

# ***Correlation Between Pressure During the Final Week and College Students' Positive Psychological Capital***

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**Abstract:** Positive psychological capital (PPC), as a concept of positive psychology, has achieved a great development. It emphasized the positive psychological state of an individual and how it affects their well-being and performance. It contains four parts: hope, efficiency, resilience, and optimism. PPC also has important reference value for judging an individual's mental health status. This paper aims to discover correlation between college students' PPC and number of their final exams and papers. The study found that the PPC level of Wenzhou-Kean University college students during the final week did not show a high level of correlation with the number of final tests (NFT) or number of final papers (NFP). The research results can provide a reference for exploring the sources of stress during final week for college students. The outcome of the study can apply the framework to explore the relationship between potential variables and college students' stress, which will promote the study of college students' stress.

**Keywords:** Positive Psychological capital, final test, final paper, college students

## **1. Introduction**

Suffering from COVID-19, Chinese college students are forced to take online classes for several years. Based on such background, these fresh bloods of universities lack social experience with their peers, since schools transfer from face-to-face teaching to online teaching for nearly two years. Although the Internet has already applied a number of new stages for young people to practice their social skills, current undergraduate students still lose many chances to have a face-to-face talk that emphasizes participation in cultural and artistic activities. Lack of social activities in real life is undoubtedly a destructive disaster for the mental health of college students. Cultural and artistic activities are closely related to the positive psychological capital (PPC) of Chinese college students [1]. The PPC is helpful for college students to establish life motivation, self-confidence, strong will, and even resilience in the face of adversity [2].

The correlation between pressure experienced during the final week and the positive psychological capital of college students is a subject of considerable interest within the realm of positive psychology and student well-being. Numerous studies have delved into various facets of this correlation, shedding light on the intricate relationship between pressure, psychological resources, and overall well-being. In order to investigate the connection between college students' psychological health and goal-oriented self-regulation, Wang, Yang, and Li [3] carried out a weekly diary research. They underscored the pivotal role of academic performance as an intermediary factor in this relationship,

emphasizing the significance of optimism and social support as essential resources for unleashing the positive effects of goal-oriented self-regulation behaviors. Additionally, Sun, Wang, and Shen [4] focused on the role that PPC played as a mediator in the link between college students' employment pressure and their inability to wait occupational gratification. Although their study did not offer a summary, the selection of a mediator aligns with the overarching theme of comprehending how psychological resources mediate the impact of external pressures on the well-being of college students. Furthermore, Varadwaj and Mahapatra [5] explored the mediation of psychological capital between academic stress and positive academic behavior among college students. The results of their research have demonstrated noteworthy positive associations between the characteristics of psychological capital and positive academic behaviors. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that psychological capital functions as a moderator to mitigate the negative effects of academic stress on constructive academic activities. These investigations contribute to a comprehensive comprehension of the connection between the pressure experienced during the final week and the PPC of college students as a result, they highlight the importance of psychological resources in reducing the negative impacts of pressure on students' wellbeing. In summary, the reviewed research provides insightful information about the complex relationship between pressure, psychological capital, and general well-being in college students. The findings underscore the significance of psychological resources in buffering the negative impact of external pressures and fostering positive outcomes for students [3] [4] [5].

In order to discover the factors impacting the PPC of Chinese college students in their daily lives since the PPC plays such an indispensable role in their academic performance, this study aims to discuss the correlation between the number of final tests and the PPC of college students from Wenzhou-Kean University. Score of the PPC will be randomly recruited from Wenzhou-Kean University. Regression analysis will be carried out on two sets of data in this study: PPC scores and NFT, and PPC scores and NFP. It is anticipated from the experiment that there would be two hypotheses in total. Hypothesis 1: PPC has negative correlation with NFT. Hypothesis 2: PPC has negative correlation with NFP. In this study, NFT is IV1, NFP is IV2, and PPC is DV.

## **2. Reaserch methodology**

This study used SPSS26.0 and bootstrap for data analysis.

### **2.1. Measures**

The Positive Psychological Capital Scale used the scale developed [6], adapting the questions to the college student population. The Luthans et al. Positive Psychological Capital Scale focuses primarily on work and goal accomplishment in companies, enhancing the restricted research framework with college students and the general public. The reliability of this scale has been tested by several experts. There are 20 questions on the scale.

### **2.2. Participants and Procedures**

In this study, the questionnaire was distributed to students at Wenzhou-Kean University, including undergraduate and graduate students. This questionnaire began to be distributed online through the Internet on September 2th, 2033 and lasted 25 days. A total of 45 questionnaires were obtained, of which 42 questionnaires will be used for this study.

### 2.3. Control variables

Wenzhou-Kean University has a much smaller student population than other schools, and the enthusiasm of students to fill out questionnaires is relatively low. Limited by the factors considered above, this study did not control the age of the participants, which college they came from, and their hometown. This study mainly controlled the grade of the people who participated in the questionnaire and the number of final tests.

## 3. Result and discussion

### 3.1. Descriptive analysis

Descriptive line statistical analysis of demographic variables based on data collected from 42 participants revealed that 47.6% of participants were male. The proportion of women is 50%. In addition, most junior and senior students participated in the questionnaire, reaching 33.3% and 35.7% respectively (the total is 69%, accounting for the vast majority). From a professional perspective, participants from the College of Liberal Art (CLA) reached 40.5%, while participants from the College of Business & Public Management reached 42.9%. The specific data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of participants

Demographic Variable	Type	Frequency	Ratio (%)
Gender	Male	20	47.60%
	Female	21	50.00%
	Prefer not to say	1	2.40%
	Total	42	100.00%
Year of Study	Freshmen	7	16.70%
	Sophomore	6	14.30%
	Junior	14	33.30%
	Senior	15	35.70%
	Total	42	100.00%
Types of Colleges	CLA	17	40.50%
	CBPM	18	42.90%
	CSMT	4	9.50%
	Architecture and Design	3	7.10%
	Total	42	100.00%

### 3.2. Hypothesis Testing

A Pearson correlation analysis was carried out on each variable to show if the variables were associated with one another. The result is shown by SPSS 26 in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation analysis.

		TotalScore	NFP	NFT
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Table 2: (continued).

TotalScore	Pearson Correlation	1	0.096	0.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.544	0.652
NFP	Pearson Correlation	0.096	1	-.378*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.544		0.014
NFT	Pearson Correlation	0.072	-.378*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.652	0.014	
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Note: The lower triangle is the Pearson correlation coefficient between variables; \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ . NFT: number of final tests; NFP: number of final papers; PPC: Positive Psychological Capital.

In Table 2., The correlation coefficients between NFT and PPC were significant at 0.072, and the correlation coefficients between NFP and PPC were significant at 0.096. These results indicate a positive relationship between NFT and PPC, and also a positive relationship between NFP and PPC.

### 3.3. Regression Analysis

Two regression analysis graphs are demonstrated by SPSS 26 to indicate correlation between PPC and NFT, and correlation between PPC and NFP.

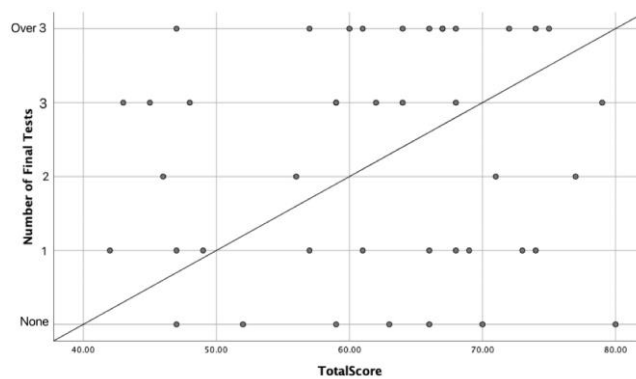


Figure 1: Correlation between NFT and PPC

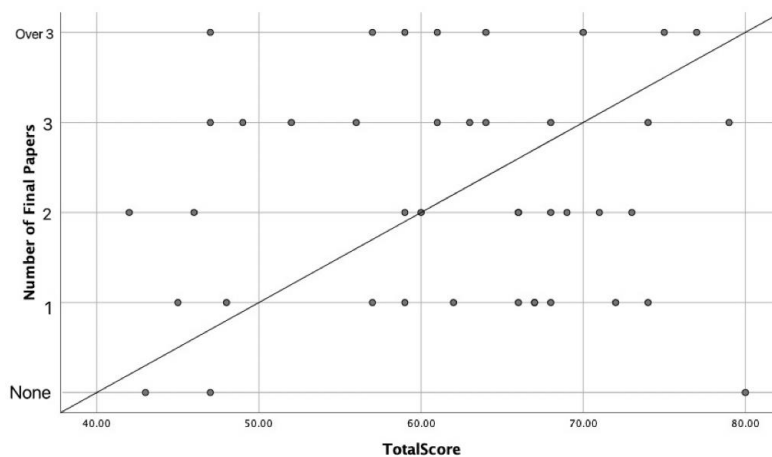


Figure 2: Correlation between NFP and PPC

Simple scatter graph of both two hypothesis shared a weak correlation between variables which means the correlation of the two variables in Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 does not hold.

#### 4. Limitation

This study is a cross-sectional study which lacks longitudinal methods to collect data from participants. For example, the author collected data four times (one week before midterm week, one week after midterm week, one week before final week, and one week after final week) to make comparison of difference results. Besides, use of questionnaires raises the possibility of participants reporting false data. Since the sample scope was selected at Wenzhou-Kean University and lacks external validity, this study cannot be used as a reference for external parties (such as other universities). Since most of the sample size comes from juniors and seniors, they may experience a practice effect more than other sophomores and freshmen in facing final stress. In the end, too small a sample size can easily lead to unreliability in the results of this study.

#### 5. Conclusion

The following conclusions can be formed based on the study's findings. Hypothesis 1 is rejected, which means there is no negative correlation between PPC and NFT. Hypothesis 2 is rejected, which means there is no negative correlation between PPC and NFP. In summary, both of NFT and NFP will not impact PPC of students from Wenzhou-Kean University. However, it is an optimistic outcome to interpret that mental health of students from Wenzhou-Kean University will not easily be impacted by NFT and NFP.

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