

# A study on the influence of professional competence and professional identity on college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations

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**Abstract.** Objective: This study examines the influence of professional competence and professional identity on college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, as well as the underlying mechanisms of such influence, in order to provide a reference for alleviating the human resource difficulties faced by nonprofit organizations. Methods: A model of college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations was constructed. Using questionnaire surveys, this study analyzed undergraduate students' professional competence, professional identity, and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, and explored the key factors and pathways influencing their willingness to enter the nonprofit sector. Results: Both professional competence and professional identity exerted significant positive effects on college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. In addition, professional competence played a mediating role between professional identity and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. Conclusion: Nonprofit organizations and universities should work together to enhance college graduates' professional competence and strengthen their professional identity toward nonprofit work, thereby increasing their willingness to pursue careers in the nonprofit sector.

**Keywords:** nonprofit organizations, professional competence, professional identity, college graduates

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research background

As the "third sector" distinct from government and for-profit enterprises, nonprofit organizations play a vital role in social development. Nonprofit organizations provide a wide range of social services in fields such as education, environmental protection, and charity, filling the gaps left by governments and businesses in related services. Owing to their unique operational model, they have become an important bridge connecting governments, enterprises, and the public, playing a significant role in addressing social problems, promoting social communication, and safeguarding social values. However, in recent years, nonprofit organizations have generally faced human resource challenges such as insufficient staffing, relatively low educational and

professional levels among employees, and high turnover rates. Consequently, the importance and urgency of increasing the recruitment of college graduates have become increasingly evident, while attracting graduates to work in the nonprofit sector has become progressively more difficult.

In essence, the recruitment process of nonprofit organizations is a two-way selection process between college students and nonprofit organizations. For college graduates, professional competence and professional identity are key factors influencing career choice. Students are more inclined to choose jobs that they are capable of performing well, where they can fully utilize their abilities, and that offer sufficient advantages in terms of social status, occupational prestige, and career development. From the perspective of nonprofit organizations, expanding service areas, developing relevant positions, enhancing social credibility, and strengthening their attractiveness to college graduates have become pressing issues. In terms of university talent cultivation, it has become increasingly important to accurately understand the employment needs of nonprofit organizations, guide students in establishing proper values and employment perspectives, and enhance students' professional competence and professional identity.

## 1.2. Research significance

Existing studies on human resource management in nonprofit organizations have mainly focused on specific functions such as training, performance evaluation, and compensation management, while relatively little attention has been paid to personnel recruitment. Moreover, most previous studies have concentrated primarily on nonprofit organizations themselves, despite the fact that recruitment is fundamentally a two-way selection process between college students and nonprofit organizations. In addition, measurements of professional competence in prior studies have rarely been applied to the nonprofit sector, and self-evaluations of professional competence and professional identity among college students have been relatively limited, mainly focusing on highly career-oriented majors such as teacher education and medicine. This study places its emphasis on college students and adapts existing scales of professional competence and professional identity to more accurately measure college students' professional competence and professional identity.

By constructing a theoretical model linking professional competence, professional identity, and employment intention, this study analyzes the mechanisms underlying their relationships in order to comprehensively understand the motivations and behavioral tendencies of college graduates in choosing nonprofit work. The findings are expected to provide guidance and support for nonprofit organizations and universities, thereby helping to alleviate the human resource difficulties faced by nonprofit organizations.

## 1.3. Literature review

### *1.3.1. Professional competence*

Since the competency model was introduced into China in the late 1990s, it has attracted widespread attention and application, with most related studies conducted within specific industrial contexts. In addition to enterprises, competency theory has also been applied to the nonprofit sector to a certain extent, although related research remains limited. Jianwen Ding constructed a competency structure model for social organization practitioners based on competency theory and proposed approaches for optimizing the quality of personnel in social organizations [1]. Furthermore, studies on competency models have explored in detail the enhancement of job competence among college students, but these studies have mostly focused on majors such as medicine and teacher education. For example, Yuhang Song combined a self-designed questionnaire with a core competency questionnaire for midwives to investigate the core competencies of midwifery students at different educational levels and their influencing factors [2].

### *1.3.2. Professional identity*

The concept of professional identity originated from psychologist Erikson's theory of Ego Identity. Subsequent scholars further developed different concepts and measurement methods for professional identity. For example, Kremer and Hofman developed the Professional Identity Scale, which includes four dimensions: centrality, self-expression, values, and solidarity [3]. At present, professional identity scales are not only widely applied to employees but are also used among college students. However, studies on professional identity among college students have mainly focused on students in highly career-oriented majors such as teacher education and medicine. For instance, Chengming Yuan employed a professional identity scale for college students to examine the professional identity, contract fulfillment intentions, and correlations among rural-oriented medical students [4]. At present, domestic research on the professional identity of nonprofit organization employees remains limited. Bing Shi conducted a survey on the professional identity of social workers in nonprofit organizations using a case-study approach, examining factors such as career choice motivation, job satisfaction, and satisfaction with welfare benefits, and proposed recommendations for enhancing social workers' professional identity [5].

### *1.3.3. Research on the relationship among professional competence, professional identity, and employment intention*

Some scholars have investigated the relationship between professional competence and professional identity, although studies focusing on the nonprofit sector and college students remain scarce. Wei Xu explored the relationships among professional competence, professional identity, self-efficacy, and occupational well-being among university teachers through questionnaire surveys, finding that professional identity and self-efficacy mediated the relationship between occupational well-being and professional competence [6]. Wenzeng Wang employed teacher competency tests, professional identity scales for primary and secondary school teachers, and work thriving scales to examine the influence of competence on the professional development of physical education teachers, as well as the mediating roles of professional identity and work thriving in this relationship [7].

### *1.3.4. Literature review summary*

From the perspective of existing literature, studies on professional competence have largely been conducted within specific industrial contexts. By establishing competency models, these studies aim to develop universally applicable evaluation systems to help enterprises or governments improve the abilities of managers and employees. However, nonprofit organizations have only relatively recently entered public attention, and related studies have mainly focused on management systems and organizational functions, with comparatively limited research on the competencies of nonprofit practitioners. In addition, although some previous studies have focused on college students, they have primarily concentrated on majors such as medicine and teacher education.

Although professional identity scales have now been widely applied among college students, existing studies mainly focus on students in highly career-oriented majors, while students in other disciplines have received little attention. Meanwhile, the application of professional identity research within the nonprofit sector remains limited and has mainly focused on social workers, with little research addressing the professional identity of other nonprofit organization practitioners.

## 2. Conceptual definitions and model construction

### 2.1. Operationalization of core concepts

#### 2.1.1. Professional competence

Competency refers to the deep-seated characteristics that distinguish outstanding performers from average performers in a particular job [8]. In this study, professional competence refers to the deep-level characteristics of individuals working in the nonprofit sector, including personal traits, professional abilities, and professional emotions, that distinguish high achievers from ordinary practitioners.

Drawing on the College Students' Employability Competency Scale developed by Zhenyang Lü based on KPI theory [9], and integrating competency elements of nonprofit organization employees identified through literature review, this study adjusted the measurement items according to the competency requirements of nonprofit-sector occupations and the characteristics of college students. Professional competence was measured through four dimensions: personality traits, professional emotion, professional ability, and relationship management. A five-point Likert scale was adopted.

#### 2.1.2. Professional identity

Vocational identity refers to an individual's positive evaluation of the profession in which they are engaged [10]. In this study, professional identity refers to college students' positive perceptions and emotional attachment toward nonprofit organizations and related work. Professional identity plays an important role in influencing college graduates' behavioral tendencies toward entering nonprofit organizations. This study adapted the Social Workers' Self-Professional Identity Scale revised by Yanmei Gao [11], focusing on three dimensions: professional cognition, professional emotion, and professional behavior. The items were adjusted to fit college students and nonprofit organizations, and were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

#### 2.1.3. Willingness of college graduates to work in nonprofit organizations

The behavioral tendency of college graduates to work in nonprofit organizations was measured through students' self-evaluation regarding whether they were suitable for nonprofit work, whether they believed such work could realize their self-worth, and their willingness to enter nonprofit organizations when suitable positions became available. A five-point Likert scale was employed (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Operationalization of research variables

Variable	Measurement Dimension	Operational Definition
Professional Competence	Personality Traits	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am open-minded, cheerful, and tolerant toward others.</li> <li>2. I am caring and compassionate.</li> <li>3. I am positive and optimistic about life and do not become discouraged or slack off when facing difficulties.</li> <li>4. I am sincere, upright, and willing to contribute to others</li> <li>5. I possess good moral standards and a strong sense of social responsibility.</li> </ol>
	Professional Emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I pursue work that enables me to realize my self-worth.</li> <li>2. I pursue work that creates social value.</li> <li>3. I am conscientious and willing to take responsibility.</li> <li>4. I am willing to start from grassroots-level work.</li> <li>5. I believe social interests are more important than personal interests.</li> </ol>

**Table 1.** Continued

Professional Ability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I pay close attention to emerging trends related to the public and society.</li> <li>2. I possess relatively proficient professional knowledge and skills.</li> <li>3. I am good at applying what I have learned to work practice.</li> <li>4. I have strong execution ability and can complete tasks efficiently.</li> <li>5. I can closely cooperate with team members to accomplish tasks together.</li> </ol>
Relationship Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In study and work, I generally identify with team decisions and values.</li> <li>2. I am good at interpersonal communication and can get along harmoniously with others.</li> <li>3. I try to complete tasks independently and avoid troubling others whenever possible.</li> <li>4. I actively help others solve problems they encounter.</li> <li>5. I am capable of avoiding, mediating, and resolving conflicts.</li> </ol>
Professional Cognition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I believe nonprofit organizations play an important role in social life.</li> <li>2. I understand and recognize the professional values and ethics of nonprofit practitioners.</li> <li>3. I clearly understand the roles played by nonprofit practitioners in their work.</li> <li>4. I believe the government provides strong support for nonprofit practitioners.</li> <li>5. I believe nonprofit practitioners enjoy high social status.</li> </ol>
Professional Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. I believe nonprofit practitioners possess high occupational prestige.</li> </ol>
Professional Emotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am interested in the work content of nonprofit organizations.</li> <li>2. If I work in a nonprofit organization in the future, I would be willing to tell others about my profession.</li> </ol>
Professional Behavior	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I frequently follow developments in nonprofit career opportunities in different regions.</li> <li>2. I believe nonprofit work is worth pursuing and committing to in the long term.</li> </ol>
Willingness to Work in Nonprofit Organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I believe I am suitable for work in nonprofit organizations.</li> <li>2. I believe working in nonprofit organizations can help me realize my self-worth.</li> <li>3. If suitable positions become available in the future, I would be willing to work in nonprofit organizations.</li> </ol>

## 2.2. Research hypotheses

This study mainly examines the relationships among three key variables: college students' professional competence, professional identity, and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. Based on relevant theories and previous literature, the following hypotheses are proposed.

### *2.2.1. The influence of professional competence on willingness to work in nonprofit organizations*

For college students, professional competence may influence career choice. Students are more inclined to choose jobs that they are capable of performing well, where they can fully utilize their abilities and realize their self-worth. Nonprofit organizations often have specific competency requirements for employees, such as a strong sense of social responsibility, enthusiasm for grassroots work, and specialized knowledge and skills. Students with higher levels of professional competence are more likely to believe that they are capable of nonprofit work and therefore more willing to join nonprofit organizations. Accordingly, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Professional competence positively affects college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations.

### *2.2.2. The influence of professional identity on willingness to work in nonprofit organizations*

Social identity theory suggests that through the processes of social categorization, social comparison, and positive distinctiveness, individuals tend to classify themselves into a particular social group and develop self-esteem based on comparisons between their in-group and out-groups. For college students, if they fully understand the differences between nonprofit-related occupations and other professions, and believe that nonprofit work has sufficient advantages in terms of social status, occupational prestige, and career development, they will be more willing to become part of this group. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Professional identity positively affects college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations.

### *2.2.3. The interaction between professional competence and professional identity*

For college students, competency elements such as personality traits, professional emotion, and professional ability may enhance their professional identity toward nonprofit organizations. Examples include a sense of social responsibility, enthusiasm for grassroots work, and the application of professional knowledge. At the same time, driven by professional identity, college students are more likely to acquire qualities of willpower and abilities related to nonprofit work in their daily lives and studies, thereby improving their professional competence. Accordingly, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H3: Professional competence positively affects professional identity among college graduates.

H4: Professional identity positively affects professional competence among college graduates.

### *2.2.4. The mediating roles of professional identity and professional competence*

Based on the above analysis, this study further proposes the following hypotheses:

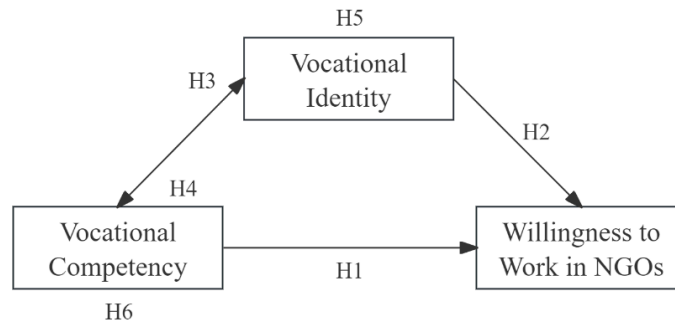
H5: Professional identity mediates the relationship between professional competence and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations.

H6: Professional competence mediates the relationship between professional identity and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations.

## 2.3. Model construction

Based on the concepts of professional competence and professional identity, as well as the relationships among the variables, this study constructs a model of college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit

organizations (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Hypothesized research model

### 3. Analysis of the mechanisms influencing college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations

The participants in this study were undergraduate students enrolled at universities. Questionnaires were distributed through both online and offline channels. A total of 487 questionnaires were distributed, among which 74 invalid questionnaires were excluded due to careless responses. Ultimately, 413 valid questionnaires were collected, including 276 online questionnaires and 137 paper questionnaires, yielding an effective response rate of 84.80%.

#### 3.1. Reliability and validity analysis of the questionnaire

This study employed Cronbach's alpha coefficient to assess the reliability of the scales in the questionnaire. An  $\alpha$  value greater than 0.7 indicates a high level of internal consistency among items. The KMO test and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to examine validity. A KMO value greater than 0.7 and a significance level below 0.05 indicate satisfactory scale validity. The results of the reliability and validity tests for each variable and the overall questionnaire are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2.** Reliability analysis of the questionnaire

Measurement Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Overall Scale
Professional Competence	0.943	
Professional Identity	0.913	0.950
Work Intention	0.837	

As shown in Table 2, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for professional competence, professional identity, willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, and the overall scale were all greater than 0.7, indicating good internal consistency of the scales.

**Table 3.** Validity analysis of the questionnaire

Measurement Variable	KMO Value	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
		Approximate Chi-square	df	Significance
Professional Competence	0.941	5,452.459	190	0.000
Professional Identity	0.918	2,213.581	45	0.000
Work Intention	0.727	488.623	3	0.000

According to Table 3, the KMO values for professional competence, professional identity, and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations were all greater than 0.7, and all significance values were below 0.05, indicating good validity of the scales.

### 3.2. Descriptive analysis

#### 3.2.1. Overall analysis of major measured variables

Descriptive statistics were conducted for college students' professional competence, professional identity, and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. The results are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics	M	SD
Professional Competence	3.85	1.30
Professional Identity	3.54	0.72
Work Intention	3.48	0.88

Note: N = 413

According to Table 4, the levels of professional competence, professional identity, and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations among university students were all at a moderate level.

#### 3.2.2. Analysis of college graduates' concerns about working in nonprofit organizations

The responses to the open-ended questionnaire item, "What concerns do you have about working in nonprofit organizations?" were integrated and analyzed. A total of 45 valid responses were collected. The major viewpoints expressed by respondents and their frequencies are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Major concerns regarding working in nonprofit organizations

Main Concern	Frequency
Low income and welfare benefits in nonprofit work make it difficult to meet living needs	38
Unclear career development paths and unstable employment	6
Concern that the work may fail to bring substantial social benefits	5
Concern that nonprofit organizations may lack integrity, have disorganized management, or lack transparency	4
Concern that society and family members may not recognize nonprofit work	4
Unclear competency requirements for nonprofit work	3
The domestic environment may not be conducive to the long-term and stable development of nonprofit organizations	3

According to Table 5, respondents' concerns about entering nonprofit organizations mainly focused on the following three aspects:

First, salary and career planning. Compared with for-profit organizations, nonprofit organizations generally offer lower salaries and less clear career development prospects. Respondents believed that such salaries might not adequately support personal and family living needs, while ambiguous career paths could hinder long-term personal development.

Second, job content and competency requirements. Nonprofit organizations operate across a wide range of fields, and their work often possesses unique characteristics. However, the competency requirements for many positions are not clearly defined, leading respondents to worry that their professional knowledge and expertise may not be fully utilized.

Third, the social credibility of nonprofit organizations. At present, many nonprofit organizations possess relatively weak fundraising and financial planning capabilities, and public trust in them remains limited. Many respondents still held concerns regarding whether nonprofit organizations maintain orderly internal management, whether donated funds are used appropriately, and whether organizational information is sufficiently open and transparent. In addition to their own cautious attitudes, some respondents also worried that their family members might not approve of such careers.

### 3.3. Validation of the mechanism of influence

#### 3.3.1. Correlation analysis

This study employed Pearson correlation analysis to examine the relationships among the variables. The results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Pearson correlation analysis

	Professional Competence	Professional Identity	Work Intention
Professional Competence	1	0.519**	0.407**
Professional Identity		1	0.699**
Work Intention			1

\*Note: \* $p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 6, professional competence ( $r = 0.407, p < 0.01$ ) and professional identity ( $r = 0.699, p < 0.01$ ) are both significantly and positively correlated with willingness to work in nonprofit organizations at the 0.01 significance level. In addition, professional competence and professional identity are also significantly positively correlated ( $r = 0.519, p < 0.01$ ). These results indicate that there are significant correlations among college students' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, professional competence, and professional identity.

#### 3.3.2. Regression analysis

Based on the Pearson correlation results above, significant relationships exist among willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, professional competence, and professional identity. Therefore, this study further employs linear regression analysis to examine the relationships among these variables. The results are presented in Tables 7–10.

**Table 7.** Regression analysis of professional competence on work intention

Model	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	F	Sig
Constant	1.67	0.29	8.67	11.00	0.000
Professional Competence	0.53	0.06	5.67		0.000

As shown in Table 7, professional competence has a significant positive effect on willingness to work in nonprofit organizations among college graduates ( $\beta = 0.53, p < 0.01$ ), thus supporting Hypothesis H1. Based on the regression coefficients, the regression equation can be expressed as: Willingness to work in nonprofit organizations =  $0.528 \times \text{Professional Competence} + 1.668$

**Table 8.** Regression analysis of professional identity on work intention

Model	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	F	Sig
Constant	0.69	0.22	3.14	37.85	0.002
Professional Identity	0.82	0.04	18.56		0.000

As shown in Table 8, professional identity has a significant positive effect on willingness to work in nonprofit organizations among college graduates ( $\beta = 0.82, p < 0.01$ ), thus supporting Hypothesis H2. The regression equation can be expressed as: Willingness to work in nonprofit organizations =  $0.818 \times \text{Professional Identity} + 0.685$

**Table 9.** Regression analysis of professional competence on professional identity

Model	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	F	Sig
Constant	1.49	0.23	6.54	16.12	0.002
Professional Competence	0.57	0.05	11.98		0.000

As shown in Table 9, professional competence has a significant positive effect on professional identity among college graduates ( $\beta = 0.57, p < 0.01$ ), thus supporting Hypothesis H3. The regression equation can be expressed as: Professional Identity =  $0.566 \times \text{Professional Competence} + 1.492$

**Table 10.** Regression analysis of professional identity on professional competence

Model	Coefficient	Std. Error	t	F	Sig
Constant	2.04	0.19	10.65	14.58	0.002
Professional Identity	0.47	0.04	11.98		0.000

As shown in Table 10, professional identity has a significant positive effect on professional competence among college graduates ( $\beta = 0.47, p < 0.01$ ), thus supporting Hypothesis H4. The regression equation can be expressed as: Professional Competence =  $0.466 \times \text{Professional Identity} + 2.050$

### 3.3.3. Mediation analysis

The above correlation and regression analyses indicate that professional competence and professional identity mutually influence each other, and both have positive effects on willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. Therefore, this study further examines the mediating roles of professional competence and professional identity, respectively, following the mediation analysis approach proposed by Wen Zhonglin et al. [12]. The relationships among variables are described by the following regression Equations (1)–(3):

$$Y = cX + e_1 \quad (1)$$

$$M = aX + e_2 \quad (2)$$

$$Y = c'X + bM + e_3 \quad (3)$$

In Equation (1), coefficient  $c$  represents the total effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The product of coefficients  $a$  and  $b$  from Equations (2) and (3), namely  $a*b$ , represents the indirect effect, which constitutes the mediation effect. Coefficient  $c'$  represents the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable after controlling for the mediating variable.

The results show that when professional identity is treated as a mediating variable, both coefficient  $a$  ( $\beta = 0.57, p < 0.01$ ) and coefficient  $b$  ( $\beta = 0.78, p < 0.01$ ) are significant. When professional competence is treated as a mediating variable, coefficient  $a$  is significant ( $\beta = 0.47, p < 0.01$ ), while coefficient  $b$  is not significant ( $\beta = 0.09, p > 0.1$ ). Therefore, a bootstrap method was further employed to test the mediating effects. A total of 1,000 resamples were drawn, and 95% confidence intervals were estimated. The results are presented in Tables 11 and 12.

**Table 11.** Mediation effect of professional identity between professional competence and work intention

Path	Effect Size	Boot SE	Boot CI Lower	Boot CI Upper
Indirect effect	0.041	0.029	-0.016	0.098
Direct effect	0.784	0.065	-0.125	0.004

**Table 12.** Mediation effect of professional competence between professional identity and work intention

Path	Effect Size	Boot SE	Boot CI Lower	Boot CI Upper
Indirect effect	0.445	0.052	0.344	0.546
Direct effect	0.088	0.061	-0.032	0.207

According to Table 11, the 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect [-0.016, 0.098] includes zero, indicating that professional identity does not have a significant mediating effect between professional competence and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. Therefore, Hypothesis H5 is not supported.

According to Table 12, the 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect [0.344, 0.546] does not include zero, indicating a significant indirect effect. Meanwhile, the direct effect is not significant. The indirect effect of professional competence between professional identity and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations is significant ( $a*b = 0.45$ ). When professional competence is treated as a mediating variable, professional identity is significantly and positively associated with willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. Therefore, professional competence has a significant mediating effect between professional identity and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, and Hypothesis H6 is supported.

## 4. Conclusion and recommendation

### 4.1. Research conclusions

Based on a questionnaire survey of undergraduate students, this study analyzes the influence of professional competence and professional identity on college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations, as well as the underlying mechanisms. On the basis of the above analysis, the following conclusions are drawn:

Overall, undergraduate students' professional competence and professional identity are at a moderate level, and their willingness to work in nonprofit organizations is not particularly strong. Students' main concerns about entering nonprofit organizations are concentrated in three areas: salary and career planning, job content and competency requirements, and the social credibility of nonprofit organizations.

Both professional competence and professional identity have significant positive effects on college graduates' willingness to work in nonprofit organizations. Professional identity and professional competence mutually reinforce each other. In addition, professional competence plays a mediating role between professional identity and willingness to work in nonprofit organizations.

Therefore, improving college graduates' willingness to enter nonprofit organizations can be approached from two dimensions: enhancing professional competence and strengthening professional identity toward nonprofit work, so as to alleviate the human resource recruitment difficulties faced by nonprofit organizations.

## 4.2. Policy recommendations

### *4.2.1. Enhancing college graduates' professional identity toward nonprofit work*

First, nonprofit organizations should strengthen internal management and external cooperation to enhance their social credibility. At present, many college students still have concerns about whether nonprofit organizations have well-structured internal governance, whether donated funds are used appropriately, and whether organizational information is transparent. Improving social credibility is one of the most important ways for nonprofit organizations to enhance students' professional identity.

First, nonprofit organizations should establish a scientific and well-structured internal governance system, clearly defining the division of responsibilities among decision-making, execution, and supervision. They should formulate detailed organizational bylaws, management rules, and operational procedures to improve internal governance standards. Second, they should ensure financial transparency by proactively disclosing basic organizational information, project progress, and the use of donated funds. Information can be disseminated more widely through official websites, social media platforms, and the publication of project updates and annual reports. Third, nonprofit organizations should strengthen communication and cooperation with various social actors, including government departments, enterprises, and media organizations. They should actively collect and respond to public opinions and concerns, address questions in a timely manner, and build a positive organizational image.

In addition, nonprofit organizations should optimize their compensation systems to ensure job competitiveness. Although nonprofit organizations are not profit-oriented, reasonable compensation remains a key factor in attracting and retaining high-quality talent. Salary level is currently the primary concern of college students regarding employment in nonprofit organizations, and appropriate remuneration and social benefits also help enhance public recognition of nonprofit careers. Where conditions permit, nonprofit organizations may establish enterprise annuity schemes and supplementary medical insurance systems to provide more comprehensive protection for long-term employees, and encourage them to participate in personal pension schemes, thereby ensuring both talent retention and career development.

From the university perspective, courses related to nonprofit organizations can be introduced, and experts or practitioners in the nonprofit sector can be invited to deliver lectures and workshops. This would help students gain a basic understanding of nonprofit organizational operations, management philosophies, professional values, and career development pathways. As a bridge between nonprofit organizations and students, universities can also establish employment matching platforms and organize dedicated recruitment fairs for nonprofit organizations, thereby collecting and disseminating recruitment information and creating favorable conditions for mutual selection between organizations and students.

#### 4.2.2. Enhancing college graduates' professional competence

Nonprofit organizations may establish targeted partnerships with universities, create internship positions, and implement internship subsidy policies in accordance with regulations. This would encourage students to participate in internships within nonprofit organizations, enabling them to understand organizational operations and daily work, and to develop relevant professional skills through practical experience, thereby improving their professional competence in a targeted manner.

Given that the mission and vision of nonprofit organizations are typically centered on public welfare, nonprofit work often requires employees to possess a strong sense of social responsibility. Therefore, universities can enhance students' willingness and ability to serve at the grassroots level, and cultivate their sense of social responsibility, by organizing public welfare activities and volunteer service programs.

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