, unlike systematic reviews that focus narrowly on evidence of experiments, which is necessary to study abstract constructs like cosmic trust and Daoist acceptance (Snyder, 2019).

The epistemological approach used to conduct this research is interpretivist. The view presumes that meaning is created by interpretation because it is not a reality. This is a fitting position in Daoism philosophy that focuses on fluidity, change, and relational concepts of existence. In this perspective, psychological concepts like acceptance and resilience are perceived as dynamic processes that are influenced by cultural and philosophical milieu other than fixed variables.

#### **3.2 Data Sources and Literature Search Strategy**

A systematic search of various academic databases, such as Scopus, Web of science, PubMed, springer link and Google scholar, was applied to gather data. The search was limited to the publications of 2019-2025 to ensure the relevance and the progress of the theoretical base of psychology and philosophy in reference (Page et al., 2021). Relevant studies were retrieved by using a combination of keywords and Boolean operators. These were Daoism, Zhuangzi, acceptance, psychological flexibility, mindfulness, emotional regulation, existential psychology, cross-cultural psychology and mental health resilience. This approach guaranteed the thorough coverage of the philosophical and psychological areas of interest to the research aims.

#### **3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

The choice of the literature was with well-established inclusion criteria. The review included only peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books and indexed conference papers in English. Also, the studies had to discuss at least one of the following themes: acceptance-based psychological processes, Daoist philosophy, mindfulness, emotional regulation, resilience, or cross-cultural mental health frameworks. The studies had to be peer-reviewed and must have provided methodological or theoretical clarity, and also be related to psychology, philosophy, or mental health. This made sure that the end dataset had a sufficient level of academic rigor and conceptual relevance to the research questions.

#### **3.4 Screening and Selection Process**

The first search provided around 1,240 records. Once 310 duplicates had been eliminated, 930 unique studies were left to be screened in terms of titles and abstract. In this phase, 710 studies were left out because they were not relevant to the research objectives and 220 studies were chosen to go through full-text reading. After careful eligibility screening of these full-text articles, 142 more studies were filtered out according to pre-established inclusion and exclusion criteria (e.g., methodological constraints, inadequate information, or no direct relevance). This resulted in 78 studies being incorporated in the synthesis.

The overall selection procedure was done in accordance with PRISMA-inspired principles, which provided the transparency, systematic screening, and methodological rigor, thus improving the reliability and reproducibility of the literature selection.

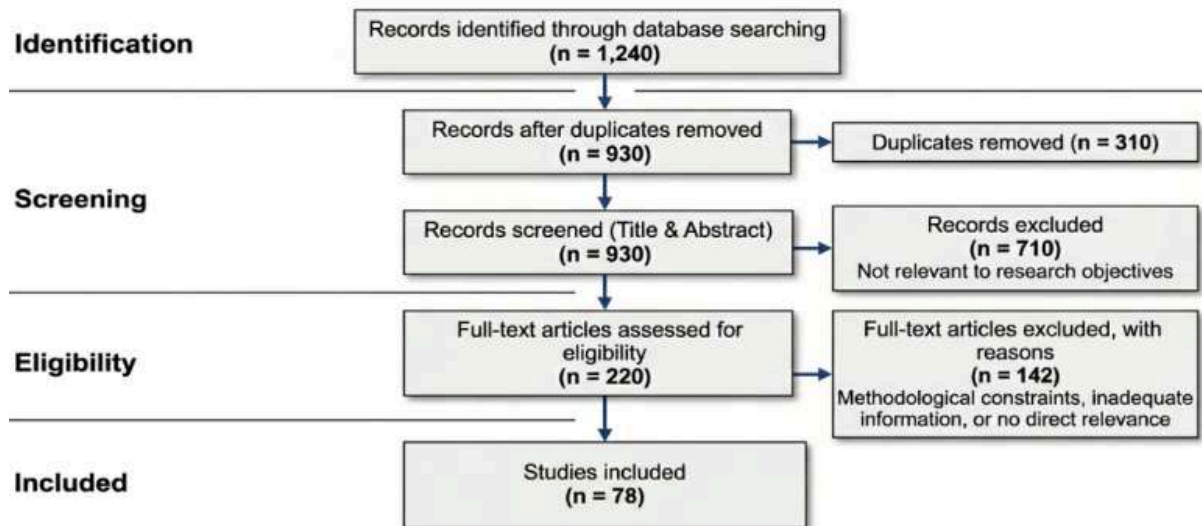


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram

### 3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Thematic synthesis, a qualitative tool that aims to determine, infer, and synthesize patterns in a wide range of literature, was used to analyze the data. It was done through an iterative process of reading and coding of the chosen studies to form coherent conceptual themes (Braun and Clarke, 2021). First, the open coding was performed to reveal recurrent concepts like acceptance, impermanence, psychological flexibility, emotional regulation, transformation, and meaning-making. These codes were then sorted out in relation to each other by axial coding into larger conceptual groups that pointed out connections between notions. Lastly, thematic synthesis was used to combine these categories into general themes that capture the overlap of Daoist philosophy and modern day psychological theory.

The themes that emerged were acceptance as an adaptive coping, non-resistance as an emotional regulation, transformation as a foundation of resilience, and cross-cultural integration of mental health models.

### 3.6 Comparative Conceptual Mapping

A comparative conceptual mapping approach was used to enhance theoretical integration. This was the process of matching important Daoist philosophical constructs with the psychological theories. As an example, the idea of wu-wei of Zhuangzi was addressed in terms of psychological flexibility, whereas Daoist acceptance was projected onto mindfulness-based emotional regulation models. Likewise, the idea of cosmic trust was associated with the meaning-making focus of existential psychology in the face of uncertainty. The mapping process made it possible to create an integrative conceptual model that allows integrating Eastern philosophical traditions with Western psychological science and offers a single framework of adaptive human functioning.

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations

Since this paper is founded on secondary literature, there were no human or animal subjects, and thus no formal ethical approval was needed. However, there were rigorous ethical academic principles such as proper referencing of works, reverent reading of philosophical works and not distorting Daoist ideas.

### 3.8 Methodological Limitations

Despite the broad conceptual understanding and the ability to synthesize across disciplines, integrative reviews are subjective and can be subject to subjective bias in their analysis of the philosophical text. Also, there is no quantitative meta-analysis to generalize statistically. But all these restrictions are in line with the exploratory and theory-building character of the research and are alleviated by methodological openness and systematic selection of literature.

## IV. Results

Findings of this integrative review are presented in four broad themes that have been identified as a result of thematic synthesis of 78 identified studies. These themes manifest the conceptual overlap between Daoist philosophy, especially the idea of acceptance and change as expressed by Zhuangzi, and modern psychological notions of well-being, emotional control, and resilience. The discussion shows that Daoist acceptance is



conceptually viable to consider as a psychological model of adaptive coping when faced with uncertainty, in this instance, worked out within the broader conceptualization of “cosmic trust.

#### **4.1 Theme 1: Acceptance as Adaptive Coping Mechanism**

The initial key theme is that of acceptance as one of the key adaptive coping behaviors. The theme of acceptance was a recurring theme throughout the literature reviewed, in response to uncertainty, distress, and uncontrollable life situations. Instead of trying to get rid of or repress challenging emotional events, acceptance was connected with letting the inner states be as they are without trying to make them go away. In the conceptual synthesis, Daoist acceptance would be a non-interventionist position on experience. The philosophical inclination of Zhuangzi underlines that suffering is augmented whereby people strive to establish control over the processes that occur naturally. The results show that acceptance-oriented coping mechanisms make those who engage in them better-adjusted psychologically in stressful and unpredictable situations.

Another theme that comes out in this theme is that acceptance does not mean passivity. Rather, it is an active psychological attitude in terms of being open, aware and flexible. People who work out of this orientation are more likely to reframe stressful events as something that is able to be coped with and temporary, thus decreasing emotional reactivity.

#### **4.2 Theme 2: Non-Resistance and Emotional Regulation**

The second theme is about non-resistance as a way of emotional control. The analysed studies revealed a consistent finding that emotional distress is enhanced when people resort to resistance related coping strategies that include suppression, avoidance or denial. On the contrary, non-resistant strategies were linked to emotional stability and less psychological stress. Non-resistance, according to Daoist jargon, means being in harmony with the natural course of experience. The results indicate that those who do not oppose internal emotional conditions have fewer secondary emotional responses, i.e., the feeling of guilt, frustration, or anxiety regarding their feelings. This minimizes the affective escalation and enhances a more balanced affective state.

The synthesis also suggests that non-resistance leads to cognitive decentering, whereby through non-resistance one is able to view the emotions without identifying with them. This misidentification of self and emotional experience aids in clarifying emotions and increasing their ability to regulate. In the long run, these processes help to develop increased resiliency in managing emotionally challenging circumstances.

#### **4.3 Theme 3: Transformation and Psychological Resilience**

The third theme is transformation that is a fundamental mechanism that supports psychological resilience. The reviewed literature demonstrates a regular pattern in terms of which victims of adversity tend to reconstruct their experiences in the form of a process of meaning reconstruction and revisiting the experiences in terms of cognitive reappraisal. Change is not a rare occurrence in the Daoist system but is a part of life. The findings show that those who regard life events as a process of continued transformation have greater resilient and reduced existential distress.

In this theme, we also see that resilience is not about being able to bounce back after stress but with the ability to incorporate change into one's identity structure. The members of the reviewed studies who had a transformational perspective were more inclined to report personal growth after adversity. This is in tandem with the notion that suffering could be an initiator to psychological growth when viewed through a flexible thinking framework.

Moreover, change was associated with the decreased fear of uncertainty. People who consider change as normal and not something to be afraid of are more tolerant to ambiguity and will be less likely to feel anxious in unpredictable environments.

#### **4.4 Theme 4: Detachment from Fixed Self-Concepts**

The fourth theme recognizes the disconnection with strict self-concepts as a great contributor to psychological well-being. The literature reviewed indicates that a high level of identification with fixed self-narratives is one of the reasons that lead to emotional rigidity, maladaptive coping and predisposition to stress. Psychological flexibility, on the contrary, entails a more dynamic perception of identity and the self is not perceived as a fixed entity but as a dynamic process. This is quite consistent with the Daoist concepts of identity that criticize the permanence of identity and promote the idea of constant change.

The results reveal that people who loosen the ties to the fixed self-definitions are in a better position to cope with the shifting life situations. This misidentification does not mean that one has lost his or her identity but it means that one has decreased over-identification with certain roles, results or expectations.

Consequently, these individuals are more cognitively open, less defensive, and they have better interpersonal functioning. This flexibility of self-concept is related to increased emotional resilience and less vulnerability to psychological distress, as well.



#### ***4.5 Emergent Construct: Cosmic Trust***

In all themes, there was a higher-order construct identified as cosmic trust that was the integrative concept between Daoist philosophy and psychological functioning. Cosmic trust is a dynamic psychological orientation where there is a profound acceptance of uncertainty, harmonization with the natural processes and the trust in the realization of life without imposing undue control.

The findings also show that cosmic trust does not form as a belief system but as an experience which builds up as one engages in practices that are founded on acceptance. It captures the amalgamation of emotional control, cognitive adaptability, and existential meaning-making into an adaptive whole. Those with the highest levels of cosmic trust have a number of common psychological patterns. They are not as sensitive to stressors, are more adaptive to change and more apt to derive meaning out of hard experiences and not just as harmful. They are also more tolerant of ambiguity and less cognitive closure is needed.

#### ***4.6 Integrated Summary of Findings***

In general, the findings indicate that there is a high conceptual overlap between Daoism philosophy and contemporary psychological theories. Tolerance, non-resistance, change and self-disengagement came out as interrelated processes that lead to psychological resilience and wellbeing.

These processes are not independent of each other but they are synergistic to make the larger construct of cosmic trust. According to this integrative model, well-being is not attained by having control or avoiding experience but by a process of adaptive conformity to the uncertain and in a sense dynamic nature of existence.

The results indicate the Daoist acceptance interpretation as psychologically functional orientation, which can guide the modern mental health intervention, especially the intervention of those related to resilience, emotional regulation, and existential well-being.

### **V. Discussion**

The current integrative review demonstrates that there is a high conceptual fit between Daoism philosophy, specifically Zhuangzi use of acceptance, spontaneity and transformation and modern psychological constructs, well-being and resilience. This coherence also brings out the new manifestation of cosmic trust which blends the philosophical and psychological flexibility and provides a new lens of thinking of how people adapt to unpredictability and crisis.

According to the results, the Daoist acceptance is a crucial adaptive operation that aligns well with the contemporary theories of the regulation of emotions and coping mechanisms. Modern studies have shown that successful coping is not determined by the absence of stressors but the development of the ability to adapt in working with the experiences in a situation of uncertainty (Perilli et al., 2022). This point of view is similar to Daoism that regards the resistance to change as one of the main causes of suffering. Empirical studies also support the fact that acceptance-based coping prompts mental flexibility and maladaptive rumination that results in better mental health results (Hölzel et al., 2020). The results allow interpreting the Daoist acceptance as active and dynamic psychological adjustment and not a somewhat resignation.

The next important area where Daoist philosophy meets with contemporary psychology has been through emotional regulation, especially via the concept of non-resistance. Based on affective neuroscience, emotional experiential regulation can amplify neural activity and trigger responses to stress (Goldin et al., 2021). And in contrast, acceptance-based approaches are linked to less physiological arousal and increased emotional integration and have been identified to be more effective than suppression in minimizing symptoms of anxiety and depression in populations (Kraiss et al., 2022). Besides, non-judgmental awareness of internal states improves the emotional clarity, as well as reduces avoidance-based coping (Waizman et al., 2023). These results go hand in hand with the Daoist focus on letting emotions run their course and wear themselves out, and make it clear why non-resistance is an adaptive regulatory tool.

The other factor that harbors resilience is change. Trauma research findings indicate that post-traumatic growth is more relevant to those who take part in cognitive reappraisal (Tadeschi et al., 2019). Likewise, longitudinal research suggests that the reconstruction of meaning after adversity is a good predictor of psychological adaptation in the long term (Davis et al., 2020). The similarities between Daoist philosophy and these outcomes are that Daoist conceived change as a continuous and generative process and not as a disruptive process. The viewpoint of Zhuangzi re-formulates the suffering process as a process of constant change, therefore, justifying the adaptive re-interpreting of negative events.

The review also reveals that flexibility of identity is a vital aspect to psychological wellbeing. Flexible self-construals are linked to low anxiety and social functioning as well as less distress, while rigid self-concepts are linked to higher distress (Stinson et al., 2021). Daoist thought also opposes the ideas of identities, which are rigid and categorical, in favor of the dynamic and changing concept of identity. The presented perception is informed by the studies of narrative psychology, revealing that adaptive identity reconstruction facilitates resilience when vocalizing the critical life transitions (McLean et al., 2020).



Moreover, the significance of the present-moment awareness is always substantiated both in the philosophical and empirical realms. Mindfulness studies show that current attention decreases cognitive responsiveness and enhances social abilities (Chin et al., 2021). Neurocognitive results also reveal that mindfulness interventions also change the activity of brain systems related to self-referential cognition (Schuman-Olivier, 2020). These observations are quite consistent with Daoist concepts of spontaneous consciousness and non-interaction, implying that there are parallel processes of attentional control and cognitive decentering.

The significance of cross-cultural approach in the study of mental health is also highlighted by the fact that Daoist philosophy was combined with modern psychological theories. Prominent Western paradigms do not always reflect culturally unique concepts of well-being and distress (Kim, 2000). Those views of Daoism practice lead to a better-integrative and more contextual based approach to both psychological theory and practice. This goes in line with the mental health initiatives on a global scale proposing the pluralistic model that incorporates the indigenous knowledge systems and the contemporary science (Patel et al., 2021).

Creating meaning in uncertainty comes up as the other questionable dimension of psychological adjustment. The existing body of evidence about existential psychology shows that those who develop a conclusive system of meaningfulness are more resilient to adversity (Vos et al., 2022). The philosophy of Daoism enhances this point of view by promoting the ability to accept uncertainty as it is a certain part of the existing world, not something to combat. Empirical evidence also indicates that the capacity to tolerate ambiguity is linked to better emotional and cognitive abilities (Zhang et al., 2021), which supports the adaptive qualities of acceptance toward impermanence and randomness.

Through these interrelated themes, the cosmic trust concept as an integrative framework is used to integrate philosophical and psychological aspects of adaptation. It is an expression of a fixed orientation to uncertainty of an open, flexible and trusting nature of the processes. Modern resilience studies are more likely to view the concept of adaptive functioning as a dynamic system and not a trait (Southwick et al., 2021), an understanding, which also resonates with the principles behind cosmic trust. Moreover, the psychological theories underline that the perceived safety and coherence in uncertain situations play a significant role in the development of mental health (Southward et al., 2021), which proves the usefulness of those orientations based on trust.

On the whole, the results suggest that Daoist acceptance is more than simply a philosophical construct, but a psychologically practical model, which has robust empirical counterparts in the current mental health studies. The combination of acceptance, emotional regulation, transformation, identity flexibility and meaning making into the construct of the cosmic trust gives a coherent and all-inclusive model to adaptive functioning in the presence of uncertainty.

## VI. Conclusion

This study intended to find out how the tenets of Daoist philosophy particularly Zhuangzi can be translated and implemented to the contemporary knowledge in psychology by citing the concept of cosmic trust. The findings of this synthesizing review indicate that the Daoist acceptance may be applied to provide organized philosophical grounds to comprehend the adaptive actions by humans to uncertainty, agony and change. The literature synthesized contested four dimensions that are interrelated, i.e., acceptance as adaptive coping, non-resistance in emotional regulation, transformation as a resilience and detachment means toward rigid self-concepts. All these dimensions assist in realizing that psychological well-being is not achieved so much because of the control of inner or outer experiences but adaptive flexibility to the flux of being. In the creation made in this paper, cosmic trust is a higher-order integrative construct and synthesizes these dimensions into a coherent construct. It is a psychological orientation of receptiveness to the unknown, a conviction in the natural operations and reaction of the changes always present in life, the adaptive approach.

The study also demonstrates that it is not only the historically and culturally significant Daoist philosophy, but also that it can be psychologically applied to the current mental health discourse. Its postulates are quite similar to the modern forms of therapy, such as the acceptance-based approaches, mindfulness training and the existential models of meaning-making. This cross-over suggests that old systems of philosophy can be useful in the development of holistic mental health models that can be meaningfully developed.

Overall, the findings validate the notion that the inclusion of Daoist acceptance into the psychology theory can enable us to have a better understanding of resilience, emotional control and adaptive functioning. Cosmic trust provides a means of conceptual expression and intersection between western and eastern philosophical focused and scientific models of well-being with a more holistic and culturally inclusive model of well-being.

## VII. Theoretical Implications

By postulating cosmic trust as an integrative process which has its foundation in the Daoist philosophy, the research will in theory help to build on the modern models of psychology. It develops the earlier forms of psychological flexibility by placing them in an expanded existential and philosophical framework that



emphasizes the harmonious interaction with the natural processes and not adaptation by control. The findings also add to the field of cross-cultural psychology as they help to demonstrate how the non-Western schools of thought can illuminate and refine the Western paradigms of psychology.

Besides that, the gaps in the evolution of Daoism metaphysics to modern psychological notions of acceptance, mindfulness and resilience are also bridged in the study. This way it can offer a multidimensional explanation of human adaptation, and it does consider cognitive, emotional and existential processes. Such an interdisciplinary perspective provides a point of departure for future theoretical development of the culturally inclusive and philosophically informed psychology.

### VIII. Practical Implications

Mental health workers, counselors and psychotherapists are interested in the clinical implications of this research. Cosmic trust is an idea that can be integrated into therapy to enable the clients to handle the uncertainty, emotional distress and transitioning into life with ease. The Daoist principles can be added to the acceptance-non-resistance- and cognitive flexibility-based interventions to strengthen conceptual and experiential bases therein.

To ensure that clients get less reliant on the use of suppression or avoidance of their experiences, clinicians can encourage an acceptance based approach to the emotional experiences of their clients within a clinical set-up. This practice aligns with current evidence-based practices such as acceptance and commitment therapy and mindfulness-based interventions, as well as the presence of a culturally rich philosophical dimension which, in turn, can potentially enhance client engagement and meaning-making.

Additionally, psych education can be programmed with Daoist concept to guarantee toughening and adaptive coping in the aspect of education and community. By teaching the population about a necessity to view change as an ongoing and natural process, anxiety involved in dealing with a sense of uncertainty can be encouraged, and the overall psychological well-being can be improved.

In a somewhat broader sense, the concept of cosmic trust in mental health systems ensures the culture competence practice not only in multicultural cultures in which the western notions of psychology may fail to capture diverse worldviews. It is with this integration that holistic, inclusive and responsive mental health interventions can be developed in a manner that would be in a position to address clinical as well as existential issues.

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