

Reflections and Practices of College Students' Career Planning in the Era of the Metaverse Concept

Suqin Ouyang

Hunan University of Science and Engineering, Yongzhou 425199, China

Abstract: The rise of the metaverse presents new opportunities and challenges for college students' career planning. Under the concept of the metaverse, college students' career planning will show the following trends: immersive construction of career scenarios, intelligent guidance of career experience, and continuous generation of multi-dimensional data. Therefore, it is important to focus on the following development paths: returning to the real world, strengthening interdisciplinary integration, and promoting co-construction and sharing.

Keywords: Metaverse, Career Planning, College Students, Development Trends

Preface

As a digitized virtual world, the metaverse represents a potential direction for the future. China has already laid a certain foundation in the field of the metaverse, making it crucial to leverage its advantages and seize opportunities. The advent of the metaverse era will provide new opportunities for the high-quality development of vocational education in our country and the future development of vocational education.

There is a certain convergence between the metaverse and career planning. The metaverse can offer college students an immersive, interactive environment for career experiences, helping them understand the real conditions of different professions and make more rational career plans.

1. The Dilemma of College Students' Career Planning Development

The "Report on the Current Status of College Students' Career Planning in China" (2022) by the Chinese Academy of Educational Sciences points out that only 30% of college students have a clear understanding of their interests, abilities, and career values, while 70% of college students face significant confusion in career choices. Currently, the career planning of college students is confronted with practical challenges.

1.1 Slow Development of Career Enlightenment Education

Career enlightenment education refers to the education aimed at cultivating students' awareness of careers and their ability to plan for their professional future from an early age. In China, the development of career enlightenment education started relatively late, lacking a systematic vocational education system, which is one of the crucial factors affecting the career planning of Chinese college students. This is manifested in three aspects. Firstly, the lack of systematic educational content. Currently, career enlightenment education in China primarily relies on classroom lectures, lacking a systematic curriculum for vocational education. Students' understanding of careers often remains at a simplistic "interests + abilities" level, lacking comprehensive and profound insights into various professions. Secondly, a singular educational approach. Traditional methods of career enlightenment education are predominantly lecture-based, lacking experiential teaching methods that could help students gain in-depth knowledge of different careers. Thirdly, insufficient educational resources. Currently, career enlightenment education resources in China are inadequate and unevenly distributed, resulting in a shortage of professional teaching staff and educational facilities in various regions. These factors contribute to college students' abstract and one-sided perceptions of careers, making it challenging to form accurate career cognitions and, consequently, hindering effective and scientific career planning.

1.2 Limited Application of Experiential Teaching

Experiential teaching is a student-centered instructional approach that allows students to acquire knowledge and skills through firsthand experiences. In the context of career planning education, experiential teaching enables students to simulate professional work, providing a hands-on understanding of the tasks and requirements of different careers. This approach allows students to gain a more intuitive understanding of the real aspects of various professions. Furthermore, experiential teaching helps students form a more rational set of career values by allowing them to personally experience the values and sense of accomplishment associated with different professions. It also enables students to interact with professionals, gaining insights into the development opportunities and prospects of various careers, thus providing a more comprehensive basis for career planning. However, the application of experiential teaching faces certain challenges. For instance, it requires specific facilities and equipment, leading to relatively high costs. Additionally, its design and implementation demand qualified teachers and organizers with professional expertise.

1.3 Lack of Aggregation in Career Planning Data

Currently, career planning data in China is scattered across various departments and entities, lacking a unified platform for aggregation and analysis. This hinders college students from obtaining comprehensive and accurate occupational information, thus impacting the scientific and effective nature of career planning. This issue manifests in several aspects:

Diverse data sources: Career planning data in China comes from various sources, including government departments, universities, businesses, industry associations, etc. The differing data formats and standards across these entities make it challenging to achieve unified

integration and analysis.

Slow data updates: Career planning data in China is updated at a slow pace, making it difficult to reflect the latest information in the job market. This, in turn, makes it challenging for college students to understand the most recent occupational demands and trends when planning their careers.

Low data utilization: The utilization rate of career planning data in China is low, posing difficulties in providing effective support for college students' career planning efforts.

2. Trends in College Students' Career Planning Development Under the Metaverse Concept

Immersion in Constructed Occupational Scenarios. Under the metaverse concept, the construction of immersive occupational scenarios provides college students with a unique career experience environment. In traditional career planning, students often have abstract and one-sided perceptions of professions, making it challenging to form accurate career cognitions. The immersive experiences in the metaverse, facilitated by technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality, allow students to virtually experience the work environments of different professions. This enables them to gain a more comprehensive and authentic understanding of the job content, environment, and requirements.

Intelligent Guidance for Career Experiences. Through intelligent guidance, artificial intelligence can generate personalized career experience scenarios based on students' interests, abilities, and values. For instance, students interested in creative design can be immersed in a virtual design studio to experience the design task workflow, while those interested in STEM fields can engage in virtual laboratory operations and principles.

Continuous Generation of Multifaceted Data. In comparison to traditional career planning, the data generated in the metaverse is more comprehensive and authentic, particularly given the current state of college students' career planning in China. Leveraging technologies like virtual reality, the metaverse can simulate occupational scenarios, generating multidimensional data including job content, skill requirements, and development prospects. In the current environment of career planning for Chinese college students, the data advantages of the metaverse are particularly prominent.

3. Career Planning Development Paths for College Students Under the Metaverse Concept

3.1 Returning to the Real World and Preventing Self-Cognitive Displacement

In the metaverse concept, college students' career planning needs to be more comprehensive. Firstly, they should adeptly integrate virtual experiences with real-world workplace experiences, gaining a deeper understanding of the characteristics of different professions through metaverse career experiences. However, these cognitions need validation in reality to establish more practical career awareness. Secondly, the metaverse provides more personalized career experiences, allowing students to customize the direction of their career experiences based on their interests and abilities. However, this customization must be coordinated with the demands of the actual job market to ensure that personalized experiences do not lose practicality and feasibility in career development.

In metaverse career planning, college students should also cultivate insight into the real world. While the metaverse provides richer information and experiences, real-world career challenges are complex and dynamic. Only through a profound understanding of the real-world workplace can college students better cope with various challenges in their future careers.

It is important to note that when experiencing careers in the metaverse, college students should always maintain consistency with the real world. Although the metaverse provides vivid virtual scenarios, it does not fully replicate the reality of professional life. Therefore, during virtual career experiences, students need to keep a clear mind, recognize the differences between virtual experiences and actual work, to avoid developing skewed perceptions of their careers.

Specifically, college students engaging in career experiences in the metaverse should remind themselves to avoid becoming too immersed in the virtual world. While immersive experiences can be captivating, they do not represent the entirety of the real professional workplace. Excessive immersion in virtual experiences may lead to neglecting real-world challenges, causing career planning to deviate from reality. Therefore, maintaining sensitivity to reality, adjusting the balance between the virtual and the real in a timely manner, is crucial for effective career planning.

3.2 Strengthening Interdisciplinary Integration to Ignite Enthusiasm for Career Experiences

Under the metaverse concept, college students' career planning needs to emphasize interdisciplinary integration to ignite enthusiasm for career experiences. The widespread application of metaverse technology spans multiple disciplines. To fully leverage the application value of the metaverse in career planning, we need to deeply consider and practice the following aspects:

Interdisciplinary integration is indispensable. The development and application of metaverse technology encompass multiple disciplines, including computer science, human-computer interaction, virtual reality, psychology, and more. College students in career planning should actively expand their knowledge base, not only mastering professional skills but also understanding related interdisciplinary knowledge. This ability for interdisciplinary integration contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of metaverse technology, fully utilizing its integrated role in career planning.

College students need to cultivate interdisciplinary thinking. The application of the metaverse involves not only technology but also aspects of sociology, business models, and more. In career planning, college students should cultivate interdisciplinary thinking, being able to approach problems from multiple perspectives and understand the interrelationships between different disciplines. This thinking style

helps them more flexibly address complex challenges in career development.

Practice is an effective way to enhance enthusiasm for career experiences. By participating in projects, internships, or career experiences in virtual environments, college students can gain in-depth insights into the practical applications of metaverse technology in the actual workplace. Such practical experiences will ignite their enthusiasm for career planning, deepening their understanding and interest in metaverse technology. Practice not only reinforces disciplinary knowledge but also establishes a substantive foundation for career planning under the metaverse concept.

Establishing a cross-disciplinary collaborative network is crucial for college students' career planning. The application of the metaverse requires collaboration among professionals from different fields. Therefore, college students should actively establish cross-disciplinary collaborative networks. This helps expand possibilities for career development and, at the same time, allows them to acquire more knowledge and experience in a multidisciplinary environment, enhancing their competitiveness in the job market.

3.3 Promoting Co-construction and Sharing to Lower Resource Development Barriers

The key to advancing the widespread application of metaverse technology lies in achieving co-construction and sharing while lowering resource development barriers. Given the high investment and risks associated with metaverse technology, it is challenging for a single entity to bear this enormous responsibility alone. Therefore, to achieve this goal, multiple stakeholders, including government, enterprises, and universities, need to collaboratively participate, forming a strong and powerful cooperative network.

Firstly, the government plays a crucial role in guiding and supporting the co-construction of metaverse technology. The government can formulate relevant policies, provide financial support, and encourage collaborative innovation among research institutions and businesses to reduce the economic barriers for metaverse technology research and application. Additionally, the government can drive the establishment of industry standards and regulations, providing robust safeguards for the further development of metaverse technology.

Secondly, enterprises, as the main actors in the application of metaverse technology, need to take a leading role in the process of co-construction and sharing. Through cross-disciplinary collaboration, enterprises can integrate resources from various parties, promote the research and innovation of metaverse technology, and establish industry alliances and partnerships to collectively address technological challenges and achieve shared technological achievements. This collaborative model helps alleviate the burden of risks and costs borne by individual enterprises, enhancing the sustainability of projects.

Moreover, universities have unique advantages and roles in the co-construction of metaverse technology. They can establish industry-academia-research collaboration platforms to facilitate the application of academic research results in practical production. By providing expertise and technical support, universities contribute to the continuous upgrading and improvement of metaverse technology. Universities can also nurture talent with expertise in the application of metaverse technology, providing the industry with a constant source of innovative energy.

Finally, in the process of promoting co-construction and sharing, it is essential to establish an efficient information-sharing mechanism to facilitate comprehensive communication among all parties, avoid redundant resource waste, and achieve complementary advantages. This includes not only sharing at the technological level but also involves sharing relevant regulations, standards, and best practices to ensure the all-encompassing and sustainable development of metaverse technology.

References:

- [1] Chen, W. Q., & Chen, L. (2022). Analysis of the fit between metaverse and career planning. *Chinese Higher Education (S1)*, 35-40.
- [2] Chinese Academy of Education. (2022). Survey report on the status of career planning for Chinese college students. Beijing: Chinese Academy of Education.
- [3] Chinese Education Society. (2022). China's vocational education development report (2021-2022). Beijing: Chinese Education Society.
- [4] Education Department of Beijing Normal University. (2021). Study on the application of experiential teaching in career planning education. Beijing: Beijing Normal University.

Funding Projects:

Hunan University of Science and Engineering 2023 Employment and Entrepreneurship Research Project: Research on the Development of College Students' Career Planning under the Concept of Metaverse - A Case Study of the School of Science of Hunan University of Science and Technology; Project Number: 23XJCY05