

A study on the relationship between mental toughness and subjective well-being of high school students

Ling Li¹, Yuran Xu^{2,*}

¹School of International Studies, Southwest University, Chongqing, China

²The Experimental High School Attached To University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, Sichuan, China

*Corresponding author: echohug07@163.com

Abstract. The high school student body faces a major life transition in the form of university entrance examinations, and as it grows older, the multiple life and academic pressures it has to face increase. The stronger the mental resilience of the students, the stronger the sense of subjective well-being they can generate, and the more relaxed and enjoyable the whole learning and growth process will be. To address the intrinsic relationship between mental resilience and subjective well-being of high school students and the specific teaching influencing factors, we can guide students to form a better mental state by actively enhancing the implementation of aesthetic education, physical education, family involvement and mental health teaching in schools.

Keywords: high school students; mental toughness; subjective well-being; interactions.

1. Introduction

Mental resilience, or Resilience, is a physical concept that refers to the rebound of an object when it is crushed by an external force.^[1] It was first derived from the phenomenon of an individual adapting and developing well in the face of serious threats.^[2] In a psychological sense, every individual has either strong or weak mental resilience, but a range of life factors lead to a clear distinction between their overall mental resilience. Students who are more mentally resilient are able to apply themselves positively in the face of a number of academic and life challenges, maintaining a good mental state and not letting a momentary setback directly affect their life situation for a period of time. On the contrary, they are easily beaten down by a momentary setback, which is not conducive to the healthy growth of young people.

2. The impact of high school students' mental toughness on subjective well-being

2.1 High mental resilience and subjective well-being

Mental resilience refers to the emergency response of human beings in the face of a series of negative events and injuries. Some young people are able to deal with emotional and behavioural reactions quickly in the face of some injurious events and consequences, and adjust their lives to return to normal as soon as possible; some young people are prone to form psychological and physical traumas in the face of serious injuries, and have difficulty in rebounding from their psychological conditions in a relatively short period of time. Students who are more psychologically resilient tend to be able to face their immediate difficulties more positively and healthily, and gain a greater sense of subjective well-being. The so-called subjective sense of well-being means that students, under the condition of subjective consciousness adjustment, enlarge their life pattern, especially when facing their ordinary life can actively feel the things that are still gratifying in it, through strong psychological implication and other methods, produce a positive mindset towards their current situation and subjectively enhance their happiness index.^[3] As a group of high school students in an unstable mental state, teachers need to help them develop a high mental resilience index through a

variety of educational guidance tools, and to develop an optimistic personality to enhance their subjective sense of well-being.

2.2 Weak mental toughness and subjective well-being

Mental resilience has a strong impact on students' subjective well-being scores. Generally speaking, students who are more mentally resilient also have higher subjective well-being scores and are able to react wisely and weaken their negative psychological state when they are faced with a range of negative situations and unexpected events.^[4] The high school student population is generally subject to a combination of pressures, including high parental expectations and high teacher goals, which can be emotionally overwhelming. In this situation, some high school students lack strong mental resilience and tend to form negative thought trends in bad situations. Not only do they lack the ability to solve their current confusion, but they also blindly associate themselves with similar life situations in the future, leading to negative hints about life and learning, which is not conducive to their well-being.

2.3 The interconnection between psychological resilience and subjective well-being in high school students

There is an interactive relationship between mental toughness and subjective well-being in high school students. The strength or weakness of mental toughness directly affects the enhancement of students' daily well-being index, while the level of students' subjective well-being index generates some confrontational challenge or through boosting power to their mental toughness. High school students with a high subjective well-being index are able to enhance their ability to cope with life's comprehensive affairs and to deal with problems effectively in difficult situations and to develop emotional self-resolution patterns, thus effectively enhancing their mental resilience and forming a stronger mental state in a subtle way. High school students with a low subjective well-being index gradually lose their ability to face problems and solve them actively due to their already negative and powerless state of life, resulting in a downward spiral of their practical life skills and emotional management ability.

3. Practical paths for high school students to improve their mental resilience and enhance their sense of well-being

3.1 Enhancing the teaching of aesthetic education

Enhancing the strength of beauty and teaching for high school students can cultivate their personal sentiments in the process of rich aesthetic experience, aesthetic ability cultivation and aesthetic creativity cultivation, and guide them to feel the specific state of mind of others facing multiple situations in a large number of literary works to form a stronger self-awareness and world awareness. Schools are the main ground for cultivating a healthy personality and psychological state in high school students, and teachers should pay attention to the clear recognition and effective guidance of students' mental toughness to help them develop a strong inner condition and urge them to achieve a higher happiness index.^[5] High schools can actively develop thematic aesthetic education classes, with specific thematic analysis and appreciation of works, to help students develop good aesthetic and emotional experience skills.

For example, a comprehensive aesthetic education programme on the theme of 'Art of the Qing Dynasty' encourages students to actively collect relevant artworks and gain an insight into the life and career circumstances faced by each of the art creators. The teacher will focus on the detailed analysis of the artworks, and lead the students to understand the behaviour of each of the great artists of the Qing Dynasty when they faced major adversities in their lives. Students are encouraged to learn from the courageous and unrestrained aesthetic and creative attitudes of the ancients and to enhance their mental resilience.

3.2 Enhancing physical education

Participation in physical activities can effectively help high school students to relax, strengthen their bodies and minds, and improve some of their problem-solving and psychological coping skills. Schools offer sufficient physical education courses to enhance students' core physical literacy in a theoretical and practical way, helping them to vent their bad emotions effectively and develop positive and optimistic character traits in the richness of sporting activities. Through long-term participation in sports activities, high school students are able to exercise their psychological resilience in the process of repeated successes and failures in sports competitions, enhance their ability to cope with failure and adversity, and consciously build themselves up quickly after extreme sadness and enhance their psychological resilience.

For example, schools can periodically organise school-wide sports training activities and sports assemblies for all students, taking the last afternoon session to encourage participation in different types of sports training activities according to their interests. During sports activities, students' individual emotions can be raised to a great extent, effectively fostering their lively and cheerful character traits. In large-scale school sports events, students inevitably face successes and failures in a variety of sports, the results of which often create a psychological boost or blow to their state of mind. In sports competitions with a certain degree of disparity in results, students' psychological states can be tempered to a certain extent, especially in the case of sporting defeats, and with the right psychological and mental guidance from the teacher, they can recover from their jealous and low psychological state and build up their confidence again. After many similar experiences, the mental state of high school students can be honed to a great extent and develop a stronger mental condition.

3.3 Create a welcoming home environment

The parent community is encouraged to develop an awareness of "home-school education" and to fully recognise the importance of parents in the growth and learning process of high school students. In particular, a positive family environment is an important factor in the development of a positive and healthy mental state, and the way in which parents relate to each other can have a significant psychological impact on students. In a family environment that is extremely cold or full of conflicts, students tend to develop extremely negative, timid or very irritable personalities, and have less overall mental toughness. When they encounter some major blows or stimuli in real life, they tend to stumble or overreact, and their subjective well-being index also drops rapidly, which is not conducive to the healthy growth of the high school student population. Teachers should encourage parents to be fully aware of this problem and actively play an important role in the family environment and family education, so as to help high school students build up a healthy state of mind through a warm and harmonious family environment with some educational guidance.

3.4 Enhancing psycho-educational work

Psychological education work has long been under-appreciated in traditional educational settings, resulting in the formation and deterioration of many young people's mental illnesses. In response to this phenomenon, schools should enhance their mental health education work for high school students, using professional theoretical and practical guidance to help them develop positive and optimistic character traits and encourage them to face a series of unexpected risks and blows with as much optimism as possible, and to seek solutions within their capabilities.

High school campuses can join forces with teachers of all subjects in the school to focus on changes in students' psychological state in their regular teaching activities and actively initiate some psychological guidance based on the performance of some students who are depressed. At the same time, special mental health education courses are offered to provide special guidance and training on factors such as students' mental resilience and subjective well-being, and a variety of social practice activities are used to guide people to strengthen their resilience and mental capacity. In the course of daily lectures, a number of mental health education films are shown to students every week by means of documentaries, interspersed with real-life cases of self-help through mental resilience to help

students fully realise the important role of self-regulation in the process of growth. Teachers motivate students to develop a more positive mindset in their daily studies and lives through frequent self-referencing, and also to open themselves up to teachers, classmates and parents for help when facing some of life's difficulties, so as to develop a higher degree of mental resilience.

4. Conclusions

There is a strong interconnection between mental resilience and subjective well-being in high school students. Depending on the developmental and age-specific characteristics of their student population, high school teachers can actively help to enhance their own ability to achieve higher levels of mental resilience and subjective well-being through later development and guidance.

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