

RESEARCH ON JD-R-BASED EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE ENHANCEMENT FOR PRIVATE UNIVERSITY COUNSELORS

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Abstract:

Private university counselors are crucial players in ideological and political education and student management. Their career guidance skills directly impact the quality of graduate employment and the level of talent development within universities. However, current private university counselors' career guidance skills are generally plagued by issues such as unclear role positioning, formalized guidance content, a lack of personalized solutions, and a disconnect between theory and practice. Based on the Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R model), this paper constructs a mechanism for improving the career guidance skills of private university counselors from three dimensions: job resources, job requirements, and personal resources. The paper proposes pathways for improvement, including cognitive restructuring, skill empowerment, ecosystem construction, and evaluation and incentives. The results demonstrate that the JD-R model can effectively optimize counselors' career guidance skills, promote high-quality student employment, and is of great significance to the sustainable development of private universities.

Keywords: Private University, Counselors, Career Guidance, JD-R Model, Capacity Improvement Mechanism.

Author:

Zhuang Linyi (Faculty of Liberal Arts, Perdana University, Malaysia; Minnan University of Science and Technology, China)

Correspondence: 24210107@perdanauniversity.edu.my

1. Introduction

College counselors are the backbone of ideological and political education for college students. They are the organizers, implementers, and instructors of daily ideological and political education and management for college students. Counselors are guiding lights on the path of growth for college students, life mentors for their growth and development, and close friends who support their healthy lives. To become a college counselor, one must possess all the necessary qualifications and fulfill all the responsibilities of a counselor. One of a counselor's responsibilities is to provide students with scientific career planning, employment guidance, and related services, helping them establish correct employment concepts, guiding them to gain and apply what they have learned, and promoting their early and rapid employment.

In recent years, the scale of higher education in China has continued to expand. As a crucial component of higher education, private universities shoulder the heavy responsibility of cultivating national talent. The competence of counselors directly impacts the quality of talent development in universities, becoming a key factor influencing the "fourth team" of a university, on par with teaching, research, and management. However, the competence of counselors in private universities, particularly in career guidance, has been slow to develop, directly impacting the effectiveness of talent development and the employment quality of graduates. Improving the career guidance skills of counselors in private universities has become a top priority.

2. Analysis of the Current Status of Employment Guidance Ability of Counselors in Private Colleges Universities

Current Status of Counselor Work: With the changing times and social development, the number, level, and scale of private colleges and universities have continued to expand. As college counselors have become an integral part of the faculty and a teaching profession, the number of counselors in private colleges and universities has shown an upward trend. However, counselors vary widely in quality, ranging from undergraduates to master's graduates. Their professional titles range from teaching assistants to associate professors (or associate researchers). Their positions range from part-time positions in the Youth League and Party organizations. Their responsibilities range from life-saving "nannies" and safety "firefighters" to academic tracking and career guidance services. They are available 24 hours a day, Monday through Sunday.

Current Status of Counselors' Employment Guidance Capabilities: " College graduates are a valuable talent resource. Achieving high-quality, full employment for tens of millions of young people is crucial to overall economic and social development." As the primary force in university student employment, counselors' employability is particularly crucial. However, the employment guidance capabilities of

counselors in private universities present several challenges: First, their roles are unclear. Most counselors are primarily clerical, spending the majority of their time clocking in and out, checking students' arrival at class, going to bed, and completing forms, marginalizing career guidance. Second, career guidance classes are often formalistic, with counselors typically conducting group lectures with large groups, general content, outdated case studies, and little interaction, resulting in poor results. Third, individualized guidance plans are lacking, and coverage of one-on-one career counseling is low. Fourth, counselors have limited opportunities to enhance their practical skills, conduct in-depth research within enterprises and institutions, and lag behind in their understanding of industry information. Fifth, counselors' theoretical development and research capabilities are weak. Few counselors are proficient in using big data platforms to analyze employment trends, and few have published employment-related research papers or written research projects.

Analysis of the Causes: While private universities are increasing in number and scale, they face shortcomings at the institutional, institutional, and individual levels. First, at the institutional level, the focus of private university publicity remains on "enrollment over employment." Most universities only consider student employment prospects during enrollment, only consider whether professional training programs are aligned with employment requirements when applying for admission, and only consider the low employment rates of certain majors and the disparity between employment and enrollment funding at the time of admission. Assessments primarily prioritize campus safety and stability, and student academic performance, resulting in a low percentage of career guidance outcomes. Second, at the institutional level, there are multiple government departments. Counselors are subject to multiple management levels, including the Student Affairs Office, the Communist Youth League Committee, the Academic Affairs Office, and secondary colleges (departments). Daily, they face dozens of notifications and student incidents, leaving them with little time to improve their academic qualifications, professional titles, research innovation, and career guidance skills. Third, at the individual level, counselors lack professional identity, and many use counseling as a temporary stepping stone, switching roles as soon as suitable jobs become available. Counselor training is fragmented in both timing and content, often focusing on administrative matters and safety education, and lacks systematic, professional training.

3. The Significance of Improving Counselors' Employment Guidance Capabilities

Faced with the reality that private universities have limited educational resources, an imperfect educational system, and inadequate implementation of benchmarking, faced with the reality that the professional ability and professional level of the counselors in private universities directly affect the development of education in private universities, faced with the reality that the work content of counselors in private universities is relatively tedious and they undertake various student affairs

management work in addition to teaching, this paper analyzes the significance of improving the employment guidance ability of counselors.

Improving the career guidance skills of counselors at private universities meets the real needs of talent development in society. The ultimate goal of university talent development programs is to address student employment, especially in recent years, with tens of millions of university graduates annually. How, where, and how to find good jobs have become national priorities, a vital public welfare project, and a catalyst for social stability. As key venues for talent development and the leading force behind university employment efforts, universities and counselors must enhance their career guidance capabilities.

Improving the career guidance capabilities of counselors at private universities is an inevitable requirement for counselor team building in the new era. With university counselors becoming an important component of both the faculty and management teams and a profession, the development of the counselor team has entered a new phase and must adhere to new professional competency standards, establishing basic norms, guidelines, and foundations for student work. The professional competency standards for university counselors include career guidance capabilities, with "career planning and employment guidance" as a separate professional function, listing specific work content, competency requirements, and relevant theoretical and knowledge requirements.

Improving the career guidance skills of counselors at private universities is a crucial pillar for their sustainable development. The five core functions of universities are talent cultivation, scientific research, social service, cultural heritage and innovation, and international exchange and cooperation. Talent cultivation is the most core and fundamental function. The goal of talent cultivation is to cultivate socially useful talents, solve student employment problems, and thus better serve society. As a key force in higher education, the key to promoting sustainable development in private universities lies in the quantity and quality of talent cultivation. However, this vital force in promoting high-quality student employment is inseparable from counselors and their career guidance skills.

4. Construction of the Jd-R Model for Improving Counselors' Career Guidance Ability

Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R Model). The Job Demands-Resources Theory (D-R) is an important theoretical framework for explaining the balance between workplace stress and work effectiveness. Proposed by scholars such as Demerouti in the early 21st century, the JD-R model centers around the two dimensions of job demands and job resources. By analyzing the interplay between job demands and job resources, it reveals the mechanisms linking employee psychological states and organizational performance, providing a scientific basis for management practice.

4.1 Main contents of the “JD-R Model” for improving counselors’ employability

Work Resources: First, organizational support (training and assessment): The school prioritizes counselors' career guidance, supports them in participating in various employment training programs, and incorporates career guidance into performance appraisals. Second, professional communities (mentors and peer exchange): Establish a team of career guidance experts to strengthen students' career and employment guidance, implement "one-on-one" guidance, and promote student employment. Third, technology platforms (big data, AI tools): Apply big data platforms or AI tools to analyze student unemployment information and understand the reasons for students' slow or delayed employment. Fourth, school-enterprise cooperation resources: Deepen school-enterprise collaboration to expand the employment market and create more job opportunities.

Job Requirements: First, the pressure of policy interpretation: familiarize yourself with various national and local employment policies for college students, explain these policies to students promptly and accurately, and provide effective career guidance. Second, address the diverse needs of students: listen to the employment aspirations and needs of young college students in the new era, and understand their desire for "no rush for employment" and "stability." Third, data tracking tasks: understand the market demand for talent, provide information on suitable job positions for students, follow up on students' resume submission, interviews, and hiring, and provide effective guidance when appropriate. Fourth, role conflict: view student employment from the perspective of both the university and society, promoting student employment, while also addressing issues such as "slow employment," "delayed employment," and "lack of employment" from the student's perspective.

Personal resources: First, career counselors: The school assigns full-time and part-time career counselors based on the student-teacher ratio, and encourages counselors to obtain certification. Second, psychological and educational knowledge: Counselors utilize their spare time to acquire knowledge in psychology and education. Third, self-efficacy: Focus on improving their overall competence to meet students' diverse employment needs. Fourth, reflective practice: While guiding and promoting student employment, students should constantly reflect on their achievements and shortcomings.

Construction of the JD-R Model: Based on the explanation of work resources, work requirements, and personal resources, and targeting the current situation of the employment capabilities of counselors in private universities, we propose the construction of a JD-R model to improve counselors' employment guidance capabilities, as shown in Figure 1.

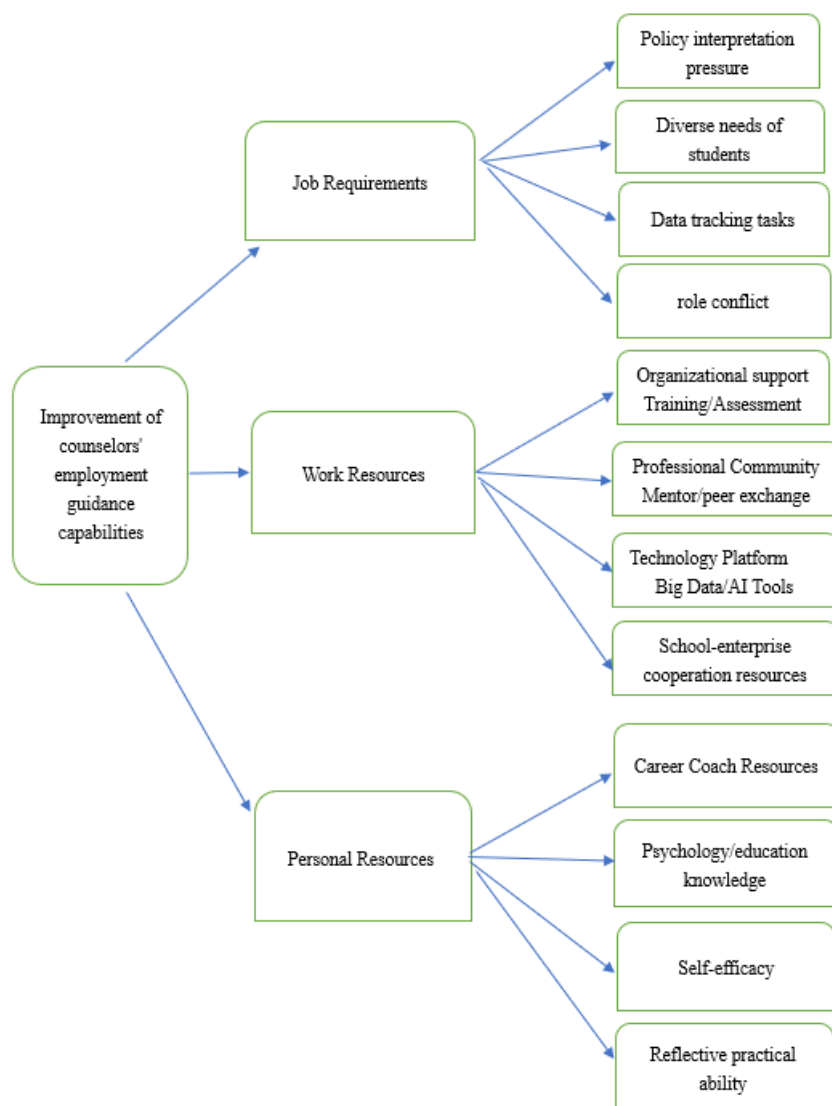


Figure 1. The JD-R model for improving counselors' employability

Paths to improve counselors' career guidance abilities based on the JD-R model. The JD-R model of counselor employability constructed above, we will optimize it from the dimensions of cognitive reconstruction, skill empowerment, ecological construction, evaluation and incentives, and discuss the path to improve counselor employability based on each dimension.

Cognitive Reshaping. First, conduct situational education to understand the current job market from national, local, social, and industry perspectives, gain a clear understanding of the current employment landscape, and integrate career guidance courses to guide students towards effective employment. Second, focus on policy updates. Career guidance must simultaneously meet the diverse needs of different types of students, taking into account both students' job-seeking and their desire for stability. Career guidance methods and strategies must be constantly updated to ensure effective guidance.

Skill Empowerment. First, we will focus on vocational skills training, such as GCDF training, psychological counselor training, and AI application training, to improve counselors' career guidance

skills. This will ensure that counselors are proficient in using big data, AI, and other tools to stay abreast of job market demand information, promptly promote jobs suitable for students' majors, and help them find employment as soon as possible. Second, we will strengthen individual supervision. Every student has unique characteristics, and one-on-one guidance is most effective. We will use big data to analyze each student's individual employment situation, accurately promote appropriate job information to students, and promote high-quality employment for students.

Ecosystem Construction. First, strengthen school-enterprise cooperation. According to the school's talent training plan, identify suitable enterprises to establish co-construction relationships, jointly develop school-enterprise courses and internship training bases, demonstrate the effectiveness of talent training, stimulate students' interest in their majors, build their confidence in mastering their majors, and master solid professional skills to better serve society. Second, implement on-the-job internships, giving counselors the opportunity to work in enterprises, gain a more direct understanding of the hardships and joys of the enterprises' production practices, and gain direct work experience, which is more conducive to guiding students' academic and employment prospects.

Evaluation and Incentives. Including counselors' employment quality assessment as a key component of their annual performance appraisals directly impacts their career development. Employment quality (not simply placement rate) can be incorporated into counselors' KPI assessments. Based on the principle of "rewarding excellence and punishing laxity," this can motivate counselors to promote student employment and enhance their employability.

5. Conclusion

In general, improving the career guidance capabilities of counselors at private universities, addressing the challenges of imperfect institutional mechanisms for developing these capabilities, and deeply analyzing the underlying causes, should be crucial. This should lead to exploring avenues for enhancing counselors' career guidance skills. Based on the JD-R model, counselors should diligently focus on cognitive reshaping, skill empowerment, ecosystem development, and evaluation and incentives. We believe that through the joint efforts of private universities, counselors themselves, and all sectors of society, the career guidance capabilities of counselors at private universities will be significantly enhanced.

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