Research on the Influence of Vocational Interest of Vocational College Students on the Professional Learning Effectiveness

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Abstract: This study investigates how various occupational interests among students in higher vocational colleges impact their learning outcomes. It develops a theoretical model linking six occupational interest types to learning outcomes, gathering data from 390 valid responses via online surveys. Analysis was performed using SPSS 24.0 software to assess the relationship between occupational interests and learning outcomes, incorporating both reliability and validity tests, followed by multiple linear regression to evaluate the research hypotheses. Findings indicate that interests in vocational, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional areas positively influence professional learning outcomes. Notably, social occupational interests demonstrate the most significant positive impact, whereas conventional interests have the least effect on learning outcomes. Conclusively, the study offers targeted recommendations for students, parents, and educators. It highlights the necessity of aligning students' occupational interests with educational programs to enhance learning outcomes, advocating for concerted efforts from all stakeholders to support students' academic and professional growth. This tailored approach aims to foster an educational environment that maximizes students' potential and academic success.

Keywords: Vocational Students, Career Interests, Professional Learning Effectiveness

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

When students complete their high school education and enter university, if they choose their majors without clear understanding or awareness, they might not be aware of their career interests. It is crucial for universities to expect each student to choose their majors based on their interests, so that students can have a sufficient understanding of their interests to choose the appropriate major. The type of career interest of the students becomes very important (Huang et al., 2019; Weng et al., 2021).

Autonomous action emphasizes a student-centered learning approach, enhancing students' ability to learn independently. Due to the diversity of elective courses available, students can choose majors that match their interest types and future career paths, and the increase in mastery of the learning content can also boost their confidence. Both of these factors can effectively improve learning outcomes (Feng, 2020; Cui, 2021).

Core literacy simply refers to the ability to solve problems that a person cultivates for living, which can be divided into the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that should be possessed (Jiang & Dong, 2020). The educational philosophy of Chinese vocational colleges aims to enable students to understand their interests better through autonomy, uniqueness, and diversity, and through diverse explorations. Whether currently studying or entering the workforce in the future, the enhancement of interest in this field can cultivate sufficient professional ability to solve problems when they arise (Weng et al., 2021).

Professional literacy is significantly related to the learning content required in students' actual life fields or the professional skills needed in the future workplace. Core literacy emphasizes that the focus is no longer on taking exams for the sake of exams or exam-led teaching that focuses only on academic knowledge, but rather emphasizes the concept of integrating knowledge with action, and unity of knowledge and practice. Compared to the flexibility of future advancement and learning content of students in higher vocational education, the course content of vocational education appears to be more fixed and
limited in terms of advancement opportunities. Therefore, for a vocational student, it is even more important to be able to enter a major that matches their interest type. 

Vocational schools emphasize that students explore their interests and future career choices during their three years of study, thus the focus of education shifts to enabling students to learn professional skills directly applicable to the workplace. It is also set that students entering vocational education should have a thorough understanding of the professional content they choose. Therefore, understanding the career interests of vocational students, as well as their expectations for their career directions, can greatly help students choose majors, pick courses that meet their needs, and reduce the gap between psychological and actual professional differences (Li, 2022).

The better one understands their career interests, the clearer the direction of the major they choose to study. The better the fit between an individual's career interest type and the major they study, the better their academic performance. As long as students can understand their career interests early in the learning process and find suitable fields, this can effectively improve learning outcomes (Huang et al., 2019), and through the arrangement of the curriculum syllabus, it is hoped to obtain practical skills for facing the workplace in the future. These professional skills will further help students prepare early for potential difficulties in the future workplace, thereby increasing their problem-solving skills and confidence, leading to self-efficacy. Whether it is career interest type or self-efficacy, research has found a significant impact on learning outcomes (Bandura, 1999; Wang & Yuan, 2020; Li, 2021). However, research on the impact of different career interest types of vocational students on academic performance is still lacking, hence the background of this study is established.

1.2 Research Motivation

According to the research findings of multiple scholars (Oswald et al., 2019; Wille et al., 2020), it is evident that, regardless of being in China or abroad, at the high school and university stages, there is still a very high proportion of students who are unable to clearly understand the content of their studies and feel lost regarding their future major or career choices.

In such situations, when vocational students enter a major only to discover it does not align with their career interests, the difficulty of switching majors or choosing to study at another vocational college significantly increases. Therefore, rethinking how to help vocational students possess sufficient career competencies, so they can choose majors that match their career interest types, become more motivated to learn, improve learning outcomes, and have enough confidence to choose what they love, is also something researchers hope to provide more assistance and guidance to students who face career choice difficulties or poor adaptation to their majors in the actual teaching field.

With the advent of the information age, traditional vocational education, which emphasized the cultivation of a specific skill, now faces the challenge of lifelong learning, placing even greater emphasis on the cultivation of core literacy skills. Literacy skills represent the individual's ability to choose the most appropriate and suitable problem-solving skills in daily situations, whether in learning environments or at work, centered on themselves. Planning, executing, and innovating flexibility emphasize that during the learning process, students should have the capacity to prepare and act, developing skills and experiences that can be followed in adapting to environments and facing emergencies. These abilities signify that students can have a full understanding of the professional content and future career fields under the professional training in schools. People can increase their mastery and confidence to overcome potential problems with increased understanding of unknown fields, which is what we refer to as the essence of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Talsma et al., 2019).

Yan et al. (2021) pointed out in their study that for cases with difficulties in career decision-making, having sufficient ability to explore interests is a key factor for successful choices. Practitioners in the educational field should consider how to help students ignite the motivation to explore career interests and have sufficient ability to choose what they love. During the exploration process, various interest inventories, career belief scales, and vocational tests can be used to help students focus, allowing students with doubts about their career choices to have enough confidence to face future challenges through the interpretation of test results (Huang, 2020).

In summary, when vocational students go through the process of matching their career interests with their chosen majors, there may arise situations where the chosen major does not align with their career interest types, leading to a lack of enthusiasm and poorer
academic performance. This sparked the motivation for this study. Therefore, this research aims to explore the impact of different career interest categories on academic performance among vocational students.

1.3 Research Significance

Theoretical Significance: The Expectancy-Value Theory emphasizes that the actual learning outcomes of certain subjects, self-identification, and the presence of learning interest interact with each other and are closely linked. Based on this theory, it is believed that the career interest of vocational college students is the match between themselves and their major. The stronger the students' interest, or the better the match of interest types, the more energy they will invest in learning professional knowledge. At the same time, the more interested they are in a major, the higher their confidence will be, which in turn leads to higher levels of autonomous learning behavior. Therefore, exploring the relationship between vocational college students' career interest and their academic performance in their majors provides a theoretical basis for better cultivating students' career interests and for schools to offer and enhance specialized courses based on students' career interests.

Practical Significance: Studying the career interests of students in vocational schools not only allows for more tailored teaching methods, enabling students to be more fully engaged in learning, enhancing their satisfaction with learning, and improving the effectiveness of their professional studies, but also helps them to effectively cope with university life. Moreover, through career interests, students accumulate valuable practical experience in advance, allowing them to directly enter the workforce upon graduation, significantly reducing the time for employee training and adaptation to the work environment, and to some extent, reducing employment pressure for graduates (Wang, 2022). Therefore, this study provides certain references for the real-world problems that vocational college students will face upon graduation in terms of their career interests and the effectiveness of their professional studies.

1.4 Research Innovation

Innovation in the research subjects. Previous studies on career interests in China have mainly focused on working professionals (Bi et al., 2021), preschool teachers (Chen et al., 2021), secondary vocational students (Zhang, 2020), and medical students (Zhao et al., 2020), with much of the research on vocational college students' career interests being qualitative or based on current status surveys, neglecting the educational model of vocational college students. Therefore, this study targets vocational college students as its research subjects, differentiating from past studies that focused on students from regular universities. This constitutes one of the innovations of this research.

Innovation in the research model: Previous studies have found a significant positive relationship between career interest and learning outcomes (Zhang & Cheng, 2017); however, whether the relationship between different categories of career interests, akin to different personality traits, and learning outcomes changes remains unknown. Thus, this study is based on the Expectancy-Value Theory and further explores the impact of six types of career interests on professional learning outcomes. It aims to create a model based on the professional learning outcomes of vocational college students, which constitutes the second innovation of this research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

2.1.1 Congruence Theory

The theory of congruence, also known as the fit theory, proposed by Holland and Leinhardt (1973), posits that an individual's career choice is a reflection of their inherent psychological traits. Holland believed that the choice of career is influenced by an individual's accumulated experiences and the interplay of psychological traits, leading individuals with similar backgrounds and psychological traits to choose similar types of occupations. Consequently, workers in similar occupational fields tend to have similar career interest traits and exhibit similar reactions to situations and analogous problem-solving patterns (Sween & Reyns, 2017; Xu & Pratt, 2018). This theory suggests that the degree of harmony between personality types and environments is related to occupational stability and achievement. For an individual to make the best career choice, they must achieve a fit between their typical personal style and the occupational environment. Holland pointed out that career guidance counselors within the school system play a crucial role in providing career information, helping students understand themselves, and acquainting them with the
working world to achieve suitable career development (Li, 2021).

2.1.2 Cognitive-Motivational Model of Learning Emotions:

Pekrun et al. (2002) proposed the cognitive-motivational model of learning emotions, suggesting that the closer an individual's workplace or learning environment is to their type of interest, the higher the positive emotions displayed. This, in turn, drives a series of related responses, including identification with the workplace, motivation to learn professional skills, and enhanced learning outcomes.

2.2 Career Interest and Professional Learning Outcomes

Career interest is defined as a pattern formed through the interaction between an individual's personality traits and their environment, facilitating the adaptation to the environment and specific preferences, thus aiding in career choices and preference assessments (Holland, 1997). Professional learning outcomes refer to the professional abilities related to students' career development and the completion of career tasks, key factors for accurately completing daily work or assigned tasks (Anthony et al., 2019), and represent the traits and conditions essential for an individual's career (Delisle et al., 2019).

Luo (2021) noted that vocational school students enter schools to learn skills, and the curriculum arranged by the schools provides proper career goals. The study found that vocational school students with more years of work experience have a better perception of career planning and different ideas about their chosen majors. Individual intentions can affect future job choices, reflecting on self-judgments about suitability for the industry and professional advancement. Yi (2021) explored the motivations for choosing majors and the skills learned in school by vocational students to see if they can meet future job requirements. The study of vocational students' internship experiences revealed that the main factors affecting students' entry into internship workplaces include self-efficacy in improving work capabilities learned from courses, expected salary compensation, social support from family, and career interest developed during the internship. Positive internship experiences can influence the establishment of professional functions in the workplace and the confidence to choose a suitable profession.

Professional skills, work attitudes, and professional learning outcomes have become essential abilities for workers, with professional learning outcomes being necessary skills for career success. Literature shows that career interest can directly affect professional learning outcomes. The subjects of this study are vocational students, who, according to Super’s (1980) Life-Career Development Theory, are in the Exploration stage, focusing on constructing an understanding of various professions and shaping the beginning of professional learning outcomes through school education, engaging in self-exploration to find the most suitable future career field.

Career interest can be interpreted as an individual's inherent psychological trait, so when an individual's inner traits match the professional environment or major, their work performance and desire and interest in learning professional skills significantly increase. The aim of vocational schools is to emphasize the development of students' problem-solving abilities, following the cultivation of professional skills that can later be elevated to problem-solving competencies for the workplace.

Therefore, when students choose majors they are interested in, it tends to trigger their interest in learning, which can be reflected in their career interests. When the state of interest is high, it also makes it easier to enhance one's capability for professional learning outcomes. Based on the above, this paper proposes the following research hypotheses:

H1: Practical career interest among vocational students has a positive impact on professional learning outcomes.
H2: Investigative career interest among vocational students has a positive impact on professional learning outcomes.
H3: Artistic career interest among vocational students has a positive impact on professional learning outcomes.
H4: Social career interest among vocational students has a positive impact on professional learning outcomes.
H5: Enterprising career interest among vocational students has a positive impact on professional learning outcomes.
H6: Conventional career interest among vocational students has a positive impact on professional learning outcomes.
2.3 Research Framework

This study explores the impact of vocational students' career interests on professional learning outcomes. Based on the research objectives and literature review, a research framework is proposed that includes six types of career interests and professional learning outcomes. The independent variable is career interest, and the dependent variable is professional learning outcomes, as shown in Figure 1.

![Research Framework](image)

3. Research Methods and Design

3.1 Research Tools

Career Interest: Based on Holland’s (1997) career interest types, there are six types of career interests: 1. Realistic; 2. Investigative; 3. Artistic; 4. Social; 5. Enterprising; 6. Conventional. A Likert 5-point scale is used, with a total of 30 questionnaire items for the career interest fit scale, each dimension having 5 measurement items. The Cronbach’s α value is 0.943, indicating high internal consistency within the scale.

Professional Learning Outcomes: Utilizes the scale from Lin (2011) in the article "Survey Analysis on the Impact of Vocational Students' Professional Interests on Learning Outcomes," consisting of 10 measurement items, using a Likert 5-point scale. The higher the score, the higher the learning outcomes. The Cronbach’s α value is 0.893, showing high internal consistency within the scale.

3.2 Sampling Subjects and Methods

Henan A College has been listed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance as a high-level professional group construction unit. It ranks first in terms of strength among vocational colleges in Henan Province, with a wide range of majors and a large student body. This makes the students of this college suitable research subjects for this paper's study on career interest types and professional learning outcomes, providing a rich sample that is representative of the study's settings.

According to the official website of the college, there are more than 20,000 students. The sample size calculation formula from Dillman (2000) is used: \( n = \frac{p(1-p)}{e^2 / z^2 + p(1-p)/N} \). Setting the confidence interval at 95% and maintaining an error range of no more than ±0.05, the minimum sample size calculated is 361.

4. Results

4.1 Survey Sample

This survey collected 400 questionnaires online. After excluding 10 invalid questionnaires with consistently identical responses, there were 390 valid questionnaires. There were 189 male respondents, accounting for 48.5% of the sample, and 201 females, accounting for 51.5% of the sample; the majority of respondents came from town-level origins, with 147 people, making up 37.7% of the sample, followed by county-level origins with 118 people, accounting for 30.3%, county-level and above origins with 83 people, accounting for 21.3%, and the fewest from rural origins, with 42 people, making up 10.8% of the sample; majors were primarily in the humanities, with 159 people, accounting for 41.8% of the sample, followed by science with 125 people, accounting for 32.1%, and the fewest in arts and engineering, with 62 and 44 people respectively, each accounting for 15.9% and 11.3% of the sample. The survey results are consistent with actual situations, indicating that the collected sample is representative.

4.2 Validity Analysis

To explore the construct validity of the scale, exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The 30 measurement items of career interest and the 10 items of professional learning outcomes were incorporated into the exploratory factor analysis. The analysis yielded a KMO value of 0.869, allowing for subsequent factor analysis. As shown in Table 1, seven factors with initial eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, with a cumulative rotation load squared sum of 72.828%. It is generally considered that a cumulative rotated load squared sum greater than 50% indicates that the factors can well explain the observed variables. Here, it can be considered that seven factors can explain 72.828% of the variance of 40 observed variables. All measurement items were rotated to their corresponding dimensions, indicating that the scales used in this paper have good construct validity.
4.3 Correlation Analysis

As shown in Table 2, there is a significant positive correlation between professional learning outcomes and Realistic ($r = 0.452, p < 0.05$), Investigative ($r = 0.507, p < 0.05$), Artistic ($r = 0.498, p < 0.05$), Social ($r = 0.508, p < 0.05$), Enterprising ($r = 0.452, p < 0.05$), and Conventional ($r = 0.246, p < 0.05$) types of career interest, preliminarily verifying the research hypotheses.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

To test the impact relationship between the five categories of career interests and professional learning outcomes, a multiple linear regression was conducted. As shown in Table 3, the five categories of career interests (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional) served as independent variables, and professional learning outcomes as the dependent variable. The model displayed an $F$ value of 53.542, which is significant; $R^2$ is 0.657, and the adjusted $R^2$ is 0.424, indicating that the independent variables, the five categories of career interests, explain 42.4% of the variance in professional learning outcomes. In the model's standardized regression coefficients, vocational students' Realistic career interest positively impacts professional learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.248, p < 0.01$), Investigative career interest positively impacts professional learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.287, p < 0.001$), Artistic career interest positively impacts professional learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.317, p < 0.001$), Social career interest positively impacts professional learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.280, p < 0.001$), Enterprising career interest positively impacts professional learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.214, p < 0.05$), and Conventional career interest positively impacts professional learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.178, p < 0.05$), supporting hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6. From the order of the impact coefficients, it can be seen that the Social career interest has the largest impact on professional learning outcomes, while the Conventional career interest has the least impact.

Table 1. Exploratory Factor Analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>PLO</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Enterprising</th>
<th>Investigative</th>
<th>Realistic</th>
<th>Artistic</th>
<th>Conventional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLO-10</td>
<td>.857</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-3</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.737</td>
<td>.708</td>
<td>.764</td>
<td>.684</td>
<td>.645</td>
<td>.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-5</td>
<td>.829</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-7</td>
<td>.825</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-8</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-1</td>
<td>.804</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-2</td>
<td>.788</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-3</td>
<td>.791</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO-4</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO-6</td>
<td>.754</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-2</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-1</td>
<td>.737</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
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<td>Social-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social-4</td>
<td>.645</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.809</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the order of the impact coefficients, it can be seen that the Social career interest has the largest impact on professional learning outcomes, while the Conventional career interest has the least impact.
Table 2. Correlation Matrix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Realistic</th>
<th>Investigative</th>
<th>Artistic</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Enterprising</th>
<th>Conventional</th>
<th>PLO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigative</td>
<td>.354**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>.430**</td>
<td>.540**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>.476**</td>
<td>.456**</td>
<td>.411**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>.403**</td>
<td>.482**</td>
<td>.429**</td>
<td>.412**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>.148**</td>
<td>.217**</td>
<td>.195**</td>
<td>.182**</td>
<td>.278**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>.452**</td>
<td>.507**</td>
<td>.498**</td>
<td>.508**</td>
<td>.452**</td>
<td>.246**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: **p<0.01

Table 3. Regression Analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Adj R²</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-0.920</td>
<td>0.235</td>
<td>-3.916</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>0.282</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.248</td>
<td>3.339</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigative</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>3.937</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>53.542***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>3.869</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>0.380</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>4.783</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>0.230</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>2.506</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>2.018</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Sources: ***p<0.001; DV=PLO

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The scales of career interest and professional learning outcomes used in this study have passed reliability and validity analyses. Through regression analysis, it was found that all six dimensions of career interest have a significant positive impact on professional learning outcomes. It was observed that the Social type of career interest has the most significant impact on professional learning outcomes, followed in order by Investigative, Artistic, Realistic, Enterprising, and Conventional types.

5.2 Recommendations

For students:
(1) Understand the reasons for career indecision: Is it due to not knowing what one wants, too many options making it hard to choose, or family expectations that may be unachievable or unwanted, all of which can lead to decision anxiety.

(2) Analyze why one doubts their career choices: For some students, the inability to choose appropriately stems from their personality traits, such as a tendency to procrastinate, low self-concept, or incorrect career beliefs. Others find their chosen path unsuitable after making a choice, such as not achieving a sense of accomplishment in new environments or lacking interpersonal skills, leading to feelings of loneliness or depression.

(3) Actively seek resources for assistance: Career maladaptation leading to stunted career development could be due to personal traits. It’s recommended to utilize school resources for help, such as discussing with counseling teachers, participating in social skills training groups, or, if mild, engaging in on- and off-campus club activities to train interpersonal skills.

For parents:
Strengthen understanding of current systems to assist children in career choices: Parents can help by learning about the current education system, industry trends, and course content, not just applying their own experiences but understanding and resolving differences in career choices with their children. Supportive family environments play a key role in fostering students’ self-efficacy, thus empowering them to choose their future career paths effectively.

For educational institutions:
When encountering students with low fit for their chosen profession, teachers could use individualized teaching strategies and assessment methods to instill a sense of achievement and confidence in students. This can create a positive feedback loop, triggering interest in learning and enhancing the positive impact of career interest types on professional learning outcomes. Hence, if students can fully understand the content and actively seek help when falling behind, or if the environment provides ample resources to help them overcome learning bottlenecks, it will be beneficial for building their mastery and confidence in learning. Schools should strive to create an environment that encourages students to take initiative and express themselves, thereby improving their learning outcomes.

Regardless of the stakeholders involved - students, parents, or educational institutions - there should be a concerted effort to help students fully understand their interests and find corresponding majors, while also strengthening their self-efficacy to enhance the positive effects of career interest types on professional learning outcomes. This approach aims to enable each student to successfully navigate their career path and excel in the future workplace.

5.3 Limitations and Future Directions
As mentioned in the limitations, different types of schools and regional disparities in China can greatly affect the results. The variation even within the same school across different classes or majors can be significant. Future researchers could enhance their studies by increasing the diversity of samples from different vocational colleges and regions, and by strengthening the dimensions chosen for professional learning outcomes to achieve more in-depth findings.

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