

Substitution or Complementarity?

-- The Impact of Internship and Academic Study on the Employment Quality of Media Major College Students

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Abstract

This study focuses on college students majoring in media, and constructs an interactive effect model of the impact of internship and academic study on the employment quality of this group, exploring its specific effects and mechanisms. With the help of 194 valid sample data collected through a questionnaire survey, the regression analysis results show that: 1) internships can significantly improve the employment quality of media majors for college students; 2) The effect of academic study on improving employment quality has not been verified; 3) There is a significant negative interaction between internship and academic study, exhibiting a "substitution effect" rather than a complementary relationship. The study reveals the professional characteristics of media majors that are relatively more focused on practice, providing empirical evidence and practical inspiration for college students to balance their studies and internships, universities to optimize talent training programs, and enterprises to improve talent screening mechanisms.

Keywords

College Students; Majoring in Media; Employment Quality; Internship; Academic Study.

1. Research Background and Problem Proposal

In China, employment is the biggest livelihood project, and the quality of employment for college graduates is not only related to personal growth and development, family happiness and health, but also to the implementation of the national talent strategy and social harmony and stability. It has always been a hot topic of concern for all sectors of society. With the continuous promotion of the popularization of higher education, the scale of college graduates has been increasing year by year, and the competition in the job market has become increasingly fierce. The dual dilemma of difficult employment and low employment quality is becoming increasingly prominent. According to data released by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of Education, the number of college graduates in 2026 is expected to reach 12.7 million, an increase of 480000 compared to the same period last year, setting a new historical high. Against the backdrop of a sluggish economic environment, the contradiction between supply and demand has become increasingly prominent, and public opinion is generally discussing issues such as low salary levels, insufficient job matching, and limited career development space for college graduates. How to improve the employment quality of college graduates has become an important issue[1-5].

In the context of increasingly fierce employment competition, the traditional cognitive logic of "studying hard has a way out" has been challenged by reality, and the one-sided view of "academic study is useless" has spread among some groups, causing employment anxiety and action deviation among college students. This deviation is particularly prominent among

college students majoring in media - the media industry has distinct characteristics of strong practicality, high innovation, and fast iteration. It requires practitioners to have extremely high practical skills, industry insights, and practical experience. When recruiting, companies prefer job seekers with practical experience, and the overall job demand shows a tendency of "emphasizing practice over theory".

A questionnaire survey on "internship advancement" among college students conducted by China Youth Daily • China Youth School Media shows that, among 8122 valid questionnaires, 84.44% of respondents stated that they had their first internship experience in their freshman or sophomore year. A survey conducted by 51job also showed that 47.4% of surveyed college students had started their internship experience as early as their freshman or sophomore year, with a more obvious trend of younger internships for media majors. Some college students, in order to participate in internships, even skip classes and neglect professional knowledge learning, falling into the misconception of "utilitarian internship" and "trial and error blindness". Some students on the internet also admit that the content of their freshman internship does not match their career goals, and can only play a role in "eliminating wrong options", which actually squeezes their time for academic study.

This practical dilemma has triggered the core question of this study: what is the relationship between academic study (i.e. learning core knowledge and cultivating professional qualities in media majors) and internship (i.e. accumulating practical experience in the media industry) as the two core paths for media majors to enhance their employment competitiveness? Are the two mutually substitutable, meaning that the improvement of one will weaken the positive impact of the other on employment quality, or complementary, meaning that the synergistic effect of the two can more effectively promote the improvement of employment quality? In the current situation where the employment pressure of media college students continues to rise, and the younger age of internships and academic utilitarianism coexist, a systematic exploration of the impact mechanism of the two on the employment quality of media college students, clarifying the relationship paradigm between the two, can not only break the cognitive misconceptions of media college students' emphasis on internships and neglect of studies or 'emphasis on studies and neglect of internships', but also provide practical guidance for their rational allocation of time and energy, and achieve the coordinated development of studies and internships. It can also provide theoretical support and policy reference for universities to optimize the talent training mode of media majors, balance theoretical teaching and practical teaching, and improve the employment quality of graduates, which has important practical significance and theoretical value[6].

2. Literature Review

Regarding the core issue of "academic study, internships, and the quality of employment for college students", scholars at home and abroad have conducted a large amount of research and formed relatively rich research results. However, there are still differences in core viewpoints, research perspectives, and research conclusions, and there is a lack of targeted research focusing on media majors for college students. A unified understanding has not yet been formed, leaving room for expansion in this study.

1) Foreign Literature Review

Research on the employment quality of college students started earlier in foreign countries, forming a relatively mature theoretical system and research paradigm. The core revolves around the impact of internships and academic performance on employment quality and their relationship. In terms of research on the impact of internships on employment quality, scholars generally believe that internships, as an important carrier for connecting theory and practice, can effectively improve the employment quality of college students. Nunley et al. (2016) found

that job seekers with internship experience had an interview rate about 14% higher than those without internship experience. Internship experience can help college students shorten their job search cycle, increase employment opportunities, and improve salary levels and job matching. Supriyanto et al. (2022) based on empirical research pointed out that internship experience helps college students prepare for their careers, clarify their career choices, enhance their adaptability to the workplace, and thus promote the improvement of employment quality. Chen et al. (2018), based on the theory of workplace learning, believe that internships can help college students integrate into the workplace culture and acquire non-technical skills, which is of great significance for improving the quality of employment.

In the study of the impact of academic performance on employment quality, screening theory suggests that in an information asymmetric labor market, academic performance serves as an important signal to measure students' intelligence and learning ability, which can help employers reduce screening costs. Therefore, college students with excellent academic performance are more likely to obtain high-quality employment opportunities (Kim, 2023). Crebert et al. (2004) found that graduates with "Upper Second Class" or higher degrees in the UK have a salary premium of about 5% one year after graduation, which rises to 8% six years later, fully reflecting the positive impact of academic performance on long-term employment quality. For media majors, foreign research focuses more on the integration of theory and practice, believing that solid theoretical knowledge is the foundation for students to quickly improve their practical abilities during internships, and can help students better understand industry logic and optimize work methods. In addition, some scholars have paid attention to the interaction between internships and academic performance. For example, Katsumoto and Bowman's (2023) longitudinal study showed that students who participated in internships during their undergraduate years had a significant improvement in their GPA in their senior year, and internships had a positive promoting effect on academic performance. The two showed a synergistic development trend, suggesting that there may be a complementary relationship between the two. However, some scholars have put forward different views. Ishengoma and Vaaland's (2016) research shows that workplace information disclosure brought about by internships can affect students' academic study efforts. Students with stronger academic abilities may reduce their learning engagement as a result of internships, whereas those with weaker abilities may intensify their learning efforts. The relationship between internship participation and learning engagement is thus heterogeneous and may demonstrate a substitution effect.

2) Domestic literature review

Domestic scholars have conducted a large amount of empirical research on core issues based on the actual situation of higher education in China and the characteristics of the employment market. Among them, research on media majors mainly focuses on the importance of internships, and there is a lack of exploration on the relationship between reading and internships. The research conclusions mainly concentrate on three aspects. Firstly, internships have a significant positive impact on the employment quality of college students majoring in media. Wang et al. (2025) conducted a survey on vocational college graduates and found that graduates with high-quality internship experience have significantly higher job matching and job satisfaction than those without internship experience. Even if some students face the dilemma of "reverse internship", internship experience is still an important bargaining chip for them to obtain employment opportunities. Hu and Zeng (2025) further pointed out that when recruiting media talents, leading domestic MCN institutions, Internet giants and mainstream media clearly regard relevant internship experience as a priority employment condition. Internship can help students accumulate industry contacts, polish practical skills, and even directly obtain retention opportunities. The research by Zhao and Gao (2022) shows that internship quality has a greater impact on employment quality than internship duration. High

quality internships can indirectly promote the improvement of employment quality by enhancing the vocational abilities of college students. This conclusion also applies to media majors, as ineffective internships are difficult to have a positive impact on employment quality. Secondly, there is controversy over the impact of academic performance on the employment quality of students majoring in media. Some scholars believe that academic performance is significantly positively correlated with employment quality, and solid professional knowledge (such as communication theory, copywriting, data analysis, etc.) is the foundation for media college students to enhance their employment competitiveness, which can help them obtain better career development space (Ran et al., 2025); A survey conducted by the School of Journalism at Renmin University of China found that the quality of course learning for graduates majoring in international journalism and communication directly affects their employment choices and career development. Solid professional knowledge can help students better adapt to the job demands of mainstream media at the central level. However, some scholars have put forward different views, believing that in the context of the media industry's emphasis on practice over theory, academic performance has no significant impact on graduates' salaries, job satisfaction, and professional relevance, and practical ability is more important than academic performance. Lv's (2016) research further points out that the deep learning motivation of college students (such as learning with questions and actively exploring cutting-edge knowledge in the media industry) can improve the quality of reading, and indirectly promote the improvement of employment quality, emphasizing the importance of "effective reading".

Thirdly, regarding the relationship between internships and academic study, domestic research mostly focuses on the synergistic effect of the two, with less exploration of substitution effects, and there is a particular lack of specialized research on media related majors. Li and Liang (2025) believe that internships can help college students apply the professional knowledge learned in the classroom to practice, achieve the integration of theory and practice, and thereby improve academic and employment quality, showing a complementary relationship between the two; The research by Zhao and Gao (2022) also indicates that internships are not in opposition to academic studies. Reasonable internship arrangements can promote the digestion and absorption of professional knowledge, improve academic study efficiency. This viewpoint is reflected in media majors as "the practical industry experience acquired during internships can feed back professional theoretical learning and deepen understanding of professional knowledge". However, existing research has not fully taken into account the limited time and energy of media major college students, ignoring the possible substitutional relationship between the two - when students invest more time in internships, it may squeeze their academic study time, leading to a weak foundation of professional knowledge and ultimately affecting long-term employment quality; On the contrary, excessive focus on academic study may result in a lack of practical industry experience, making it difficult to meet the job demands of the media industry and also detrimental to improving employment quality.

3) Shortcomings and gaps in existing research

Based on a comprehensive review of domestic and foreign literature, existing research provides a solid theoretical foundation and research reference for this article. However, there are still significant research shortcomings and gaps, which are reflected in three aspects. Firstly, there are limitations in the research perspective. Existing studies mostly explore the impact of internships or reading on employment quality separately, or simply analyze the synergistic effect of the two, without systematically exploring the substitution and complementary relationship between the two. In particular, there is a lack of in-depth analysis of specific majors with professional differences, which cannot answer the practical question of "how should this type of college student balance their studies and internships". Secondly, the research subjects are not targeted enough. Existing studies mostly focus on ordinary college students, and there

is a lack of specialized research on media majors. It fails to combine the strong practicality and fast iteration characteristics of the media industry to analyze the impact mechanism of internships and reading on their employment quality. The research conclusions are not targeted and convincing enough. Thirdly, the measurement of research variables is not precise enough. Existing studies often use academic performance as a single indicator to measure "academic study", neglecting key dimensions such as learning motivation and learning strategies; The measurement of "internship" often adopts binary variables of "with or without internship", which fails to fully consider micro indicators such as internship quality, internship duration, and the matching degree between internship and major, resulting in insufficient pertinence and persuasiveness of research conclusions. Fourthly, there are differences in research conclusions regarding the impact of academic performance on employment quality and the interaction between internships and studies. Existing research has not yet formed a unified understanding, and most studies have not considered the moderating effect of individual heterogeneity (such as family socioeconomic status and professional type) on the relationship between the two. The universality of research conclusions needs further verification[7-15].

3. Hypothesis Development

Based on the above research gaps, this article takes "substitution or complementarity" as the core theme, systematically explores the impact mechanism of internships and academic study on the employment quality of college students, and clarifies the relationship paradigm between the two. The media industry has distinct characteristics of strong practicality, high innovation, and fast iteration. Its employment quality is not only reflected in basic dimensions such as salary level and job stability, but also highlighted in professional dimensions such as job matching, creative expression ability, and cross platform operation ability. As the core group of talent supply in the media industry, the employment quality of college students majoring in media is directly related to the sustainable development and talent development of the media industry. Internship, as a core carrier connecting campus education and industry practice in media majors, can help students accumulate practical experience in the industry and adapt to industry needs; Reading, as the core path for accumulating professional knowledge and core competencies, can lay the foundation for students in the field of media and cultivate innovative thinking and communication abilities. Based on workplace learning theory and screening theory, combined with the characteristics of the media industry and relevant research results at home and abroad, this article focuses on college students majoring in media. Around the relationship between internships, reading, and employment quality, the following three research hypotheses are proposed.

1) The Promoting Effect of Internship on the Employment Quality of Media Majors

The media industry attaches great importance to practical experience, and internships are a key way for media majors to expose themselves to real industry scenarios and accumulate practical skills. They can enhance their employment competitiveness in multiple dimensions, thereby promoting the improvement of employment quality. From the perspective of industry characteristics, the media industry has numerous sub sectors (news gathering and editing, new media operations, public relations and communication, film and television production, etc.), and there are significant differences in the practical skills required for positions in different fields. Campus education is difficult to fully cover the practical needs of frontline industries, and internships have become the core way to bridge this gap. From a theoretical perspective, workplace learning theory points out that the cognitive development of media majors relies on practical experience in real communication scenarios. Internship can help students acquire industry skills, familiarize themselves with industry rules, grasp industry trends, and achieve

rapid improvement of professional abilities in specific projects. From empirical research, Wang et al. (2025) found in their survey of vocational college graduates that graduates with high-quality internship experience have significantly higher job matching and job satisfaction than those without internship experience. Even if some students face the dilemma of "reverse internship", internship experience is still an important bargaining chip for them to obtain employment opportunities. Some scholars further pointed out that when recruiting media talents, leading domestic MCN institutions, Internet giants and mainstream media all clearly regard relevant internship experience as a priority employment condition. Internship can help students accumulate industry contacts, polish practical skills, and even directly obtain retention opportunities. In summary, internships can have a significant positive impact on the employment quality of media majors by accumulating practical skills, building industry networks, and clarifying career positioning. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1: Internship has a promoting effect on the employment quality of media majors for college students.

2) The Promoting Effect of academic study on the Employment Quality of College Students majoring in Media

Academic study, as a core way for college students majoring in media to accumulate professional knowledge and cultivate core competencies, is essentially an important form of investment in human capital for media talents. It can promote the improvement of employment quality by conveying professional education signals, enhancing comprehensive competencies. The innovation and professionalism of the media industry determine that practitioners not only need solid practical skills, but also require profound professional theoretical foundation, keen media insight ability, and strong creative expression ability. The cultivation of these qualities cannot be separated from systematic reading and learning. From a theoretical perspective, screening theory suggests that in the labor market of the media industry, employers find it difficult to directly assess the professional potential of job seekers. However, the academic performance formed by reading (such as professional grades and mastery of core courses) can serve as observable educational signals, helping employers quickly screen job seekers with professional foundations and learning abilities (Ishengoma, Vaaland, 2016). From empirical research, a survey conducted by the School of Journalism at Renmin University of China found that the quality of course learning for graduates majoring in international journalism and communication directly affects their employment choices and career development. Solid professional knowledge can help students better adapt to the job demands of mainstream media at the central level. The study by Ran et al. (2025) also confirms that the academic performance of media majors is significantly positively correlated with employment quality, and the academic study effect of core courses can directly affect the job suitability and salary level of graduates. Lv's (2016) research further points out that the deep learning motivation of media majors, such as learning with questions and actively exploring cutting-edge knowledge in the media industry, can improve the quality of reading, cultivate innovative thinking and media insight abilities, and indirectly promote the improvement of employment quality. In addition, media platforms such as Sohu have also released industry reports showing that popular media majors such as network and new media, digital media art, etc. have a high degree of integration between professional theories and cutting-edge technological knowledge in their curriculum system, which directly affects the starting salary level and career development space of graduates, highlighting the important value of reading and learning. Although some studies have pointed out that the media industry "emphasizes practice over theory", such views ignore the professional competence improvement and long-term development potential brought by reading. Combining mainstream research conclusions with the development needs of the media industry, reading can have a significant positive impact on the employment quality

of media majors by transmitting professional signals and improving comprehensive literacy. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H2: Reading has a promoting effect on the employment quality of college students majoring in media.

3) The simultaneous interaction between internship and reading can promote the employment quality of media majors for college students

For college students majoring in media, internships and academic study are not independent of each other. The interaction between the two can achieve a synergistic effect of "theory+practice", make up for the shortcomings of a single path, further amplify the positive impact on employment quality, and form a virtuous cycle of "Learn to apply, apply to promote learning". From the perspective of talent demand in the media industry, there is an urgent need for composite talents who possess both solid professional theories and strong practical abilities. Simply studying cannot meet the practical skills requirements of the position, and simple internships without professional theoretical support are difficult to achieve long-term development. From a theoretical perspective, the media professional theories accumulated through reading, such as communication theory, media ethics, copywriting, data analysis, etc., can provide systematic theoretical guidance for internships, help students better understand the core logic of internship projects, optimize work methods, and improve internship quality; Internship provides real application scenarios for the theoretical knowledge accumulated from reading, helping students deepen their understanding and absorption of professional knowledge, avoid "talking on paper", and discover their own knowledge shortcomings, and improve their reading and learning plans in a targeted manner (Li, 2013). From empirical research, the study by Ran et al. (2025) clearly indicates that internship experience plays a significant positive moderating role in the relationship between academic performance and employment quality of media majors, and can strengthen the effect of academic performance on improving employment quality, confirming the synergistic and complementary relationship between the two. Crebert et al. (2004) found that internships can enhance soft skills such as communication and comprehensive operational abilities of media students, while the learning and creative abilities cultivated by academic study can help students quickly learn cutting-edge industry technologies and create high-quality works during internships. The combination of the two can significantly improve their employment competitiveness. In summary, the interaction between internships and reading can achieve a deep integration of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the media industry, further promoting the improvement of employment quality for college students majoring in media. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H3: The simultaneous interaction between internships and reading can promote the employment quality of media majors for college students.

4. Research Methods, Empirical Analysis, and Results Discussion

1) Data collection and variable measurement

In order to collect more accurate data on fresh graduates, the data collection work of this study spans from May 2023 to November 2025, using an online questionnaire survey to balance the efficiency of data collection and the representativeness of the sample. The main channel for distributing questionnaires is through snowballing, with the help of the researcher's well-known network, to collect targeted information from media majors in Zhejiang universities. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, and 262 questionnaires were collected. After preliminary screening, 68 invalid questionnaires with incomplete filling, short filling time (less than 120 seconds), and obvious logical contradictions in answers (such as continuously selecting the same option or conflicting answers in reverse questions) were

excluded. Finally, 194 valid questionnaires were obtained, with an effective response rate of 74.62%. Among the valid samples, females accounted for 70.1% and males accounted for 29.9%; All students majoring in media within 5 years of graduation; After graduation, the proportion of people who have never changed jobs is 36.1%, while the proportion of people who have changed jobs once, twice, three times, or more is 20.6%, 22.7%, 10.3%, and 10.3%, respectively. The sample structure basically conforms to the overall characteristics of the research object and can provide reliable data support for subsequent empirical analysis.

The questionnaire design strictly follows the standardized process, and the measurement of core variables adopts mature scales at home and abroad. Two scholars in relevant fields and five research subjects are invited to conduct a pre survey. Based on the feedback from the pre survey, vague and ambiguous items are modified, and the questionnaire layout and filling logic are optimized to ultimately form a formal questionnaire. The questionnaire mainly includes two parts: core variable measurement items and demographic information. The core variable measurement items are scored using the Likert 5-point scale (1=completely disagree, 5=completely agree) to ensure the objectivity and comparability of the measurement results. Among them, the measurement of the reading dimension adopts the Deep Learning Motive Scale developed by Biggs et al. (2001) and Lv Linhai (2016), while the employment quality scale comprehensively refers to the mature scales developed by Sewell, Forest (2001), and Li Junkai (2013). The internship quality scale is developed by scholar Gamboa (2011).

2) Reliability and validity testing

To ensure the reliability and validity of the research data, SPSS 26.0 software was used to conduct reliability and validity tests on the measurement items of the core variables before conducting formal regression analysis. This study used Cronbach's alpha coefficient as the core indicator for reliability testing. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of each variable were generally greater than 0.7, indicating good reliability and internal consistency of the items. In terms of content validity, the measurement items of the core variables are based on relevant mature research scales at home and abroad. As mentioned earlier, after review and confirmation by two scholars in the relevant field and pre survey feedback, it can be concluded that the content validity of the measurement tool in this study is good. In terms of construct validity, factor analysis was used in this study, as shown in Table 1. The three core variables were classified into three groups as expected, indicating that the measurement tool has good construct validity.

Table 1. reliability and validity test

Items	Cronbach's α	Factor loading		
Internship quality1	0.8123	0.7321	-0.1953	-0.115
Internship quality2		0.7826	-0.1836	-0.2259
Internship quality3		0.7757	-0.1410	-0.2916
Internship quality4		0.7156	-0.2051	-0.3267
Internship quality5		0.5686	0.0169	-0.1331
Deep learning motive1	0.7863	0.1509	0.8203	-0.0014
Deep learning motive2		0.3192	0.8077	0.0856
Deep learning motive3		0.3620	0.7362	-0.0398
Employment quality1	0.7087	0.4292	-0.0990	0.7026
Employment quality2		0.3888	-0.0524	0.7780
Employment quality3		0.3091	-0.1686	0.5821

3) Empirical analysis and result discussion

This study used Stata15.1 software to conduct empirical analysis on valid sample data, and the specific analysis results are reported as follows. Table 1 shows the correlation analysis using Pearson correlation coefficient. The core purpose of correlation analysis is to preliminarily determine the direction and strength of the linear relationship between variables, and to test for the existence of multicollinearity (it is generally believed that a correlation coefficient absolute value greater than 0.7 indicates severe multicollinearity). In this study, the correlation coefficients between variables were all above 0.35, indicating that there is no serious multicollinearity problem, which provides a prerequisite for subsequent regression analysis.

Table 2. correlation analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Employment quality	1							
2.Academic study	0.0289	1						
3.Internship quality	0.1940***	0.2039***	1					
4.Gender	0.0483	-0.2168***	0.0217	1				
5.Resident city	-0.0724	-0.0264	0.2670***	-0.0473	1			
6.Extent of family social capital	0.1839**	0.2389***	0.1865***	0.0158	0.0675	1		
7.Internship-major match	0.1147	0.0402	0.2674***	0.1750**	-0.0868	0.0893	1	
8.Supervisory guidance	0.1329*	0.1732**	0.3449***	0.1164	-0.0422	0.1529**	0.1666**	1

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Table 3. regression analysis

VARIABLES	M1	M2	M3
Interaction			-0.382**
			(-1.98)
Academic study		-0.083	-0.186
		(-0.75)	(-1.53)
Internship quality		0.246**	0.268**
		(2.26)	(2.46)
Gender	0.035	0.024	-0.000
	(0.26)	(0.17)	(-0.00)
Resident city	-0.042	-0.075*	-0.086**
	(-1.02)	(-1.73)	(-1.98)
Extent of family social capital	0.147**	0.142**	0.114*
	(2.33)	(2.20)	(1.73)
Internship-major match	0.056	0.024	0.008
	(1.03)	(0.43)	(0.15)
Supervisory guidance	0.089	0.041	0.007
	(1.23)	(0.53)	(0.08)
Constant	1.811***	1.835***	2.326***
	(5.68)	(4.65)	(5.02)
Observations	194	194	194
R-squared	0.058	0.084	0.103
r ² _a	0.0325	0.0491	0.0639
F	2.297	2.423	2.645

Note: Y=employment quality;

t-statistics in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Regression analysis is the core method of empirical testing in this study, used to test the causal relationship between core variables and verify research hypotheses. This study used stratified regression analysis to analyze the impact of each variable on the dependent variable. According to the regression analysis results in Table 4, Model 1 is the baseline model that only includes control variables; Model 2 simultaneously includes two independent variables - internship quality and reading, with regression equation coefficients of 0.246 ($p=0.025$) and -0.083 ($p>0.1$), indicating that Hypothesis 1: the promotion effect of internship quality on employment quality has been validated, but Hypothesis 2: the promotion effect of reading on employment quality has not been supported; Model 3 further incorporates the interaction term between internship quality and reading. Contrary to expectations, the regression equation coefficient of the interaction term is negative (-0.382 , $p=0.049$), indicating that Hypothesis 3 has not been validated, that is, there is a mutually inhibitory relationship between internship quality and academic study. The possible reason is that media majors have strong practicality. Different from traditional science and engineering or theory and research majors, media students really need more employment to obtain higher employment quality.

5. Research Summary, Practical Implications, and Research Prospects

The main conclusions of this study are as follows. Firstly, at least in the field of media majors, internship quality can significantly improve employment quality. Secondly, the employment promotion effect of academic study on media majors is not significant; Thirdly, over-emphasized on academic study may squeeze out potential internship opportunities, which may further lead to lower the employment quality of media students.

The empirical results of this study have important theoretical significance, mainly reflected in two aspects: firstly, it enriches the research results in the fields of employment and the object of media industry, meanwhile, it incorporates the factors of internship and academic study into the research framework simultaneously, making it possible to examine the differentiated impact of these two factors on student employment; the second is to verify the substitutability relationship between internship and academic study, supplement and deepen the empirical evidence on the research of media majors in this field, improve the relevant theoretical system, and provide new research perspectives and ideas for subsequent related research.

Based on the empirical results of this study and combined with the practical application scenarios of the research topic, the following practical suggestions are proposed. Firstly, regarding the important role of internships, relevant entities such as universities, enterprises, and governments should attach more importance to strengthen the arrangement and cultivation guidance of internship positions, take multiple measures to improve internships quality, and thereby promote the improvement of the employment quality of graduates. Secondly, at least for the universities offering media majors, as well as the education authorities, should fully recognize the fact that the role of academic study in the current social environment is declining. They should strengthen the practical application orientation in curriculum design and other aspects to help students in such practical and applied majors better adapt to the needs of society and improve themselves more targetedly.

Although this study has achieved certain research results, there are still some limitations that need to be further improved in future research. Firstly, in terms of data collection, this study used an online questionnaire survey. Although the sample coverage is relatively wide, there is still a certain sampling bias. Besides, cross-sectional data cannot reflect the dynamic relationship between variables. Subsequent research can use more methods like multi-stage sampling, to collect longitudinal data to improve the universality and timeliness of research results. Secondly, in terms of variable measurement, although the measurement items of the core variables were adopted from existing scales, they were adjusted according to the context

of this study, which may result in certain measurement biases. Subsequent research can further optimize the measurement items, increase measurement dimensions, and improve measurement accuracy. Thirdly, in terms of research scope, this study only examined the direct relationship between internships and academic study on employment quality, without considering the contextual boundary conditions on the main effects mentioned above, especially for academic study that the causal relationship is not established. Subsequent research can in-depth explore more key research variables, include more potential independent variables, moderating variables, and mediating variables, and improve the research framework.

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