

Empirical Research on the Career Planning Ability of University Students in China

Lin Hu^{1,*}, Honghua Xu²

¹Jilin University of Finance and Economics, Changchun, Jilin, China

²Changchun University of Science and Technology, Changchun, Jilin, China

hulin@jluife.edu.cn

*Corresponding author

Abstract: Career planning ability of university students determines their career trajectory. Research on the career planning ability of university students from the perspective of sustainable development may change their ideas, plan their studies and improve their self-management ability. This paper does an empirical study in Grade One and Grade Three of A University in China to find out the current situation of career planning ability of university students.

Keywords: Career Planning, Ability, University Student

1. Introduction

The core of career planning is to cultivate students' career planning ability [1-2]. In order to cultivate university students' career planning ability, it is necessary to understand the career development of university students at their age. Super is not only the proponent of career development theory, but also an authoritative figure in the field of career development research. Super believes that "career is the embodiment of self-concept." He focuses on developing self-concept, putting forward 14 famous propositions (Super & Jordan, 1973) which divide career development into five parts: growth stage, exploration stage, establishment stage and decline stage. Each stage clarifies the development tasks. University students aged 18-22 are in the stage of career exploration in which they are supposed to explore their own roles and careers through campus activities, leisure activities, practical experience and other opportunities. Career education should encourage students to seek more learning opportunities [3-5]. At this stage, the students' professional concept is initially formed, the career trend is preliminarily established, and whether it can become a long-term professional life is tested. In this critical period, if their career development ability is cultivated in time, it will lead to the lifelong sustainable development of their career. Therefore, according to Super's career development theory, this study adopts a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct a questionnaire survey on the current situation of career planning of students in A University in Changchun, China to find out the differences of university students' career planning ability from different aspects.

2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire of university students' career planning ability used in this study is slightly modified from the questionnaire of students' career planning ability compiled by Professor Xu Haiyuan in 2012 [6]. According to Super's career development theory: university students in the period of career exploration need to consider many factors when planning their career, such as needs, interests, abilities and values, and try to form specific career preferences [7-8]. The questionnaire of this study is scored according to Likert 4 points (1 = inconformity, 2 = relative inconformity, 3 = relative conformity, 4 = conformity), in which the reverse scoring topics are 3, 5, 13, 18, 25 and 27.

After the statistical analysis of the SPSS23.0 system, the results show the α coefficients of the accuracy of the questionnaire, of career exploration ability [9], of career decision-making power, and of career action and monitoring ability were 0.831, 0.759, 0.873 and 0.848 respectively, indicating good reliability.

3. Analysis on the Current Situation of Students' Career Planning Ability in Changchun A University

The average score of students' career planning ability of Z University in Changchun is 2.648, the standard deviation is 0.327, and the full score of the questionnaire is 4. The results show that the overall career planning ability level of students in the university is high [10], but the data are discrete and the standard deviation is large, indicating that the ability differences among students are large. From each factor, students' professional cognitive ability score is the lowest and their ability level is weak [11].

3.1. Grade Difference in Career Planning Ability

According to table 1-3, juniors career decision-making ability is lower than freshmen and sophomores, and juniors career exploration ability is lower than freshmen and sophomores. In terms of specific factors, juniors career cognitive ability and career planning awareness are significantly different from freshmen and sophomores [12-13], and lower than freshmen and sophomores. The self-cognitive ability of juniors and freshmen is significantly different from that of sophomores, and lower than that of sophomores [14-15]. The goal management ability of juniors is significantly different from that of freshmen and lower than that of juniors [16]. The career orientation ability of junior students is significantly different from that of freshmen and sophomores, and lower than that of freshmen and sophomores.

Table 1: Career planning ability of students in different grades and variance analysis of each factor

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Post Hoc Tests
Career planning ability	Between Groups	1.391	2	0.695	6.591	0.001	freshmen, sophomores > juniors
	Within Groups	82.384	781	0.105			
Career exploration ability	Between Groups	0.977	2	0.488	4.920	0.008	freshmen, sophomores > juniors
	Within Groups	77.535	781	0.099			
Career decision-making ability	Between Groups	3.558	2	1.779	11.345	0.000	freshmen, sophomores > juniors
	Within Groups	122.449	781	0.157			
Career action and detection ability	Between Groups	0.766	2	0.383	2.486	0.084	
	Within Groups	120.300	781	0.154			

Table 2: Variance analyses of factors about self-cognitive ability, professional cognitive ability and career planning awareness of each grade

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Post Hoc Tests
Self-cognitive ability	Between Groups	1.708	2	0.854	8.459	0.000	Sophomores > freshmen, juniors
	Within Groups	78.828	781	0.101			
Career cognition ability	Between Groups	5.755	2	2.877	9.564	0.000	freshmen, sophomores > juniors
	Within Groups	234.959	781	0.301			
Career planning awareness	Between Groups	2.851	2	1.426	7.649	0.001	freshmen, sophomores > juniors
	Within Groups	145.557	781	0.186			

Table 3: Variance analyses of factors about goal management ability and career orientation ability of each grade

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Post Hoc Tests
Goal management ability	Between Groups	1.790	2	0.895	3.213	0.041	Freshmen > juniors
	Within Groups	217.589	781	0.279			
Career orientation ability	Between Groups	6.906	2	3.453	16.592	0.000	freshmen, sophomores > juniors
	Within Groups	162.536	781	0.208			

3.2. Gender Difference in Career Planning Ability

According to table 4, there is no significant difference in career planning ability between boys and girls.

Table 4: Gender differences in each dimension of university students' career planning ability

	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Career planning ability	male	296	2.660	0.307	0.018	0.783	671.149	0.434
	female	488	2.641	0.339	0.015			
Career exploration ability	male	296	2.613	0.311	0.018	0.322	782	0.747
	female	488	2.621	0.321	0.015			
Career decision-making ability	male	296	2.552	0.348	0.020	1.431	720.804	0.153
	female	488	2.512	0.430	0.019			
Career action and detection ability	male	296	2.817	0.359	0.021	0.905	689.179	0.366
	female	488	2.791	0.413	0.019			

3.3. Difference of Career Planning Ability in Career Counseling

According to Table 5, students who have participated in career counseling courses or have career planning counseling experience have strong career planning ability [17].

Table 5: Differences in career counseling among various dimensions of university students' career planning ability

	Career counseling	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Career planning ability	Yes	344	2.726	0.344	0.019	6.018	782	0.000
	No	440	2.588	0.300	0.014			
career exploration ability	Yes	344	2.711	0.318	0.017	7.549	782	0.000
	No	440	2.545	0.296	0.014			
Career decision-making ability	Yes	344	2.592	0.424	0.023	4.028	782	0.000
	No	440	2.477	0.375	0.018			
Career action and detection ability	Yes	344	2.877	0.407	0.022	4.856	782	0.000
	No	440	2.741	0.372	0.018			

3.4. Difference of Career Planning Ability in Internship Experience

According to table 6, students who have participated in social internships in schools or social organizations have relatively high career planning ability.

Table 6: Differences in internship experience among various dimensions of university students' career planning ability

	internship experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Career planning ability	Yes	520	2.742	0.330	0.014	13.868	715.350	0.000
	No	264	2.463	0.226	0.014			
career exploration ability	Yes	520	2.709	0.317	0.014	13.783	695.491	0.000
	No	264	2.438	0.227	0.014			
Career decision-making ability	Yes	520	2.599	0.427	0.019	8.098	708.326	0.000
	No	264	2.387	0.298	0.018			
Career action and detection ability	Yes	520	2.919	0.382	0.017	13.065	782	0.000
	No	264	2.567	.2998	.0184			

4. Conclusions

This study has a certain reference significance for the cultivation of university students' sustainable career planning ability in the future. This study uses empirical research to explore the current situation of university students' career planning ability, which is highly credible. For universities, they can find suitable measures to cultivate the career planning ability of the students.

References

- [1] Jaakko Nikander, Asko Tolvanen, Kaisa Aunola, Tatiana V. Ryba, *The role of individual and parental expectations in student-athletes' career adaptability profiles*, *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, Volume 59, 2022
- [2] David, Rae, Naomi, et al. *How does enterprise and entrepreneurship education influence postgraduate students' career intentions in the New Era economy*. *Education + Training*, 2013, 55(8/9): 926-948.
- [3] Miller S, Liciardi R. *Tertiary student perceptions of the benefits of professional career management education: an exploratory study*. *Career Development International*, 2003, 8(6):309-315.
- [4] Stukalina Y, Roskosa A, Pavlyuk D. *Investigating students' migration decisions in the frame of career management in higher education institutions of Latvia*. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 2018, 32(3)
- [5] Ehrenberg R G, Jakobson G H, Groen J, et al. *Inside the Black Box of Doctoral Education: What Program Characteristics Influence Doctoral Students' Attrition and Graduation Probabilities?*. *Social Science Electronic Publishin*, 2023.
- [6] Zeegers Y, Clark I F. *Students' perceptions of education for sustainable development*. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 2014, 15(2):325-8.
- [7] Sorkkila M. *Development of sport and school burnout among student-athletes across the first year of upper secondary school: different methodological perspectives*. 2018.
- [8] Sorkkila M, Aunola K, K Salmela-Aro, et al. *The co-developmental dynamic of sport and school burnout among student-athletes: The role of achievement goals*. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 2018, 28(6).
- [9] Barger M M, Seward M D. *Merged identity of student-athletes and achievement goals across school and sport*. *Journal for the Study of Sports & Athletes in Education*, 2018:1-19.
- [10] Connor J B. *Highly effective interscholastic athletic programming for student athletes within a high school setting*. 2016.
- [11] Monkhouse H, Forbes A M. *Perceptions of Tertiary Music Students on the Benefits of Ensemble*

Activities. 2018.

[12] *Albakri M A, Safinas I. Tertiary Students Perceptions of the Impact of Reader Theatre Activities in an Esl Classroom. 2012.*

[13] *Ganapathy M, Kaur S. ESL Students' Perceptions of the use of Higher Order Thinking Skills in English Language Writing. Advances in Language & Literary Studies, 2014.*

[14] *Sharma U, Kelly M. Students' perceptions of education for sustainable development in the accounting and business curriculum at a business school in New Zealand. Meditari Accountancy Research, 2014, 22(2):130-148.*

[15] *Kukkonen J, S Kärkkäinen, Keinonen T. University Students' Information Sources of Education for Sustainable Development Issues and Their Perceptions of Environmental Problems. Problems of education in century, 2012.*

[16] *Keinonen T, Palmberg I, Kukkonen J, et al. Higher Education Students' Perceptions of Environmental Issues and Media Coverage. Discourse & Communication for Sustainable Education, 2016, 7(1).*

[17] *Chau K. Y., Law K. M., & Tang Y. M. Impact of Self-Directed Learning and Educational Technology Readiness on Synchronous E-Learning. Journal of Organizational and End User Computing (JOEUC), 2021, 33(6), 1-20.*