

Research on the Impact of College Students' Major Identity on Employment Tendency

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Abstract: With the gradual popularization of higher education, the number of college students in China is increasing, and employment has become a problem. Whether you are willing and able to work in a job that matches your major is a problem that every college student encounters in the process of employment. On the basis of combing the literature related to professional identity and employment tendency, this paper uses the literature research method and questionnaire survey method to investigate the current situation of professional identity and employment tendency of college students, and explore the relationship between the two. The study found that students with high degree of professional recognition tend to have a strong interest in learning, and their employment tendencies are clearer; Students have a low sense of professional identity, and their future employment options will be very confused. Based on the conclusions of the study, this paper makes several suggestions to improve students' sense of professional identity, form a core competitive advantage for students, and help students find careers that match themselves.

Keywords: College student; Major identity; Employment tendency

1. Introduction

With the development of higher education in China, the number of college students is increasing day by day. According to incomplete statistics, the number of graduates in 2022 reached 10.76 million. How to choose a career and what kind of occupation to choose when graduating has become an inevitable problem for college students, and it is even more difficult to choose a career that matches the major they have studied. So it is very important to explore the matching of college students' majors and employment. The time in the university is a critical stage for students to improve their professional skills. And in general, university graduates will choose their future careers based on the professional knowledge they have learned and the professional skills they have mastered, so professional identity is closely related to employment choices. The level of professional identity is affected by factors such as the length of study time, learning involvement, and learning interest of students in the major. Students with a high sense of professional identity also have clear career goals, and they will study knowledge more seriously to improve their professional skills and enhance their professional competitiveness. However, influenced by many factors such as personal, family, and society, some students may not choose a major that matches themselves, resulting in a low sense of professional identity, negative and school-weary emotions, and they will be confused in future employment choices. This research investigates the current situation of college students' professional identity and employment tendency, explores the relationship between the two, and puts forward relevant suggestions to improve students' professional identity, in order to build students' core competitive advantages, help students find careers that match themselves, promote the more reasonable distribution of human resources and educational resources, and improve employment efficiency and quality.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Professional Identity

Henning proposed that professional identity is a kind of subjective view of the profession by the individual, which is sporty and is a certain attitude held by the individual psychological level towards the major studied. He also found that personal traits, personal skills, remuneration, and career

orientation all have an impact on professional identity.^[1] Nehami conducted a study of recent Graduates of Arab Social Work and found that four factors influence professional identity: the contradiction between self and professional needs, the contradiction between space needs and professional responsibility, and the contradiction between professional ability and values.^[2] Zhou Ying analyzed the level of professional identity from five dimensions including professional cognition, professional emotion, professional support, professional teachers, and professional employment, and found that professional identity was affected by factors such as college students' individuals, employment prospects, social opinion, parents, relatives and friends.^[3] There are also some experts and scholars who have done relevant research on the professional identity of teachers. Sullivan pointed out that teachers' professional identity was teachers' views on the profession, mainly covering the future development of the profession, the reasons for choosing the major, and the value.^[4] Welmond pointed out that teachers' professional identity is reflected in a good mental state, a strong sense of competition, a wide range of career prospects, and the ability to grasp conflicts in interests and ideologies.^[5]

2.2. Employment Tendencies

Schein used the "self-concept" to explain the employment tendency, which is the individual's judgment of his own abilities, motivations, needs, talents, attitudes, and values, as well as the subjective tendency to choose a career formed by the long-term study of the profession^[6]. Irene Gianakos found through fieldwork that employment tendencies were associated with self-efficacy, and that individuals with high self-efficacy were often willing to pursue more challenging occupations or freelance occupations.^[7] Holland believed that motivation, knowledge, interests, and self-knowledge influence people's choice of career. The main thing was that a person choosing a certain career field is likely to be influenced by his or her interests and personality.^[8] Zhang and Wang found that the more students identified with their majors, the more they were inclined to continue their studies and the more optimistic they were about their employment prospects.^[9]

3. Research Design

3.1. Respondents

The research content of this paper is the influence of college students' professional identity on employment tendencies, so the research object is college students. In this paper, a combination of stratified sampling and random sampling was used to survey students in four grades from freshman to senior year. A total of 180 questionnaires were distributed through the questionnaire star platform, and a total of 176 valid questionnaires were issued, with an effective recovery rate of 97.7%. The specific sample distribution is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample distribution table

	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	89	50.57
	Female	87	49.43
Grade	Freshman	20	11.36
	Sophomore	21	11.93
	Junior	53	30.11
	Senior	82	49.56
Willingness to choose a major	Discretionary choice	54	30.68
	Non-discretionary choice	122	69.32
Major	Literature and history	28	15.91
	Economics and Management	56	31.82
	Science and engineering	44	25
	Arts and sports	28	15.91
	others	20	11.36

Source: Compiled from the results of the questionnaire survey

3.2. Research Tools

The questionnaire used is the "Questionnaire on the Influence of College Students' Professional Identity on Employment Tendencies", which is composed of three parts. The first is basic information, including gender, grade and major; The second is the major identity; Finally, there is the employment tendency, which mainly includes problems in future career planning and future work. The professional identity part draws from Qin Panbo's *Scale of Professional Identity of Chinese College Students*,^[10] including four dimensions of cognition, emotion, behavior and relevance, with a total of 12 questions. Using a five-point scoring method, from 1 to 5 indicates complete non-conformity to full compliance, the higher the final score, the higher the professional recognition. The Cronbach's α is 0.849, so the reliability is better. KMO is 0.897, more than 0.8, and the validity is also good.

4. Research Results and Analysis

The collected data is processed using SPSS 26 software, and the results are as follows.

4.1. Analysis of College Students' Major Identity

4.1.1. Analysis of Overall Major Recognition

Through data analysis, the average score of major identity of the sample was 3.63, indicating that the students were still more agreeing with their major. In terms of specific dimensions, the emotional dimension indicates the degree of liking for the profession, with an average score of 3.54; the behavioral dimension indicates the degree of effort to learn the profession, with an average score of 3.59; the relevance dimension indicates the degree of suitability for the profession, with an average score of 3.44; and the cognitive dimension indicates the degree of understanding of the profession, with an average score of 3.93. From the perspective of specific topics, 69.3% of the students said that they had accepted and agreed with their majors, and 65.34% of the students said that they generally liked their majors.

In terms of grade level, the overall average score for freshmen is 3.73, the overall average score for sophomores is 3.49, the overall average score for juniors is 3.73, and the overall average score for seniors is 3.65. In general, students in all grades have a high degree of major recognition, which is in line with the overall situation of the above analysis.

From a professional point of view, the average scores of literatures and history, economics and management, science and engineering, art and sports and other categories were 3.45, 3.52, 3.67, 3.92 and 3.74, respectively. College students of literatures and history have the lowest score, with an average score of 3.45, which indicates that the major recognition of literature and history is relatively low, and the major recognition of students in the arts and sports category is higher. The reason for this situation may be that the professional practicability of philosophy and history is not strong, and the knowledge learned is mainly theoretical, and its competitiveness in the labor market is relatively weak. The practicality of these majors such as economics and management, science and engineering are strong, the future employment is relatively easy. The art and sports majors are mostly chosen by students according to their own interests and hobbies, and the sense of major identity is high.

In terms of gender, the average score for male was 3.63 and the average score for female was 3.64, and from each dimension, the emotional scores were 3.51 and 3.57, the behavioral scores were 3.57 and 3.62, the appropriateness scores were 3.43 and 3.44, and the cognitive scores were 3.97 and 3.89, respectively.

4.1.2. Analysis Based on the Reasons for Choosing a Major

This research divides the reasons for choosing a major into five categories, namely parental wishes, suggestions from others, employment prospects, school transfers, and blind applications. The average score of major identity selected according to the wishes of the parents is 3.46, of which the emotional and appropriateness scores are lower, 3.28 and 3.24, respectively, indicating that the child is not very recognized and not suitable for the major; the average score of major identification of students selected by others is 3.51, and the emotional and relevance scores are 3.38 and 3.34, respectively; the average score of students selected according to their own interests reaches 3.95, and the scores of each dimension are 3.96, 3.93, 3.83, respectively. 4.03; the average score of major identity selected according to the employment prospect is 3.84, and the cognitive dimension reaches 4.06, indicating a

high degree of understanding of the profession; the major recognition of students after school transfer is relatively low, the emotional dimension score is the lowest, only 3.00, the students do not like the major they have studied, so the sense of identity is low; the average score of major identity of students who blindly apply for the examination is only 3.09, and the behavioral and relevance dimension scores are the lowest, 2.98 and 3.75.

4.2. Analysis of College Students' Employment Tendencies

4.2.1. Investigation and Analysis of the Types of Jobs of College Students

This study divides the types of work into state organizations, independent entrepreneurship, enterprise, public institutions and applying for graduate school. The survey results show that enterprise have become the first choice, accounting for 22.16%; Followed by state organizations, accounting for 21.02%; schools and other institutions accounted for 16.48%; 10.23% decided to start their own business; applying for graduate school accounted for 21.59%, while the remaining 8.52% of students did not choose the above options, perhaps because the career plan is not clear.

4.2.2. Investigation and Analysis of Career Planning for College Students

Career planning plays a very important role in the career of college students. A clear career plan can explore their own potential, enhance personal strength to guide us to make up for our own shortcomings. The survey shows that 36.36% of students have a clear plan for their careers, 43.18% of students have a unclear career plan, 17.05% of students have no career plan, and the remaining 3.41% of students have not thought about this issue. In general, the career planning of college students also needs to pay more attention. College is an important stage of career selection, so career planning is indispensable. Colleges and universities should educate college students in career planning, help college students to self-position, so that students can find the ideal job.

College career planning is so important because studies have shown that college students with a clear career plan have more potential and are more likely to find their ideal job than college students without career planning. The following is an analysis of career planning combined with the difficulty of finding your ideal job. Combined with the data, it can be seen that among students with clear career plans, 42.19% of students think it is easy to find the ideal job, 43.75% think it is average, and 14.06% of students think it is more difficult to find the ideal job. For students without career planning, more than 60% believe that finding a job is difficult. This makes it clear that career planning is important for students' future work.

4.2.3. Corresponding Survey and Analysis of College Students' Work Majors

36.93% of students believe that they should be professional counterparts in order to exert professional skills in the work and have stronger competitiveness in employment; 43.75% of students think that they should try to be professional in job hunting, but they do not have to be forced, and 19.32% of students think that the major is not important, as long as it is suitable for themselves. The proportion of literature and history students who think that the major is not important is slightly higher, accounting for 35.71%, while the highly professional management, science and engineering and art and sports students still attach more importance to professional issues, and the proportion of art and sports students who think that they will find a professional counterpart in the future is as high as 96.43%.

4.3. Analysis of the Influence of College Students' Major Identity on Employment Tendency

4.3.1. The Impact of the Emotional Dimension on the Degree of Employment Matching

The results are shown in Table 2 using a cross table to analyze the relationship between "Whether you generally like your major" and "Whether you will work in your major after graduation".

The results of the analysis show that more than 20% of the theoretical frequencies are less than 5, and the Pearson chi-square fails, and the results of Fisher's exact test should be observed. Fisher's exact test is 45.989 with a significance $P < 0.05$, indicating that there is statistical significance between whether students like their major and whether they will pursue related work in the future. From people who don't like their major at all to those who like their major completely, the proportion of people who say that they will engage in a career related to their major after graduation is rising, from 16.7% who do not like it at all to 80.3% who like it completely; The number of people who said they would not pursue occupations related to the profession also fell from 47.8% to 4.2%. From this point of view, professional recognition and employment matching are also closely related, the higher the degree of

professional recognition, the more students are inclined to engage in related professional occupations in the future, the higher the degree of employment matching, and vice versa.

Table 2: Chi-square tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Monte Carlo Sig. (2-sided) Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pearson Chi-square	52.256 ^a	8	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Likelihood ratio	47.534	8	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Fisher's Exact test	45.989			.000 ^b	.000	.000
N of valid cases	176					

a. 6 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.82.

b. Based on 10000 sampled table with starting seed 1314643744.

Source: Compiled from the results of the questionnaire survey

4.3.2. The Impact of Behavioral Dimensions on Employment Assistance

The results are shown in Table 3 using a cross table to analyze the relationship between “Do you have accepted this profession in your heart and studied carefully” and “Whether the professional knowledge you have learned will be helpful for future employment”.

Table 3: Chi-square tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Monte Carlo Sig. (2-sided) Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pearson Chi-square	52.273 ^a	12	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Likelihood ratio	43.929	12	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Fisher's Exact test	40.415			.000 ^b	.000	.000
N of valid cases	176					

a. 11 cells (55.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.16.

b. Based on 10000 sampled table with starting seed 1502173562.

Source: Compiled from the results of the questionnaire survey

The results of the analysis show that more than 20% of the theoretical frequencies are less than 5, and the Pearson chi-square fails, and the results of Fisher's exact test should be observed. Fisher's exact test is 40.415, with significance $P < 0.05$, so this shows that there is a statistical significance between whether the student accepts the profession in his heart and whether the major will help for the future. For a student who does not accept the major at all and does not study seriously, only 25% of them think that the professional knowledge they have learned will be of little help to the future work, and for those who fully accept the major and study seriously, up to 67.6% believe that the professional knowledge learned during college is very helpful for future employment. It can be seen that the higher the professional recognition of college students, the more they will tend to study hard, and the greater the help for future employment.

4.3.3. The Impact of the Relevance Dimension on the Degree of Employment Difficulty

The results are shown in Table 4 using a cross table to analyze the relationship between “Do you think you can play your specialty in this profession” and “How easy it is for you to find your ideal job”.

The results of the analysis show that 45% of the theoretical frequencies are less than 5 and more than 20%, so the Pearson chi-square fails, and the results of Fisher's exact test should be observed. Fisher's precise test is 63.991, with a significance $P < 0.05$, which shows that there is a statistical significance between the ability to play to the student's strengths in the major and the difficulty of the student's future employment. Judging from the specific data, among those who cannot play their own strengths at all in the major, 66.7% of students think that it is difficult to find the ideal job, and the remaining 33.3% of the students think that this matter is more difficult, and almost no one thinks that

they can easily find the ideal job. Among the students who can play their own strengths well in the major, 37.9% of them think that it is not difficult to find the ideal job, 13.8% of the students think it is more difficult, and it can be found that from not being able to play their own strengths at all to being able to play their own strengths, the proportion of students who think they can easily find the ideal job is gradually rising, from 0.0% to 3.5%, to 27.7%, and finally to 37.9%. It can be seen that the more students can play their own strengths in the major, the easier it is to find the ideal job in the future, and vice versa, the more difficult it is.

Table 4: Chi-square tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Sig.	Monte Carlo Sig. (2-sided) 95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pearson Chi-square	75.590 ^a	12	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Likelihood ratio	70.054	12	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Fisher's Exact test	63.991			.000 ^b	.000	.000
N of valid cases	176					

a. 9 cells (45.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.17.

b. Based on 10000 sampled table with starting seed 92208573.

Source: Compiled from the results of the questionnaire survey

4.3.4. The Impact of the Cognitive Dimension on Career Planning

The results are shown in Table 5 using a cross table to analyze the relationship between “Do you know the employment status of this major” and “Do you now have plans for your future career direction”.

Table 5: Chi-square tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Sig.	Monte Carlo Sig. (2-sided) 95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pearson Chi-square	39.389 ^a	12	.000	.003 ^b	.001	.004
Likelihood ratio	40.768	12	.000	.000 ^b	.000	.000
Fisher's Exact test	38.141			.000 ^b	.000	.000
N of valid cases	176					

a. 11 cells (55.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.07.

b. Based on 10000 sampled table with starting seed 1993510611.

Source: Compiled from the results of the questionnaire survey

The results of the analysis show that more than 20% of the theoretical frequencies are less than 5, and the Pearson chi-square fails, and the results of Fisher's exact test should be observed. The value of Fisher's exact test is 38.141, and the significance $P < 0.05$, so this indicates that there is a statistical significance between the student's understanding of the employment situation in his or her major and whether there is a career plan. 66.7% of the students who fully understand the employment situation in this major have a clear career plan for the future, and 28.2% of the students have a less clear career plan. Among the students who are more familiar with the employment situation of this major, 33.5% of the students have a clear career plan, and 49.5% of the students have a vague career plan. Among students who do not understand this, less than 30% have a clear career plan. It can be seen that only under the premise of understanding the employment situation can they devote themselves wholeheartedly to learning, can they consciously cultivate their professional ability, be clearer about their future employment direction, they will explore themselves more actively, understand employment information through various channels, and be clearer about their career goals.

5. Conclusions and Implications

5.1. Conclusions

Through the above research, it can be found that college students have the following characteristics in terms of major identity, employment tendencies and the relationship between the two.

5.1.1. Conclusion on Major Identity of College Students

Overall, college students still agree with their majors. From the perspective of grade, the major identity of freshmen is the highest, the major identity of sophomores is the lowest, and the scores in each dimension are also the lowest compared with other grades, which needs to be paid attention to. From the professional point of view, the major identity of students such as literature and history is the lowest, while the major identity of science and engineering and management is relatively high, and the art and sports are the highest. From the perspective of gender, the major identity of male and female students is not much different, and it is likely that it is not a factor influencing major identity. From the perspective of the reasons for choosing to volunteer, the major identity of students who choose a major according to their own interests and strengths is generally relatively high, while the major identity of blind selection or school adjustment and the willingness of others will generally be relatively low.

5.1.2. Conclusion on Employment Tendencies of College Students

The most choices for college students in terms of job types are enterprise with high stability, followed by applying for graduate school, followed by state organizations and institutions, and few students decide to start their own businesses. In terms of career planning, nearly 80% of students have their own future career plans, of which less than half have a clear career plan, and some of the remaining students have no career plan or have not thought about the issue. In addition, career planning and the difficulty of finding a job in the future are also linked, with 42% of students with a clear career plan thinking it is easy to find the ideal job, while among students without career planning, almost no one thinks that finding the ideal job is an easy task. In the professional analysis of the corresponding work of college students, most people said that they will engage in professional-related work in the future, literature and history do not attach much importance to professional counterpart problems, and art and sports students will almost choose to engage in related occupations after graduation.

5.1.3. The Influence of College Students' Major Identity on Employment Tendencies

This study used SPSS to analyze the influence of major identity on employment tendencies, and found that the higher the emotional dimension score of college students, the more students like their majors, and the greater the possibility of engaging in major-related work in the future; The higher the behavioral dimension score of college students, the more students are inclined to study hard, and the more they will receive help with future employment; The higher the score of the relevance dimension of the college student, the higher the student's fit with the major, and it is easier to find the ideal job in the future; The higher the cognitive dimension score of college students, the more deeply students understand their majors, and the more clear their career plans will be. In summary, the higher the degree of major identity, the clearer the employment goals, the higher the degree of employment matching, and the greater the emphasis on employment issues.

5.2. Implications

The employment of college students is a problem that cannot be ignored, and should be given sufficient attention. College graduates are the most valuable human resources of the country, and the successful employment of college students is the premise of our social stability. According to the conclusions of the study, the following revelations were obtained.

5.2.1. Schools Should Improve Teaching and Provide Guidance

Optimize the teaching process. Reasonable and effective teaching links can help students improve their sense of major identity. In terms of curriculum, the comprehensive development of students should be considered, focusing on the study of professional courses and increasing the proportion of practical courses, so that students can apply what they have learned. In terms of assessment, in addition to professional knowledge, students' divergent thinking should also be examined, and practical examination questions should be added.

Create a good learning atmosphere. A good learning atmosphere can cultivate students' positive

learning attitude, enable students to unconsciously integrate into learning, and the school can regularly hold professional knowledge and skills competitions, carry out related practices, and so on. In addition, schools should also strengthen professional education, consider the training goals of different majors, and design special courses. For example, for teacher training students, schools should provide a platform for students to support students to participate in practice and encourage participation in training courses.

Provide career guidance to students. Colleges and universities should pay full attention to employment counseling, set up relevant courses to carry out effective training for students, so that students can further master employment skills, be guided to fully grasp their own characteristics, and make good plans for their future through practical operations. Employment training courses and related practical activities can also be added to increase students' understanding of the employment situation and continuously help them cultivate their correct employment concepts. Through the above methods, students can use their strengths and avoid weaknesses in their job search and find the most suitable and valuable jobs for themselves.

5.2.2. Students Should Pay Attention to Major Choice and Improve their Quality

From the perspective of major selection, the major is of great significance to students. Interest is the source of motivation, without interest in learning, students will not have enough motivation to learn, and it will be difficult to make progress academically. Therefore, we should pay attention to the choice of major. Before choosing the major, we should consider our own interests and strengths, and at the same time refer to the opinions of parents and others. Students should have a comprehensive understanding of their pre-selected major and apply scientifically. From the perspective of personal quality, today's employment competition situation is becoming increasingly severe, and the quality of students is becoming more and more important in job hunting. When students enter the university, they must be prepared to meet difficulties, establish a positive attitude, continuously improve their professional quality, continue to strengthen learning, check and fill in the gaps, strive to improve themselves, and improve their comprehensive ability. In addition, it is also necessary to have the courage to try, on the basis of learning professional knowledge, it is also necessary to carry out more professional practice, so that their knowledge is more complete, their experience is more abundant, and they lay a good foundation for future employment.

5.2.3. Families Should Respect their Children and Provide Protection

Respect your child's choices. Through this survey, it is likely that the wishes of parents may lead to students not agreeing with the chosen major, thus abandoning learning. Parents should respect the child's choice, when choosing a major, to be a suggester or explainer, to explain the general situation of the profession for the child, to respect the child's wishes. Encouragement and support should be given in the area of employment. Employment is difficult, parents have reasonable expectations. For a college student who has just entered the society, parents should give support, often cheer for the child, show the parents' mentality, do not give the child too much psychological pressure, let the child cheer up, face the difficulties not be discouraged. After hard work and fall, they will definitely find a good job suitable for themselves. At the same time, we must also pay attention to employment policies, collect recruitment information, and help children find employment smoothly.

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