

The Vocational Ability, Vocational Motivation and Professional Identity of Xiamen University Teachers

Xi Huang*, Dr. Lorna A. Espeso

Graduate School, Adamson University, CO 1000, Philippines

* Corresponding author: Xi Huang (Email: 763439323@qq.com)

Abstract: With the rapid development of China's higher education, the quality of teachers is becoming more and more important. On the one hand, the vocational ability of college teachers directly affects the effectiveness of higher education; On the other hand, the vocational motivation of college teachers determines the efficiency of higher education. Therefore, whether from the perspective of higher education development, reform, or university management, it is of great theoretical significance and practical value to discuss the professional ability and motivation of university teachers. A modern higher education system cannot be separated from a stable and high-quality teaching team. In order to maintain the stability of the team and continuously improve the professional quality, it is necessary to cultivate the professional identity of college teachers. Professional identity is the recognition degree of college teachers to higher education. Only teachers with strong professional identity can devote themselves to the cause of higher education. Only by systematically summarizing the current situation of professional ability, professional motivation and professional identity of college teachers can we draw the map of college teachers deeply. At the same time, on the basis of the research data, the relationship between professional ability, professional motivation and professional identity can be deeply explored to explore the path to motivate the enthusiasm of college teachers. According to the components of vocational ability, vocational motivation and professional identity, interviews was utilized to determine the educational background and academic background, teaching skills, diversified teaching ability, project management ability, educational innovation ability, communication ability with students and parents, personal ambition, working environment, salary, social identity and career prospects. Salary satisfaction, welfare security satisfaction, personal value realization, social recognition and other dimensions, to deeply explore the professional characteristics of Xiamen university teachers. Through narrative inquiry, the present status of vocational ability, vocational motivation and occupational identity was explored, and the generation mechanism of occupational identity is sorted out. Future directions of this study was presented as to exploring on other methodology and increasing the locale and sample size.

Keywords: Vocational Ability; Vocational Motivation; Professional Identity.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of China's higher education, the quality of teachers is becoming more and more important. On the one hand, the professional ability of college teachers directly affects the effectiveness of higher education; On the other hand, the professional motivation of college teachers determines the efficiency of higher education. Therefore, whether from the perspective of higher education development, reform, or university management, it is of great theoretical significance and practical value to discuss the professional ability and motivation of university teachers.

A modern higher education system cannot be separated from a stable and high-quality teaching team. In order to maintain the stability of the team and continuously improve the professional quality, it is necessary to cultivate the professional identity of college teachers. Professional identity is the recognition degree of college teachers to higher education. Only teachers with strong professional identity can devote themselves to the cause of higher education. Only by systematically summarizing the current situation of professional ability, professional motivation and professional identity of college teachers can we draw the map of college teachers deeply. At the same time, on the basis of the research data, the relationship between professional ability, professional motivation and professional identity can be deeply explored to explore the path to motivate the enthusiasm of college teachers.

At the same time, Xiamen is also one of the cities that carried out higher education reform earlier in China, and has accumulated abundant empirical data in the aspects of higher teacher training and encouragement. Therefore, the selection of Xiamen university teachers as the research object has a strong representation.

According to the components of vocational ability, vocational motivation and professional identity, interviews and questionnaires were used to evaluate educational background and academic background, teaching skills, diversified teaching ability, project management ability, educational innovation ability, communication ability with students and parents, personal ambition, working environment, salary, social identity and career prospects. Salary satisfaction, welfare security satisfaction, personal value realization, social recognition and other dimensions, to deeply explore the professional characteristics of Xiamen university teachers. Through statistical regression of the research data, the influence of occupational ability and occupational motivation on occupational identity is explored, and the generation mechanism of occupational identity is sorted out. Combining with the incentive theory, this paper discusses how to enhance the professional identity of college teachers by improving their professional ability and strengthening their professional motivation.

After entering the 21st century, China's higher education ushered in explosive growth. In 2000, there were 1,813 colleges and universities in China, with 2,206,100 students

enrolled in regular higher education, and a total of 5.609 million students enrolled. By 2022, the number of universities in China will reach 3,013, with 4,679,400 undergraduate students and 19,656,400 students. The increase in the number of colleges and universities and the expansion of enrollment scale stimulate the demand of college teachers. The number of full-time teachers in Chinese universities has soared from 462,800 in 2000 to 1,977,800 in 2022. With the increase in the number of college teachers, the quality of college teachers has become an important issue in the development of China's higher education. Xiamen, as a planned city, has 16 institutions of higher learning with 178,200 students. Whether it is the number of universities, or the number of students, Xiamen is typical. The quality level of college teachers in Xiamen can effectively reflect the current situation of college teachers in China. The current situation of Xiamen university teachers is also a microcosm of Chinese university teachers. Whether it is a university in Xiamen or a university in other cities in China, the enthusiasm of teachers' work is an important and realistic issue.

In the higher education system, the professional characteristics of teachers include three aspects: professional ability, professional motivation and professional identity, namely, professional level, professional motivation and professional development. First, professional ability is the mandatory condition for college teachers to perform their duties, including the mastery of knowledge and skills. College teachers should not only possess basic subject knowledge and basic teaching skills, but also have diversified teaching ability, classroom management ability, educational innovation ability, and communication ability with students and parents. Second, career motivation refers to the purpose of teachers engaged in educational work, including internal motivation and external motivation. Specifically, personal ambition, working environment, salary, social recognition, career prospects and other factors constitute the career motivation of college teachers. Thirdly, professional identity reflects teachers' satisfaction with their work and is also the core proposition of teacher team construction. In general, college teachers with higher job satisfaction often have higher professional identity. On the contrary, college teachers who are not satisfied with their work often have a low degree of professional recognition. Professional identity is not only linked with the work enthusiasm of college teachers, but also directly affects the stability of college teachers. The high degree of professional recognition of college teachers leads to the strong working enthusiasm and the high stability of the teaching team. The low professional recognition of teachers in colleges and universities leads to the weak work enthusiasm and the low stability of teachers. The stability of university teachers will have a profound impact on the development and reform of higher teachers and even the modernization of higher education.

From the perspective of the modernization-oriented development and reform process of higher education, the professional identity of college teachers is closely related to the effectiveness of higher education, and is also the core proposition of China's current higher education. However, the professional identity and professional ability of college teachers are not simply linear. Teachers with high professional identity may not have strong working ability. On the contrary, teachers with low professional identity may have strong working ability. Therefore, the investigation of the professional identity of college teachers must be carried out

from the more macroscopic characteristics of the teacher's career.

At present, the teachers in Chinese colleges and universities, including those in Xiamen, all show dual characteristics. On the one hand, with the standardization of higher education, college teachers are facing higher requirements and are becoming more and more "internal". On the other hand, in the long career, "job burnout" of college teachers is very common. Of course, the factors that affect the work enthusiasm of college teachers are both objective ability level and subjective motivation level. From the perspective of the career development of Xiamen university teachers, it is necessary to maintain the basic working conditions and take differentiated incentive measures to maintain the enthusiasm of teachers.

2. Statement of Purpose

This paper focused on the research of professional ability, professional motivation and professional identity of teachers working in Xiamen universities, and discusses the relationship between the three. At the same time, based on the perspective of external and internal factors, professional ability and motivation, the generation mechanism of college teachers' professional identity is sorted out. Combining with the background of the modernization of Chinese higher education. Specifically, there are three main research questions in this paper. 1) Describe the vocational ability of university teachers in Xiamen. 2) Describe the Core Factors affecting the vocational motivation of university teachers in Xiamen. And 3) Describe the Generation Mechanism of Professional Identity of University Teachers in Xiamen City.

3. Methodology

The research method is an important support and path guarantee for achieving the research purpose and content of this study. This research mainly adopted in-depth interview in dealing with the gathering of data aligned to the statement of purpose.

On the basis of fully exploring the vocational ability, vocational motivation and professional identity of university teachers in Xiamen, this paper focused on sorting out the relationship between the ability, motivation and identity. Taking literature analysis as the starting point of the research, this paper sorted out the literature on the nature and connotation of vocational ability, vocational motivation, professional identity and generation mechanism of teachers in relevant colleges and universities. The narrative inquiry research design was used to explore the influence of occupational motivation on occupational identity and dig deep into the causal relationship.

3.1. Research Design

Narrative research design effectively adheres to the core elements of qualitative research methods. Narrative is a constructive statement of history, seeking order and meaning from scattered events. Assembling interview materials in a certain sequence of events into a cohesive whole with inherent meaning is called 'narrative'.

When teachers of universities in Xiamen narrated their experiences, they chose which experiences and used which storylines to turn them into causal plots. This is the process by which teachers judge their professional abilities and motivations, and gave them professional identity, reflecting

the tension between their individual characteristics and professional traits.

In this study, the researcher mainly collected story clues such as the experiences and key cases of 15 interviewees through interviews, described them in narrative form, and explored the deep information hidden behind the phenomena. She systematically presented the current situation and key variables of the professional abilities, professional motivations, and professional identities of teachers in Xiamen universities, in order to sort out the causal relationship between professional abilities, professional motivations, and professional identities.

The issue that professional identity must face is to what extent people actively participate in shaping their identity. Realizing individual professional identity involves understanding and planning of professional abilities and motivations, as well as achieving the unity of self-identity and recognition from others. Professional identity needs to be constructed from the structure generated by interaction, which to some extent relies on the shared role of self and others in the interaction.

Professional identity is not only the process and result of individual interaction with society and others, but also the result of individual self construction. As Giddens said, the connotation of identity at the end of the 20th century underwent a tremendous transformation, with external influences and the constraints of others being replaced by the reflective nature of self management. Individuals who construct identity are given high priority, and identity is constructed by individuals.

Identity can be seen as the preferred emphasis on individual agency, as it relates to the relationship between the individual and society, as well as the complex possibilities of the interaction between agency and social construction, and even social constraints. Individuals shape the identity they present to the world, and each individual can be described through the way they shape their identity. As Giddens believed, self-identity is not a trait or set of traits possessed by an individual, but rather a self-concept formed by each person's reflexive understanding of their personal experiences.

If an individual lacks a coherent sense of consistency in their life experiences, such as the discontinuity between their previous and subsequent experiences, they will feel a "broken self" that threatens their sense of security in existence. It can be seen that social structure is not external to actors, but is constructed in the daily life actions of actors with "habitual characteristics". Forming self-identity in a reflexive way requires constantly "reviewing personal early experiences", and individual self-identity can also be presented through the expression of personal experiences and feelings. In short, the identification and establishment of personal identity require a detailed investigation of daily practice and personal life.

The professional competence and motivation of teachers are key factors that affect their professional identity. Teacher narrative research, as an important research method in educational research, relates the life characteristics of narrative to the personal daily life of teachers, and stories always occur in real and specific educational practices in the daily life world. The narration of these stories can truthfully reveal the true way and state of existence of individual teachers, and also imply their understanding, knowledge, attitude, and evaluation of people, things, events, etc. in the educational field. It can also present teachers' knowledge of professional abilities and professional motivations. In view of

this, this article starts from the narratives of 15 teachers, extracts key events and concepts, and presents the current situation and causal relationships of professional competence, professional motivation, and professional identity of teachers in Xiamen universities.

3.2. Interview Situation

From January to December 2023, the author conducted interviews with 15 university teachers from Xiamen University, Huaqiao University, Jimei University, Xiamen Institute of Technology and Xiamen City University. The interview place was selected in the office of the interviewee or the coffee shop in the university, and the interview method was semi-structured interview.

4. Conclusion

First of all, through combing the interview data, the interrelationship of vocational ability, vocational motivation and professional identity is determined. The occupational ability, occupational motivation and occupational identity of the participants were evident in their responses. They exuded positive attitude towards vocational ability, vocational motivation and occupational identity. That is, the stronger the occupational ability, the higher the occupational identity; The stronger the occupational motivation, the higher the occupational identity.

Secondly, combing through the interview data, it is found that vocational ability, vocational motivation and professional identity have various influences. Lack of vocational ability leads to increased occupational stress, which affects professional identity. Personal factors are the main career motivation of Xiamen university teachers, and personal interest and self-actualization have an important impact on the career election of university teachers. Positive occupational motivation can improve professional identity, while excessive expectation, unreasonable salary level, resource allocation, imperfect and unfair system will affect the professional identity of college teachers. In addition, interpersonal relationship will also contribute to the professional identity of Xiamen university teachers, and harmonious interpersonal relationship is conducive to enhancing professional identity.

Thirdly, there are typical characteristics in the professional manpower, vocational motivation and professional identity of Xiamen university teachers. Professional pressure mainly comes from professional challenges, scientific research pressure, teaching tasks and other aspects. Teachers with less professional pressure tend to have a higher degree of professional matching and can be competent for the challenges brought by scientific research and teaching. On the contrary, the professional ability of college teachers is weak, the professional pressure is often greater. The career motivation of teachers in Xiamen university ranks from strong to weak, such as self-actualization, personal interest, high freedom of work, cultural influence, job stability and family influence. Both external factors and internal factors affect the professional identity of Xiamen university teachers, and the two factors have the same influence degree.

5. Future Directions

This study culled out form the participants their vocational ability, vocational motivation and vocational identity through narrative inquiry. However, due to the constraints of subjective conditions, there are still certain limitations and

deficiencies, which need to be further improved in future studies.

First, the limitations of the study sample. This study mainly takes Xiamen University, Huaqiao University, Jimei University, Xiamen Institute of Technology and Xiamen City University as samples. In terms of sample number selection, sample representation is relatively simple, and the lack of horizontal comparison between different provinces and cities and different universities restricts the generalization of research conclusions. Therefore, in future studies, sample size could be increased, such as selecting corresponding universities in Northeast China, North China, Northwest China, Central China, East China, South China and Southwest China to obtain more comprehensive data.

Second, the limitation of research content. The vocational ability, vocational motivation and professional identity of teachers in colleges and universities is a cross-issue between psychology and pedagogy, and there are many influencing factors. At the same time, teachers' professional identity will also have an impact on professional ability and professional motivation, such as the tendency to further study. This paper only explores the participants' vocational ability, occupational motivation and occupational identity as well as the influence of occupational ability and occupational motivation on occupational identity, but the research is still not in-depth enough. Based on this, in the future research, researchers could focus on exploring the impact of college teachers' professional identity on professional ability and professional motivation, and build a theoretical model of college teachers' professional identity.

References

- [1] Charles yuan. (2023). Digital transformation of education: what and how to turn [J]. Journal of east China normal university (education sciences).
- [2] Zhang Wenting, Yu Haibo. Teaching thinking: Attributes, structural relations and operational mechanisms [J]. Hunan Social Sciences,2021,(02):158-165.
- [3] Yu Zeyuan, Ma Zhumin. (2021).Smart era teachers' teaching wisdom and generating [J/OL]. Modern distance education research.
- [4] Wang Yuling. (2024)."inside volume" dilemma of young university teachers and countermeasures study [J]. Journal of China youth research.
- [5] Hu Jianhua. (2024). Academic Research on Teaching: The high level of teaching development of university teachers [J]. Higher education in jiangsu.
- [6] Dong Xuan.(2021).The new teacher's career choice and class consciousness [J]. Journal of education development research.
- [7] He Shuwei.(2022). Cognition and reshaping of the role of organization members from the perspective of Governance of Ideological and Political education in Universities [J]. BBS leadership science.
- [8] Shao Lei, Jin Juanjuan, Yu Guoliang.(2023).Cognition and evaluation of mental health education of secondary vocational teachers: research evidence [J]. Journal of Renmin University of China Education.
- [9] Hu Yangyang.(2022).The metaphorical characteristics of pedagogic knowledge Production: An ideological analysis from the "three-body problem of Education" to the "Comprehensive Art" [J]. China's education science (both in English and Chinese).
- [10] Ma Junxian, Qi Cong.(2022).A review of the research on vocational Identity of Primary Education majors in Chinese universities -- Based on the literature analysis from 2006 to 2020 [J]. Education.
- [11] Li Qiong, Zhao Jiangshan, Liu Wei.(2022). "Stay away" : Career identity and teaching choice of public funded normal students in pre-school education from the perspective of field theory [J]. Science of Education.
- [12] Wu Xiaowei.(2021).A study on vocational identity types and Enrollment motivation of normal college students [J]. Journal of Ningbo University (Education Science Edition).
- [13] Liang Fenghua.(2021).Teachers' professional identity research review [J]. Journal of contemporary education theory and practice.
- [14] Dong won.(2021).Research on the relationship between professional identity and Subjective well-being of college physical Arts Teachers: The mediating role of Job satisfaction [J]. Journal of xi 'an sports institute.
- [15] Cheng Tianjun, Zhu Shouxin.(2021).Teacher education and post-service job performance: Influencing mechanism and heterogeneity of teaching age [J]. Education and Economic.
- [16] Cheng Cuiping, Huang Xiting, Gao Liang.(2020).The structure and measurement of professional identity of general teachers in rural primary schools in the New era [J]. Psychological Research.
- [17] Zhao Jun.(2019). A review of China's "Free normal Students" education research and its implications for public funded normal students' education research: Based on the measurement and content analysis of the literature in the past ten years [J]. Quality education in the west.
- [18] Duan Bihua.(2019).Teacher professional identity: Connotation and structure [J]. Think Tank Time.
- [19] Yang J. (2020). The Real Situation and Support Strategies of Practical Knowledge of Primary and Secondary School Teachers. Journal of South China Normal University (Social Science Edition).
- [20] Luo W. (2021). The Development of Public Kindergartens under the Background of Public Welfare and Benefits: Positive Effects, Operation Modes and Potential Risks. Education Theory and Practice.
- [21] Li X.W., Guo Y.F., Wang P.P. (2019). The Current Situation of Burnout among Preschool Teachers and Its Relationship with Organizational Atmosphere and Teachers' Teaching Efficacy. Research on Teacher Education.