

Research on Enhancing Students' Sense of Professional Belongingness under the Background of the Academy System

Wangshu Hao*, Weijing Yang

School of Journalism and Communication, Sias University, Zhengzhou, 45000, China

**Corresponding author*

Abstract: *This study explores effective strategies to enhance students' sense of professional belonging in the context of the academy system. A series of measures have been proposed to enhance students' sense of professional belonging by analyzing the optimization of the academy education model, the construction of teacher-student interaction and support systems, career planning and professional identity, as well as the creation of campus culture and atmosphere. Research has found that interdisciplinary curriculum design and diverse teaching methods can cultivate students' comprehensive abilities. Good teacher-student relationships and a sound support system provide personalized guidance for students. Career planning guidance courses and awareness of professional prospects enhance students' career confidence, while a positive campus culture and environment enhance their sense of belonging. Therefore, by implementing comprehensive policies, students can effectively enhance their sense of professional belonging in the context of the academy system and promote their comprehensive development.*

Keywords: *academy system, professional sense of belonging, educational model*

1. Introduction

In today's field of higher education, the academy education model, as a traditional and innovative education model, has attracted much attention. Academy education, with its emphasis on personalized teaching, close interaction between teachers and students, and holistic education, has attracted more and more attention and practice from students and educational institutions. The academy education model not only promotes students' academic growth, but also provides them with more choices and development space [1]. However, under this education model, the issue of students' sense of professional belonging is becoming increasingly prominent.

The sense of professional belonging of students, as a reflection of their identification and degree of belonging to their major, is directly related to their academic performance, learning motivation, and mental health. Under the background of the academy system, students usually face more professional choices, which is different from the traditional education model of single major setting, which poses a challenge to their sense of professional belonging. How to effectively enhance students' sense of professional belonging in the educational environment of the academy system is one of the urgent problems to be solved in the current field of higher education.

This study aims to explore the current situation, influencing factors, and improvement strategies of students' sense of professional belonging under the background of the academy system, in order to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for student management and educational practice under the academy education model. By conducting in-depth research on students' sense of professional belonging, the development of the academy education model can be better promoted, providing useful references for the comprehensive development of students and the improvement of school education quality.

Therefore, the significance and value of this study lies in the fact that by studying the improvement of students' sense of professional belonging under the background of the academy system, it can effectively promote their academic development, psychological health, and personal growth, and provide useful references for the reform and development of higher education. It has important practical significance and theoretical value.

2. Literature review

2.1 Academy based education model

The academy education model is an ancient and unique education system that originated from the academy system in ancient China [2]. Ancient academies began in the Tang and Song dynasties and flourished during the Ming and Qing dynasties. They were academic institutions that integrated teaching, research, and daily life. Academies are not only important places for academic research and education, but also emphasize personality education and moral cultivation. In the West, the college system developed in medieval universities, especially in institutions like Oxford and Cambridge, where the college system became an important component of teaching and student life management.

The core idea of the academy education model is to promote close interaction between students and teachers, as well as close communication among students, through a small-scale and personalized educational environment, in order to achieve holistic education. This model emphasizes the shared life and learning of teachers and students, and through mentorship, seminars, and diverse extracurricular activities, helps students achieve comprehensive development in academic, personality, and social abilities.

With the development of modern educational concepts, the academy system has been widely applied and promoted worldwide. Famous universities in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia, such as Oxford University, Cambridge University, Yale University, and Harvard University, have successfully implemented the college education model and achieved significant educational results. These academies usually have an independent management structure, independent curriculum design, and rich extracurricular activities, emphasizing the cultivation of students' independent thinking ability and innovative spirit.

In China, the revival of the academy education model began in the early 21st century. Many colleges and universities began to explore and implement this model, such as Peking University, Tsinghua University and Fudan University [3]. On the basis of inheriting the essence of traditional academy culture and combining modern educational concepts, these academies have constructed a Chinese characteristic academy education system. At present, the education model of the academy system in China mainly manifests as the coexistence of academies and colleges. Academies are responsible for the daily management and comprehensive quality cultivation of students, while colleges are responsible for professional teaching and academic research. Through this model, students can not only acquire solid professional knowledge, but also enhance their comprehensive abilities through the diverse activities in the academy.

The main characteristics of the academy education model include small class teaching, personalized tutoring, rich extracurricular activities, diverse learning resources, and strong community support. These characteristics provide students with a good learning and living environment, which is conducive to their comprehensive development.

2.2 Student's sense of professional belonging

Professional sense of belonging refers to the sense of identification, belonging, and participation that students have towards their major [4]. It is a psychological state formed by students in the process of professional learning. It reflects students' interest, level of investment in their major, as well as their expectations and plans for future careers. The sense of professional belonging not only affects students' academic performance and career choices, but also has a significant impact on their overall mental health and self-efficacy.

The theoretical basis for professional belonging mainly includes social identity theory and self-determination theory. The social identity theory suggests that individuals establish their self-concept and social identity by belonging to a certain group or organization, and professional belonging is the identity recognition of students within a specific professional group. The self-determination theory emphasizes that when individuals meet the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relationship, they will generate higher intrinsic motivation and engagement, which is of great significance for enhancing students' sense of professional belonging.

Student professional belonging is influenced by various factors, including course design, teacher-student relationships, and campus environment. A scientifically reasonable curriculum design can enhance students' interest and sense of identification with their major. The practicality, challenge,

and innovation of course content, as well as the coherence and logic between courses, all have a significant impact on students' sense of professional belonging. A positive teacher-student relationship can enhance students' sense of professional belonging. The support, care, and guidance of teachers can not only improve students' academic performance, but also enhance their confidence and identification with their profession. In addition, the teaching style and professional competence of teachers also have a direct impact on students' sense of professional belonging. Mutual assistance and collaborative learning among peers can enhance students' sense of professional belonging. Collaboration, competition, and communication among classmates can increase their investment and identification with their majors. A good campus culture and learning environment can also affect students' sense of professional belonging. The atmosphere of the school, the richness of resources, and the frequency of academic activities all play an important role in students' sense of professional belonging.

2.3 Overview of relevant research

2.3.1 Current research status on academy system and professional sense of belonging both domestically and internationally

In recent years, scholars at home and abroad have conducted extensive research on the relationship between the academy education model and students' sense of professional belonging [5]. Foreign research mainly focuses on the impact of the academy education model on students' academic performance, mental health, and overall quality. For example, some studies have found that the college education model can significantly improve students' academic performance and learning satisfaction, enhance their social adaptation ability and mental health level. In these studies, the sense of professional belonging, as an important indicator of student academic and psychological development, has also received widespread attention.

In China, with the promotion and implementation of the academy based education model, related research is gradually increasing. Some studies have found through empirical analysis that the academy education model can effectively enhance students' sense of professional belonging, especially in curriculum design, teacher-student relationships, and peer interaction. The academy education model shows significant advantages [6]. However, due to the exploration and development stage of academy education in China, there are still certain deficiencies in the depth and breadth of related research.

2.3.2 Existing research achievements and shortcomings

Existing research has shown that the academy education model can to some extent enhance students' sense of professional belonging, but there are still some problems and challenges in practical operation. On the one hand, the coordination and cooperation between academies and colleges still need to be further strengthened. How to fully leverage the comprehensive educational function of academies while ensuring the quality of professional teaching is an important issue currently faced. On the other hand, the implementation effect of the academy education model is also influenced by various factors such as teacher strength, management mechanism, and resource allocation, and needs to be continuously explored and improved in practice.

In addition, existing research mostly adopts quantitative research methods to explore the relationship between the academy education model and professional sense of belonging at a macro level, lacking in-depth analysis of specific practical processes and individual differences among students. Future research should further combine qualitative research methods, using case studies, interviews, and observations to deeply explore the implementation effects and student experiences of the academy education model in different contexts, in order to provide more comprehensive and detailed theoretical support and practical guidance for the development of academy education.

3. The current situation of students' sense of professional belonging under the background of the academy system

3.1 The positive impact of the academy system on students' sense of academic belonging

Under the background of the academy system, students feel a specific influence on their professional affiliation. Firstly, the academy based education emphasizes comprehensive development, emphasizing the cultivation of humanistic literacy and interdisciplinary abilities, which may make students more inclined towards interdisciplinary or comprehensive majors rather than traditional subjects. Secondly, the academy system may provide students with more opportunities for choice and

autonomy, which may encourage them to choose majors that align with their personal interests and values, thereby enhancing their sense of identification with the major they are studying. In addition, the counselor system and small class teaching model of the academy system may also enhance students' sense of belonging to their majors, as they are more likely to establish close relationships with teachers and receive more support and guidance.

3.2 Problems faced by students' sense of academic belongingness under the background of academy system

Under the background of the academy system, there are also some potential issues with students' sense of professional belonging. The general education and interdisciplinary requirements under the academy system may cause students to feel confused in their professional choices, lacking clear directions and goals. Under the academy education model, the widespread implementation of general education and interdisciplinary requirements aims to cultivate students' comprehensive qualities and diverse abilities. However, this education model may also bring some challenges. Especially for students in the major selection stage, they may feel confused due to the diversity and breadth of course offerings, making it difficult to find clear directions and goals. The academy system focuses on improving students' comprehensive quality through general education, which means that students need to be exposed to and learn knowledge from multiple fields. Although this can help broaden horizons and cultivate critical thinking, it may also make students feel confused when facing major choices, as they lack the time and energy needed to gain a deeper understanding of a particular field of expertise. Although interdisciplinary curriculum requirements promote interdisciplinary integration and innovation, they also increase the academic burden on students, making it difficult for them to focus on their professional cognition. Students may wander between multiple disciplines, unsure of which field is most suitable for their interests and career development, resulting in a lack of clear direction and goals in their major choices. In addition, although the teacher-student interaction and support system in the academy system can provide assistance to a certain extent, if the guidance is not specific or targeted enough, students may still feel confused when choosing majors. The uncertainty of future career development and the vague understanding of one's own interests and abilities further exacerbate this confusion. Meanwhile, due to the emphasis on comprehensive literacy and diversified development in the academy system, there may be a relative lack of in-depth guidance on professional disciplines, which may reduce students' sense of identification with their majors.

Overall, under the background of the academy system, students feel various influences on their professional belonging, including positive aspects, as well as some challenges and potential problems. A thorough study of the impact of the academy system on students' sense of professional belonging can help to better understand their needs and provide reference for educational reform and practice.

4. Strategies for promoting students' sense of professional belonging through the academy system

The academy production is an educational model aimed at enhancing students' comprehensive quality and professional identity, and its implementation effect largely depends on specific strategies and measures. The following explores how to promote students' sense of professional belonging through the college system from four aspects: optimization of educational models, construction of teacher-student interaction and support systems, student career planning and professional identity, and campus culture and atmosphere creation.

4.1 Optimization of the academy system education model

The curriculum design under the academy system should focus on diversity and practicality. Firstly, interdisciplinary courses should be developed to enable students to be exposed to knowledge from multiple fields and cultivate their ability to comprehensively analyze and solve problems. At the same time, teaching methods should also be more flexible, using small class teaching, discussion based teaching, and project-based learning to increase students' sense of participation and initiative. Through case analysis, practical experiments, and practical projects, enable students to apply their learned knowledge in real-life situations, deepen their understanding and love for the profession.

The academy system not only focuses on the academic development of students, but also emphasizes their life guidance. Establishing an integrated academic and life guidance system can help students better balance their studies and lives, and improve overall satisfaction. Specific measures

include arranging full-time counselors and mentors to provide students with comprehensive support such as academic counseling, career planning, and psychological counseling; At the same time, organize a variety of extracurricular activities to enhance students' social skills and teamwork spirit, allowing them to find their own positioning and sense of professional belonging in a diverse environment.

4.2 Construction of teacher-student interaction and support system

A good teacher-student relationship is an important factor in enhancing students' sense of professional belonging. The academy system can increase opportunities for interaction between teachers and students by regularly organizing activities such as teacher-student symposiums, academic salons, and professional lectures. Encourage teachers to step out of the classroom and establish closer connections with students through organizing extracurricular discussions, guiding students in research projects, and leading students to visit internships. At the same time, implementing a mentorship system, each student is equipped with a dedicated academic mentor, allowing students to receive personalized guidance and support in both academic and daily life.

A sound support and tutoring system is the core of the academy system. Schools should establish specialized student service centers that provide one-stop services such as academic counseling, psychological counseling, and career planning. By regularly evaluating the needs and feedback of students, continuously improving and perfecting support services. Establish a sound academic warning mechanism, promptly identify and assist students with academic difficulties, ensure that each student receives necessary support and guidance, and successfully complete their studies.

4.3 Student career planning and professional identity

Career planning guidance is a key link in enhancing students' sense of professional belonging. The college system should incorporate career planning courses into the compulsory curriculum system, helping students understand their interests and strengths, and clarify their career direction. By inviting industry experts and alumni to share their career experiences, organizing career experiences and internship projects, students can explore career choices in practice, and enhance their confidence and sense of identity for future career development.

Students' perception of professional prospects directly affects their sense of professional belonging. The academy system should strengthen cooperation with industry enterprises, regularly hold enterprise open days, job fairs and other activities, and enhance students' understanding of industry development. Provide more professional practical opportunities, such as internships, project collaborations, innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, so that students can apply theoretical knowledge to practical work, see the actual value and prospects of the profession, and thereby enhance their sense of identification and belonging to the major they are studying.

4.4 Campus culture and atmosphere creation

A good campus culture and atmosphere are the foundation for enhancing students' sense of professional belonging. Colleges should strive to create a positive learning and living environment, encouraging students to learn independently and cooperate with each other. By establishing an honor system, rewarding outstanding students and teams, setting an example, and stimulating students' learning motivation and professional enthusiasm. Improve campus hardware facilities, provide comfortable learning and living conditions for students, and enable them to grow and develop in a good environment.

Encouraging students to actively participate in campus cultural construction can help enhance their sense of belonging and responsibility. Colleges can organize various cultural festivals, sports events, club activities, etc., allowing students to showcase their talents, make friends, and cultivate interests in a variety of activities. Through student autonomous organizations, students are given more management and decision-making power, enhancing their sense of ownership, and enabling them to feel the collective power and professional significance in participating in campus construction.

In summary, the academy system can effectively enhance students' sense of professional belonging through various strategies such as optimizing education models, strengthening teacher-student interaction and support systems, emphasizing career planning and professional identity, and creating a good campus culture. This not only contributes to the comprehensive development and personal growth

of students, but also lays a solid foundation for the improvement of educational quality and long-term development of schools.

5. Conclusion

Under the background of the academy system, enhancing students' sense of professional belonging is one of the important goals of educational reform and development. Through exploration and analysis of the optimization of the academy education model, the construction of teacher-student interaction and support systems, student career planning and professional identity, campus culture and atmosphere creation, it can be found that the optimization of the academy education model has a positive impact on students' sense of professional belonging. Interdisciplinary curriculum design and diverse teaching methods can cultivate students' comprehensive abilities and professional identity, which helps to enhance their love and identification with their major. The construction of teacher-student interaction and support systems is an important guarantee for promoting students' sense of professional belonging. A good teacher-student relationship and a sound support and tutoring system can provide personalized guidance and support to students, enhancing their sense of professional identity and belonging. Student career planning is closely related to professional identity. The establishment of career planning guidance courses and the enhancement of students' understanding of professional prospects can help enhance their sense of professional belonging. The creation of campus culture and atmosphere has a significant impact on students' sense of professional belonging. A positive learning and living environment, as well as encouraging students to participate in campus cultural construction, can enhance their sense of professional responsibility and belonging.

Therefore, under the background of the academy system, through comprehensive measures such as optimizing education models, strengthening teacher-student interaction and support systems, emphasizing career planning and professional identity, and creating a good campus culture, students can effectively enhance their sense of professional belonging, laying a solid foundation for their comprehensive development and the long-term development of the school.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the "Research on Enhancing Students' Sense of Belonging to Their Major within the Context of the Residential College System". (No. 2023SYB13) .

References

- [1] Wang Y L, Peng Y W. *Implementation of Classical Academy System in Higher Vocational Colleges: A Case Study of Chongli Academy in Shenzhen Polytechnic* [J]. *Journal of Shenzhen Polytechnic*, 2019, (2): 57-61.
- [2] Zhang J B. *Innovative Educational Mode of Outstanding Academy System* [J]. *Journal of Jiangsu Second Normal University*, 2018, (5): 65-69.
- [3] Guo J. *The Rise of Classical Academy and the Implications of Its Development* [J]. *Journal of Higher Education*, 2013, (8): 76-83.
- [4] Zhang M, Li R L. *The Effect of Speciality Identity on University Students' Learning Engagement: the Mediating Role of School Belonging* [J]. *Heilongjiang Researches on Higher Education*, 2018, (3): 94-99.
- [5] Liu Z P, Zhang X W. *The Enlightenment of Traditional Chinese Academy Culture to the Construction of Academy System of Modern University* [J]. *Journal of Tonghua Normal University*, 2024, (5): 78-83.
- [6] Zhou Y, Chen Y Y, Feng H Y. *The Impact of Interdisciplinary Education on Nurturing Exceptional Innovative Talents—Empirical Evidence from S University's Collegiate System* [J]. *Journal of Educational Science of Hunan Normal University*, 2024, (1): 33-43.