

# Counselor's Competency and Employment Intention Among Engineering Graduates In A Government University In Qingdao China

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## Abstract:

To investigate the impact of counselors' competency on the employment intentions of engineering undergraduates, a study was conducted at A Government University In Qingdao China. The goal of this study was to identify ways to develop counselors' competency and promote graduates' employment intentions. By improving the quality of counseling services and enhancing graduates' employment prospects, universities could provide significant support to their students and contribute to their success.

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## Keywords:

Engineering graduate  
Counselor's ability  
Employment intention

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## 1. Introduction

Counselors' competency is a critical component in providing effective support and guidance to undergraduate students<sup>[1]</sup>. It is essential to promoting their mental and emotional well-being, helping them navigate through various challenges, and enhancing their overall quality of life. Competent counselors are an invaluable resource for undergraduate students, providing them with the necessary tools and support to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals<sup>[2]</sup>.

Decree No. 43 of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China stipulates that counselors are the backbone of ideological and political education for college students. They are the organizers, implementers,

and guides of daily ideological and political education and student management in colleges and universities. Counselors should strive to become life mentors for students and close companions in promoting a healthy life. In terms of career planning, employment, and entrepreneurship guidance, they must provide students with scientific career planning, employment advice, and related services. Counselors should help students establish a correct concept of employment and encourage them to work in grassroots areas, the western regions, and the most needed places in the country.

## 2. The competitiveness and employment rate of engineering graduates

In today's highly competitive job market, the employment intentions of college graduates have become a major concern for universities and the government in China [3]. To promote social and economic development, the Chinese government has implemented various policies to increase the employment rate of college graduates [4]. As part of this effort, universities are expected to provide quality education and support services to students, including counseling services [5].

Counseling services are crucial in promoting the mental health and well-being of college students. Counselors provide support and interventions to help students overcome challenges and enhance their overall well-being. However, the quality of counseling services depends on the competency of counselors [6]. Competent counselors can provide effective support and interventions, promote ethical practice, and contribute to the targeted outcomes and development of college students [7].

Therefore, the development of counselors' competency has become a crucial part of teaching management. School managers recognize that improving the competency of counselors is essential to providing high-quality counseling services to students. It is important to note that different students may have different needs and challenges, and counselors need to have the necessary skills and knowledge to address these needs effectively. Therefore, developing counselors' competency is critical to supporting the academic and career success of college students [8].

For engineering students, employment intention is particularly important. Currently, China's engineering and technology field is facing huge challenges, requiring a large number of high-quality engineers to drive technological innovation and industrial upgrading. Therefore, the Chinese government and universities attach great importance to improving the employment intention and competitiveness of engineering students [9].

A Government University In Qingdao China is a mainly engineering-focused university, and the employment situation of its graduates is of great concern. Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of counselors' competency on engineering students' employment intention at A Government University

In Qingdao China. By studying the competency of counselors and their support and intervention methods for students, as well as their impact on students' employment intentions, this study can help improve the employment competitiveness and employment rate of engineering graduates [10].

Additionally, this study can provide reference and guidance for other universities in China. By understanding the relationship between counselors' competency and engineering students' employment intention at different universities, corresponding problems and solutions can be identified to improve the employment competitiveness and employment rate of college graduates and promote China's social and economic development [11].

## 3. Counselor competency and employment intention of undergraduate engineering students

Zhang and Yuan explored effective employment guidance strategies for college students, using Shanxi Agricultural University as an example. The article highlighted the importance of accurate guidance and services, vocational value education, employment psychological guidance, and employment guidance skills. By addressing these issues, universities can better assist students in overcoming employment intention misconceptions and provide effective employment guidance. Overall, this article provided a comprehensive analysis of the misconceptions and causes of employment intentions among college students, emphasizing the importance of effective employment guidance strategies. The article provides practical suggestions for universities to improve employment guidance services and help students overcome employment intention misconceptions [12].

In addition to the survey, in-depth interviews will be conducted with counselors and engineering undergraduates to explore the factors that influence the development of counselors' competency and the impact of counselors' competency on engineering undergraduates' employment intention. The data collected through the interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns [13].

The findings of this study will provide insights into the impact of counselors' competency on engineering

undergraduates' employment intention. The results will aid in the development of strategies to improve the competency of counselors and promote the employment intention of engineering undergraduates. The study's results will also contribute to the broader goal of promoting the mental and emotional well-being of undergraduate students and supporting their academic and career success<sup>[14]</sup>.

#### 4. Social Cognitive Career Theory

This study is anchored in the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) and Theory of Planned Behavior. This Social Cognitive Career Theory was first proposed by Robert D. Lent, Steven D. Brown, and Gail Hackett in the 1990s. The theory is based on Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals in human behavior<sup>[15]</sup>. SCCT extends SCT to the domain of career development, suggesting that individuals' career choices and development are influenced by their characteristics, environmental factors, and the interaction between the two<sup>[16]</sup>.

According to SCCT, individuals develop their career interests and goals through a process of observational learning, where they observe and model the behavior of others who are perceived to be successful in their chosen career paths. Individuals' self-efficacy, or their belief in their ability to perform specific tasks related to their career goals, also plays a significant role in their career development. Outcome expectations, or the anticipated results of their actions, influence individuals' motivation and persistence in pursuing their career goals<sup>[17]</sup>.

#### 5. Scope and delimitation of the study

This study aims to investigate the influence of counselors' competency on the employment intentions of engineering students at A Government University In Qingdao China in China. The study will focus on Mechanical Engineering graduates from specific academic years. Data will be collected through a survey questionnaire, and statistical methods will be used to analyze the data to identify the relationship between counselors' competency and

engineering students' employment intentions. The scope of the study is limited to students at A Government University In Qingdao China and will not include students from other universities or non-mechanical majors<sup>[18]</sup>.

#### 6. Differences in the employment intentions among respondents

The overall assessment of the respondents, based on their dimensions of employment intention in terms of the following profile variables, yielded the following results.

Differences in employment intention based on sex and age among the Mechanical Engineering respondents showed no significant impact. However, variations were observed among those who graduated in the school years 2019, 2020, and 2021, particularly in terms of behavioral attitude, with significant differences noted between graduates from 2019 and 2020<sup>[19]</sup>.

Furthermore, a significant difference was found among respondents based on the time spent with their respective counselors. The data indicated that the longer a counselor maintains a working relationship with a counselee, the greater the impact on the counselee's employment intentions.

#### 7. Relationship between counselors' competencies and employment intentions

Generally, there was no significant relationship between the counselors' competency indicators and the employment intention factors of the Mechanical Engineering graduate respondents. However, a moderate to strong positive relationship was found between counselors' competency in terms of "Knowledge" and the behavioral attitude of the engineering graduates, with the relationship being strong and positive. Similarly, counselors' skills were significantly related to perceived behavioral control, showing a mild relationship, and also to internship expectations, with a strong and positive relationship<sup>[20]</sup>.

#### 8. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following

conclusions are hereby drawn:

- (1) The personal circumstances of the respondent graduates in Mechanical Engineering qualify them to assess and provide information about their counselors' competencies and their influence on employment intentions.
- (2) It can be deduced that the activities initiated by the counselors have fostered a closer working relationship, forming a stronger connection toward realizing the employment intentions of the Mechanical Engineering graduates.
- (3) The profile variables of the engineering students are not reliable factors for determining counselor competencies. Other measurements, beyond personal circumstances, should be considered.
- (4) The respondents, based on their assessments, recognize that to enhance students' employment abilities, the counselors' knowledge and skills are crucial components of their competency in guiding student employment.

### Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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