

A Study on the Current Situation of Positive Psychological Quality of Student Leader in Colleges and Universities: A Case Study of Guangxi a Vocational Education College

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Abstract: As the strong core of the student body, student leaders in colleges and universities originate from and represent students, and their unique centripetal and rallying power, cultivating positive psychological qualities of student leaders in colleges and universities is conducive to giving full play to the pioneering role of role models and infecting other students with their own personality and moral values, and teaching them by example. In the late 20th century, the American psychologist Martin Seligman founded the positive psychology, which emphasizes the positive perspective of psychology and believes that discovering and giving full play to human strengths and virtues is an important means to stimulate individual motivation and improve happiness. This reveals that in the management process of student leaders, we should change our perspective to investigate the current situation of positive psychological qualities of college students, and propose a targeted and reasonable cultivation path to promote the cultivation of creative talents with sound personality according to their abilities. In this study, by using the Positive Psychological Quality Scale for Chinese College Students developed by Chinese scholars, Prof. Meng Wanjin and Guan Qun, 303 student leaders of different majors were selected from the author's university to conduct a questionnaire survey, and 301 valid samples were obtained. The following conclusions were drawn: (1) The overall positive psychological quality of student leaders was good, and the scores of all six dimensions were higher than the Chinese norm. The highest scores among the six dimensions of positive psychological quality were 3.80 for the interpersonal dimension and 3.80 for the transcendence dimension (both scores were the same), the last ranked mean score was 3.58 for the moderation dimension, and the scores of other dimensions were 3.64 for the awareness dimension, 3.79 for the emotion dimension, and 3.74 for the justice dimension, with an overall comprehensive mean score of 3.72. (2) The interpersonal dimension was significantly higher for male student leaders than for female student leaders, and there were no significant differences in other dimensions. (3) There were minor differences in the dimensions across grades among this group of student leaders surveyed, but none of them were significant.

Keywords: positive psychology, student leaders, status survey

1. Introduction

Student leaders in colleges and universities are a special group of college students, with the dual roles of students and cadres. Article 4, Chapter 1 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Higher Education points out that "to make the educated become the builders and successors of socialism with all-round development in moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic aspects". "As a member of the student group, student leaders are the main body of students and have the advantages that teachers do not have. In the student body, student leaders play the role of a bridge and an exemplary role model, which requires student leaders to embody the expectations of the society and realize the all-round development of the social builders and successors more than the general students.

Not only do the law and society expect students to develop, but from the perspective of school management alone, teachers, as administrators, expect them to be role models and leaders of learning on campus. Teachers expect student leaders to play a leading role in the student body, to realize students' "self-education, self-management, and self-service"[1], and to have the ability to serve as role models and exemplars. In conclusion, both society and teachers expect high expectations for the overall

development and growth of student leaders.

Student leaders, who are traditionally considered to be students with good academic performance, face more opportunities and choices in life, and are under more pressure in study, work and life, so they have more potential psychological crisis. Sometimes they may show that they cannot adjust their mentality in time, cannot arrange their study time and school work reasonably, cannot build up a good relationship with their classmates, lack the ability to resist frustration, lack the ability to communicate and so on.

Marked by American psychologists Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's January 2000 Introduction to Positive Psychology [2], the field of positive psychology is emerging and gradually forming a positive psychology movement. Based on the theories related to positive psychology proposed by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, this study was conducted based on the local conditions and the unique cultural background of China, using the Positive Psychological Qualities Scale for College Students developed by Meng Wanjin and Guanqun. Through multi-dimensional professional statistics, the psychological quality of student leaders of different genders, ages and majors was investigated in order to grasp the development of positive psychological quality in the academic cadre group of the college.

As the strong core of the student body, student cadres originate from students and represent them, and their unique centripetal and rallying power is generally trusted and followed by the majority of students. Cultivating the positive psychological qualities of excellent student cadres, shaping a positive educational environment, and helping student cadres manage their own positive psychology can improve their sense of responsibility, happiness and self-confidence, so that they can give full play to the pioneering role of role models and infect other students with their own character sentiments and teachings, and enlighten other students with their growth wisdom and successful experiences, which is conducive to generating a better peer effect. In a word, integrating positive psychology into the training and management of student cadres is an effective way to innovatively cultivate high quality talents.

On the one hand, the positive psychology theory, which has had a wide and deep impact, provides a solid foundation for research. On the other hand, Chinese scholars have Chineseized Western psychological theories and developed a scale with high reliability and validity for measuring positive psychological qualities of college students, which provides a current operational measurement tool for the study.

Thus, this paper takes student leaders of a vocational college in Guangxi, China, as an example, and uses Professor Meng Wanjin's Positive Psychological Quality Scale for Chinese College Students to analyze their mean and characteristic status through six dimensions of interpersonal dimension [5], transcendence dimension, moderation dimension, awareness dimension, emotion dimension and justice dimension by investigating their positive psychological quality, which provides research data for improving positive psychological quality of college students, improving the quality of education and management of student leaders, improving positive psychological quality of student leaders, and cultivating innovative talents with sound personality, which has important research value and practical necessity.

2. Positive psychology theory and its research status

2.1. Positive Psychology Literature Review

With the January 2000 Introduction to Positive Psychology by American psychologists Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi [2], the field of positive psychology is emerging and gradually forming a positive psychology movement. First, in terms of positive psychology theory, foreign scholars have mainly conducted research in three areas: positive experience research, positive personality trait research, and positive organizational system research. These are also the three main elements of positive psychology research identified by Ekumar, which Seligman chaired in 1998.

Second, positive psychology is dedicated to the study of positive elements in personality, positive personality formation and development [2]. The term "Positive character" was first introduced by Seligman in 2002, and Seligman believes that virtues and strengths are the core of positive character of an individual, acting as a buffer and a powerful weapon to overcome mental illness. Positive personality can be divided into six "virtues" and twenty-four positive psychological qualities that build the prosperity of the individual, family and society [3].

In the "Advanced Search" of China Knowledge Network (CNKI), we limited the time period to the

last thirty years (i.e., from January 1, 1993 to February 1, 2023) and conducted a "search" of the relevant literature on the topic of "positive psychology". "Search". After the survey, the total library was searched, including foreign literature and Chinese literature included in CNKI, with a total of 14,397 documents. By analyzing the trend of issuance, the slope of the research issuance curve of positive psychology from the millennium until 2016 is showing a linear upward trend, reaching the peak of research in 2019. From 2020 to the present, there is a more oscillating trend in the overall publication of the topic, with an average of about 1070 publications in the last three years, but the research remains hot.

In the article, "Positive Psychology Perspectives on Enhancing the Well-Being of Banking Employees", Fu Chunjie, Ling Wenspokes and Fu Lesi (2014) analyzed that the heavy pressure and high intensity of work in the banking industry lead to job burnout and mental health problems of some employees, and the article drew on the results of positive psychology to propose enhancement strategies for bank staff to promote more positive psychological qualities [4].

Scholars Qian Cao, Na Lin, and Zhenwei Li (2021) applied positive psychology to the production and operation activities of business management and proposed four aspects to improve employees' happiness by setting goals, enhancing employees' happiness, motivating and appreciating employees, and optimizing the construction of corporate culture, so as to improve the productivity of enterprises [5].

2.2. Study of the current state of positive psychological qualities

In 2005, positive psychology was introduced to China when Professor Wang Xiyong proposed the "positive psychology education" model. In 2007, a core team led by Professor Meng Wanjin of the Chinese Academy of Educational Sciences collaborated with the U.S. and China to conduct "Chinese" research on positive psychology. In 2009, Meng Wanjin and Guan Qun used the term "positive psychological qualities" for the first time: positive psychological qualities are multidimensional, a collection of positive qualities that include individual thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Positive qualities are inherent, latent, constructive psychological traits or personality traits that make people happier in life. Specifically, a positive psychological quality is a positive or active psychological quality, such as cognitive, interpersonal, benevolence, justice, moderation, and excellence, etc[13]. After 2010, the research on positive psychology in China has increased in popularity and the definition of positive psychological qualities has become increasingly mature.

Scholars in Henan Province, Huang Hongqiang and Zhao Guoxiang (2009) conducted a study through more than 700 student leaders in six randomly selected universities in Zhengzhou, Luoyang, Kaifeng, Pingdingshan, and Xuchang, and concluded that student leaders in universities need to have information processing ability, task execution ability, cooperation ability, and communication and coordination ability [6].

Meng Wanjin and Guan Qun (2009) created a new system of positive mental health education in Chinese schools, taking into account the national conditions and the essence of traditional culture in China, and constructed the structure of positive psychological qualities of college students. The positive psychological qualities of Chinese college students are mainly divided into six dimensions: knowledge dimension, interpersonal dimension, human dimension, justice dimension, moderation dimension and transcendence dimension. The statistical test showed that the scale has good reliability and validity, and can be used to assess the development of positive psychological qualities of Chinese college students in a large scale, so as to provide a scientific basis for promoting the transformation of college mental health education in a positive direction and further enhancing the preventive and developmental functions of college mental health education [7].

Chinese scholars Li Ziwei and Zhang Weigui (2011) conducted a study in several colleges and universities in Chongqing to measure the current situation of positive qualities among college students, and the results showed that, on the one hand, contemporary college students generally agree on the importance of positive qualities, and their self-evaluation of positive qualities is generally good. However, on the other hand, although college students value positive qualities, their own positive qualities also have deficiencies [8].

By investigating and studying the positive psychological qualities of more than 1000 college students in higher education in 2012, Lin Shijun and Zhou Meihua concluded that the overall condition of positive psychological qualities of higher education students was better, and male students were more prominent in the emotional dimension than the female group. In contrast, female students were

significantly higher than male students in the justice dimension, moderation dimension and transcendence dimension [9].

Bao, Mengke, and Che, Liping (2023) selected college students from six representative universities in Shanghai to measure positive psychological qualities. The results of the measurement found that the development of positive psychological quality among college students was uneven in all latitudes, and the most significant influence on positive psychological quality among college students was course activities [10].

In summary, positive psychology theory has become an important theoretical foundation for humanities and social sciences research, and has had a wide and deep impact on higher education in China, especially on mental health education research. However, based on the perspective of positive psychology, few results have been found to explore the positive psychological qualities of student leaders group, and there is still a need for in-depth investigation. On the other hand, Meng Wanjin's team has compiled the Positive Psychological Quality Scale for Chinese College Students, which is a series of scales suitable for the Chinese context, and has been measured and studied by scholars on college freshmen, art college students, and college students who were once left-behind children, but a broader and more holistic scientific empirical study is needed on the current development of positive psychological quality among college students in China.

2.3. Significance of the study

Unlike traditional psychological research, positive psychology focuses not only on human mental illnesses and weaknesses, but also on positive human qualities. Positive psychology can bring students a good social support system to improve their subjective well-being and self-efficacy. The research on "student cadre management" in vocational undergraduate colleges and universities seems to be very little at present, and it needs to be extended and explored by scholars. As China attaches more and more importance to vocational education, the discussion and deepening of student cadre management in vocational undergraduate colleges and universities will definitely become the future trend of research on this topic at home and abroad. In view of this, the author chooses student leaders in vocational undergraduate colleges and universities as the research object, which will surely fill in the missing problems of the previous research on the management of student leaders.

By investigating the psychological status of student leaders in vocational undergraduate colleges and universities, this paper will provide research data with the help of the basic theory of positive psychology, which has important research value and practical necessity for improving the positive psychological quality of college students, improving the quality of education and management of student leaders, enhancing the positive psychological quality of student leaders, and cultivating innovative talents with sound personality.

3. Survey Results

The ability and psychological condition of student leaders in colleges and universities are an inner quality and an outer behavior showing personal potential, and there is a certain logical connection with the effect of tasks performed in work or other environmental conditions. Taking Guangxi A vocational education college as an example, by drawing on the concept and method of positive psychology, we applied the "Positive Psychological Quality Scale for College Students" (containing 62 questions) compiled by Meng Wanjin and Guanqun in the "Report on the Compilation of Positive Psychological Quality Scale for Chinese College Students", obtained first-hand data through field questionnaires and compared and analyzed the data through six dimensions of quality, in order to investigate and understand the real psychological quality of student leaders. The survey was conducted to find out the real psychological quality of student leaders, to obtain the average of positive psychological quality, and to understand the differences within the group.

3.1. Overall situation

The survey was conducted by distributing electronic questionnaires on China's Questionnaire Star platform, and using SPSS20.0 to conduct statistics and analysis on the collected samples. 303 valid questionnaires were returned, and the number of valid subjects was 301, accounting for 99.34%. Among them, 70 were male students, accounting for 23.26%, 231 were female students, accounting for 76.74%, 133 were first-year students, accounting for 44.1%, 123 were second-year students, accounting

for 40.9%, and 45 were third-year students, accounting for 15%, which is in line with the situation of school students and the data are true and valid.

The survey found that the overall positive psychological quality of student leaders in this group at this school is in good condition. As shown in Table 1, the scores of student leaders of this school in all six dimensions are higher than the scores of positive psychological quality of college students nationwide, which indicates that the positive psychological status of Student leaders of this college is more positive. Among the Student leaders of this school, the highest scores in the six dimensions of positive psychological quality are 3.80 in the interpersonal dimension and 3.80 in the transcendence dimension (both scores are the same), the last one in the average score is 3.58 in the moderation dimension, and the scores in the other dimensions are 3.64 in the awareness dimension, 3.79 in the emotion dimension, and 3.74 in the justice dimension, with an overall comprehensive average score of 3.72.

Table 1: Mean values of the dimensions of positive psychological qualities

Dimensionality	Mean	Standard deviation	National Standing Model
Cognitive	3.64	0.55	3.411±0.497
Interpersonal	3.80	0.49	3.535±0.414
Emotion	3.79	0.52	3.706±0.433
fairness	3.74	0.55	3.522±0.435
Moderation	3.58	0.57	3.417±0.473
Transcendence	3.80	0.57	3.628±0.452
Positive mental qualities	3.72	0.49	/

Note: The national standing model of positive psychological qualities of college students is from the General Project Group of Positive Mental Health Education of the Central Institute of Educational Sciences of China.

3.2. Gender Comparison Analysis

To find out whether there are significant differences in positive psychological qualities and their dimensions in student cadres of different genders, this study examined the positive psychological qualities and their dimensions in student cadres of different genders using independent samples t-test and manova-test, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: The manova-test test of positive psychological qualities of student leaders on each dimension of gender

Dimensionality	Gender		t	Sig.(P)
	Male (N=70)	Female (N=231)		
Cognitive Dimension	3.65±0.68	3.64±0.51	0.155	0.877
Interpersonal Dimension	3.96±0.55	3.75±0.46	2.871	0.005
Emotional Dimension	3.75±0.62	3.80±0.48	-0.592	0.555
Fairness dimension	3.76±0.68	3.74±0.50	0.159	0.874
Moderation dimension	3.58±0.68	3.58±0.54	-0.049	0.961
Transcendence Dimension	3.79±0.68	3.81±0.53	-0.182	0.856

Note: 0.01<P<0.05 indicates a significant difference, p<0,01 a highly significant difference

The t-test and variance results for the six latitudes for different genders are shown in the table above, based on which gender differences do exist within the group of Student leaders of the cohort. There was a significant difference in the interpersonal latitude (t=2.871, p<0.01), while there was no significant difference in the positive psychological qualities and the five sub-dimensions of cognition, emotion, justice, moderation, and transcendence among the Student leaders of different genders.

Analyzed from the gender of the sample group, male students (mean: 3.75) scored more positive psychological qualities than female students (mean: 3.72), indicating more positive psychological qualities, while the manova-test test of male Student leaders in interpersonal dimension was significantly higher than that of female Student leaders, and the positive psychological qualities in interpersonal dimension were generally expressed in sincerity, bravery persistence and enthusiasm. It shows that there are fewer male students in this college, male Student leaders need to undertake class work and take responsibility more in the daily management of the college, show more sincerity, bravery, persistence and enthusiasm, are more direct and active in interpersonal relationship handling and expression, can be more brave in collective activities, and play a better role in communication and

leading.

This is inconsistent with the results of Shen Wudan (2007) et al. who measured 313 college students in Guangxi, which showed gender differences in college students' peer interpersonal relationships, with girls being better than boys ($p < 0.05$)[11]. Consistent with the findings of Deng Qiyin and Zhang Na (2022), who selected college students from Chengdu Agricultural Science and Technology Vocational College as the study population and used a group administration, they concluded that male students scored significantly higher than female students on positive psychological qualities. Male students scored significantly higher than female students on the interpersonal dimension, emotional dimension and transcendence dimension [12].

3.3. Comparative Analysis of Grades

To find out whether there are significant differences in positive psychological qualities and their dimensions on student leaders across grades, this study used ANOVA to examine the differences in positive psychological qualities and their dimensions on student leaders across grades, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The manova-test test of positive psychological qualities of student leaders on each dimensional grade

Grade	Cognitive dimension	Interpersonal dimension	Emotional dimension	Justice dimension	Moderation dimension	Transcendence Dimension
Level 1	3.63±0.50a	3.79±0.42a	3.78±0.46a	3.72±0.48a	3.56±0.49a	3.84±0.52a
Level 2	3.66±0.60a	3.82±0.56a	3.83±0.57a	3.79±0.59a	3.62±0.60a	3.78±0.62a
Level 3	3.63±0.57a	3.77±0.49a	3.70±0.55a	3.70±0.62a	3.54±0.73a	3.76±0.54a

Note: Letters represent differences between grades.

According to the above table, there were no significant differences in positive psychological qualities and the six sub-dimensions of cognitive, interpersonal, affective, fairness, moderation and transcendence among student leaders of different grades.

This is consistent with the results of this and Shen Wudan (2007) et al. who measured 313 college students in Guangxi with findings that showed no grade differences in realistic interpersonal relationships among college students [11]. However, this is inconsistent with the results of Song, Weiwei and Wu, Lili (2013), who used college students enrolled in Qufu Normal University as the overall study population [13], which said that students in higher grades were better in the moderation dimension than those in lower grades. We often say that students in vocational education are in the middle of their youth, and although the physiological changes in various aspects are not as pronounced as in secondary school students, they are still in the stage of development and tendency to maturity. On the one hand this period is a period of formation of worldview, values and outlook on life; on the other hand it is a period of rapid physiological maturity.

4. Conclusion

The overall positive psychological quality of student leaders is good, and the scores of all six dimensions are higher than those of the whole Chinese norm. The highest scores in the six dimensions of positive psychological quality were 3.80 in the interpersonal dimension and 3.80 in the transcendence dimension (both scores were the same), the last ranked mean score was 3.58 in the moderation dimension, and the other dimensions were 3.64 in the awareness dimension, 3.79 in the emotion dimension, and 3.74 in the justice dimension, with an overall mean score of 3.72.

The interpersonal dimension was significantly higher for male student leaders than for female student leaders, and there were no significant differences in other dimensions. There were minor differences in the dimensions across grades among this group of student leaders surveyed, but none of them were significant.

We expect more scholars to start from "prevention" and make use of positive psychology to optimize the management environment and carry out the education and management of student cadres in an optimistic and positive way in the personal development of student cadres in vocational education universities. It improves the initiative, enthusiasm and creativity of student cadres, so as to improve the effectiveness and relevance of the management of student cadres in vocational undergraduate colleges and universities. When student cadres themselves meet difficulties, they can stimulate their positive

emotions and strength to the greatest extent, face and solve the problems that occur with a positive and optimistic attitude, and cultivate positive psychological qualities and positive experiences of student cadres in all aspects, so as to promote campus stability and social development.

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