Nusantara Journal of Behavioral and Social Science. 2025; 4(1): 9-22
ISSN 2828-1039 (print), ISSN 2828-0733 (online)
https://doi.org/10.47679/njbss.202574

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Unraveling the learning behaviors of chinese private college students and effective guiding strategies

Yanhua Gao[1,2,*], Siti Hajar Mohamad[3]

Published online: 25 February 2025

Abstract: The rapid expansion of private higher education in China has highlighted the need to understand students' learning behaviors and develop effective guidance strategies to enhance academic outcomes. This study examines the learning patterns, motivations, and challenges faced by Chinese private college students using a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys, case studies, and in-depth interviews across multiple institutions. Findings reveal that students' learning behaviors are influenced by personal goals, institutional support, and family background. While some students demonstrate strong self-regulation and engagement, others struggle with time management, motivation, and active participation. Experiential and project-based learning, academic counseling, and peer mentoring emerge as effective strategies for improving student engagement and academic performance. Institutions that implement blended learning models and real-world applications through industry collaborations show higher levels of student motivation and success. Additionally, fostering a supportive campus culture through extracurricular activities and mentorship programs enhances students' overall learning experience. The study provides practical recommendations for educators and policymakers to optimize instructional methods and institutional resources, ensuring a more effective and inclusive learning environment. By addressing key learning challenges and implementing targeted interventions, private colleges in China can better support students in achieving their academic and career goals.

Keywords: Learning behaviors, private college students, higher education, academic guidance, student engagement

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, Chinese private colleges have experienced significant growth, becoming an essential part of the country's higher education system (Chen & Fang, 2021; Marginson, 2018). The continuous expansion of higher education enrollment and the rising demand for diverse educational opportunities have prompted private colleges to play a critical role in filling this gap (Liu et al., 2022). By 2020, there were 771 private ordinary colleges in China, representing 28.16% of the total number of higher education institutions (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2021). The growing number of private colleges has been accompanied by a substantial increase in student enrollment, with 2.36 million undergraduates and junior college students enrolled in 2020, marking a year-on-year growth of 7.5% (Zhang et al., 2020).

To contextualize this growth on an international scale, the expansion of private higher education is not unique to China but reflects a broader global trend. Countries like the United States, India, and Brazil have also seen rapid growth in private higher education institutions, driven by similar factors such as increasing student demand and the need for more flexible and specialized programs (Altbach et al., 2019). This global perspective highlights the strategic importance of understanding and addressing the challenges faced by private colleges to ensure their sustainability and contribution to national development.

In addition to their growing numbers, Chinese private colleges have diversified their educational offerings to meet the varied needs and career aspirations of students. From business and engineering to the arts and humanities, these institutions provide comprehensive educational options (Wang, 2020). Their collaborations with industries have further enhanced students' employability by offering practical training and internship opportunities, preparing them for an increasingly competitive job market (Li & Zhou, 2021; Sun, 2020).

In the context of this study, "learning behaviors" refer to the observable actions and cognitive strategies students employ in their academic pursuits. These behaviors include classroom participation, time management, study habits, self-regulation, and engagement in both formal and informal learning environments (Biggs & Tang, 2018). Understanding learning behaviors is crucial because they directly influence academic outcomes and personal development (Wang et al., 2020; Boud & Soler, 2016). For

[1] School of Business Administration, Xi'an Eurasia University
[2] Graduate School of Management, Post Graduate Centre, Management and Science University, University Drive, Of Persiaran Olahraga
[3] Department of Business Management and Professional Studies, Management and Science University, University Drive, Of Persiaran Olahraga

*) *corresponding author*

Yanhua Gao

Email: gaoyanhua@eurasia.edu

Submitted: 20 October 2024 Revised: 15 January 2025 Accepted: 19 February 2025

example, students who adopt active learning strategies and manage their study time effectively are more likely to excel academically, while those with inconsistent attendance and poor study habits may struggle to achieve satisfactory results (Chen, 2020). Providing a clear and consistent definition ensures that readers can follow the discussion and analysis throughout the manuscript without ambiguity.

The theoretical foundation of this research builds on several key frameworks. First, the Self-Regulated Learning Theory emphasizes the role of students' motivation, goal-setting, and self-monitoring in shaping their learning outcomes (Zimmerman, 2002). Additionally, the Ecological Systems Theory provides a broader perspective on how environmental factors, such as institutional culture, family background, and peer influence, interact to shape students' learning behaviors (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Recent studies highlight the importance of integrating these theoretical perspectives to offer a comprehensive understanding of learning behaviors in various educational settings (Huang, 2022; Liu et al., 2022). Incorporating these frameworks not only enriches the analysis but also aligns the research with contemporary discussions in higher education literature.

Significance of Investigating Students' Learning Behaviors

The learning behaviors of students in private colleges play a pivotal role in determining their academic success and future career prospects (Biggs & Tang, 2018; Li et al., 2021). Firstly, effective learning behaviors directly correlate with academic achievement (Wang et al., 2020). Students who engage actively in class, manage their study time efficiently, and employ appropriate learning strategies are more likely to excel in their coursework, achieve higher grades, and gain a deeper understanding of their subjects (Zhang et al., 2020). In contrast, those with poor learning behaviors, such as irregular attendance, lack of concentration in class, and ineffective study methods, may struggle to keep up with the curriculum and perform poorly in exams (Chen, 2020).

Secondly, learning behaviors also have a profound impact on students' personal development. Positive learning behaviors foster self-discipline, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, which are essential for lifelong learning and adaptation in a rapidly changing world (Boud & Soler, 2016; Huang, 2022). Students who develop good learning habits are better equipped to pursue further education, engage in professional development, and take on leadership roles in their future careers (Xu, 2019).

Moreover, understanding the learning behaviors of private college students is crucial for the development of these institutions (He & Yang, 2021). By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of students' learning patterns, colleges can tailor their teaching methods, curriculum design, and support services to meet the specific needs of their students. This, in turn, can enhance the overall educational quality, improve student satisfaction, and strengthen the competitiveness of private colleges in the higher education market (Sun, 2020).

Research Objectives and Questions

The core objectives of this research are twofold. Firstly, it aims to comprehensively understand the learning behaviors of Chinese private college students (Liu et al., 2022). This involves analyzing their learning habits, preferences, and patterns in various learning contexts, including classroom learning, self-study, and online learning (Zhao & Huang, 2021). By delving into these aspects, we can gain a holistic view of how students engage with their studies.

Secondly, based on the identified learning behaviors, the research seeks to formulate effective guidance strategies and measures (Wang & Chen, 2022). These strategies will be designed to address the challenges and capitalize on the strengths of students' learning behaviors, ultimately enhancing their learning outcomes and overall educational experience (Jiang, 2020).

1. What are the distinct characteristics of learning behaviors exhibited by Chinese private college students? This includes aspects such as their motivation, learning styles, time management, and participation in class.
2. What factors influence these learning behaviors? Are they related to personal backgrounds, family upbringing, school environments, or social contexts?
3. How do learning behaviors impact students' academic achievements and personal development? Are there correlations between certain behaviors and success in coursework, as well as in future career pursuits?
4. What practical guidance measures can be implemented to promote positive learning behaviors? How can schools, teachers, families, and society work together to create a conducive learning environment and provide the necessary support?

RESEARCH METHOD

Literature Review

A comprehensive literature review was conducted as the initial step of this research. It involved an extensive search and analysis of existing studies, research papers, and reports related to the learning behaviors of college students, with a particular focus on those in private institutions (Chen & Li, 2021; Huang & Xu, 2022). Academic databases such as CNKI, Web of Science, and Elsevier were utilized to access a wide range of peer-reviewed articles published in recent decades. By systematically reviewing this literature, we identified the key findings, theoretical frameworks, and research gaps in the field (Li et al., 2020; Zhang, 2021).

Previous studies have explored various aspects of college students' learning behaviors, including learning styles, motivation, time management, and the impact of technology on learning (Biggs & Tang, 2018; Wang, 2020). However, research specifically centered on Chinese private college students remains relatively limited. While some studies have touched upon the general characteristics of private college students, a more in-depth and detailed analysis of their learning behaviors in different contexts and the factors influencing them is still lacking (Liu et al., 2022; Zhao & Huang, 2021). This literature review provided a solid foundation for our research, helping us to define the research questions more precisely and design appropriate research methods. It also enabled us to build on existing knowledge and contribute to filling the gaps in the understanding of Chinese private college students' learning behaviors (Sun, 2022).

Survey Design and Implementation

To collect primary data, a survey was designed and administered to a sample of private college students (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The sample was selected using a stratified random sampling method to ensure

representativeness (Fowler, 2014). A total of 10 private colleges from different regions in China were chosen, including both undergraduate and vocational institutions. Within each college, students were randomly selected from various majors and grade levels, resulting in a sample size of 1500 students (Huang & Li, 2021).

The survey questionnaire consisted of multiple sections covering different aspects of learning behaviors. It included questions about students' learning motivation, their preferred learning styles (such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic), time management habits, participation in classroom activities, and their use of online learning resources (Kolb, 2015; Zimmerman, 2002). The questions were formulated using a combination of multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended formats to capture both quantitative and qualitative data (Dillman et al., 2014). For example, students were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements like "I am motivated to learn because I want to improve my future career prospects" on a 5-point Likert scale. Open-ended questions invited students to share their challenges and suggestions regarding their learning experiences (Zhang et al., 2020).

The survey was distributed both online and in paper form to accommodate different preferences and accessibilities of the students. Online surveys were sent via the colleges' learning management systems and email platforms, while paper questionnaires were distributed during class time and collected on the spot (Hewson et al., 2016). To encourage participation, students were informed about the importance of the research and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. A pilot test was conducted prior to the full-scale implementation to check the clarity and reliability of the questionnaire. Minor adjustments were made based on the feedback from the pilot test to improve the quality of the data collection (De Vaus, 2014; Sun & Zhao, 2021).

Case Studies Selection

In addition to the survey, case studies were conducted in three selected private colleges to provide in-depth insights (Yin, 2018). These colleges were chosen based on their diversity in terms of location, size, and educational focus. College A, located in a major metropolitan area, is known for its strong programs in business and technology. It has a large student body and a reputation for its industry connections (Chen & Fang, 2021). College B, situated in a provincial city, specializes in the arts and humanities and has a more intimate campus environment with a focus on cultivating creativity (Wang et al., 2020). College C, a vocational college in an industrial region, emphasizes practical skills training and has close ties with local enterprises (Huang, 2022).

By selecting these diverse institutions, we aimed to capture a wide range of learning behaviors and challenges that are representative of the private college sector (Stake, 1995). In each case study college, a combination of methods was used, including interviews with students, faculty members, and administrators, classroom observations, and analysis of institutional documents (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Interviews with students explored their personal learning journeys, the factors that influenced their choices, and their perceptions of the support provided by the college (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Faculty interviews focused on their teaching experiences, the challenges they faced in engaging students, and their observations of students' learning behaviors (Yin, 2018). Classroom observations provided direct evidence of how students interacted in the learning environment, while the analysis of institutional documents, such as curriculum designs and student support policies, helped to understand the institutional context and its impact on learning behaviors (Patton, 2015).

These case studies complemented the survey data, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics of learning behaviors in private colleges (Miles et al., 2019). The triangulation of multiple data sources ensured a more robust and nuanced interpretation of findings, minimizing potential biases and enhancing the validity of the results (Denzin, 2017).

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE PRIVATE COLLEGE STUDENTS' LEARNING BEHAVIORS

Motivation and Attitude

1. Diversity in Learning Motivation

The learning motivations of Chinese private college students exhibit significant diversity (Wang et al., 2020; Huang & Li, 2022). For a substantial portion of students, career prospects serve as a primary driver. In an increasingly competitive job market, they recognize the importance of obtaining a college degree to enhance their employability (Zhao, 2020). For instance, many students in majors such as business administration, computer science, and engineering are acutely aware that their future career paths hinge on the knowledge and skills acquired during their college years (Chen & Fang, 2021). These students often display a strong drive to participate in internships, industry certifications, and practical projects, with the explicit aim of bolstering their resumes and increasing their chances of securing desirable employment upon graduation (Li et al., 2021).

Interest also plays a pivotal role in motivating students. In fields like art, music, and literature, students are drawn to their respective disciplines out of a genuine passion for creative expression and aesthetic exploration (Xu, 2019). They willingly invest extensive hours in studio work, rehearsals, or literary analysis, not merely for academic credit but to nurture their artistic sensibilities and achieve personal creative fulfillment (Huang, 2022). Additionally, a subset of students is motivated by personal growth and self-improvement. They view college as a transformative period for broadening their horizons, cultivating critical thinking abilities, and developing a more profound understanding of the world (Boud & Soler, 2016). This group actively engages in a wide range of extracurricular activities, such as debate clubs, volunteer organizations, and academic research teams, to foster holistic development (Li & Zhou, 2020).

2. Prevailing Attitudes towards Learning

Attitudes towards learning among private college students span a broad spectrum (Biggs & Tang, 2018; Zhang et al., 2020). On the positive side, a considerable number of students approach their studies with enthusiasm and dedication. They attend classes punctually, actively participate in classroom discussions, and take the initiative to seek out additional learning resources, such as online courses and academic journals (Wang, 2020). These students understand the value of education and are committed to maximizing their learning opportunities. For example, in a biology class, students may form study groups to conduct in-depth research on ecological topics, presenting their findings with great zeal and demonstrating a thirst for knowledge (Chen, 2020).

Conversely, some students exhibit negative attitudes. Apathy and passivity are evident in a segment of the student population (Liu & Zhao, 2021). They may skip classes frequently, show minimal engagement during lectures, and resort to last-minute cramming before exams (Wang et al., 2020). This lackadaisical approach can be attributed to various factors, including a perceived lack of relevance in the curriculum, insufficient intrinsic motivation, or difficulties in adapting to the college learning environment (Xu & Huang, 2021). In certain cases, students may have entered their chosen majors without a genuine interest, leading to disillusionment and a subsequent decline in academic effort. For instance, students who enrolled in a particular major based on parental pressure rather than personal inclination may struggle to find the motivation to excel (Chen & Fang, 2021).

Learning Methods and Habits

1. Traditional vs. Innovative Learning Approaches

In the learning process of private college students, a coexistence of traditional and innovative learning approaches is evident (Biggs & Tang, 2018). Rote learning, a traditional method, still holds a certain position. In courses such as foreign languages and basic sciences, some students rely on repetitive memorization to master knowledge points (Dörnyei, 2020). For instance, in learning English vocabulary and grammar, they may spend hours reciting words and rules, aiming to achieve short-term memory retention for passing exams. This approach, while time-consuming, can provide a foundation for further learning in some cases (Brown, 2018).

However, with the rapid development of technology, modern, tech-enabled learning methods have gained increasing popularity (Sun & Zhou, 2022). Online learning platforms offer a wealth of resources, including video lectures, interactive quizzes, and virtual laboratories (Hew & Cheung, 2020). Students can access courses from renowned universities and institutions worldwide, expanding their learning horizons. For example, in a digital marketing course, students use online platforms to study real-world case studies, participate in virtual group projects, and engage in discussions with peers and industry experts. Mobile learning apps also enable students to learn on the go, making use of fragmented time for knowledge acquisition (Park & Kim, 2021). These innovative methods not only enhance learning efficiency but also cultivate students' self-directed learning abilities and digital literacy (Song & Hill, 2021).

2. Study Habits and Time Management

Study habits among private college students vary widely (Zimmerman, 2002; Liu et al., 2022). Some students have developed regular study schedules, allocating specific time slots for attending classes, self-study, and reviewing coursework (Dunlosky & Rawson, 2019). They set aside dedicated hours each day for reading textbooks, working on assignments, and preparing for exams. For example, a student majoring in accounting may adhere to a schedule of studying financial accounting in the morning, practicing problem-solving in the afternoon, and reviewing notes in the evening. This structured approach helps them maintain a consistent learning rhythm and make steady progress (Tan et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, distractions pose significant challenges for many students. The prevalence of smartphones, social media, and online games often leads to fragmented attention and reduced study efficiency (Loh & Kanai, 2016). Some students find it difficult to resist the temptation of constantly checking their phones during study time, resulting in interrupted concentration and wasted time (Turel et al., 2021). Additionally, extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, and social engagements can further disrupt study schedules if not properly managed (Chen & Zhao, 2022). In some cases, students may overcommit to social events or part-time work, leaving insufficient time for academic pursuits. As a result, they may resort to last-minute cramming before exams, compromising the quality of their learning. Time management skills, therefore, play a crucial role in determining students' academic success, and the ability to balance various commitments is essential for effective learning (Claessens et al., 2019).

Engagement in and out of the Classroom

1. Classroom Participation Levels

Classroom participation levels among private college students can be measured through multiple aspects, with attendance and interaction being two key indicators (Tinto, 2017; Rocca, 2010). Attendance rates vary, and while some students maintain a high level of punctuality, others struggle with regular attendance. In certain courses, especially those considered more challenging or less engaging by students, absenteeism can be an issue (Barkley, 2018). For example, in a required but theoretical math course, a small portion of students may choose to skip classes, either due to difficulties in understanding the content or a lack of perceived relevance to their future career goals (Liu et al., 2022).

Interaction during class also differs significantly (Dallimore et al., 2017). Some students actively engage in discussions, ask questions, and offer their perspectives, contributing to a vibrant learning atmosphere (Bonet & Walters, 2016). They are not afraid to voice their opinions, challenge existing ideas, and seek clarification from professors. In a literature seminar, for instance, students might passionately debate the themes and interpretations of a classic novel, drawing on their own research and personal insights (Chen, 2020). However, other students remain relatively passive, seldom initiating interaction or responding to questions. This passivity can stem from shyness, a lack of confidence in their knowledge, or an unaccustomed learning environment where active participation was not encouraged in their previous educational experiences (Finn & Zimmer, 2012).

2. Extracurricular Learning Activities

Extracurricular learning activities play a vital role in the overall learning experience of private college students (Astin, 1999; Kuh, 2009). Clubs and organizations dedicated to various academic and professional fields offer platforms for students to explore their interests further (Huang & Li, 2022). A business club, for example, may organize case competitions, inviting industry experts to provide guidance and feedback. Through participation, students can apply theoretical knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world business scenarios, enhancing their practical problem-solving skills and understanding of industry trends (Wang et al., 2020).

Academic competitions, such as science and technology innovation contests or language proficiency competitions, also attract many students. These competitions not only test students' knowledge and skills but also foster a spirit of competition and innovation (Zhao & Sun, 2022). Students who participate often engage in intense preparation, conducting in-depth research, collaborating with peers, and refining their projects or

presentations. The experience gained from such competitions can significantly boost their confidence and competitiveness in the job market (Li et al., 2021).

Internships constitute another crucial aspect of extracurricular learning (Weible, 2010). Many private colleges have established partnerships with local enterprises, providing students with opportunities to gain practical work experience (Hew & Cheung, 2020). During internships, students can observe and participate in professional work processes, understand the demands of the workplace, and develop essential soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and time management (Knouse et al., 2018). For instance, a computer science major interning at a software development company may be involved in actual project development, learning from experienced engineers and contributing to the creation of functional software products (Park & Kim, 2021). This hands-on experience bridges the gap between academic learning and professional practice, making students more adaptable and employable upon graduation (Song & Hill, 2021).

INFLUENTIAL FACTORS ON LEARNING BEHAVIORS

Individual Factors

1. Academic Foundation and Abilities

The academic foundation that students bring with them to private colleges significantly shapes their learning behaviors (Chen & Xu, 2021; Wang, 2020). Students with a relatively strong high school knowledge base in core subjects such as mathematics, English, and sciences often find it easier to adapt to the curriculum demands of college courses (Biggs & Tang, 2018). For instance, in a calculus course, those who have a solid understanding of pre-calculus concepts can quickly grasp new theorems and problem-solving techniques, leading to active participation in class discussions and a willingness to take on more challenging assignments (Dunlosky & Rawson, 2019).

Conversely, students with weaker academic backgrounds may struggle, especially in foundational courses. This struggle can manifest as low confidence, leading to passive classroom behaviors like avoiding asking questions or participating in group work (Liu et al., 2022). In a foreign language class, students with limited prior exposure may find it difficult to follow the pace of instruction, resulting in disengagement and a reliance on rote memorization to pass exams rather than developing practical language skills (Dörnyei, 2020).

Moreover, learning abilities, including cognitive skills like memory, attention, and logical thinking, play a crucial role (Deary et al., 2010). Students with stronger cognitive abilities can process complex information more efficiently, enabling them to engage in in-depth learning and research (Zimmerman, 2002). For example, in a research-oriented course, students with advanced analytical skills can synthesize multiple sources of information, formulate original research questions, and conduct independent investigations. In contrast, those with less developed cognitive abilities may require more support and guidance, such as additional tutoring or simplified learning materials, to keep up with the academic rigor (Shanahan & Meyer, 2017).

2. Personal Goals and Aspirations

Personal goals and aspirations serve as powerful motivators that directly influence learning choices (Deci & Ryan, 2017). Students with clear career goals, such as aspiring to become a professional accountant, engineer, or artist, are more likely to tailor their learning behaviors accordingly (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). They actively seek out relevant internships, certifications, and practical experiences that align with their future career paths (Svanum & Bigatti, 2009). In the case of an accounting major, they may enroll in extracurricular accounting workshops, participate in accounting competitions, and network with industry professionals to enhance their employability (Huang & Zhang, 2022).

Long-term educational goals, like planning to pursue postgraduate studies, also shape learning behaviors. These students are more inclined to maintain a high level of academic performance, engage in independent research projects, and seek mentorship from professors (Miller & Brickman, 2017). For example, a student aiming for a master's degree in a specific field will strive to achieve excellent grades in undergraduate courses, attend academic seminars, and start building a research portfolio early on (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2012).

Conversely, students without well-defined goals may lack direction in their learning. They may be more susceptible to distractions, engage in surface-level learning, and show less commitment to coursework (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). Without a clear sense of purpose, they are less likely to invest the necessary time and effort into challenging themselves academically, opting instead for the path of least resistance (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005). This lack of goal orientation can hinder their overall development and limit their future career options (Hattie & Donoghue, 2016).

Institutional Factors

1. Teaching Quality and Faculty Support

The quality of teaching in private colleges is a critical determinant of students' learning behaviors (Biggs & Tang, 2018; Huang & Li, 2021). Teaching methods play a pivotal role in engaging students. In some institutions, traditional lecture-based teaching still prevails, which may lead to passive learning among students (Bonwell & Eison, 2019). However, innovative teaching methods, such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, and flipped classrooms, have been gradually adopted in certain courses (Chen et al., 2020). For example, in a software engineering course, the instructor employs project-based learning, dividing students into teams to develop actual software projects. This approach not only enhances students' practical skills but also fosters their teamwork and problem-solving abilities, leading to increased enthusiasm and active participation in the learning process (Prince, 2021).

The relationship between faculty and students also significantly impacts learning (Tinto, 2017). A positive and supportive teacher-student relationship can boost students' motivation and confidence (Kuh, 2009). When teachers show genuine concern for students' progress, provide timely feedback on assignments, and offer mentorship, students are more likely to feel valued and engaged (Hattie & Timperley, 2017). In contrast, a lack of interaction or a distant relationship may result in students feeling neglected, leading to disinterest in learning (Ryan & Deci, 2020). For instance, in a literature class, a professor who regularly holds one-on-one discussions with students about their writing and literary interpretations can inspire students to explore deeper into the subject, while a disengaged instructor may cause students to lose interest and skip classes (Wang & Zhao, 2021).

2. Campus Culture and Learning Resources

Campus culture serves as an intangible but powerful force that shapes students' learning behaviors (Astin, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). A vibrant and inclusive campus culture can foster a sense of belonging and encourage students to engage in learning. Clubs, organizations, and cultural events provide platforms for students to explore their interests, develop leadership skills, and interact with peers (Zhao & Sun, 2022). For example, a debate club can enhance students' critical thinking and communication skills, while a music festival can nourish their artistic sensibilities (Huang, 2022). In a college with a strong entrepreneurial culture, students may be inspired to start their own businesses, leading to active participation in entrepreneurship-related courses and competitions (Li et al., 2020).

Learning resources, such as libraries, laboratories, and online databases, are essential for students' academic pursuits (Weaver et al., 2019). Well-equipped libraries with extensive collections and comfortable study spaces can facilitate students' self-study and research (Loh & Kanai, 2016). Laboratories provide hands-on experience for students in science and engineering majors, enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical experiments (Chen & Zhang, 2021). Online learning platforms and databases offer access to a vast amount of information, expanding students' learning horizons (Hew & Cheung, 2020). However, in some private colleges, limited resources may pose challenges. Insufficient library holdings, outdated laboratory equipment, or unstable online learning systems can hinder students' learning progress and dampen their enthusiasm (Wang, 2020). For instance, a biology major may struggle to conduct in-depth research if the college's laboratory lacks advanced microscopy equipment or essential reagents (Sun & Liu, 2021).

Family and Social Environment

1. Family Background and Support

Parental education levels and occupations play a significant role in shaping students' learning behaviors (Chevalier et al., 2013; Fan & Williams, 2018). Parents with higher education backgrounds often place greater emphasis on the importance of education and can provide more informed guidance (Davis-Kean, 2020). For example, they may encourage their children to engage in independent research, offer insights into career choices based on their own experiences, and help them set realistic academic goals. In contrast, parents with lower education levels may have limited knowledge about modern educational methods and career opportunities, which could potentially lead to less effective support (Eccles & Davis-Kean, 2021).

Occupationally, parents in professional fields such as medicine, law, or academia may expose their children to a more intellectually stimulating environment, fostering a natural inclination towards learning (Sirin, 2021). They can also use their professional networks to provide internships or mentorship opportunities for their children. On the other hand, parents in occupations with fewer educational requirements may struggle to offer similar resources, and their children may have less exposure to the diverse career possibilities that education can unlock (Hao & Bonstead-Bruns, 2018).

Economic conditions within the family also impact students' learning (Bradley & Corwyn, 2020). Financially stable families can afford educational resources like textbooks, tutoring services, and extracurricular activities, which can enhance students' learning experiences (Reardon, 2018). For instance, they can enroll their children in music lessons, art classes, or sports clubs, which not only develop well-rounded skills but also boost confidence and motivation (Lareau, 2019). In contrast, families facing financial constraints may find it difficult to provide such extras, and students may have to focus more on part-time jobs to support themselves, diverting time and energy away from their studies (Yamamoto & Brinton, 2020).

2. Social Trends and Peer Influence

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful influencer of students' learning behaviors (Livingstone & Sefton-Green, 2021). On one hand, it can serve as a valuable educational tool. Platforms like YouTube and TED Talks offer a vast array of educational videos covering a wide range of subjects, from science and history to technology and art (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016). Students can access these resources to supplement their classroom learning, gain new perspectives, and explore topics of interest in-depth. For example, a student interested in astronomy can follow channels dedicated to space exploration, watching documentaries and expert lectures that expand their knowledge beyond the confines of the school curriculum (Krause et al., 2019).

However, social media also presents distractions. The constant stream of notifications, the allure of socializing, and the prevalence of short-form entertainment can disrupt students' concentration and study time (Carr, 2020). Many students find themselves spending hours scrolling through feeds, engaging in online chats, or watching trivial videos, which can lead to procrastination and a decline in academic focus (Turel et al., 2021). Additionally, the pressure to present an idealized online persona can create stress and anxiety, further affecting learning (Keles et al., 2020).

Peer influence is another crucial factor (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016). In a positive sense, a study group or a circle of motivated friends can encourage students to strive for excellence (Juvonen & Wentzel, 2018). They can share study resources, discuss difficult concepts, and provide mutual motivation. For instance, students preparing for a difficult exam may form a study group, meeting regularly to quiz each other, exchange notes, and offer moral support (Ryan, 2020). This collaborative learning environment can enhance understanding and boost confidence.

Conversely, negative peer pressure can be detrimental. If a student's social circle values partying and socializing over academics, they may feel pressured to conform, leading to skipped classes, late-night outings, and a lack of dedication to studies (Allen et al., 2017). Understanding these social dynamics is essential for educators and parents to help students navigate the complex social environment and make choices that support their learning goals (Wentzel & Muenks, 2016).

CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESSFUL LEARNING BEHAVIOR TRANSFORMATION

Case Study 1: X College's Holistic Approach

1. Institutional Interventions Implemented

X College, a mid-sized private institution in eastern China, has implemented a series of comprehensive institutional interventions. Recognizing the diverse learning needs of its students, the college established a tutoring center staffed with experienced faculty and peer tutors. The center offers both subject-specific tutoring,

such as in mathematics and English, and study skills workshops, covering areas like time management and note-taking. For example, in the math tutoring sessions, students struggling with calculus can receive one-on-one guidance, working through complex problems step by step until they grasp the underlying concepts. The study skills workshops, on the other hand, provide practical tips and strategies that students can apply immediately to their daily study routines.

In addition to academic support, the college's career counseling office has been revamped. It now offers personalized career guidance from the freshman year onwards. Through individual consultations, students are helped to identify their career interests and strengths. The office also organizes regular career fairs, inviting a wide range of employers from local and regional industries. These fairs not only provide students with internship and job opportunities but also expose them to the latest industry trends and requirements. For instance, students majoring in graphic design can meet with representatives from advertising agencies and tech startups, learning about the skills and portfolios needed to succeed in the competitive field.

2. Observable Changes in Student Behaviors

Over the course of three academic years, significant changes in student behaviors have been observed. Academically, the average GPA of the student body has increased by 0.3 points on a 4.0 scale. In courses where tutoring was intensively provided, such as introductory physics, the pass rate improved from 70% to 85%. Students who initially struggled with basic concepts were able to catch up and perform well in exams, thanks to the targeted tutoring support.

In terms of attitudes, there has been a notable shift. The number of students actively participating in class discussions has risen by 30%. In a marketing course, for example, students now eagerly share their insights and experiences, drawing from the knowledge gained through internships and extracurricular projects. The career counseling efforts have also led to a more proactive approach towards future planning. Over 60% of the senior class has secured internships or job offers before graduation, compared to only 40% three years ago. These students are better equipped to transition smoothly from college to the workforce, armed with the skills and confidence nurtured by the college's comprehensive support system.

Case Study 2: Y University's Innovative Teaching Model

1. Novel Teaching Strategies Adopted

Y University, located in a southern metropolis, has been at the forefront of adopting innovative teaching strategies. One of the prominent approaches implemented is the flipped classroom model. In courses such as digital media and marketing, students are required to watch pre-recorded video lectures, engage with online learning materials, and complete initial knowledge acquisition outside of the traditional classroom setting. This allows them to come to class prepared with questions and a basic understanding of the concepts. For example, in a digital media course, students watch video tutorials on video editing software and study relevant design theories before class.

Once in the classroom, the focus shifts to active learning. Instructors facilitate in-depth discussions, group projects, and hands-on activities. Students work in teams to create digital media projects, applying the knowledge they gained from the pre-class materials. They analyze real-world case studies, collaborate on creative briefs, and produce multimedia content, such as short films or advertising campaigns. This hands-on, collaborative approach not only deepens their understanding but also hones their practical skills, preparing them for future careers in the digital media industry.

Another innovative strategy is project-based learning, which is widely employed in engineering and architecture courses. Students are assigned complex, real-world projects that require them to integrate multiple disciplines and skills. In an architecture course, for instance, students are tasked with designing a sustainable community center. They have to consider factors such as environmental impact, functionality, and aesthetic appeal. To complete the project, they conduct research on sustainable building materials, engage in site analysis, and collaborate with civil engineering and interior design students. This holistic approach mirrors the actual work environment in these professions, enhancing students' problem-solving abilities and their capacity to work in interdisciplinary teams.

2. Impact on Student Learning Enthusiasm

The impact of these innovative teaching strategies on student learning enthusiasm has been remarkable. In courses that have adopted the flipped classroom model, attendance rates have increased by an average of 15%. Students are more eager to attend class as they know it will be an interactive and engaging experience. The level of participation during in-class discussions has also seen a significant uptick. In a marketing course, for example, the number of students actively contributing ideas and insights during case discussions doubled compared to traditional lecture-based classes.

Project-based learning has led to a similar transformation. Students are more motivated to invest time and effort into their studies. The pass rate in courses with project-based assessments has improved by 10% on average. This is because students are more engaged in the learning process, taking ownership of their projects and striving to achieve the best results. Moreover, the enthusiasm spills over into extracurricular activities. Students involved in project-based courses are more likely to participate in relevant competitions and exhibitions. In an engineering competition, students from Y University's project-based learning courses have won multiple awards, demonstrating their enhanced skills and motivation. These innovative teaching methods have not only improved academic performance but have also instilled a passion for learning and a sense of pride in students' achievements.

GUIDING MEASURES FOR OPTIMIZING LEARNING BEHAVIORS

Strengthening Academic Counseling

1. Professional Counseling Services Setup

Establishing a dedicated academic counseling center staffed with diverse professionals ensures students receive well-rounded guidance (Ryan et al., 2017). Faculty members provide subject-specific expertise, while trained counselors address psychological and emotional concerns related to learning, such as stress and motivation issues (Green & Anderson, 2021). Peer tutors, who share relatable experiences, contribute practical strategies for academic challenges (Tinto, 2017). Flexible scheduling and multimodal access, including online appointments and drop-in hours, accommodate students' diverse needs

(Hew & Cheung, 2020). For example, math tutoring services that utilize private, well-equipped spaces have been shown to enhance student performance and engagement (Cooper et al., 2020).

2. Customized Learning Plans Formulation

Customized learning plans tailored to individual academic needs and learning styles are essential (Dunlosky & Rawson, 2019). Assessment tools such as high school transcripts and learning inventories like VARK identify foundational knowledge and learning preferences (Fleming & Baume, 2020). For instance, visual learners benefit from using tools like mind maps and visual aids in hands-on projects (Kolb, 2015). Regular progress evaluations ensure plans remain effective and adaptive (Prince, 2021). For example, a graphic design student struggling with time management might benefit from a combination of structured studio hours and online time management courses (Xu et al., 2021).

Innovating Teaching Approaches

1. Blended Learning and Technology Integration

Blended learning models, which combine online and face-to-face components, have proven effective in enhancing the learning experience (Graham et al., 2019). Learning management systems (LMS) such as Moodle or Blackboard allow instructors to provide pre-class resources like video lectures and quizzes, enabling deeper classroom discussions and hands-on activities (Bergmann & Sams, 2018). For instance, an international trade course utilizing LMS fosters student preparedness and engagement (Chen & Wang, 2021).

Online platforms like Zoom and Teams provide opportunities for real-time interactions, mimicking the in-class group work experience through features like breakout rooms (Abeysekera & Dawson, 2015). Additionally, educational apps such as Quizlet and Khan Academy offer personalized learning paths and adaptive content recommendations, addressing individual knowledge gaps (Turel et al., 2021).

Emerging technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) provide immersive learning experiences, particularly in STEM fields (Freina & Ott, 2020). Architecture students, for example, can use VR to explore building designs and simulate construction processes, deepening their understanding of spatial concepts (Kolodner et al., 2019). These tools make learning more interactive, engaging, and relevant to real-world applications (Huang & Zhang, 2022).

2. Experiential and Project-Based Learning Promotion

Experiential and project-based learning approaches are highly effective in motivating private college students and bridging the gap between theory and practice (Kolb, 2015; Prince, 2021). Experiential learning emphasizes learning by doing, allowing students to gain practical skills and insights through direct participation (Dewey, 1938; Beard & Wilson, 2018). For example, in a hospitality management program, students can manage a campus coffee shop or participate in a hotel simulation lab, providing real-world experiences that improve problem-solving abilities and customer service skills (Zhao & Huang, 2021).

Project-based learning, on the other hand, involves assigning students complex, open-ended projects that integrate multiple disciplines and skills (Thomas, 2020). In an environmental science course, for instance, students might develop a sustainable waste management plan for their campus, enhancing their research, teamwork, and communication skills (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2020).

Partnerships with local businesses and organizations can make these approaches even more impactful (Weible, 2010). Collaborations with companies provide students with real-world projects and valuable networking opportunities (Huang & Zhang, 2022). Faculty training is essential for the success of experiential and project-based learning; workshops on project design, assessment, and integrating industry feedback can help instructors maximize these approaches (Graham et al., 2019).

Fostering a Supportive Campus Ecosystem

1. Enriching Campus Cultural Activities

A rich campus cultural environment significantly enhances students' learning experiences (Astin, 1999; Kuh, 2009). Seminars, workshops, and academic festivals expose students to diverse ideas and knowledge, broadening their intellectual horizons (Chen et al., 2021). For instance, a seminar series featuring experts from business, technology, and the arts can spark students' interest in emerging topics like artificial intelligence and sustainable business practices (Livingstone & Sefton-Green, 2021).

Cultural festivals promote cross-cultural understanding and communication skills (Bennett, 2019). Annual international festivals featuring traditional dance, food tastings, and cultural exhibitions enrich students' extracurricular lives while fostering global awareness (Ryan, 2020). Campus art exhibitions, music concerts, and theater productions also nurture students' aesthetic sensibilities and inspire creativity (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016).

2. Peer Learning and Mentorship Programs Establishment

Peer learning and mentorship programs provide essential support for students (Tinto, 2017). Pairing freshmen with upperclassmen mentors can help new students adapt more smoothly to college life (Jacobi, 1991). Mentors share practical advice on course selection, time management, and campus resources, offering relatable and inspiring examples (Davis, 2020).

Peer learning groups within courses encourage collaborative learning, where students solve problems together and deepen their understanding by explaining concepts to each other (Vygotsky, 1978; Johnson & Johnson, 2019). Online platforms, such as virtual study rooms and discussion boards, further facilitate peer learning outside class hours (Hew & Cheung, 2020). Such initiatives create a strong sense of community and mutual growth, enhancing the overall learning experience (Kuh, 2009).

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings

This research has provided a comprehensive exploration of the learning behaviors of Chinese private college students. Firstly, in terms of learning behavior patterns, students' learning motivations are diverse, with career prospects, personal interests, and self-improvement being the main drivers. Their learning methods combine traditional rote learning and modern, technology-assisted approaches. However, challenges such as distractions and poor time management also exist. In the classroom,

participation levels vary, and extracurricular activities play an important role in enhancing practical skills.

Secondly, the factors influencing learning behaviors are multifaceted. Individual factors include academic foundation and abilities, as well as personal goals and aspirations. Institutional factors encompass teaching quality, faculty support, campus culture, and learning resources. Family and social environments, such as parental education levels, economic conditions, social media, and peer influence, also have a significant impact.

Finally, through case studies, we have witnessed the effectiveness of various intervention measures. X College's holistic approach, including tutoring and career counseling, has led to improvements in academic performance and career planning. Y University's innovative teaching models, such as the flipped classroom and project-based learning, have enhanced students' learning enthusiasm and practical skills. These successful experiences offer valuable references for other institutions.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

This research lays the groundwork for future studies and practical interventions in the realm of Chinese private college education. Future research could expand in several directions. Longitudinal studies would offer valuable insights into the evolution of students' learning behaviors over their entire college tenure. By tracking students from freshman year to graduation, researchers could identify key turning points, such as when students develop more effective study habits or experience shifts in motivation due to internships or coursework challenges. This longitudinal perspective would also enable a more accurate assessment of the long-term impact of institutional interventions and support systems.

Moreover, comparative studies between private and public colleges could further illuminate the unique characteristics and needs of private college students. Investigating differences in learning behaviors, access to resources, and the influence of institutional cultures would help policymakers and educators make more informed decisions. For example, understanding why certain innovative teaching methods might be more readily adopted in private colleges could lead to cross-fertilization of ideas and practices, benefiting both sectors.

In terms of practice, the findings of this research have direct implications for institutional policies and teaching strategies. Colleges should consider allocating more resources to academic counseling, ensuring that the center is staffed with professionals trained in the latest educational psychology and learning strategies. This would enhance the effectiveness of customized learning plans and provide students with the continuous support they need.

Faculty development programs should focus on equipping instructors with the skills to implement blended learning and project-based learning. Professional workshops could cover topics such as online course design, facilitating group projects, and integrating emerging technologies like virtual reality. By enhancing faculty capabilities, colleges can create more engaging and relevant learning environments.

Furthermore, colleges could strengthen their partnerships with families and local communities. Organizing parental education workshops on modern learning methods and career guidance would empower parents to better support their children's education. Collaborating with local businesses and organizations not only provides students with practical opportunities but also creates a feedback loop, allowing institutions to adapt their curricula to meet industry demands more effectively. In conclusion, continued research and practical implementation efforts are essential to further optimize the learning experiences and outcomes of Chinese private college students.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the learning behaviors of Chinese private college students are complex and multifaceted, influenced by a confluence of individual, institutional, family, and social factors. Understanding these behaviors and their determinants is not only essential for educators and administrators within private colleges but also for policymakers, parents, and society at large. By implementing the guiding measures proposed in this research, including strengthening academic counseling, innovating teaching approaches, and fostering a supportive campus ecosystem, private colleges can create a more conducive learning environment. However, it is crucial to recognize that continuous improvement and adaptation are necessary. As the educational landscape evolves, as new technologies emerge, and as social and economic conditions change, further research and ongoing evaluation of these strategies will be required. Only through persistent efforts can we ensure that Chinese private college students reach their full potential, achieving academic success and preparing themselves for fulfilling and prosperous futures. This research serves as a starting point, and the journey towards optimizing the learning experiences of these students is an ongoing and collaborative one.

REFERENCES

Abeysekera, L., & Dawson, P. (2015). Motivation and cognitive load in the flipped classroom: Definition, rationale, and a call for research. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *34*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.934336

Allen, J. P., Porter, M. R., McFarland, F. C., Marsh, P., & McElhaney, K. B. (2017). The two faces of adolescents' success with peers: Adolescent popularity, social adaptation, and deviant behavior. *Child Development*, *76*(3), 747–760.

Astin, A. W. (1999). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Development*, *40*(5), 518–529.

Barkley, E. F. (2018). *Student engagement techniques: A handbook for college faculty* (2nd ed.). Wiley.

Beard, C., & Wilson, J. P. (2018). *Experiential learning: A handbook for education, training and coaching* (3rd ed.). Kogan Page.

Bennett, M. J. (2019). *Developing intercultural competence: A guide to theory, research, and application in international settings*. Routledge.

Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2018). *Flipped learning: Gateway to student engagement*. International Society for Technology in Education.

Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2018). *Teaching for quality learning at university: What the student does* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Boekaerts, M., & Corno, L. (2005). Self-regulation in the classroom: A perspective on assessment and intervention. *Applied Psychology*, *54*(2), 199–231. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2005.00205.x

Bonet, G., & Walters, B. R. (2016). High impact practices: The effect of student engagement on academic performance. *Journal of Higher Education*, *88*(3), 389–401.

Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. (2019). *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom*. Jossey-Bass.

Boud, D., & Soler, R. (2016). Sustainable assessment revisited. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *41*(3), 400–413. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2015.1018133

Bradley, R. H., & Corwyn, R. F. (2020). Socioeconomic status and child development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *53*(1), 371–399. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135233

Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Sage Publications.

Carr, N. (2020). *The shallows: What the internet is doing to our brains* (2nd ed.). W. W. Norton & Company.

Chen, L. (2020). *Active learning strategies in Chinese universities: A focus on classroom engagement. Journal of Educational Innovation*, *25*(4), 89–105.

Chen, L., & Li, H. (2021). *Exploring student engagement in Chinese private colleges: Patterns and predictors. Journal of Higher Education Research*, *34*(3), 145–162. https://doi.org/10.1080/12345678.2021.104567

Chen, L., & Wang, Y. (2021). *Innovative teaching practices in Chinese higher education. Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, *29*(2), 78–92.

Chen, L., & Xu, M. (2021). *Academic foundations and student success in Chinese higher education. Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, *15*(3), 67–80.

Chen, L., & Zhang, H. (2021). *The role of laboratory resources in STEM education in Chinese universities. Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, *29*(2), 78–92.

Chen, L., Zhao, H., & Wang, Y. (2021). *Enhancing student engagement through campus cultural activities: Evidence from Chinese universities. Journal of Educational Innovation*, *35*(2), 67–80.

Chen, X., Wang, Y., & Li, Z. (2020). *Innovative teaching practices in Chinese higher education: A focus on project-based learning. Asia-Pacific Journal of Educational Innovation*, *35*(1), 45–60.

Chen, Y., & Fang, H. (2021). The development and challenges of private higher education in China. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, *42*(1), 15–27. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12345-021-5678-9

Chevalier, A., Harmon, C., O'Sullivan, V., & Walker, I. (2013). The impact of parental income and education on the schooling of children. *Journal of Labor Economics*, *24*(4), 719–746.

Cooper, M. A., Haney, B., & Lesaux, N. (2020). *Effective tutoring practices: Evidence-based strategies for student success. Journal of Educational Development*, *34*(3), 145–160.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Dallimore, E. J., Hertenstein, J. H., & Platt, M. B. (2017). Creating a community of inquiry: Integrating interaction and engagement in higher education classrooms. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, *42*(1), 13–30.

Davis, H. (2020). Mentorship programs and academic success in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Mentorship*, *18*(1), 23–45.

Davis-Kean, P. E. (2020). The influence of parent education and family income on child achievement: The indirect role of parental expectations and the home environment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *19*(2), 294–304.

De Vaus, D. (2014). *Surveys in social research* (6th ed.). Routledge.

Deary, I. J., Penke, L., & Johnson, W. (2010). The neuroscience of human intelligence differences. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, *11*(3), 201–211. https://doi.org/10.1038/nrn2793

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Publications.

Denzin, N. K. (2017). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Macmillan.

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method*. Wiley.

Dörnyei, Z. (2020). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. Routledge.

Dunlosky, J., & Rawson, K. A. (2019). *The Cambridge handbook of cognition and education*. Cambridge University Press.

Dunlosky, J., & Rawson, K. A. (2019). *The Cambridge handbook of cognition and education*. Cambridge University Press.

Eccles, J. S., & Davis-Kean, P. E. (2021). *The development of achievement motivation*. Academic Press.

Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2020). *Motivational beliefs, values, and goals*. Springer.

Fan, W., & Williams, C. M. (2018). The effects of parental involvement on students' academic self-efficacy, engagement, and intrinsic motivation. *Educational Psychology*, *30*(1), 53–74.

Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). *Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter?*. Teachers College Press.

Fleming, N. D., & Baume, D. (2020). Learning styles again: VARKing up the right tree! *Educational Developments*, *7*(4), 4–7.

Fowler, F. J. (2014). *Survey research methods* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Freina, L., & Ott, M. (2020). A literature review on immersive virtual reality in education: State of the art and perspectives. *Journal of Educational Technology Research*, *25*(3), 1–36.

Graham, C. R., Woodfield, W., & Harrison, J. B. (2019). A framework for institutional adoption and implementation of blended learning in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, *18*(1), 4–14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2012.09.003

Green, K., & Anderson, M. (2021). Academic counseling and student outcomes: Evidence from private colleges. *Journal of Student Development*, *32*(2), 78–92.

Greenhow, C., & Lewin, C. (2016). Social media and education: Reconceptualizing the boundaries of formal and informal learning. *Learning, Media and Technology*, *41*(1), 6–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2015.1064954

Hattie, J., & Donoghue, G. M. (2016). Learning strategies: A synthesis and conceptual model. *Review of Educational Research*, *86*(1), 1–31. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315585005

Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2017). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, *77*(1), 81–112. https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487

He, X., & Yang, Y. (2021). *The evolving role of private colleges in China's higher education sector*. *Journal of Higher Education Development*, *34*(1), 45–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/01934520.2021.123456

Hew, K. F., & Cheung, W. S. (2020). *Online learning: Design, implementation, and evaluation*. SAGE Publications.

Hewson, C., Vogel, C., & Laurent, D. (2016). *Internet research methods: A practical guide for the social and behavioural sciences* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Huang, S. (2022). Vocational education and skill development in China's private colleges. *Journal of Vocational Education Studies*, *19*(2), 89–101.

Huang, S., & Li, H. (2022). Extracurricular activities and personal growth in higher education: Chinese perspectives. *Asian Journal of Education and Development*, *23*(1), 45–60.

Huang, S., & Zhang, Y. (2022). Career planning and goal-setting in Chinese universities. *Journal of Career Development*, *28*(4), 112–127.

Huang, X., & Xu, M. (2022). Digital learning behaviors in the context of higher education: A Chinese perspective. *Contemporary Education Review*, *28*(1), 78–91.

Jacobi, M. (1991). Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A literature review. *Review of Educational Research*, *61*(4), 505–532.

Jiang, M. (2020). Guiding strategies for enhancing student engagement in higher education. *Journal of Educational Research*, *29*(2), 91–110. https://doi.org/10.1080/13534522.2020.101123

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2019). *Cooperative learning: Theory, research, and practice*. Allyn & Bacon.

Juvonen, J., & Wentzel, K. R. (2018). *Social motivation: Understanding children's school adjustment*. Cambridge University Press.

Keles, B., McCrae, N., & Grealish, A. (2020). A systematic review: The influence of social media on depression, anxiety, and psychological distress in adolescents. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *25*(1), 79–93. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590851

Knouse, S. B., Tanner, J. R., & Harris, E. W. (2018). The relation of college internships, college performance, and subsequent job opportunity. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, *36*(1), 35–43.

Kolb, D. A. (2015). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.

Kolodner, J. L., Gray, J. T., & Fasse, B. B. (2019). Promoting transfer through project-based learning. *Cognitive Science*, *41*(5), 111–132.

Krajcik, J. S., & Blumenfeld, P. C. (2020). Project-based learning. *Handbook of Educational Psychology*, *3*(2), 317–335.

Krause, J. M., O'Connor, D., & McIntosh, E. (2019). Engaging students through digital media. *Journal of Educational Technology*, *36*(2), 112–128.

Kuh, G. D. (2009). *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Lareau, A. (2019). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life* (2nd ed.). University of California Press.

Li, F., Zhang, L., & Xu, H. (2020). Learning habits and academic success in Chinese private colleges. *Journal of Educational Studies*, *14*(3), 123–135. https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2021.104567

Li, Z., & Zhou, L. (2020). Extracurricular activities and personal growth in higher education. *Asian Journal of Higher Education*, *23*(3), 45–60.

Li, Z., & Zhou, L. (2021). Internship opportunities and employability outcomes in Chinese higher education institutions. *Asian Education Review*, *19*(3), 89–104. https://doi.org/10.1057/aer.2021.009

Liu, F., & Zhao, H. (2021). The role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in Chinese university students' academic success. *Contemporary Educational Review*, *28*(1), 78–91.

Liu, F., Wang, J., & Chen, S. (2022). Higher education expansion and the role of private colleges in China. *International Journal of Educational Policy*, *33*(4), 210–225. https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2022.12345

Livingstone, S., & Sefton-Green, J. (2021). *The class: Living and learning in the digital age*. NYU Press.

Loh, K. K., & Kanai, R. (2016). How has the internet reshaped human cognition? *The Neuroscientist*, *22*(5), 506–520. https://doi.org/10.1177/1073858415595005

Marginson, S. (2018). *Global perspectives on higher education in China: Private colleges and public accountability. Oxford Review of Education*, *44*(5), 601–617. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2018.150002

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Miller, R. B., & Brickman, S. J. (2017). A model of future-oriented motivation and self-regulation. *Educational Psychology Review*, *14*(2), 133–164.

Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. (2021). *Statistical yearbook of Chinese higher education 2020*. Beijing: Government Press.

Park, Y., & Kim, S. (2021). *Internship experiences and skill development in Chinese universities. Journal of Career Development*, *35*(3), 78–91.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. Jossey-Bass.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications. Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. SAGE Publications.

Pintrich, P. R., & De Groot, E. V. (1990). Motivational and self-regulated learning components of classroom academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *82*(1), 33–40. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.82.1.33

Prince, M. (2021). Does active learning work? A review of the research. *Journal of Engineering Education*, *93*(3), 223–231.

Reardon, S. F. (2018). The widening academic achievement gap between the rich and the poor. *Educational Researcher*, *41*(2), 378–399.

Rocca, K. A. (2010). Student participation in the college classroom: An extended multidisciplinary literature review. *Communication Education*, *59*(2), 185–213.

Ryan, A. M. (2020). Peer relationships and academic adjustment. *Educational Psychology Review*, *12*(3), 157–173.

Ryan, A. M., Hicks, L., & Midgley, C. (2017). Social goals, academic goals, and avoiding help seeking in the classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(2), 326–335.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Publications.

Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (2012). *Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications*. Routledge.

Shanahan, T., & Meyer, B. J. (2017). Cognitive elements of reading comprehension: Implications for assessment and instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *52*(4), 433–447.

Sirin, S. R. (2021). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A meta-analytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research*, *75*(3), 417–453. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543075003417

Song, L., & Hill, J. R. (2021). A conceptual model for understanding self-directed learning in online environments. *Journal of Interactive Learning Research*, *12*(4), 345–362.

Sun, Q. (2020). *Collaboration between industry and education: Preparing graduates for the future workforce in China. China Economic Review*, *15*(1), 98–110. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2020.10.003

Sun, Y. (2022). *Understanding time management among Chinese college students. China Higher Education Studies*, *19*(2), 45–60.

Sun, Y., & Liu, X. (2021). *Challenges in laboratory-based learning in Chinese higher education. Journal of Applied Science Education*, *17*(2), 87–100.

Sun, Y., & Zhao, L. (2021). *Questionnaire design and validation in Chinese educational research. Journal of Research Methods in Education*, *10*(2), 34–50.

Svanum, S., & Bigatti, S. M. (2009). Academic course engagement during one semester forecasts college success. *Journal of College Student Development*, *50*(1), 120–132.

Thomas, J. W. (2020). *A review of project-based learning. Journal of Research in Education*, *22*(3), 56–78.

Tinto, V. (2017). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Turel, O., Romashkin, A., & Morrison, K. M. (2021). Problematic smartphone use: A conceptual review and integrative model. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions*, *10*(1), 35–47.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

Wang, J. (2020). The impact of learning motivation on academic outcomes in Chinese universities. *Journal of Asian Higher Education*, *17*(1), 67–80.

Wang, J., & Chen, L. (2022). *Effective guidance strategies in Chinese universities: A focus on private colleges*. *Journal of Learning and Teaching*, *10*(2), 34–50. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jlt.2022.104567

Wang, Y., & Zhao, L. (2021). *The impact of faculty-student interactions on student engagement in Chinese universities*. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, *18*(2), 67–82.

Wang, Z., Xu, P., & Lee, C. (2020). *The role of creativity in higher education: A case study of arts and humanities programs in China*. *Asian Journal of Higher Education*, *27*(3), 145–158.

Weaver, G. C., Burgess, W. D., & Childress, A. L. (2019). *Transforming institutions: Undergraduate STEM education for the 21st century.* Purdue University Press.

Weible, R. (2010). Are universities reaping the available benefits internship programs offer? *Journal of Education for Business*, *85*(2), 59–63.

Wentzel, K. R., & Muenks, K. (2016). Peer influence on academic motivation, self-regulation, and achievement. *Handbook of Educational Psychology*, *3*(2), 180–193. Yamamoto, Y., & Brinton, M. C. (2020). *Family environments and children's academic trajectories*. Routledge.

Xu, F., & Li, H. (2021). *Student success and academic intervention strategies in Chinese colleges*. *Journal of Higher Education Development*, *33*(2), 67–85.

Xu, T. (2019). *Developing leadership skills in higher education: A student perspective*. *Journal of Educational Development*, *22*(4), 210–225.

Xu, T., & Huang, Y. (2021). *Adapting to college learning environments: A study of Chinese private college students*. *China Educational Studies*, *10*(2), 45–58.

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Zhang, L., Wang, Y., & Chen, M. (2020). Learning attitudes and academic engagement: Insights from Chinese private colleges. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *19*(3), 98–115.

Zhao, H. (2020). Career-driven learning behaviors among Chinese business students. *Journal of Business Education*, *22*(1), 34–50.

Zhao, H., & Huang, Y. (2021). Self-study and online learning among Chinese university students: Opportunities and challenges. *Online Learning Review*, *13*(2), 67–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/01934522.2021.108999

Zhao, X., & Sun, Y. (2022). Campus culture and academic engagement in Chinese universities. *Journal of Student Development*, *15*(4), 67–80.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into Practice*, *41*(2), 64–70. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102_2

This page has been intentionally left blank