

# *A Study on the Correlation between Subjective Well-Being and Coping Styles of College Students*

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**Abstract:** Subjective well-being is a person's self-judgment of the individual, which is usually characterized by subjectivity, stability and integrity. Different from the traditional sense of well-being, subjective well-being is closely related to an individual's own positive emotional experience and life satisfaction. To improve subjective well-being, it is necessary to improve an individual's inner feelings and psychological experience. The lack of subjective well-being of college students is an important issue in the current education of colleges and universities. Many college students have problems such as unsustainable happiness, weak sense of well-being, and unstable and inactive campus learning and life. This study focuses on the relationship between college students' subjective well-being and coping styles, and how to make college students obtain lasting, real and subjective well-being. This study recognized the mediating effect among factors such as subjective well-being, coping style and level of mindfulness, and tried to add laughter therapy to college students' campus life, and obtained research results on the improvement of college students' subjective well-being, proving that courses related to subjective well-being can improve the current situation of college students' happiness deficit.

## **1. Introduction**

Subjective well-being is different from the conventional sense of well-being. The former is defined by the individual's self-judgment. It considers oneself happy and happy, often accompanied by the increase of positive emotions and the decrease of negative emotions. The latter is defined by the judgment of others, often by whether they have a lot of wealth, free time, good health, and rich interpersonal relationships as the criteria to judge whether others are happy.

## **2. Overview of subjective well-being and coping styles**

### **2.1 Subjective well-being**

Subjective well-being is a kind of human subjective cognitive feeling, which is often associated with positive outcomes and belongs to individual self-judgment. In their research in 2017, foreign scholars Tyack and Camic proposed the definition of subjective well-being, namely, positive

emotional experience, low level of negative emotional experience and high life satisfaction experience <sup>[1]</sup>. Other scholars also have a similar definition, mostly around the positive emotions, negative emotions or the three sides of life satisfaction. Although different, the three domains are interrelated and jointly affect a person's subjective self-judgment, and there is a high and opposite coupling effect between positive emotions and negative emotions <sup>[2]</sup>, such as the two ends of the seesaw. Individuals with high subjective well-being tend to think that they feel more positive emotions and less negative emotions, and that their life is stable and positive as a whole, indicating that subjective well-being is characterized by subjectivity, stability and wholeness <sup>[3]</sup>. Although domestic scholars started the research on subjective well-being late, the overall definition and research results are basically consistent with foreign scholars. They believe that subjective well-being is a positive state experienced by a person in content, and a stable and positive psychological experience in form.

## 2.2 Test of subjective well-being

Scholars at home and abroad have made many different scales based on the framework of positive emotions, negative emotions and life satisfaction of subjective well-being to test the existence and degree of subjective well-being and to judge the level of subjective well-being of the subjects. The subjective well-being and coping styles of college students discussed in this paper need to be based on the optimized subjective well-being test to obtain the judgment of college students on their own individual reality and the comparison of self-expectation value, so as to measure the application effectiveness of coping styles. Considering the reliability and applicability of the subjective well-being test, the "Total Well-being Scale" compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics of the United States is chosen as the basis. The scale contains 33 items and tests the subjective well-being of 6 different sectors <sup>[4]</sup>. The life satisfaction, emotion index and social approval index of college students are added and replaced to form a scale to measure the subjective well-being index of college students. For example, the subjective well-being test scale is divided into different dimensions such as learning (exam success and exam failure), life (dormitory harmony, dormitory quarrel), social (lovers love, misunderstood), development (ideal OFFER, employment difficulties), family (parent-child harmony, parents often quarrel), etc., covering college students' daily study and life. It is used to test college students' positive emotions, negative emotions and life satisfaction, so as to measure college students' subjective well-being.

## 2.3 Coping styles

Coping style comes from Freud's self-defense theory, which mainly refers to an individual's internal psychological defense mechanism in the face of situational stimuli and inner imbalance. For example, when there is a task failure stimulus, an individual chooses to objectively summarize the causes of failure and seek success next time, or chooses to attribute the causes of failure to external reasons such as difficult task and bad luck, and escape from his own reasons. It presents different coping styles, corresponding to different emotions, and brings different individual experiences. After years of continuous research, foreign researchers have roughly divided coping styles into two categories: involvement and disengagement; involvement into problem involvement and emotional involvement; and disengagement into problem disengagement and emotional disengagement <sup>[5]</sup>. For example, in the face of exams, which is a stimulating factor in life, problem involvement focuses on problem solving and reconstruction of personal inner cognition, often manifested as focus on learning and active response to exams; Emotional involvement focuses on getting emotional support, often by accepting the advice of others and encouraging each other with friends; Problem disengagement is mainly manifested as escaping from problems, hoping to pass examinations and

obtain ideal results by praying to God and Buddha; Emotional detachment is mainly manifested as detachment from the current responsibility to ease emotions, admitting that they did not listen to the class properly this semester, and lying flat in the exam. On the basis of foreign researchers, domestic researchers have subdivided coping styles to different degrees. For example, college students have richer coping styles than middle school students, because they have access to more and more comprehensive social relations and will produce more cognitive and behavioral coping styles due to external environmental factors.

## 2.4 Measurement of coping styles

Foreign scholars started to study the coping style test scale earlier, and domestic scholars carried out localization treatment on the basis of foreign research results. The coping scale developed by foreign scholars Carver et al in 1989 is the scale with the most dimensions and the most comprehensive test so far. It contains 13 dimensions and 53 questions, including different coping categories such as problem coping, emotional coping and escape coping. The higher the score, the more positive the coping style. On the basis of the coping scale made by Carver et al., domestic scholars have localized the coping style scale to different degrees. For example, Xiao Jihua et al optimized the coping style scale in 1996 according to China's national conditions, and mainly divided the coping style into three categories: positive, moderate and negative. Negative coping style reverse score; Another example is that domestic scholars have developed a targeted coping style scale for middle school students and medical staff, which effectively improves the localization level of the coping scale.

## 3. Research Design

### 3.1 Research Scale

In this study, 500 college students were randomly selected as test subjects to issue test scales (See Table 1 and 2), 500 questionnaires were recovered, and 495 valid questionnaires were obtained after missing questionnaires were excluded, with a recovery rate of 99%. The test scale consists of two parts, namely, Subjective Well-being Test Scale and Life Event Coping Style Test Scale. The Subjective Well-being Test Scale contains 9 questions, among which questions 1 to 8 belong to the general emotion index and question 9 belongs to the dimension of life satisfaction. The consistency reliability of the two dimensions is 0.73, and the weight of life satisfaction is 1.1.

Table 1: Section reliability of subjective well-being scale

Scale name	plate	reliability $\alpha$	Number of test questions
Subjective wellbeing test scale	Overall emotion index	0.81	8
	Life satisfaction	——	1
	ensemble	0.73	9

The life event coping test scale contains 28 topics, including 14 topics for college students study life stable life events, 14 topics for college students to take coping style, coping contains positive, moderate, negative three categories, positive coping integral, moderate coping style does not increase, negative coping reverse scoring.

Table 2: Plate reliability of life event coping measures

Scale name	plate	reliability $\alpha$	Number of test questions
Life event response style test scale	life events	0.91	14
	academic stress	0.65	5
	interpersonal relation	0.72	5
	Healthy adaptation	0.66	4
	coping style	0.66	14
	coping with	0.77	5
	Mean response	0.63	5
	Negative response	0.73	4
ensemble	0.66	28	

### 3.2 Statistical analysis results

Table 3: Statistical analysis of the impact of life events on college students

Scale name	plate	average value	standard deviation
Life event response style test scale	life events	2.20	0.67
	academic stress	2.71	0.78
	interpersonal relation	2.50	0.85
	Healthy adaptation	2.00	0.80
	coping style	———	———
	coping with	3.20	0.55
	Mean response	3.30	0.59
	Negative response	3.00	0.62
Subjective wellbeing test scale	Overall emotion index	4.48	0.97
	Life satisfaction	4.61	1.41
	ensemble	4.49	0.96

See Table 3, statistical analysis was made on the recovered effective life event coping style test scale. From the average point of view, college students in the face of learning pressure, interpersonal relationship, health and environmental adaptation events, the average value is lower than 3, indicating that college students generally encounter few negative life events; In terms of coping styles, the average values of positive coping and moderate coping are slightly higher than those of negative coping, indicating that non-negative coping is more common among college students. From the standard deviation point of view, the life events that have a greater impact on college students are interpersonal relationship and health adaptation, indicating that college students are more concerned about the adaptability to environment and interpersonal relationship; The overall score of college students' satisfaction with life is significantly higher than the emotional index, indicating that college students' subjective well-being is relatively high.

### 3.3 Test of the mediating effect between subjective well-being and coping style

Among the subjective well-being and coping styles of college students, there are factors that produce intermediate effects, such as mindfulness level, gender role, social desirability, etc., among

which, structural equation models need to be established for fitting analysis. Taking mindfulness level as an example, coping style is the independent variable, non-negative coping style and negative coping style are the two latent variables of coping style, mindfulness level is the mediating variable, subjective well-being is the dependent variable, positive emotion, negative emotion and satisfaction with quality of life are the latent variables of subjective well-being, and structural equation can be constructed [6]. Other structural equation models such as gender roles and social desirability can be constructed and fitted in the same way. As shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3.

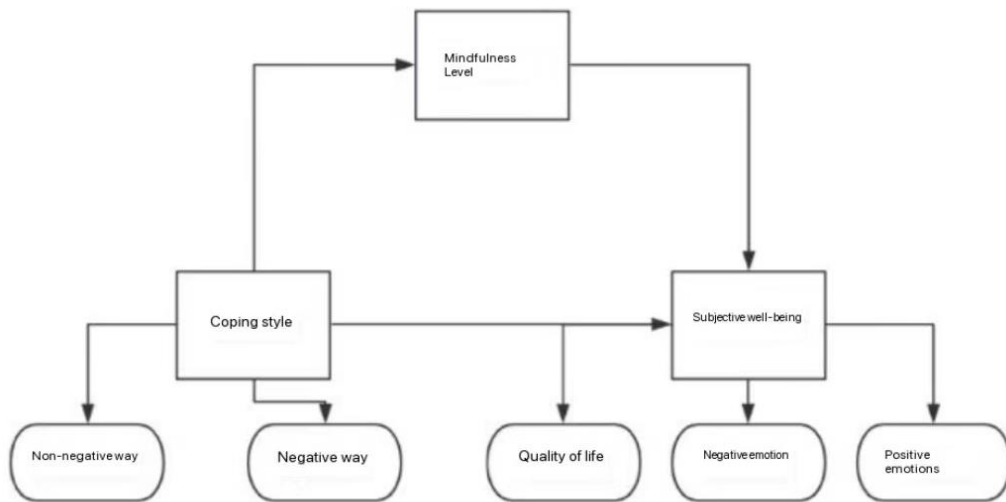


Figure 1: Structural equation model of mediation effects between mindfulness level, subjective well-being, and coping styles

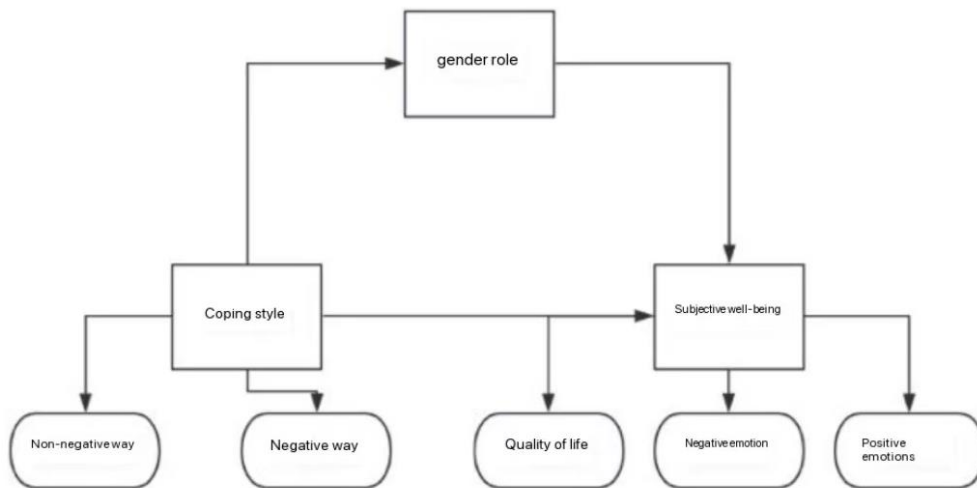


Figure 2: Structural equation model of mediation effects between gender roles, subjective well-being, and coping styles

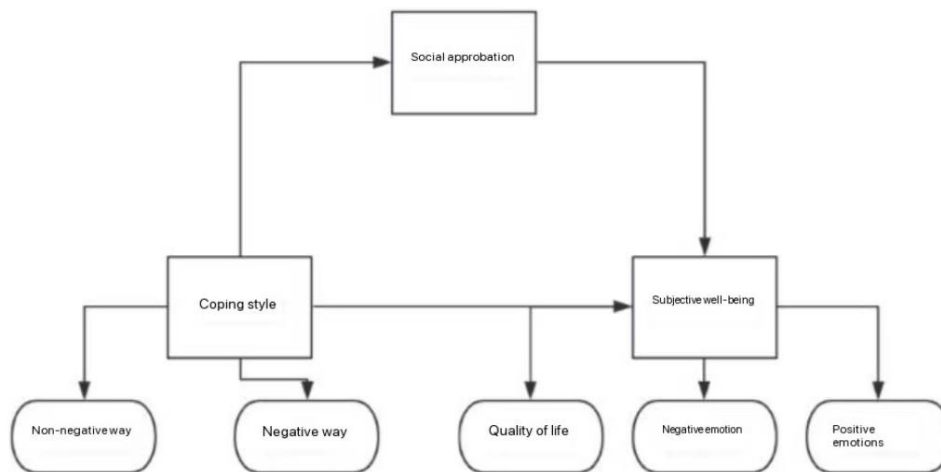


Figure 3: Structural equation model of mediation effects between social approvability, subjective well-being, and coping styles

Using the structural equation model of mindfulness level mediation effect, the results of coefficient valuation and significance tests between different pathways are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Results of coefficient valuation and significance tests between different pathways

way	SE price	CRprice	P	Standardized path coefficient
Non-negative coping style mindfulness level	0.023	7.746	<0.001	0.402
Negative coping style mindfulness level	0.025	-6.517	<0.001	-0.339
Mindfulness level of subjective well-being	0.308	5.791	<0.001	0.425
Coping style and subjective well-being	0.260	5.647	<0.001	0.383

From the research results, the impact of mindfulness level on college students' subjective well-being is higher than that of coping style, and the impact of non-negative coping style on mindfulness level is higher than that of negative coping style. Specific to the group of college students, that is, the subjective happiness of college students who like their major is higher than that of those who don't like their major, and the subjective happiness of college students with excellent academic level is higher than that of college students with academic level below excellent level. The subjective happiness of college students who are influenced by positive internal and external factors such as professional identity, clear career planning, higher learning motivation, social recognition from school and support from parents is higher than that of college students who are not influenced by positive internal and external factors. The reason is that the influence of internal and external positive factors can offset the negative impact of negative life events to a certain extent, which can promote students to amplify positive emotions, encourage students to adopt non-negative coping styles, mobilize self-efficacy, and ultimately affect their academic level, life enthusiasm and even future career planning. Therefore, colleges and universities should carry out courses on improving college students' subjective well-being and guiding non-negative coping styles, so as to help college students spend their campus life with a happier and more positive attitude and better cope with their future life [7].

#### 4. Study on coping styles that affect college students' subjective happiness

Laughter therapy is a certified method in the field of positive psychology, which can effectively improve people's subjective well-being under the influence of mindfulness and help people adjust

their mental state in the face of pressure, and is an effective positive coping method <sup>[8]</sup>. The research results of domestic and foreign researchers on laughter therapy can be referred to as the reference material for cultivating the subjective well-being of college students.

#### 4.1 Research object

A small team study was conducted based on student dormitories, and 10 student dormitories were randomly selected, among which dormitories 1 to 5 were female dormitories, and dormitories 6 to 10 were male dormitories, with the same number of dormitory members being 4. Ten dormitory students were randomly divided into groups by tossing coins, with the literal ones going to the experimental group and the flower ones going to the control group. Both groups of students signed informed consent and voluntary confidentiality agreement, and had not received other psychological intervention or psychological counseling in the past three months, and had no history of hypertension, heart disease, epilepsy, etc. Students who have received other psychological interventions, counseling or medical history in the past three months have been excluded for replacement.

#### 4.2 Research Preparation

Before the formal application of laughter therapy, the students in both groups were tested with the Subjective Well-Being Test Scale and Coping Style Test Scale to understand the students' subjective well-being level and coping style level before laughter therapy.

#### 4.3 Research process

In the experimental group, 24 laughter movements in the Therapeutic Cell Laughter Movement written by Chinese scholar Zhang Lixin were applied. The 24 laughter movements can be divided into three chapters, the first chapter is the eight forms of stress reduction, the second chapter is the happy laughter therapy, and the third chapter is the spiritual energy. With the detailed explanation of the movements on the exercise CD, the students in the experimental group can quickly understand the 24 laughter movements and complete the exercise of 1 laughter movement every day. For example, the fourth type of "relish" in the eight forms of stress reduction is related to the daily diet. The exercise CD explains to the practitioner that the stomach is an emotional organ, and eating behavior with negative emotions and pressure will often cause stomach discomfort. It also breaks down the essentials of the laughter movement and leads the practitioner to complete the laughter movement exercise. The students in the experimental group can watch the explanation and action analysis in the CD together as a unit, and carry out laughter action exercises together, and spend 5 minutes to exchange the experience of laughter action exercises with each other, and relax after laughing exercise.

The control group received the normal teaching of the specialty within 24 days, and did not receive additional psychological intervention and psychological counseling.

On the 25th day, the experimental group and the control group were tested with the Subjective Well-being Test Scale and Coping Style Test Scale again to judge the students' subjective well-being level and coping style level. The results were compared with those of the experimental group before laughter therapy.

#### 4.4 Research Results

On the 25th day, the subjective well-being test and coping style test of the experimental and

control groups obtained significant results. The scores of the experimental group in subjective well-being test and coping style test were significantly improved, and the comparison difference between the experimental group and the control group was  $P < 0.05$ , indicating the value of inter-group comparison in statistical significance.

#### 4.5 Descriptive feedback of experimental group students

After laughter therapy was applied, students in the experimental group submitted descriptive feedback assignments to the research group within a specified time. The research team extracted the impact of laughter therapy on improving subjective well-being and the necessity of continuing laughter therapy-related interventions on college campuses. The need for intervention. In the descriptive feedback of the students in the experimental group, many times mentioned that after participating in the laughter therapy experiment, they realized that laughter has so much knowledge, that laughter is related to so many actions, and that happiness can be obtained through active behavior. They believed that participating in the laughter therapy experiment brought color to their campus life and helped them adjust their psychological pressure. I hope to participate in more similar interventions in the future. The value of intervention. In the descriptive feedback of the students in the experimental group, many times mentioned that the laughter therapy experiment made them feel that the laughter movement can massage the mood, exercise the abdomen, shoulders and other body parts, and promote the relationship between dormitory roommates, which is a very valuable intervention activity.(3) Suggestions on intervention activities. In the descriptive feedback of the experimental group, many students mentioned that they hoped to extend the cycle of the laughter therapy experiment and learn the laughter therapy movements one by one, instead of choosing 24 of them to try; Some students mentioned that they hope to organize offline promotion activities on campus, so that more students, teachers and parents can participate in it, feel the power of laughter together, and pass the laughter action to life.

According to the results of the research data and the descriptive feedback of participating students, laughter therapy is a measure that can improve the subjective well-being of college students. Laughter therapy can effectively improve students' positive emotions, improve students' life satisfaction, harmonize students' dormitory interpersonal relations, and effectively improve the subjective well-being of college students. Laughter therapy builds a harmonious dormitory relationship, uses the characteristics of laughter and happy emotions to create a positive emotional environment, and uses laughter to enhance the courage and internal motivation of college students to deal with difficulties, alleviates the impact of pressure and negative emotions, which is equivalent to enhancing the non-negative coping ability of college students. Laughter therapy also improves the level of mindfulness of college students, making them realize that happiness can be obtained through actions and exercises, and enhancing the motivation of college students to actively obtain happiness, actively feel happiness, and actively adopt positive coping methods. To a certain extent, it improves their mindfulness and action.

#### 5. Conclusion

Starting with the concept and test methods of subjective well-being and coping styles, this study analyzed the relationship between college students' subjective well-being and coping styles, explored the intermediate effect brought by influential factors such as mindfulness level, and proposed the research content of laughter therapy to improve college students' subjective well-being and coping styles. The purpose of this study is to understand the factors that affect the acquisition of subjective well-being of college students, study the available methods of happiness education in colleges and universities, and effectively improve the level of happiness of college students.



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