

The Sociocultural Features of Chinese College Students' Prior Choices in Life

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Abstract—The priority of life is influenced by the specific social culture in which they live, and there are obvious cultural differences. In order to reveal these features, we did the research during 2012 to 2015 with 187 Chinese students aged 17 to 22 years. The questionnaire contained “your dream of life”, “expected work”, “city of residence”, “expected income”, “future family”, “the influence of family, parents and schools on their own prior choices” and other items. At last, we drew the conclusion and described the Sociocultural features according to the answers of the respondents.

Keywords—Chinese college students, sociocultural features, prior choices in life

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of children's self-cognition, the formation of their outlook on life and the orientation of their values are influenced by the specific social-cultural aspects in which they live. [1] It can be seen that the people's prior choices in life has distinct cultural characteristics and differences. The study of Chinese college students' life priorities can better understand the impact of Chinese traditional social culture on their own development, draw the picture of their growth and development, and predict their orientation of life-plan and the orbit of development in their future life. [2] To study these sociocultural features, we conducted a series of studies during 2012 to 2015, in which 187 Chinese students aged 17 to 22 years took part. In the study, we got the results by using

questionnaire, the questionnaire contained “your dream of life”, “expected work”, “Ideal city for work”, “expected income”, “future family”, “the influence of family on their own prior choices” and other items. The study was conducted in Chinese Normal Universities at the spring semesters and autumn semesters.

After the rejection of ineffective questionnaires, we got 160 effective questionnaires at last with the effective response rate of 86%, the results of our research analysis are as follows.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our research mainly consists of three parts: the priority of Chinese college students' life dreams, the Chinese college students' ideal future family, and the Characteristics of Chinese College Students' Career Planning

A. The Priority of Chinese College Students' Life Dreams

As the result of the study shown in Table I, we found that 66% of Chinese college students are going to work in their specialty at the end of their studies. 10% of College students dream of doing businesses that not related to their specialty. 5% of College students would like to continue their education. 2% of College students want to be army-man. 2% of College students want to be government employee. 9% of College students are going to work in the other occupations. 6% of College students stated that there were no clear intentions as to what they would like to do after receiving the diploma.

TABLE I. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT “YOUR DREAM OF LIFE”

Dream of life	In own specialty	Doing businesses	Continue education	Army-man	Government employee	Other occupations	No clear intentions
Quantity of respondents	106	16	8	3	3	14	10
Percentage (%)	66	10	5	2	2	9	6

The results of our study showed that most Chinese college students (66%) will follow their original intentions, choose to work as a teacher after graduation, and a small number of Chinese college students will choose other occupations; however, we found that 6% of Chinese college students still do not A clear dream of their life, this phenomenon is worthy of our attention, we need to carry out effective career planning education for Chinese college students, and help these students find their career development orientation.

1) Chinese parents' attitude towards college students' choice of life dreams: As the result of the study shown in

Table II, we found that 87% of Chinese college students gave positive answers. 11% of Chinese students said that their parents disapprove what they want to do after graduation. 2% of Chinese college students said that they do not know the parents' attitude to their future choice.

It can be seen that most parents will respect their children's work choices. Of course, there are also a small number of parents who do not agree with their children's work choices. In addition, there are very few Chinese college students that don't know if their parents agree with their choice. This phenomenon may be related to their lack of a clear career orientation.

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TABLE II. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE PARENTS APPROVE WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE GOING TO DO AFTER GRADUATION

Parents' attitude	Agree	Disagree	Not clear
Quantity of respondent	139	18	3
Percentage (%)	87	11	2

2) *Important people who influence college students to realize their dreams of life:* Our results of research show in Table III, that 84.38% of college students think that fulfilling their life dreams depends on themselves. 13.75% of college students think that fulfilling their life dreams depends on friends. 1.25% of college students think that realizing their life dreams depends on parents and relatives. Only 0.62% of college students think that they can achieve own life dream depends on the teacher.

TABLE III. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS DEPENDS ON WHOM ACHIEVING THEIR LIFE DREAMS

Whom	Myself	Friends	Parents Relatives	Teachers
Quantity of respondent	135	22	2	1
Percentage (%)	84.38	13.75	1.25	0.62

In response to the results of the above studies, we found that the vast majority of Chinese college students believe that personal success is inseparable from their own efforts, and they must learn to be independent. They think that "my life is my master," and everything is in my own hands. And the way of life depends on themselves, so they realize their dreams of life depends on themselves and their friends around them; a small group of college students think that parental consent is very important, because of the influence of Chinese traditional filial piety; in addition, there are A few college students think that teachers have set an impact on their role as a model. Therefore, it is up to the teacher to realize their dream of life. It can be seen that the psychological impact of Chinese traditional culture education on college students, the results of the above research highlights the psychological characteristics and life value orientation of Chinese college students' life choices.

3) *Negative factors affecting the realization of college students' life dreams:* When answering the question about which Factors mostly affecting College Students to realize their dreams of life, 42.1% of Chinese students put the insufficient efforts in the first place, 31.9% - negative influence of Surroundings and the other people, 24.1% - their personal characteristics and 1.9% - other factors (As shown in Table IV).

TABLE IV. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT WHICH FACTORS MOSTLY AFFECTING COLLEGE STUDENTS TO REALIZE THEIR DREAMS OF LIFE

Factors	Effort factor	Surroundings	Personal Characteristics	Other Factors
Quantity of respondent	67	51	39	3
Percentage (%)	42.1	31.9	24.1	1.9

We found that the psychological attribution of Chinese college students is more focused on internal reasons. For example, 66.2% of college students attribute the factors that affect their life goals to personal lack of effort, laziness, or the characteristics of personal personality. For example, not self-confidence, psychological stress and other factors. However, external environmental factors accounted for only 31.9%, which was attributed to the negative influence of others around them, or external factors such as society and family. This attribution phenomenon is very consistent with the traditional Chinese educational thought, that is, to find reasons from oneself, rather than looking for the deficiencies of others.

4) *Ideal city for work:* As the preferred place of work and residence, large cities (over one million inhabitants) were indicated by 13.76% of Chinese students, medium and small cities - 45.62% of Chinese students, Hainan Province - 37.5% of Chinese students. And 3.12% of Chinese students stated that they had not yet determined it. (As shown in Table V).

TABLE V. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE PREFERRED PLACE OF WORK AND RESIDENCE

Cities	large cities	Medium and small cities	Hainan Province	No difference
Quantity of respondent	22	73	60	5
Percentage (%)	13.76	45.62	37.5	3.12

As can be seen from the above table, compared with large cities, Chinese college students are more likely to choose to work in medium and small cities, accounting for 83.12%, which is related to the relatively small work pressure in medium and small cities. Among them, 37.5% hope to stay in Hainan Province, which should be related to the development of Hainan's international tourist island and good ecological environment.

5) *Chinese college students' Expected salary:* As shown in Table VI: the expected salary is less than 2,000 yuan, accounting for only 0.62%, 2000-5000 yuan accounting for 53.75%, 5000-7000 yuan accounting for 15.63%, 7,000 yuan or more accounting for 19.38%; and 10.62% Chinese college students are not aware of their expected salary.

It can be seen that the income expectation of Chinese college students' work is at a medium level, and the Chinese college students who have high expectations of high-level work income only account for 19.38%, which is in line with

the educational paradigm of Chinese Normal University students: teaching and educating people.

TABLE VI. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE EXPECTED SALARY(1000 YUAN)

Expected salary	1.5-2	2-5	5-7	≥7	Not clear
Quantity of respondent	1	86	25	31	17
Percentage (%)	0.62	53.75	15.63	19.38	10.62

B. Chinese College Students' Ideal Future Family

The ideal family of Chinese college students is studied through three dimensions: the ideal spouse, the age of marriage and the number of children in the future family.

TABLE VII. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' IDEAL SPOUSE

Ideal spouse	Spouse' age elder	Spouse' age Similar	Responsible and self-motivated	common language	Spouse is a teacher	Spouse has a stable job	Spouse is civil servant	Spouse is a doctor
Quantity of respondent	32	24	21	2	36	23	12	10
Percentage (%)	20	15	13.13	1.25	22.5	14.37	7.5	6.25

2) *Chinese college students' age of marriage:* As shown in Table VIII, the results of our survey show that 26.25% of Chinese students stated that their ideal marriage period is 24-26 years old, while 38.75% of Chinese students stated that their ideal marriage period is 27-28 years old. And there are 29.37% of Chinese college students Will marry after the age 28 years old.

TABLE VIII. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' AGE OF MARRIAGE

Age of marriage	≤23	24-26	27-28	≥28	Un-certain	Not married
Quantity of respondent	3	42	62	47	4	2
Percentage (%)	1.88	26.25	38.75	29.37	2.5	1.25

In addition, 1.88% of Chinese college students think they will get married before the age of 23 years old, because youth can't afford it. On the contrary, 1.25% of Chinese college students think they will not get married in the future.

3) *Chinese college students' children in the future family:* At the same time, the optimal quantity of children in the family was named: 1 child - 30% of Chinese students, 2 children - 63.13% of Chinese students, 3 or more children - 3.75% of Chinese students. Preference in favor of the absence

1) *Chinese college students' ideal life partner:* According to the survey, in terms of spouse' age, 20% of Chinese college students want their spouse to be elder than themselves, and 15% of Chinese college students want their spouse to be similar to their age; In terms of personality characteristics, 13.13% of Chinese college students hope that their spouses are responsible and self-motivated. 1.25% of Chinese college students want to have a common language with their spouse; In terms of occupation, 22.5% of Chinese college students hope that their spouses are engaged in teacher professions, 14.38% of Chinese college students hope that their spouses have stable jobs, 7.5% of Chinese college students want their spouses to engage in civil servant occupations, and 6.25% of China College students want their spouse to be a doctor.(Table VII)

of children was expressed by 3.13% of Chinese students. (Table IX)

TABLE IX. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE QUANTITY OF CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY

Quantity Of children	0	1	2	≥3
Quantity of respondent	5	48	101	6
Percentage (%)	3.13	30	63.13	3.75

The analysis of the psycho-social characteristics of Chinese college students on the choice of children' quantity in the future family found that most Chinese college students think that children are more companionship and lively, so they choose to have 2-3 children in the future family. A small number of Chinese college students think that they should have less birth and better education, or the quantity of children should be determined according to the family's economic situation, so they choose to have one children in the future family. There are also fewer Chinese college students who think that children are more stressed, will affect the development of their careers, or choose not to have children in the future family.

C. The Characteristics of Chinese College Students' Career Planning

We study the Characteristics of Chinese College Students' Career Planning through three dimensions: the Chinese College Students' staged goals in life, the expectation of achieving their life goals, and the strategies to achieve their life goals.

1) *The Chinese College Students' staged goals in life:* In the study of the Chinese college students' staged goals in life, we have designed five stages, they are one year, three years, five years, ten years and fifteen years later. The results of the survey are shown in Table X.

TABLE X. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' STAGED GOALS IN LIFE

Stages (years)	1	3	5	10	15
Pass exams	28.63	0	0	0	0
Admitted to master's degree	19.87	0	0	0	0
Find the ideal job	34.15	37.6	0	0	0
Working smoothly	0	25.85	33.57	36.52	16.31
Find the ideal spouse	0	15.80	0	0	0
Career success and family are happy	0	19.48	39.49	55.23	72.38
Others	17.35	1.27	26.94	8.25	11.31

The results of the study show that 34.15% of Chinese college students hope to find a job after one year. 28.63% of Chinese college students want to pass all the exams and get diploma of graduation. 19.87% of Chinese college students hope to have a successful postgraduate study one year later. 37.6% of Chinese college students hope to find a job after three years. 25.85% of Chinese college students hope that their work will develop well after three years. 19.48% of Chinese college students hope that after three years of good career and family, 15.8% of Chinese college students hope to find the other half of their favorite three years later. 39.49% of Chinese college students hope to have a good career and a happy family after five years. 33.57% of Chinese college students hope that their work will develop well after five years. 55.23% of Chinese college students hope to have a good career and a happy family after ten years. 36.52% of Chinese college students hope that their work will develop well after ten years. After 15 years, 72.38% of Chinese college students hope that their careers will be excellent and their families will be happy. 16.31% of Chinese college students hope that their work will develop well after 15 years.

We can see that the focus of Chinese college students' staged goals in life are on family and career after five years, ten years, and fifteen years.

2) *The Chinese College Students' expectation of achieving their life goals:* The research on the expectation of Chinese college students to achieve their own goals in life is mainly done by the probability assessment of the possibility of college students to achieve their goals in life. The results of the study are shown in Table XI.

TABLE XI. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' EXPECTATION OF ACHIEVING THEIR LIFE GOALS

Probability of realization	≤30%	30% – 50%	51% – 70%	71% – 80%	≧ 80%	No answer
Percentage (%)	1.25	11.87	20.62	26.88	38.13	1.25

In general, 86% of Chinese College students are confident in the successful implementation of their life goals. However, there are 13.12% of Chinese College students think that they cannot successfully achieve their goals in life. Even 1.25% of Chinese college students are confused, no answer.

3) *The Chinese College Students' Strategies to achieve their life goals:* As everyone knows, on the way to achieving their goals in life, they will encounter all kinds of difficulties and obstacles. Only by successfully overcoming these negative effects can they achieve their goals in life. So what should we do? Let us explore the strategies adopted by Chinese college students to achieve their goals in life.

TABLE XII. ANALYSIS RESULTS IN RESEARCH ON THE QUESTION ABOUT THE CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THEIR LIFE GOALS

Strategies	Improve ability level	Improve psychological quality	Optimize external resources	Others
Quantity of respondent	97	51	9	3
Percentage (%)	60.63	32.1	5.67	1.6

The results of Table XII show that 60.63% of Chinese college students hope to continuously improve their abilities through learning and practice, overcome the difficult factors that affect themselves, and achieve their goals in life. 32.1% of Chinese college students adopt strategies to improve their psychological quality and achieve their own life goals. 5.67% of Chinese college students adopt strategies to optimize external resources to achieve their own life goals. In addition, 1.60% of Chinese college students adopt other strategies.

According to the obtained results, the Chinese undergraduates has a clear request for an ability of potential-realizing and goal-setting. What's more the education, that can

promote undergraduates to reach to their goal, is also needed. In view of the request, we developed and introduced the educational module "Life Navigation" into the educational process of Chinese universities to help undergraduates to realize their intentions, set their goal and achieve it.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the above studies show that Chinese students' dreams of life, ideal families and the choice of career planning are influenced by Chinese traditional social culture.

The priority of Chinese college students' life dreams has obvious social and cultural characteristics, which highlights the personality psychological characteristics of Chinese college students, the parent-child relationship of the original family, and their important influence on the growth and preference of college students. At the same time, it also reflects the current social problems in China and their impact on the life priorities of contemporary college students.

The preferred choices for Chinese college students' future ideals, including the choice of spouses, age of marriage, and the number of children in the future family plan, clearly outline the paradigm of traditional Chinese family views. However, we have also discovered new changes. Different from the traditional family concept, the age of marriage of contemporary Chinese college students has been postponed much more than before. Not only that, but also a few singles have appeared;

In addition, with the opening of China's second-child policy, most contemporary college students want to have two children, which is very different from the previous family and one child. Based on these findings, we can predict that in the near future, China's demographic structure and family structure

will undergo great changes, which will directly affect the changes in people's social psychology.

The career planning of Chinese college students' life can help us understand the future development of Chinese college students. At the same time, it can also help us to find out the specific problems existing in the life planning of contemporary college students, provide theoretical basis for the practical education of college students, and propose practical solutions strategies to the causes of problems.

All in all, we can through the results of the research on the priority of college students' life to understand the Chinese social-cultural characteristics, to explore the life value orientation of contemporary Chinese college students, to outline the blueprint for their life development, and to better understand their life needs. Providing the most effective education for them, helping them to grow better and making them have the best life in the future.

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