

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COUNSELORS' CAREER MANAGEMENT FOR KUNMING MEDICAL UNIVERSITY HAI YUAN COLLEGE IN YUNNAN PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

Against the high-quality development background of private undergraduate higher education in China, university counselors are the core workforce of ideological and political education and student management. Unsound career management systems cause high turnover, weak professional identity and insufficient long-term motivation among counselors in private medical colleges. This research takes full-time counselors from Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College as research object, adopts mixed research method combining questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Five research dimensions are constructed: Organizational Career Management System, Career Development Opportunities, Person-Organization Fit, Professional Commitment, Career Sustainability. A total of 108 valid questionnaires and 5 in-depth interview records are collected. The study finds that the overall career management level of the college's counselors is moderate; Career Development Opportunities scores highest, while Professional Commitment and Career Sustainability stay at low levels, which are core restrictive factors. Based on trait-factor matching theory, career sustainability theory and JD-R model, this paper sorts out institutional, resource and cultural dilemmas, and forms targeted development guidelines. This research enriches empirical research on counselor career management in private medical universities and provides practical reference for educational administrators of similar private higher education institutions.

Keywords: Education Management; Career Management; Counselor; Private Undergraduate Institutions

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INTRODUCTION

The standardized upgrading of China's private higher education has become a national educational development priority. Different from public universities, private colleges adopt market-oriented human resource mechanisms with tight budget constraints, unclear promotion paths and unstable talent teams (Dai, 2023). As frontline educators undertaking moral education, student psychological counseling and employment guidance, counselors' professional growth directly determines the quality of talent cultivation (Chen, 2021). The Regulations on the Construction of Counselor Teams in General Colleges and Universities issued by the Ministry of Education clearly requires all universities to build full-cycle career development systems for counselors. However, most private medical colleges only formulate basic assessment rules without systematic career support mechanisms, leading to widespread problems including single promotion tracks, insufficient training resources and low long-term professional willingness (Ye et al., 2025).

Educational administration and strategic HRM theories lay the theoretical foundation for this research (Bush, 2022; Decramer & Smolders, 2021). From strategic human resource management perspective, scientific career management realizes the coupling of institutional development goals and individual career demands (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Existing domestic and foreign studies mostly take comprehensive public universities or vocational colleges as samples, while targeted empirical research focusing on private medical college counselors is scarce (Kokenge et al., 2023). Medical counselors bear unique work pressure including medical student mental crisis intervention and medical ethics education, which makes their career management have special industry characteristics. Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College, a representative private medical undergraduate institution in Yunnan Province, owns a counselor team featured by young age, high master's proportion and high mobility, which is a typical research sample.

In conclusion, the guidelines for the development of counselors' career management for Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College in Yunnan Province provide a systematic and sustainable framework for strengthening counselor team construction in private higher education institutions. By integrating principles of educational management, strategic human resource management, and career development theory, the proposed guidelines align institutional development goals with counselors' professional growth and career aspirations. The framework emphasizes structured career planning, stage-based professional development, competency enhancement, and supportive organizational policies to ensure long-term career sustainability. Furthermore, these guidelines contribute not only to improving counselors' job satisfaction, professional commitment, and retention but also to enhancing institutional governance and student support effectiveness. Through the establishment of clear promotion pathways, competency-based training systems, and person-organization alignment mechanisms, the college can foster a more stable, dynamic, and professional counselor workforce. Ultimately, the implementation of these guidelines supports the coordinated development of both the institution and individual counselors, promoting high-quality and sustainable development in private higher education in Yunnan Province.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the level of counselors' career management for Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College in Yunnan Province.
2. To Propose the guidelines for the development of counselors' career management for Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College in Yunnan Province.

SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

1. Content Scope

This research centers on the full-cycle career management of full-time counselors at Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College. From educational management and strategic HRM perspectives, it analyzes five core dimensions: organizational career management system, career development opportunities, person–organization fit, professional commitment and career sustainability. It excludes all other domestic universities and unrelated staff groups.

2. Geographical Scope

The research site is restricted solely to Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College, a private medical undergraduate institution in Yunnan. Data and conclusions are only applicable to this college, without generalization to other public or private universities across the province.

3. Scope of the variables

Five core research variables are adopted:

- 1)Organizational Career Management System
- 2)Career Development Opportunities
- 3)Person–Organization Fit
- 4)Professional Commitment
- 5)Career Sustainability

4. Scope of the population

4.1 Research Population

The target population includes all 150 full-time counselors of the college.

4.2 Quantitative Sample

Based on Krejcie & Morgan’s (1970) sample table, 108 counselors are selected via simple random sampling for questionnaires to guarantee sample representativeness.

4.3 Qualitative Informants

Five purposively sampled interviewees are recruited: senior student affairs administrators, veteran counselors with over five years’ service, and human resource management staff.

EXPECTED BENEFITS

- 1.For the college’s administrative departments: provide data-based analysis of existing career management defects, support human resource policy adjustment and team governance optimization;
- 2.For frontline counselors: promote the construction of multi-channel growth platforms, enhance training, salary and promotion guarantee, improve professional sense of gain and retention intention;
- 3.For regional private higher education: supplement empirical cases of medical counselor team construction, provide systematic management schemes for peer institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper sorts domestic and foreign literature to lay theoretical and empirical foundation for researching counselors’career management at Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College, which is divided into four modules.

1. Core Theories of Counselor Career Management

Referencing classic career management theory (Greenhaus et al., 2019),this research adopts four fundamental theories: Trait-Factor Matching Theory, Career Sustainability Theory, and Job Demands-Resources Model, as well as theories on performance appraisal and incentives. Combined with national policies concerning counselor team construction, it defines core concepts including the connotation of counselor career management, role positioning, professional identity and dual-track promotion mechanisms.

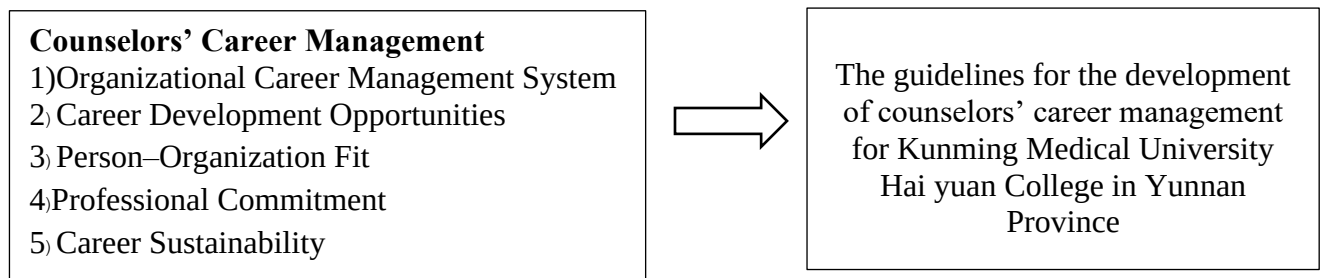
2.Overview of Domestic and Foreign Research

Overseas studies mainly focus on faculty career resilience, career adaptability and decent work, while targeted research on counselors in private medical colleges is insufficient. Domestic

scholars mostly explore the professional burnout of counselors in public universities. Existing research results cannot fit the characteristics of private medical colleges such as limited resources and high staff turnover, leaving a research gap in this field.

3. Institutional Context : Kunming Medical University Haiyuan College is a private undergraduate medical university. Its counselor team is generally young with a high proportion of master's degree holders. At present, the college has only issued basic assessment documents and failed to establish a sound multi-channel career development system for counselors.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Subjects and Samples: The target research subjects were 150 full-time counselors. Based on the table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a quantitative sample of 108 teachers was determined. In the qualitative research part, 5 key informants were selected using purposive sampling (Deputy Secretary of the School Party Committee, Director of Student Affairs Of Ice, Director of Personnel Ofce, 2 senior counselors).

2. Research Steps

- 1) Based on the literature review and motivation theory, research tools (questionnaires and interview forms) were developed.
- 2) They were submitted to the supervisor to verify the accuracy of the content and the appropriateness of the language.
- 3) Before actual data collection, the tools were revised and fnalized according to the supervisor's suggestions.

3. Data Collection

Quantitative Data: Questionnaires were distributed and collected from the 108 sampled teachers through both face-to-face and online channel.

Qualitative Data: In-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with 5 administrators. The interview process was recorded using electroni c devices (with permission), and summary notes were recorded immedi ately after each interview.

4. Data Analysis.

Part 1 (1 (General Demographics): Analyzed using frequenci es and percentages.

Part 2 (Professional Development Level of Psychological Counselors at Haiyuan College, Kunming Medical University): Analyzed using m ean and standard deviation (S.D.), and interpreted through a 5-point rat ing scale (highest level 4.51–5.00, lowest level 1.00-1.50).

Qualitative Data: Analyzed through content analysis, extracting in-dep th thematic conclusions from the interviews.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Quantitative Results: The results of the mean and standard deviation analysis of counsellors at Hai yuan College, Kunming Medical University (M =2.58, S.D.=0.87), Moderate level. And if considering side by side by ordering the average from the most to the least, we will find that the highest value of career development opportunities (M=2.67, S.D.=0.82), it is the highest part of

the counselor career development survey. Followed by organizational career management system ($M=2.65$, $S.D.=0.84$), person-organization fit ($M=2.60$, $S.D.=0.88$), career sustainability ($M = 2.49$, $S.D. = 0.91$). The lowest value of professional commitment factor ($M= 2.48$, $S.D. = 0.89$).

Qualitative Results: Interviews revealed underlying issues. While school management acknowledged the completeness of the institutional framework, frontline counselors generally perceived the policy implementation as superficial; the macro-level policy design is disconnected from the practical needs of the grassroots level. The overlapping shortcomings of resource supply, evaluation mechanisms, and career development channels directly lower the levels of professional commitment and career sustainability.

DISCUSSION

The investigation results show that, through cross-validation of questionnaire mean data and qualitative interview content, it is confirmed that private medical undergraduate colleges are constrained by funding and corporate-style personnel models. They generally face practical dilemmas such as ineffective institutional implementation, shortage of development resources, single promotion channels, low person-organization fit, and long-term lack of motivation among practitioners. Meanwhile, a comparison with similar domestic and international literature reveals that the management models of existing public colleges cannot be directly applied, and this study fills the gap in empirical research on counselors in private medical colleges.

SUGGESTION

1. Institutional level: Establish a dual-track promotion system for management and professional roles, increase the weight of practical assessments for students, and establish a hierarchical career planning and feedback mechanism.
2. Resource level: Add medical-specialized practical training, balance the allocation of academic and further study resources, and establish a special research support fund for counselors.
3. Matching Support: Reduce and optimize workload, improve tiered compensation and honor incentives, and create an organizational culture that fosters growth.
4. Professional Identity: Carry out professional value education, provide supporting psychological stress relief services, and enhance the motivation for long-term dedication among practitioners.
5. Long-term development: Open up independent professional title channels, establish a phased training system, and improve the mechanism for work-life balance.

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Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

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