

The Study of Positive Personality Characteristics of Students in Private College

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Abstract: Previous studies on positive personality traits tended to focus more on undergraduates from public colleges and less research on students from private colleges. This study mainly starts from the students of private colleges and explores the positive personality traits of students in private colleges. This paper mainly uses the questionnaire method to explore the personality characteristics of private college students from this study we know more about the students' positive personality, which can help educators better understand this group and carry out mental health work better

1. Preface

Personality is a unity of characteristic trait patterns and behavioral tendencies. Positive personality, in a broad sense, refers to the potential core virtues and positive qualities of human beings.

Based on a reflection on psychological research and treatment for more than a century, Martin Seligman (Martin E.P. Dr. Seligman) proposed the concept of "positive psychology" (Positive Psychology) in 1998, which has had a significant impact on the development of psychology in the past 20 years [1-2]. Positive psychology aims to find effective mechanisms to help individuals, groups, and organizations understand and achieve happiness through scientific research methods, to promote individuals, groups, and organizations to a state of abundance (Flourishing). Prosperity is an important concept that helps researchers measure positive emotions, participation, interpersonal relationships, meaning, and achievement [3]. It means that individuals have the ability to live in a positive and happy environment through their own initiative, and can adapt to and achieve positive growth even in the face of threats and challenges. Seligman believes that a positive personality should meet the following screening criteria: first, it belongs to the trait class, which is related to the happy life, has moral value and does not harm others[4]; second, it has social support and has high value in the social role; again, the opposite of the positive trait cannot be expressed in a positive form, that is, the opposite meaning of the positive trait should not have positive significance. The six categories of virtues established by the above standards are recognized by the vast majority of cultures in history, and these characteristics will bring about more happiness in practice[5].

Personality Power and Virtue: Classification Manual compiled by Peterson and Segligman describes and classifies six human virtues and 24 positive personality traits from the perspective of positive psychology, and defines the meaning of positive personality traits and virtues. This is not only the latest classification of human positive personality traits, but also a positive complement to different versions of the Mental Disorders and Statistical Manual (DSM), demonstrating shared virtues and positive personality traits across cultural contexts[6-7].

Based on the perspective of positive psychology theory, this study discusses the characteristics of positive personality traits of students in private colleges, providing a reference for educators to better carry out mental health work.

2. Objects and Methods

2.1. Object

Undergraduates from some private universities in Sichuan Province were selected as the survey objects, 500 questionnaires were distributed, 490 were recovered, abnormal samples were removed, and 475 valid samples were obtained. The effective recovery rate is 95%. Sample details are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Study subject sample information.

		N	%			N	%
Gender	male	44	9.3%	Serve as a student leader	yes	351	73.9%
	Female	431	90.7%		no	124	26.1%
Origin	city	111	23.4%	Discipline	science and engineering	52	10.9%
	rural area	364	76.6%		Literature and history	423	89.1%
Whether the only child	yes	113	23.8%				
	no	362	76.2%				

2.2. Method

The questionnaire uses the "Positive Personality Scale for College Students" compiled by Du Xiahua, with a total of 88 items, divided into 24 dimensions and a 5-point score. It consists of five options: "very disagree", "somewhat disagree", "not sure", "somewhat agree" and "very agree". The higher the score, the more prominent the corresponding personality trait [8]. The Cronbach's α coefficient of the scale is 0.979. Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the fitting indexes of the scales were all good, and the value of X^2/df was 2.578. The values of NFI, CFI and other indicators are between 0.9-0.94. The value of RMSEA is between 0.05 and 0.08. The scale has high reliability and validity[9].

3. Positive Personality Status of Students

3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Positive Personality Traits of College Students (Table 2)

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of college students' positive personality traits

	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Judgment	475	1.00	5.00	3.57	0.59
Enthusiasm	475	1.00	5.00	3.44	0.79
Social Intelligence	475	1.00	5.00	3.47	0.67
Faith	475	1.25	5.00	3.66	0.66
Stick	475	1.00	5.00	3.58	0.73
Leadership	475	1.00	5.00	3.84	0.62
Fair	475	1.00	5.00	3.71	0.71
Tolerance	475	1.00	5.00	3.53	0.68
Hope	475	1.00	5.00	3.78	0.62
Brave	475	1.00	5.00	3.6	0.68
Curiosity	475	1.00	5.00	3.77	0.69
Sincere	475	1.00	5.00	3.39	0.66
Self-discipline	475	1.00	5.00	2.81	0.82
Teamwork	475	1.00	5.00	3.79	0.63
Gratitude	475	1.00	5.00	3.95	0.61
Studious	475	1.00	5.00	3.75	0.63
Modesty	475	1.00	5.00	3.67	0.66
Kindness	475	1.00	5.00	3.99	0.57
Love	475	1.33	5.00	4	0.67
Creativity	475	1.00	5.00	3.45	0.76
Humor	475	1.00	5.00	3.61	0.76
prudent	475	1.00	5.00	3.62	0.66
Insight	475	1.00	5.00	3.78	0.58
Appreciation	475	1.00	5.00	3.55	0.73
Positivity Total Score Average	475	1.06	4.99	3.64	0.49

3.2. Demographic Difference Test of Positive Personality Traits among College Students

On the basis of gender, origin, whether only child, whether they had served as a class, cadre, and discipline, the results showed that the positive personality traits were significantly different in the following demographic dimensions.

3.2.1. Differences in Positive Personality Traits on the Gender Dimension

Table 3: Comparison of differences by gender

	Male		Female		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Judgment	3.75	0.78	3.55	0.57	2.12	.034
Self-discipline	3.32	0.77	2.76	0.8	4.43	.000

P<0.05 indicates a significant difference

Based on the different genders, an independent sample t-test revealed significant differences in

scores on two dimensions, judgment and self-discipline, and non-significant differences in scores on other dimensions. As shown in Table 3 and Figure 1.

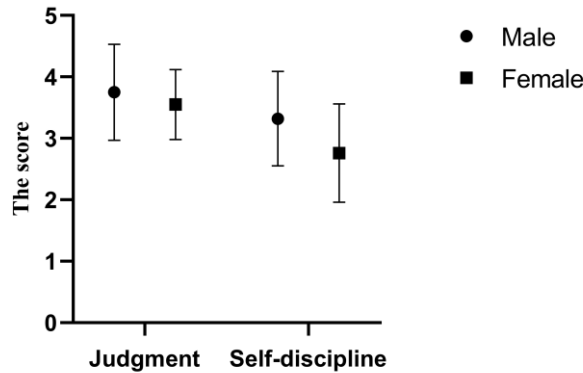


Figure 1: Comparison of differences by gender.

2.2.2. Differences in Positive Personality Traits on the Origin Dimension

Based on the division of origin into city and rural areas, an independent sample t-test was used to find significant differences in scores on the three dimensions of creativity, humor, and appreciation, and non-significant differences in scores on the other dimensions. As shown in Table 4 and Figure 2.

Table 4: Comparison of differences in origin

	City		Rural area		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Creativity	3.61	0.75	3.4	0.76	2.64	.009
Humor	3.78	0.69	3.55	0.77	2.74	.006
Appreciate	3.75	0.67	3.49	0.74	3.37	.001

P<0.05 indicates a significant difference

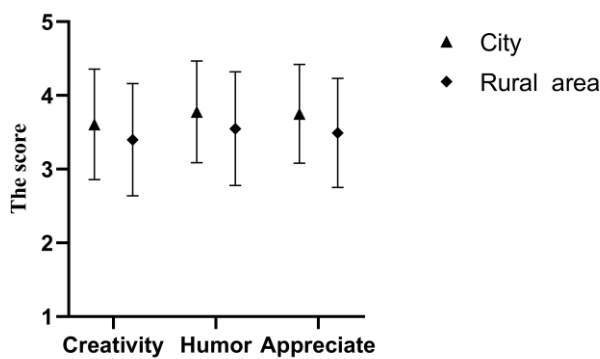


Figure 2: Comparison of differences in origin.

3.2.3. Differences in the Positive Personality Traits on the Dimension of Being an Child

Using independent sample t-tests, significant differences were found between the scores of only children and non-only children on the dimensions of enthusiasm and appreciation, while the differences in scores on the other dimensions were not significant. As shown in Table 5 and Figure 3.

Table 5: Comparison of differences on whether the only child.

	The only child		Non-only child		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Enthusiasm	3.27	0.83	3.49	0.77	-2.65	.008
Appreciate	3.66	0.76	3.51	0.72	1.98	.049

P<0.05 indicates a significant difference

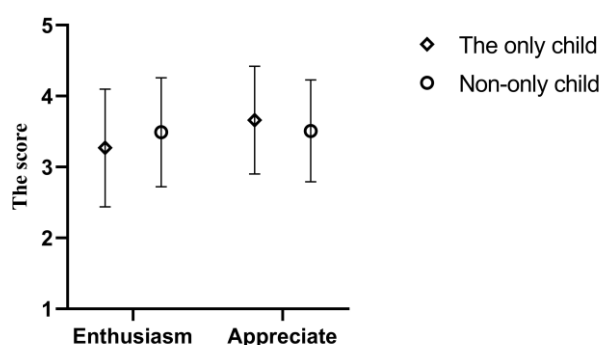


Figure 3: Comparison of differences on whether the only child.

3.2.4. Differences in Positive Personality Traits on the dimension of serving as A Class Cadre or Not

Table 6: Comparison of differences in serving as a class cadre or not.

	Served as a class cadre		Never served as a class cadre		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Judgment	3.63	0.58	3.39	0.6	4.00	.000
Enthusiasm	3.52	0.76	3.22	0.82	3.73	.000
Social intelligence	3.55	0.68	3.25	0.6	4.34	.000
Faith	3.7	0.67	3.54	0.64	2.24	.026
Stick	3.64	0.73	3.39	0.71	3.26	.001
Leadership	3.89	0.62	3.72	0.62	2.66	.008
Hope	3.83	0.61	3.66	0.65	2.69	.007
Brave	3.66	0.67	3.43	0.67	3.25	.001
Curiosity	3.83	0.67	3.59	0.72	3.38	.001
Teamwork	3.87	0.58	3.59	0.7	4.3	.000
Gratitude	4	0.6	3.8	0.62	3.26	.001
Studious	3.8	0.63	3.6	0.63	3.05	.002
Kindness	4.03	0.54	3.86	0.64	2.91	.004
Love	4.05	0.65	3.85	0.69	2.92	.004
Creativity	3.53	0.76	3.21	0.72	4.08	.000
Humor	3.69	0.75	3.38	0.72	3.96	.000
Insight	3.82	0.58	3.67	0.59	2.46	.014

P<0.05 indicates a significant difference

Using independent sample t-tests, significant differences were found between those who had been class cadres and those who had not been class cadres on 17 dimensions, including including judgment, enthusiasm, social intelligence, faith, stick, leadership, hope, brave, curiosity, teamwork, gratitude, studiousness, kindness, love, creativity, humor, and insight, and no significant differences

were found on only seven other dimensions. The details are shown in Table 6 and Figure 4.

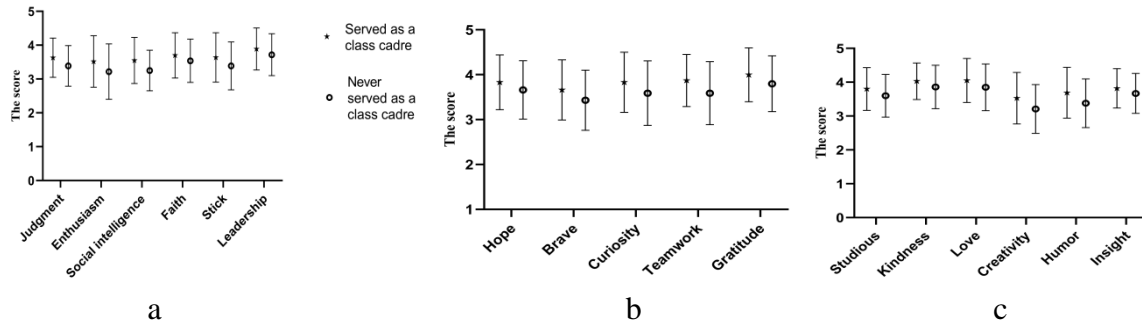


Figure 4: Comparison of differences in serving as a class cadre or not.

3.2.5. Differences In the use of Positive Personality Traits of Different Disciplines

Using independent sample t-tests, it was found that there were significant differences between the Scores of science and engineering and the scores of literature and history on five dimensions, including tolerance, curiosity, self-discipline, teamwork, and prudent, and there were no significant differences in scores on other dimensions. Details are shown in Table 7 and Figure 5.

Table 7: Comparison of differences by discipline

	Science and engineering		Literature and history		T	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Tolerance	3.86	0.61	3.49	0.68	3.64	.000
Curiosity	3.96	0.63	3.74	0.69	2.11	.036
Self-discipline	3.04	0.92	2.78	0.8	2.16	.032
Teamwork	4.07	0.43	3.76	0.64	3.37	.001
Prudent	3.79	0.7	3.6	0.65	2.05	.041

P<0.05 indicates a significant difference

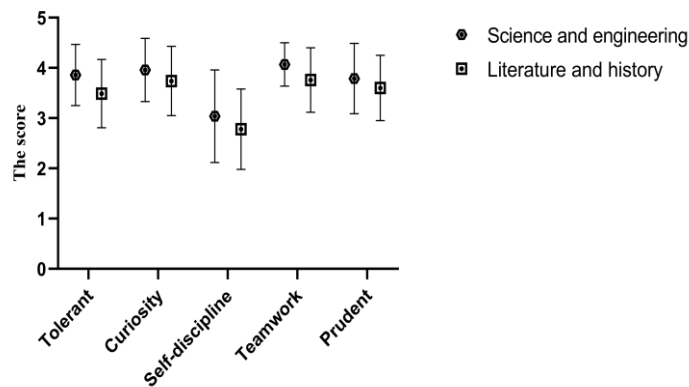


Figure 5: Comparison of differences by discipline.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1. The Overall Status of the Positive Personality of College Students

Through the descriptive statistics on positive figures of college students, 24 positive personality traits are above the median, including love (4.00), kindness (3.99), gratitude (3.95), respectively in

the top three; self-discipline (2.81), sincere (3.39), enthusiasm (3.44), are the bottom three. In general, college students have high positive personality scores, and college students have good positive personality characteristics[10]. Domestic researcher Du Xiahua (2009) also shows that the overall development of positive personality traits of Chinese college students is at an above-average level. The low self-discipline score is consistent with the results of Du Xiahua's study.

4.2. Gender Differences

The results of this study show that in all dimensions of the positive personality scale, male and female college students are significantly different in judgment and self-discipline ($p < 0.05$), showing that male college students show higher judgment and self-discipline than female college students, and there is no significant difference between male and female college students in other dimensions. This is consistent with the research results of Zhao Zhangliu (2019), and is different from the study of Du Xiahua (2009) and Zhou Jia (2008).

4.3. Differences in Student Origin

The results of this study showed that college students from the city and rural areas have a difference in creativity, humor, and appreciation, and that college students from the cities had significantly higher scores than those from the rural areas. The reasons for this analysis may be due to the differences in the living environment of the students living in urban and rural areas. Students living in the city because the relatively developed economy, so the material life is relatively superior, more contact with new things since childhood, received knowledge, culture, information is more colorful, contacts with all kinds of people are relatively more, so open horizon, strong self-confidence, and have a sense of superiority. However, the living environment in rural areas is relatively closed, and a variety of cultures and new things received are limited, and the people contacted are also limited. Therefore, urban students are better than students from rural areas in terms of creativity, humor, and appreciation. Domestic scholar Zhou Qin (2008) results also show that urban students in humor dimension scores significantly higher than rural students, Du Xiahua found in its research from urban students in judgment, insight, humor, enthusiasm, curiosity, teamwork, social intelligence, and gratitude eight dimensions score significantly higher than college students from rural areas. The findings are partially consistent with those of this study.

4.4. Difference between Only Child and Non-Only Child

The results of this study showed that there were significant differences in the scores between the only child and non-only child college students on both the enthusiasm and appreciation dimensions ($p < 0.05$). On the enthusiasm dimension of the only child, score is significantly lower than the only child, but in the dimension of appreciation, the only child score is significantly higher than the only child, which shows that only child than the only child has higher appreciation characteristic, in addition, the only child and the only child college students have no significant difference in other dimensions. Gu Beiye's study on the social behavior characteristics of the only child in China shows that the emotional development of the only child is unbalanced. And the only child often receives more attention, and the parents pour more energy and money to cultivate their child's various talents, so the appreciation ability is higher than the non-only child.

4.5. Differences between Student Cadres and Non-Student Cadres

The results of this study show that college students as student cadres and no student cadres in the

positive personality scale, have 17 dimensions ($p < 0.05$), judgment, enthusiasm, social intelligence, belief, respectively, persistence, leadership, hope, courage, curiosity, teamwork, gratitude, studious, kindness, love, creativity, humor and insight. College students who have served as student cadres score significantly higher in all dimensions than those who have not served as student cadres. It shows that student cadres have stronger judgment, more enthusiasm, higher social intelligence, and more faith, courage, and teamwork ability. Analysis of the reasons in the university student cadres in addition to facing the heavy learning task, but also to undertake a lot of learning outside the work practice activities, service for the majority of students at the same time to exercise their own leadership and interpersonal communication skills. Therefore, student cadres have more opportunities to exercise themselves than non-student cadres, so that these students have positive personality traits. Foreign scholars Erikson and Brown Brenner particularly emphasize the impact of macro- environment and microenvironment on people.

4.6. Professional Differences

The results of this study showed that the scores of different subject types in tolerance, curiosity, self-discipline, teamwork, and prudence were significantly higher ($p < 0.05$), and in these five dimensions, the students in science and technology scored significantly higher than those in literature and history. We believe that college students of different major categories are different in their training abilities and accomplishments due to the limitation of their professional characteristics. Students of science and technology have always paid more attention to the training of logical thinking ability, so they show certain advantages in the dimension of caution. The reasons for the differences in other positive personality traits need to be further explored.

5. Conclusions

This study initially explored the positive personality traits of college students. In general, college students in private universities have a good positive personality level; the positive personality characteristics of college students are significantly different in the demographic dimension.

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