

The Impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on College Students' Career Choice Commitment: A Case Study of Wuyi University

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism) on college students' career choice commitment, using students from Wuyi University as the research subjects. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and factor analysis. The results show that Extraversion, Openness, and Conscientiousness have significant positive impacts on career choice commitment, while Neuroticism has a significant negative impact. Agreeableness does not have a significant impact on career choice commitment. This study provides theoretical support for understanding the psychological mechanisms underlying college students' career choice commitment and offers practical guidance for university career counseling and student career planning.

Keywords: Big Five Personality Traits, Career Choice Commitment, College Students, Wuyi University

Introduction

Research Background

With the acceleration of global economic integration and the rapid development of technology, profound changes have occurred in the socio-economic structure. These changes have not only brought new industries and career opportunities but also intensified competition in the job market. In this context, college students, as the backbone of future society, face unprecedented opportunities and challenges in career choice. On one hand, diversified employment channels and career types offer a broad range of choices for college students. On the other hand, the rapidly changing market demands and uncertain economic environment have increased the complexity and uncertainty of career choices. Therefore, making wise decisions among numerous career options and maintaining a high level of commitment to the chosen career has become an important topic in the career development of college students.

In recent years, the impact of personality traits on career choice commitment has attracted increasing attention from scholars. Personality traits are relatively stable characteristics in an individual's behavior, emotions, and cognition, which have a profound impact on individual behavior patterns and decision-making processes. The Big Five Personality Traits model, widely recognized in psychology, includes Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism. These traits not only affect an individual's daily behavior and emotional responses but also play an important role in career choice and development. For example, individuals with high Extraversion are more active in social situations and tend to choose careers that require frequent interpersonal interactions, such as sales, marketing, and human resources. Individuals with high Openness are open to new things and experiences and are more willing to try careers with innovation and challenges, such as research, design, and creative industries. Individuals with high Conscientiousness demonstrate stronger self-discipline and goal orientation in their work, focusing more on the long-term development and stability of their careers.

This study focuses on college students from Wuyi University to explore the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment. Located in Wuyishan City, Fujian Province, Wuyi University is a comprehensive university primarily offering undergraduate education. The students of this university have typical characteristics of Chinese college students while being influenced by the local culture and social environment. By studying the career choice commitment of Wuyi University students and its relationship with the Big Five Personality Traits, this study aims to provide theoretical and practical support for university career counseling and student career planning. Specifically, this study will analyze the current status of career choice commitment among Wuyi University students, explore the relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and career choice commitment, and test the predictive role of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment. Through these studies, we hope to provide more effective career counseling strategies for universities, help college students better understand their personality traits, make career choices that align with their characteristics and career goals, thereby enhancing career choice commitment and promoting career development.

"Although previous studies have explored the impact of personality traits on career choice commitment, most of these studies have focused on Western cultural contexts. The relationship between personality traits and career choice commitment in the context of Chinese culture, especially considering the unique social, cultural, and family influences faced by Chinese college students, has not been fully explored. Additionally, existing research on the psychological mechanisms underlying college students' career choice commitment is not sufficiently in-depth, lacking a systematic analysis of the role of personality traits. Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by investigating the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism) on career choice commitment among college students, providing a new perspective for understanding the psychological mechanisms of career choice commitment."

Research Motivation

"The motivation for this study stems from the complexity and uncertainty of the current career choice environment. With the acceleration of global economic integration and rapid technological development, the diversity and complexity of career choices have significantly

increased. College students, as the backbone of future society, face unprecedented opportunities and challenges in career choice. However, existing research on the psychological mechanisms of career choice commitment among college students is not sufficiently in-depth, especially in the context of Chinese culture. Through this study, we aim to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for university career counseling and student career planning, helping college students better understand their personality traits and make career choices that align with their characteristics and career goals, thereby enhancing career choice commitment and promoting career development."

(3) Research Objectives

This study aims to explore the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism) on the career choice commitment of college students at Wuyi University. The specific objectives include:

1. Analyzing the current status of career choice commitment among college students at Wuyi University.
2. Exploring the relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and career choice commitment.
3. Testing the predictive role of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment.

Research Questions

1. Do the Big Five Personality Traits have a significant impact on the career choice commitment of college students at Wuyi University?
2. Which of the Big Five Personality Traits have a positive impact on career choice commitment, and which have a negative impact?

Literature Review

The Big Five Personality Traits

The Big Five Personality Traits model is a widely recognized personality model in psychology. This model describes and explains personality traits through five dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism. Based on statistical analysis of a large number of personality trait terms and extracted through methods such as factor analysis, these five relatively independent and representative dimensions can comprehensively cover various aspects of personality.

Extraversion: Extraversion (Costa et al 1992) reflects an individual's level of activity in social situations and their enjoyment of social activities. Individuals with high Extraversion are usually outgoing, confident, and sociable. They enjoy interacting with others in social settings and derive energy and satisfaction from such interactions. They can quickly establish interpersonal relationships in groups and often become the focus of the group. Research shows that there is a certain correlation between Extraversion and career choice. For example, individuals with high Extraversion tend to choose careers that require frequent interpersonal interactions, such as sales, marketing, and human resources. These careers can fully leverage their social strengths and meet their needs for interaction with others.

Agreeableness: Agreeableness (Barrick et al 1991). reflects the cooperativeness and friendliness of an individual in interpersonal relationships. People with high Agreeableness are usually kind, friendly, and helpful. They are good at establishing harmonious relationships

with others, understanding the feelings and needs of others, and willing to provide help and support. In the workplace, individuals with high Agreeableness are more likely to establish good cooperative relationships with colleagues and clients, reducing conflicts and contradictions. However, individuals with high Agreeableness may sometimes neglect their own interests and needs due to excessive focus on others' feelings or lack sufficient decisiveness and firmness when facing competition and challenges.

Openness: Openness(Feist et al 1998) reflects an individual's acceptance of new things and experiences. Individuals with high Openness usually have curiosity and imagination. They are open to new knowledge, cultures, and ideas, willing to try new things and experiences, and pursue innovation and change. They show a strong interest in fields such as art, literature, and philosophy and enjoy exploring unknown areas. In career choice, individuals with high Openness tend to choose careers with innovation and challenges, such as research, design, and creative industries. These careers can satisfy their desire to explore new things and their need for innovation.

Conscientiousness: Conscientiousness(Barrick et al 1991) reflects an individual's self-discipline and goal orientation. Individuals with high Conscientiousness are usually organized, planned, and responsible. They can manage their time and tasks well and pay attention to details and quality. They demonstrate high efficiency and reliability at work and can persist in completing set goals and tasks. In career choice, individuals with high Conscientiousness place more emphasis on the long-term development and stability of their careers, tending to choose careers that offer stable career development paths and promotion opportunities, such as business management, engineering technology, and education.

Neuroticism: Neuroticism(Judge et al 2001) reflects an individual's emotional stability. Individuals with high Neuroticism usually experience significant emotional fluctuations and are prone to negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, and anger. They have a lower tolerance for stress and setbacks. When facing uncertainties and challenges in career choice and development, they may show more worries and unease. In contrast, individuals with low Neuroticism have more stable emotions and can better cope with stress and setbacks, maintaining a positive attitude.

Numerous studies have shown that the Big Five Personality Traits are closely related to career choice, job satisfaction, and career development. For example, individuals with high Extraversion perform better in careers that require frequent social interactions and achieve higher job satisfaction. Individuals with high Openness are more likely to succeed in careers with innovation and challenges. Individuals with high Conscientiousness can better achieve career development in careers that require high self-discipline and goal orientation. However, research results may vary across different cultural backgrounds and educational environments, suggesting that cultural factors should be considered when exploring the relationship between personality and career.

Career Choice Commitment

Career Choice Commitment(Meyer et al 1997) refers to an individual's identification with and dedication to a specific career, which is an important factor affecting career development. Individuals with high career choice commitment usually show greater enthusiasm, stronger

sense of responsibility, and more persistent dedication to their chosen career. This commitment not only helps individuals overcome difficulties and adapt to the work environment in the early stages of their career but also helps maintain a positive attitude and continuously improve their abilities and performance during career development. Research shows that career choice commitment is closely related to job satisfaction, work performance, and career stability.

Career choice commitment is influenced by a variety of factors, including personal interests, abilities, values, family expectations, and social influences. Personal interests are one of the important factors affecting career choice commitment. When an individual has a strong interest in a career, they are more likely to develop a higher commitment to it. Abilities are also an important factor influencing career choice commitment. When an individual believes they possess the necessary abilities for a career, they are more likely to commit to it. The impact of values on career choice commitment should not be overlooked. When an individual believes that a career aligns with their values, they are more likely to develop a higher commitment to it. In addition, family expectations and social influences also affect career choice commitment. Family and societal expectations and evaluations of an individual's career choices can influence their career selection and commitment.

The Relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and Career Choice Commitment

Research shows that the Big Five Personality Traits have a significant impact on career choice commitment (Allen et al 1990). For example, individuals with high Extraversion tend to choose careers that require social skills in career choice. Individuals with high Conscientiousness place more emphasis on long-term career development and stability in career choice. Individuals with high Openness are open to new things and experiences and are more willing to try careers with innovation and challenges. However, research results may vary across different cultural backgrounds and educational environments. The impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment among Chinese college students has not been fully explored.

Research Methods

Research Design

This study employs a cross-sectional survey design, targeting college students at Wuyi University, and collects data through questionnaires. The research hypotheses are as follows:

1. Extraversion has a positive impact on career choice commitment.
2. Neuroticism has a negative impact on career choice commitment.
3. Openness has a positive impact on career choice commitment.
4. Conscientiousness has a positive impact on career choice commitment.
5. Agreeableness has a positive impact on career choice commitment.

Sample and Data Collection

The sample consists of college students from Wuyi University. A total of 770 questionnaires were distributed, and 770 valid questionnaires were recovered. The questionnaire includes dimensions such as career choice commitment, Big Five Personality Traits, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The data collection period was from October to November 2024.

Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 31.0 and Lisrel 8.53 software, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and factor analysis (Field, A. 2018).

Research Results

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

In the sample, the majority of respondents were aged between 18 and 22, with 58% being female and 42% being male. In terms of career choice commitment, college students generally showed a positive attitude, with an average score of 4.76 (out of a maximum of 7 points), but there were significant individual differences. For example, most students believed that having a clear career goal is a sign of maturity (average score of 5.39), but there was a divergence of opinion on whether they are only suitable for one career (average score of 3.08).

Correlation Analysis

The results of the correlation analysis show that career choice commitment is significantly positively correlated with Extraversion ($r = 0.62$), Openness ($r = 0.58$), and Conscientiousness ($r = 0.65$), and significantly negatively correlated with Neuroticism ($r = -0.70$). The correlation with Agreeableness ($r = 0.25$) is not significant. In addition, career choice commitment is significantly positively correlated with positive attitudes (such as believing that career goals are beneficial) and significantly negatively correlated with negative attitudes (such as believing that career goals are unwise).

Regression Analysis

The results of the regression analysis show that Extraversion, Openness, and Conscientiousness have significant positive predictive effects on career choice commitment, while Neuroticism has a significant negative predictive effect. The impact of Agreeableness on career choice commitment is not significant. The specific regression coefficients are as follows:

- Extraversion: $\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$
- Neuroticism: $\beta = -0.50$, $p < 0.001$
- Openness: $\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$
- Conscientiousness: $\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$
- Agreeableness: $\beta = 0.10$, $p > 0.05$

Factor Analysis

The results of the factor analysis show that career choice commitment can be summarized into four key factors: career choice maturity, single career adaptability, career choice persistence, and changing plans due to competition. These factors together explain 60.75% of the total variance, further validating the explanatory power of the model.

Discussion

Research Conclusions

Through a survey of college students at Wuyi University, this study has explored the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism) on career choice commitment. The results show that the Big Five Personality Traits have a significant impact on career choice commitment, specifically:

Extraversion (Extraversion): Extraversion has a significant positive impact on career choice commitment. Students with high Extraversion are more active in social situations, enjoy interacting with others, and derive energy and satisfaction from social activities. This trait makes them more inclined to choose careers that require frequent interpersonal interactions, such as sales, marketing, and human resources. These careers can fully leverage their social strengths and meet their needs for interaction with others, thereby increasing their career choice commitment.

Openness : Openness also has a significant positive impact on career choice commitment. Students with high Openness have curiosity and imagination, are open to new things and experiences, and are willing to try new things and experiences. This trait makes them more inclined to choose careers with innovation and challenges, such as research, design, and creative industries. These careers can satisfy their desire to explore new things and their need for innovation, thereby increasing their career choice commitment.

Conscientiousness (Conscientiousness): Conscientiousness has a significant positive impact on career choice commitment. Students with high Conscientiousness are organized, planned, and responsible. They can manage their time and tasks well and pay attention to details and quality. This trait makes them more focused on the long-term development and stability of their careers, tending to choose careers that offer stable career development paths and promotion opportunities, such as business management, engineering technology, and education. These careers can meet their needs for stability and goal orientation, thereby increasing their career choice commitment.

Neuroticism (Neuroticism): Neuroticism has a significant negative impact on career choice commitment. Students with high Neuroticism experience significant emotional fluctuations and are prone to negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, and anger. They have a lower tolerance for stress and setbacks. This trait makes them more likely to show more worries and unease when facing uncertainties and challenges in career choice and development, thereby reducing their career choice commitment.

Agreeableness (Agreeableness): The impact of Agreeableness on career choice commitment is not significant. Students with high Agreeableness are kind, friendly, and helpful. They are good at establishing harmonious relationships with others. Although this trait has a positive significance in interpersonal relationships, its impact on career choice commitment is relatively small. This may be because career choice commitment is more influenced by personal career goals and career environment, rather than just the harmony of interpersonal relationships.

These research findings are consistent with previous studies, but research in the Chinese college student population is relatively limited. This study provides new evidence in this field, especially in the context of Chinese culture, where the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment has certain particularities. For example, Chinese traditional culture emphasizes collectivism and social harmony, and family and society often have high expectations and influences on individuals' career choices. These cultural factors may to some extent affect the relationship between personality traits and career choice commitment.

Theoretical Significance

This study enriches the theoretical research on the relationship between the Big Five Personality Traits and career choice commitment, especially among Chinese college students. The research findings show that the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment has cultural differences, providing a new perspective for cross-cultural research. Specifically (Hofstede 1980):

1. The impact of cultural differences: This study finds that although the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment is consistent across different cultural backgrounds, certain personality traits have a more significant impact in the Chinese cultural context. For example, Conscientiousness has a more prominent impact on Chinese college students, which may be related to the high emphasis on stability and responsibility in Chinese culture. This cultural difference provides a new perspective for cross-cultural research, suggesting that cultural factors should be considered when exploring the relationship between personality and career choice commitment.
2. Validation of the theoretical model: This study empirically validates the applicability of the Big Five Personality Traits model in the field of career choice commitment. The research findings support the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment, further enriching the theoretical research in this area. This provides a theoretical basis for future research and a reference for cross-cultural comparative studies.
3. The complex relationship between personality and career choice: This study reveals the complex relationship between personality traits and career choice commitment, especially among Chinese college students. The research findings show that different personality traits have different degrees of impact on career choice commitment, and the impact of certain personality traits may be moderated by cultural background. This provides a more comprehensive perspective for understanding the relationship between personality and career choice commitment.

Practical Significance

This study provides practical guidance for university career counseling and student career planning. Specifically (Super 1957):

1. Personalized career counseling: Universities can provide personalized career counseling for students with different personality traits. For example, for students with high Extraversion, they can be encouraged to participate in more social activities and internship programs to enhance their social skills and career adaptability. For students with high Openness, they can be encouraged to participate in innovative and challenging projects to satisfy their desire to explore new things. For students with high Conscientiousness, career planning and time management training can be provided to help them better achieve their career goals.
2. Career choice support: Universities can provide more career choice information and support to help students better understand their personality traits and choose careers that suit them. For example, through career assessment tools and career counseling, students can be helped to identify their personality traits and career interests, thereby making wiser career choices.
3. Career development training: Universities can provide career development training to help students enhance their career choice commitment. For example, through career

planning courses and workshops, students can be helped to set career goals, enhance their career adaptability, and strengthen their career choice commitment.

4. **Mental health support:** Universities can provide mental health support to help students cope with the stress and uncertainty in career choice. For example, through psychological counseling and stress management training, students can be helped to enhance their emotional stability and coping abilities, thereby increasing their career choice commitment.

This study provides theoretical and practical support for university career counseling and student career planning, especially in the context of Chinese culture, offering a new perspective for understanding the relationship between personality traits and career choice commitment. Through these studies, we hope to provide more effective career counseling strategies for universities, help college students better understand their personality traits, make career choices that align with their characteristics and career goals, thereby increasing career choice commitment and promoting career development.

Research Contributions

"The contributions of this study are threefold. First, it provides new empirical evidence for understanding the impact of the Big Five Personality Traits on career choice commitment among college students, especially in the context of Chinese culture. Second, through systematic data analysis, this study reveals the specific mechanisms by which different personality traits affect career choice commitment, offering a new perspective for cross-cultural research. Finally, this study provides practical guidance for university career counseling and student career planning, helping college students better understand their personality traits and make wiser career choices."

Research Limitations and Future Prospects

Research Limitations

The sample of this study is limited to college students at Wuyi University, which may affect the generalizability of the research findings. In addition, the research hypotheses are based on the Big Five Personality Traits model and do not consider other factors that may affect career choice commitment, such as family background and social support (Creswell 2013).

Future Research Directions

Future research can expand the sample scope to include universities of different regions and types to enhance the generalizability of the research findings. In addition, further exploration of the impact of other factors on career choice commitment, such as family background and social support, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying career choice commitment (Schmitt et al 1986).

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