International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD)
Volume 10 Issue 5, Sep-Oct 2026 Available Online: www.ijtsrd.com e-ISSN: 2456 – 6470

Exploring the Impact of AI on College Students' Career Choices

Xing Chen Li

Beijing Wuzi University, Beijing, China

ABSTRACT

The explosive development of generative artificial intelligence (AI) is profoundly reshaping the social production structure and employment market pattern. Based on 22 questionnaire research data of college students (including 10 basic portraits and behavioral analysis, 12 in-depth cognition and intention analysis) of college students, this article uses the method of combining quantitative statistics and qualitative discussion to systematically explore the multi-dimensional impact of AI technology on college students' career choices. The study found that college students show the characteristics of "high understanding and high usage rate" of AI; AI has profoundly changed the job search behavior and tool utilization mode, but it has triggered significant "job replacement anxiety" in employment psychology, and indirectly forced college students to move towards the career planning path of "seeking stability and avoiding danger" (such as examination Research/examination). Finally, this article puts forward feasible suggestions for the cultivation of talents in colleges and universities, students' self-improvement and social guidance.

KEYWORDS: *artificial intelligence; college students; career choice; employment anxiety; human-computer collaboration; career planning.*

How to cite this paper: Xing Chen Li "Exploring the Impact of AI on College Students' Career Choices" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-10 | Issue-5, October 2026, pp.185-187, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd142219.pdf

IJTSRD142219

Copyright © 2026 by author (s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0)

I. INTRODUCTION

With the popularity of large language models such as ChatGPT and various AI-assisted job search tools, artificial intelligence technology has not only become the driving force of industrial upgrading, but also an important variable for young people to build career awareness and carry out career planning. As the core group of college students who are about to enter the labor market, their cognition, use preferences and psychological expectations of AI directly determine their future career choices and development paths.

Based on this, this study collected 22 valid sample data covering engineering, science, management, law, medicine and other major categories, including different academic levels from freshman to graduate students, through a questionnaire survey, aiming to explore the mechanism and impact path of AI on college students' career choices.

II. Research data analysis and core discovery

A. Sample basic portrait and cognitive distribution

1. Group structure distribution: The sample covers all stages from undergraduate freshman to postgraduate, among which engineering (50%) and management (33.33%) account for the main body, showing the representativeness of strong logical and applied majors. In the gender ratio, men account for 75% and women account for 25%.

2. AI recognition and contact channels:

High level of understanding: 50% of students think they "know a lot" or "know very well" about AI technology, and only 25% say they don't know it at all.

Channels rely on social media: Up to 83.33% of students obtain AI-related information through social media (TikTok, Xiaohongshu, Weibo, etc.), while only 50% obtain information through school courses/lectures. This reflects that college students' initial understanding of AI is mainly driven by public opinion and Internet communication.

B. Application status of AI tools in job search and career planning

1. Frequency of use and penetration rate: 66.67% of students have used AI-related tools as daily or high-frequency tools (of which 50% are frequently used and 16.67% are frequently used).

2. The scene is highly concentrated on "efficiency" applications:

Industry prospect analysis (90%) and resume optimization/writing (58.33%~80%) are the core scenarios that students rely most on AI.

Career orientation evaluation (58.33%) and interview simulation/counseling (50%) also have a very high application penetration rate.

1. Satisfaction with the effect: 50% of students said they were "relatively satisfied" with the effect of AI-assisted job search, but 16.67%~20% of students said they were "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied", showing the limitations of the current AI job search tool in personalized in-depth tutoring.

C. The impact of AI on career choice psychology and planning path

1. The spread of employment fear and "substitution anxiety":

50% of the students interviewed have clear concerns about AI technology replacing their major-related career positions (33.33% are worried and 16.67% are very worried).

In the evaluation of the overall impact of AI on the career development of college students, 41.67% of students believed that the "negative impact is large" and the polarization was serious.

1. Career planning shows the tendency of "seeking stability and avoiding danger":

In the face of industry uncertainty brought about by AI, as many as 58.33% of students set their future career planning direction as postgraduate entrance examination/public entrance examination, while only 25% choose direct employment in enterprises.

This choice shows that students hope to avoid the impact of employment caused by technological iteration by raising the threshold of academic qualifications or entering the system.

III. Discussion on the role and mechanism of AI on college students' career choices

Comprehensive research data and open feedback (word cloud high-frequency words such as: "reconstruction", "replacement", "human-computer collaboration", "reverse force", "creativity", "tension and anxiety", etc.), the impact mechanism of AI on college students' career choices is mainly manifested in the following three aspects:

1. "Toolization and efficiency change" of job search behavior: AI significantly reduces the cost of information retrieval and the threshold of document writing in the job search process. The popularization of resume optimization and interview simulation has improved the job search efficiency of college students, but it has also caused new problems such as the homogenization of resumes.

2. The "reconstruction and reverse effect" of ability requirements: AI's replacement of basic and process-oriented positions forces college students to redefine their "core competitiveness". It is difficult to meet the market demand by simply mastering traditional professional knowledge. High-level "critical thinking, decision-making ability, emotional value and interpersonal collaboration" has become the new standard for career choice.

3. "Determinity preference" of career mentality: The uncertainty of technological iteration exacerbates college students' job search anxiety. Under the psychological hint of "AI replacing low-level positions", college students tend to adjust their career plans, from pursuing high-risk and high-return entrepreneurship or market-oriented enterprise employment to pursuing higher certainty institutional employment or further education.

IV. Coping strategies and countermeasures

Based on the research on the needs of middle school students for school and social job search guidance (58.33% demand for AI skills training courses, 50% demand for AI job search tool teaching), the following three suggestions are put forward:

A. Colleges and universities: deepen the integration of industry and education, and build an integrated teaching system of "AI + major"

1. Open AI practical and tool courses: Colleges and universities should open formal AI general knowledge and job search tool application courses to guide students to use AI scientifically and efficiently and avoid over-reliance or blind exclusion.

2. Restructure the talent training program: reduce repetitive skills training and increase the cultivation of high-level abilities such as interdisciplinary cooperation, complex problem solving and human-computer collaboration.

B. Students: Transform professional thinking and cultivate human-computer collaboration and irreplaceability

1. From "being replaced" to "good use of tools": actively improve your AI questioning (Prompt) and tool application ability, and regard AI as an auxiliary "external brain" in your career.

2. Create differentiated core advantages: focus on cultivating soft power that AI cannot replace, such as innovative thinking, empathy, leadership and cross-border integration ability.

C. Society and Enterprise: Provide rational industry forecasts to alleviate unnecessary anxiety

1. Release authoritative industry AI impact reports: Social institutions and enterprises should regularly release objective job changes and skill demand analysis to help college students rationally recognize industry trends and reduce blind anxiety caused by excessive rendering of social media information.

2. Provide more human-computer collaborative internship positions: encourage enterprises to provide internship scenarios for college students to use AI tools to improve productivity, and help them complete the transformation of their professional roles in practice.

V. Conclusion

The impact of AI technology on college students' career choices is far-reaching and three-dimensional. It not only brings opportunities to improve job search efficiency and restructure thinking, but also triggers the anxiety of job replacement and risk-avoidance. College students need to actively adapt to the new paradigm of human-computer collaboration, and colleges and universities and society should provide scientific guidance and guarantee to jointly help college students achieve high-quality career development in the AI era.