



A Study on the Relationship with Students' Psychological Capital and Academic Achievement

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Abstract. With the gradual development of psychology, people began to think about the relationship between a person's psychology and personal development and proposed the concept of psychological capital. Meanwhile, with the increasingly fierce competition between individuals and countries, issues related to talent cultivation have received widespread attention. Facing these two important issues, some people began to ponder whether there is a certain connection between the two. Therefore, this article analyzes the impact of college students' psychological capital on their academic achievement. This article finds that there is a positive impact on academic achievement, that is, the higher student's psychological capital is, the higher their level of academic achievement is. This article also points out the existence of regulatory factors between the two. Based on this, this article proposes suggestions from two aspects: individual and university. The suggestion for college students is to improve their psychological level and provide specific implementation plans. The suggestion for the school is to improve the teaching environment.

Keywords: Psychological Capital, Academic Achievement, Psychology, Higher Education.

1 Introduction

Nowadays, in the rapidly changing international environment, higher education is very crucial for a country's development. Since the establishment of universities, cultivating talents has been the mission of colleges and universities as well as the foundation of social development. The need for talent to promote social development and the increasing demand for modern people's self-actualization have made it more and more important for universities to cultivate high-quality talent. As the major groups in the university, college students' academic situation receives significant attention. Observing their academic performances is also an effective means of testing the quality of talent cultivation. The academic achievements of college students are closely related to the development of society. Improving students' academic achievements would be instrumental in promoting their growth and development, and is more conducive to improving the quality of talent cultivation in universities. Therefore, how to effective-

ly enhance the academic achievements of college students is a topic worthy of attention and research.

At the same time, students not only receive better educational resources but also bear more pressure in today's society. In recent years, college students' mental health problems have been very prominent. Reports on their psychological problems have emerged one after another, which attract widespread attention. According to Levecque's research, compared to younger students, the risk of depression among college students has increased significantly ^[1]. Every small academic setback can hurt students' psychology, whether they cannot understand the learning content during class, fail to achieve ideal grades in exams, have conflicts with classmates, or are criticized by teachers.

In higher education institutions, the mental health issues of students are not only related to the field of psychology but also to the quality of talent cultivation and the future development of society. Students are facing psychological burdens beyond academic pressure. While they focus on their academic achievements, they also need psychological counseling urgently, and there is an inseparable connection between the two. Research has shown that students' psychological qualities have a significant impact on their learning ability and creativity, and these factors are related to their academic performance ^[2]. This means that exploring the relationship between students' mental health and academic performance can further understand their learning situation from various perspectives. Universities can provide necessary assistance to students promptly, which has an important impact on improving their academic achievement. Based on these theories, this article conducts research on the relationship between psychological capital and the academic achievement of college students.

2 Definition

2.1 Psychological Capital

In the 1890s, with the continuous development of psychology, people realized that positive psychology had a significant impact on people's daily lives and self-development, which gradually gave rise to a new concept: psychological capital. The concept of psychological capital was first formally proposed by American scholar Goldsmith in 1997. It contains positive psychological elements related to mental health and is a positive and positive psychological state exhibited by individuals in the process of self-growth and development, with openness and exploitability ^[3]. The key concept of psychological capital lies in the positive psychological power or state, which can be understood as a person's abilities rather than a personality trait. To measure a person's psychological capital more effectively and accurately, Luthans believed that psychological capital has four dimensions, namely hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy ^[4].

"Hope" is the ability of individuals to set challenging but appropriate goals, and to adjust and optimize them promptly according to specific situations. Ultimately people can achieve the goals under all circumstances. "Optimism" refers to an individual's ability to objectively and positively summarize past and future events. "Resilience"

means that an individual can calmly face challenges brought about by adversity or sudden changes. After that, he can demonstrate good self-recovery or self-transcendence abilities. "Self-efficacy" refers to the positive attitude, behavior, and firm confidence exhibited by individuals when facing challenges. These four dimensions complement each other and predict results more accurately than unilateral dimensions [5].

Psychological capital has multiple influencing factors and can be classified based on internal and external factors. As for internal factors, psychological capital is influenced by personal factors and is related to one's abilities, such as education, grades, income, and so on. These factors can be controlled and regulated by individuals. External factors such as social environment and interpersonal relationships can have an impact, but individuals are unable to choose and regulate [6]. In addition, the mechanism of psychological capital is also worth discussing. Through research, it can be found that psychological capital can directly or indirectly regulate the outcomes of behavior. Psychology can directly affect behaviors, while the indirect way includes regulating emotions and other psychological variables. According to Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory, positive emotions can expand the ability of thinking and instant actions. This means that when students are in a positive emotional state, their acceptance of knowledge and information is higher, while their thinking is more flexible and innovative, resulting in more positive outcomes, which is a higher academic level. On the contrary, negative emotions can limit an individual's thinking and lead to negative behavioral tendencies such as avoidance, which is not conducive to students' academic development. According to these theories, the relationship between psychological capital and the academic achievement of college students can be explored through the mechanism of action.

2.2 Academic Achievement

The evaluation of academic achievement can be simply defined as the knowledge and skills that students acquire in a certain field, which can be measured by their academic performances.

In 2008, Perna and Thomas extended the existing academic achievement theory framework and proposed a fourth-order theory of academic achievement based on previous research findings [7]. The core viewpoint of this theory is that there are four basic contexts affecting students' academic achievement, namely family context, personal inner context, school context, and social context. Among them, personal inner context plays the most crucial role in shaping students' behavior and ultimately affects their academic achievement, revealing the close relationship between students' psychology and academic achievement.

3 Impacts

3.1 The Role of Psychological Capital

With the continuous development of research on psychological capital, many scholars have paid attention to the application of psychological capital and demonstrated it through experiments. In early experiments, Avey and Reichard conducted research on psychological capital and employee performance and found that psychological capital has a positive impact on their performance [8]. They explored the impact of psychological capital from employees' perspective and found that as their psychological capital increased, not only did performance improve, but it also had an impact on the improvement of employees' mental health. Psychological capital is not just a psychological state. It is the source of motivation and competitiveness. The benefits that psychological capital brings to individuals could be fully demonstrated after the rational development of individual psychological capital.

To explore the relationship between psychological capital and academic achievement, hypotheses can be made. By evaluating students' learning processes and outcomes, the impact of psychological capital on individual behavior and outcomes can be explored, and the correlation with academic achievement can be obtained. According to the regression analysis results of relevant studies, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between psychological capital and academic achievement [6]. Meanwhile, relevant studies have shown that psychological capital can positively predict students' academic performance [9]. These conclusions indicate that psychological capital has a positive impact on academic achievement, which means that the higher the psychological capital of students, the more they can overcome difficulties and obstacles in their learning process, and ultimately achieve higher grades.

When students have low psychological capital, it has various impacts on their physical, mental, and personal lives. This can be analyzed through the four dimensions of psychological capital. Firstly, as psychological capital decreases, students' "hope" weakens, which means that they may find it more difficult to achieve their expectations and goals. The decrease in "optimism" and "resilience" can cause psychological harm to students and increase the risk of mental illness. Meanwhile, the decrease in "self-efficacy" can lead to lacking confidence in overcoming academic difficulties, resulting in emotions and actions such as procrastination and avoidance. Over time, college students' demands and standards for themselves decrease, and the overall level of talent cultivation also decreases.

The Positive Adolescent Development Theory (PYD) holds that academic achievement plays an important role in a student's personal development. Good academic achievement is not only significant in terms of students' further education and employment but also helps to improve their mental health level, thereby promoting their comprehensive development [10]. Liao and Chen's research found that with the progress of academic knowledge and the improvement of academic performance, students' sense of ability can be significantly enhanced, thus promoting positive development in various aspects of the individual [11].

By analyzing these experimental conclusions, it can be determined that improving the psychological capital level of college students can enhance their academic achievement and help them achieve better personal development. For students, the greatest impact of psychological capital is undoubtedly to improve their academic level and increase their competitiveness. For society, more talents with high academic achievements can promote faster development and contribute to a better future for humanity.

3.2 Intermediary

In the aforementioned studies on psychological capital and academic achievement, different researchers have involved factors that have regulatory and mediating effects. The most discussed point among them is students' learning motivation. This part of the research aims to explore how psychological capital can not only directly affect academic achievement, but also indirectly intervene in academic performance. The underlying reasons for college students' learning motivation mainly lie in learning emotions. Students with high psychological capital can maintain confidence in themselves during the learning process and study with more positive and abundant emotions, which can lead to better academic performance. Students with low psychological capital may experience negative emotions such as frustration and helplessness when facing difficulties during the learning process, which can hurt their learning outcomes.

4 Proposal

4.1 Personal Perspective

How to improve psychological capital can be considered separately from two factors. Compared to external factors that individuals cannot change, solving problems of internal factors is a better way. Cultivating an optimistic mindset is the quickest way to improve a person's psychological capital. Nowadays, when facing great academic pressure, college students often cannot find suitable ways to relieve it. Regarding college students' mental health, studies are showing that exercise is the best way to regulate it ^[12]. Maintaining a certain frequency of moderate physical exercise, can effectively reduce the anxiety index and promote positive learning emotions, thereby improving academic performance. Meanwhile, treating failures and setbacks objectively and correctly is a way to alleviate academic pressure and psychological burden, and strengthen psychological capital. To set reasonable learning goals for oneself, one should neither aim too high to cause unnecessary pressure on oneself nor aim too low to lose learning motivation. Breaking down big goals into phased small goals and achieving them separately can reduce the frustration caused by excessively high goals while achieving a sense of satisfaction can improve a person's self-efficacy. Mastering correct attribution methods can enhance psychological resilience when facing learning failures. If the reason for failure is solely attributed to external factors, such as exam environment, the difficulty of questions, and so on, it would gradually cause students

to lose confidence during the exam. Carefully analyzing reasons for failure and objectively viewing problems from one's perspective can make students have a more resilient mentality. The key to enhancing individual psychological capital lies in regulating one's emotions in time and improving one's psychological quality from the four dimensions of psychological capital.

4.2 University Perspective

In addition to students' factors, universities, as an external factor, also play an important role in improving students' psychological capital. Firstly, it is necessary to create a suitable learning environment. In terms of class management, the traditional teaching mode of "teacher teaching, student learning" should be improved. New teaching methods should be added in class to increase students' participation. Especially in university courses, the proportion of students who are unable to integrate into the learning environment has greatly increased. As a result, the quality of courses cannot be guaranteed, and there is a waste of resources in talent cultivation. Meanwhile, during after-school tutoring, teachers should focus on providing different coping strategies for different students. Teachers should provide positive feedback such as praise and encouragement to students who have made progress in their academic performance. Students with academic difficulties should not be simply blamed. Teachers should provide specific feedback based on their situation, which is conducive to inspiring their confidence, improving their self-efficacy, and cultivating their psychological capital.

5 Conclusion

This article explores the relationship between psychological capital and academic achievement of college students through literature research. After summarizing comprehensive research from all aspects, it can be seen that there is a positive correlation between students' psychological capital and academic achievement. Multiple factors play a mediating role. The conclusion of this article can lead to effective methods to improve college student's academic achievement, which are manifested in four levels of enhancing their psychological capital. Meanwhile, this article provides suggestions and solutions for improving student academic achievement from both the perspectives of students and universities.

There are individual differences in student's psychological capital, which inevitably have impacts on their learning achievements. Therefore, future research can make hypotheses and design experiments to verify more possible factors.

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