

Professional Identity and Management Effectiveness among Chinese University Administrators

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Abstract: In modern university management, studying administrative staff's professional identity and management efficacy is crucial. Professional identity reflects individuals' career recognition and integration, while management efficacy enhances service levels in education, research, and administration. As Chinese higher education expands and reforms deepen, administrative reforms are vital for overcoming institutional barriers and driving progress. However, research on this topic remains limited. This study explores how professional identity impacts management efficacy using quantitative methods. Results show administrative staff's professional identity is "average," with beneficial identity scoring highest and university development lowest. Management efficacy is also rated "average," indicating adequate service and incentives but room for improvement in career and university development. Furthermore, no significant differences in management efficacy were observed across demographic characteristics, but a clear correlation exists between professional identity and efficacy evaluations. Individuals with stronger professional identity tend to perceive higher management efficacy. Based on the findings, targeted programs are recommended to strengthen professional identity and management efficacy, fostering overall university development.

Keywords: Chinese Higher Education, Management Effectiveness, Professional Identity, Promotion Programs, University Administrators.

1. Introduction

In the management and development of modern universities, it is essential to study administrative personnel's professional identity and management effectiveness. One is to improve job satisfaction and career development: Professional identity is a key indicator to measure the degree of integration between university administrators and their professional roles, which reflects the positive evaluation and internal affirmation of an individual's career. A high degree of professional identity helps to improve the job satisfaction of administrative staff, promote the healthy development of their career, and improve work efficiency and service quality. The second is to promote the improvement of management effectiveness: professional identity is closely related to management effectiveness, and an executive team with high professional identity is more likely to show high management effectiveness, including effective decision-making, excellent leadership and efficient organizational commitment. By enhancing the professional identity of administrative personnel, it can promote the improvement of the administrative efficiency of colleges and universities, and ensure that colleges and universities keep the leading position in the competitive educational environment. The third is to optimize the internal management and development of colleges and universities: Research on the relationship between professional identity and management effectiveness of college and university administrators is helpful to deeply understand the working state and psychological needs of administrators, so as to take targeted measures to optimize the internal management of colleges and universities. By promoting professional identity, it can stimulate the enthusiasm of administrative staff, overcome job burnout, promote the smooth development of various work in colleges and universities, and realize the social value of higher

education. This study studies the impact of professional identity and management effectiveness on Chinese colleges and universities. The details are as follows:

In the modern workplace, professional identity has emerged as a critical metric for assessing how well an individual aligns with their professional role, influencing job satisfaction and career advancement. This concept, which has evolved since the mid-20th century, is particularly significant for administrative staff in higher education institutions, where it encompasses internal acceptance of work and a positive view of associated responsibilities. Unlike faculty, administrative staff have distinct job roles and status, shaping a unique professional identity.

Management efficacy is the heart of administrative work, aiming to enhance service levels in education, research, and management. As Chinese higher education expands and reforms deepen, administrative reforms are crucial to overcoming institutional bottlenecks and advancing overall progress. Professional identity, reflecting an administrative staff's perception of their work's value and their efficacy, can significantly affect job performance and decision-making quality. A management team with a strong professional identity is more likely to demonstrate high management efficacy, fostering effective decision-making, leadership, and organizational commitment. Investigating this relationship can provide insights into bolstering administrative staff's professional identity to uplift management efficacy, ensuring universities remain competitive in the dynamic educational landscape.

Regarding the concept of professional identity, early research can be divided into three schools: the Perception School, the Dynamic School, and the Construction School (Tang Qiaoling, 2023). The Perception School views professional identity as an expression of social identity, mainly related to the comparison between the subject of

identity and other groups. It includes people's understanding of professional work, awareness of their work progress, and perception of career value. An individual's perception of a profession, along with the extent to which they define their own professional attributes, constitutes the concept of professional identity for that individual. The Dynamic School believes that professional identity is a process, a description and re-description of the experiences they go through. Professional identity is a dynamic balance process generated by the complexity of different roles for individuals, a dynamic equilibrium process between an employee's true self and the various roles they must follow. The Construction School argues that professional identity is a continuous process of explaining personal and situational changes by directly comparing professional identity with professional reality. It can be defined in terms of centripetal force, value, and harmony, considering professional identity as an overall evaluation of the importance, attractiveness, and harmony of one's profession. An individual's view of their profession can be shaped through various reasons and means, and professional identity should include theoretical assumptions at different psychological levels, including affective identification, continuous identification, and normative identification.

In recent years, research on professional identity has become more refined, especially regarding teachers' professional identity. Chinese authoritative scholar Wei Shuhua has compiled a feature table of teachers' professional identity by collecting domestic and international literature, indicating that teachers' professional identity has two main characteristics: dynamism, interactivity, and multidimensionality. It is believed that teachers' professional identity is constructed through the interaction between the individual and their profession and environment, representing a comprehensive entity of cognition, experience, and behavioral tendencies towards one's professional identity or role (Wei Shuhua, 2020). Teachers' professional identity is constructed through the interaction between the individual and their profession and environment. The individual recognizes and accepts the role of a teacher and makes positive perceptions and evaluations in terms of cognition, emotion, and behavioral tendencies towards the profession, consciously externalizing professional norms into professional behavior as a comprehensive process.

Moreover, teachers' professional identity is influenced by both the individual themselves and external environments. Therefore, research should delve into the inner world of teachers while also extensively understanding the environment and atmosphere for teacher development. To enhance young teachers' professional identity, it is first necessary to deepen professional cognition, laying the foundation for the formation and development of professional identity. Secondly, strengthening teachers' sense of belonging to the profession promotes the formation of teachers' professional identity. Finally, increasing external support reinforces the sense of professional identity. Forming correct professional cognition and a sense of belonging to the profession spontaneously generates positive behavioral tendencies, which are externalized into good professional behaviors, promoting teachers' professional development and improving the quality of education (Huang Yuantze, 2023).

At the same time, teachers' professional identity shows significant differences in demographics such as age, educational background, teaching experience, and

professional titles, but not in gender. Studies have shown that older teachers with longer teaching experience tend to have higher levels of identification and engagement. There is a significant positive correlation between teachers' professional identity and job involvement, with teachers' professional identity having a significant positive impact on job involvement (Xie Songyu, 2023).

However, the professional identity of administrative staff in higher education institutions differs greatly from that of university teachers, involving fewer concepts related to the professional identity of administrative staff. This is related to the "subsidiary" nature of this group within universities. Administrative staff in higher education institutions act as managers of school administrative work, executing and implementing school policies and systems. They are primarily engaged in teaching management, faculty and student services, research management, affairs processing, financial management, personnel management, and other related tasks, playing roles in organization, coordination, communication, and service. They are an important force ensuring the smooth progress of various school operations.

On the other hand, management tasks in higher education institutions are repetitive and tedious, with a heavy workload. Daily engagement in repetitive and complex tasks can easily lead to a loss of enthusiasm for the job, resulting in mental stress and high pressure. Some teaching administrative staff believe that their work involves a significant amount of miscellaneous tasks, leading to generally low levels of professional identity. The monotony of work content, lack of challenge and sense of achievement, can easily lead to job burnout. Alleviating job burnout among teaching administrative staff in higher education institutions is key to enhancing their professional identity. By implementing job rotations, strengthening management, creating a positive cultural environment, and other measures, teaching administrative staff can recognize the importance of their work and enhance their professional identity. At the same time, optimizing workload distribution, strengthening professional training, providing psychological counseling, enriching leisure activities, and intensifying supervision and guidance are also essential measures (Lu Chunli, 2020).

Existing research indicates that the overall professional identity of administrative staff in higher education institutions is moderately high but varies across different dimensions and individuals. There is a higher level of recognition regarding work benefits, autonomy, and rules and regulations, reflecting the administrative staff's attention to practical aspects of their work; there is a better sense of belonging to their professional identity and social recognition, indicating an acknowledgment of the value and social significance of their work. However, there is relatively lower recognition regarding career development, self-worth realization, and career prospects, suggesting that administrative staff's needs for future career advancement and personal improvement are not yet fully met. From the perspectives of gender, age, job level, and employment type, there are significant differences in the professional identity of administrative staff in higher education institutions, necessitating differentiated career development and incentive mechanisms for different groups (Tang Qiaoling, 2020).

Enhancing the professional identity of grassroots administrative staff in higher education institutions is crucial for the development of these institutions. It helps overcome job burnout, stimulates work enthusiasm, improves work

efficiency; promotes the professional development of grassroots administrative staff, building a high-quality administrative team; assists grassroots administrative staff in establishing scientific professional values, realizing the social value of higher education. Higher education institutions should adopt various measures to enhance the professional identity of grassroots administrative staff. Firstly, create a harmonious work atmosphere, provide humanistic care, and enhance their sense of professional belonging and happiness. Secondly, focus on professional training to improve their political literacy, management skills, psychological quality, and service awareness. Thirdly, establish objective and fair evaluation standards, quantify work results, offer affirmation and incentives, and enhance their sense of professional accomplishment. Lastly, help grassroots administrative staff develop scientific career plans to promote their professional development (Cao Panpan, 2020).

Therefore, this study exploring the current situation of professional identity among administrative staff in Chinese higher education institutions is very meaningful.

Management efficacy refers to the conscious arrangement of resources, facilities, and infrastructure to produce a certain quantity of attributes or services. The definition of management efficacy includes resource utilization efficiency and the extent to which goals are achieved, emphasizing the realization of actual results. Unlike efficiency, management efficacy focuses more on the realization of actual outcomes, while efficiency primarily concerns how goals are achieved through input-output ratios (Vidya Bai Gokarna, 2022).

Management efficacy is the degree of success an organization achieves in reaching its established goals. It emphasizes outcomes rather than the process of achieving them. Assessing organizational management performance is mainly done by measuring the effectiveness of management projects. Project effectiveness refers to the extent to which projects meet their established goals and focuses on indicators such as goal achievement, plan understanding, timeliness, and genuine change. By evaluating these indicators, one can understand the actual effects of management projects and thereby judge the quality of organizational management performance. Organizational performance satisfaction can also serve as a reference for the success of projects implemented by public service institutions (Susilo, 2020). There is a positive correlation between management efficacy and organizational performance satisfaction. That is, the higher the management efficacy, the higher the organizational performance satisfaction. This is because improvements in management efficacy help organizations better achieve their established goals, leading to tangible changes and improvements, thus enhancing service quality and ultimately satisfying consumers or users with the organization's performance (Sukmo Hadi Nugroho, 2021).

There has already been some research on teacher work efficacy, such as studies on the impact of institutional support strategies on the effectiveness of core duties of university teachers in some Nigerian public universities. Research shows that strengthening research support such as conference sponsorships and research funding, maintaining technical equipment and platforms, functional help desks, and user-friendly platforms, adhering to teacher training, and creating flexible and convenient teaching environments can significantly improve teachers' job satisfaction and academic achievements, thereby gaining a competitive edge in the academic environment (Falola, 2020).

With the overall development of Chinese society, the government's requirements for administrative levels in various units have become increasingly stringent. In 2024, the State Council issued the "Guidance on Further Optimizing Government Services and Improving Administrative Efficacy to Promote 'Efficiently Accomplishing One Thing'", which provided specific guidance on optimizing government services and improving administrative efficacy (State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2024). As important bases for fostering virtue through education, universities should focus more on innovation and leadership, implementing the principle of "efficiently accomplishing one thing" to the fullest extent, serving teachers and students maximally. The main focus of "efficiently accomplishing one thing" should be teachers and students rather than the management departments themselves. It is necessary to clearly define the responsibilities of each department, ensuring that every department executes tasks around the needs of their service targets, thoroughly understands the real needs and demands of teachers and students, and promptly addresses the "key minor issues" affecting their daily lives and work (Zhang Mijia, 2024).

From the perspective of values and organizational culture, the organizational culture of a university stems from the reflections of university administration in their management practices, which gradually accumulate to form shared values and behavioral consciousness within the organization (Zhang Wenli, 2010). An efficient organization inevitably possesses advanced and scientific management concepts and organizational culture. Organizational culture is a direct reflection of a university's comprehensive management level, with many affairs led by administrative departments. The lack of human-centric cultural awareness will inevitably affect the performance of administrative management. Emphasizing cultural construction, innovating management concepts, and leveraging the function of cultural governance are essential for generating a university governance culture that aligns and grows together, encompassing the core values of internal management and a human-centric, multi-stakeholder trust and recognition culture (Lin Yangfang, 2021).

However, research on the management efficacy of university administrative staff is relatively scarce. In higher education studies, more resources and attention are allocated to areas directly related to the core functions of universities, such as teaching and research. Although administrative management is crucial for university operations, it has a lower priority in research. In some cases, the roles and contributions of university administrative staff have not received adequate social recognition and attention. Moreover, the work of university administrative staff involves a wide range of aspects and is often closely related to the specific environment and policies of the university, making it difficult to form universally applicable conclusions. Current research tends to focus on the overall governance efficacy of universities or the improvement of educational quality from a macro perspective, while research on the management efficacy of individual or team administrative staff is relatively rare.

In summary, studying the relationship between professional identity and management efficacy of university administrative staff is of significant importance. Firstly, professional identity is a key indicator measuring the integration degree of individuals with their professional roles. It not only reflects individuals' positive evaluation and

internal affirmation of their profession but also profoundly affects their job satisfaction and career development. For university administrative staff, professional identity is particularly important as it involves the inner acceptance and recognition of their work and the positive feelings and evaluations towards various responsibilities of the position. Secondly, management efficacy is the core and value embodiment of administrative work. Enhancing administrative management efficacy is the starting point, basic requirement, and pursuit goal of administrative work. A management team with a high degree of professional identity is more likely to exhibit higher management efficacy, including effective decision-making, excellent leadership, and efficient organizational commitment, thereby driving the entire educational institution steadily toward its established goals. Therefore, by studying this relationship, we can better understand how to improve management efficacy by enhancing the professional identity of administrative staff, ensuring that universities can maintain a leading position in the competitive educational environment.

There is a close relationship between the professional identity of university administrative staff and their management efficacy. Against the backdrop of continuous deepening reforms in higher education, university administrative work is facing new challenges and requirements. As an important part of university management, the strength of professional identity among administrative staff directly affects their work enthusiasm, efficiency, and ultimately, management efficacy.

Firstly, the professional identity of university administrative staff is an important psychological foundation for their work enthusiasm. For a long time, universities have generally neglected research on the career development of administrative staff, leading to low work enthusiasm and professional identity among them. This phenomenon of low professional identity not only affects the personal career development of administrative staff but also becomes an important factor restricting the improvement of university management levels and the sustainable and healthy development of universities. Therefore, enhancing the professional identity of administrative staff is of great significance for stimulating their work enthusiasm and improving work efficiency.

Secondly, according to existing research, positive factors affecting the management efficacy of university administrative staff include content related to professional identity. The improvement of university administrative management efficacy needs to be considered from a strategic level, including the efficiency of handling affairs and work capability. An increase in self-identity among administrative staff can promote their more active participation in university management, thereby enhancing administrative management efficacy (Huang Haiman, 2019).

Furthermore, the career development and career planning of university administrative staff are also important ways to enhance their sense of professional identity. The career development of university administrative staff is related not only to the realization of personal goals but also to the achievement of organizational goals. Universities can adopt corresponding measures at different stages to promote the career development of administrative staff, providing an effective dynamic management model for universities (Xue Liqiang, 2021). The incentive mechanism for university administrative staff also plays an indispensable role in

enhancing their professional identity and work enthusiasm. Research on incentive issues for university administrative staff has achieved phased results, but attention to the personal development of administrative staff themselves is insufficient. Future research needs to strengthen comparative studies based on the personal development needs of university administrative staff.

In summary, there was a close relationship between the professional identity of university administrative staff and their management efficacy. Enhancing the professional identity of administrative staff is crucial for improving the management level and efficacy of universities. Universities should pay attention to the career development of administrative staff and establish effective incentive mechanisms to promote the professional growth of administrative staff and the overall development of the university.

2. Statement of the Problem

This study examined how professional identity influences the management effectiveness displayed by administrative personnel in Chinese universities.

Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

- (1) What is the profile of the administrators based on their:
 - 1) sex
 - 2) age
 - 3) educational background
 - 4) administrative level
- (2) What is the assessment of the respondents on the status of university administrators on their own professional identity?
 - 1) Attribution professional identity
 - 2) Beneficial professional identity
 - 3) Achievement professional identity
- (3) Is there a significant difference in the professional identity of university administrators grouped by personal data?
- (4) What is the assessment of the management effectiveness of their own institution by university administrators?
 - 1) University development
 - 2) Administrative career development
 - 3) Performance appraisal incentive
 - 4) Administrative service effect
- (5) Is there a significant difference in the evaluation of the respondents in the management effectiveness by university administrators?
- (6) Is there a significant relationship between the professional identity of university administrators and the effectiveness of university management?
- (7) Based on the results of the research, what kind of promotion programs can be developed for university administrators?

3. Hypotheses

- (1) There was no significant difference in the occupational identity of university administrators grouped by personal data.
- (2) There was no significant difference in the evaluation of management effectiveness of university administrators according to personal data.
- (3) There was no significant difference between the professional identity of university administrators and the efficiency of university management.

4. Research Design

This study explored the relationship between professional

identity and management efficacy among university administrative staff. Quantitative descriptive research aims to describe a sample or population, providing insights into its characteristics (Thomas & Zubkov, 2023).

In this study, samples of administrative staff were randomly selected from five universities in Zhejiang, China, to participate in the survey. The questionnaire covered demographic characteristics such as gender, age, educational background, and administrative level, as well as scales designed based on existing literature and theoretical frameworks to assess three dimensions of professional identity: belongingness, benefit, and achievement, along with four dimensions of management efficacy: organizational culture atmosphere, administrative career development, performance assessment incentives, and administrative service effectiveness. The questionnaire was designed to ensure the validity and reliability of the study content. Valid questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS software for reliability and validity analysis, as well as descriptive

statistical analysis, including calculating the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of each variable.

In the data analysis, multiple linear regression or logistic regression was used to establish predictive models to explore the extent and direction of the impact of professional identity on management efficacy. Additionally, principal component analysis or factor analysis was employed to extract key factors affecting professional identity and management efficacy from the questionnaire data, which will then be interpreted and classified. Finally, structural equation modeling was used to explore the pathways and mechanisms through which professional identity influences management efficacy among university administrative staff, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for university administration practices.

5. Results, Analysis, and Interpretation

Respondents' Profile

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentage of Demographic Factors

Sex		Counts		% of Total	
Female		218		59 %	
Male		154		41 %	
Age		Counts		% of Total	
18-30		69		19 %	
31-40		140		38 %	
41-50		103		28 %	
50 and above		60		16 %	
Educational Background		Counts		% of Total	
Associate Degree or below		64		17 %	
Bachelor's Degree		86		23 %	
Doctorate Degree		46		12 %	
Master's Degree		176		47 %	
Administrative Level		Counts		% of Total	
Middle		106		28 %	
Rank and File		196		53 %	
Top		70		19 %	

Table 1 displays the frequency and percentages of demographic information for a sample of administrative staff, including gender, age, educational background, and administrative level. According to the data, 59% of administrators are women, while 41% are men. This may indicate that the majority of the administrative staff who participated in the study are female. A similar finding was in a study involving Chinese university teachers, which found that 70.2% were female and 29.8% were male (Peng & Nair, 2022). Though this pertains to teaching staff, it suggests that a higher proportion of female faculty members leads to administrative roles.

Based on their age, 19% of the respondents are between 18 and 30 years old, 38% are between 31 and 40, 28% are between 41 and 50, and 16% are 50 years old and above. This means that the majority of the administrative staff are 31 to 40 years old. This finding is close to the average age of the administrators in China, which was 47.83 years, according to the study of Keating et al. (2017). This suggests a mature and experienced administrative body in Chinese universities.

Regarding their educational qualifications, 17% obtained an associate degree or lower, 23% acquired a bachelor's degree, 12% attained a doctorate, and 47% secured a master's degree. This may suggest that most administrative

staff possess a master's degree. This finding was parallel to a report from the Ministry of Education in 2022 that 99.94% of full-time teachers met qualification requirements, with 91.71% having a four-year college education and 78.54% having a master's degree or above, up 1.04 percentage points from the previous year. Also, it reflects the high educational standards within Chinese higher education institutions.

Finally, according to their administrative level, 28 are at the intermediate level, 53 are in the rank and file, and 19% occupy the highest level, signifying that the predominant majority of administrative staff belong to the rank and file. In Chinese universities, administrative staff play a crucial role in supporting academic functions and ensuring institutional operations. The administrative hierarchy typically mirrors the academic structure, with positions ranging from junior to senior levels. Recent initiatives, such as the "Double First-Class" plan, aim to enhance the professionalization of administrative staff in local universities. This strategy emphasizes the need for specialized training, clear role definitions, and effective evaluation systems to improve administrative efficiency and support academic excellence (Wang et al., 2022). However, administrative staff often face challenges like role ambiguity and heavy workloads (Hu, 2022). Therefore, the administrative staff in Chinese universities are organized into a structured hierarchy, with ongoing efforts to professionalize and address challenges to enhance their effectiveness in supporting academic and institutional goals.

In summary, the profile of the respondents was mostly male between 31 to 40 years old in rank and file level with relevant master's degrees. This demographic profile likely indicates that the group of respondents was a combination of experienced yet still mid-career professionals, with a higher proportion of men. They possess strong educational qualifications, which might be important for understanding their professional capabilities or roles. Further, it could suggest areas for focus in gender diversity, career development for this age group, or educational requirements for such positions.

6. Conclusion

Based on the summary of findings, the following conclusions on the investigation of the impact of professional identity and the management effectiveness on administrative staff in Chinese universities were drawn:

The profile of the respondents represented a highly educated and relatively experienced group within the university's administrative structure. This demographic profile provided valuable context for understanding the perspectives and professional identity of those working within the administrative services. The findings indicated that this group may possess a level of maturity and academic competence that could influence their professional identity and evaluation of management effectiveness.

The overall professional identity of respondents being rated as "average" across various categories suggested that while individuals within the university administrative staff recognize their roles, they may not experience a particularly strong or highly developed sense of professional identity. The highest score in beneficial professional identity indicated that the respondents perceive personal advantages from their professional roles, but the lowest score in university development suggested that there may be concerns about the broader institutional growth or the administrative

contribution to it. This finding highlights areas where the university could invest in fostering a stronger, more cohesive professional identity among staff.

The lack of significant differences in professional identity based on sex, age, educational background, or administrative level implied that professional identity may be more strongly influenced by other factors, such as organizational culture, job satisfaction, or individual experiences, rather than demographic characteristics. This finding suggested that efforts to strengthen professional identity should be targeted at the individual level or across all staff, regardless of their demographic background.

The "average" ratings for categories such as administrative service effect and performance appraisal incentive suggest that while these areas are generally considered adequate, there is still room for improvement, particularly in career development and university development. These findings indicated that administrative staff may feel there are gaps in opportunities for career progression or that the university's developmental strategies could be better communicated or implemented. A focus on these areas could help boost overall satisfaction and effectiveness within the administrative body.

The finding that management effectiveness did not significantly differ based on sex, age, educational background, or administrative level posited that these demographic factors do not play a major role in influencing how effective university staff perceive the administration's management. This suggests that factors such as leadership styles, institutional policies, and the overall work environment may have more influence on management effectiveness than the individual characteristics of staff members.

The relationship between the respondents' professional identity and their evaluation of management effectiveness suggests a mutual influence. As respondents' professional identity strengthens, they may be more likely to rate management effectiveness higher, indicating that a well-developed professional identity could contribute positively to perceptions of effective management. This finding aligns with the idea that personal and professional development are interconnected with organizational outcomes, and efforts to enhance professional identity could improve overall management perceptions within the university.

7. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations can address the findings and potentially enhance both professional identity and management effectiveness within the university's administrative staff:

Strengthen professional identity across demographics. While demographic factors such as sex, age, educational background, and administrative level did not significantly impact professional identity, it remains important to create initiatives that foster a stronger, more unified professional identity across the board, such as workshops, seminars, or mentoring programs that focus on enhancing professional identity at an individual and group level, regardless of demographic characteristics. And recognize and celebrate individual and group achievements in ways that reinforce the value of their roles within the university.

Improve university development and career advancement. The "average" ratings in career development and university development indicate areas where improvement is needed. Implement clearer career development frameworks with defined progression paths for administrative staff, including

training programs, opportunities for promotion, and guidance on skill development. Strengthen communication regarding the university's long-term goals and how administrative staff can contribute to these objectives. This could involve involving staff in planning processes and ensuring their roles in the university's growth are highlighted. Finally, create formal channels for administrative staff to voice concerns and suggestions related to career growth and development, ensuring they feel heard and valued.

Target professional development based on identified needs. Given that the professional identity did not vary significantly by demographic factors, it would be effective to focus professional development initiatives on the needs of individuals, rather than on demographic factors. For instance, provide individualized development opportunities based on personal career goals, strengths, and areas of improvement. This would help in tailoring programs to meet the needs of diverse staff members. Also, invest in programs that promote leadership, communication, and collaborative skills to support administrative staff at all levels in developing a more robust sense of professional identity.

Enhance administrative services and incentive systems. While administrative service effects and performance appraisals were rated as adequate, there may still be room for improvement by ensuring that performance evaluations are more comprehensive, transparent, and fair, with clear feedback mechanisms to encourage ongoing growth and improvement. Likewise, reevaluate the incentive systems in place to ensure they are motivating and aligned with the university's strategic goals. Providing both monetary and non-monetary rewards could improve overall satisfaction. Lastly, link professional development opportunities (such as training or certifications) directly to performance appraisals, which would encourage staff to engage in continuous improvement.

Promote inclusivity in management effectiveness. Since demographic factors did not significantly impact management effectiveness, it suggests that the focus should be on broader organizational practices. Consider offering leadership development programs for all staff members, regardless of their position, that focus on effective management skills, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Promote leadership styles that are inclusive and emphasize diversity and equality. This can be done through training on diverse management strategies and open dialogue about leadership challenges. And foster open lines of communication between university administrators and their staff. Regular feedback can ensure that management decisions are aligned with staff needs and expectations.

Leverage professional identity to enhance management effectiveness.

Since there was a positive relationship between professional identity and management effectiveness, leveraging this connection can enhance overall organizational performance by developing programs that link staff professional development with leadership effectiveness. This could involve training that emphasizes the alignment of personal professional goals with broader institutional objectives. Highlight and reward contributions that align with strong professional identities, such as innovation in administrative services or leadership in university development. Finally, encourage administrative staff to see their professional identity as directly connected to the success

of the university. This could be achieved through team-building activities or discussions that emphasize the importance of each role in achieving institutional objectives.

By implementing these recommendations, the university can enhance both the professional identity of its administrative staff and the effectiveness of its management practices, ultimately contributing to the institution's success.

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