

# The Development of Curriculum Based on Happiness Theory to Improve the Hope of College Students

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## Abstract

The research objectives were 1) to study the factors affecting the development of hope of college freshman students in Guangxi International Business Vocational College. 2) to develop curriculum based on the happiness theory. 3) to compare the hopes of college freshman students before and after learning by curriculum based on the happiness theory.

With a carefully selected sample of 35 students from the first-year Thai class at Guangxi International Business Vocational College, researchers conducted a thorough analysis of various factors affecting students' hope. A range of research tools was utilized, including 1) a questionnaire about the factors affecting the development of hope level. 2) interview form about influencing factors of hope level. 3) lesson plans. 4) the Hope Scale. 5) observation form about student behavior. (6) interview form about opinions on teaching. This study was conducted in 3 steps: 1) study the factors affecting the development of hope. 2) develop curriculum based on the happiness theory. 3) experiment and improvement of curriculum model.

The results of the study showed that: 1) factors that affect the development of college students' hopes include personal factors and environmental factors. Personal factors are related to goals thinking, pathways thinking and agency thinking, and environmental factors include family, school, and society. 2) The curriculum based on happiness theory includes 6 elements: principle, goal, contents, and time, learning process, learning resource, and Evaluation. The learning process in the curriculum includes 4 processes: positive emotion, engagement, relationship, meaning, accomplishment, and present. 3) students' hope is improved after the implementation of the curriculum based on happiness theory. This change was statistically significant, especially at the level of 0.1.

**Keywords:** curriculum, happiness theory, the PERMA model, improvement, hope

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

Mental health is a crucial pillar of national stability, social prosperity, and sustainable development, significantly impacting society's happiness index and productivity level. College students, playing a vital role in society as knowledge inheritors, innovators, and participants and promoters of social development, find themselves at a critical life growth stage. They navigate a complex social environment and face numerous difficulties and challenges amidst rapid societal evolution and heightened competition for talent.

Recent years have seen growing concerns over the mental health of Chinese university students. Research by Gao et al. (2020), involving a search across four electronic databases, revealed a 28.4% overall prevalence rate of depression among these students. Similarly, Wang et al. (2020) detected depression symptoms in 24.71% of students through a meta-analysis of cross-sectional studies from six databases. The "Psychological Health Blue Book" by the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Psychology (2021) found a 24.6% depression detection rate among

adolescents (Fu, 2021). Furthermore, the "2022 National Depression Blue Book," jointly released by the People's Daily and various research institutions and platforms, showed that 86.39% of individuals frequently experienced depression, highlighting an alarming trend towards younger onset ages. Among those with depression, 50% were students, with the 18-24 age group representing 35.32%. Yu (2022), employing a random-effects model to analyze university students' mental health issue detection rates, found the highest to lowest rates as follows: sleep problems (23.5%), depression (20.8%), self-harm (16.2%), anxiety (13.7%), suicidal ideation (10.8%), somatization (4.5%), and suicide attempts (2.7%). These findings underscore the concerning overall mental health status of Chinese university students and the need for society-wide heightened awareness.

Given the diversity and complexity of college students' mental health issues, education is instrumental in their growth and development. During their university years, students not only acquire knowledge and develop skills but also shape their personalities, increase social engagement, and further their career development. Consequently, teachers must fully appreciate the role of school education in mitigating negative psychological states and fostering and enhancing students' positive personality traits. To achieve this, teachers should study students' characteristics, tailor the curriculum to provide psychological health education that aligns with college students' developmental needs, cultivate positive psychological qualities, effectively mitigate depression and other psychological issues, and enhance students' mental health levels.

### *1.2 Rationale*

In the process of providing psychological counseling to college students and engaging in in-depth communication with them, researchers have discovered that to enhance students' mental health, educators need to teach students how to accurately comprehend and address the psychological and behavioral challenges they encounter in their growth, academic pursuits, emotional life, and professional development. This includes imparting specific strategies and techniques, such as adjusting emotions and cultivating positive interpersonal relationships, encouraging students to maintain an optimistic outlook, appreciate themselves, embrace challenges, and seek their life values.

While mental health education curricula and initiatives have been implemented across various universities in China, many of these curricula primarily focus on addressing existing problems. The researchers advocate for the development of a new curriculum aimed at guiding students towards positive psychological experiences, through which they can discover a happier and more effective approach to maintaining mental health.

The curriculum developed based on Happiness Theory, utilizing the PERMA model, aims to elevate students' hope through goals, pathway thinking, and agency thinking. The curriculum design thoughtfully integrates the five elements of the PERMA model into the organization of the learning experience. This integration encourages student participation in the curriculum and deep, focused engagement in activities. Students are motivated to cultivate positive relationships through interpersonal interactions in group activities, enhance the efficiency of interpersonal communication, and access resources for pathway and motivational thinking to bolster their sense of hope. Classroom sharing, the exemplary role, and mutual guidance of team members foster a sense of meaning and accomplishment, contributing to a healthy outlook on life. This positive emotional experience permeates the students' learning journey, interpersonal interactions, achievements, and the pursuit of meaningful learning. Ultimately, through practical learning experiences, students are expected to increase their level of hope and boost self-confidence and happiness, thereby enhancing mental health.

### *1.3 Literature Review*

The researchers reviewed studies of hope in the literature, summarized below:

Psychologist Snyder, who conducted a 15-year project on hope, has carried out the most in-depth and systematic study of hope. He posits that hope is the most crucial personality force and forms the foundation for other positive personality forces (Snyder, 2000). Numerous studies have demonstrated that hope serves as a vital psychological resource for individuals to prevent mental illness and cope with stress. It is also an important protective factor for mental health (Griggs, 2017; Ritschel, 2018). Furthermore, positive psychological interventions targeting hope levels can effectively help participants alleviate depressive symptoms (Hergenrather et al., 2013). An increase in hope aids participants in clarifying their goals, regaining confidence, and discovering ways to escape their current predicaments, thus significantly reducing depression symptoms among college students (Zhang, 2023).

Hope consists of goals, pathways thinking, and agency thinking. A goal is the outcome of individual mental activities, the pivot of people's mental activities, and also the cornerstone of Snyder's hope theory. The establishment of goals motivates individuals to engage in a series of behaviors and is closely linked to the efforts individuals make toward achieving those goals and their value assessment for achieving them (Liu & Huang, 2013). Individuals with high

hope traits tend to set more goals, and as each goal is achieved, the setting of subsequent goals becomes increasingly challenging and uncertain. Pathways thinking represents an inner plan or roadmap guiding an individual toward achieving a goal, consisting of a belief in one's ability to devise multiple routes to reach the goal and to overcome obstacles (Snyder, 2002). Typically, individuals with high hope traits have more concrete and feasible plans than those with low hope traits, including more alternative routes. Agency thinking, as interpreted by Snyder, is the mental will or drive, which is an individual's perception of their ability to engage in pathways thinking in the process of achieving a goal. When facing difficulties in achieving goals, individuals with a high sense of motivation possess stronger perseverance to overcome setbacks and challenges. The determination and confidence to achieve goals are the sources of this motivational consciousness. Positive agency beliefs (e.g., "I believe I can do it") motivate the pursuit of goals.

The "PERMA" model, an essential theory of happiness proposed by Seligman, has become a research focal point in positive psychology, which concentrates on individuals' experiences of happiness. Seligman, a leading figure in positive psychology, developed the initial version of the happiness theory, version 1.0, building upon previous studies. He posits that happiness comprises three elements: Positive Emotion, Engagement, and Meaning, suggesting that happiness largely stems from an individual's perspective and is primarily based on the subjective feeling of life quality. As research on happiness evolved, it acknowledged that achieving happiness encompasses not only the state of being happy but also engaging in and realizing an individual's inner potential. Consequently, Seligman introduced the PERMA 2.0 model in his book "Flourish," integrating various aspects of happiness to construct a comprehensive and multi-level happiness framework. This model sheds light on people's positive qualities across five factors: "Positive Emotion, Positive Engagement, Positive Relationships, Positive Meaning, and Positive Achievement." It aims to delve into the positive force within individuals, facilitating their interaction with one another to foster personal development, the integration of individuals with society, and ultimately enhancing the happiness of life (Seligman, 2011).

#### *1.4 Research Questions*

The research questions were formulated to address the following inquiries: 1) What are the factors affecting the development of hope of college freshman students in Guangxi International Business Vocational College? 2) How to develop a curriculum based on happiness Theory? 3) After the implementation of a curriculum based on the happiness theory, whether students' hope has improved?

#### *1.5 Research Objectives*

The research objectives were outlined as follows: 1) to study the factors affecting the development of hope of college freshman students in Guangxi International Business Vocational College. 2) to develop a curriculum based on the happiness theory. 3) to compare the hopes of college freshman students before and after learning by curriculum based on the happiness theory.

#### *1.6 Research Hypothesis/Hypotheses*

College freshman students' hope level will be improved after implementing the curriculum based on happiness theory.

#### *1.7 The Variables*

In the study, the variables were defined as follows: the independent variable was the curriculum based on happiness Theory, and the dependent variable was the students' hope.

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Population and Sample Group*

#### *2.1.1 The Population*

942 freshmen from the School of Applied Foreign Languages, Guangxi International Business Vocational College.

#### *2.1.2 The Sample Group:*

Through the cluster random sampling method, students from the foreign language class of Grade 1 of the Applied Foreign Language School of Guangxi International Business Vocational College have been selected. There are 35 students in total.

## 2.2 Research – Instruments

The research employs a variety of instruments to explore the factors influencing the development of hope levels among college students, including 1) a questionnaire about the factors affecting the development of hope levels. 2) interview form about influencing factors of hope level. 3) lesson plans. 4) the Hope Scale. 5) observation form about student behavior. 6) interview form about opinions on teaching.

## 2.3 Research Process

This study was conducted in 3 steps: 1) study the factors affecting the development of hope. 2) develop a curriculum based on the happiness theory. 3) experiment and improvement of curriculum model.

2.3.1 Step 1 of the research was to study the factors affecting the development of hope of collage freshman students in Guangxi International Business Vocational College

This began with collecting data from ten academic experts on the factors influencing college students' hopes, utilizing 1) a questionnaire about the factors influencing the development of hope, and 2) an interview form on influencing factors of the hope level of college students. Following this, the data concerning the factors influencing the development of hope were analyzed.

2.3.2 Step 2 of the research was to develop a curriculum based on the happiness theory

Researchers carried out the development of the curriculum by following these steps in sequence: 1) studied about development of the curriculum process. And 2) determined the curriculum development components. 3) drafted the details of the curriculum development: principle, goal contents, learning process, learning resource, and evaluation. 4) verified the details of the curriculum by the 5 professional scholars and modified the curriculum according to suggestions. 5) modified the details of the curriculum according to suggestions

2.3.3 Experiment and Improvement of Curriculum

During the experiment and improvement phase of the curriculum, the first step involved conducting hope Scale measurements on 35 students to ascertain their initial hope levels. Next, the students participated in a structured experiment utilizing a lesson plan based on the curriculum, which consisted of 20 hours of instruction spread over 4 weeks, 300 minutes per week. After completing the lesson plan, the students were observed and interviewed to gather insights into their engagement with the activities and what they learned from the curriculum. The final step in this process was to conduct a second round of hope scale measurements on the same 35 students, assessing the changes in their hope levels after engaging with the curriculum. This sequential approach allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the curriculum's effectiveness in influencing the students' hope.

## 2.4 Data Analysis

The data are analyzed as follows.

2.4.1 Qualitative data are analyzed through content analysis

2.4.2 Quantitative data are analyzed through descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage, means, and standard deviation, and the different scores of hope level before and after using the curriculum are analyzed through a pared-sample t-test.

## 2.5 Results on the Development of Curriculum Based on Happiness Theory

2.5.1 The factors affecting the development of hope of college freshman students in Guangxi International Business Vocational College.

The data about the opinions of 10 experts on the factors affecting the hope level of college freshman students are shown in Table 1.

From Table 1, It can be seen that 10 experts generally agree that both environmental and personal factors have a greater impact on the hope level of college students. In the realm of personal factors, the most influential factor on the hope of college freshman students is agency thinking. ( $\bar{x}=4.92$ ,  $SD.=0.184$ ), followed by pathways thinking ( $\bar{x}=4.9$ ,  $SD.=0.211$ ), At the bottom of the list are personal goal ( $\bar{x}=4.82$ ,  $SD.=0.432$ ). Among the environmental factors, the most influential is the school factor ( $\bar{x}=4.82$ ,  $SD.=0.395$ ), followed by the family factor ( $\bar{x}=4.57$ ,  $SD.=0.551$ ), and the last factor is the social factor ( $\bar{x}=4.52$ ,  $SD.=0.565$ ).

**Table 1.** Summary of Influencing Factors

	Factors	N	$\bar{X}$	SD.
Environment	Family	10	4.57	.551
	School	10	4.82	.395
	Society	10	4.52	.565
<b>Total</b>			4.64	.511
Personal factors	Personal goal	10	4.82	.432
	Pathways thinking	10	4.9	.211
	Agency thinking	10	4.92	.184
<b>Total</b>			4.88	.275

### 2.5.2 Curriculum Based on the Happiness Theory

The curriculum based on the happiness theory is presented as follows:

#### 1) Principle

Happiness theory is an important focus of positive psychology and explores the factors that influence people's happiness. The Theory of Happiness 1.0, proposed by Seligman, a leading representative of positive psychology, identifies three elements: positive emotion, engagement, and meaning. As his research progressed, Seligman developed a theory of Happiness 2.0 that emphasized measurable elements, including positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. The first letters of these 5 factors make up the PERMA model, and it can be said that Happiness Theory 2.0 is also known as the PERMA model.

Hope is one of the core concepts of positive psychology and is an important research content of positive personality traits. Snyder (2000) believes that hope is the most important strength of personality and the basis of other positive personality forces. Hope is a kind of personal thinking formed through acquired learning. This kind of thinking includes motivation thinking that stimulates the motivation and belief system of individuals to continuously move forward towards the goal and the path thinking of the method and strategy to achieve the goal effectively. A large number of studies have shown that hope is an important psychological resource for individuals to prevent mental illness and combat stress, and an important protective factor for mental health (Griggs, 2017; Ritschel, 2018) and that positive psychological interventions on hope levels can effectively help participants alleviate depressive symptoms (Hergenrath et al., 2013). The promotion of hope can help participants clear their goals, regain confidence, and find ways to break the current predicament, thus significantly reducing the depressive symptoms of college students (Zhang, 2023). Based on Lazarus' research, there was a significant positive correlation between college students' sense of hope and their mental health status (Lazarus, 1999).

Hope elements include goals, pathways thinking, and agency thinking) Goals refer to the result of individual psychological activities, which is the fulcrum of people's mental activities and also the fulcrum of Snyder's hope theory. The establishment of goals encourages individuals to produce a series of behaviors and is closely related to the efforts made by individuals to achieve goals and their value evaluation for achieving goals (Liur et al., 2013). Individuals with high-hope traits tend to set more goals, and the setting of these goals becomes more challenging and uncertain as the previous goal is achieved. 2) Pathways thinking are the inner plans or pathway maps that guide individuals toward their goals. The pathways component consists of beliefs regarding individuals' abilities to plan multiple routes to reach goals and overcome barriers (Snyder, 2002). Generally, individuals with high hope traits have more concrete and feasible ways to plan than individuals with low hope traits, and there are more alternative ways. 3) Agency thoughts of motivational thinking are interpreted by Snycier as mental will or mental drive, which are the perception of individuals performing pathways thinking on themselves in the process of achieving goals. In the case of difficulties in achieving goals, individuals with high motivation consciousness have stronger perseverance to overcome setbacks and difficulties, and the determination and confidence to achieve goals is the source of motivation consciousness.

This Curriculum is based the latest happiness theory of Seligman, namely the PERMA model, and reasonably integrates the five factors of the PERMA model into the learning experience organization to improve the three dimensions of hope: goals, pathways thinking, and agency thinking.

## 2) Objective

Curriculum based on Happiness theory improves the hope of students: Goals, pathways thinking, and Agency thinking.

## 3) Contents and Time

The contents include 4 Units: Unit 1 Self-Cognition, Unit 2 Self-Planning, Unit 3 Beyond the Self, and Unit 4 Achieve the Self. Contents and Time present as follows:

Unit	Content	Time
Unit 1 Self-Cognition	1. Self-awareness: divided Self-cognition, Self-experience, Self-control 2. Self-understanding	5hours
Unit 2 Self Planning	1. Concept of goals and setting goals 2. Planning goals	5hours
Unit 3 Beyond the Self	1. Pathway thinking, Formulating methods, and Strategies 2. Recognize setbacks and enhance willpower	5hours
Unit 4 Achieve the Self	1. Pathway thinking, and enhance willpower 2. Builds confidence in achieving goals	5hours

## 4) Learning process

The learning process consists of positive emotion, engagement, relationship, meaning, and accomplishment, present as follows:

(1) Positive emotion: Stimulate students' positive emotions, and promote the improvement of hope.

The teacher conducts a group of ice-breaking warm-up activities to mobilize students' positive emotions.

The teacher completes 2-3 activity tasks with positive emotions and a good cooperative relationship with students.

The students share their positive emotional experiences, harvests, and achievements.

(2) Engagement: Improve the heart flow experience

Teachers design task scenarios, adapt to students' psychological development and skills, and arrange medium difficult activities.

The students enter the activity scene and participate in the activity.

The teacher guide students to interact, and provide immediate and continuous feedback.

The students talk freely about the activities.

The students discuss and explore various activities and the situation to experience flow

(3) Relationship: Attach great importance to the establishment and maintenance of relationships.

The teacher provides the path and motivational thinking resources for improving the sense of hope. Through classroom sharing exemplary roles and mutual guidance of other team members, find meaning and accomplishment and build a healthy attitude to life.

Students of all levels will be divided into 8 learning groups to participate in activities and tasks. Each teaching will start with the ice-breaking activity to establish a good relationship and learn to complete 2-3 tasks together in one lesson.

(4) Meaning: Organize students to share in the process of each group counseling

Students explore the meaning together and influence each other. Students discuss together and find ways to create flow experiences. Thinking about meaning and a sense of value enables students to have more enjoyable and fulfilling flow experiences.

Students discuss the activities and give meaning to them.

(5) Accomplishment: Encourage students to share their successful experiences and share their feelings.

The teacher encourages students to share their successful experiences and share their feelings.

### 2.5.3 Learning resources

The learning resources section includes a curriculum lesson plan, teaching PowerPoint presentations, and materials for activities, all designed to support and enhance the educational experience.

### 2.5.4 Evaluation

The evaluation process encompasses the Hope Scale to measure students' levels of hope, observation of students' behavior to assess changes and impacts, and interviews to gather students' opinions on the teaching methods and curriculum effectiveness.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 The Result of Improved Hope Among College Freshmen Students

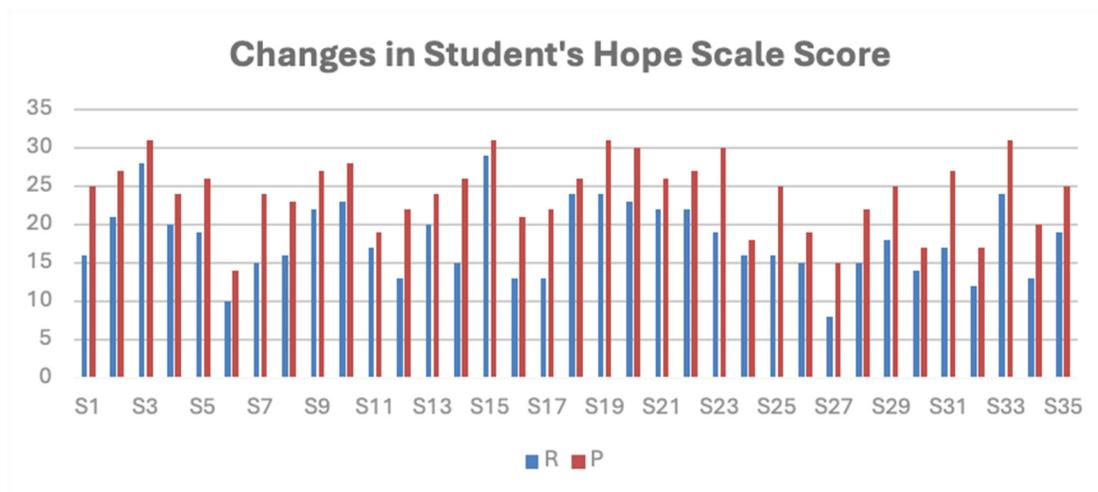
The comparison of students' hope before and after the curriculum based on happiness theory is presented as follows

**Table 2.** Comparison of Students' Hope Level before and after the Curriculum Based on Happiness Theory

Test	Scores	$\bar{x}$	SD.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	32	18.03	4.67	13.922	34	<.001
Posttest	32	24.14	4.90			

(n=35)

From Table 2, it was clear that the students' post-test score ( $\bar{x}$  =24.142, SD=4.90) was significantly higher than the pre-test score ( $\bar{x}$  =18.03, SD=4.67),  $t = 13.922$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , indicating that the curriculum based on happiness theory can improve students' hope level.



**Figure 1.** Changes in Student's Hope Scale Score

Figure 1 shows that 35 Students improved their hope level. This indicates that the curriculum based on happiness theory can effectively promote the improvement of students' hopes and achieve positive teaching effects.

## 4. Discussion

The analytical discussion of the study is divided into three parts, which are discussed in turn in this section:

### 4.1 Discussion of the Factors Affecting the Development of Hope of College Freshman Students at Guangxi International Business Vocational College

The research result shows that the factors affecting the development of hope of college freshman students include

two factors: personal factors and environmental factors. Personal factors are related to goals thinking, pathways thinking and agency thinking, and environmental factors include family, school, and society. Personal factors are more influential.

This observation is similar to the results of Xue et al. (2017) study on influencing factors of college students' hope, which all agree that the influencing factors of college students' hope include personal factors and environmental factors, and there are also some differences. For example, this study adds to the discussion on the influence of family environment factors on college students' hopes. In addition, the analysis of influencing factors on teenagers' sense of hope is also very similar to that of Wang (2017), but there are some differences in specific descriptions. The reason for this difference may be that the research focus and the description of influencing factors brought by the difference in research objectives are different. Through literature review, it is found that in recent years, there is no more literature on the influence factors of college students' hope.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have adopted measures such as remote teaching, online teaching, and delaying the start of school to prevent and control the epidemic. Even when students return to school, all campuses are under closed management, which reduces the contact with classmates and friends, and increases the sense of loneliness and social isolation. On the other hand, campus psychological counseling services have also been affected to varying degrees, reducing, or suspending such services, or transforming into online or telephone counseling forms, which may not provide timely and effective psychological support, and may lead to an increase in depression or poor mental health of college students. Taking Guangxi International Business Vocational College as the observation objects, the researchers found that these are intuitively reflected in the increased incidence of psychological problems among students, the high diagnosis rate of depressed students, and the increasing demand for psychological counseling. The number of psychological service teachers in colleges and universities is far from meeting the needs of these students.

Therefore, the current mental health education curriculum should be based on the research results of positive psychology, combined with the new form of students' mental health status, and actively explore the effective curriculum, through teaching guidance and help the majority of students to improve their hope, cultivate positive psychological quality, to improve and maintain the level of mental health ultimately.

#### *4.2 Discussion on the Development of the Curriculum*

In this study, we first systematically comb the curriculum, the concept of happiness theory and hope, as well as its theory and measurement. On this basis, it creatively integrates Seligman's latest happiness theory, namely the PERMA model, with the curriculum model. and reasonably integrates the five factors of the PERMA model into the learning experience organization, A curriculum model for freshmen is constructed. to improve the three dimensions of hope: goals, pathway thinking, and agency thinking. The objective coherence index (IOC) was tested. The course consists of 4 units and a total of 20 hours. The contents include 4 Units: Unit 1 Self-cognition, Unit 2 Self-planning, Unit 3 Beyond the self, Unit 4 Achieve the self.

In The course teaching design, the five factors of The PERMA model were fully considered and reasonably integrated into the teaching experience organization to improve hope:

Positive emotion(P): Le Branc et al. (2012) carried out a 4-week study among 59 employees of a Dutch university and found that an individual's daily emotional state has a very significant impact on the level of hope. Subjects with persistent positive emotional states had higher levels of hope. Positive emotions help to have a more optimistic view of goals, and encouraging positive emotions can increase motivation to pursue and achieve goals. In this curriculum, the positive emotional experience will run through the learning process of students' involvement in learning, interpersonal interaction, feeling achievement, and clear meaning. Engagement(E): Students are encouraged to engage deeply and intently in the course of their studies. Fully engaged and focused on the activity helps to form clear and concrete actionable ideas, and students will be more likely to identify effective strategies and pathways to achieve their goals. Relationship(R): Positive interpersonal relationships can help college students gain a sense of support and develop agency thinking about their ability to achieve goals. The curriculum will encourage students to obtain good relationship experience through interpersonal interaction in group activities, enhance interpersonal effectiveness, and provide pathways and resources for motivating thinking to enhance the sense of hope. Meaning(M), Accomplishment(A): Meaning provides the foundation for setting and accomplishing goals. Accomplishment is often cited as evidence of the ability to succeed, the confidence to achieve goals, and the perseverance to overcome obstacles, and provides Pathways Thinking with inspiration and motivation. Through class sharing and other group members' exemplary roles and mutual guidance, we can find a sense of meaning and achievement, and establish a healthy attitude toward life.

The curriculum will improve the hope of students: Goals, pathways thinking, and agency thinking. It enhances students' self-confidence and happiness and thus promotes mental health.

#### *4.3 Discuss the Implementation Effect of the Curriculum*

After the teaching experiment, through the measurement of the hope scale, the 35 students who participated in the curriculum significantly improved their hopes. The results show that the curriculum can improve students' sense of hope. This is consistent with the project study of the Upliftment Hope course designed by Snyder (2005). This is because integrating The PERMA model into the curriculum conforms to the law and needs of the psychological development of college students.

In this study, through the implementation of curriculum, students' goal thinking, pathways thinking, and agency thinking are improved.

Through the implementation of the curriculum model, goals and thinking can be improved, which can be summarized as the enhancement of students' planning, the establishment of goal awareness to improve their life and study planning, and the formulation of scientific goals and plans. The number of targets increases.

The improvement of pathways thinking through the implementation of the curriculum can be summarized as "the number of pathways thinking of students to achieve goals has increased, and the ability to plan multiple routes to achieve goals has improved." This includes finding other ways to solve problems when goals are blocked, finding root causes, seeking multiple ways to help in relationships, drawing inspiration from past successes, and finding an alternative goal to solve problems."

Agency thinking is improved through the implementation of the curriculum, which can be summarized as helping students enhance their willpower and self-efficacy, acquire Positive agency beliefs, and adopt positive emotions when their goals are blocked. They face setbacks and challenges more positively and believe in the future."

## **5. Conclusion**

The results are as follows:

Factors that affect the development of college students' hopes include personal factors and environmental factors. Personal factors are related to goals thinking, pathways thinking and agency thinking, and environmental factors include family, school, and society.

The curriculum based on happiness theory includes 6 elements: principle, goal, contents, time, learning process, learning resource, and evaluation. The learning process in the curriculum includes 4 processes: positive emotion, engagement, relationship, meaning, accomplishment, and present.

Students' hope is improved after the implementation of the curriculum model based on happiness theory. This change was statistically significant, especially at the level of 0.1.

## **6. Recommendations**

Based on the findings, it is recommended that:

This study reveals that individual factors, particularly pride in past achievements, most significantly influence students' hope, affecting goal setting, pathway thoughts, and agency thinking. Positive emotions and a sense of purpose in goals or tasks also play a vital role. Environmental factors, with the school environment being paramount, followed by family and social factors, significantly impact students' hope. The provision of educational resources and opportunities, such as courses focused on hope, is essential.

Therefore, creating new, targeted courses is key to boosting students' hope. Schools are encouraged to prioritize the development and refinement of such courses, especially those grounded in happiness theory. By focusing on students' developmental needs and fostering a positive, optimistic environment with abundant learning resources and strong teacher-student interaction, schools can significantly enhance students' hope levels and support their mental health development.

This study finds that the happiness theory-based curriculum notably boosts college freshmen's hope levels, particularly enhancing their pathways and agency thinking. By focusing on positive psychological development, tailoring content to students' developmental stages, and designing engaging activities, this curriculum model successfully sparks students' learning interests and meets educational objectives.

Educators are encouraged to incorporate happiness theory into their teaching, considering the varied psychological growth patterns of students across disciplines. By employing diverse teaching strategies and assessment methods, teachers can deepen student engagement, stimulate interest and potential, and significantly elevate their hope levels.

This study revealed that while the happiness theory-based curriculum model generally significantly boosted most students' hope levels, those with pre-existing mental health issues saw less significant improvement. This outcome could stem from the multifaceted influences on hope, including personal growth experiences, family, and societal factors, which interplay with mental health development and maintenance. Given that long-standing mental states are challenging to ameliorate through short-term courses fully, it is recommended that educators consider these individual differences during instruction. They should offer tailored guidance and, if needed, psychological counseling to students requiring extra support.

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