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An Empirical Study on the Professional Identity and Career Decision-Making Difficulties of Business Administration College Students

GONG Xiuyun[a],*

[a]Beijing Wuzi University, Beijing, China.
*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

This paper studied the career decision difficulties of college students through 268 questionnaires, and revealed the influence mechanism of the degree of major recognition on the career decision-making difficulties. First of all, the original Major Identity and Career decision difficulties questionnaire were adjusted; Secondly the influential factors were analyzed and found that gender, major, major selection intention and family residence, whether to participate in major practice impact on major and career decision-making significantly. Hierarchical Regression Model shows that major recognition has significant negative influence on career decision-making difficulties. Therefore, in order to improve students' major recognition and reduce the difficulty in making employment decisions, it is necessary to strengthen professional guidance from the college entrance examination application. More professional practice and more vocational guidance for rural children.

Key words: Professional identity; Career decision-making difficulties; Influence factor

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Professional identity is an important part of individual's self-identity and self-development. Professional identity has gradually been paid more and more attention with the deepening of scholars' discussion on identity. Career decision-making is career choice behavior and a process to maximize value for college students' career decision-making and employment,which is an important test results of university teaching and students' learning effects.Career decision-making difficulties refers to the state of making career in the face of difficult, and professional identity have direct relationship with it. This paper studies the career decision difficulties of college students, and reveals the influence mechanism of professional identity on the career decision difficulties, and reduces the difficulty of career decision by improving the degree of professional identity of college students, which is helpful to improve the initial employment rate of college students.

At present, there is few study of relationship between major recognition and career decision-making difficulty. Search for "professional identity" and "career decision-making difficulties" on CNKI. The number of literatures is 1. The literatures are mainly divided into "professional identity" or "career decision-making difficulties". Most of the foreign researches on the professional identity take the identity of the major and the profession as the same subject. Chia (2005) investigated and studied the students who engaged in the consulting profession after graduation, and concluded that the major has a significant impact on their professional adaptability, which is also an important factor affecting their professional identity (Chia, 2005). Henning (2001) showed that the influencing factors of professional identity include personal characteristics, professional ability, remuneration and career orientation (Olesen, 2001). In China, Wang Dingming (2007) conducted a study on the professional identity of postgraduates, and the results showed that the factors affecting their professional identity included gender, grade, major and whether they were reading, etc., and the overall level of professional identity of Postgraduates was in the middle (Wang & Liu, 2007). Li Zhi (2011) pointed out that grade, gender, major, school level, and their

willingness to choose their major all had an important impact on College Students' professional identity (Li, Wang, & Qi, 2011).

The definition of career decision-making difficulty has been discussed for a long time, and scholars have expressed their own opinions on it, but the current research has not reached a more unified result. Gati (1969) believes that career decision-making difficulties refer to the process of action in which an individual has no ability to choose or enter a career (Gati & Asher, 2001). Krumboltz (1976) pointed out that the direct cause of the difficulty in career decision-making is dissatisfaction with the choice, or the state of being unable to make a reasonable career decision due to the limited experience and ability (Krumboltz, et al, 1986). The difficulty of career decision-making discussed in this paper refers to the situation that it is difficult to make a decision when college graduates are employed. Xie Baoguo (2013) combed the factors related to career decision-making difficulties at home and abroad from 1980 to 2012, and found personal factors (such as ability, self-efficacy, big five personality), interpersonal factors (psychological separation, parental attachment, parental support) (Xie, et al, 2013). Ye Baojuan et al. (2018) studied the impact of psychological capital on career decision-making difficulties (Ye, et al, 2018).

In the current research on the relationship between professional identity and career decision-making difficulties of college students, Mao Xingyong (2011) has made a study on the relationship between professional identity and career decision-making difficulties. According to the survey conducted by teachers and students in Colleges and universities, it is found that the professional identity of teachers and students in Colleges and universities is at a medium level, the total score of professional identity is significantly negatively related to the total score of career decision-making difficulties, and the higher the professional identity, the lower the career decision-making difficulties of teachers and students (Mao, 2011). Yu Ting (2017) studied the influence of College Students' professional identity on career decision-making difficulties, and applied the scale to reveal its mechanism (Yu, 2017).

Therefore, the author made a survey in Human Resource Management, Business Administration and Marketing in our university in 2019.This paper provides a basis for the related majors selection and career decision through the research on the degree of recognition of three majors and the difficulty of making career decisions.

1. BASIC INFORMATION OF THE INVESTIGATED SAMPLES

This research mainly focuses on the three majors of Business Administration -- Human Resource Management, Business Administration and Marketing, which conducts targeted research on sophomores, juniors and seniors to find whether there are differences in their professional identity and career decisions? What factors influence students' professional identity and career decisions? What help can teachers provide in "Free Enrollment and Classified Trainning? With these questions this paper was carried out, and a total of 268 valid questionnaires were obtained. The basic information of the survey is shown in Table 1:

Table 1
Basic Information

Category	Option	F	Percentage
Gender	Female	203	75.75
	Male	65	24.25
Major	HRM	111	41.42
	BM	92	34.33
	M	65	24.25
Major selection intention	independent choice	158	59.18
	Parents or others choice	39	14.61
	Adjust	70	26.22
Family residence	City	178	66.42
	Rural	90	33.58
Major practice	N	204	76.12
	Y	64	23.88
Who has been the biggest influence on your job or career perception?	Parents	68	25.47
	Teachers	112	41.95
	Relatives or friends	52	19.48
	Classmates	32	11.99
	Others	1	0.37
Total		268	100

2. SOURCE AND ADJUSTMENT OF SCALE

The scales used in this paper are Professional identity Scale(Referred to as PIS) and Career Decision Difficulty Scale（Referred to as CDDS） The professional identity scale was compiled by Qin Pan Bo (2008) of southwest university and revised by Yu Ting (2017). It consists of 23 questions and contains four dimensions, namely, emotion, behavior, cognition and suitable. The CDDS was compiled by Li Na (2009) of southwest university and revised by Yu Ting (2017). It contains 26 questions and six dimensions, namely, lack of preparation, indecision, and lack of self-understanding, lack of external information, conflict and unreasonable belief.

After reliability and validity analysis (see Table 2 and Table 4), the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire of PIS was 0.900, greater than 0.9, and KMO was 0.875, greater than 0.6, which met the premise requirements of factor analysis. Moreover, the data were tested by Bartlett sphericity test ($p<0.05$), indicating that the research data were suitable for factor analysis. Therefore, the reliability of research data is very high (see Table 2). The reliability

coefficient of CDDS was 0.897, greater than 0.8, and KMO was 0.855, greater than 0.6, satisfying the premise of factor analysis. Therefore, it shows that the reliability and validity of survey data is high.

On the basis of Yu Ting's questionnaire, the PIS was adjusted to 16 questions and 3 dimensions (Emotion, Behavior and Cognition), through the analysis of exploratory factors and confirmatory factors, as shown in Table 3. The CDDS scale was adjusted into 20 questions with 4 dimensions (Lack of self-understanding, Fear, Lack of external information, Conflict), as shown in Table 5.

Table 2
KMO and Bartlett Test（PIS）

KMO		**0.875**
Bartlett	Approximate Chi-Square	1582.373
	df	136
	p	0

Table 3
MIS factor analysis

Dimention	Factor loading coefficient			Commonality (Common factor variance)
	Emotion	**Behavior**	**Cognition**	
I like to study my current major	**0.617**			0.579
I'd like to work in relation to my major	**0.638**			0.555
My personality matches the major	**0.827**			0.712
My major can reflect my specialty	**0.818**			0.731
My ability can meet the requirements of professional study	**0.689**			0.65
I often read books related to my major		**0.572**		0.518
I will finish the major course assignment in time and seriously		**0.726**		0.579
My major performance is good		**0.596**		0.479
I actively participate in professional lectures and practical activities		**0.593**		0.462
I can listen to professional courses carefully		**0.764**		0.619
I spend a lot of time on my major		**0.613**		0.562
I forget most of the problems in my major study		**0.818**		
Professional learning affects my way of thinking			**0.742**	0.591
I admire the experts in my field			**0.705**	0.576
I think it's very substantial to learn a lot of professional knowledge			**0.647**	0.627
My purpose of learning professional knowledge is to deal with homework and exams			**0.754**	0.607

Table 4
KMO and Bartlett test

KMO		0.855
Bartlett Test	Approximate Chi-Square	2009.257
	df	136
	p	0

Table 5
Factor analysis of career decision-making difficulties

Dimention	Factor loading coefficient				Commonality (Common factor variance)
	Lack of self-knowledge	Fear	Lack of external information	Conflict	
I don't know which career to choose	**0.636**				0.592
I don't know what professions are related to my major	**0.587**				0.48

To be continued

Continued

Dimention	Factor loading coefficient				Commonality (Common factor variance)
	Lack of self-knowledge	Fear	Lack of external information	Conflict	
I haven't thought about what I'm suitable for	**0.774**				0.652
I don't know what my career requirements and expectations are	**0.815**				0.723
I have no sense of direction for my future career	**0.78**				0.733
I will take a step by step look at my career choice in the future	**0.614**				0.461
I'm afraid that the information I have is not comprehensive enough to make a decision		**0.677**			0.62
I'm afraid of missing out on my best career opportunities		**0.794**			0.673
I'm worried that the information I have is distorted or not objective		**0.811**			0.731
I'm afraid that my chosen career will not meet my expectations		**0.772**			0.675
I don't know the current employment situation			**0.694**		0.684
I can't predict the employment situation in the next few years			**0.801**		0.766
I don't understand the development trend of society			**0.827**		0.812
I don't understand the effective way to get career guidance and services			**0.711**		0.676
I can get the latest recruitment information quickly			**0.78**		
My personality, physical condition, etc. meet the requirements of my favorite occupation				**0.758**	
My favorite career prospects are not good				**0.578**	0.507
I disagree with my family, lover or friend on career choice				**0.856**	0.77
My family, lover or friend's career advice to me is inconsistent				**0.854**	0.756

3. SINGLE FACTOR ANALYSIS OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND CAREER DECISION-MAKING DIFFICULTIES

3.1 Gender Factors

It can be seen from Table 6 that gender has no significant difference in all dimensions of "professional identity", but there is a significant level of 0.05 in "Lack of self-knowledge" (t = -1.993, P = 0.047), It means that Lack self-knowledge in boys more than in girls, and there is a significant level of 0.01 in "Worry and Fear" (t = 3.034, P = 0.003), which means that girls are more worried about their own mistakes in career choice than boys. This is in line with the social reality. Girls are more hesitant and think too much about their career choices, resulting in higher scores for girls.

Table 6
Gender difference

Dimention	Gender(average±std)		t	p
	Female(n=203)	male(n=65)		
Cognition	3.46±0.52	3.64±0.22	-1.14	0.258
Bahvior	3.26±0.53	3.35±0.68	-0.942	0.349
Emotion	3.34±0.68	3.53±0.84	-1.771	0.078
Professional identity	3.34±0.48	3.43±0.65	-1.116	0.268
Conflict	2.56±0.78	2.55±0.91	0.124	0.902
Lack of self-knowledge	2.55±0.79	2.78±0.87	-1.993	0.047*
Fear	3.65±0.78	3.25±0.96	3.034	0.003**
Lack of external information	2.94±0.84	2.84±0.88	0.763	0.446
Career decision difficulty	2.95±0.58	2.86±0.3	0.928	0.354

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.2 Family Residence Factor

It can be seen from Table 7 that students with different family residences show differences in professional identity and career decision-making difficulties. Specifically speaking, the students with family residence in the city have higher professional identity than the rural students, and higher identity in "behavior" and "emotion"; the rural students have higher "career decision-making difficulty" than the urban students, and "lack of self-knowledge" and "lack of external information". The reason may be that urban students have more abundant information resources and contacts, and it is easier to collect some information about their major in filling in the college entrance examination and professional learning, and choose the major in line with their own ability and interest, so they get a higher score in the dimension of suitability.

Table 7
Family residence

Dimension	Family residence(average±std)		t	p
	rural(n=90)	city(n=178)		
Cognition	4.08±1.23	4.26±0.66	-1.613	0.108
Bahvior	3.15±0.51	3.34±0.59	-2.651	0.009**
Emotion	2.63±0.57	2.92±0.6	-3.765	0.000**
Professional identity	3.47±0.47	3.45±0.53	-3.763	0.000**
Conflict	2.69±0.76	2.5±0.83	1.868	0.063
Lack of self-knowledge	2.77±0.76	2.53±0.82	2.334	0.020*
Fear	3.60±0.83	3.53±0.85	0.688	0.492
Lack of external information	3.1±0.8	2.81±0.85	2.7	0.007**
Career decision difficulty	3.06±0.56	2.86±0.64	2.55	0.011*

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.3 Major Factors

From Table 8, it can be seen that there are significant differences in professional "cognition" among the three majors. The professional identity of students majoring in Human Resource Management > marketing > Business Administration. In terms of career decision-making, the difficulty of business administration in career decision-making is significantly higher than that of the other two majors, mainly reflected in "conflict" and "lack of external information". However, this data only shows the degree of difficulty in decision-making when college students of different majors are faced with career choice, which does not represent the degree of difficulty in employment.

Table 8
Major differences

Dimension	Major (average±std)			F	p
	HRM(n=111)	BM(n=92)	M(n=65)		
Cognition	4.36±1.13	4.1±0.69	4.1±0.63	3.038	0.050*
Bahvior	3.32±0.62	3.2±0.56	3.31±0.5	1.006	0.367
Emotion	2.9±0.64	2.79±0.57	2.72±0.58	2.079	0.127
Professional identity	3.43±0.54	3.3±0.53	3.33±0.5	1.658	0.192
Conflict	2.49±0.78	2.75±0.35	2.43±0.77	3.758	0.025*
Lack of self-knowledge	2.53±0.81	2.74±0.81	2.55±0.81	2.014	0.135
Fear	3.55±0.72	3.57±0.69	3.52±0.92	0.069	0.933
Lack of external information	2.79±0.84	3.13±0.74	2.78±0.93	5.075	0.007**
Career decision difficulty	2.86±0.62	3.07±0.54	2.85±0.69	3.62	0.028*

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.4 Professional Practice Factors

From Table 9, it can be seen that whether students participate in professional practice has a significant impact on professional cognition. Students who have participated in social practice have more professional identity in terms of "emotion" and "behavior", and significantly reduce the "worry and fear" in career decision-making. Through the part-time or internship experience related to the major, college students apply theoretical knowledge to practice, and have a deeper understanding of the major. In the process of internship, they gradually realize the match between themselves and the major and the post, which makes the professional identity score of college students with internship experience relatively higher.

Table 9
Professional practice

Dimension	Whether there is professional practice (average±std)		t	p
	N(n=204)	Y(n=64)		
Cognition	4.1±0.64	4.42±1.43	-1.587	0.117
Bahvior	3.22±0.57	3.45±0.54	-2.861	0.005**
Emotion	2.77±0.61	3.0±0.57	-2.664	0.008**
Professional identity	3.32±10.34	3.52±0.53	-2.748	0.006**
Conflict	2.56±0.8	2.57±0.84	-0.111	0.911
Lack of self-knowledge	2.63±0.8	2.52±0.87	0.981	0.328
Fear	3.64±0.77	3.27±0.99	2.695	0.008**
Lack of external information	2.96±0.82	2.77±0.89	1.507	0.133
Career decision difficulty	2.97±0.59	2.8±0.71	1.955	0.052

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

3.5 Professional Choice Intention

Table 10 shows that students with "independent choice" of major have significantly higher professional identity than students with "adjustment" of "parents and others' wishes", and have higher mean value in professional "cognition" and "emotion" dimensions. The results of this study are basically consistent with our reality: most of the students who choose their own major think that the chosen major is suitable for themselves or because of their interest. Their initiative is stronger, they have a certain understanding of the major and their professional emotions are also positive, which will make them work harder to complete professional learning tasks and explore professional knowledge. However, college students who choose and transfer majors according to their parents' or others' wishes, because their major choice is not the embodiment of their own will, especially those who are "transferred" majors, do not have strong interest in the major, so they are likely to have resistance and exclusion psychology, leading to their relatively low professional identity.

Table 1
Professional choice intention

Dimension	Independent choice (n=158)	Parents' or others' choice (n=39)	Transferred (n=70)		
Cognition	4.32±1.04	4.12±0.65	3.99±3.09	3.52	0.031*
Bahvior	3.32±0.54	3.21±0.7	3.23±0.58	0.88	0.016*
Emotion	2.95±0.59	2.76±0.59	2.58±0.58	9.673	0.000**
Professional identity	3.44±0.5	3.31±0.6	3.23±0.51	4.396	0.013*
Conflict	2.54±0.81	2.77±0.91	2.52±0.71	1.427	0.242
Lack of self-knowledge	2.58±0.8	2.71±0.88	2.62±0.82	0.387	0.679
Fear	3.52±0.86	3.62±0.84	3.57±0.80	0.217	0.805
Lack of external information	2.89±0.84	3.04±0.83	2.88±0.88	0.533	0.588
Career decision difficulty	2.9±0.6	3.05±0.71	2.92±0.62	0.874	0.418

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

4. HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION MODEL OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND CAREER DECISION-MAKING DIFFICULTIES

It can be seen from Table 11 that there is a significant negative correlation between college students' professional identity and career decision-making difficulties（R = -0.287, P < 0.01), and the four dimensions of professional identity were also negatively correlated with the total score of career decision-making difficulties. That is to say, the higher the professional identity of college students, the lower the difficulty of career decision-making. This is also basically consistent with our actual situation. The more college students recognize their major, the higher their enthusiasm for learning, and the better their professional development ability. Therefore, they show stronger professional ability and advantages in the process of career selection, and prefer to choose the field related to their major in career selection.

Table 11
Pearson correlation analysis of professional identity and career decision-making difficulties

Dimension	Conflict	Lack of self-knowledge	Fear	Lack of external information	Career decision difficulty
Cognition	-0.134*	-0.154*	-0.160**	-0.148*	-0.197**
Bahvior	-0.133*	-0.180**	-0.215**	-0.253**	-0.274**
Emotion	-0.192**	-0.242**	-0.159**	-0.232**	-0.280**
Professional **i**dentity	-0.161**	-0.228**	-0.178**	-0.272**	-0.287**

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01

In the hierarchical regression model, it mainly analyzes the influence of professional identity on career decision-making difficulty. The control variables, such as gender, major, grade, major choice intention, family residence, whether to participate in professional practice and so on, explain 4.8% of the reasons for the change of career decision-making difficulties. However, the R-square value increased from 0.048 to 0.101 after the "professional identity" variable was added, which means that professional identity can generate 5.3% explanation for career decision-making difficulties. Specifically, the regression coefficient of professional identity is -0.221, which shows a significant (t = -3.844, P = 0.000 < 0.01), which means that professional identity will have a significant negative impact on career decision-making difficulties.

Table 12
Hierarchical regression model

	Layering 1	Layering 2
Constant	38.880 (11.174**)	56.742 (9.867**)
Gender	-0.921 (-0.664)	-0.436 (-0.322)
Major	-0.107 (-0.140)	-0.194 (-0.261)
Grade	0.335 (0.314)	-0.010 (-0.010)
Major choice	0.168 (0.246)	-0.266 (-0.395)
Family residence	3.290 (2.609**)	2.358 (1.884)
Professional pratice	-2.803 (-1.954)	-1.584 (-1.106)
Professional identity		-0.221 (-3.844**)
Samples	261	261
R^2	0.048	0.101
Adjust R^2	0.018	0.069
F □	F (8,252)=1.603,p=0.124	F (9,251)=3.145,p=0.001
△R^2	0.048	0.053
△F value□	F (8,252)=1.603,p=0.124	F (1,251)=14.779,p=0.000
Dependent variable career decision making difficulty		

5. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

From the above analysis, we can see that the degree of recognition and the degree of difficulty in professional decision-making of human resource management, business administration, marketing are all in the middle level, which shows that the degree of difficulty in professional decision-making of college students has a lot of room for improvement, so it is imperative to reduce and improve the degree of difficulty in professional decision-making of college students. At the same time, the research shows that the higher the degree of professional identity, the lower the difficulty of career decision-making. The more college students recognize their major, the higher their enthusiasm for learning, and the more professional advantages they will show in their future career choices. When choosing a career, the goal is more clear and the difficulty of career decision-making is lower. Therefore, there are the following policy recommendations:

• Strengthen the professional guidance of college entrance examination. Interests and hobbies are my career direction. If you have a specialty in your field, you will achieve success in your own interest. In the research, it is found that the students who choose their major independently have higher professional identity, while the students who choose their major passively, especially the students who adjust their major, often lack understanding of the major or have no interest at all. The goal of professional learning is to cope with the examination and obtain the degree certificate, and the professional identity is generally low. Therefore, our school should strengthen the professional guidance of college entrance examination students' voluntary filling in and reporting, and enhance the students' understanding of the major through professional teachers' explanation, video publicity, on-site visit and other ways.

• Through the mixed teaching mode, enhance students' professional interest and enhance their professional identity. Through mixed teaching and individualized teaching, we can give full play to the advantages of online and offline teaching, Online learning enables students to basically master the basic knowledge points. Offline, after the teacher's check of the deficiencies and key breakthroughs, the rest is to organize students to consolidate and flexibly apply the basic knowledge learned online through carefully designed classroom teaching activities as the carrier. The meeting between teachers and students can be used to achieve some more advanced teaching objectives, so that students have more opportunities to participate in learning at the cognitive

level, rather than paying special attention to whether students sit in the classroom as before, which can make some students with low professional identity rekindle their interest in professional learning.

• Enhance students' professional practice through various forms. It is found that professional practice can effectively improve students' professional identity and reduce the difficulty of career decision-making. Therefore, during the University, students should learn more about their major and be familiar with the work content through professional practice and discipline competition.

• More attention should be paid to vocational guidance for rural students. Let them understand themselves, explore themselves, help them get more information from the outside world, and reduce the difficulty of career decision-making.

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