

The Employability Enhancement For Students of Art Universities in Liaoning Province

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were: (1) to explore the components of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province, and (2) to propose the managerial guidelines for student's employability enhancement of art universities in Liaoning Province.

The research was a mixed method between quantitative research and qualitative research. Population was 1,047 teachers work in the 2023 academic year at eight art universities in Liaoning Province; the sample size was determined by Krejcie and Morgan's tables and was obtained using stratified random sampling method, with a total of 285 teachers. Key informants for interview total 11 key informants were selected by the purpose sampling method. Focus group discussion by seven key informants. The data collection instruments include a five-point rating scale. The statistics used for data analysis were frequency, percentage, refer to, Standard Deviation and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Both Interviews and Focus Group Discussion were analyzed by content analysis.

The research results showed: (1) the student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province, total 5 components included: Policy and goal setting, Student's employability attributes, Effectiveness management and collaboration platform, Quality education and training, and Monitoring and evaluation, and (2) managerial guidelines for student's employability enhancement of art universities in Liaoning Province, total 32 guidelines included: 5 for Policy and goal setting, 8 for Student's employability attributes, 8 for Effectiveness management and collaboration platform, 7 for Quality education and training, and 4 for Monitoring and evaluation.

Keywords: Employability Enhancement for Students; Art University; Liaoning Province

Introduction

China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) emphasizes modern industrial development and economic growth, with art universities playing a crucial role in social and economic transformation. While vocational education has shifted from quantity-focused to quality-oriented approaches, the increasing number of graduates in 2023-2024 has created significant employment pressure, exacerbated by the ongoing effects of COVID-19, particularly affecting SMEs' hiring capacity.

The current employment market faces structural challenges where job seekers' skills often don't match employers' requirements. Top employers seek graduates with critical thinking, teamwork, professionalism, communication skills, and leadership abilities. However, surveys indicate that most art university graduates feel unprepared for the job market, lacking updated knowledge and skills in their field of expertise.

Key challenges exist at multiple levels: policy-wise (incomplete support mechanisms and insufficient policy awareness), institutional level (inefficient resource utilization and outdated curriculum systems), and personal level (students' lack of employment awareness and professional competencies). The situation is particularly concerning in Liaoning Province's art universities.

This research aims to develop comprehensive guidelines for administrators to enhance students' employability through policy implementation, curriculum improvement, learning environment optimization, and student activities development. The study focuses on creating a more effective educational governance system that bridges the gap between academic training and industry requirements, ultimately improving the quality of art education and graduate employment prospects in Liaoning Province.

Research Objectives

1. to explore the components of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province.
2. to propose the managerial guidelines for student's employability enhancement of art universities in Liaoning Province.

Research Methodology

The research methodology was mixed methodology, including qualitative and quantitative research. There were three processes of research which were research proposal preparation, research procedures, and research report. The research procedures consisted of three steps; (1) qualitative research: The researcher has studied related kinds of literature about the concept, principles, and theories, related research on the student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province as well as an in-depth interview with key informants. Key informants consisted of eleven key informants. Focus group discussion by seven key informants. Purposive sampling methods and semi-structured interviews were used. Data collection was done by the researcher and the collected data was analyzed by Content Analysis. (2) to explore the components of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province, and (2) to propose the managerial guidelines for student's employability enhancement of art universities in Liaoning Province. Population was 1,047 teachers work in the 2023 academic year at eight art universities in Liaoning Province; the sample size was

determined by Krejcie and Morgan's tables and was obtained using stratified random sampling method, with a total of 285 teachers. The data collection instruments include a five-point rating scale. The statistics used for data analysis were frequency, percentage, refer to, Standard Deviation and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Both Interviews and Focus Group Discussion were analyzed by content analysis. The research results showed: (1) the student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province, total 5 components included: Policy and goal setting, Student's employability attributes, Effectiveness management and collaboration platform, Quality education and training, and Monitoring and evaluation, and (2) managerial guidelines for student's employability enhancement of art universities in Liaoning Province, total 32 guidelines included: 5 for Policy and goal setting, 8 for Student's employability attributes, 8 for Effectiveness management and collaboration platform, 7 for Quality education and training, and 4 for Monitoring and evaluation.

1. Population and Sample and key informants

Population was 1,047 teachers work in the 2023 academic year at eight art universities in Liaoning Province; the sample size was determined by Krejcie and Morgan's tables and was obtained using stratified random sampling method, with a total of 285 administrators and teachers in the 2023 academic year at eight art universities in Liaoning Province.

Key informants for interview total 11 key informants consist of the educational management department, who are educational management personnel, teachers of universities, mainly including principals, education administrators, and directors, obtained by purposive sampling method.

Qualification of key informant were 11 experts, criteria as below;

- (1) Work experience in administrative level more than 10 year.
- (2) In professional position in Art
- (3) Graduated in doctoral degree

Key informants for Focus group discussion by seven key informants who are educational management personnel, teachers of universities, mainly including principals, education administrators, and directors, obtained by purposive sampling method.

2. Research instruments

Three research instruments were used to three research tools to examine the objectives of this paper. (1) Semi-structured interview (2) A five-point rating scale questionnaire (3) Connoisseurship discussion form.

2.1 Semi-structured interview form

Through the semi-structured interview table, mainly by discovering the main factors, the semi-structured interview is preliminarily completed. The interview was mainly conducted in a non-face-to-face way. A total of 11 respondents were sent by mail and online.

2.2 Five-Point Rating Scale Questionnaire

The researchers used a three-part questionnaire; Part I: Demographic variables (Checklist), General information of the respondents, totaling 6 items, Part II: the Academic Administrator Leadership model of the School of Foreign Languages in Higher Education under Hunan Province. (Five-point rating scale), totaling 81 items, and Part III: Suggestions and additional comments (Open Ended). Each factor is measured on a 5-point Likert's scale.

2.3 Focus group discussion form

3.Data collection

(1) Researchers contacted key informants and sent interview questionnaires by email, telephone. (2) This part of the questionnaire can be distributed on site or collected through online links. About 316 questionnaires need to be completed in about 2 weeks. And (3) Connoisseurship Discussion can be conducted on site, with researchers leading participants and open-ended discussions.

4.Data analysis

(1) Conduct content analysis on the results of the interview (2) Descriptive statistical methods were used for analysis, including frequency, percentage, mean and Standard Deviation. (2) Analysis data with SPSS by Exploratory Factor Analysis method. And (3) Conduct content analysis on the results of Focus group discussion.

Research Conceptual Framework

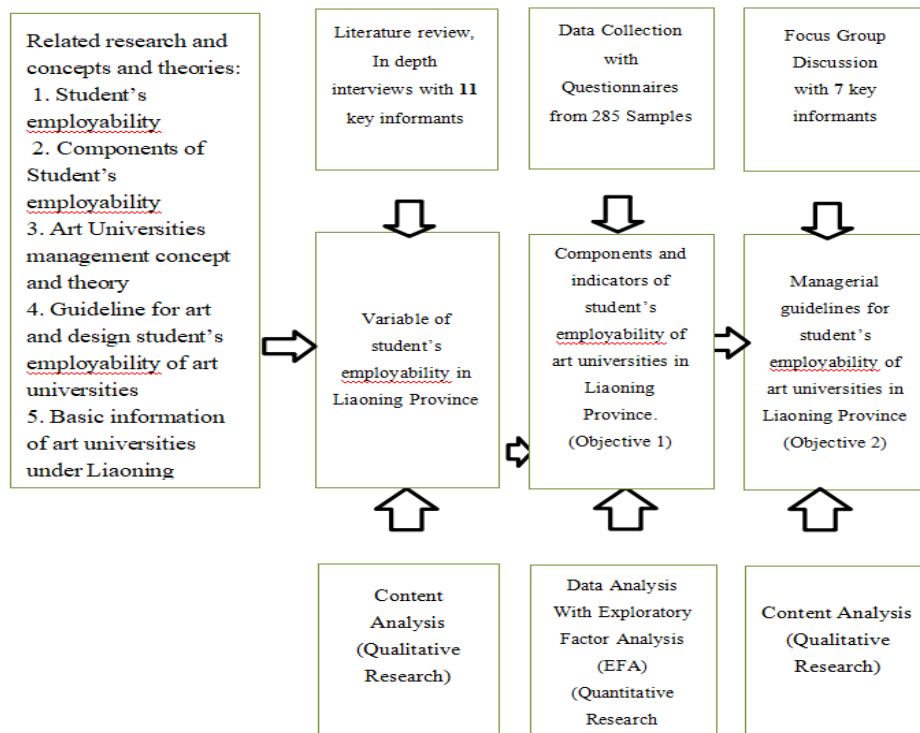


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Research Results

The research results showed: (1) the student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province, total 5 components included: Policy and goal setting, Student's employability attributes, Effectiveness management and collaboration platform, Quality education and training, and Monitoring and evaluation.

Analysis results of questionnaire data: variable analysis

Variable of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province. Researcher analysis refer to and the Standard Deviation (S.D), the results showed that the refer to, Standard Deviation and level of each method variable are the variable of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province. As below:

Table 1 Descriptive statistics from questionnaire data

Items	Content/topic	Mean	Std. Deviation (S. D)	Skewness	Kurtosis	Level
1		4.48	0.654	-0.233	-0.653	Highest
2		4.57	0.595	-0.527	-0.764	Highest
3		4.55	0.615	-0.044	-0.859	Highest
4		4.64	0.579	-0.644	0.749	Highest
5		4.48	0.562	-0.651	-0.654	Highest
6		4.63	0.588	0.081	-0.732	Highest
7		4.45	0.647	-0.542	-0.266	Highest
8		4.54	0.586	-0.216	-1.211	Highest
9		4.48	0.628	-0.473	-0.774	Highest
10		4.54	0.614	-0.437	-0.758	Highest
11		4.66	0.652	-0.942	0.022	Highest
12		4.46	0.614	-1.156	2.566	Highest
13		4.52	0.636	-1.251	2.621	Highest
14		4.69	0.631	-0.804	-0.374	Highest
15		4.48	0.579	-0.818	1.710	Highest
16		4.63	0.643	-0.145	-1.178	Highest
17		4.45	0.582	-0.877	0.063	Highest
18		4.36	0.629	-0.129	-0.821	Highest

Items	Content/topic	Mean	Std. Deviation (S. D)	Skewness	Kurtosis	Level
19		4.68	0.583	-0.062	-1.179	Highest
20		4.58	0.616	-0.142	-1.252	Highest
21		4.48	0.635	-0.112	-0.789	Highest
22		4.66	0.653	-0.201	-1.513	Highest
23		4.57	0.646	-0.056	-1.282	Highest
24		4.51	0.543	-0.725	-0.442	Highest
25		4.54	0.625	-0.211	-1.152	Highest
26		4.65	0.624	-1.254	3.508	Highest
27		4.48	0.612	-0.210	-1.183	Highest
28		4.38	0.627	-0.966	0.064	Highest
29		4.55	0.593	-0.222	-1.356	Highest
30		4.56	0.612	-1.899	5.468	Highest
31		4.57	0.648	-0.826	-0.233	Highest
32		4.49	0.569	-0.143	-1.153	Highest
33		4.53	0.634	0.032	-0.820	Highest
34		4.54	0.593	-0.263	-1.233	Highest
35		4.55	0.632	-0.245	-1.055	Highest
36		4.56	0.534	-0.423	-0.577	Highest
37		4.42	0.543	-0.160	-1.314	Highest
38		4.64	0.569	-0.876	0.066	Highest
39		4.63	0.532	-0.873	0.052	Highest
40		4.54	0.652	-0.015	-1.188	Highest
41		4.56	0.563	-0.631	-0.716	Highest
42		4.54	0.669	-0.882	0.179	Highest
43		4.64	0.524	-0.134	-1.331	Highest

Items	Content/topic	Mean	Std. Deviation (S. D)	Skewness	Kurtosis	Level
44		4.65	0.563	-0.329	-1.289	Highest
45		4.55	0.572	-0.835	0.165	Highest
46		4.67	0.578	-0.138	-1.216	Highest
47		4.56	0.657	-0.762	-0.127	Highest
48		4.52	0.544	-0.158	-1.251	Highest
49		4.58	0.633	-0.188	-1.084	Highest
50		4.63	0.516	-1.261	3.615	Highest
51		4.52	0.638	-0.722	-0.330	Highest
52		4.63	0.551	-1.308	-0.024	Highest
53		4.64	0.553	-0.427	-1.277	Highest
54		4.51	0.621	-0.204	-1.120	Highest
55		4.66	0.637	-0.258	0.135	Highest
56		4.53	0.567	-0.238	-1.312	Highest
57		4.58	0.635	-1.241	0.379	Highest
58		4.65	0.557	-0.068	-1.256	Highest
59		4.51	0.544	-0.1653	-1.233	Highest
60		4.58	0.677	-0.221	-1.297	Highest
61		4.61	0.565	-0.7785	0.219	Highest
62		4.60	0.561	-0.838	-0.219	Highest
63		4.54	0.624	-0.242	-1.068	Highest
64		4.25	0.643	-1.203	0.425	Highest
65		4.69	0.622	-0.845	0.3235	Highest
66		4.67	0.585	-0.749	0.252	Highest

Descriptive analysis describes the overall of the data by means of an average or median. From table1: in the current data. 66 variable are generally about refer to value (\bar{x}) is between 4.25-4.69, and the Standard Deviation (S.D) is between 0.516 and 0.669. It indicates that all researchers had a relatively consistent acceptance degree of the variable. From item 1 to item 66, all the items have a highest level which is refer tos that indicating that respondents had a low level of variable acceptance for this part. The results show that the student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province was relatively similar.

Table 2 KMO and Bartlett test

KMO and Bartlett test		
KMO		0.954
Bartlett test	Approx. Chi-Square χ^2	18321
	<i>df</i>	2424
	<i>p</i> value	< .001

Factor analysis is used to conduct information enrichment research. First, whether the research data is suitable for factor analysis is analyzed. From Table 2, KMO is 0.954, greater than 0.6, which meets the prerequisite requirements of factor analysis, refer toing that the data can be used for factor analysis research. The data passed Bartlett test ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the study data is suitable for factor analysis.

Table 3 Factor loading (Rotated)

Items	Factor loading				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
item 20	0.683				
item 22	0.652				
item 1	0.632				
item 23	0.585				
item 5	0.552				
item 27	0.548				
item 45	0.525				
item 36	0.513				
item 58	0.505				
item 2		0.672			

Items	Factor loading				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
item 38		0.665			
item 3		0.652			
item 65		0.648			
item 12		0.642			
item 47		0.636			
item 4		0.632			
item 28		0.630			
item 10		0.628			
item 46		0.625			
item 26		0.622			
item 55		0.620			
item 39		0.617			
item 50		0.614			
item 52		0.608			
item 60		0.576			
item 61		0.584			
item 11			0.692		
item 15			0.688		
item 13			0.682		
item 9			0.674		
item 19			0.647		
item 34			0.633		
item 44			0.624		
item 33			0.602		
item 43			0.581		
item 49			0.535		

Items	Factor loading				
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
item 7				0.667	
item 18				0.653	
item 16				0.646	
item 6				0.623	
item 17				0.586	
item 66				0.549	
item 14				0.526	
item 40				0.512	
item 29					0.634
item 8					0.621
item 37					0.589
item 64					0.576

The data in this research were rotated using the maximum variance rotation method in order to find out the correspondence between factors and items. It can be seen from the above table that the common degree value of the corresponding value of all research items is higher than 0.5, which refer to that there is a strong correlation between research items and factors.

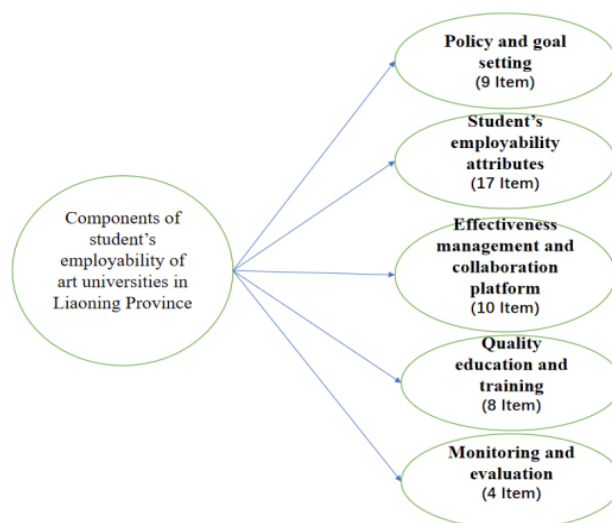


Figure 2 Components of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province.

Through qualitative research, quantitative research and factor analysis, the researcher obtained the components of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province. From Figure 2, showed the components of student's employability of art universities in Liaoning Province, consisted of 5 components and (2) managerial guidelines for student's employability enhancement of art universities in Liaoning Province, total 32 guidelines included: 5 for Policy and goal setting, 8 for Student's employability attributes, 8 for Effectiveness management and collaboration platform, 7 for Quality education and training, and 4 for Monitoring and evaluation.

Discussion

1.The findings of this research reveal five critical components that influence student employability in art universities in Liaoning Province. These components emerged through comprehensive analysis and align with contemporary research in higher education and employability studies. **Component 1: Policy and Goal Setting**

The findings demonstrate that clear policy frameworks and strategic goal setting are fundamental to enhancing student employability. This aligns with Zhang & Chen's (2023) research on Chinese higher education reform, which emphasized that well-defined policies directly impact graduate outcomes.-The World Economic Forum (2023) similarly highlighted how policy alignment with industry needs creates stronger employment pathways. The current study extends these findings specifically to the art education context in Liaoning Province, where policy reform appears to be a crucial driver of employability enhancement. **Component 2: Student's Employability Attributes** : The research identified core employability attributes that align closely with current industry demands. Campbell's (2022) framework of five essential skills (critical thinking, teamwork, professionalism, communication, and leadership) provides strong theoretical support for these findings. Jackson & Bridgstock (2021) further reinforce this through their research on creative industries, demonstrating how these attributes specifically benefit art graduates. The current study's findings suggest these attributes are particularly relevant in the Liaoning context, where industry expectations align with global trends. **Component 3: Effectiveness Management and Collaboration Platform**: The emergence of collaboration platforms as a key component reflects the growing importance of industry-education partnerships. Wang & Li's (2019) research on industry-university collaboration models in Chinese art education supports this finding, demonstrating how structured partnerships enhance graduate outcomes. The current study extends this understanding by identifying specific mechanisms, such as enterprise participation and industry mentorship, that facilitate effective collaboration in the Liaoning context. **Component 4: Quality Education and Training** : The findings emphasize the critical role of education quality and standardization in enhancing employability. This aligns with Chen & Liu's (2021) research on teaching quality standards in Chinese art universities. The current study builds on this by identifying specific elements such as teacher quality, infrastructure development, and practical training that contribute to employability outcomes. Smith, Martin, et.al. (2018) work on practice-based learning provides additional theoretical support for this component. And **Component 5: Monitoring and Evaluation**: The research highlights the importance of systematic monitoring and evaluation in maintaining high professional standards. Li & Zhang's (2022) work on professional standards and evaluation metrics in higher education supports this finding. The current study extends this understanding by identifying specific evaluation

mechanisms relevant to art education in Liaoning Province.

2. The 32 guidelines collectively represent an integrated approach that combines: Policy-level strategic planning Individual skill development Institutional management practices Educational quality assurance and Performance monitoring systems. This comprehensive framework is supported by multiple recent studies showing the interconnected nature of these elements in enhancing student employability in art universities.

Recommendations

From five component in this research to propose the guidelines for policies formulation both national level and university level as below:

- 1) Strengthen national policy support and university support, and implement special policies for the field of arts, and encourage enterprises to cooperation both of teaching management, teacher's development, and all platform in art and arts industry.
- 2) Strengthen the construction of university-enterprise cooperation management systems for enhancing in the employability attribute on competency based; knowledge, skills, attitude, and personal characteristic, and art university should to set standards for the characteristics of new graduates in the field of art for the standard of student employment
- 3) Formulating a clear cooperation agreement, clarify the responsibilities and rights and interests of all parties, and promote the joint development of courses, internship training programs, and scientific research topics in art universities and enterprises.

Recommendations for further research

1. To study the actual effects of Art university-enterprise cooperation in the training of arts, try to explore the way to optimize the cooperation type and form to enhance student's employability.
2. Explore the implementation of personalized new skill for enhance student's employability rate in art university, and evaluate their impact on students' interest in learning, professional ability and occupational development.
3. To study the application of cross -disciplinary curriculum systems in arts, and evaluate its impact on students' comprehensive ability and cross -domain knowledge application, to implement interdisciplinary courses in the arts for solution student's employability development
4. Conduct longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of these components
5. Investigate the interaction effects between different components
6. Examine the role of emerging technologies in art education and employability

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