

5.2 Positive Psychology

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 11 marks

KEY WORDS well-being 幸福感 • hedonic adaptation 享乐适应
 • subjective well-being 主观幸福感 • positive psychology 积极心理学

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **positive psychology** 积极心理学.

You must be able to:

- state what positive psychology studies and why it emerged
- describe **subjective well-being** 主观幸福感和 how it is measured
- explain **hedonic adaptation** 享乐适应 and the **relative** nature of comparison
- name factors reliably associated with well-being

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ What it studies

Positive psychology studies the conditions of flourishing — well-being, strengths, meaning — rather than only disorder. It arose because psychology's evidence base had been built largely on what goes wrong.

■ Subjective well-being

Usually measured as **life satisfaction** plus the balance of positive to negative affect, by self-report. The measure is subjective by design, which is both its point and its main methodological weakness.

■ Hedonic adaptation and comparison

People adapt to improved circumstances, so a gain raises well-being temporarily and then fades. Judgments are also **relative**: satisfaction depends on comparison with others and with one's own past.

■ What is associated with well-being

Close relationships, meaningful activity, health, and a degree of autonomy show reliable associations. Income is associated with well-being strongly at low levels and much more weakly once basic needs are met.

2 Practice

2.1 State what subjective well-being measures. [2]

2.2 Explain hedonic adaptation and one consequence for policy or personal planning. [2]

2.3 A person's satisfaction falls after their neighbours' incomes rise, though their own is unchanged.

(a) Name the property of judgment involved. [1]

(b) State what this shows about well-being measures. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The relationship between income and well-being is [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** strong at all levels
B strong at low income and much weaker once needs are met
C absent
D negative

3.2 The main methodological weakness of subjective well-being measures is that they are [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** too long
B self-reported
C physiological
D unreliable across time

3.3 A government proposes to raise national well-being by increasing average income.

(a) State one limitation of the proposal. [1]

(b) Suggest one alternative target and justify it. [2]
