

感恩干预效果的个体差异*

邓衍鹤¹, 李奕辰¹, 田思思¹, 高似彤¹, 刘翔平²

(1. 首都师范大学心理学院, 北京市“学习与认知”重点实验室, 北京 100073;

2. 北京师范大学心理学部, 北京 100875)

摘要:近年来, 基于感恩提升的干预策略对适应性功能的促进作用广受关注。然而, 诸多研究却揭示出感恩干预效果受到个体因素的调节, 即干预效果在不同个体间存在显著差异。本文基于基线的心理特征、人格类型、动机和人口学特征, 从个体视角出发, 系统地梳理了感恩干预效果的调节因素及潜在解释, 并对未来研究提出展望。由此, 拓展学界对感恩干预与个人特征适配性的认识, 优化干预的效用, 为设计个人-活动匹配的个性化方案提供思路。

关键词:感恩干预; 个体差异; 调节因素; 个人-活动匹配

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1 引言

所谓感恩, 既可以被视为在获得他人的善举时所产生的感激和喜悦的情绪体验 (Emmons & McCullough, 2004), 即状态感恩; 亦可以被看作通过感恩体验来觉察或回应他人的善举, 由此衍生出对日常生活心怀感恩的积极人格倾向 (何安明等, 2013; Wood et al., 2010), 即特质感恩。感恩源于对他人善意的认知与觉察, 也涉及到欣赏生活中美好一面的积极认知风格 (Jans-Beken et al., 2020; Emmons & McCullough, 2004)。诸多研究业已揭示出, 感恩与人的适应性功能具有密切的关联, 包括与幸福感、积极情绪、乐观和生活满意度呈正相关, 而与抑郁、焦虑、消极情绪和压力等功能紊乱呈负相关 (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Kong et al., 2021)。

研究者发现, 通过采取一些策略来主动练习和提升感恩, 能够丰富个体内在积极资源, 进而对其生理、心理与社会功能发挥积极效用 (Emmons & McCullough, 2003)。自千禧年以来, 聚焦于感恩练习的干预得以蓬勃发展, 被广泛认为是最成功的积极心理干预策略以及一种与临床治疗相关的实用技术 (Seligman et al., 2005)。常见的感恩练习策略, 包括细数感恩、感恩沉思以及诸如书写感谢信和感恩拜访的感恩行为表达 (Wood et al., 2010)。练习者在指导下对生活中值得感恩的事件和体验予以回忆、沉思或记录, 抑或是通过具体的行为表达感恩,

加以重复练习, 逐渐形成自动化的积极认知风格, 从细微中觉察到他人给予的恩惠, 促进其亲社会性 (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; 邓衍鹤等, 2016)。简而言之, 诸类感恩干预均意图通过不同种类的练习策略来培养个体的感恩水平, 继而促进其适应性功能的发展。

感恩干预不仅能够有效改善个体的积极心理功能, 如心理幸福感、基本心理需求满足 (Lee Tong & Sim, 2015; Geier & Morris, 2022)、乐观 (Kerr O'Donovan & Pepping, 2015)、心理韧性 (Salces-Cubero et al., 2018)、自尊 (Rash et al., 2011)、主观幸福感和亲社会行为 (Watkins et al., 2015; Southwell & Gould, 2017), 同样有助于降低消极情绪 (O'Connell et al., 2017; Salces-Cubero et al., 2018)、抑郁 (Disabato et al., 2017; Sirois & Wood, 2017)、焦虑 (Southwell & Gould, 2017) 和攻击性 (Deng et al., 2019)。此外, 临床研究表明在治疗体像障碍和过度担忧方面, 感恩干预同常用的临床技术一样有效 (Geraghty et al., 2010)。基于诸多实证依据, 感恩干预愈发成为一种高效、低成本并易于实施的心理治疗技术 (Seligman et al., 2006)。

纵观既往研究, 感恩对个人身心健康助益良多, 因此一直以来有关感恩干预的积极成效似乎被视为理所当然。然而, 感恩特质或表达感恩的行为未必总是有益。在某些情况下, 诱发感恩会引发负疚感、

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通讯作者: 邓衍鹤, E-mail: dengyanhe@cnu.edu.cn。

歉疚等消极情绪,甚至导致幸福感下降(Watkins, 2004; Walsh et al., 2022)。与此同时,向他人表达感恩意味着自己的幸福体验有赖于他人,由此产生的脆弱感会令某些个体感到不舒服(Kashdan et al., 2009)。Wood等(2010)也对感恩干预的疗效提出了质疑,认为将感恩干预视为积极心理学运动的重大成功还为时尚早。Davis等(2016)在一项关于感恩干预的元分析中发现,尽管干预效果显著,但效应量微弱。无独有偶,Dickens(2017)在另一项元分析中发现,只有与如细数烦恼和后悔事件的消极对照组比较(Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Froh et al., 2009),干预才显示出显著的效果;而当对照组是中性或积极的条件,干预只能带来微小的改善。Cregg和Cheavens(2020)在关于感恩干预对焦虑和抑郁症状疗效的元分析中发现,与无干预的等待组相比,干预具有中等效应,但与有主动控制的安慰剂组相比,干预效果微弱;这表明感恩干预在减轻焦虑和抑郁症状方面的效果有限。甚至,当人际联结需要与道德规范发生冲突时,对施惠者的感恩会促使受惠者的思维变得更加狭隘,激发漠视社会规则的道德违反行为,如撒谎和降低应有的惩罚(Zhu et al., 2020)。以上研究表明,感恩干预并非总会引发理想的效果。

愈来愈多的研究发现,感恩干预在不同个体之间所发挥的效应并非一致,有些人获益更多,而有些人却会由此产生损耗。因此,有必要厘清感恩干预效果的个体差异,进一步明确干预对具有何种特征的个体能够发挥更为积极的效用。鉴于此,本文首次系统梳理了调节感恩干预效果的个体因素及潜在的解释,以期拓展个人特征与感恩干预活动适配性的认识,明晰影响感恩干预效果的目标特征,为制定个性化的精准干预方案明确思路。

2 调节感恩干预效果的个体特征

2.1 基线心理特征

作为一种对日常生活心怀感激的特质(何安明等,2013),在干预前的特质感恩基线水平影响人们从感恩干预中的获益程度。例如,Rash等(2011)实施了4周感恩沉思练习,发现相比于高特质感恩者,仅低特质感恩者的生活满意度有所提高。同样,Harbaugh和Vasey(2014)对大学生进行了两周的细数感恩练习,发现干预只在低特质感恩群体中效果显著,表现为抑郁水平下降和主观幸福感提升。尽

管低特质感恩通常预测个体较低的幸福感和积极情绪,以及较高的抑郁水平(Wood et al., 2010),但感恩练习却能够打破这种模式,帮助低特质感恩者获取与高特质感恩者对等的幸福感和积极情绪,并保护其免受抑郁症状的持续影响。尽管多项研究支持了特质感恩水平是调节干预效果的重要因素,但也有研究的发现与此不一致,如Toepfer等(2012)未发现特质感恩调节书写感谢信对幸福感、抑郁症状和生活满意度的影响。

再者,积极情绪的基线状态对感恩干预效果同样有所影响。例如,在一项关于感恩行为表达的研究中,Froh等(2009)指导青少年书写并邮递一封感恩信,结果发现,相比于中性控制组,仅基线积极情绪较低者在干预后报告了更高水平的感恩和积极情绪。然而,Rash等(2011)在持续4周、每周1次的感恩沉思练习中,没有发现基线情绪状态显著调节感恩干预对幸福感的影响。但该研究的对照组与干预组样本不同质,在控制参与者的日常情绪方面可能存在混淆因素,且存在干预时间短、次数少和样本量小等问题。

此外,以往研究认为抑郁症患者从积极心理干预中获益较少,因为认知、情感和行为功能的紊乱会阻碍其充分体验积极活动。然而,Sin和Lyubomirsky(2009)发现,积极心理干预对于那些符合抑郁症诊断标准的群体显示出更加显著的疗效。Harbaugh和Vasey(2014)进一步揭示出,细数感恩练习仅对那些高抑郁水平者有益,包括提升了幸福感和积极情绪,改善了抑郁症状。再者,Sergeant和Mongrain(2015)通过聚类分析区分出两类群体,包括病态群体(更多的抑郁症状和消极情绪、更低的生活满意度和幸福指数)和非病态群体(较少的抑郁症状和消极情绪、较高的生活满意度和幸福指数),并对其采用线上诱发感恩的练习,发现病态群体在接受干预后表现出更少的抑郁症状和更高的生活满意度。换言之,干预为处在消极心理状态下的人们提供了更为有效的帮助,通过接触新的认知、情绪和行为体验进而改善了幸福感。然而,Cregg和Cheavens(2020)的元分析表明,感恩干预的效果并没有随着抑郁症状的加重而增加。甚至有研究发现,书写感恩信组与听古典音乐的控制组相比,重度抑郁和焦虑的个体在感恩练习后幸福感显著下降(Sin et al., 2011)。

针对上述研究发现,究其潜在原因。一方面,依据阻力假说(Resistance Hypothesis; McCullough et al., 2004),具有如高感恩和积极情绪的基线心理特征的个体,能够一直以积极的视角看待这个世界,已经获得了应有的积极体验,因此由感恩练习额外带来的积极体验难以引发更多的效果;反之则具有更多的提升空间,更容易从感恩练习中获得助力。同样,Watkins(2004)认为,在基线阶段具有高积极心理特征的人在感恩和幸福之间已经存在了稳定的协同效应,短期练习难以促进其进一步跃升;反观不具备这种特征的人,干预则为其开启了协同效应。与“天花板效应”类似,基线阶段心理特征的积极水平愈高者,其主观幸福感已经很高,因此感恩干预引发的正向变化程度有限。

另一方面,感恩练习对于本就缺乏积极体验的个体更为有效。类似于“地板效应”,具有更多消极心理特征的病态群体相比于非病态人群,拥有更多提升与进步的空间,因此更能够从感恩练习中获益(Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009)。然而,对于重度抑郁和焦虑者而言,动机、情感和认知功能的紊乱可能使其在开启感恩练习时存在一定的困难,激发出更多负面情绪,从而起到适得其反的效果。不一致的研究发现,提示了感恩练习对患有不同严重程度的抑郁或焦虑的人仍存在效果差异。未来应继续探索如何干预能满足不同水平焦虑或抑郁患者的需求和偏好,为其定制精准化干预策略。

2.2 人格类型

研究者从不同的理论视角出发,探索了人格对感恩干预效果的调节效应。基于人格的两极发展理论(Two-polarities Model of Personality Development; Blatt, 1976, 2004),Sergeant 和 Mongrain(2011)发现,细数感恩练习仅对高自我批评者起效,包括增加了主观幸福感和自尊水平,且显著缓解了躯体症状,但对高依赖者不起作用,甚至损害了他们的自尊。究其潜在原因,不同人格特征与干预策略的适配程度可能影响了干预效果。具体而言,不同个体具有自己独特的优势、需求、价值、兴趣和偏好等特征,当人们实施与自身特征相匹配的练习活动时,更容易从干预中获益。一方面,高自我批评个体倾向于关注和感知自身的错误和缺陷,以至于很难理解并欣赏生活中的积极一面(Zeeck et al., 2020)。在感恩干预条件下,高自我批评者被鼓励去思考生活中忽略

掉和错过的积极体验,弥补了以往消极的自我关注模式,取而代之的是对外部世界的欣赏,从而发挥出积极效果。另一方面,高依赖个体极度依赖与他人的真实联结来满足情感需求(Sekowski & Prigerson, 2021),但细数感恩不涉及人际互动,属于自助式练习,因而难以提升其幸福感,甚至会被独立的练习形式诱发出消极情绪,因此他们可能更需要涉及人际互动的练习策略。

再者,基于大五人格类型(Big Five Personality Model; Goldberg, 1993),Senf 和 Liao(2013)发现外倾性和开放性显著调节了感恩练习对幸福感和抑郁症状的效果。具体而言,高外倾性个体在感恩练习后幸福感提升更多,抑郁水平下降更多;相似地,高开放性个体在感恩练习后幸福感提升更多。同样,另一项研究在为期一周的感恩拜访练习后发现,高外倾性个体的幸福感有更大程度的增加,抑郁症状有更大程度的减少(Schueller, 2012)。此外,Win-slow 等(2017)在对公司职员进行为期四周的感恩干预后发现,高宜人性者的感恩与积极情绪得到了更多的提升,但高尽责性者在接受了干预后却出现了更强烈的消极情绪。而且值得注意的是,Ng(2016)探索了神经质对细数感恩干预效应的影响,发现只有低神经质个体从活动中提升了幸福感并持续获益,而高神经质个体并未显著获益。同理,大五人格的特点与干预内容的契合度也许是潜在的作用机制。一方面,高外倾性、开放性和宜人性个体更为擅长和偏好增加人际纽带的练习活动,因此表达感恩行为更能发挥出积极效果。另一方面,高尽责性的个体更倾向于将感恩练习当作一种外在要求的任务来完成,由此破坏了自主练习本应产生的积极作用;而高神经质个体则存在消极认知偏差,尤为不擅长使用适应性策略调节情绪,因而很难从常规感恩练习中获益。

2.3 内在动机与投入

个体参与练习的内在动机以及对效果的预期也可能影响感恩干预的成效。Sin 和 Lyubomirsky(2009)的元分析表明,明晰活动目的并积极报名参加、渴望通过练习提高自身幸福的参与者,相比于并未主动报名但同样完成了干预练习的参与者而言,从感恩练习中获益更多。原因在于,这种受内在动机驱使的人更加认同干预活动的价值,练习时更加努力主动,由此幸福感提升更多。Sheldon 和 Ly-

ubomirsky(2006)在为期4周的细数感恩干预中发现,只有在练习中付出更多努力、受内在动机驱使的参与者,在干预后显著提升了积极情绪。同样, Lyubomirsky等(2011)让参与者每周书写1封感谢信,持续8周,发现这种干预方式并不能对所有人产生效果,幸福感的提升仅发生在那些内心渴望变得更幸福的群体中,而内在动机在控制组内没有起任何作用。此外,在干预结束后仍然主动练习的参与者,其幸福感提升更多(Lyubomirsky et al., 2011; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006)。由此可见,受内在动机驱动的参与意图是有力的影响因素,想要通过感恩练习获得持续的幸福,需要自我意志的努力。

2.4 人口学特征

首先,人们所属的文化背景会影响干预的成效(Dickens, 2019)。例如, Boehm等(2011)招募了英裔和亚裔的美国人进行持续6周的感恩信练习后发现,相比于亚裔,英裔美国人在干预后的生活满意度提升更多。进一步地, Layous等(2013)直接在不同文化背景下的参与者之间比较了练习效果,发现美国人比韩国人的幸福感提升更多。由此可见,相比于集体主义文化,受个体主义文化影响的参与者从感恩干预中获益更多。究其潜在原因,强调自我意识提升的个体主义文化价值观,与感恩练习的目标更适配,而在集体主义文化价值观中较少关注个人目标和自我完善,他们的幸福感不仅取决于自身,还存在他人取向(Ho et al., 2014)。在集体主义文化背景下使用感恩策略,可能容易引发参与者的自责和对施惠者的愧疚,甚至诱发焦虑和抑郁情绪。因此,在集体主义文化背景下开展的感恩干预不能只是简单复制先前适用于个体主义文化的干预方案,以避免干预效果适得其反。

此外,研究发现具有宗教信仰的人在练习感恩时更为虔诚,所以感恩干预在信徒中开展更为有效(Van Cappellen et al., 2021; Portocarrero et al., 2020)。但需要注意的是,有宗教信仰的人已经足够感恩(Lambert et al., 2009),干预效果或许不如无宗教信仰的人。因此,干预研究有必要纳入个人的宗教信仰作为考察干预效果的控制变量。

再者,年纪大的人更可能从感恩干预中获益(Carr et al., 2021; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009)。年纪大的人往往拥有更高的智慧,更有效的情绪调节策略和完善的自我目标(Linley et al., 2007),接受感

恩干预时更认真并愿意付出更多努力。因此,练习感恩在处理与年龄相关的逆境时,是一种积极的应对机制,有助于建构心理韧性,降低消极情绪状态的影响(Killen & Macaskill, 2015)。

最后,女性相比于男性似乎更有可能体验并表达感恩,但这并不意味着女性始终会从感恩干预中获益更多。研究表明,处于青春期早期的男性要比同一年龄段的女性从感恩干预中受益更多(Froh et al., 2009)。这或许是因为女性有意识地在日常生活中体验并表达着感激,而男性更看重自我独立,因此难以承认自己对他人依赖,也甚少表达对他人的感激。但也正因如此,男性通过感恩干预而获得的提升空间要比女性更大(Watkins, 2013)。

3 未来研究与展望

一枚硬币尚且有两面,面向具有不同特征的个体,感恩干预的效果自然也会有所差异。一味关注感恩干预的积极效应的普适性,对于该领域的长期发展来说弊大于利。感恩干预蕴藏着巨大的发展潜力,但干预适用于所有人似乎过于理想。本文聚焦于感恩干预效果的个体差异,系统地梳理了调节干预效果的不同个人特征,加深了对参与者特征的理解以及对感恩干预效应的重新评估,为发展个性化感恩干预提供了证据基础。

然而,目前仍存在两大问题亟需引起学界的重视。首先,个体特征对干预效果的影响,有些结论尚不一致,亟待更多的实证研究予以澄清,得出更为稳定的结论。再者,解释个体差异调节作用机制的相关理论尚不完备,有待提出新的理论模型,在科学理论的框架下予以系统整合,明晰对干预效果产生影响的本质原因。基于现存问题,未来在开展感恩干预的研究和应用中,可从以下方向进一步深入。

3.1 规范研究程序,提升干预流程的标准化

关于个体差异对干预效果的调节作用,研究证据仍处于初期阶段,有些结论还不一致。造成这种现象的原因之一,是既往干预研究采取的练习流程不一致,以及设置对照组的类型不同。比如,同样是以个人的特质感恩为调节变量, Harbaugh和Vasey(2014)使用的细数感恩属于自助式练习策略,而Toepfer等(2012)采用的感恩拜访则涉及人际互动过程。此外,同一种干预的流程也尚未标准化。如Toepfer等(2012)要求参与者在三周内完成三封感恩信,借由主试邮寄给施惠者;而Kaczmarek等

(2015)则要求参与者在每周完成三封感恩信,并自行递交给施惠者以表达感谢。对此,未来研究有必要对同类型干预的流程进一步标准化,控制额外因素以更准确地探究个体特征对干预效果的作用,如采用数字化形式呈现统一的干预内容。另一方面,在研究程序上应统一设置惰性对照组和安慰剂对照组,更加严谨地评估干预效果中潜在的个体差异。

3.2 纳入客观生理指标,扩展个体特征作用的范围

以往研究主要通过自陈式调查来衡量干预效果,由于测量指标的全距有限,加剧了天花板或地板效应的产生,由此阻碍了对个体特征作用的探究。采用客观的生理指标评估则更加自然真实,对个体状态的反映更为精确敏锐,有助于更为广泛地探测个体特征作用的领域。伴随着数字技术的不断发展,研究者可以通过如可穿戴传感器和智能手环等新兴技术手段,采集穿戴者的脑内神经机制、语音、体征、行为和环境等数据,即时获取如内侧前额叶皮层、眼动、心率和血压等动态化的客观指标,并结合主观报告信息以全面评估干预的效果(刘冠民,彭凯平,2019;Kong et al.,2020)。

3.3 扩展个体差异特征在遗传和生理层面的探索

现有个体差异特征的研究集中于心理特征、人格和动机等方面,缺少对遗传类和生理类特征的探讨。考虑到遗传类基因和生理类指标有其客观和稳定的优势,有必要通过实证研究进一步在感恩干预中检验各种基因型和基因组合以及其他生理类特征是否具有调节作用。已有研究发现,儿童的副交感神经反应性和呼吸性窦性心律不齐水平能显著调节其从促进备择思维干预中的获益程度,即对恐惧低反应的儿童受益更多(Gatzke-Kopp et al.,2013)。感恩干预作为一种特殊的积极环境,具备某些遗传或生理特征的特定群体是否对其反应程度存在差异,未来研究应着手回答这一重要问题。

3.4 优化个体特征与干预内容的适配性,实现生态瞬时干预与评估

在应用层面,围绕个体差异特征,为不同类型的参与者设计精准个性化干预方案,实现干预效应的最大化。比如,相比于低抑郁水平者,抑郁程度较高的人虽然可能从干预中获益更多(Job & Williams,2020),但由于存在消极的认知偏差,自我启动干预的能力更弱,使其初期练习感恩时存在一定困难。因此,针对该群体需为其在干预初期准备门槛较低

的感恩暖身活动,降低他们参与的难度,帮助其逐渐沉浸到感恩练习中。此外,针对内在动机不足的参与者,可采取生态瞬时干预(Ecological Momentary Intervention;Smith & Juarascio,2019),将干预场景拓展到日常情境下,为参与者提供在自然情境下更具个性化的干预内容,提高练习的趣味性和生态性。同时结合数字化技术,利用智能手机APP、小程序或移动互联设备,实时动态观测和评估。

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Individual Differences in the Effects of Gratitude – based Interventions

Deng Yanhe¹, Li Yichen¹, Tian Sisi¹, Gao Sitong¹, Liu Xiangping²

(1. School of Psychology, Learning and Cognitive Key Laboratory, Capital Normal University, Beijing 100073;

2. Faculty of Psychology, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875)

Abstract: In recent years, the benefits of gratitude – based interventions on adaptive functioning have been received wide attention. However, numerous studies have revealed that the effects triggered by the gratitude – based interventions were moderated by individual factors. In other words, these effects varied significantly among different individuals. Hence, the current study systematically summarized the moderating roles of personal factors that impact the effects of gratitude – based interventions, including individual psychological characteristics, personality types, motivation, and demographic characteristics. Based on previous empirical findings, potential explanations and future directions are also discussed. Therefore, in here, we expand the understanding of the adaptation of gratitude – based interventions into personal characteristics, further to optimize the effectiveness of intervention, and provide ideas for the design of personalized intervention programs matching individual characteristics.

Key words: gratitude – based interventions; individual differences; moderating factors; person – activity fitness